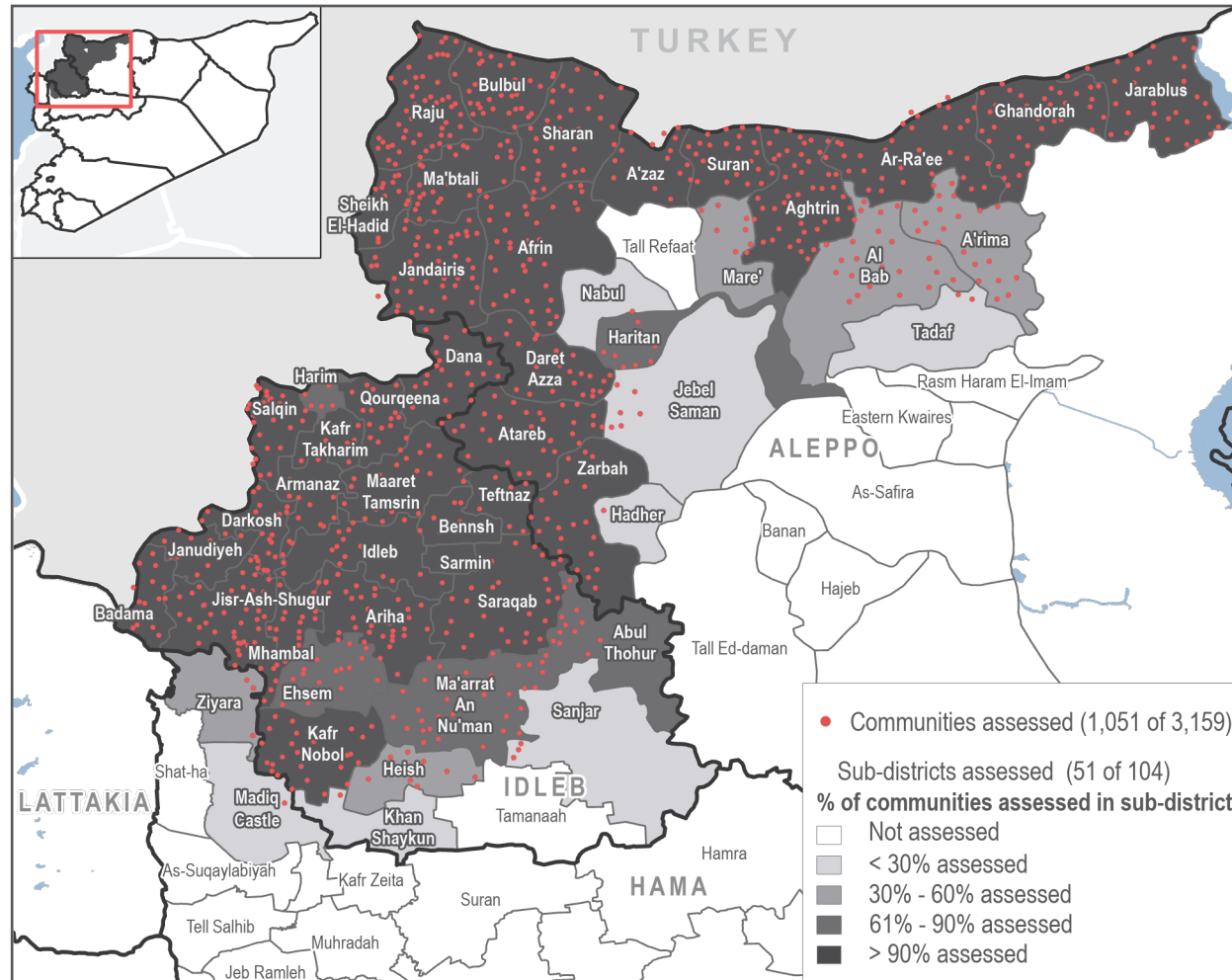


Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria (HSOS)

Northwest Syria, September 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, shelter and non-food items \(SNFI\), health, water, sanitation and hygiene \(WASH\), food security and livelihoods \(FSL\), and education.](#)

This factsheet presents information gathered in 1,051 communities across Idlib (452 communities), western Aleppo* (96 communities), northern Aleppo (498 communities), and Hama (5 communities) governorates.** Data was collected during the month of October 2019 and refers to the situation in Northwest Syria (NWS) in September 2019. Findings are indicative rather than representative, and should not be generalised across the region. Community-level datasets are available on the [REACH Resource Centre](#) and [Humanitarian Data Exchange](#).

* The western part of Aleppo where humanitarian response and coordination is conducted from the northwest.

** To provide insight on areas affected by conflict, the September 2019 factsheet includes additional analysis on 264 communities located in 15 conflict-affected sub-districts located in northern Hama, Idlib and Aleppo governorates.

Top 3 reported priority needs in assessed communities:

- 1 Healthcare
- 2 Food Security
- 3 Education

People in need (PIN) Demographics:*

PiN **2,365,501** People in Acute Need **1,297,617**

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

Average price in **September 2019** 67,681 Syrian pound (SYP)

One month change: **+6%**

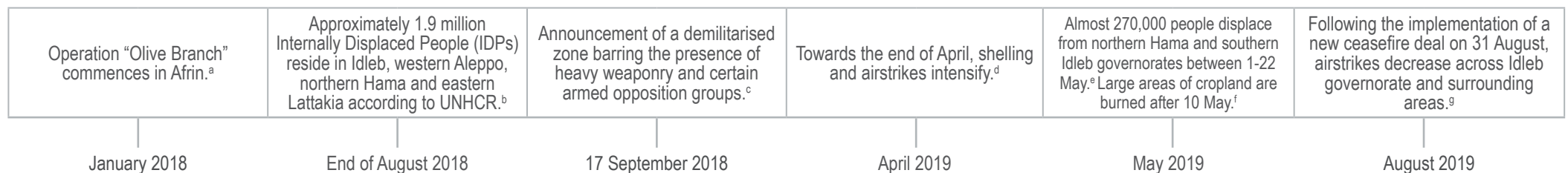
Six month change: **0%**

* 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 Northwest Syria (NWS)



CONTEXT

Following the implementation of a new ceasefire deal between the Government of Syria (GoS) and armed opposition groups on 31 August, airstrikes decreased across Idlib governorate and surrounding areas in September 2019.⁹ However, sporadic shelling and airstrikes in northern Hama and southern Idlib governorates, in addition to recurring security incidents in northern Aleppo governorate, continued to negatively impact humanitarian conditions and present challenges to humanitarian operations.⁹ Furthermore, with the start of the new school term in late September, the impact of hostilities on education became increasingly apparent, with reports that nearly half of the schools in Idlib governorate sustained conflict-related damage or were being used as shelters for IDPs.^h Some 150,000 school-aged children were reportedly in immediate need of education services across NWS.⁹ Additionally, with winter approaching, shelter and winter-specific needs became increasingly urgent issues, especially for those living in tents, makeshift shelters, or unfinished buildings.^h

KEY HIGHLIGHTS³

Education became a more commonly reported priority need

As school went back in session in September, Education became the third most commonly reported priority need in NWS, with KIs in 359 (34%) of the assessed communities citing it as a top need. KIs in 528 (50%) assessed communities reported that not all children accessed education services in September, with the primary barriers to access reported as a lack of teaching staff (50%), a lack of school supplies (49%) and the distance to services being too far (48%). Further, KIs in 265 (25%) assessed communities reported that children were not attending school in nearby communities if facilities in their community were not available or functioning. Across NWS, KIs in 101 (19%) of 1,051 assessed communities reported that challenges to accessing education mainly affected girls. Access to education was further limited in conflict-affected areas, where KIs in 174 (66%) of 264 conflict-affected communities reported that not all children accessed educational services in September. While the primary barriers in conflict-affected communities where children lacked access were those listed above, KIs also reported the routes to educational services being unsafe (26%) and early marriage (17%) as barriers to access.

Challenges to access enough food reported in addition to income insufficiency

Food security was reported as a priority need by KIs in 508 (48%) assessed communities in September. While KIs in only 81 (8%) assessed communities reported food insufficiency, KIs in all (100%) communities reported challenges to accessing sufficient food, which was reflected in the fact that KIs in 629 (59%) communities reported that food was only somewhat sufficient.¹¹ Further, KIs in 272 (26%) assessed communities reported that people received food through distributions. Compared to other areas, food distributions were proportionally most commonly reported to take place in western Aleppo (62 of 96 communities; 65%). Livelihoods was also reported as a priority need by KIs in 329 (31%) assessed communities. In communities where income insufficiency was reported, the most commonly cited coping strategy was borrowing money from family and friends (80%), followed by sending children to work or beg (56%). The third most commonly reported coping strategy was reducing the size of meals (22%). In conflict-affected areas, reducing the size of meals and skipping meals were reported by KIs in 87 (35%) and 53 (21%) assessed communities respectively.

Displacement⁴

- KIs in 935 (89%) of the 1,051 assessed communities reported the presence of IDPs in their communities.
- In 92 (9%) assessed communities, KIs reported that only 1-25% of the pre-conflict population (PCP) remained in the community in September 2019. Of the communities in which pre-conflict populations reportedly left, the top three reasons for departure were reported as being the reduced access to basic services (47%), loss of income (40%), and escalation of conflict (40%).

Food Security and Livelihoods

- KIs in all (100%) 1,051 communities reported challenges in accessing enough food. The top two reported challenges to accessing sufficient food were the lack of resources to buy available food in the markets (75%) and that some types of food were expensive (58%).
- KIs across all assessed communities in NWS most commonly reported borrowing money from family friends (80%) and sending children to work/beg (56%) as coping strategies for a lack of income. Children being sent to work/beg was proportionally most commonly reported in western Aleppo by KIs in 90 (94%) out of 96 assessed communities.

Education

- In 528 (50%) assessed communities in NWS, KIs reported a variety of challenges to accessing education services. The most commonly reported reasons were lack of teaching staff (50%), lack of school supplies (49%), and schools being too far to travel (48%).
- Of those communities (528) in which challenges to education were reported, KIs in 426 (81%) assessed communities reported that the challenges affected girls and boys equally. KIs in 101 (19%) communities reported that challenges mainly affected girls. Proportionally, this was most commonly reported in western Aleppo by KIs in 11 (33%) of 36 assessed communities.

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

- Of the 1,051 assessed communities, KIs in 329 (31%) communities reported households having insufficient water to meet their needs. In particular, KIs in 95 (36%) of the 264 conflict-affected communities reported that people experienced water insufficiency.
- KIs in 450 (43%) communities reported issues with latrines/toilets in their communities in September. Of these communities, KIs in 318 (71%) communities reported they could not empty septic tanks.

Health

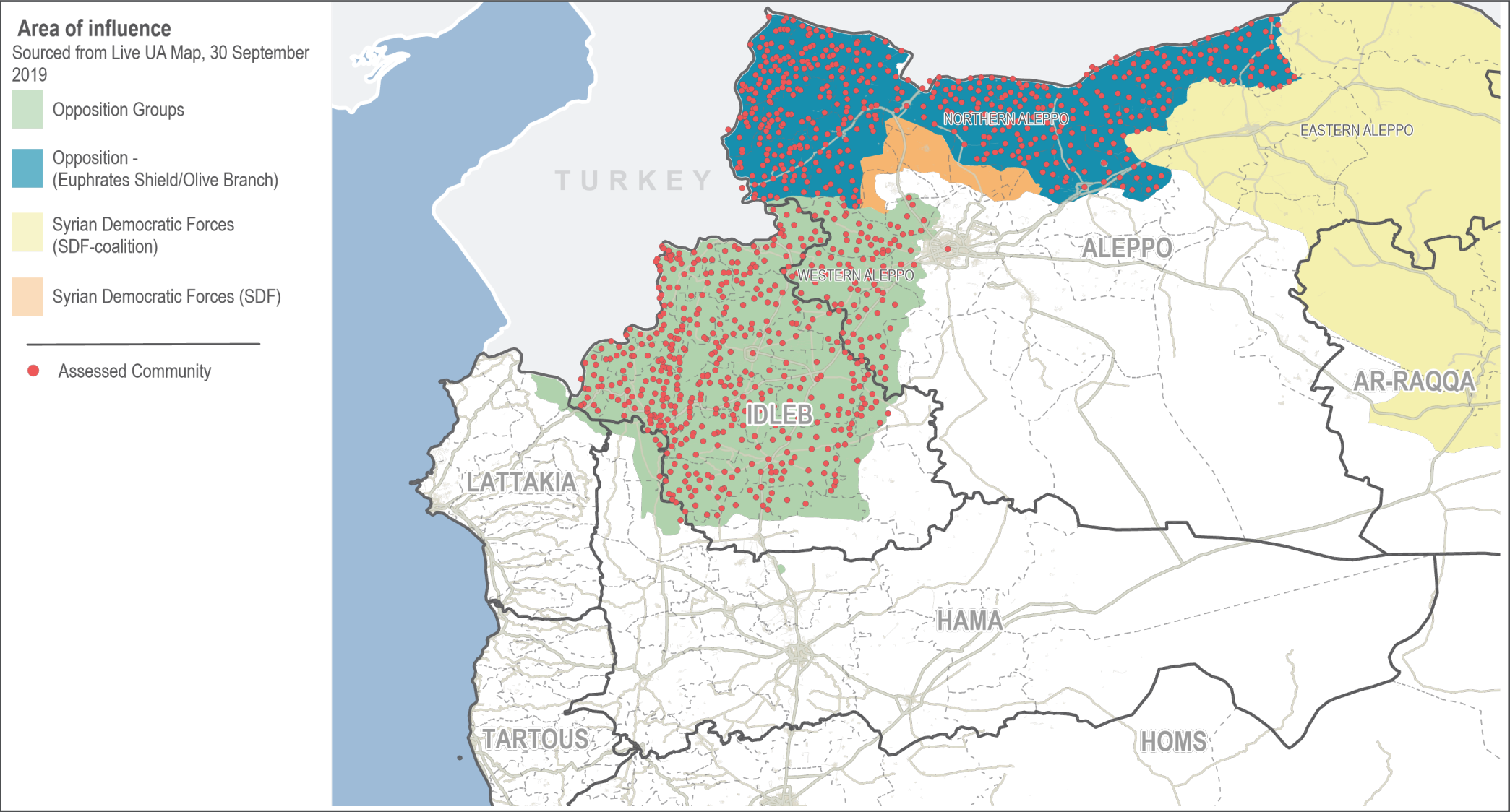
- The health problem most commonly reported by KIs in NWS in September was severe disease affecting children under the age of 5, reported in 739 (70%) assessed communities.
- KIs in 277 (56%) of 498 assessed communities in northern Aleppo reported that there were no available health facilities in the area.

Shelter and non-food items (NFI)

- KIs in 198 (19%) assessed communities reported a lack of fuel. The most common strategy reported to deal with this was cutting trees to burn, as reported in 150 (76%) communities.
- KIs in 132 (13%) assessed communities in NWS reported IDPs living in tents. This was reported most frequently in northern Aleppo governorate by KIs in 69 (14%) of the 498 assessed communities, and in Idlib governorate by KIs in 63 (14%) of 452 communities.

Northwest Syria, September 2019

Regional areas of influence:



Northwest Syria, September 2019

➔ DISPLACEMENT⁴

37,561 - 43,404 Estimated number of IDP arrivals in assessed communities in September 2019.

10,156 - 11,834 Estimated number of spontaneous returns in assessed communities in September 2019.⁵

Communities with the largest estimated number of IDP arrivals:

Sarmin (Idleb, Idleb)	2,400 - 2,500
Qourqeena (Harim, Idleb)	1,800 - 2,000
Armanaz (Harim, Idleb)	1,700 - 1,750

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

Top 3 reported sub-districts of origin for IDP arrivals:^{6,7}

- Hatmiyeh (Idleb)
- Qasabiyeh (Idleb)
- Northern Rasha (Idleb)

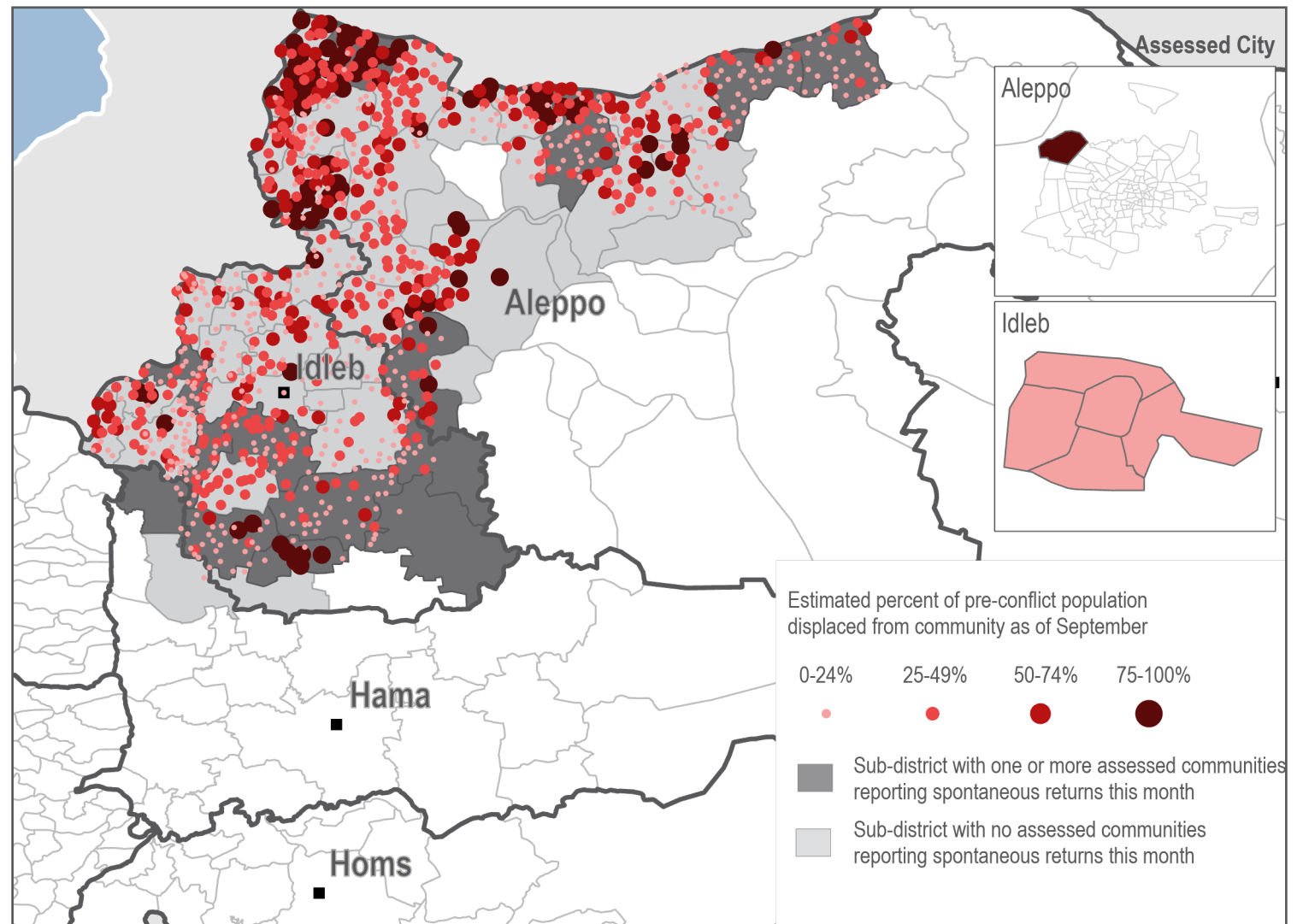
*Reported as sub-district (governorate)

981 communities reported no PCP departures.⁸

Top 3 reasons for PCP departures in the remaining 70 assessed communities:^{6,7,9}

Reduced access to basic services	47%
Escalation of conflict	40%
Loss of income	40%

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

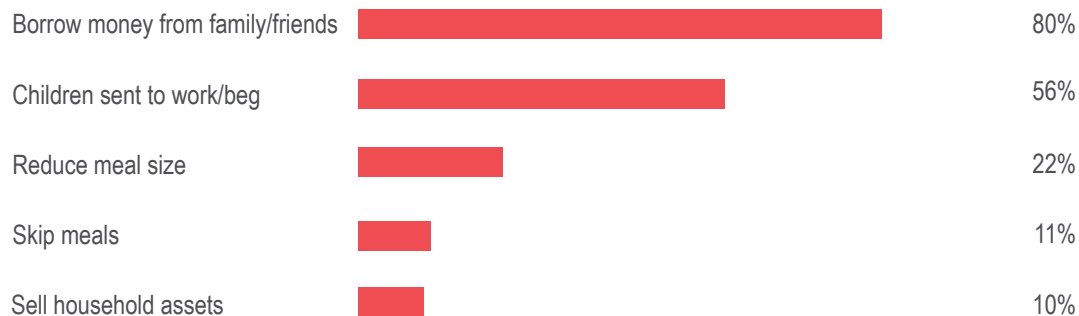


Northwest Syria, September 2019

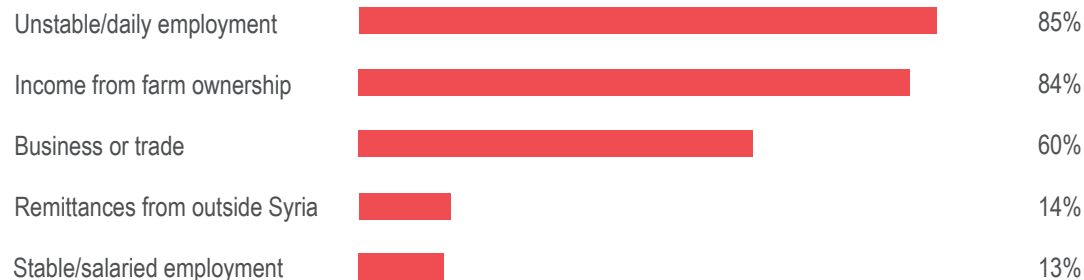
FOOD SECURITY & LIVELIHOODS

- 272/1,051** Communities reported having received food distributions in the last month.
- 215/1,051** Communities reported that residents were unable to access shops and markets.
- 0/1,051** Communities reported that residents used extreme food-based coping strategies to deal with insufficient income.¹⁰
- Less than 50,000 SYP** Most commonly reported monthly household income range.¹

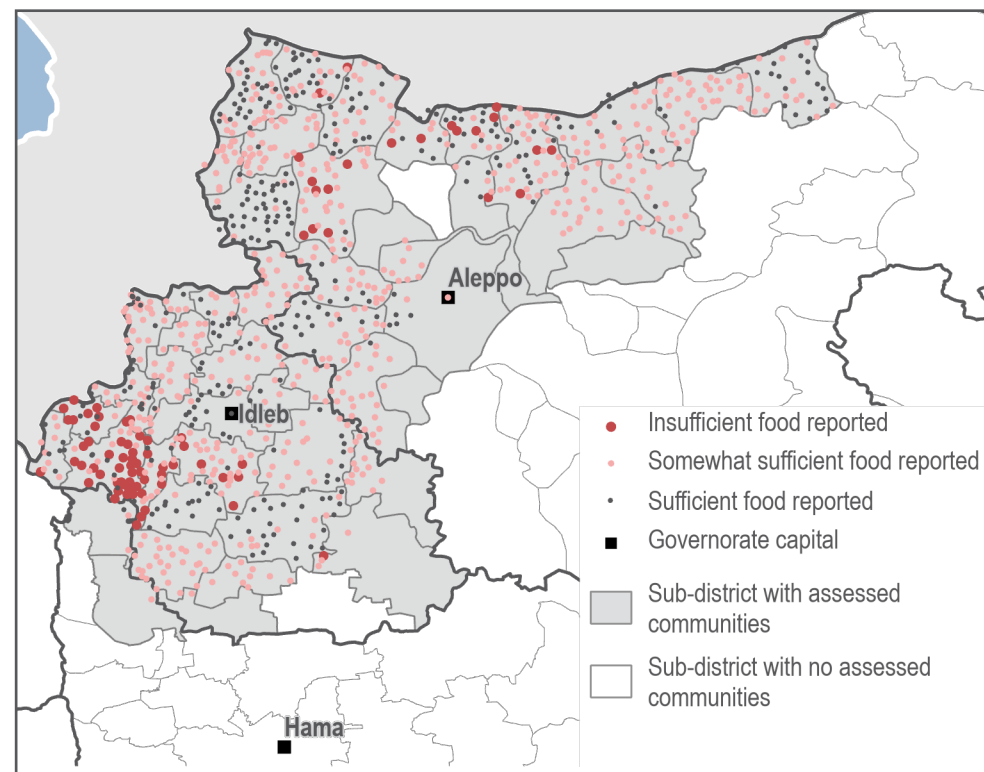
110 communities reported that residents had enough income to cover household needs. The most commonly reported coping strategies to deal with a lack of income in the remaining **941** assessed communities were:^{6,7,9}



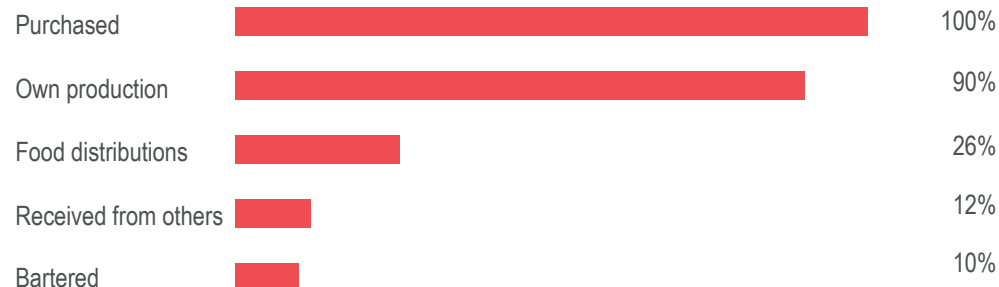
Most commonly reported main sources of income:^{6,7}



Communities that reported having an insufficient quantity of food:¹¹



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



Northwest Syria, September 2019

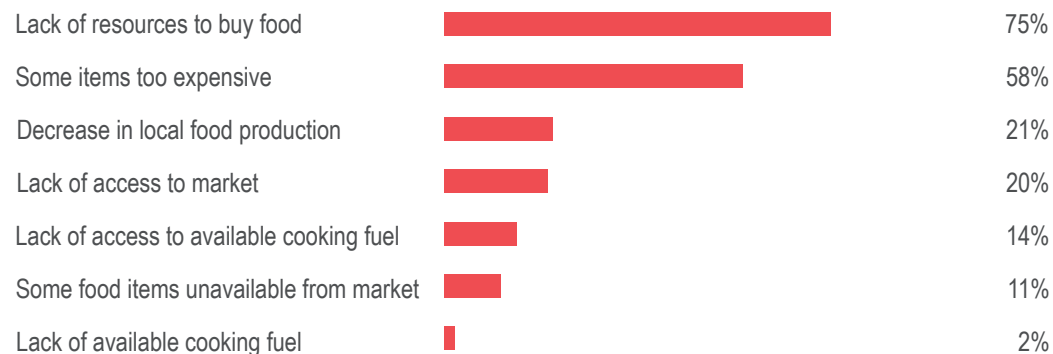
FOOD SECURITY & LIVELIHOODS

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

Food item:	Regional average price in Sept. 2019:	One month change:	Six month change:
Bread (8 pieces)	166	+3%	+10%
Rice (1 kilogram)	400	+14%	+14%
Lentils (1 kilogram)	300	+9%	+9%
Sugar (1 kilogram)	350	+8%	+17%
Cooking oil (1 litre)*	4,375	+11%	+14%

*includes the combined vegetable oil and ghee prices

All communities reported that residents experienced challenges in accessing food. The most common difficulties experienced in the 1,051 assessed communities were:^{6,7,9}



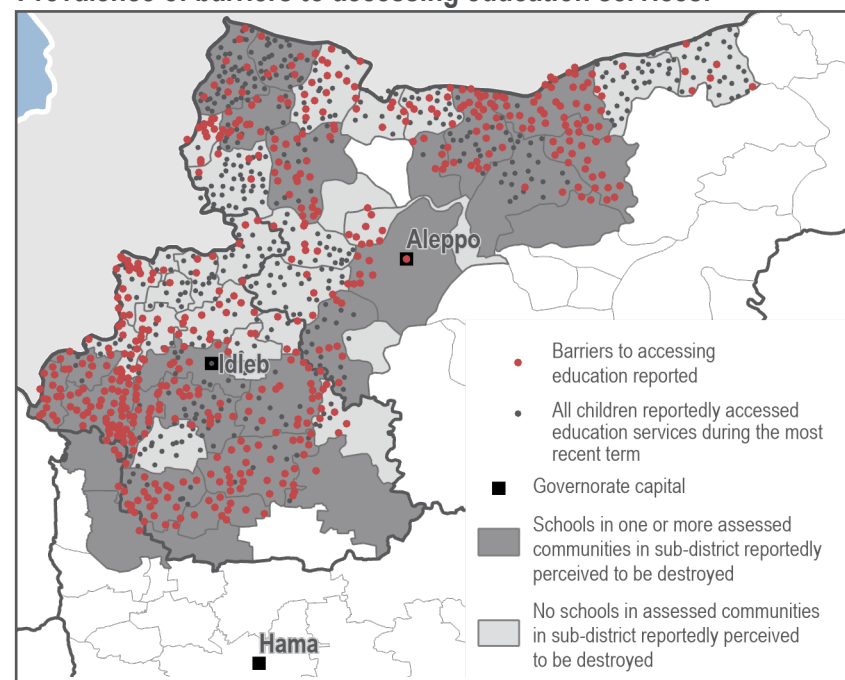
EDUCATION

963/1,051 communities reported having functioning primary education facilities, while 449 communities reported having functioning secondary education facilities.¹³

523 communities reported that all children were able to access education. The most commonly reported barriers to education in the remaining 528 assessed communities were:^{6,7,9}



Prevalence of barriers to accessing education services:



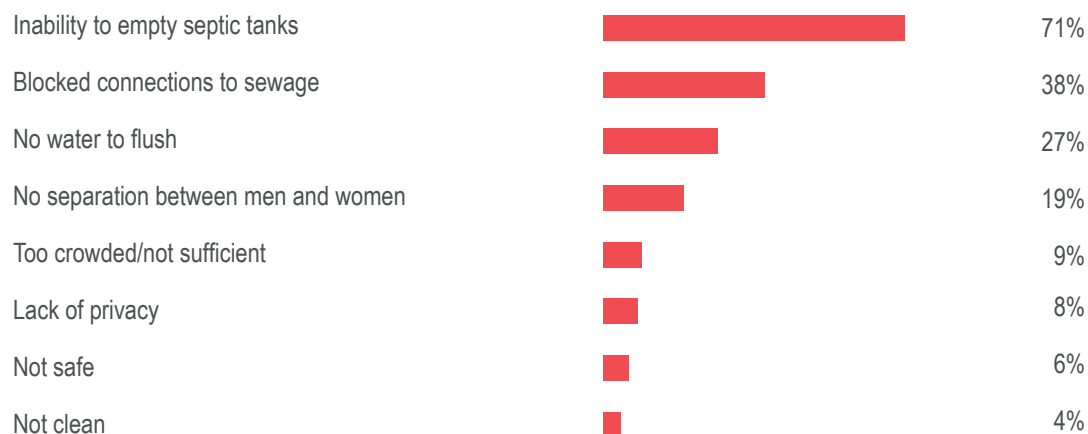
Northwest Syria, September 2019

WASH

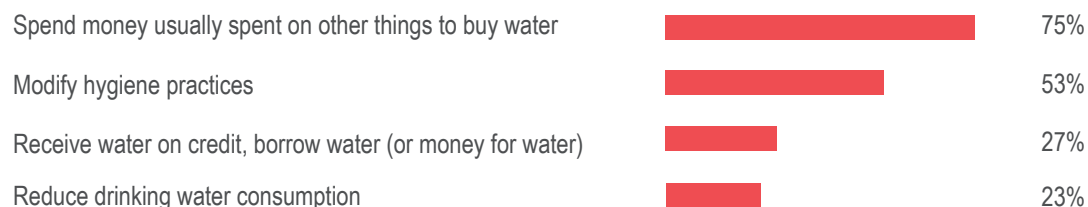
10/1,051 Communities reported that water from their primary source tasted and/or smelled bad.

1/1,051 Qubbet Elsheikh community (Al Bab sub-district, Aleppo governorate) reported that drinking water from their primary source was perceived to have made people sick.

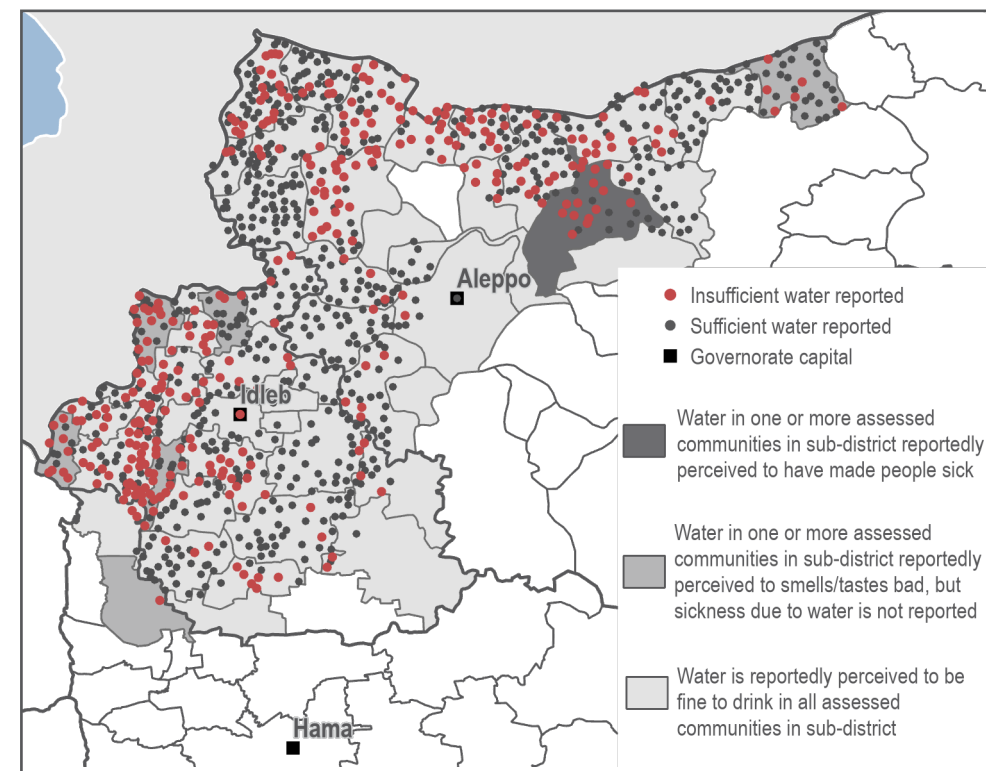
601 communities reported that residents had no problems with latrines. The most commonly reported problems with latrines in the remaining **450 assessed communities** were:^{5,7,9}



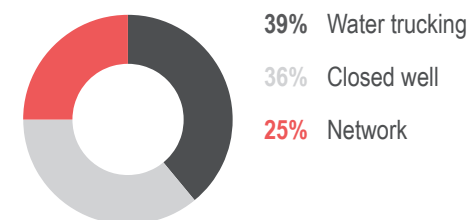
722 communities reported that they had sufficient amounts of water to meet household needs. The most common coping strategies to deal with a lack of water in the remaining **329 assessed communities** were:^{6,7,9}



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}



Northwest Syria, September 2019

HEALTH

237/1,051 Communities reported that no assessed medical items were available in their community.¹⁴

97/1,051 Communities reported that the majority of women did not give birth in a formal health facility.

0/1,051 Communities reported that some individuals had been diagnosed with SAM (Severe Acute Malnutrition).¹⁴

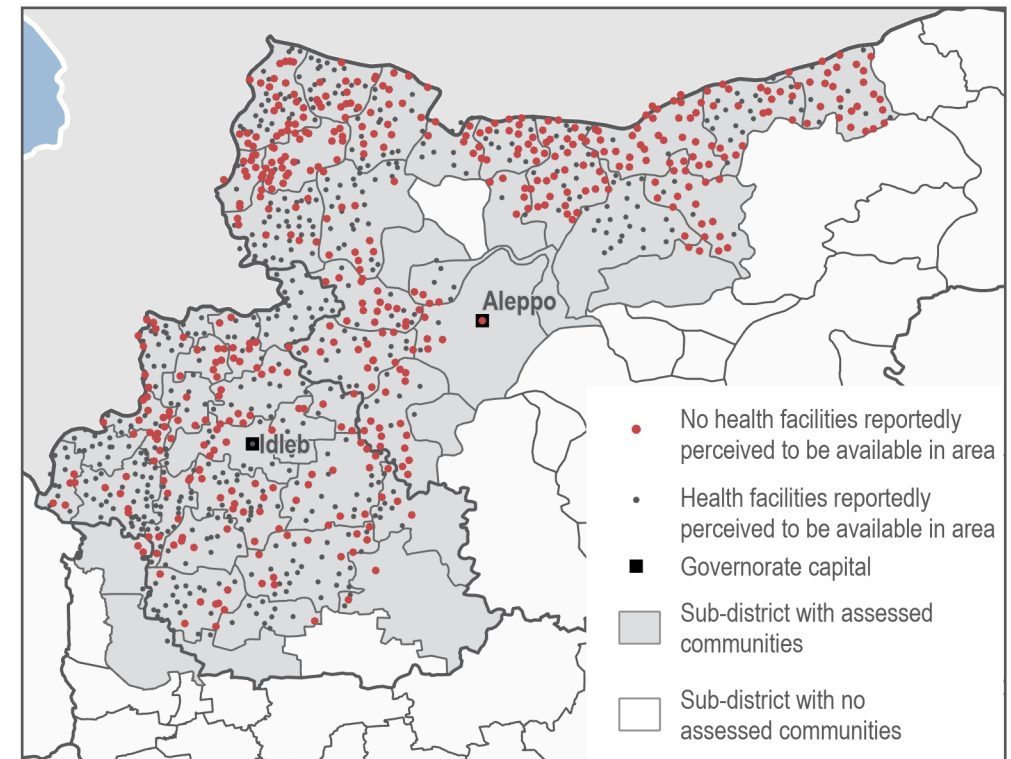
221 communities reported that residents experienced no barriers to accessing healthcare services. The most commonly reported barriers in the remaining **830 assessed communities** were:^{6,7,9}



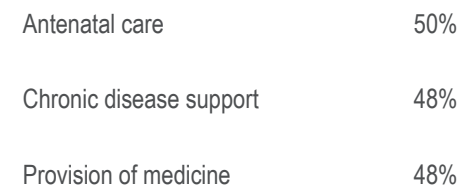
937 communities reported that residents were not using coping strategies to deal with a lack of medical services and items. The coping strategies used in the remaining **114 communities** were:^{6,7,9}



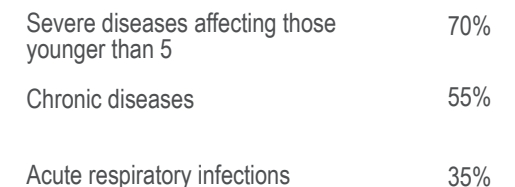
Presence of medical facilities in assessed communities:



Top 3 most needed healthcare services reported:^{6,7}



Top 3 most common health problems reported:^{6,7}



Northwest Syria, September 2019

SHELTER AND NFI

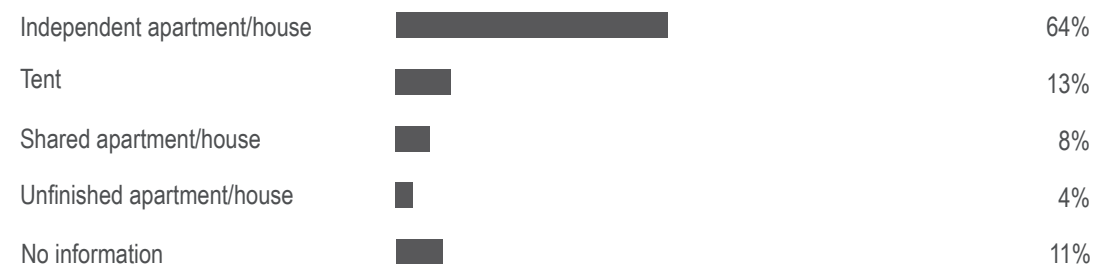
5,929 SYP Regional average monthly reported rent price in SYP across assessed communities.¹

4,68/1,051 Communities reported IDPs being hosted without a tenancy arrangement.

Most commonly reported shelter type for PCP households:⁷



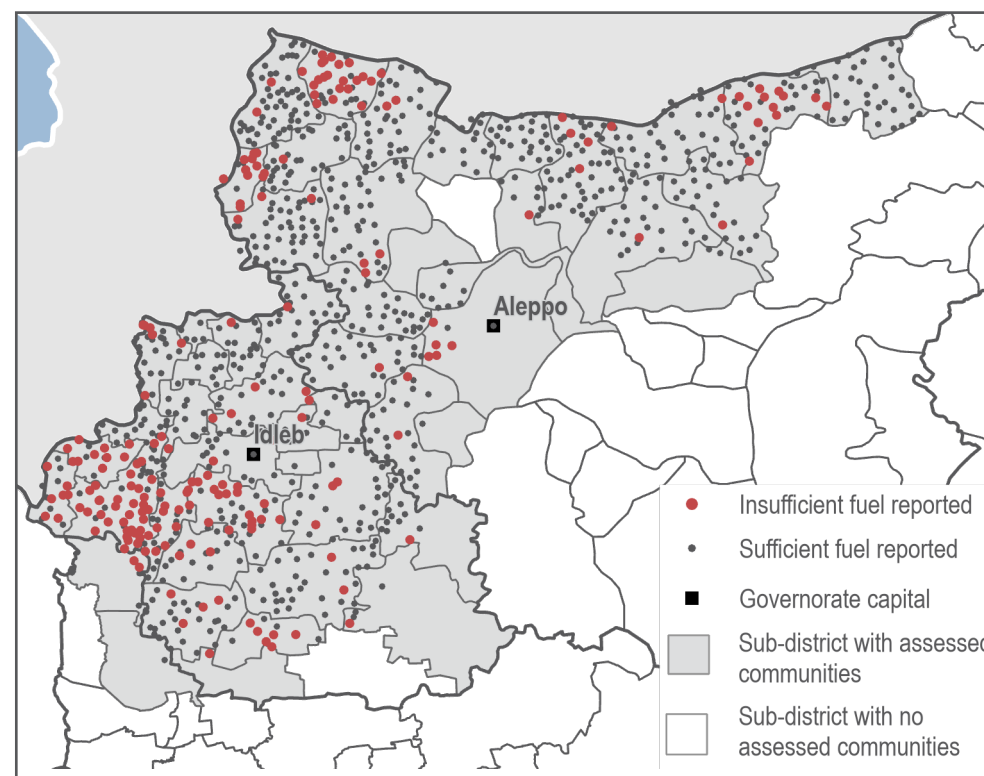
Most commonly reported shelter type for IDP households:⁷



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

Fuel type (1L):	Regional average price in September 2019:	One month change:	Six month change:
GoS petrol	510	+2%	+21%
GoS diesel	475	+4%	+19%
Manually refined petrol	346	+15%	+15%
Manually refined diesel	290	+8%	+16%
Cooking fuel	8,375	+12%	+12%

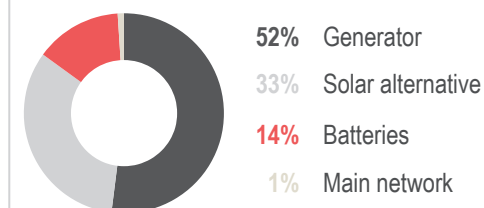
Communities that reported insufficient amounts of fuel to meet household needs:¹¹



853 communities reported no lack of fuel. Most common strategies to cope with lack of fuel in the remaining 198 assessed communities:^{6,7,9}

Cutting trees to burn	76%
Burning productive assets	47%
Burning furniture not in use	43%
Burning plastics	34%
Burning clothes	21%

Primary source of electricity reported:⁷



METHODOLOGY

HSOS data collection is conducted through an enumerator network in accessible locations throughout Idleb, western Aleppo, and northern Hama 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 render direct data collection unfeasible, some KI interviews are conducted remotely by REACH field teams. 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 are 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://www.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://www.syriahr.com>.

^d REACH. (May 2019). Southern Idleb and Northern Hama RNA. Retrieved from <https://reachresourcecentre.info>.

^e UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (31 May 2019). Situation Report 4: Recent Developments in Northwestern Syria. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

^f The new humanitarian. (7 June 2019). As crops burn in Syria conflict, hunger warnings for civilians. Retrieved from <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org>.

^g UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (20 September 2019). Syrian Arab Republic: Recent Developments in Northwestern Syria Situation Report No. 12 - as of 20 September 2019 [EN/AR]. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

^h UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (9 October 2019). Syrian Arab Republic: Recent Developments in Northwestern Syria Situation Report No. 13 - as of 8 October 2019. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

MAIN TEXT

¹ 1 USD = 630 SYP (see [Syria Market Monitoring Dataset September 2019](#))

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

Northwest Syria, September 2019

MAIN TEXT

⁴ For population numbers, KIs were asked to provide the number of resident and IDPs present in the community as of 30 September 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 September 2019 Situation Overview](#).

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, and northern Hama governorates.