

Homs Governorate, January 2018

Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria (HSOS)

REACH Informing more effective humanitarian action

OVERALL FINDINGS¹

Homs governorate is located in central Syria and borders Lebanon to the west. In **all but two** communities assessed in January 2018, only **26-50%** of the pre-conflict population remained, with no further departures or spontaneous returns indicated². **Two** communities assessed had no pre-conflict population remaining: Kisein (Ar Rastan subdistrict) and Um Sharshouh (Talbiseh subdistrict). These communities have not been assessed for a majority of indicators displayed in this factsheet. IDPs were present in **70%** of the assessed communities, with no new arrivals indicated. Of these communities, **10** reported the presence of over 1,000 IDPs, and **one**, Zafaraniya, reported the presence of approximately **10,500** IDPs out of a total estimated population of 17,500. **All** communities reporting an IDP presence cited a lack of money to pay for onward movement, in addition to physical obstacles to movement, as the reasons why IDPs remained in their communities. While pre-conflict populations across assessed communities predominantly lived in independent apartments or houses owned pre-conflict, IDPs most commonly lived in unfinished houses or apartments, where they were either being hosted without rent or squatting. For detailed, community-level information on Ar Rastan, Talbiseh and Taldu, please refer to the [community profile](#) covering this area.

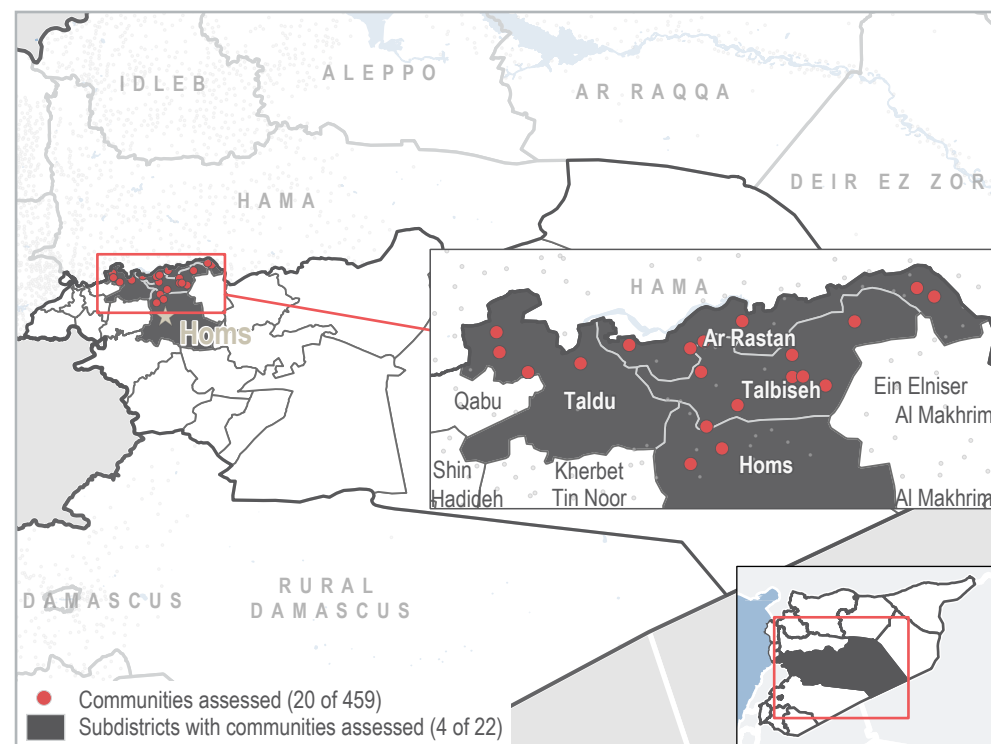
All assessed communities for which information was available reported a lack of fuel and that community members were burning plastic as a strategy to cope with fuel shortages. **All** of these communities reported acute respiratory infections as a common health problem. **None** of the assessed communities reported that residents experienced no barriers to accessing healthcare, the most common barriers being disabilities, injury or illness preventing travel, as well as security concerns to enter and remain in facilities. **All** assessed communities reported that women gave birth at home, rather than in formal health facilities. Medical KIs in **all 18** communities where populations remained reported that some individuals in their community had been diagnosed with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) in January. **All** assessed communities reported that they were unable to empty septic tanks and that connections to the sewage system were blocked, and **12** reported having insufficient water to meet household needs. **Over half** of these communities reported hosting over 1,000 IDPs. **One** community, Saan Elosud, reported that drinking water from the community's primary water source, a closed well, made people sick.

All assessed communities reported that residents were able to access somewhat sufficient amounts of food, although the high cost of some food items and a decrease in local food production were reported as challenges in accessing sufficient amounts of food across **all** communities. The governorate average price of a food basket was approximately **25-50%** of the governorate average household income of 50,000 – 100,000 SYP and **6** communities reported that their average, monthly household income was **below 50,000 SYP**. Farm ownership, and business and trade were cited as the most common sources of income across communities assessed in Hom, yet given the decrease in local food production and access restrictions to the area, it is likely that income generated was insufficient to cover household needs. Skipping meals and reducing the size of meals were reported as strategies to cope with a lack of income in **all** assessed communities. Primary and secondary schools were functioning in **all** of the assessed communities, although **all** of these communities reported that some children were unable to access education due to a lack of teaching staff and school supplies, as well as unsafe routes to services³.

KEY EVENTS

'De-escalation zone' announced in northern Hom ⁴ .	The group known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) captures Al-Qaryatain, impacting aid delivery ⁵ .	Al-Qaryatain recaptured from ISIL ⁶ .	Interagency convoy delivers assistance for 107,500 people in Ar-Rastan ⁷ .	Humanitarian convoy delivers food assistance to 60,000 people in hard-to-reach locations in Hom and Hama governorates ⁸ .	Shelling intensifies in besieged communities in northern Hom ⁹ .
3 August	Early October	21 October	14 November	December	11 January 2018

Coverage



Top 3 reported priority needs

1. Water security
2. Education
3. Food security

Demographics*

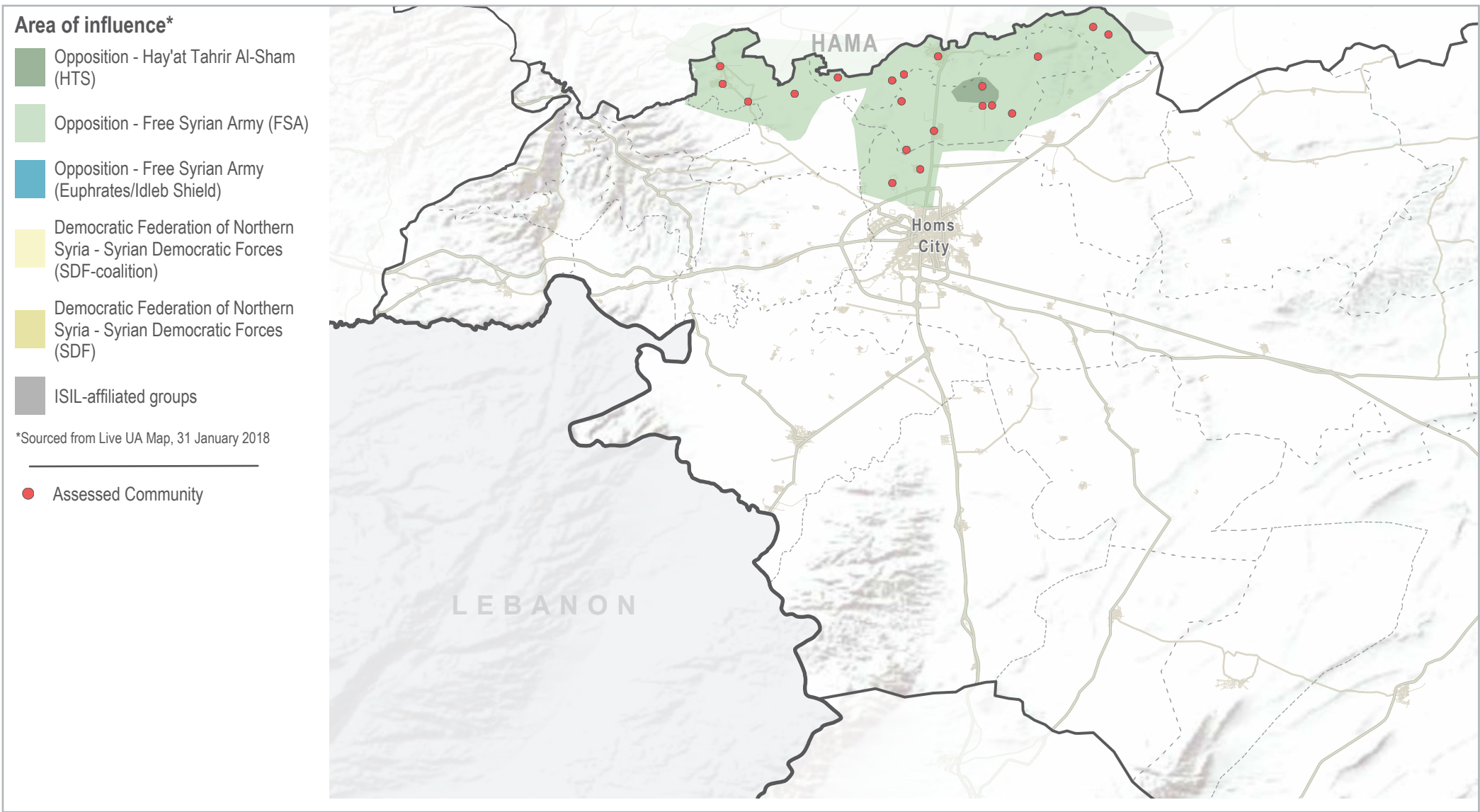
1,415,805 people in need

714,982 **700,823**

* Figures based on HNO 2018 population data for the entire governorate.

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Governorate areas of influence:



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DISPLACEMENT

0 Estimated number of IDP arrivals in assessed communities in January.

0 Estimated number of spontaneous returns in assessed communities in January².

Communities with the largest estimated number of IDP arrivals:

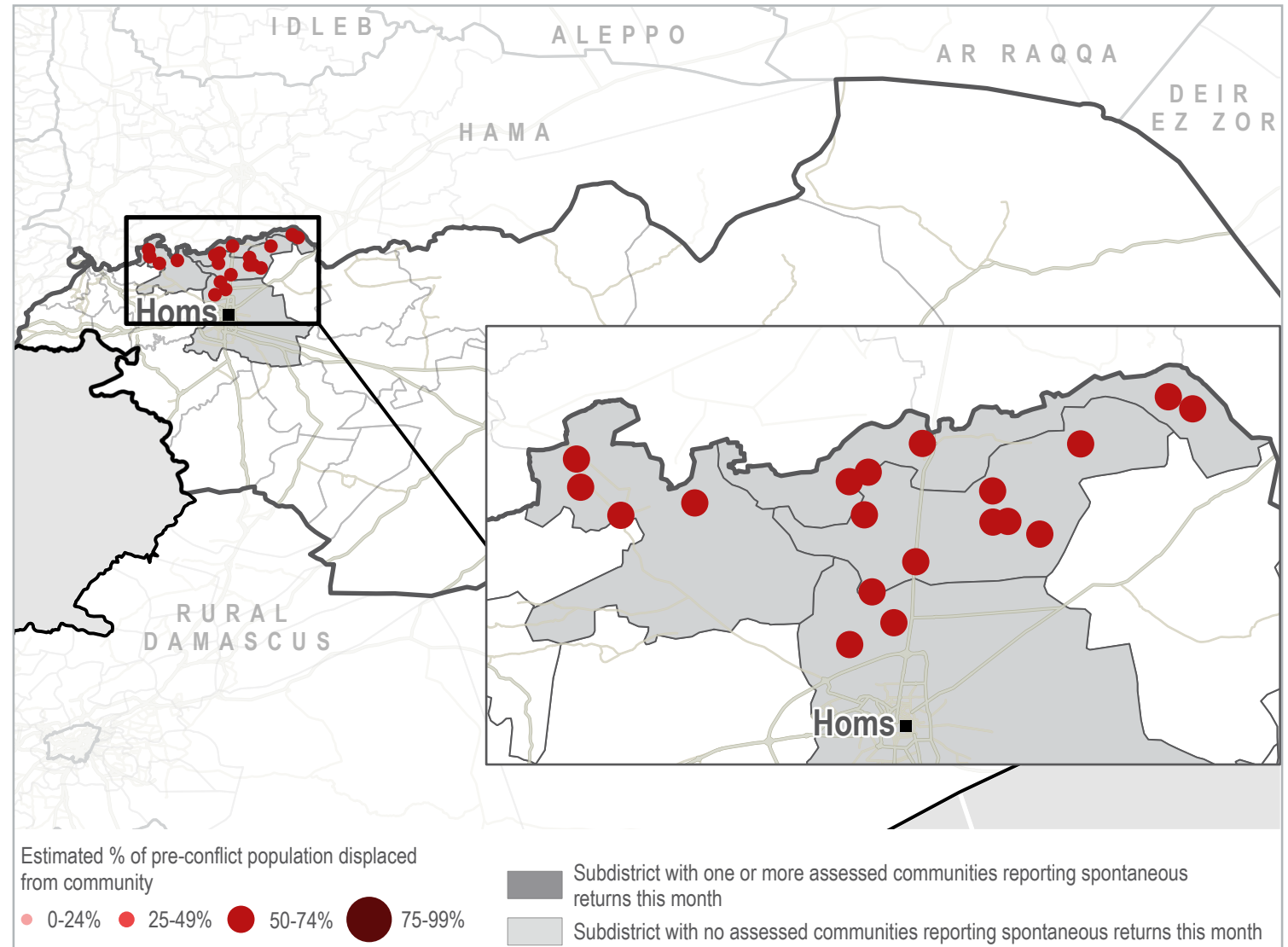
No reported IDP arrivals

Top 3 subdistricts of origin of most IDPs arrivals^{3,4}:

No reported IDP arrivals

20 communities reported no PCP departures^{3,4}.

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



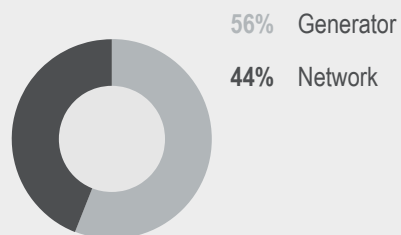
³ Multiple choices allowed.

⁴ By percent of communities reporting.

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SHELTER AND NFI

Primary source of electricity reported:⁴

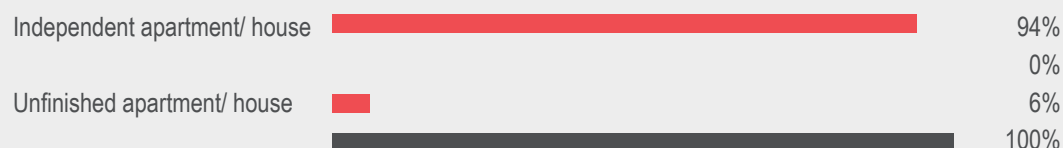


0 communities reported no lack of fuel. Most common strategies to cope with a lack of fuel in the remaining **18** assessed communities^{3,4}:

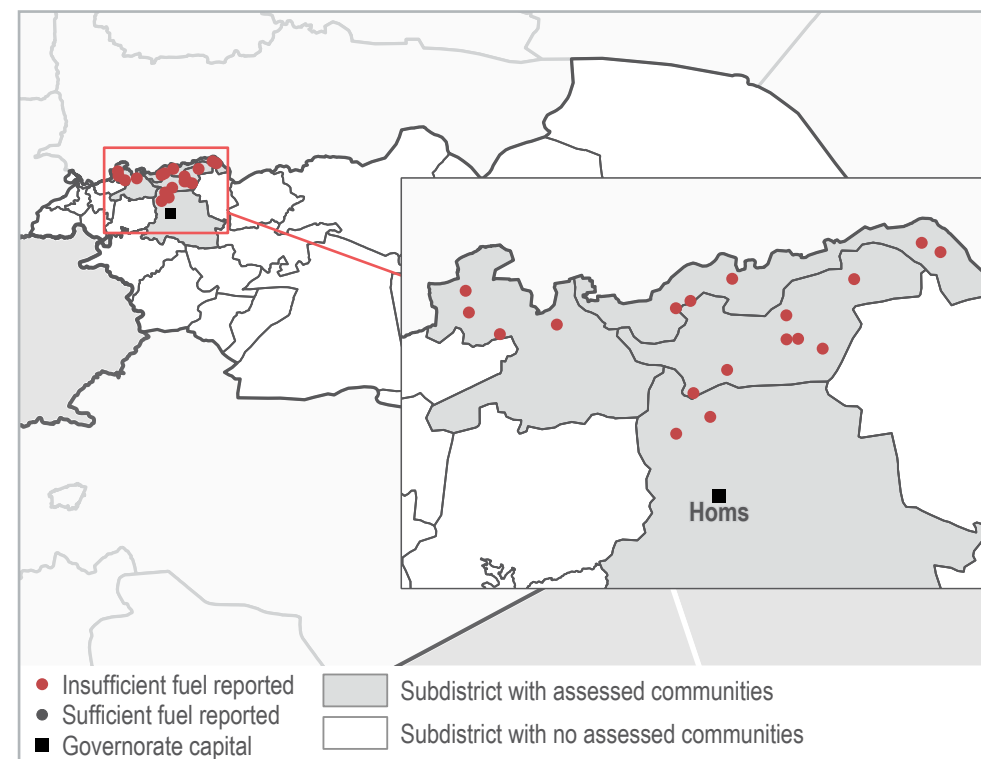
Burning plastic  100%

The average reported rent price in the governorate could not be calculated due to a lack of information in most of the communities assessed.

Most commonly reported shelter type for PCP (in red) and IDP (in grey) households⁴:



Fuel sufficiency:



Reported fuel prices (in SYP)⁵:

Fuel type:	Governorate average price in January:	Governorate average price in December:	Syrian average price in January:
Coal (1 kilogram)	666	800	325
Diesel (1 litre)	375	400	414
Butane (1 canister)	8,239	8,094	6,060
Firewood (1 tonne)	85,000	85,000	76,514

³ Multiple choices allowed.

⁴ By percent of communities reporting.

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

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0 Communities reported that no medical items were available in their community.

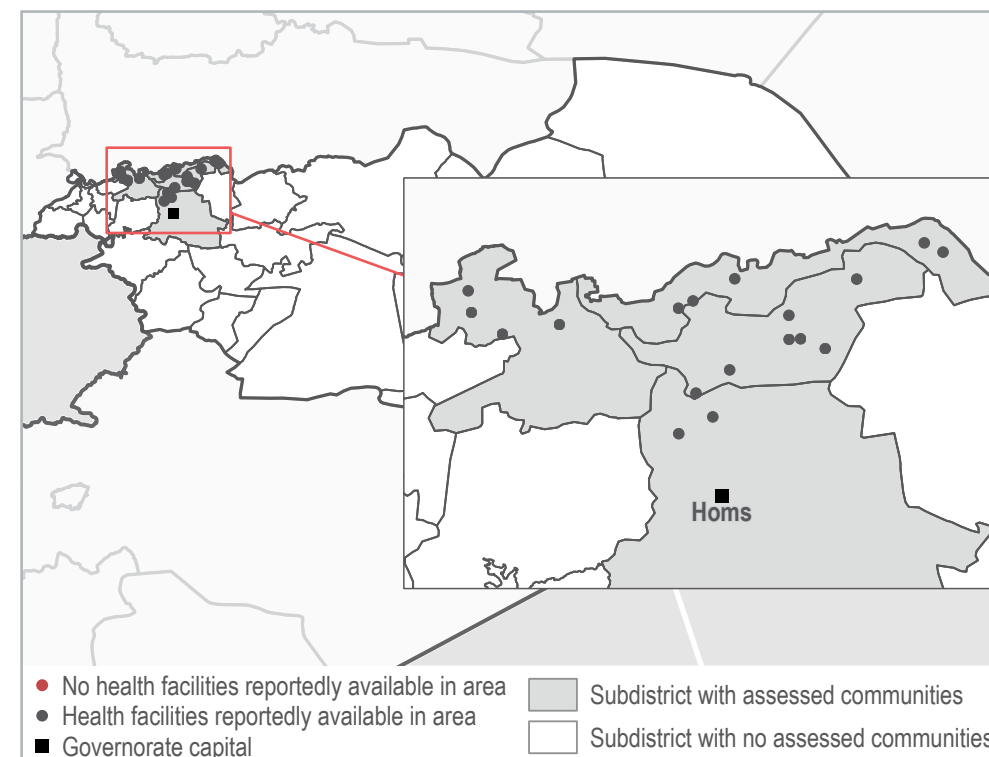
18 Communities reported that the majority of women did not have access to formal health facilities to give birth.

0 communities reported that residents experienced no barriers to accessing healthcare services. The barriers in the remaining **18** assessed communities were^{3,4}:

Disability/injuries/illness preventing travel	100%
Security concerns to enter/remain in facilities	100%

18 communities reported that residents were not using coping strategies to deal with a lack of medical supplies^{3,4}.

Presence of health facilities in assessed communities:



Top 3 most needed healthcare services reported^{3,4}:

Prosthetics and orthotics	90%
Assistive devices	90%
Rehabilitation services	80%

Top 3 most common health problems reported^{3,4}:

Acute respiratory infections	90%
Severe diseases affecting those younger than 5	90%
Pregnancy related diseases	90%

³ Multiple choices allowed.

⁴ By percent of communities reporting.

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- 0** Communities reported that water from their primary source tasted and/or smelled bad.
- 1** Community reported that drinking water from their primary source made people sick.

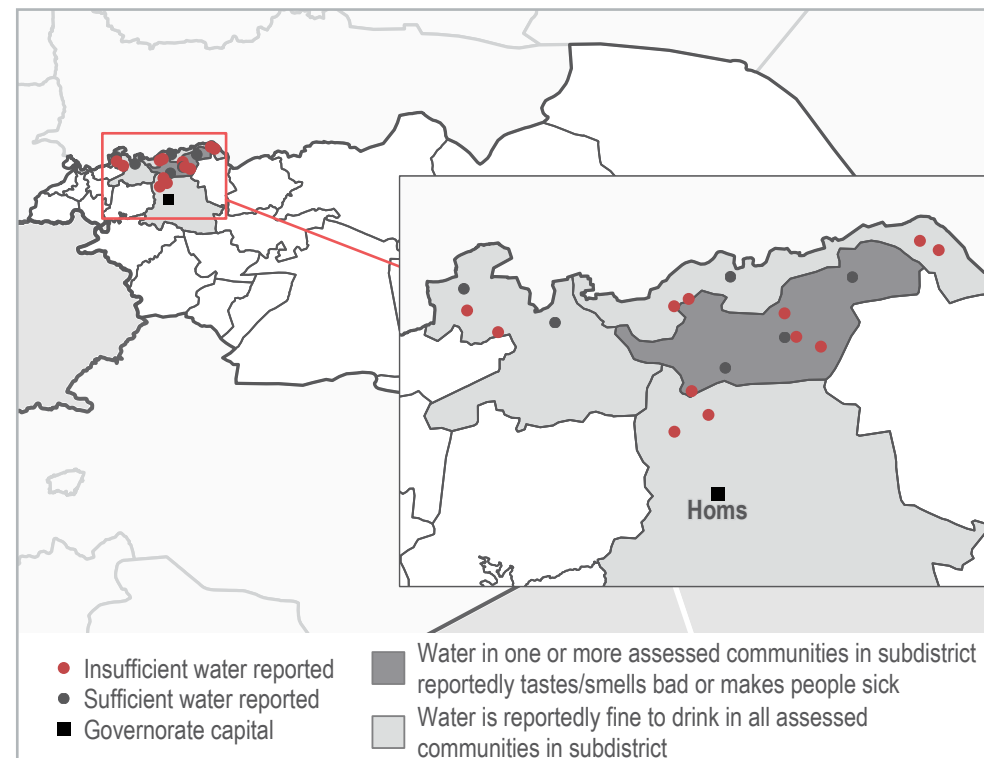
0 communities reported that residents had no problems with latrines. The most prevalent problems with latrines in the remaining **18** assessed communities were^{3,4}:

Inability to empty septic tanks		100%
Blocked connections to sewage		100%

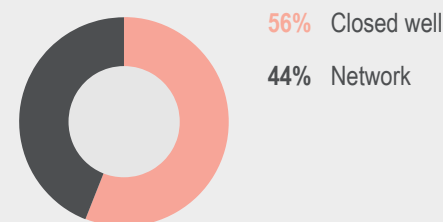
6 communities reported that they had sufficient amounts of water to meet household needs. The most common coping strategies to deal with a lack of water in the remaining **12** assessed communities were^{3,4}:

Spend money usually spent on other things to buy water		100%
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Water sufficiency for household needs:



Primary drinking water source reported⁴:



Top 3 reported methods of garbage disposal^{3,4}:

Public free collection	100%
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³ Multiple choices allowed.

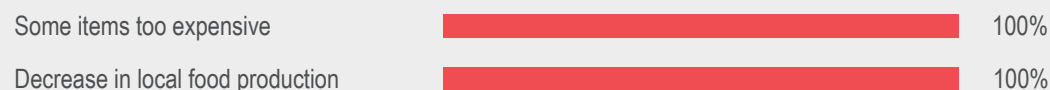
⁴ By percent of communities reporting.

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FOOD SECURITY

- 0 Communities reported not having received a food distribution in the last 12 months.
- 0 Communities reported that residents were unable to purchase food at shops and markets.

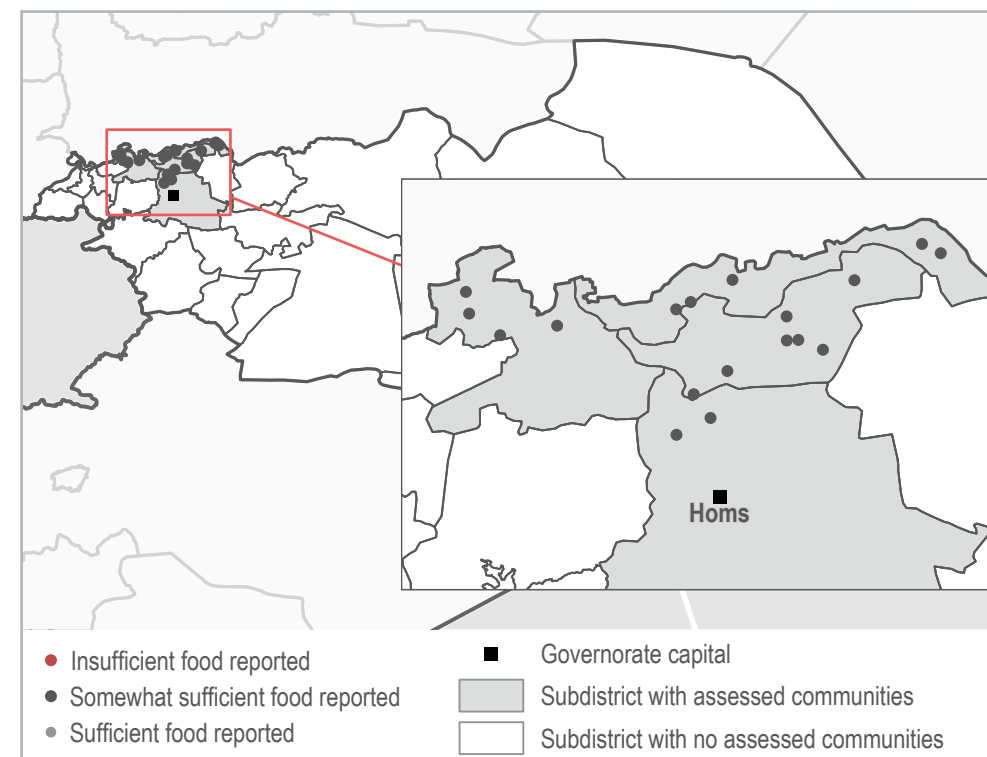
0 communities reported that residents experienced no challenges in accessing food. The most common difficulties experienced in the remaining 18 assessed communities were^{3,4}:



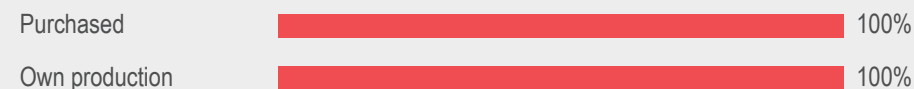
Core food item prices reported (in SYP)⁵:

Food item:	Governorate average price in January:	Governorate average price in December:	Syrian average price in January:
Bread public bakery (1 loaf)	Unavailable	Unavailable	115
Rice (1 kilogram)	200	200	535
Lentils (1 kilogram)	300	322	416
Sugar (1 kilogram)	319	275	386
Cooking oil (1 litre)	683	719	669

Food sufficiency:



Most common ways of obtaining food reported^{3,4}:



³ Multiple choices allowed.

⁴ By percent of communities reporting.

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

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LIVELIHOODS

50,000 to 100,000 SYP Most commonly reported household income range⁵.

26,595 SYP Governorate average food basket price^{5,6}.

0 Communities reported that residents used extreme food-based coping strategies to deal with insufficient income⁷.

0 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 **18** assessed communities were^{3,4}:

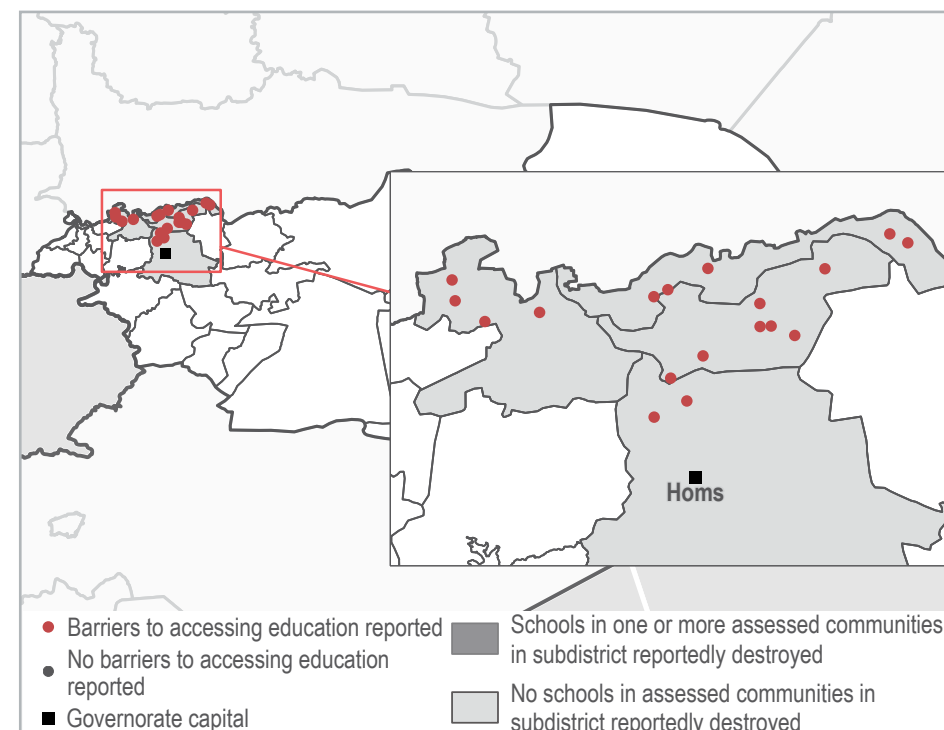


Most commonly reported main sources of income^{3,4}:



EDUCATION

Barriers to accessing education services:



0 communities reported that most children were able to access education. The most commonly reported barriers to education in the remaining **18** assessed communities were^{3,4}:



³ Multiple choices allowed.

⁴ By percent of communities reporting.

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

⁶ Calculation of the average price of a food basket is based on the World Food Programme's standard basket of dry goods. The food basket includes 37 kg of bread, 19 kg of rice, 19 kg of lentils, 5 kg of sugar, and 7 kg of vegetable oil, and provides 1,930 kcal a day for a family of five for a month.

⁷ Extreme food-based strategies: Eating food waste; eating non-edible plants and spending days without eating.

METHODOLOGY

The HSOS project, formerly known as the AoO (Area of Origin) project, is a monthly assessment that aims to provide comprehensive, multi-sectoral information about the humanitarian situation inside Syria. This factsheet presents information gathered in 20 communities in February 2018, referring to the situation in Homs Governorate in January 2018. It presents key indicators, rather than the entire range of indicators gathered in the HSOS questionnaire. For community-level data on assessed subdistricts in Al Hasakeh, Dar'a, Idleb, Rural Damascus and Quneitra, please refer to the monthly subdistrict factsheets, available on the [REACH Resource Centre](#). The complete HSOS dataset is disseminated monthly via the REACH Syria mailing list.

Wherever possible, information was collected through an enumerator network. REACH enumerators are based inside Syria and interview Key Informants (KIs) directly in the community they report about. Where access and security constraints rendered direct data collection unfeasible, KI interviews were conducted indirectly through participants identified in camps and settlements in neighbouring countries by REACH field teams. Participants contact KIs in their community in Syria to collect information about their community. KIs were asked to report at the community level.

A minimum of three KIs were interviewed per community to enhance data accuracy. 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 disagreed on a certain piece of information, enumerators triangulated the data with secondary sources or selected the response provided by the KI with the more relevant sector-specific background. For each question asked, confidence levels were 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 were triangulated through secondary sources, including news monitoring and humanitarian reports. Where necessary, follow-up was conducted with enumerators and participants. Findings are indicative rather than representative, and should not be generalised across the governorate.

ENDNOTES

¹ All information and figures reported in HSOS factsheets refer to the situation in assessed communities and cannot be generalised to other non-assessed communities of the governorate.

² Returns are not necessarily voluntary, safe, or sustainable.

³ 'Children' includes all persons below the age of 18.

⁴ Reuters (3 August 2017). Russia announces 'de-escalation zone' north of Syria's city of Homs. Retrieved from <https://www.reuters.com>.

⁵ Aljazeera (23 October 2017). ISIL accused of killing scores of Qaryatayn civilians. Retrieved from <http://www.aljazeera.com>.

⁶ UNHCR (25 October 2017). Syria: Flash update on recent events - 25 October 2017. Reliefweb. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

⁷ UNHCR (15 November 2017). Syria: Flash update on recent events - 15 November 2017. Reliefweb. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

⁸ WFP (31 December 2017). WFP Syria Country Brief, December 2017. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

⁹ The Syria Institute (11 January 2018). TSI Syria Update: January 11, 2018. Retrieved from <http://syriainstitute.org>.

About REACH

REACH is a joint initiative of two international non-governmental organisations - ACTED and IMPACT Initiatives - and the UN Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT). REACH aims to strengthen evidence-based decision making by aid actors through efficient data collection, management and analysis before, during and after an emergency. By doing so, REACH contributes to ensuring that communities affected by emergencies receive the support they need. All REACH activities are conducted in support to, and within the framework of, inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. 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.