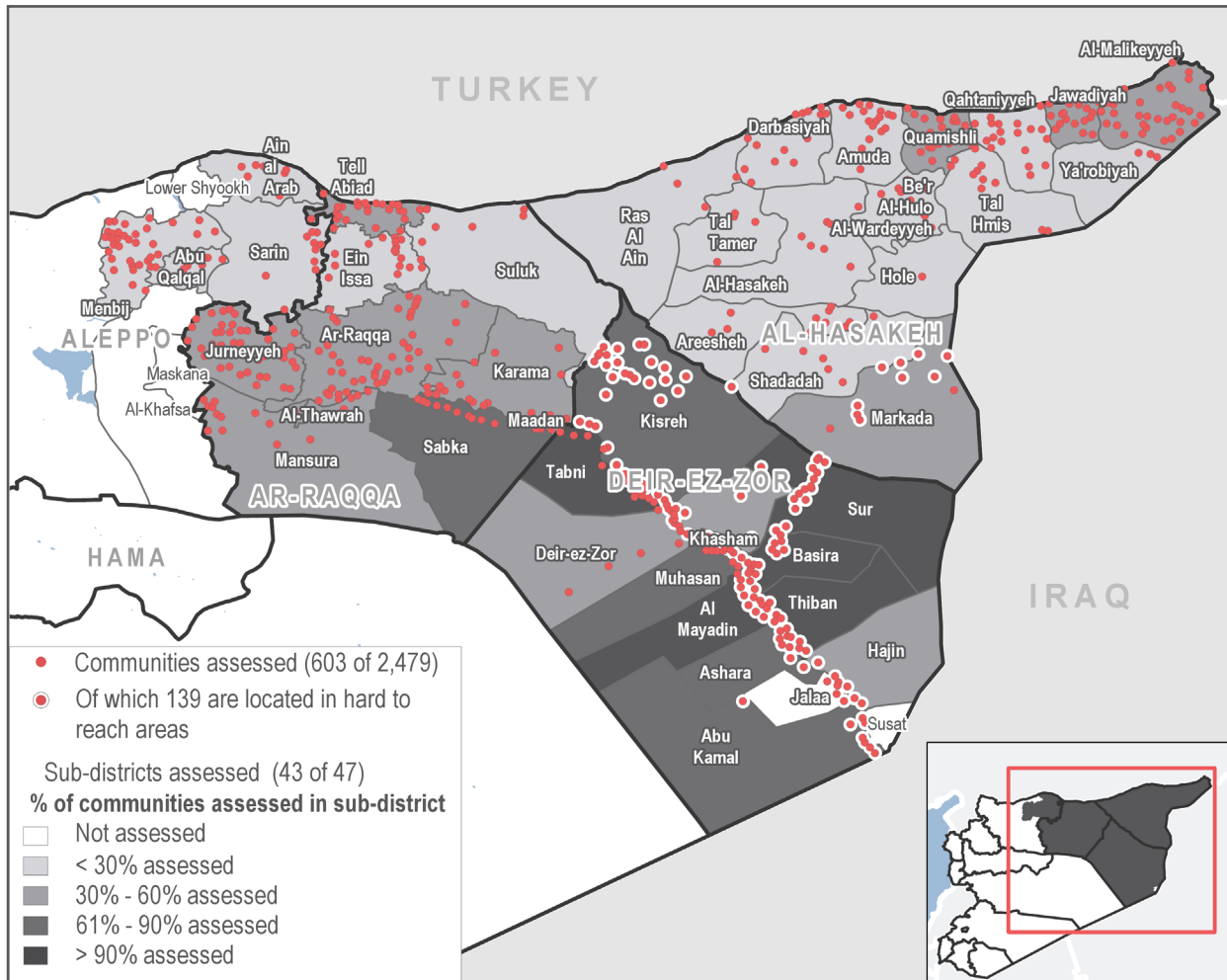


Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria (HSOS)

Northeast Syria, March 2019

Coverage



Introduction

HSOS is a monthly assessment that aims to provide comprehensive, multi-sectoral information about the humanitarian situation inside Syria. The assessment is conducted at the community level covering **displacement, food security and livelihoods (FSL), education, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), health, and shelter and non-food items (SNFI).**

The factsheet presents information gathered in 603 communities across Al-Hasakeh (196 communities), eastern Aleppo* (61 communities), Deir-ez-Zor (158 communities), and Ar-Raqqa (188 communities) governorates. Data was collected during the month of April 2019, and refers to the situation in the northeast region in March 2019. Findings are indicative rather than representative, and should not be generalised across the region.

Community-level datasets are available on [REACH Resource Centre](#), [the Humanitarian Data Exchange](#).

*The eastern part of Aleppo where humanitarian response and coordination is conducted from the northeast rather than the northwest.

Top 3 reported priority needs in assessed communities:

- 1 Healthcare
- 2 Livelihoods
- 3 Education

People in need (PIN) Demographics*

1,129,753 PiN **639,283** People in Acute Need

Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB):^{1,2}

Average price in **March 2019** **67,614 Syrian Pound (SYP)**
 One month change: **+4%**
 Six month change: **+9%**

* PiN refers to people whose physical security, basic rights, dignity, living conditions or livelihoods are threatened or have been disrupted, and whose current level of access to basic services, goods and protection is inadequate to re-establish normal living conditions within their accustomed means without assistance.

People in Acute Need refers to those facing more severe forms of deprivation in terms of their security, basic rights and living conditions and face life-threatening needs requiring urgent humanitarian assistance ([HNO 2019](#)).

The calculated PiN numbers are indicative as they are calculated using the OCHA dataset and coverage varies slightly.

Key events impacting the humanitarian situation in Northeast Syria (NES)

October-November 2017	Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor cities fully liberated from ISIL. ^{a,b}	April 2018	Forces escalate offensive on ISIL in southeastern Deir-ez-Zor governorate and in southern Al-Hasakeh governorate. ^c	October 2018	Delayed rainfall and deteriorated agricultural infrastructure and input resulted in the lowest annual wheat yield since 1989. ^d	Mid-December 2018	244,655 spontaneous returnees in Deir-ez-Zor governorate and 166,305 in Ar-Raqqa city reported by OCHA since November 2017. ^e	November 2018 - March 2019	Since November, hostilities in ISIL-held areas of Hajin and Baghouz further intensified. ^f	December 2018 - March 2019	More than 63,000 people were displaced from ISIL-held areas in Deir-ez-Zor governorate and transferred to Al Hol camp in Al-Hasakeh Governorate. ^f
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CONTEXT

Since November 2018, hostilities in Deir-ez-Zor governorate further intensified, resulting in the displacement of more than 63,000 people to Al Hol camp in Al-Hasakeh governorate.^f By the end of March, the influx of people had reduced and stabilised.^g However, as the camp has surpassed its maximum capacity, conditions remain challenging.⁹ The WASH camp infrastructure capacity has decreased, as new water tanks are needed and latrines and bathing facilities require repairs, as reported in the [REACH WASH Rapid Assessment in Al Hol Refugee / IDP Camp 14 - 19 March 2019](#). Furthermore, continued rainfall in Al-Hasakeh governorate in Northeast Syria (NES) in March 2019 resulted in damage to infrastructure, including to houses^h and roads.ⁱ Floods in Al-Hasakeh governorate resulted in temporary displacement in Tal Hmis sub-district with nearly 1,000 individuals finding shelter in mosques or schools.^j The heavy rain and subsequent flooding affected an estimated 118,000 people, including people living in internally displaced person (IDP) camps.^k

KEY HIGHLIGHTS³

Healthcare continues to be a priority need across NES

The most commonly reported priority need over the last five months in NES was healthcare, with a trend of barriers to accessing healthcare services. KIs in 300 (51%) of 603 assessed communities reported that there were no health facilities available in the area. In total, KIs in 590 (98%) of 603 assessed communities in NES reported difficulties of access. Of those reported difficulties, high costs were flagged to be the principal issue: KIs in 401 (68%) assessed communities reported that healthcare services are too expensive, and KIs in 304 (52%) assessed communities reported a high cost of transportation to health facilities. Overall, the main reported diseases were chronic diseases, severe diseases affecting those aged less than five, and acute respiratory infections. In some governorates, particular health problems were highlighted. Skin diseases were mainly reported in Deir-ez-Zor governorate, by KIs in 59 (37%) of 158 assessed communities, and Al-Hasakeh governorate, by KIs in 36 (18%) of 196 assessed communities. Pregnancy-related infections were mostly reported in Ar-Raqqa governorate (by KIs in 122 (65%) of 188 assessed communities) and eastern Aleppo governorate (by KIs in 39 (64%) of 61 assessed communities).

Regional variation in use of livelihoods-related coping strategies

Livelihoods continued to be a priority need in March 2019. However, variation between governorates was discernible in terms of the livelihoods-based coping strategies employed by populations. Overall, borrowing money from family and friends was reported by KIs in 477 (79%) of 603 assessed communities. In Deir-ez-Zor governorate, this was reported by KIs in almost every assessed community (99%). In eastern Aleppo governorate, KIs in 40 (66%) of 61 assessed communities reported that children were sent to work or beg. In Al-Hasakeh governorate, KIs in 56 (29%) of 196 assessed communities reported that people in their community reduced the size of meals. Lastly, the lack of livelihoods likely also increased bartering. The increase in bartering was especially prominent in Deir-ez-Zor governorate, reported by KIs in 52 (33%) of 158 assessed communities in March 2019. In February 2019, KIs in 34 (22%) of 158 assessed communities in Deir-ez-Zor governorate reported bartering, an 11% increase of the use of bartering. This suggests that a lack of cash (generated through livelihoods) increases the practice of bartering.



Displacement⁴

- Throughout NES, KIs in 319 (53%) communities reported that IDPs left in March 2019. This was especially reported in Deir-ez-Zor governorate (89 or 56% assessed communities), likely related to the hostilities in southern Deir-ez-Zor governorate, and Al-Hasakeh governorate (144 or 74% assessed communities).
- The two most common reasons KIs reported IDPs say they stay in the community they are in are access to employment, income, and shelter, reported in 303 (50%) assessed communities, and that their families have a good relationship with the host community, reported by KIs in 294 (49%) assessed communities.



Food Security & Livelihoods

- Food security was the second most commonly reported priority need in Al-Hasakeh governorate after healthcare, reported by KIs in 112 (57%) and 159 (81%) of 196 assessed communities respectively. Compared to February 2019, this priority need increased by 10%.
- Across NES, livelihoods was the second most commonly cited priority need after healthcare, reported by KIs in 398 (66%) of 603 communities. The lack of livelihoods affected communities severely, as only 73 (12%) of the communities in NES reported that income was sufficient to cover households needs, and all communities (100%) reported challenges for people in their community to access enough food during March. Considering that own production is one of the key ways in which people obtain food in NES, and there have been concerns about this year's harvest, food interventions continue to be a priority.



Education

- Reasons why school-aged children were not attending school during March varied substantially across governorates. In Ar-Raqqa and eastern Aleppo governorates, the lack of teaching staff was the main reason indicated by KIs. In Deir-ez-Zor, early marriage was most commonly reported, which suggested an ongoing need for integrated education programming in NES.
- In Deir-ez-Zor governorate, the second most commonly reported barrier to education was child labour and education not being provided after a certain age, reported by KIs in 89 (56%) of 158 assessed communities. Livelihoods were the most commonly reported priority need in Deir-ez-Zor.



WASH

- In Deir-ez-Zor governorate, KIs in 139 (88%) of 158 assessed communities reported problems with latrines and toilets. In comparison, in the remaining three governorates, this was reported by KIs in only 115 (26%) of 445 assessed communities. In Deir-ez-Zor governorate, the toilets not being clean (48%), the lack of privacy (45%), and the lack of separation between men and women (45%) were reportedly the three most prevalent problems with latrines and toilets.
- In Ar-Raqqa, Karama, and Junreyyeh sub-districts in Ar-Raqqa governorate, KIs in 11 (6%) of 199 assessed communities reported that people in their community fell sick after drinking water, suggesting issues of water quality in the area. Similarly, KIs in 6 (4%) of 158 assessed communities reported the same in Kisreh and Basira sub-districts of Deir-ez-Zor governorate.



Health

- Within Al-Hasakeh governorate, it was reported that some parts of the population experience more barriers to healthcare than others in 35 (18%) of 196 communities. This included the elderly (15%), children (12%), and women (11%).

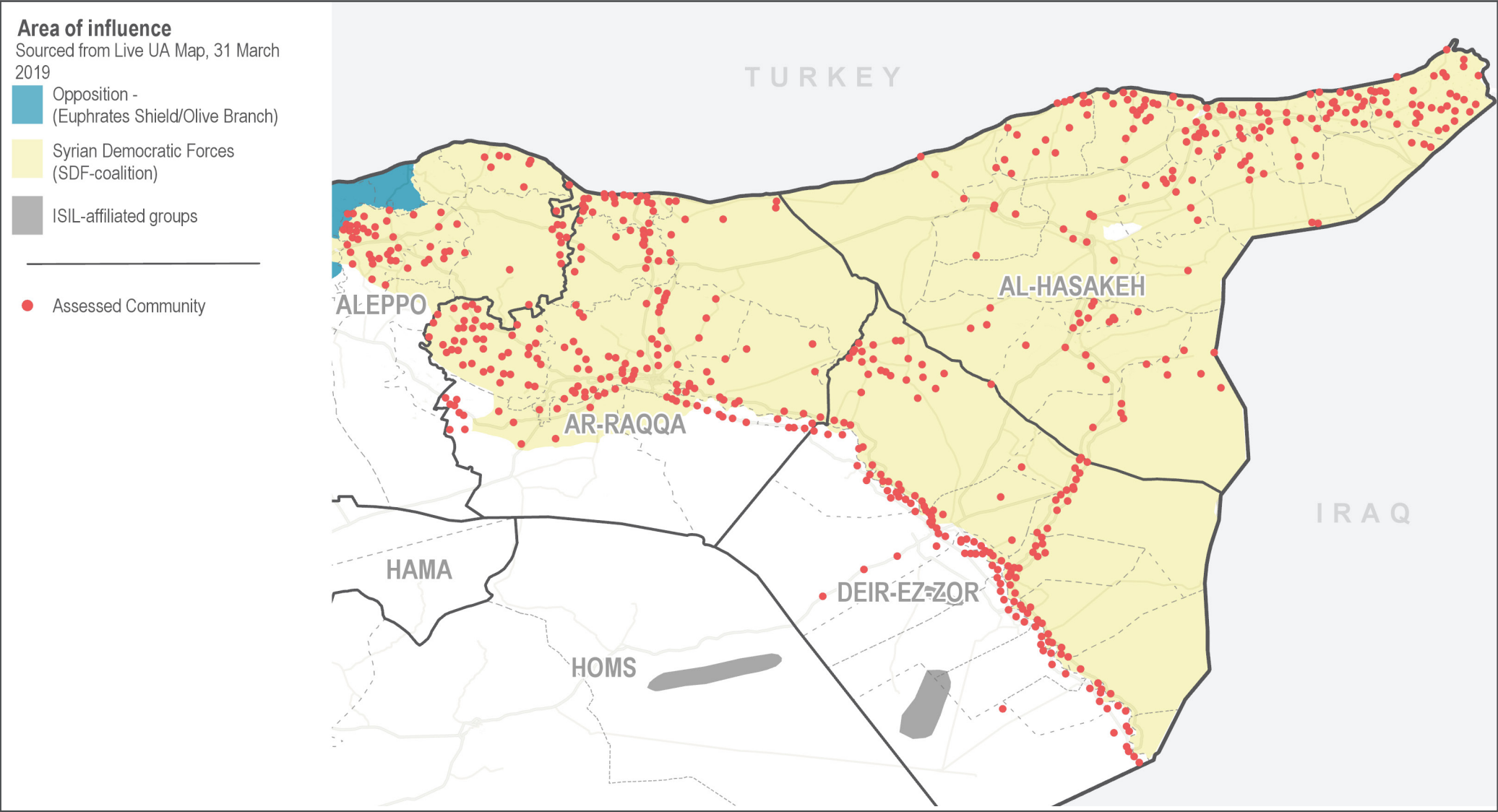


Shelter and NFI

- In 63 (12%) of 603 assessed communities a lack of fuel was reported. Of those communities, people reportedly resorted to using negative coping strategies, including burning agricultural or productive assets (43%), burning furniture in use (27%), burning furniture without use (22%), and cutting trees to burn (19%).
- In eastern Aleppo governorate, KIs in 60 (98%) of 61 assessed communities reported that 1-25% of buildings were uninhabitable due to damage caused by conflict, mainly reported in Menbij, Sarin, Abu Qalqal and Kobane sub-districts.

Northeast Syria, March 2019

Regional areas of influence:



Northeast Syria, March 2019

DISPLACEMENT⁴

10,960 - 11,710 Estimated number of IDP arrivals in assessed communities in March 2019.

9,090 - 9,770 Estimated number of spontaneous returns in assessed communities in March 2019.⁵

Communities with the largest estimated number of IDP arrivals:

Hole (Hole, Al-Hassakeh)	9,500 - 10,000
Mehbash (Kisreh, Deir-ez-Zor)	600 - 700
Deir-ez-Zor (Deir-ez-Zor, Deir-ez-Zor)	400 - 450

*Reported as community, (sub-district, governorate)

Top 3 reported subdistricts of origin for IDP arrivals:^{6,7}

- Marashdeh (Deir-ez-Zor)
- Ayyash (Deir-ez-Zor)
- Kishkiyeh (Deir-ez-Zor)

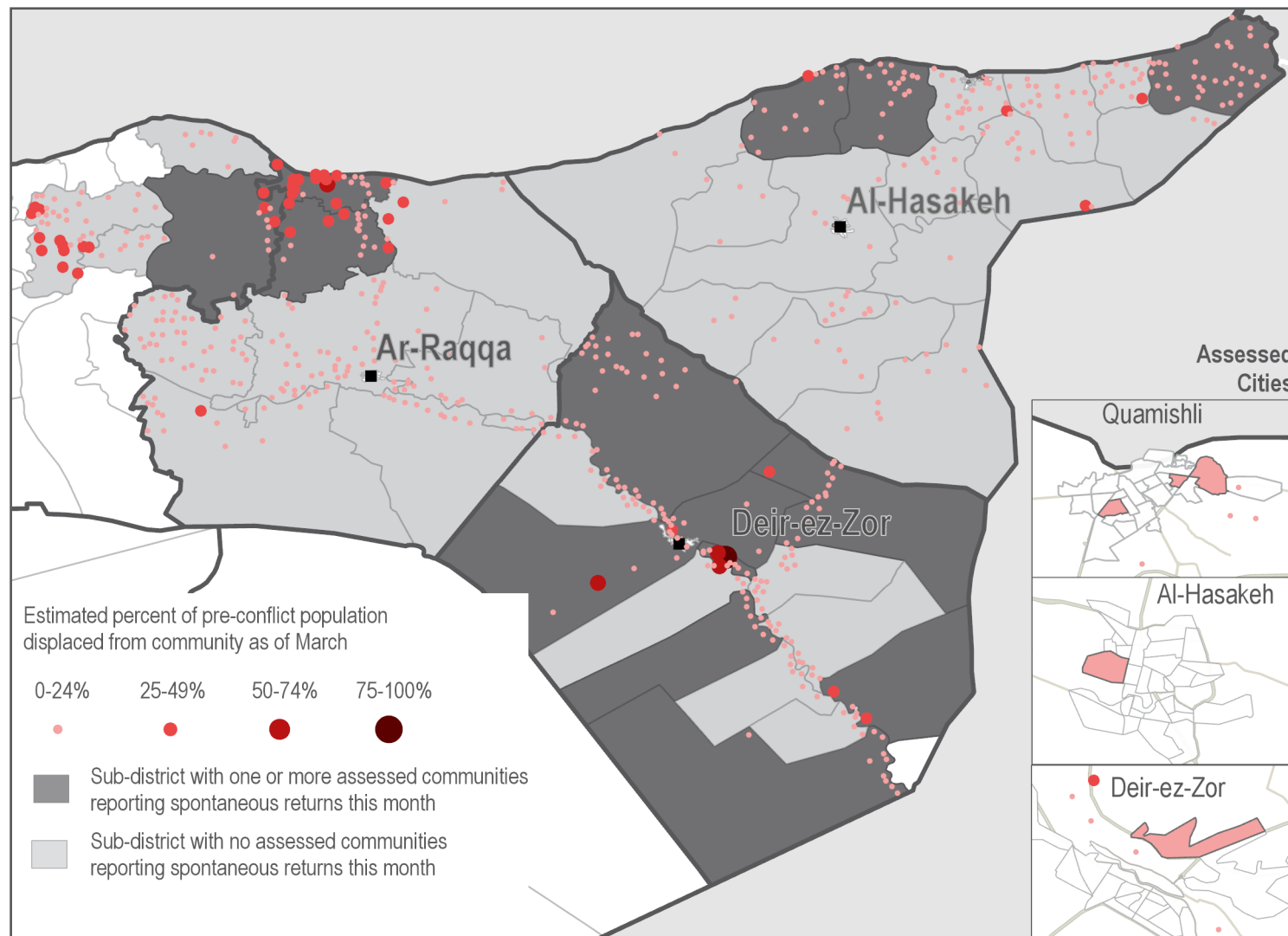
*Reported as sub-district (governorate)

600 communities reported no PCP departures.⁸

Top 3 reasons for PCP departures in the remaining 3 assessed communities:^{6,7,9}

Loss of income	67%
Reduced access to basic services	33%
Protection concerns	33%

Estimated proportion of pre-conflict population (PCP) displaced from community:



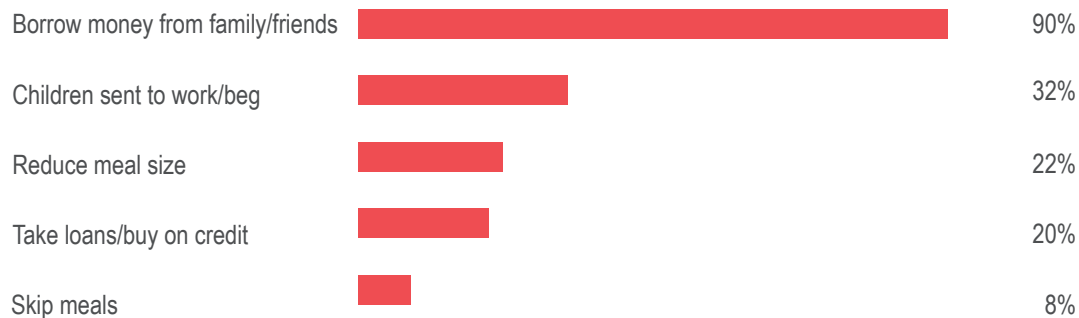
Northeast Syria, March 2019



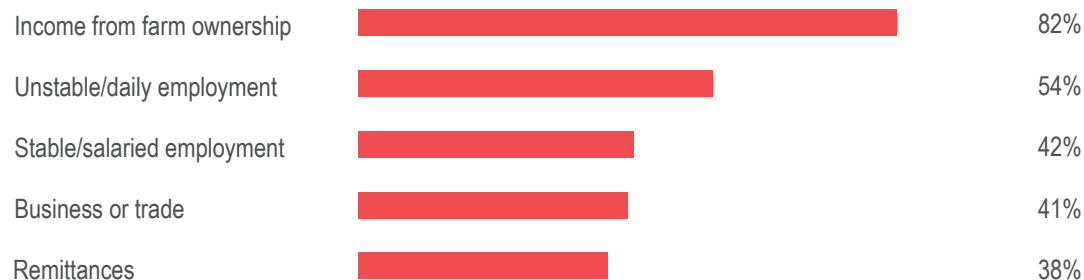
FOOD SECURITY & LIVELIHOODS

- 115/603** Communities reported having received food distributions in the last month.
- 109/603** Communities reported that residents were unable to access shops and markets.
- 0/603** No communities reported that residents used extreme food-based coping strategies to deal with insufficient income.¹⁰
- 50,000 to 100,000 SYP** Most commonly reported household monthly income range.¹

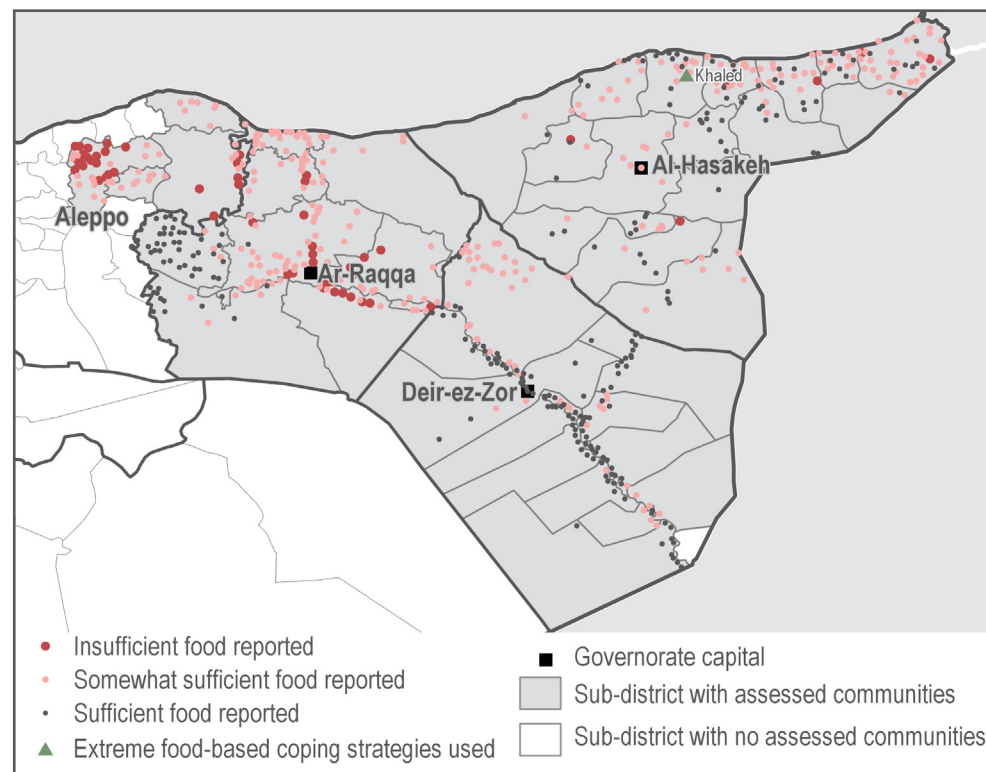
73 communities reported that residents had enough income to cover household needs. The most commonly reported coping strategies to deal with a lack of income in the remaining 530 assessed communities were:^{6,7,9}



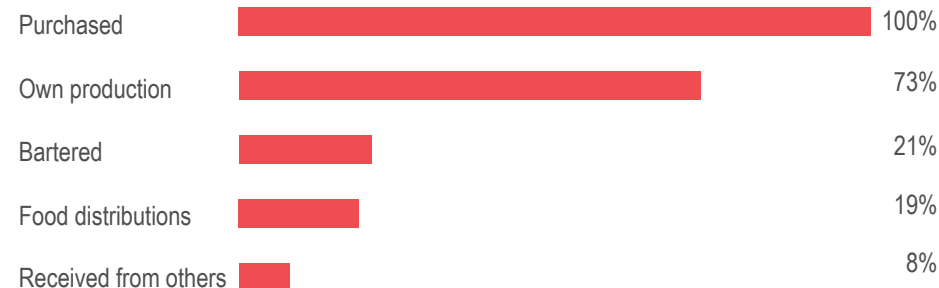
Most commonly reported main sources of income:^{6,7}



Communities that reported having an insufficient quantity of food:¹¹



Most commonly reported ways of obtaining food:^{6,7}



Northeast Syria, March 2019



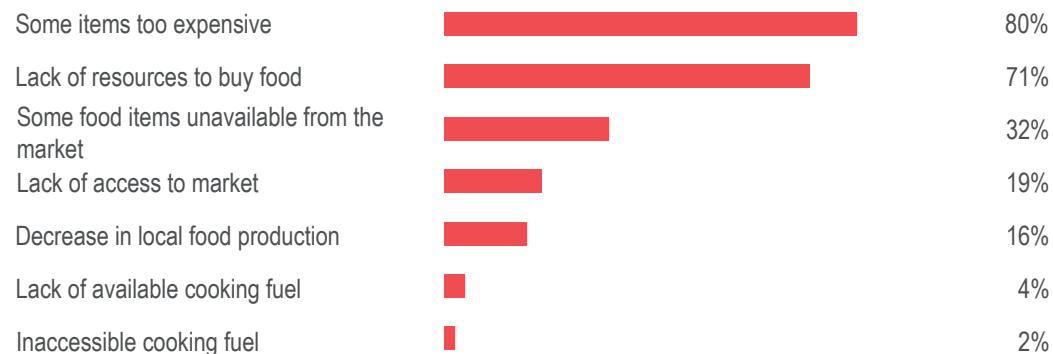
FOOD SECURITY & LIVELIHOODS

Core food item prices reported (in SYP):^{1,12}

Food item:	Regional average price in March 2019:	One month change:	Six month change:
Bread (8 pieces)	100	0%	-15%
Rice (1 kilogram)	425	-6%	-15%
Lentils (1 kilogram)	300	-8%	-14%
Sugar (1 kilogram)	325	+8%	+8%
Cooking oil (1 litre)*	4,069	-1%	+8%

*includes the combined vegetable oil and ghee prices

23 communities reported that residents experienced no challenges in accessing food. The most common difficulties experienced in the remaining 580 assessed communities were:^{6,7,9}



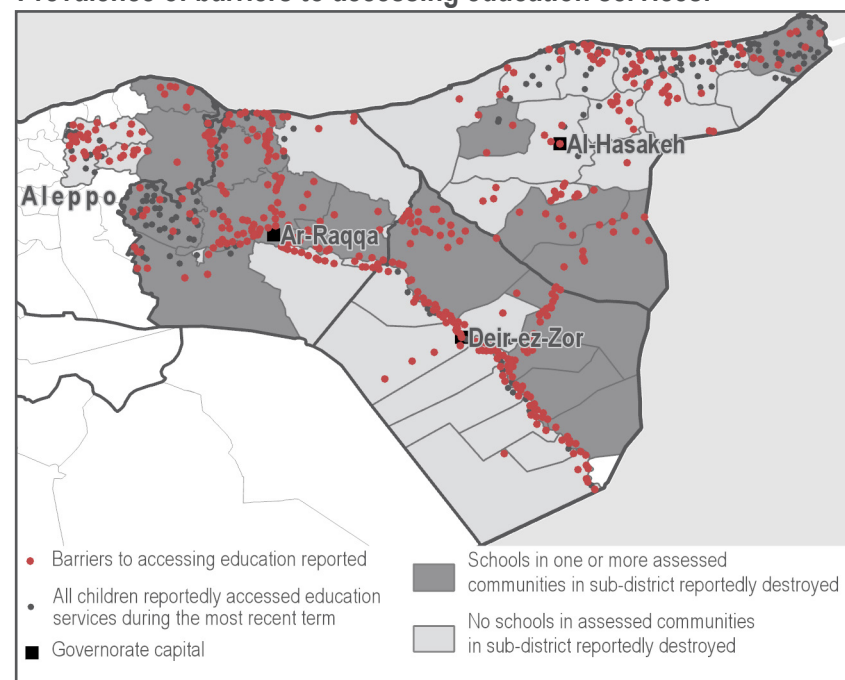
EDUCATION

579/603 communities reported having functioning primary education facilities, while 235 communities reported having functioning secondary education facilities.¹³

180 communities reported that all children were able to access education. The most commonly reported barriers to education in the remaining 423 assessed communities were:^{6,7,9}



Prevalence of barriers to accessing education services:



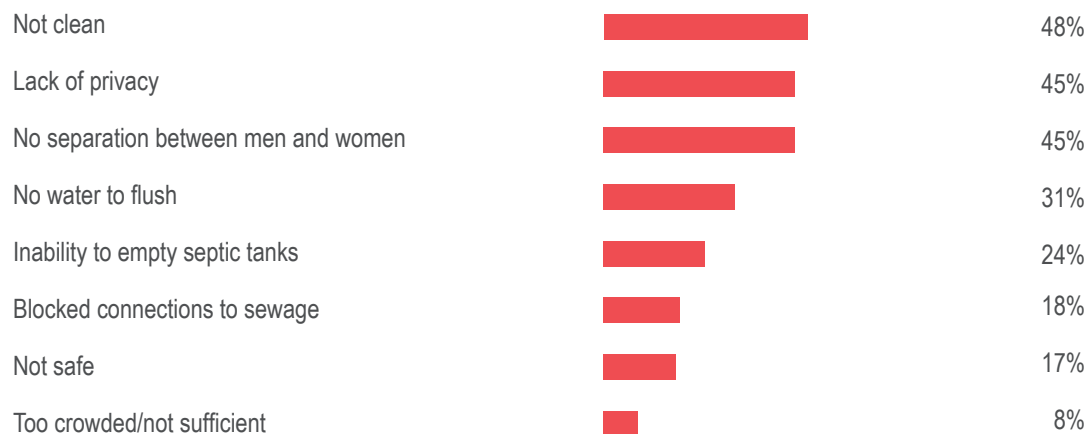
Northeast Syria, March 2019



191/603 Communities reported that water from their primary source tasted and/or smelled bad.

18/603 Communities reported that drinking water from their primary source made people sick.

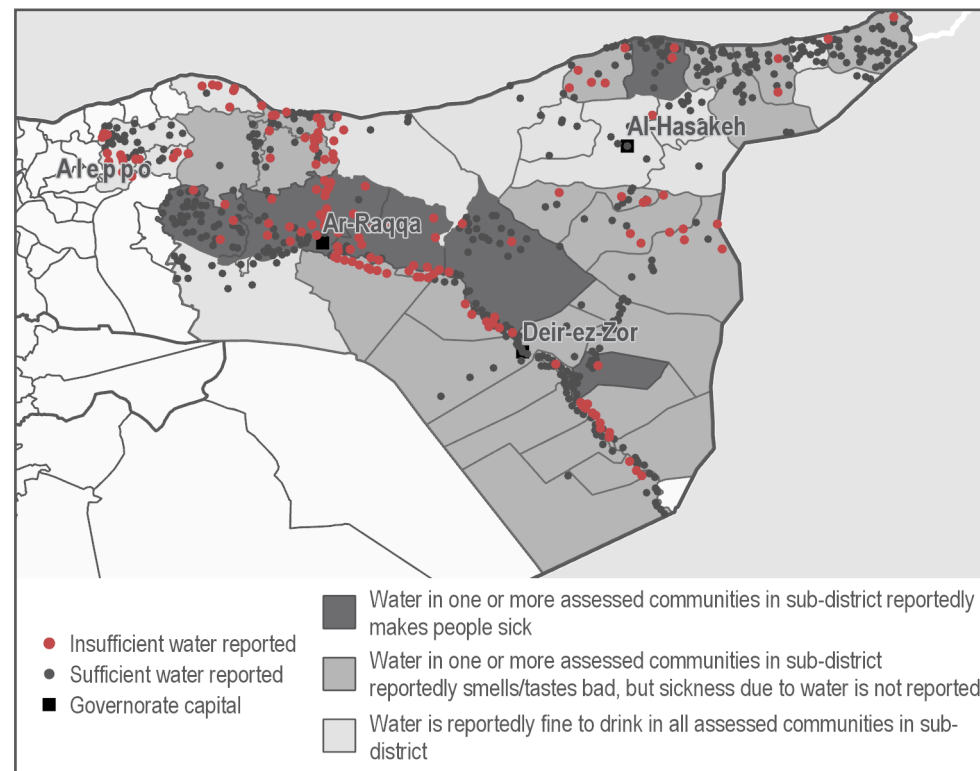
349 communities reported that residents had no problems with latrines. The most commonly reported problems with latrines in the remaining **254** assessed communities were:^{5,7,9}



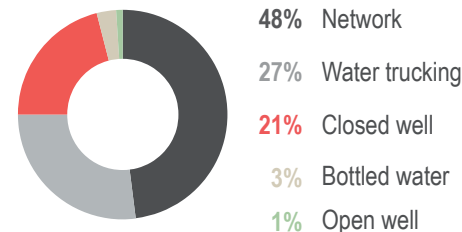
454 communities reported that they had sufficient amounts of water to meet household needs. The most common coping strategies to deal with a lack of water in the remaining **149** assessed communities were:^{6,7,9}



Communities that reported insufficient amounts of water to meet household needs:¹¹



Primary drinking water source reported:⁷



Primary method of garbage disposal reported:^{6,7}



Northeast Syria, March 2019

HEALTH

292/603 Communities reported that no assessed medical items were available in their community.¹⁴

170/603 Communities reported that the majority of women did not give birth in a formal health facility.

2/603 Communities reported that some individuals had been diagnosed with SAM (Severe Acute Malnutrition).¹⁵

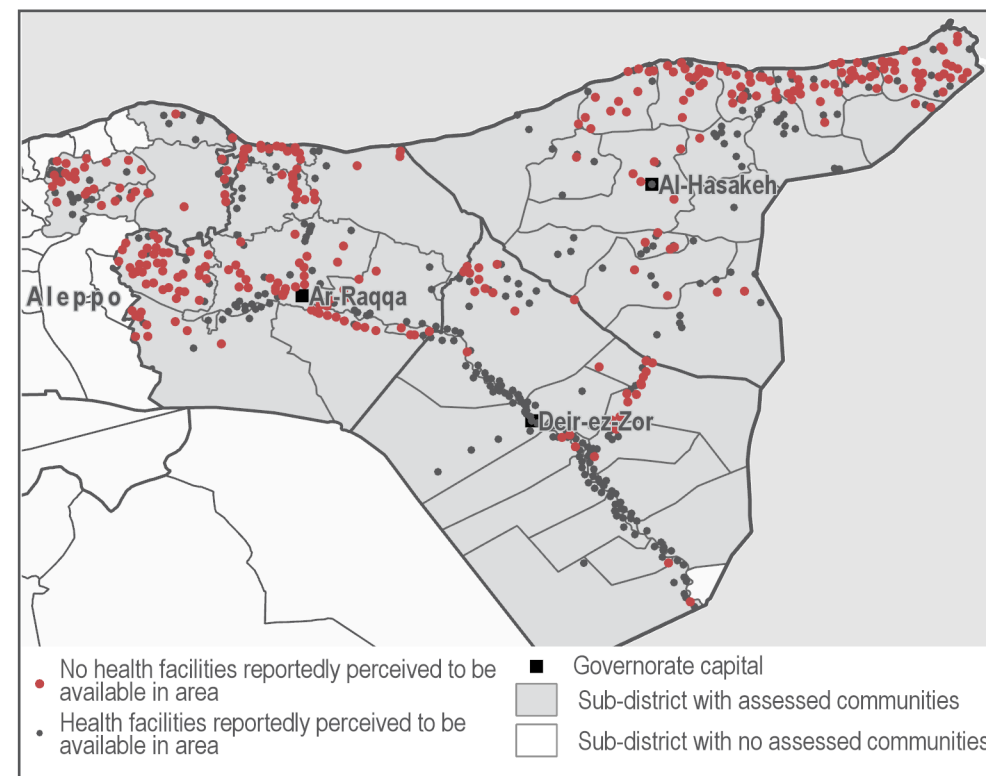
13 communities reported that residents experienced no barriers to accessing healthcare services. The most commonly reported barriers in the remaining 590 assessed communities were:^{6,7,9}



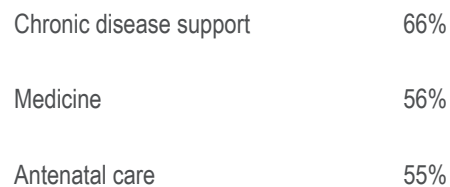
255 communities reported that residents were not using coping strategies to deal with a lack of medical services and items. The coping strategies used in the remaining 348 communities were:^{6,7,9}



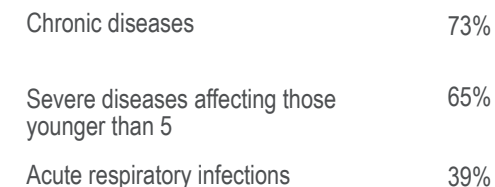
Presence of medical facilities in assessed communities:



Top 3 most needed healthcare services reported:



Top 3 most common health problems reported:



Northeast Syria, March 2019

SHELTER AND NFI

3,868 SYP Regional average monthly reported rent price in SYP across assessed communities.¹

5,819 SYP Northern Syria average monthly reported rent price in SYP across assessed communities.^{1,16}

Most commonly reported shelter type for PCP households:⁷

Independent apartment/house 100%

Most commonly reported shelter type for IDP households:⁷

Independent apartment/house 66%

Shared apartment/house 25%

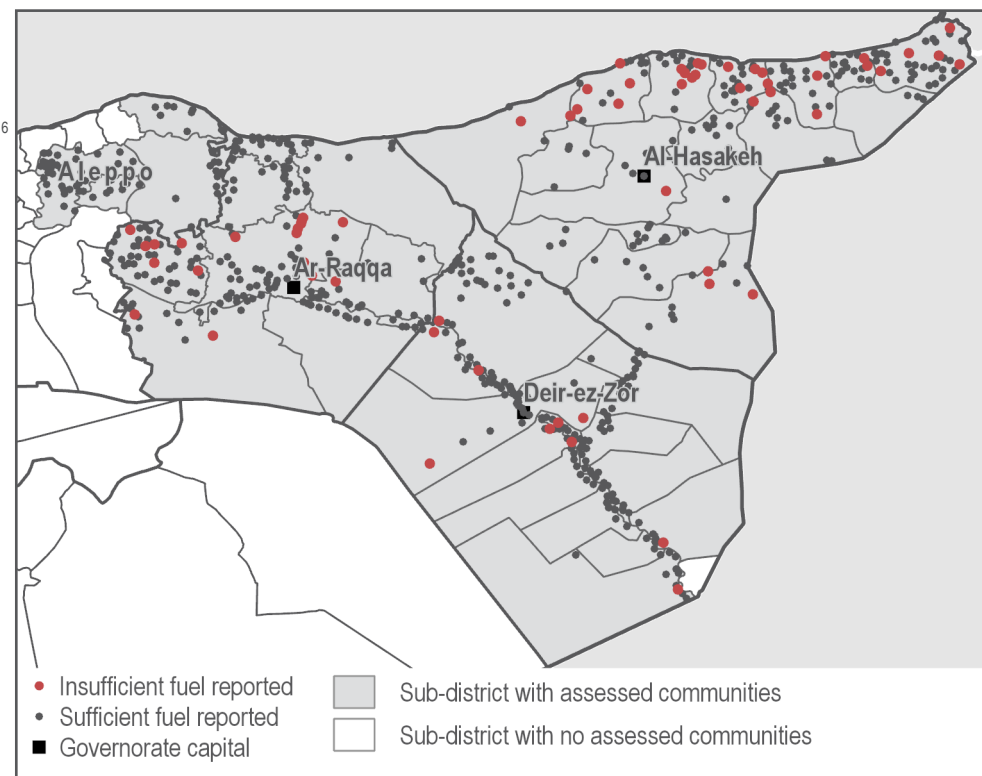
Unfinished apartment/house 4%

Tent 4%

Reported fuel prices (in SYP):^{1,2}

Fuel type (1L):	Regional average price in March 2019:	One month change:	Six month change:
GoS petrol	188	-3%	-47%
GoS diesel	55	0%	-15%
Manually refined petrol	200	0%	0%
Manually refined diesel	130	0%	+37%
Cooking fuel	3,438	-2%	-8%

Communities that reported insufficient amounts of fuel to meet household needs:¹¹



540 communities reported no lack of fuel. Most common strategies to cope with lack of fuel in the remaining 63 assessed communities:^{6,7,9}

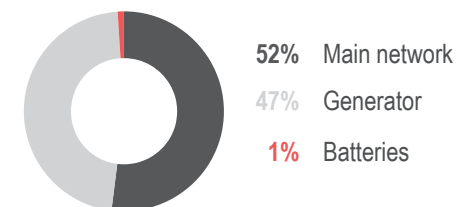
Burning productive assets 43%

Burning furniture in use 27%

Burning furniture not in use 22%

Cutting trees to burn 19%

Primary source of electricity reported:⁷



METHODOLOGY

HSOS data collection is conducted through an enumerator network in accessible locations throughout Idlib, Aleppo, northern Hama, Deir-ez-Zor, Ar-Raqqa, and Al-Hasakeh governorates. REACH enumerators are based inside Syria and interview Key Informants (KIs) directly in the community about which they are reporting. Where access and security constraints renders direct data collection unfeasible, some KI interviews are conducted remotely through participants identified in camps and settlements in neighbouring countries by REACH field teams. Participants contact multiple KIs in their community in Syria to collect information about their community. KIs are asked to report at the community level.

KIs generally included local council members, Syrian NGO workers, medical professionals, teachers, shop owners and farmers, among others, and were chosen based on their community-level or sector specific knowledge. In cases where KIs disagree on a certain piece of information, enumerators triangulate the data with secondary sources or select the response provided by the KI with the more relevant sector-specific background. For each question asked, confidence levels are assigned based on the KIs area of expertise and knowledge of the sector-specific situation. The confidence levels associated with each question are presented in the [final dataset](#). The full confidence matrix used to assign confidence levels is available upon request.

Findings are triangulated through secondary sources, including news monitoring and humanitarian reports. Where necessary, follow-up is conducted with enumerators and participants. Findings are indicative rather than representative, and should not be generalised across the region.

About REACH

REACH facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT). For more information please visit our website: www.reach-initiative.org. You can contact us directly at: geneva@reach-initiative.org and follow us on Twitter [@REACH_info](https://twitter.com/REACH_info).

ENDNOTES

KEYEVENTS AND DEVELOPMENTS

^a Sen. (18 October 2017). After the Battle for Raqqa, Now Comes the Hard Part. News Deeply. Retrieved from <https://newsdeeply.com/syria>.

^b UNHCR. (21 January 2018). Syria Crisis: Northeast Syria Situation Report No. 20 (1 December – 31 December 2017). Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

^c Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. (4 April 2018). The International Coalition and SDF prepare for a massive military operation against ISIS amid alertness in the east of the Euphrates River and south of Al-Hasakah. Retrieved from <https://syriahr.com>.

^d El Dahan, M. (9 October 2018). War and drought produce Syria's smallest wheat crop in 30 years: U.N. Reuters. Retrieved from <https://reuters.com>.

^e UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (14 December 2018). Syria Crisis: Northeast Syria Situation Report No. 30 (1 November 2018 – 14 December 2018). Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

^f United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA). (15 December - 31 March 2019). Syria Crisis: Northeast Syria. Situation Report No. 31. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

^g World Health Organization (WHO). (14 March 2019). Syria crisis - Al-Hol Camp, Al-Hasakeh Governorate - Issue 2, 25 February - 14 March 2019. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

^h Smart News Agency. (25 March 2019). Houses damaged and border crossing is closed in Al-Hasakeh due to heavy rain. Retrieved from <https://smartnews-agency.com>.

ⁱ Smart News Agency. (31 March 2019). Main road closed between two cities in Al-Hasakeh due to the rain. Retrieved from <https://smartnews-agency.com>.

^j Smart News Agency. (31 March 2019). Nearly 191 families displaced east of Al-Hasakeh due to torrent during four days. Retrieved from <https://smartnews-agency.com>.

^k International Federation of Red Cross And Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). (11 April 2019). Syria: Floods Information Bulletin #2. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

MAIN TEXT

¹ 1 USD = 434 SYP (UN operational rates of exchange as of 1 December 2018)

² 18 items comprise the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB), which represents the minimum culturally adjusted items required to support a 6-person household for a month. SMEB items: Bread, bulgur, chicken, eggs, fresh vegetables, ghee/vegetable oil, red lentils, rice, salt, sugar, tomato paste, bathing soap, laundry/dish soap, sanitary pads, toothpaste, cooking fuel, water trucking, smartphone data, float (other costs).

³ All information and figures reported in HSOS factsheets refer to the situation in assessed communities and

MAIN TEXT

cannot be generalised to other non-assessed communities of the region.

⁴ For population numbers, KIs were asked to provide the number of resident and IDPs present in the community as of 31 March 2019. A minimum of three KIs were interviewed in each assessed community. Where discrepancies in the information provided by KIs was deemed too large further triangulation with additional KIs and local organizations was conducted. Estimated individual figures in this report are rounded to the nearest tenth.

Discrepancies with other available population data may be the result of any of the following: differences in assessment coverage dates; differences in definitions of population sub-groups (IDPs and residents); differences in geographic scope of assessed locations (e.g. included/excluded nearby camps and sites); differences in KI types interviewed; and differences in average household sizes used to calculate individual numbers, among others.

The definition of IDPs used by enumerators for this assessment was 'Individuals or groups of people who have been forced to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights, or natural or man-made disasters, and who have not crossed an international border'.

⁵ Spontaneous returns refers to IDPs or refugees who return to their community of origin that they left due to conflict but not necessarily to their places of habitual residence (their former homes); who intend to remain in the community for an undetermined period; and who do not meet the IASC framework on durable solutions (IASC framework includes "not necessarily voluntary, safe or sustainable" elements).

⁶ Assessed using select multiple questions.

⁷ By percentage of communities reporting.

⁸ The definition of resident (pre-conflict) population (PCP), was 'Individuals or groups of people who currently reside in their communities of origin, or communities of permanent residence prior to the Syrian conflict. This includes populations that were never displaced as well as previously displaced populations that have returned to their communities of origin'.

⁹ Not all surveys have answers for every question, in these scenarios the KI or participant will input no answer. When the dataset has no answer for a particular question the reported number of assessed communities will not add up to the total number of communities assessed and percentages will be calculated based on submitted responses.

¹⁰ Extreme food-based strategies: eating food waste; eating non-edible plants and spending days without eating.

¹¹ Based on KI perception of sufficiency.

¹² Bread, rice, lentils, sugar, and cooking oil are considered core food items used in food baskets across Syria. For further information on all SMEB items please see the [Syria Market Monitoring Northeast Syria March 2019](#).

¹³ Reported numbers indicate the number of communities with functioning primary and secondary education facilities during the data collection period. It is important to note that simply having a functioning facility is not indicative of students being able to attend said facility. In addition, in some cases KIs reported that children attend schools in a neighbouring community.

¹⁴ Assessed HSOS medical items; anti-anxiety medication, contraception, clean bandages, blood transfusion bags, diabetes medicine, anaesthetics, blood pressure medicine, antibiotics, burn treatment.

¹⁵ This information was derived from medical professionals (KIs). The number of total communities refers to all communities that had a KI as medical professional available.

¹⁶ Includes HSOS data for Idleb, Aleppo, northern Hama, Deir-ez-Zor, Ar-Raqqa and Al-Hasakeh governorates.