

NORTHEAST SYRIA MARKET MONITORING EXERCISE

Snapshot: 10-20 February 2020

INTRODUCTION

To inform humanitarian cash programming, REACH in partnership with the northeast (NES) and northwest (NWS) Syria Cash Working Group (CWG), conducts monthly Market Monitoring Exercises in northern Syria to assess the availability and prices of 36 basic commodities that are typically sold in markets and consumed by average Syrian households, including food and non-food items, water, fuel, and cellphone data.

Of these, 18 items comprise the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB; see below), which represents the minimum, culturally adjusted items required to support a 6-person household for a month.

Data was collected this month (between 10-20 February 2020) by REACH, IRC, PIN, ACTED, Mercy Corps, and Concern.

The accompanying [data from the month of February](#) is disseminated monthly and is distributed through partners across the humanitarian community.

SURVIVAL MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET (SMEB) CONTENTS

	Item	Quantity	
Food Items	Bread	37 kg	
	Bulgur	15 kg	
	Chicken	6 kg	
	Eggs	6 kg	
	Fresh vegetables	12 kg	
	Ghee/vegetable oil	7 kg/L	
	Red lentils	15 kg	
	Rice	19 kg	
	Salt	1 kg	
	Sugar	5 kg	
	Tomato paste	6 kg	
	Hygiene items	Bathing soap	12 bars
		Laundry/dish soap	3 kg
Sanitary pads		4 packs of 10	
Toothpaste		200 g	
Fuel	Cooking fuel*	25 L	
Water	Water trucking	4500 L	
Telecom	Smartphone data	1 GB	
Other	Float (other costs)**	7.5% total value	

* Kerosene in northern Syria

** Float only applied to observations where prices of all SMEB contents could be collected

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Coverage

This month, REACH and partners covered 22 sub-districts in northeast Syria for the Market Monitoring Exercise, including approximately 1,073 individual shops. Dotted lines in the graphs indicate lack of data for the months of October and November 2019.

Highest SMEB cost recorded under northeast Market Monitoring Exercise

In February 2020, the cost of the SMEB increased by 8% from 98,721 Syrian Pounds (SYP) in January to 107,305 SYP in February 2020 across comparable communities, setting the highest price recorded by the Market Monitoring Exercise in NES. In United States Dollars (USD), the cost of the SMEB was recorded at 102 USD across comparable communities with consistent coverage across months. When including all assessed communities in NES in February 2020, the total

median regional SMEB was recorded at 110,778 SYP / 106 USD.

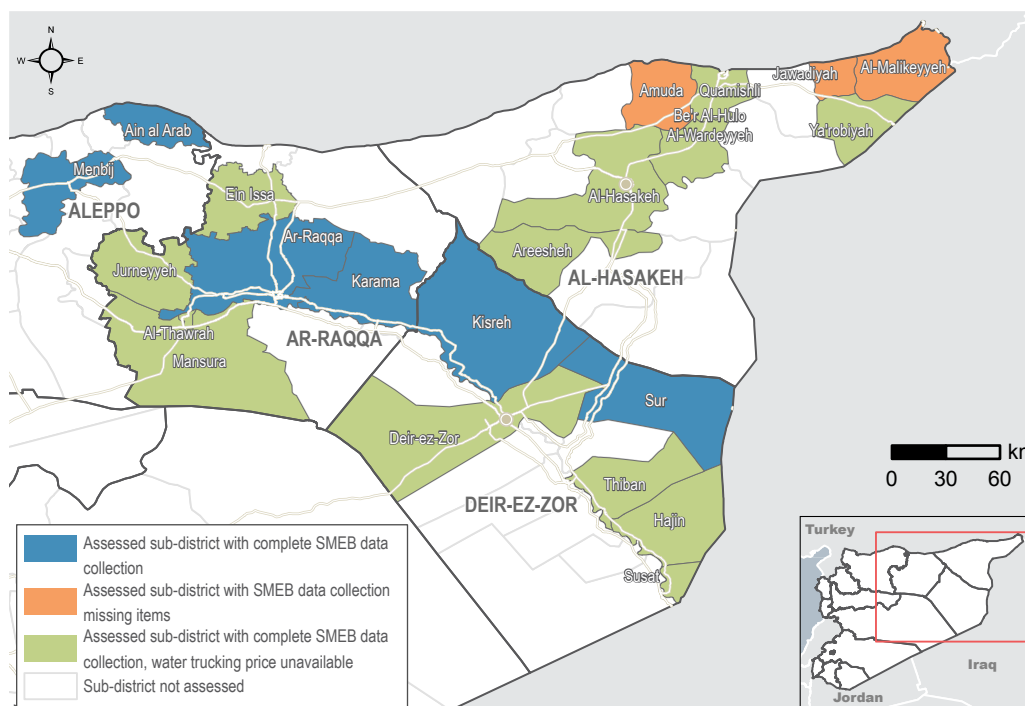
Continued depreciation of the SYP against the USD

During data collection in NES in February 2020, the informal SYP/USD exchange rate continued to increase across the region, with the highest exchange rate recorded at 1,070 SYP for 1 USD in Thiban sub-district in the governorate of Deir ez-Zor. The regional median of the informal SYP/USD exchange rate increased by 10% when compared to the previous month (from 954 SYP/1 USD in January to 1,050 SYP/1 USD in February). [The continued financial crisis in neighbouring Lebanon and international economic sanctions on Syria are reported as the main causes for the continued SYP depreciation.](#)

High quality transport fuels widely unavailable and manually refined transport fuels at increasing prices

During this month's Market Monitoring Exercise, KIs reported a scarcity of high quality transport fuel in the assessed sub-districts. High quality diesel and petrol were reportedly unavailable in 95% and 45% of the assessed sub-districts, respectively. Moreover, the price of high quality diesel saw a 71% increase compared to last month. On the other hand, manually refined fuel types were available in most assessed sub-districts but witnessed a sharp increase in prices. Since January, the regional price for manually refined diesel and petrol increased by 23% and 31% respectively. The growing unavailability of high quality transport fuel coupled with the increasing cost of all transport fuel types could potentially explain the rise in prices in the region, [as many commodities are transported over long distances to reach the markets.](#)

ASSESSED AREAS AND COVERAGE

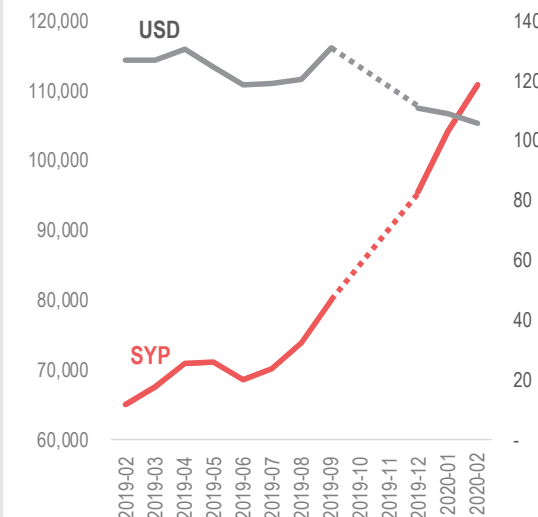


MEDIAN SMEB COST IN SYP (USD), BY REGION

110,778 SYP (106 USD)
NORTHEAST SYRIA - AL-HASAKEH, AL-RAQQA, DEIR-EZ-ZOR, EASTERN ALEPPO GOVERNORATES

MEDIAN SMEB COSTS, BY MONTH

Thousand Syrian Pounds and US Dollars



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

**110,778 SYP
(106 USD)**

NORTHEAST SYRIA - AL-HASAKEH,
AL-RAQQA, DEIR-EZ-ZOR,
EASTERN ALEPPO GOVERNORATES

SMEB food component value increased - especially onions

At a regional level, the cost of the SMEB food component increased by 14% across comparable communities since January, reaching 83,421 SYP in February. This increase was mainly driven by an increase in vegetable prices. At the regional level, red lentils prices increased by 28%, potatoes by 27%, and cucumbers by 16%. Furthermore, the prices of onions sharply increased by 50% and reached a regional median of 450 SYP per kilo. The biggest increases were recorded in the sub-districts of Ar-Raqqa and Mansura, where onion prices skyrocketed and showed increases between 80% and 100%. The increasing cost of food items [might be caused by the depreciation of the SYP and the difficulty to access transport fuel, which likely impacted the transportation of agricultural products.](#)

Toothpaste available, but recorded at increasing prices

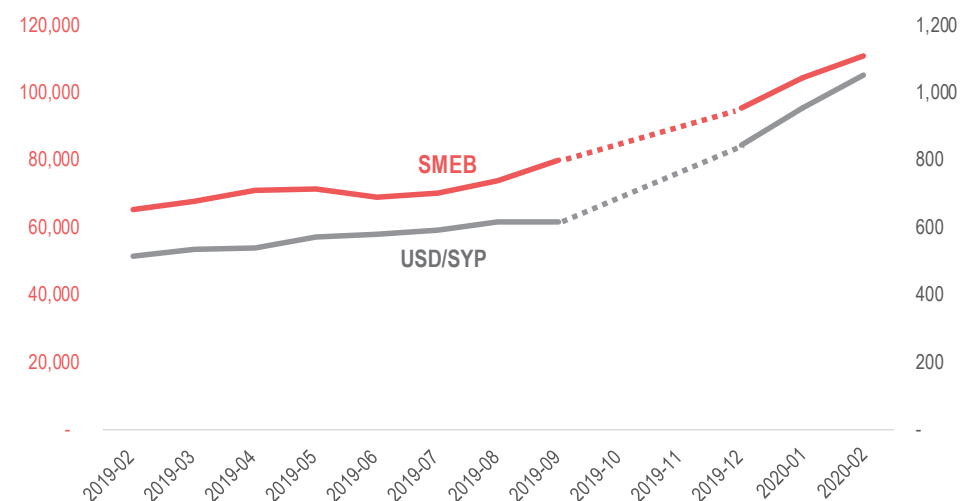
During data collection this February 2020, most hygiene items were reportedly available in the region. Toothpaste was reported to be available across all assessed sub-districts. However, the

median regional price increased by 104% compared to January. The sub-districts of Jawadiyah, Ar-Raqqa, and Kisreh especially witnessed sharp increases in the price of toothpaste compared to last month, with reported increases of 118%, 137%, and 233%, respectively. However, in the sub-district of Menbij the price of toothpaste decreased by 50%.

Winterisation items expensive and availability varied across sub-districts

This month, most winterisation items were reportedly widely available with the exception of plastic sheets, from which prices could not be collected in 45% of the assessed sub-districts. Winter carpets and kerosene/diesel heaters prices were not recorded in 41% of the assessed sub-districts due to the limited availability of these items, as reported by enumerators. Furthermore, prices of certain winter clothing items have greatly increased, especially for children's items. Children's winter hats and jackets have seen major increases of 51% and 17%, respectively. Finally, the price of manually refined kerosene used for cooking and heating increased by 25% at the regional level between January and February 2020.

SMEB COST (SYP) AND EXCHANGE RATE (USD/SYP), BY MONTH



MEDIAN SMEB COSTS & CHANGES*

Syrian Pounds

Sub-district	SMEB	One month change	Six month change
Northeast Syria	107,305	8%	40%
Ain al Arab	101,859	11%	54%
Al-Hasakeh**	104,585	NA	NA
Al-Malikeyyeh	NA	NA	NA
Al-Thawrah**	102,732	5%	37%
Amuda	NA	NA	NA
Areeshah**	99,039	NA	52%
Ar-Raqqa	113,302	NA	59%
Be'r Al-Hulo Al-Wardeyyeh**	101,953	NA	47%
Deir-ez-Zor**	109,237	NA	NA
Ein Issa**	99,599	NA	60%
Hajin**	113,144	NA	42%
Jawadiyah	NA	NA	NA
Jurneyyeh**	103,246	NA	42%
Karama	103,109	NA	NA
Kisreh	111,502	13%	37%
Mansura**	105,742	NA	39%
Menbij	96,524	-3%	NA
Quamishli**	110,365	NA	NA
Sur	118,321	NA	29%
Susat**	110,725	NA	NA
Thiban**	113,191	NA	33%
Ya'robiyah**	108,306	NA	40%

* For price and change calculations, only the communities within a sub-district with consistent coverage across months are included. This applies to all following tables.

** Denotes sub-districts where water trucking is not common, and therefore does not have water trucking prices in the SMEB cost

SUB-DISTRICTS WITH INCOMPLETE SMEB IN FEBRUARY

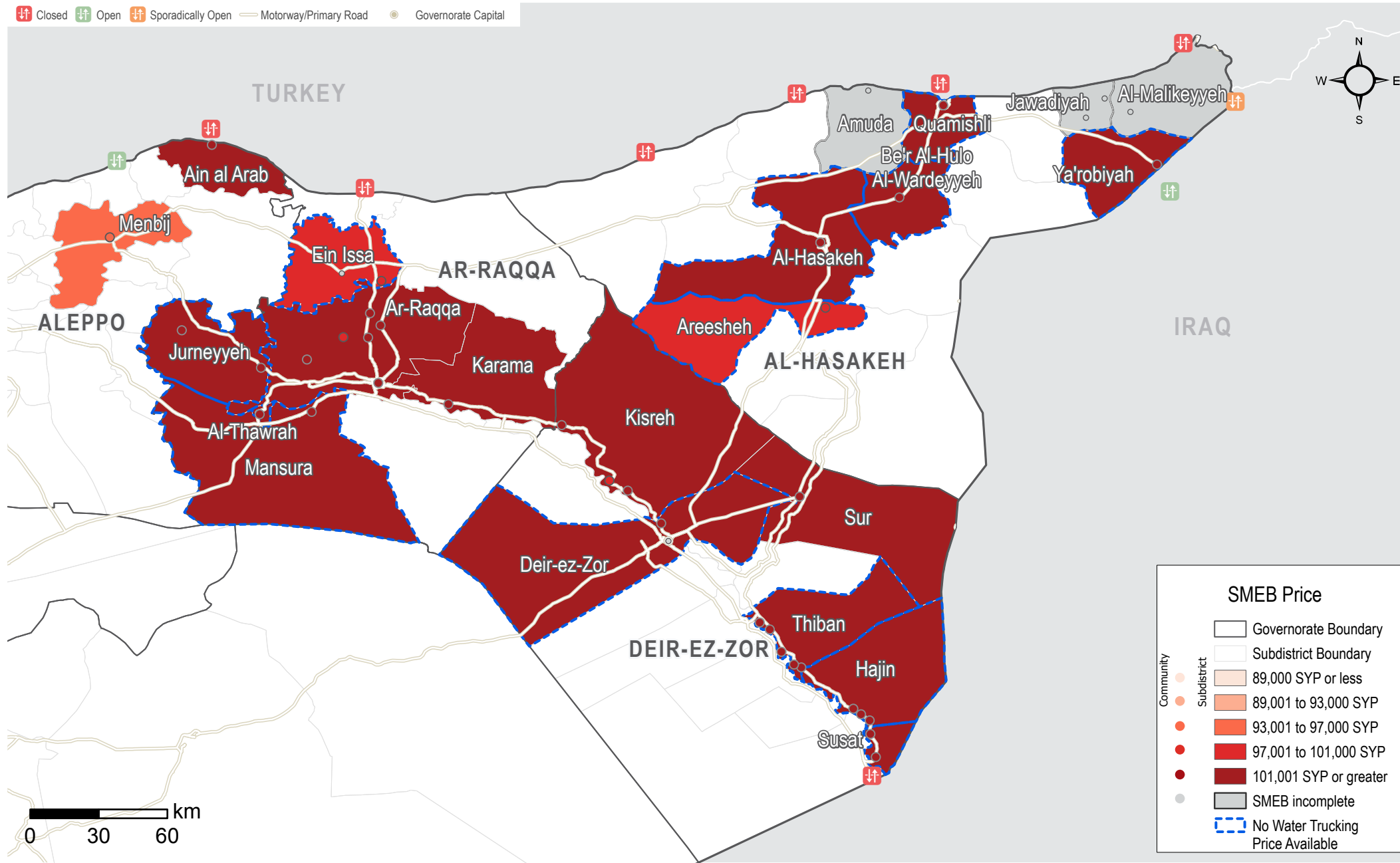
SUB-DISTRICT	MISSING ITEMS
Al-Malikeyyeh	Phone data and cooking fuel.
Amuda	Phone data.
Jawadiyah	Phone data.

Note: Lack of data for a SMEB item does not necessarily imply a shortage.

NORTHEAST SYRIA - SMEB COST RANGES

Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa, Deir-ez-Zor, Eastern Aleppo governorates

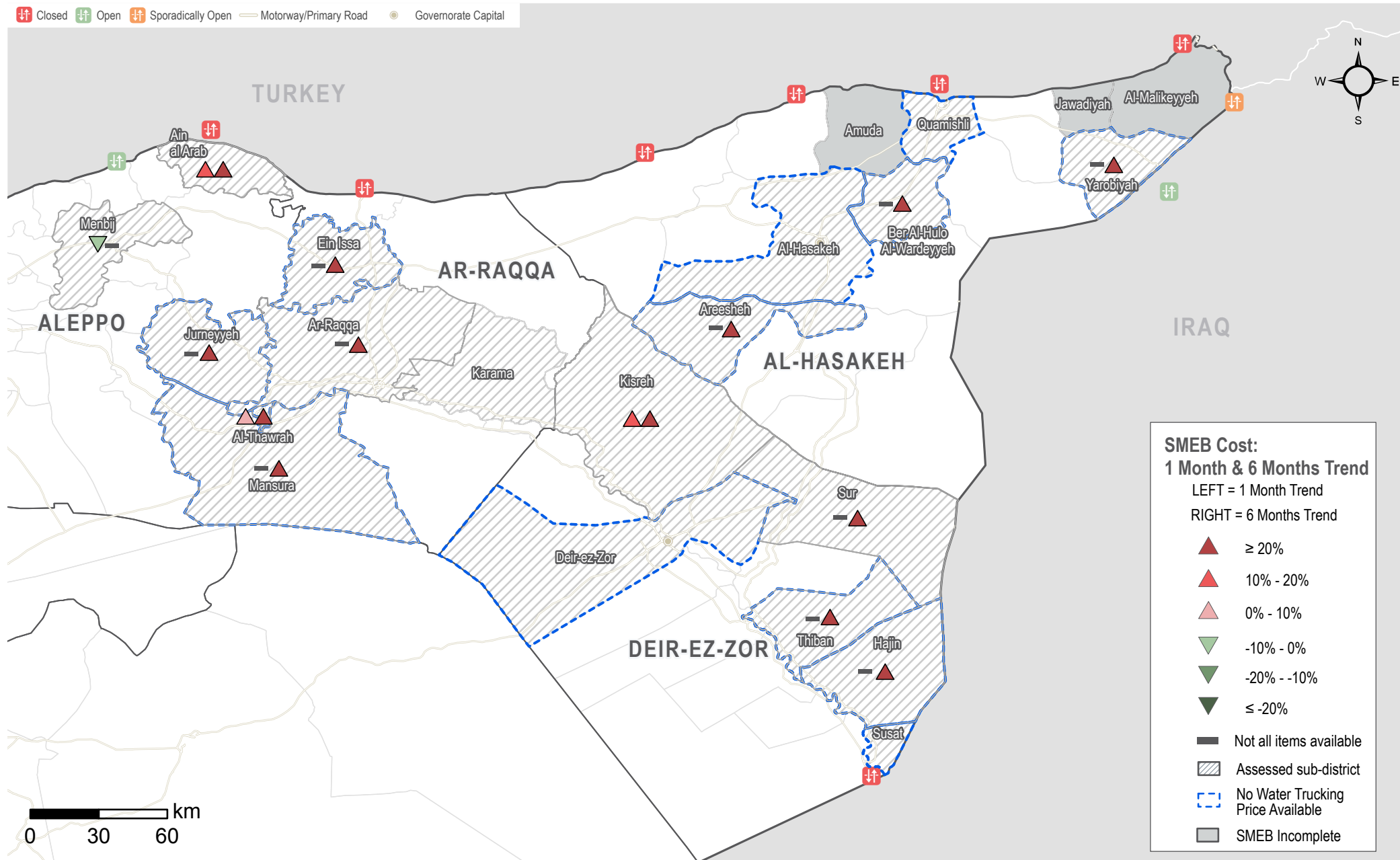
SMEB COST RANGES (SYP), BY SUB-DISTRICTS



NORTHEAST SYRIA - SMEB COST RANGES

Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa, Deir-ez-Zor, Eastern Aleppo governorates

SMEB COST: ONE MONTH & SIX MONTHS TREND



NORTHEAST SYRIA - SMEB COST: FOOD ITEMS

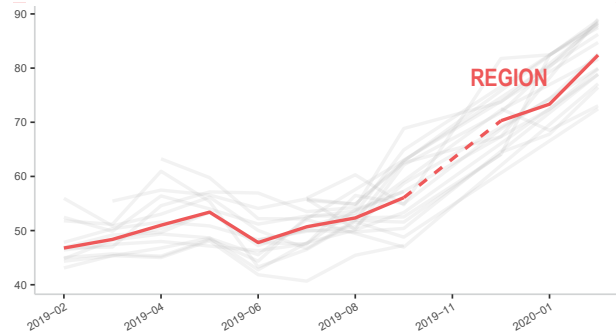
Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqqa, Deir-ez-Zor, Eastern Aleppo governorates

MEDIAN SMEB COST: FOOD ITEMS See Page 1, Syrian Pounds

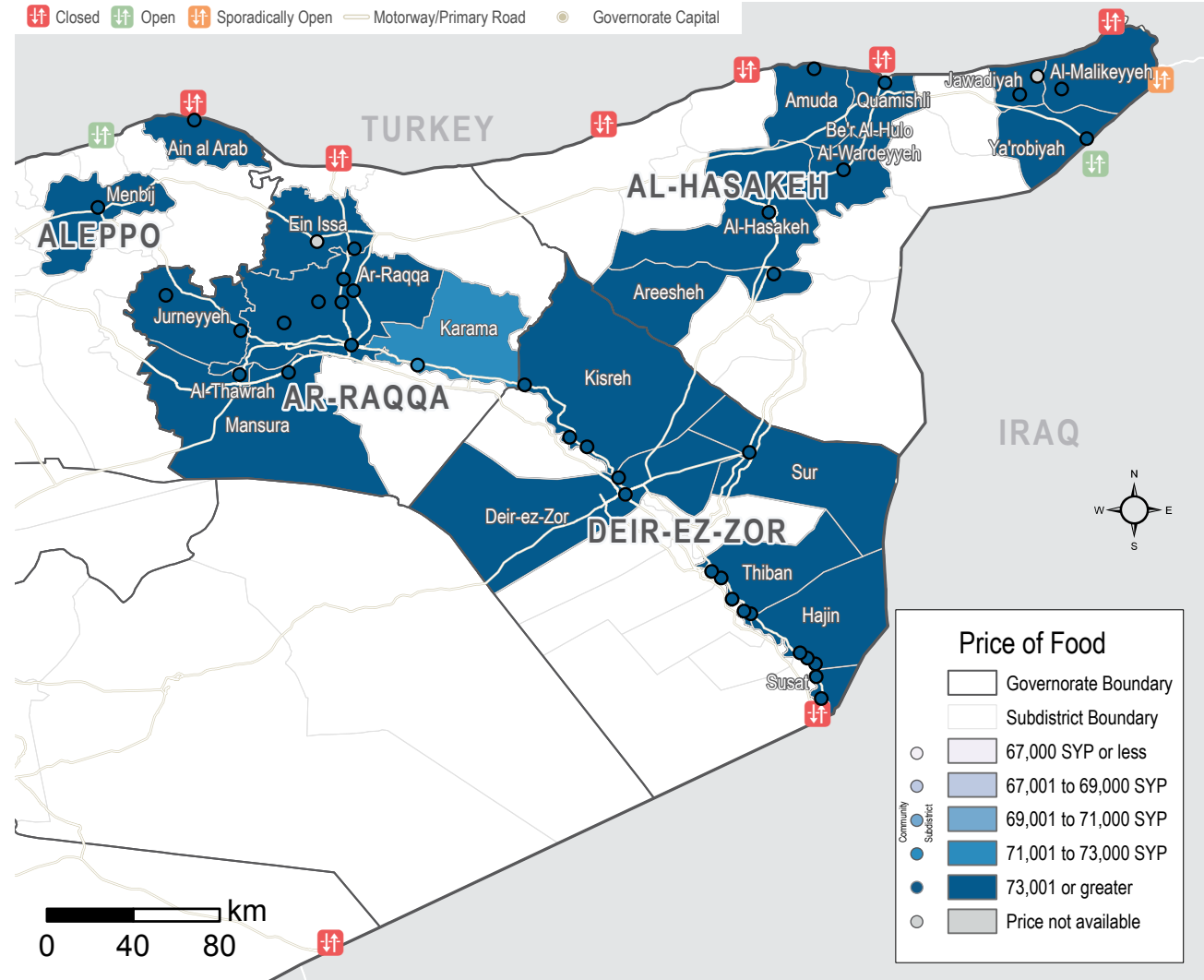
Sub-district	SMEB Food	One month change	Six month change
Northeast Syria	83,421	14%	49%
Ain al Arab	76,453	13%	62%
Al-Hasakeh	82,173	NA	NA
Al-Malikeyyeh	87,475	6%	60%
Al-Thawrah	79,850	10%	39%
Amuda	89,043	NA	42%
Areesheh	78,867	NA	56%
Ar-Raqqqa	84,668	NA	65%
Be'r Al-Hulo Al-Wardeyyeh	79,950	NA	45%
Deir-ez-Zor	84,725	NA	NA
Ein Issa	77,050	NA	64%
Hajin	88,700	NA	41%
Jawadiyah	88,250	7%	68%
Jurneyyeh	78,956	NA	46%
Karama	72,475	NA	49%
Kisreh	79,450	7%	34%
Mansura	78,725	NA	38%
Menbij	73,040	7%	NA
Quamishli	87,925	NA	28%
Sur	86,225	NA	37%
Susat	86,713	NA	NA
Thiban	88,513	NA	36%
Ya'robiyah	88,550	NA	43%

MEDIAN SMEB COST: FOOD ITEMS, BY MONTH

Region (red) and Sub-districts (grey), Thousand Syrian Pounds



SMEB FOOD ITEMS' COST Sub-districts, Syrian Pounds



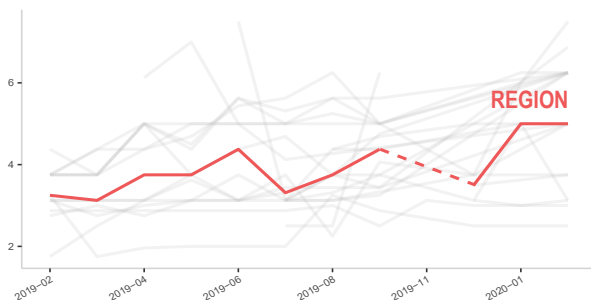
MEDIAN SMEB COOKING FUEL PRICE

Kerosene 25L, Syrian Pounds

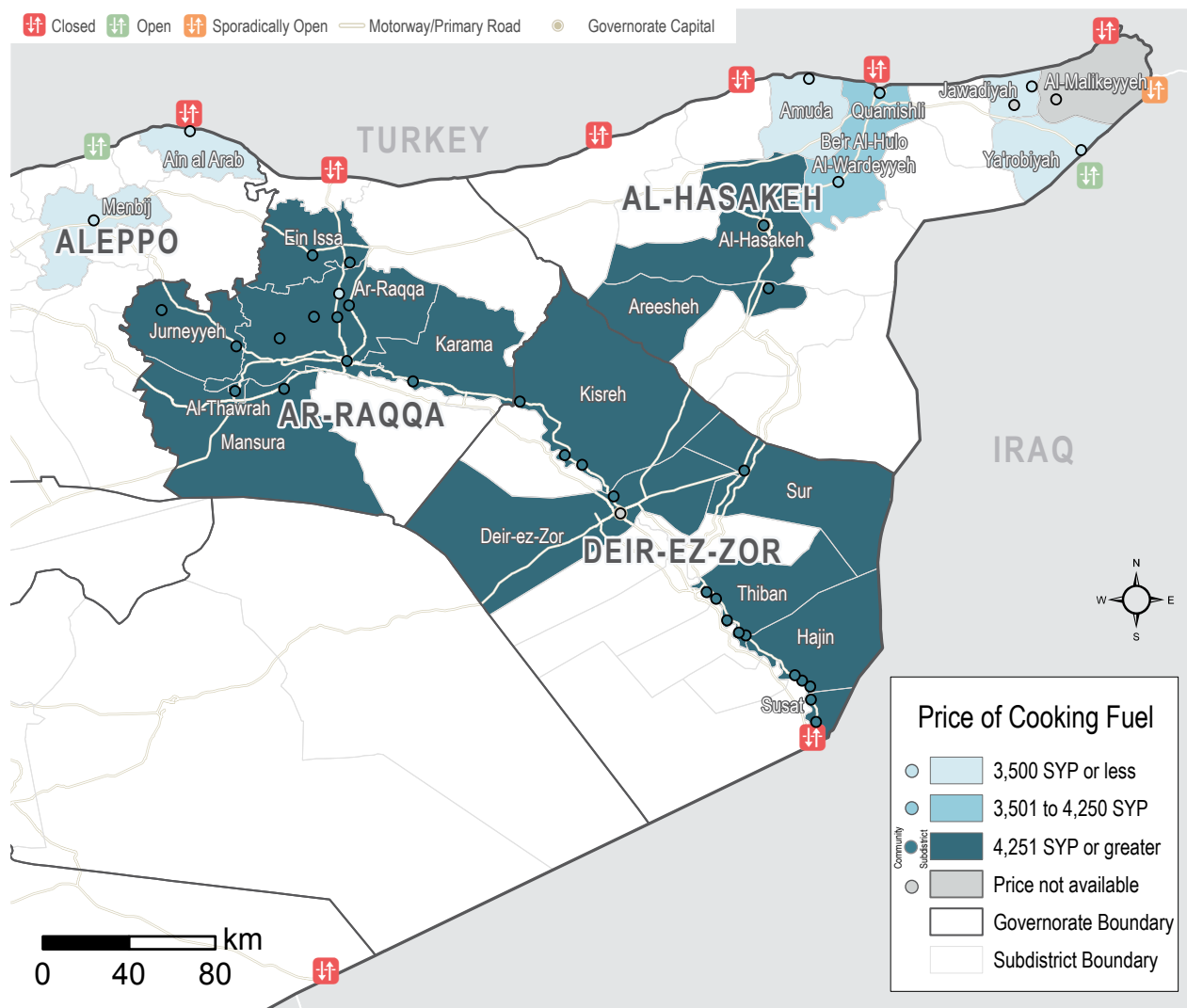
Sub-district	SMEB Cooking Fuel	One month change	Six month change
Northeast Syria	5,000	0%	23%
Ain al Arab	3,000	0%	20%
Al-Hasakeh	5,000	NA	NA
Al-Malikeyyeh	NA	NA	NA
Al-Thawrah	6,250	0%	25%
Amuda	3,125	NA	-50%
Areesheh	6,250	NA	92%
Ar-Raqqa	7,500	25%	50%
Be'r Al-Hulo Al-Wardeyyeh	3,750	NA	-8%
Deir-ez-Zor	5,000	NA	NA
Ein Issa	6,875	NA	38%
Hajin	6,750	NA	96%
Jawadiyah	3,125	-38%	-17%
Jurneyyeh	6,250	NA	18%
Karama	6,250	NA	25%
Kisreh	5,000	0%	33%
Mansura	6,250	4%	25%
Menbij	3,125	4%	NA
Quamishli	3,750	NA	NA
Sur	5,000	NA	45%
Susat	6,563	NA	NA
Thiban	6,406	NA	71%
Ya'robiyah	2,500	NA	-13%

MEDIAN SMEB COOKING FUEL COSTS, BY MONTH

Region (red) and Sub-districts (grey), Thousand Syrian Pounds



SMEB COOKING FUEL COST Sub-districts, Syrian Pounds



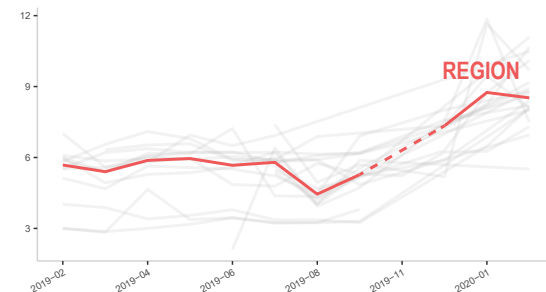
MEDIAN SMEB HYGIENE ITEMS' PRICE

12 bars of soap, 4 packs of 10 sanitary pads, 3kg of laundry/dish soap, 200g of toothpaste, Syrian Pounds

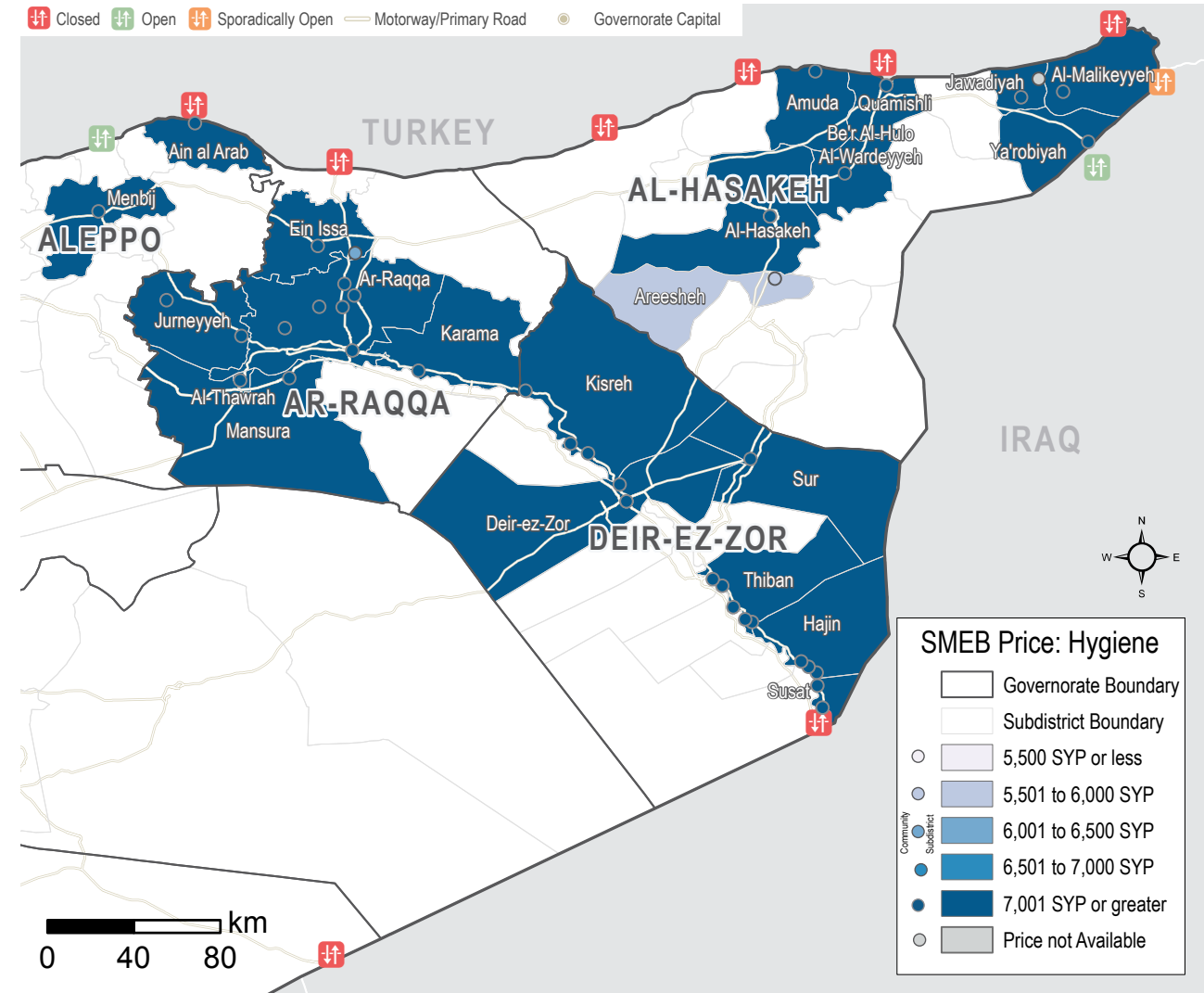
Sub-district	SMEB Hygiene	One month change	Six month change
Northeast Syria	8,553	-6%	62%
Ain al Arab	7,300	17%	38%
Al-Hasakeh	9,116	NA	NA
Al-Malikeyyeh	9,700	-17%	70%
Al-Thawrah	8,115	25%	150%
Amuda	8,405	NA	61%
Areesheh	5,513	NA	-6%
Ar-Raqqa	8,467	-10%	38%
Be'r Al-Hulo Al-Wardeyyeh	8,640	NA	83%
Deir-ez-Zor	10,491	NA	NA
Ein Issa	7,225	NA	44%
Hajin	8,800	NA	70%
Jawadiyah	10,100	11%	95%
Jurneyyeh	8,087	NA	128%
Karama	8,000	NA	30%
Kisreh	10,508	27%	86%
Mansura	8,040	NA	112%
Menbij	7,500	-37%	NA
Quamishli	8,790	NA	27%
Sur	11,091	NA	111%
Susat	8,725	NA	NA
Thiban	9,375	NA	76%
Ya'robiyah	8,200	NA	32%

MEDIAN SMEB HYGIENE ITEMS' COSTS, BY MONTH

Region (red) and Sub-districts (grey), Thousand Syrian Pounds



SMEB HYGIENE ITEMS' COST Sub-districts, Syrian Pounds



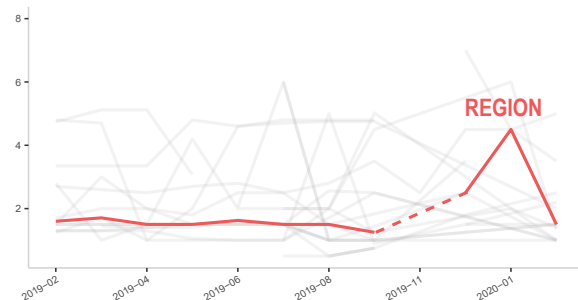
MEDIAN SMEB CELLPHONE DATA PRICE

1GB data, Syrian Pounds

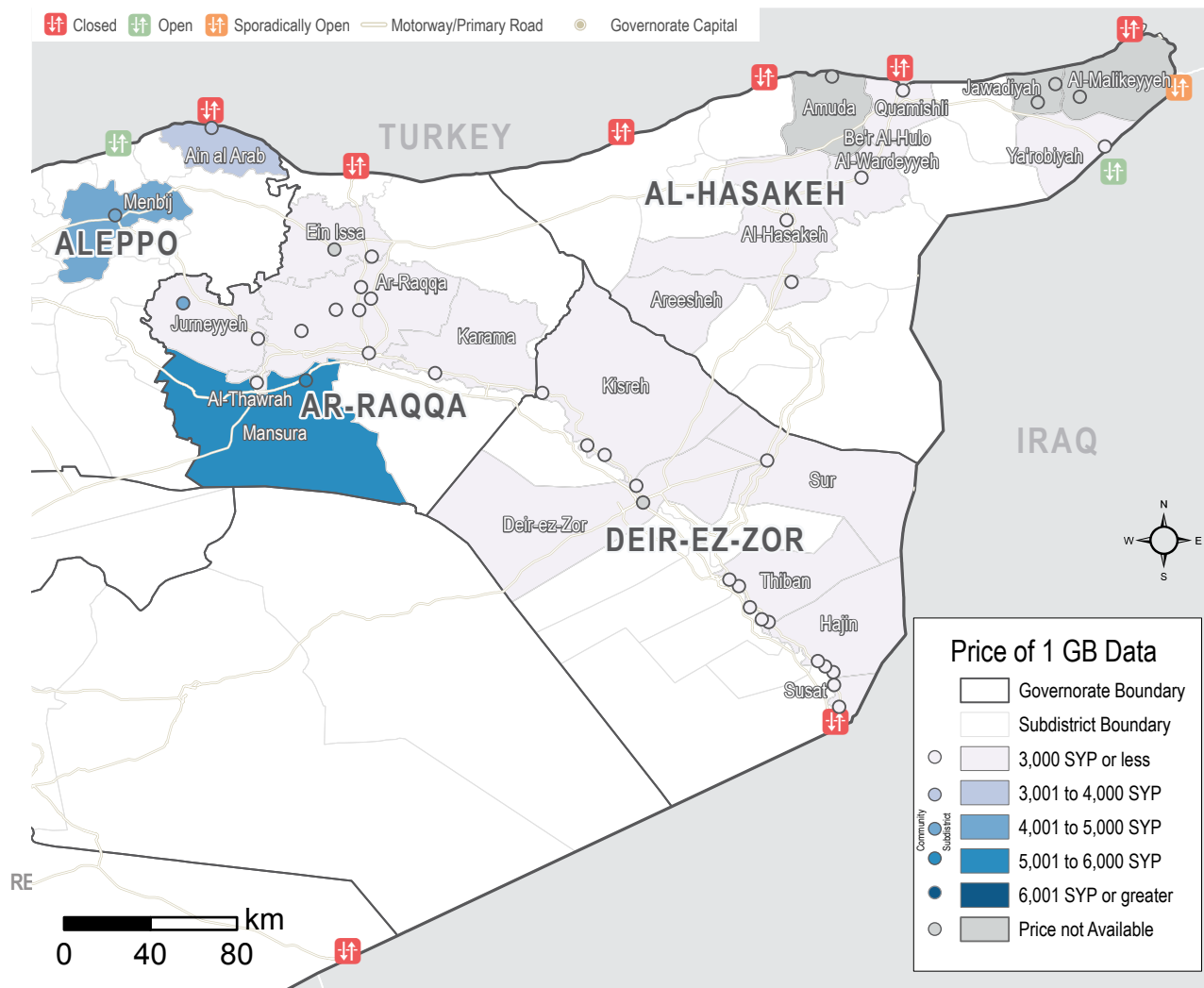
Sub-district	SMEB Data	One month change	Six month change
Northeast Syria	1,500	-67%	20%
Ain al Arab	3,500	-22%	0%
Al-Hasakeh	1,000	NA	NA
Al-Malikeyyeh	NA	NA	NA
Al-Thawrah	1,350	-78%	-70%
Amuda	NA	NA	NA
Areesheh	1,500	NA	50%
Ar-Raqqqa	1,500	NA	5%
Be'r Al-Hulo Al-Wardeyyeh	2,500	NA	233%
Deir-ez-Zor	1,400	NA	NA
Ein Issa	1,500	NA	50%
Hajin	1,000	NA	-60%
Jawadiyah	NA	NA	NA
Jurneyyeh	2,750	NA	-42%
Karama	1,000	NA	0%
Kisreh	1,250	-40%	0%
Mansura	5,350	NA	11%
Menbij	5,000	11%	NA
Quamishli	2,200	NA	NA
Sur	1,000	NA	-60%
Susat	1,000	NA	NA
Thiban	1,000	NA	-80%
Ya'robiyah	1,500	NA	67%

MEDIAN SMEB CELLPHONE DATA COST, BY MONTH

Region (red) and Sub-districts (grey), Thousand Syrian Pounds



SMEB CELLPHONE DATA COST Sub-districts & Communities, Syrian Pounds



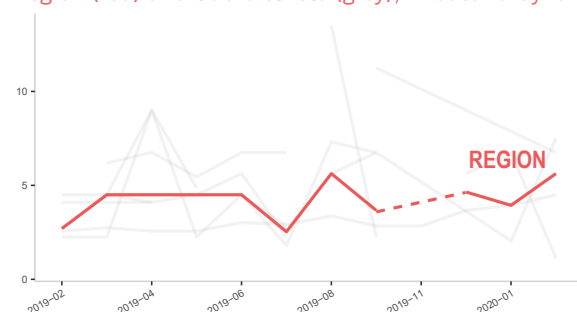
MEDIAN SMEB WATER TRUCKING PRICE

4,500L, Syrian Pounds

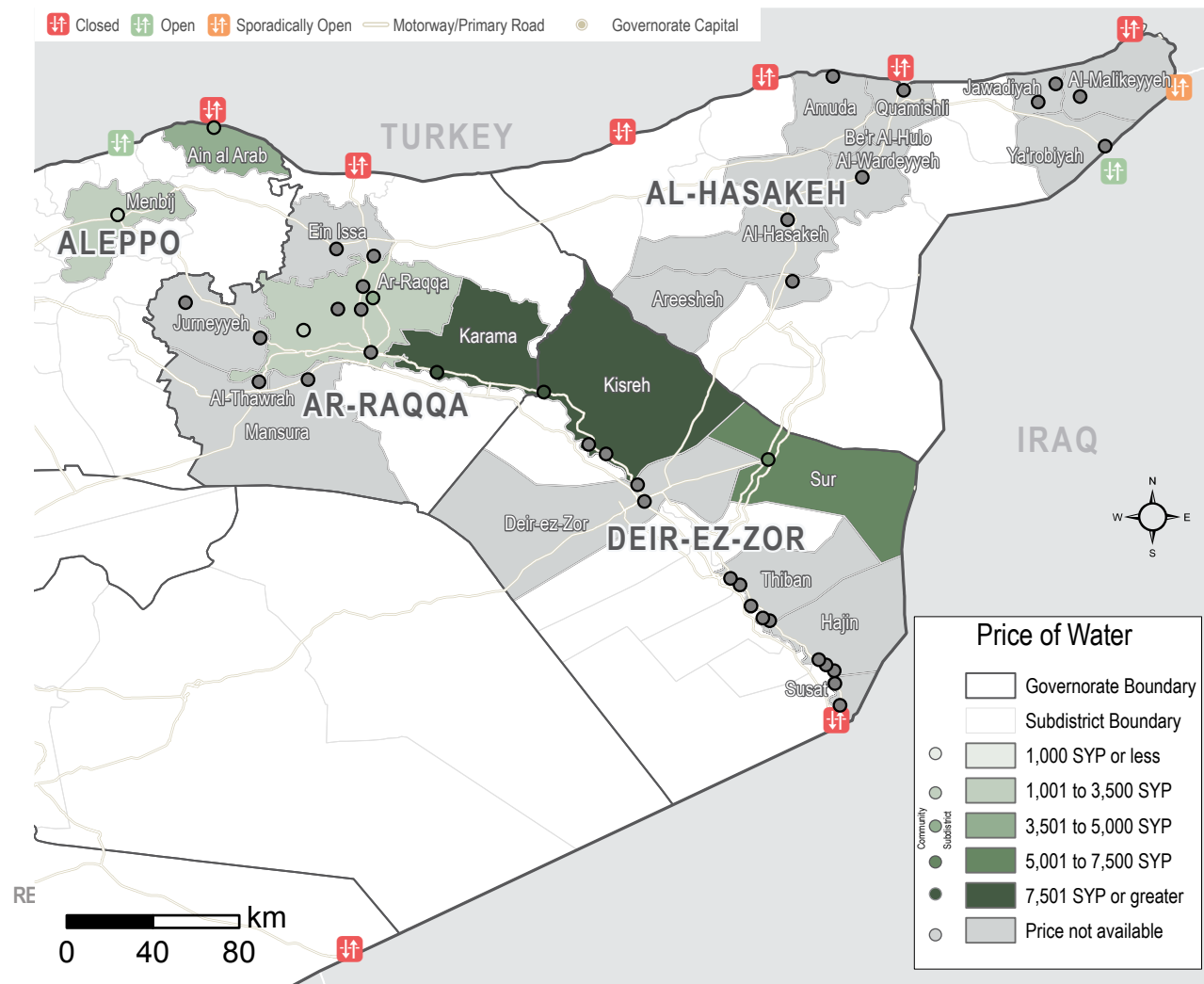
Sub-district	SMEB Water	One month change	Six month change
Northeast Syria	5,625	43%	53%
Ain al Arab	4,500	14%	59%
Al-Hasakeh	NA	NA	NA
Al-Malikeyyeh	NA	NA	NA
Al-Thawrah	NA	NA	NA
Amuda	NA	NA	NA
Areeshah	NA	NA	NA
Ar-Raqqa	3,263	NA	45%
Be'r Al-Hulo Al-Wardeyyeh	NA	NA	NA
Deir-ez-Zor	NA	NA	NA
Ein Issa	NA	NA	NA
Hajin	NA	NA	NA
Jawadiyah	NA	NA	NA
Jurneyyeh	NA	NA	NA
Karama	8,190	NA	NA
Kisreh	7,515	267%	34%
Mansura	NA	NA	NA
Menbij	1,125	-75%	NA
Quamishli	NA	NA	NA
Sur	6,750	NA	-40%
Susat	NA	NA	NA
Thiban	NA	NA	NA
Ya'robiyah	NA	NA	NA

MEDIAN SMEB WATER TRUCKING COSTS, BY MONTH

Region (red) and Sub-districts (grey), Thousand Syrian Pounds



SMEB WATER TRUCKING COST Sub-districts & Communities, Syrian Pounds



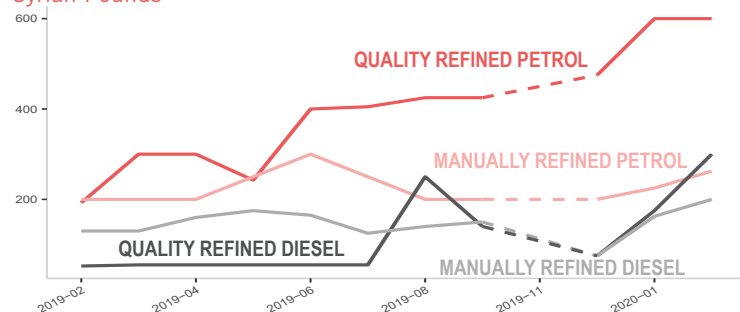
MEDIAN TRANSPORT FUEL PRICE

Diesel and Petrol, 1L (High Quality and Manually Refined), Syrian Pounds

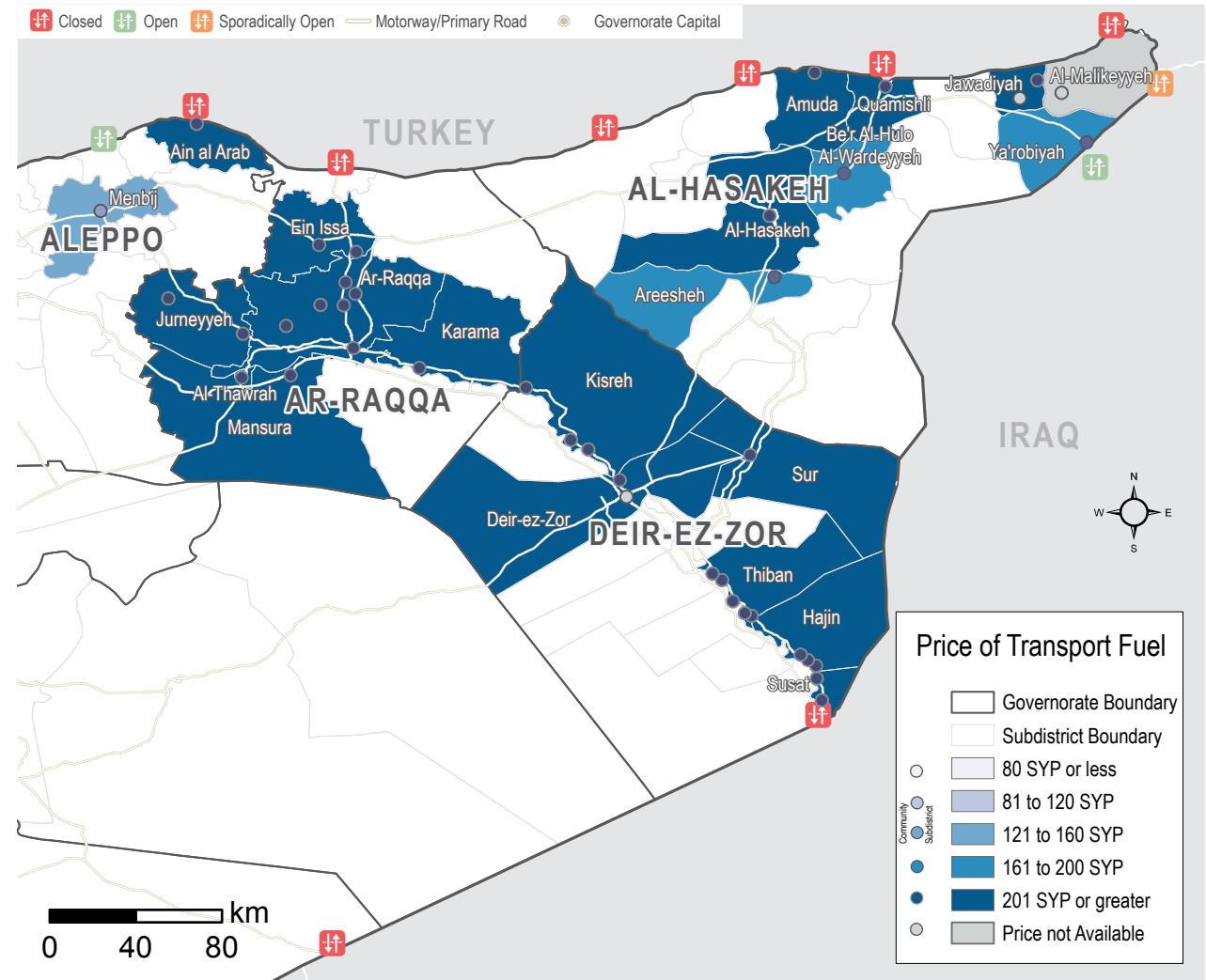
Sub-district	SMEB fuel	One month change	Six month change
Northeast Syria	275	-9%	41%
Ain al Arab	298	20%	53%
Al-Hasakeh	325	NA	NA
Al-Malikeyyeh	NA	NA	NA
Al-Thawrah	400	33%	24%
Amuda	367	NA	93%
Areeshah	200	NA	NA
Ar-Raqqqa	432	43%	10%
Be'r Al-Hulo Al-Wardeyyeh	175	NA	-10%
Deir-ez-Zor	238	NA	NA
Ein Issa	286	NA	23%
Hajin	275	NA	33%
Jawadiyah	308	-12%	58%
Jurneyyeh	294	NA	42%
Karama	408	NA	7%
Kisreh	347	76%	52%
Mansura	383	27%	8%
Menbij	143	-55%	NA
Quamishli	283	NA	48%
Sur	213	NA	-4%
Susat	275	NA	NA
Thiban	275	NA	47%
Ya'robiyah	175	NA	-9%

MEDIAN TRANSPORT FUEL COSTS, BY MONTH & TYPE

Syrian Pounds

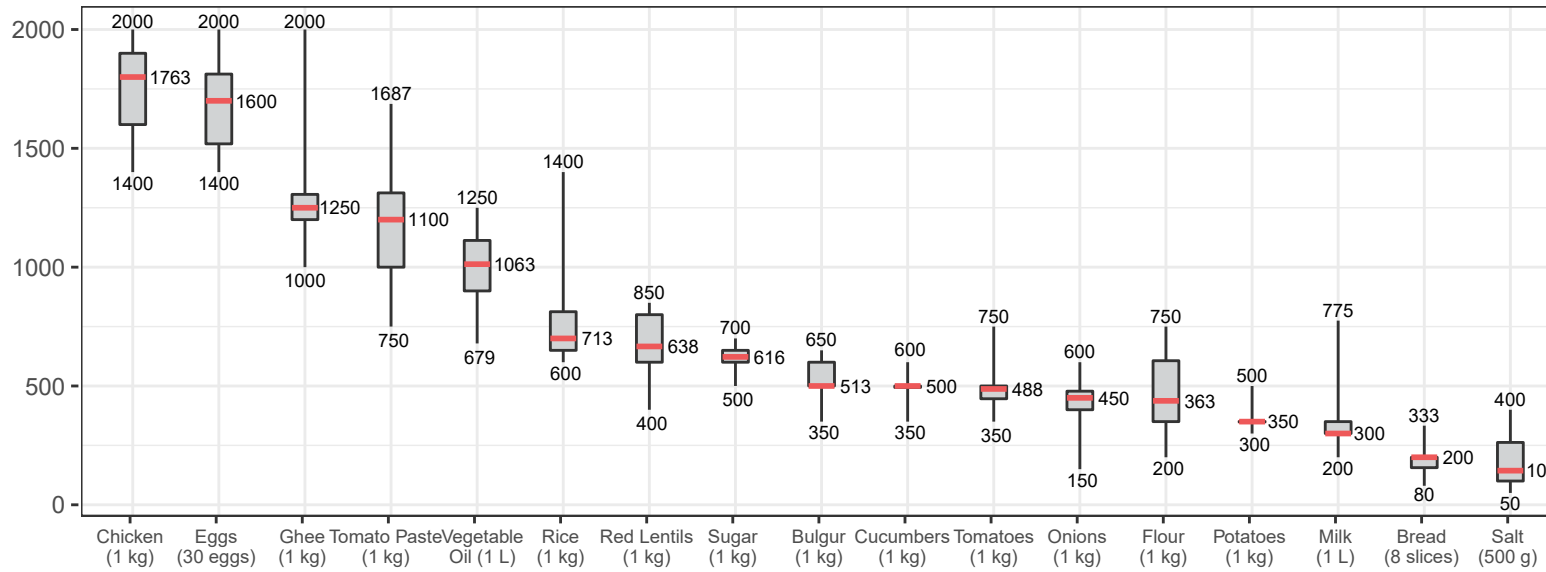


TRANSPORT FUEL COST Sub-districts & Communities, Syrian Pounds



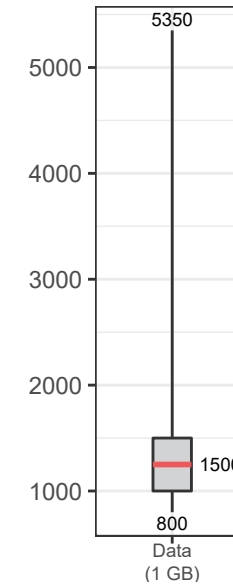
ASSESSED FOOD ITEMS

Syrian Pounds



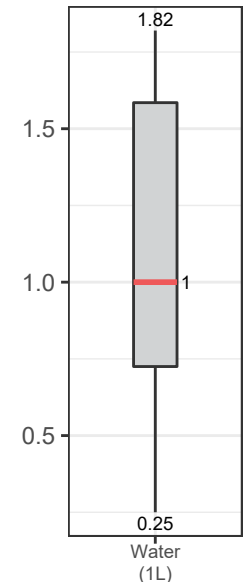
CELLPHONE DATA

Syrian Pounds



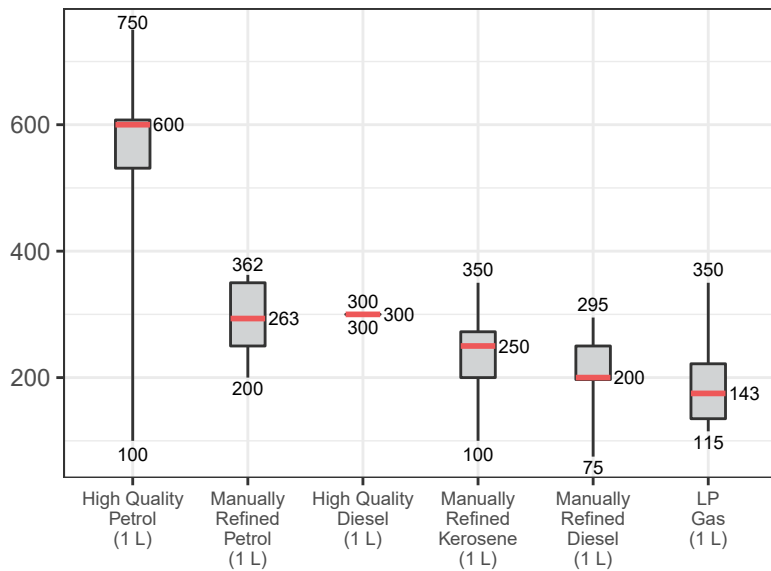
WATER TRUCKING

Syrian Pounds



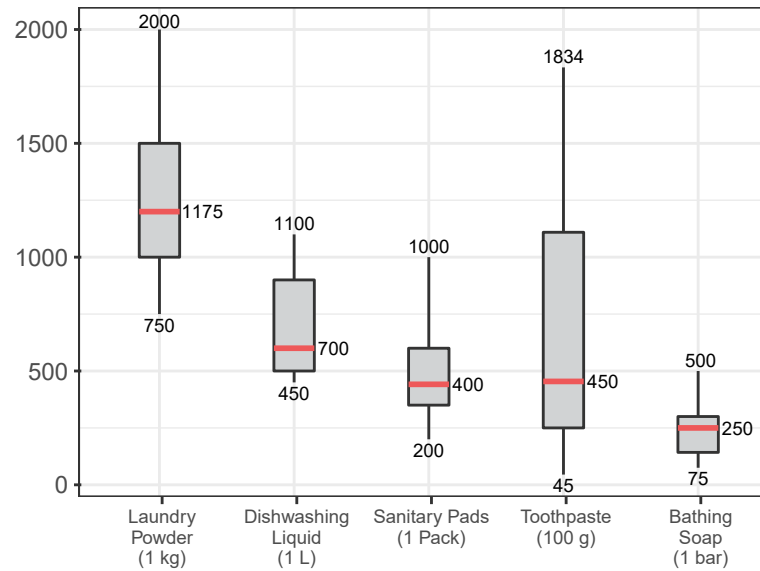
ASSESSED FUEL ITEMS

Syrian Pounds

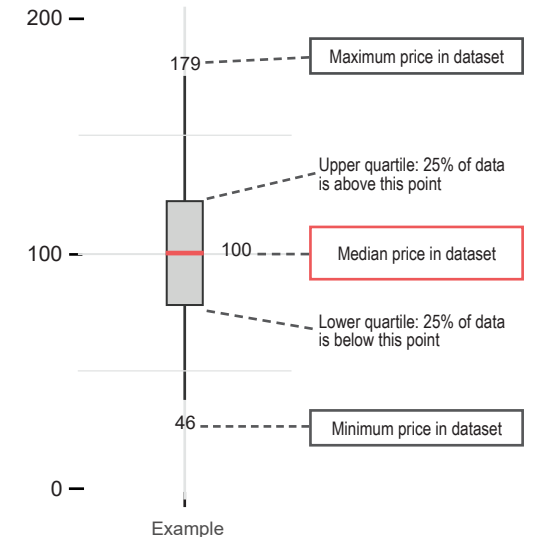


ASSESSED HYGIENE ITEMS

Syrian Pounds



READING BOXPLOTS



METHODOLOGY

In order to be included in the Syria Market Monitoring Exercise, markets must be permanent in nature, large enough to support at least two wholesalers, and diverse enough to provide a sufficient variety of goods and commodities. Additionally, the shops surveyed within each market must be housed in permanent structures and must sell certain items to be eligible for inclusion.

Participating organisations train their enumerators on the Market Monitoring methodology and data collection tools using standard training materials developed by REACH. Each enumerator aims to assess three to five shops of each type in the main market in their assigned sub-district, using surveys to collect information about the cheapest prices of each item and whether there are any barriers in the supply chain. In sub-districts where direct surveying by enumerators is not possible, data collection is conducted remotely through key informants such as shop owners, suppliers and consumers. A survey form is deployed on KoBo each month to capture price and stock information from different types of establishments, including grocery stores, fuel traders, currency exchange shops, water trucking services and mobile phone shops, among others. Nearly all participating partners submit their data to these KoBo forms, using the KoBoCollect Android app to upload data. A small number of partners, by prior permission, collect data using fully harmonised data collection tools deployed on other platforms, then submit their raw data to REACH for standardisation, compilation and cleaning.

Following data collection, REACH compiles and cleans all partners' data, normalising prices and cross-checking outliers. The cleaned data is then analysed by SMEB costs, components of the SMEB, and by commodities. These trends are observed at the sub-district-level and, when possible, at the community-level. Prices are divided into quartiles and boxplots are created to assist CWG members in understanding the distribution of prices across the northeast and northwest of Syria. To illustrate local variations in prices and availability, REACH uses the collected data to map the price of the SMEB in each sub-district and adds illustrations of surrounding border crossings, with data sourced from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). In addition, each SMEB

component costs and transport fuel prices are graphed to visualise trends over time.

The cleaned datasets are available on the [Humanitarian Data Exchange](#) website and are distributed to all participating partners, as well as to interested clusters and the broader humanitarian community.

Calculating 'median cheapest price'

This figure is calculated by taking the median of the minimum-reported prices of a region's sub-districts. In turn, the minimum-reported prices for each sub-district were taken from the median of the minimum-reported prices of the constituent towns assessed.

Calculating Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) costs

The cost of a SMEB is calculated for each assessed sub-district by calculating the median cheapest price of each SMEB commodity in that sub-district, then multiplying these medians by the number of units that an average Syrian household requires to purchase in a month. The composition of the SMEB can be found on [page 1](#). SMEB vegetables includes potatoes, tomatoes, onions and cucumbers.

Calculating price trends over time

One month and six-month price changes and trends in this factsheet are calculated only with the comparable assessed communities of a sub-district with consistent coverage across months. On the other hand, in the dataset medians are calculated taking all assessed communities for the current month in consideration. Therefore, prices and percentage changes within the tables of this factsheet may slightly differ from the current month's dataset medians.

Calculating regional SMEB costs with limited coverage

For the months of January and February 2020, the regional full SMEB cost as well as the regional full SMEB cost without water were calculated by summing the medians of each regional SMEB component. This was done due to the lower coverage at a sub-district level in January and February 2020, which affected the regional median SMEB calculations.

Seasonal items

Winterisation items have been added to the market monitoring exercise and data collection will continue for these items over winter, until mid-March 2020. Whilst other commodities are bought regularly by families, winterisation items are not expected to be bought regularly and may be one-off purchases for each family member.

Changes to coverage

Given security and access constraints in the south of Syria, data collection has been unable to take place since July 2018. Escalation of conflict in October 2019 has resulted in limited coverage in northeast Syria since then. However, coverage between January and February 2020 significantly increased (from 9 assessed sub-districts to 22 assessed sub-districts).

Challenges and limitations

As the Syria Market Monitoring Exercise currently includes 13 partners based in 2 hubs, achieving a consistent approach is inherently challenging. Participating organisations are therefore requested to adopt harmonised data collection methodologies and tools to ensure that the data uploaded is as accurate as possible. Because this exercise collects data directly from vendors and relies on partner organizations for its wide coverage, Market Monitoring may sporadically lose coverage temporarily or for longer periods of time owing to challenges in accessing locations or due to loss in the shared data collection capacity of the project. This impacts the ability to report on trends, as can be seen in the line graphs and 'NA' values in the tables.

ABOUT REACH

REACH Initiative 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).

ABOUT THE CASH WORKING GROUP

The Cash Working Group (CWG) was established in May 2014 to analyse the impact of the ongoing conflict on markets in Syria and guide the implementation of humanitarian cash and voucher programmes within those markets. REACH and the CWG have been partners on the Syria Market Monitoring Exercise since early 2015.