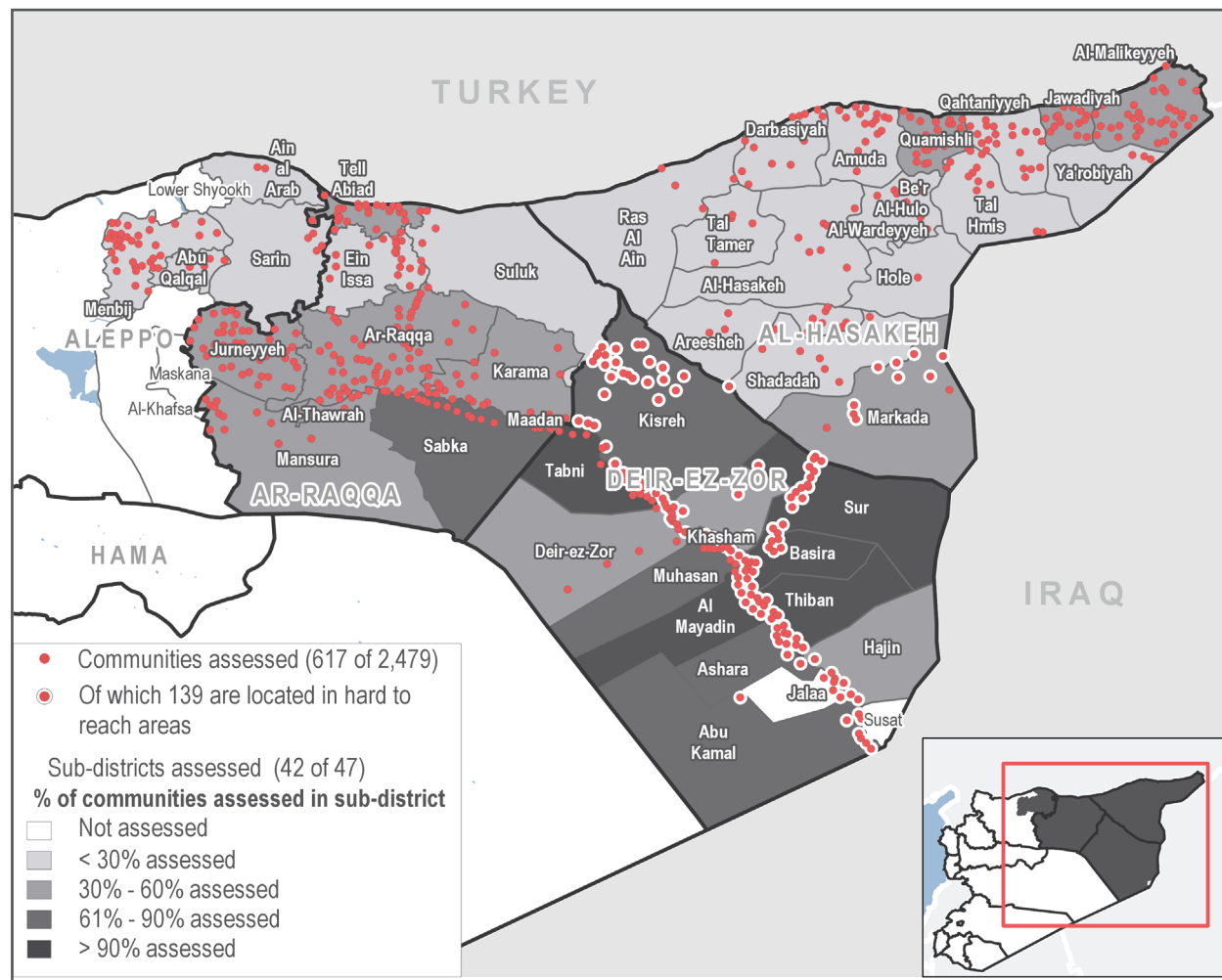


# Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria (HSOS)

## Northeast Syria, February 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](#).

The factsheet presents information gathered in 617 communities across Al-Hasakeh (200 communities), eastern Aleppo\* (46 communities), Deir-ez-Zor (158 communities), and Ar-Raqqa (213 communities) governorates. Data was collected during the month of March 2019, and refers to the situation in the northeast region in February 2019. Findings are indicative rather than representative, and should not be generalised across the region.

For community-level data, datasets are available on the [REACH Resource Centre](#), the [Humanitarian Data Exchange](#), and are also distributed through partners across the humanitarian community.

\*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)\* in assessed communities:

**1,163,429** PIN      **651,103** People in Acute Need

#### Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB):<sup>1,2</sup>

Average price in **February 2019**      **65,009 Syrian pound (SYP)**  
 One month change:      **-2%**  
 Six month change:      **+1%**

\* 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)

Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor cities fully liberated from ISIL. <sup>a,b</sup>	Forces escalate offensive on ISIL in southeastern Deir-ez-Zor governorate and in southern Al-Hasakeh governorate. <sup>c</sup>	Delayed rainfall and deteriorated agricultural infrastructure and input resulted in the lowest annual wheat yield since 1989. <sup>d</sup>	244,655 spontaneous returnees in Deir-ez-Zor governorate and 166,305 in Ar-Raqqa city reported by OCHA since November 2017. <sup>e</sup>	Offensive to retake final ISIL-held enclave continues in southern Deir-ez-Zor governorate contributing to additional displacement. <sup>h</sup>	Civilians evacuated from Baghouz, the last ISIL-held Syrian enclave. <sup>i</sup>
October-November 2017	April 2018	October 2018	Mid-December 2018	December 2018	February 2019

## CONTEXT

In February 2019, further displacement occurred in Northeast Syria (NES), in light of the offensive against the final ISIL-held enclave located in Baghouz, Deir-ez-Zor governorate.<sup>l</sup> Many of the internally displaced persons (IDPs), who largely got displaced due to conflict, arrived to Al Hol camp in Al-Hasakeh governorate.<sup>j</sup> The humanitarian situation in Al Hol camp continues to be worrying as the camp, originally established to hold 10,000 people, was as of late February, hosting over 70,000 people, the majority being women and children.<sup>k</sup> The cold weather, the lack of WASH services, and the shortages of healthcare services in this area leave camp residents vulnerable to hypothermia and waterborne and other communicable diseases.<sup>k</sup> For more information see the [Al Hol refugee Camp Map December 2018](#), and the [Al Hol IDP Camp Map December 2018](#).

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS<sup>3</sup>

### Deir-ez-Zor governorate reports limited bread consumption, likely exacerbated by recent increases in the prices of key goods such as electricity, fuel and flour

In Deir-ez-Zor governorate, KIs in 145 (92%) of 158 assessed communities reported not accessing bread on a daily basis. Reasons for limited access to bread were various: KIs in 131 (87%) assessed communities reported that flour was too expensive and KIs in 57 (36%) assessed communities reported that wheat was too expensive and hard to access. Other reported reasons were related to fuel; KIs in 59 (37%) assessed communities reported that there was not enough fuel for electricity, and KIs in 25 (16%) assessed communities reported that fuel for electricity was too expensive. This trend of increased prices of key goods such as electricity, fuel and flour is described in the [Northeast Syria Market Monitoring Exercise February 2019](#) that shows the gradual increase of the NES Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) cost since May 2018. Considering the fact that KIs in Deir-ez-Zor reported the highest proportion of communities making their own bread compared to other governorates in NES, a lack of fuel for electricity could have a significant impact on people's bread consumption, and resultant food security. For further context, see the [Deir-ez-Zor Area Based Assessment February 2019](#).

### Latrine-related challenges in Deir-ez-Zor governorate

KIs in 140 (89%) of 158 assessed communities reported multiple challenges with latrines in Deir-ez-Zor governorate in February. More than half of KIs reported that latrines were not clean (51%), and that there was a lack of privacy (54%). Furthermore, no separation between men and women was reportedly a challenge in 62 (39%) assessed communities. Additionally, a lack of water to flush (26%), a blocked connection to the sewage (22%), and problems with emptying the septic tank (20%), were commonly reported. KIs in Deir-ez-Zor governorate reported also that water tasted/smelled bad in 75% of assessed communities, highlighting that WASH conditions could have potential implications on the population's health.

### Sharp decline in reported sufficient income in eastern Aleppo governorate

In February, KIs in 12 (26%) of 46 assessed communities in eastern Aleppo governorate reported income was sufficient to meet household needs, reflecting a sharp decline since January, when KIs in 21 (46%) communities reported income was sufficient. Additionally, in February, KIs in all assessed communities reported a lack of resources to buy food available in markets, compared to KIs in 41 (89%) assessed communities in January. This was likely related to the increased SMEB cost in NES.



## Displacement<sup>4</sup>

- KIs in 108 (68%) of 158 assessed communities in Deir-ez-Zor governorate reported IDPs leaving the community, likely due to the escalation of conflict. Across NES, the governorate with the highest reported number of IDP arrivals in assessed communities was Al-Hasakeh governorate, with KIs reporting that 8,000 out of 12,010 IDPs arrived in Hole sub-district. KIs reported that all IDPs arriving in Al Hol camp came from Baghouz community in Deir-ez-Zor governorate.



## Food Security & Livelihoods

- Across all four governorates, livelihoods were considered a top priority need. In Deir-ez-Zor governorate, KIs in all 158 (100%) assessed communities reported income was insufficient to meet household needs, as compared to 385 (84%) of the 459 assessed communities in Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa, and eastern Aleppo governorates.
- KIs in all 617 assessed communities across NES reported challenges in accessing enough food to meet household needs. The most commonly reported barriers to accessing food were the high price of some food items, reported in 432 (70%) assessed communities, and a lack of resources to buy food available in the markets, reported in 421 (68%) assessed communities.
- KIs in 156 (25%) of 617 assessed communities in NES reported that local food production has decreased, which is considerable since KIs in 151 (96%) of 158 assessed communities in Deir-ez-Zor governorate and KIs in 172 (86%) of 200 assessed communities in Al-Hasakeh governorate reported food was obtained through own production.



## Education

- Among the 617 assessed communities in NES, KIs in only 181 (29%) assessed communities reported that all children had access to education services. In Al-Hasakeh governorate, KIs in 94 (47%) of 200 assessed communities reported access to education for all children compared to KIs in 87 (21%) of 417 assessed communities in Ar-Raqqa, Deir-ez-Zor and eastern Aleppo governorates.
- In Al-Hasakeh governorate, KIs in 18 (21%) of 200 assessed communities reported parents not approving of curriculum as the most common reason why school-aged children were not attending school; a barrier also reported by KIs in 18 (5%) of 317 assessed communities in Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor governorates, and not reported at all by KIs in the 46 assessed communities in eastern Aleppo governorate.



## WASH

- In eastern Aleppo governorate, KIs in 26 (57%) of 46 assessed communities reported that garbage is buried or burned as the most common way that people dispose of their garbage, a percentage that is considerably higher when compared to other assessed governorates. In tandem, KIs in only 12 (26%) assessed communities indicated that garbage was collected at least once a week.



## Health

- Access to healthcare in NES continues to pose severe challenges. KIs in only 20 (3%) of 617 assessed communities across NES reported no difficulties in access. The most commonly reported barriers in Ar-Raqqa, eastern Aleppo, and Al-Hasakeh governorates were the perceived lack of health facilities available in the area, the high costs of transportation to the facilities, and the high price of healthcare services.
- In Deir-ez-Zor governorate, unique barriers were reported: KIs in 24 (15%) of 158 assessed communities reported a lack of specialised clinics, and KIs in 8 (5%) assessed communities reported a lack of professional staff.

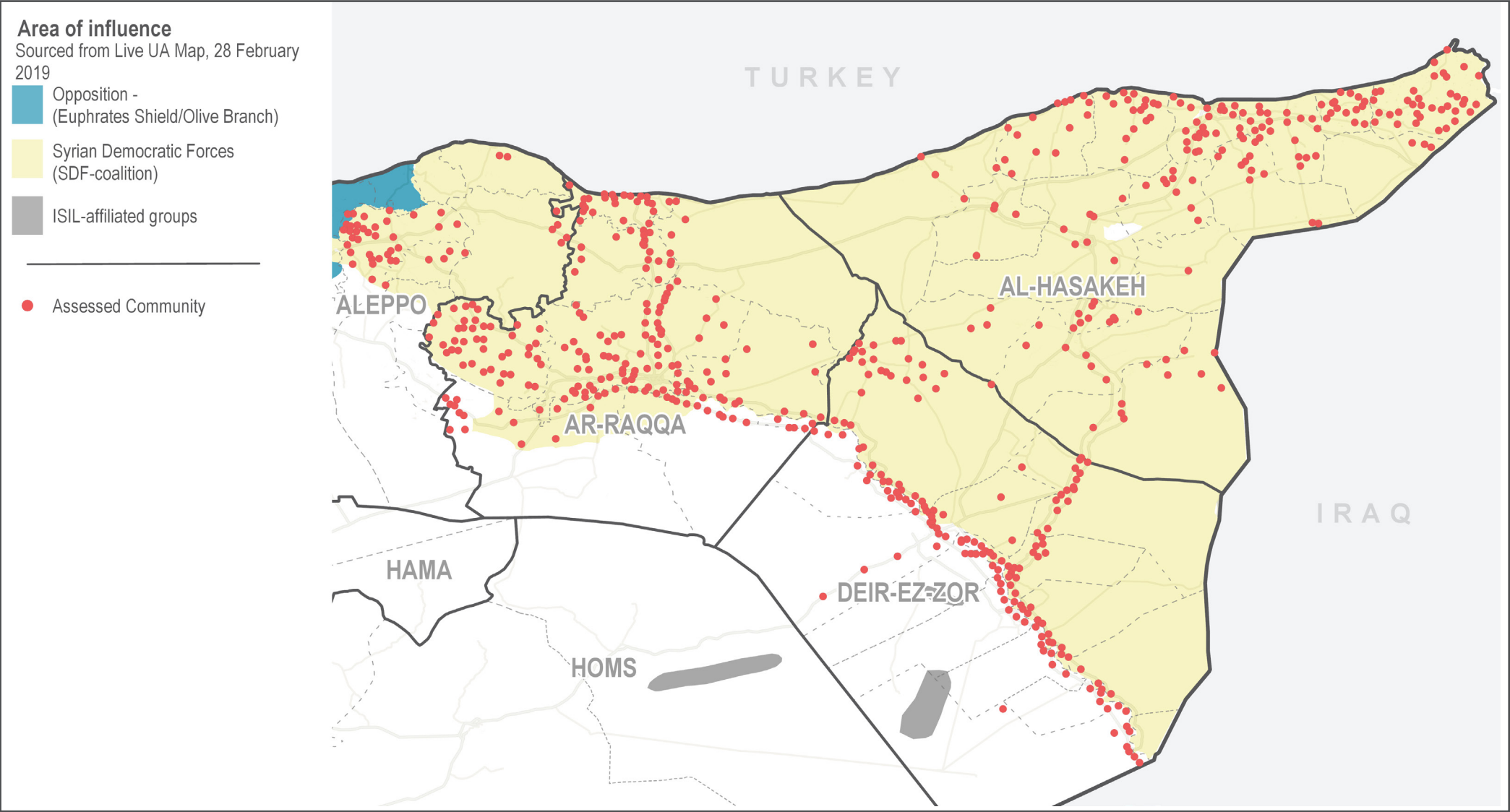


## Shelter and NFI

- In Al-Hasakeh governorate, KIs in 79 (40%) of 200 assessed communities indicated that the majority of spontaneous returnee (both IDP and refugee) households live in homes owned prior to the start of the conflict. This percentage is considerably lower compared to other governorates in NES. In Ar-Raqqa, eastern Aleppo, and Deir-ez-Zor governorates, KIs in 372 (89%) of 417 assessed communities reported that spontaneous returnee households live in homes owned prior to the onset of the conflict.

# Northeast Syria, February 2019

## Regional areas of influence:



# Northeast Syria, February 2019

## DISPLACEMENT<sup>4</sup>

**10,890 - 12,010** Estimated number of IDP arrivals in assessed communities February 2019.

**11,790 - 12,890** Estimated number of spontaneous returns in assessed communities February 2019.<sup>5</sup>

### Communities with the largest estimated number of IDP arrivals:

Hole (Hole, Al-Hasakeh)	<b>8,200 - 8,800</b>
Hajin (Hajin, Deir-ez-Zor)	<b>700 - 750</b>
Sur (Sur, Deir-ez-Zor)	<b>450 - 550</b>

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

### Top 3 reported subdistricts of origin for IDP arrivals:<sup>6,7</sup>

- Susat (Deir-ez-Zor)
- Abu Kamal (Deir-ez-Zor)
- Hajin (Deir-ez-Zor)

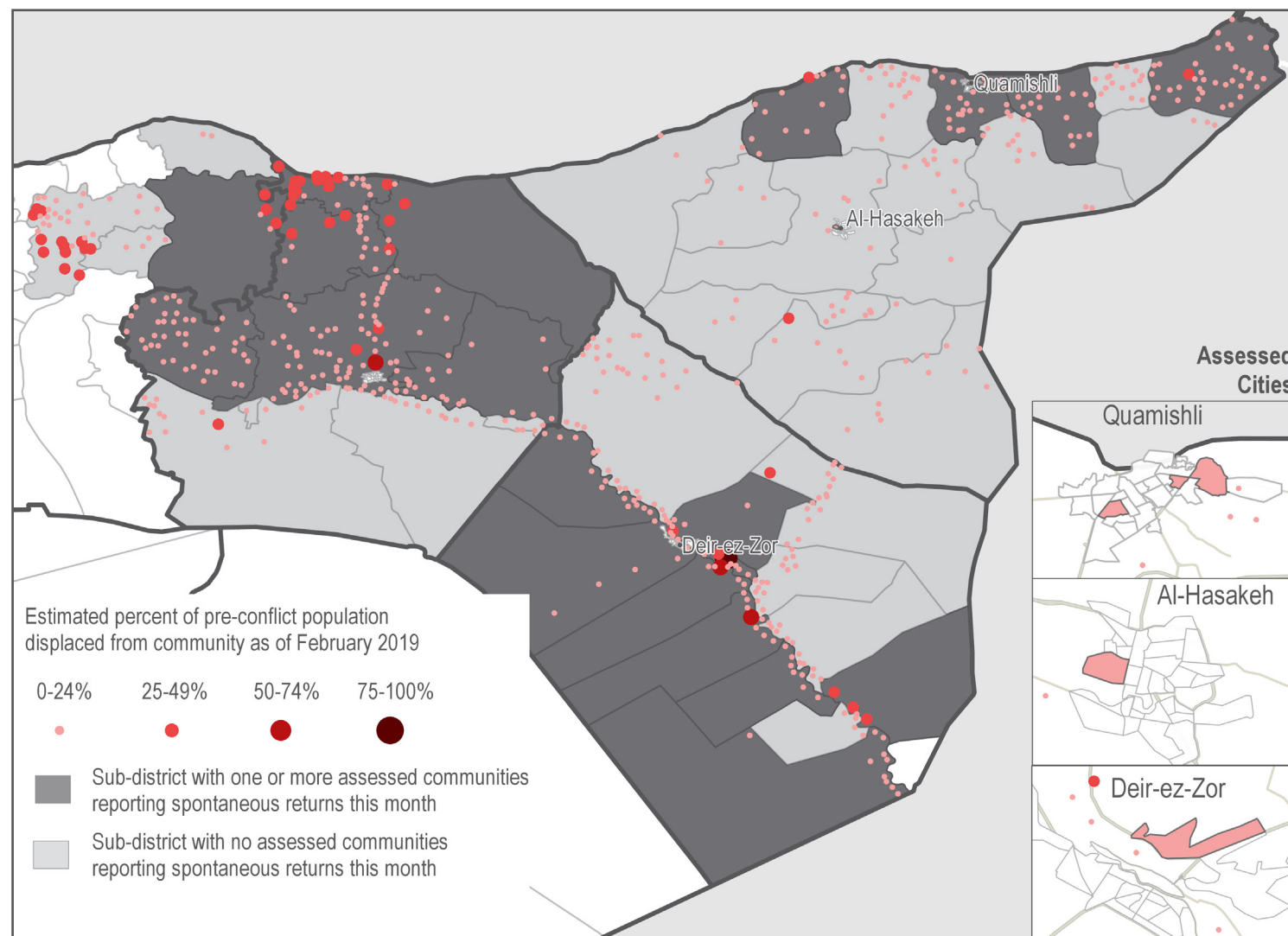
\*Reported as sub-district (governorate)

**613 communities reported no PCP departures.<sup>8</sup>**

### Top 3 reasons for PCP departures in the remaining 4 assessed communities:<sup>6,7,9</sup>

Access to money to pay for departure	50%
Loss of income	50%
Escalation of conflict	25%

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



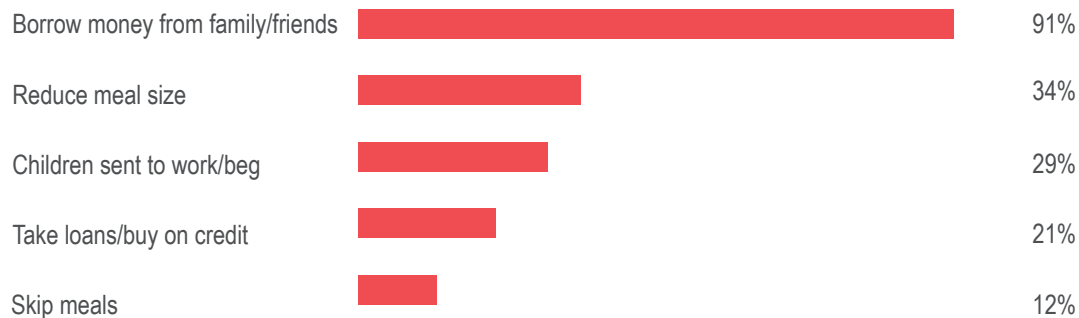
# Northeast Syria, February 2019



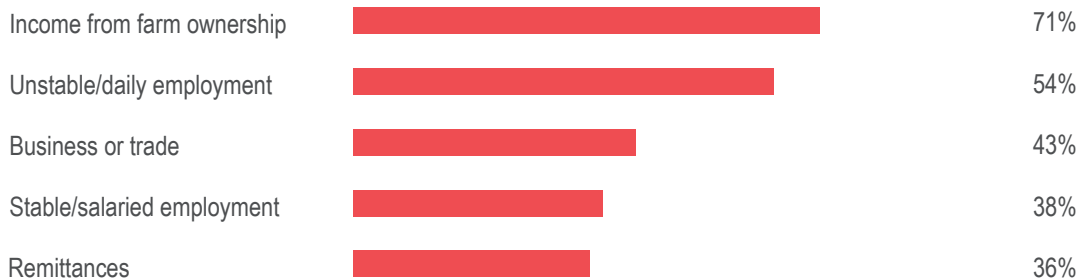
## FOOD SECURITY & LIVELIHOODS

- 91/617** Communities reported having received food distributions in the last month.
- 94/617** Communities reported that residents were unable to access shops and markets.
- 1/617** Community, Khaled (Al-Hasakeh governorate), reported that residents used extreme food-based coping strategies to deal with insufficient income.<sup>10</sup>
- 50,000 to 100,000 SYP** Most commonly reported household monthly income range.<sup>1</sup>

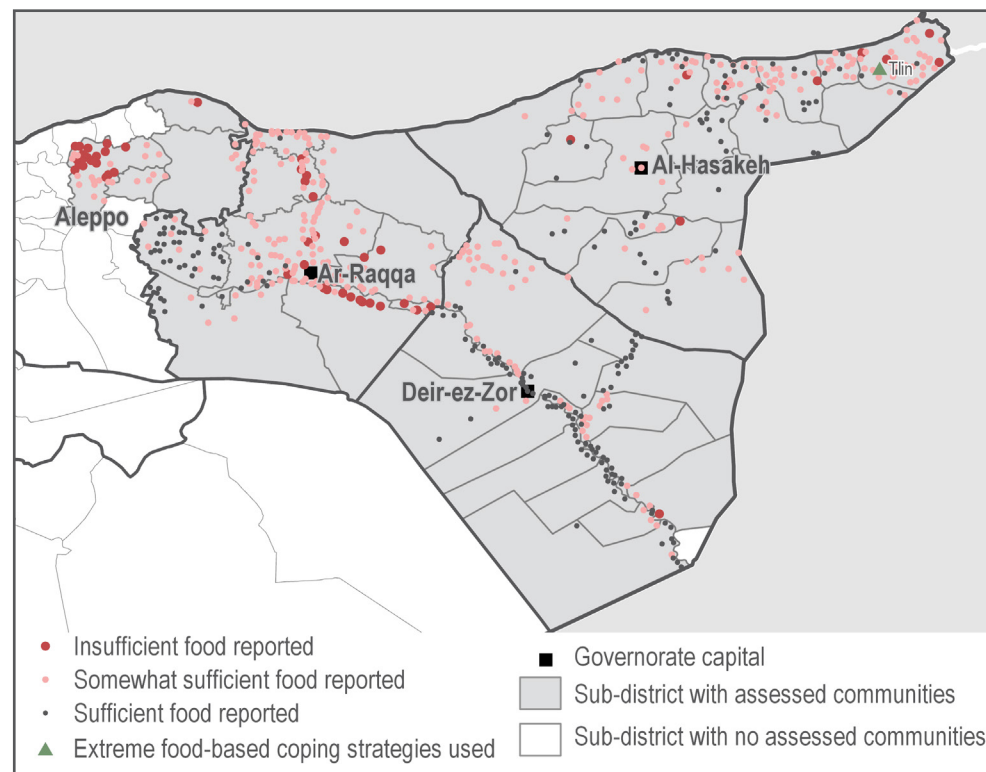
**75 communities reported that residents had enough income to cover household needs. The most commonly reported coping strategies to deal with a lack of income in the remaining 542 assessed communities were:**<sup>6,7,9</sup>



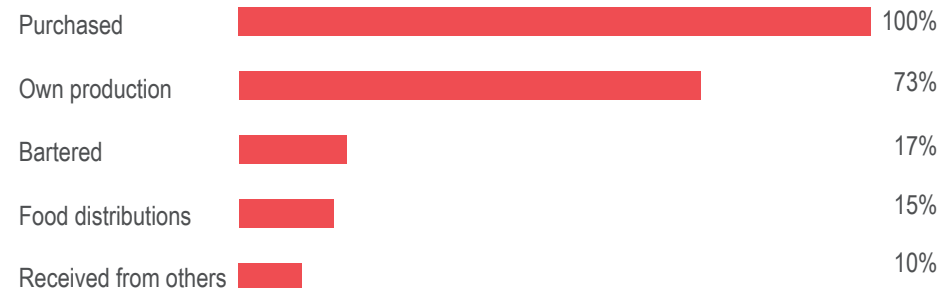
### Most commonly reported main sources of income:<sup>6,7</sup>



### Communities that reported having an insufficient quantity of food:<sup>11</sup>



### Most commonly reported ways of obtaining food:<sup>6,7</sup>



# Northeast Syria, February 2019

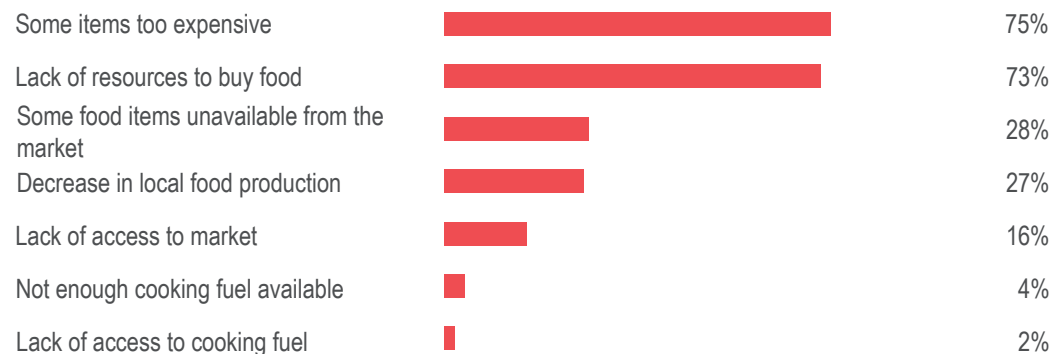
## FOOD SECURITY & LIVELIHOODS

Core food item prices reported (in SYP):<sup>1,12</sup>

Food item:	Regional average price Feb 2019:	One month change:	Six month change:
Bread (8 pieces)	100	-31%	0%
Rice (1 kilogram)	450	-5%	-10%
Lentils (1 kilogram)	325	-7%	+8%
Sugar (1 kilogram)	300	0%	+4%
Cooking oil (1 litre)*	4,113	+4%	+5%

\*includes the combined vegetable oil and ghee prices

39 communities reported that residents experienced no challenges in accessing food. The most common difficulties experienced in the remaining 578 assessed communities were:<sup>6,7,9</sup>



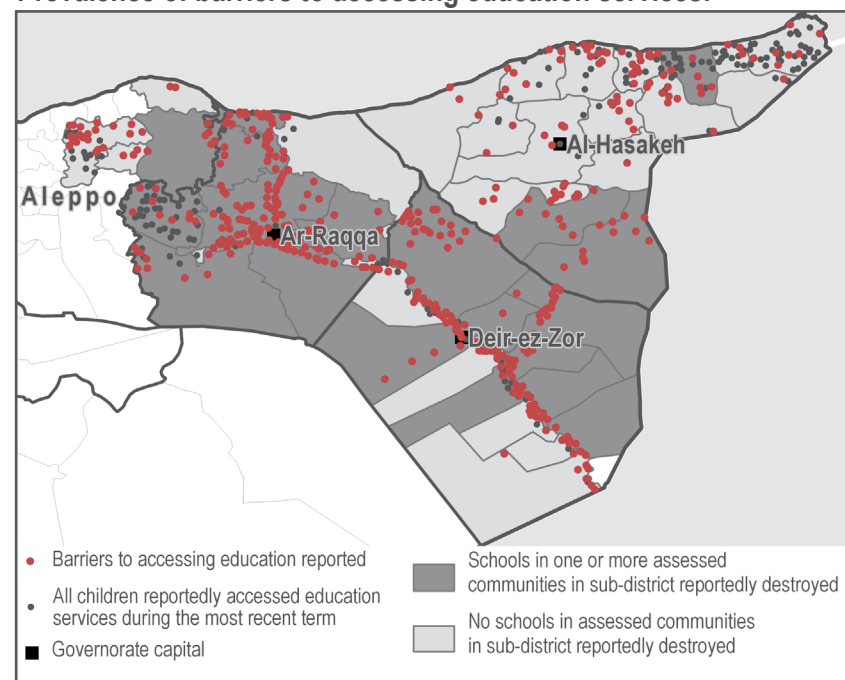
## EDUCATION

598/617 communities reported having functioning primary education facilities, while 244 communities reported having functioning secondary education facilities.<sup>13</sup>

181 communities reported that all children were able to access education. The most commonly reported barriers to education in the remaining 436 assessed communities were:<sup>6,7,9</sup>



Prevalence of barriers to accessing education services:



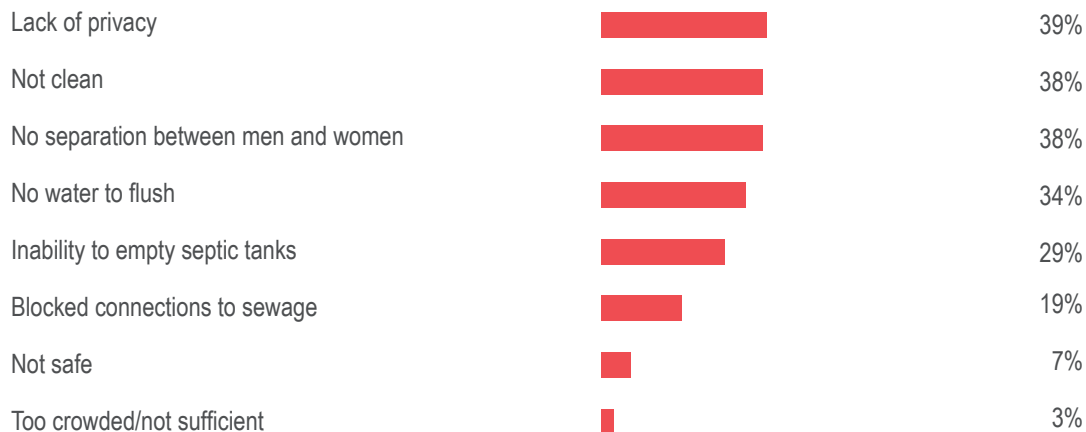
# Northeast Syria, February 2019



**197/617** Communities reported that water from their primary source tasted and/or smelled bad.

**41/617** Communities reported that drinking water from their primary source made people sick.

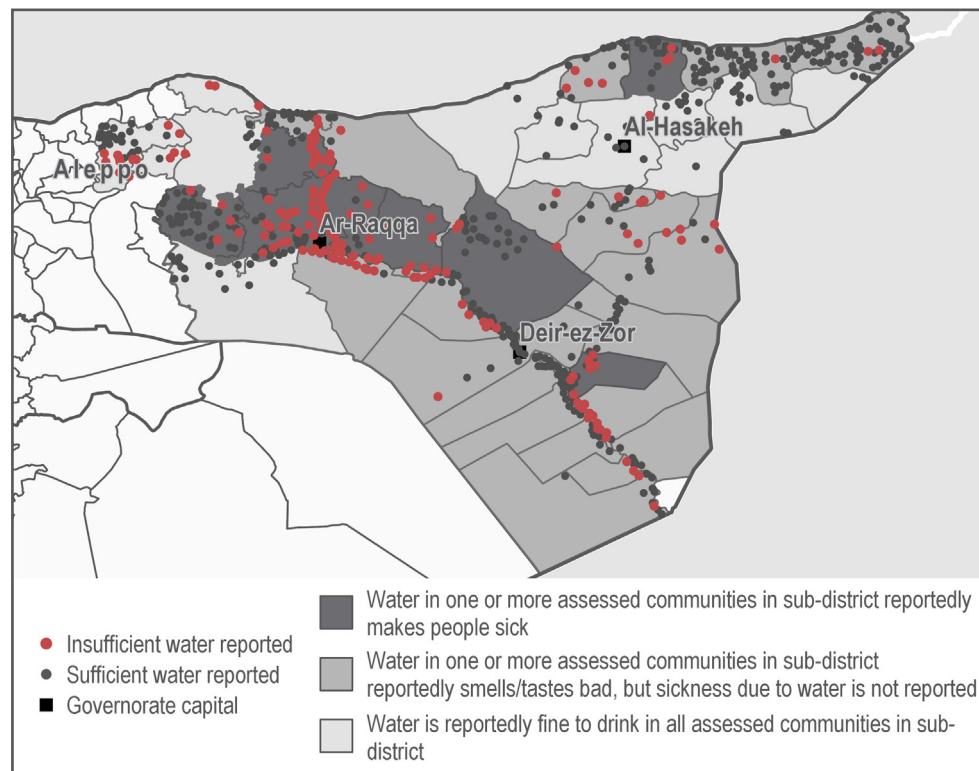
**349** communities reported that residents had no problems with latrines. The most commonly reported problems with latrines in the remaining **268** assessed communities were:<sup>5,7,9</sup>



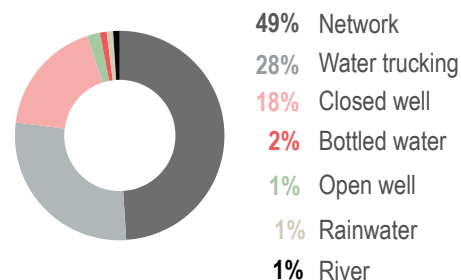
**441** communities reported that they had sufficient amounts of water to meet household needs. The most common coping strategies to deal with a lack of water in the remaining **174** assessed communities were:<sup>6,7,9</sup>



Communities that reported insufficient amounts of water to meet household needs:<sup>11</sup>



Primary drinking water source reported:<sup>7</sup>



Primary method of garbage disposal reported:<sup>6,7</sup>



# Northeast Syria, February 2019

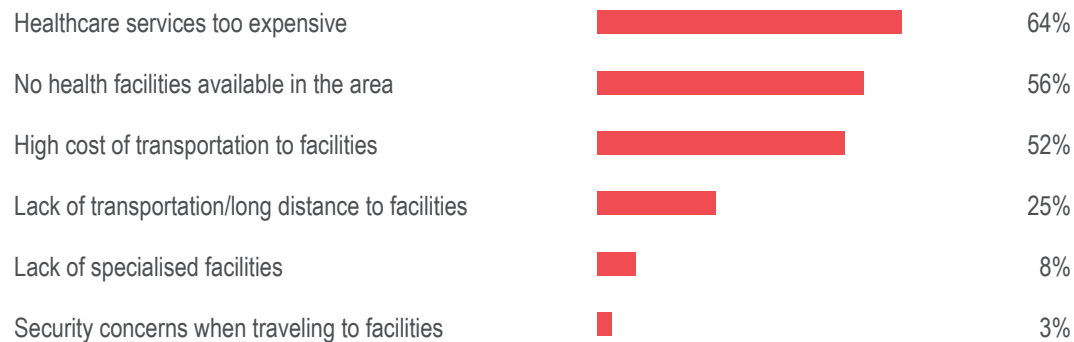
## HEALTH

**283/617** Communities reported that no assessed medical items were available in their community.<sup>14</sup>

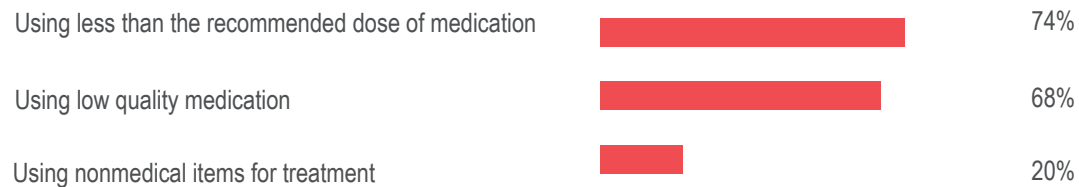
**179/617** Communities reported that the majority of women did not give birth in a formal health facility.

**11/100** Communities reported that some individuals had been diagnosed with SAM (Severe Acute Malnutrition).<sup>14</sup>

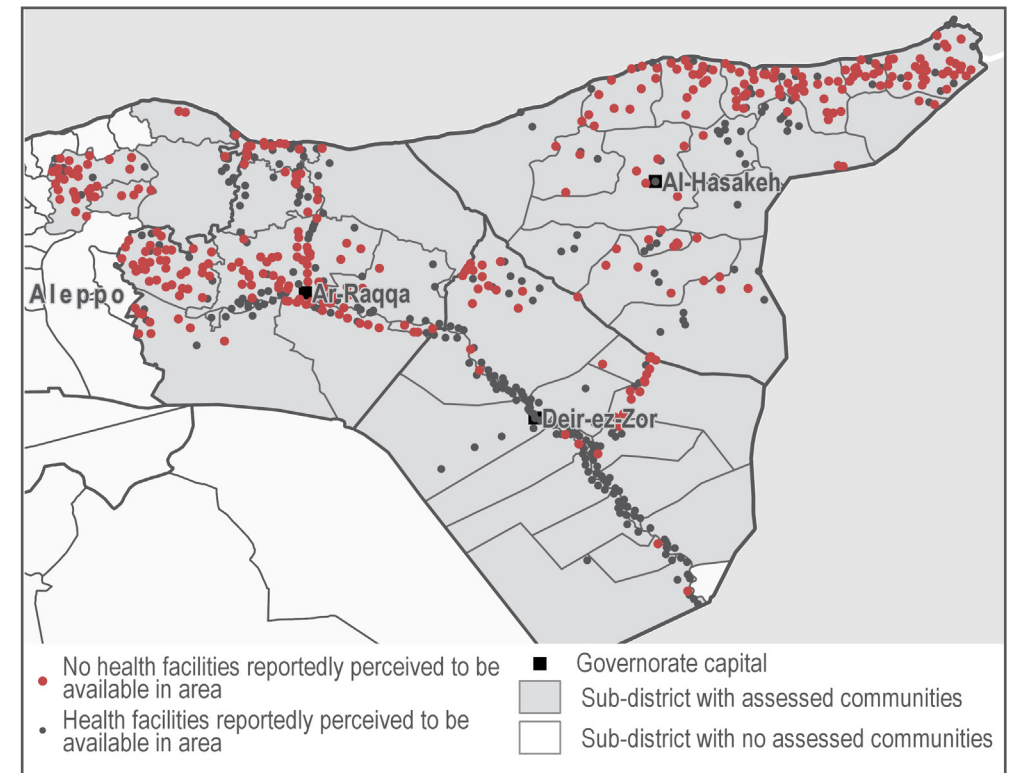
**20 communities reported that residents experienced no barriers to accessing healthcare services. The most commonly reported barriers in the remaining 597 assessed communities were:**<sup>6,7,9</sup>



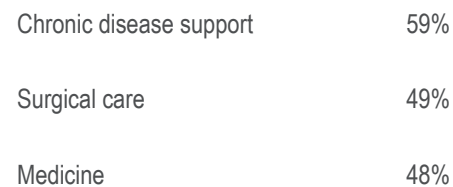
**276 communities reported that residents were not using coping strategies to deal with a lack of medical services and items. The coping strategies used in the remaining 341 communities were:**<sup>6,7,9</sup>



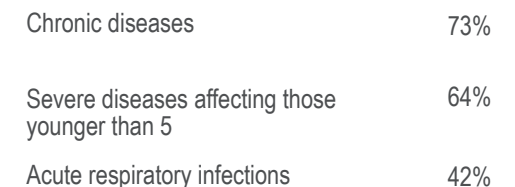
### Perceived presence of medical facilities in assessed communities:



### Top 3 most needed healthcare services reported:<sup>6,7</sup>



### Top 3 most common health problems reported:<sup>6,7</sup>



# Northeast Syria, February 2019

## SHELTER AND NFI

**3,866 SYP** Regional average monthly reported rent price in SYP across assessed communities.<sup>1</sup>

**5,962 SYP** Northern Syria average monthly reported rent price in SYP across assessed communities.<sup>1,16</sup>

### Most commonly reported shelter type for PCP households:<sup>7</sup>



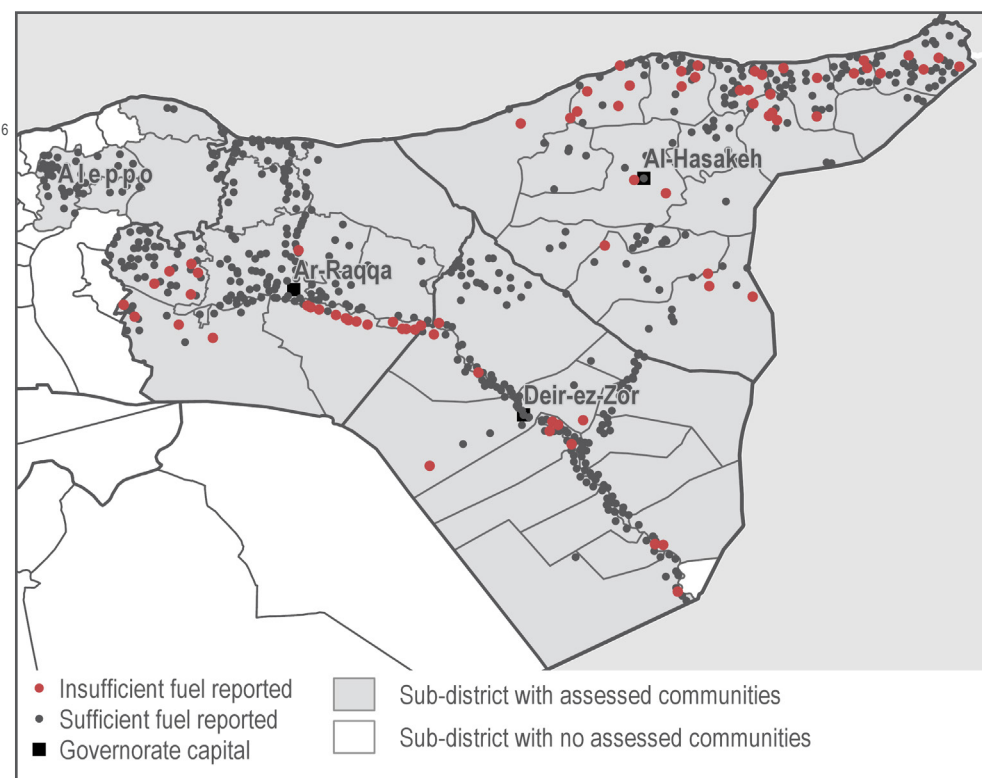
### Most commonly reported shelter type for IDP households:<sup>7</sup>



### Reported fuel prices (in SYP):<sup>1,2</sup>

Fuel type (1L):	Regional average price		
	Feb 2019:	One month change:	Six month change:
GoS petrol	85	0%	-74%
GoS diesel	50	-5%	-17%
Manually refined petrol	200	0%	0%
Manually refined diesel	130	+4%	+30%
Cooking fuel	3,125	0%	0%

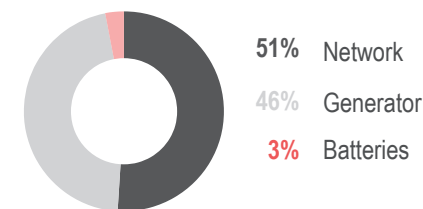
### Communities that reported insufficient amounts of fuel to meet household needs:<sup>11</sup>



**545 communities reported no lack of fuel. Most common strategies to cope with lack of fuel in the remaining 72 assessed communities:<sup>6,7,9</sup>**

Burning productive assets	39%
Burning waste	38%
Burning furniture not in use	29%
Burning furniture in use	19%
Cutting trees to burn	17%

### Primary source of electricity reported:<sup>7</sup>



## METHODOLOGY

HSOS data collection is conducted through an enumerator network in accessible locations throughout Idlib, Aleppo, 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 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](http://www.reach-initiative.org). You can contact us directly at: [geneva@reach-initiative.org](mailto:geneva@reach-initiative.org) and follow us on Twitter: @REACH\_info.

## ENDNOTES

### KEY EVENTS AND DEVELOPMENTS

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

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

<sup>c</sup> 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.syriaahr.com>.

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

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

<sup>f</sup> BBC (28 December 2018). Syria war: Government forces 'enter Manbij' amid Turkey threats. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com>.

<sup>g</sup> CCCM Cluster (December 2018). IDP Situation Monitoring Initiative (ISMI). Monthly Overview of IDP Movements in north-west Syria. Retrieved from <https://reachresourcecentre.info>.

<sup>h</sup> World Food Programme (WFP) (31 December 2018). WFP Syria Situation Report #12. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

<sup>i</sup> BBC (20 February 2019). Islamic State group: Civilians evacuated from last Syria enclave. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com>.

<sup>j</sup> UN OCHA (25 February 2019). Flash Update 3: Syria: Al-Hole camp and Suar transit-centre, Deir Ez-Zor, 25 February, 2019. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

<sup>k</sup> 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>.

### MAIN TEXT

<sup>1</sup> 1 USD = 434 SYP (UN operational rates of exchange as of 1 December 2018)

<sup>2</sup> 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).

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> For population numbers, KIs were asked to provide the number of resident and IDPs present in the community as of 28 February 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'.

<sup>5</sup> 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).

<sup>6</sup> Assessed using select multiple questions.

<sup>7</sup> By percentage of communities reporting.

<sup>8</sup> 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'.

<sup>9</sup> 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.

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

<sup>11</sup> Based on KI perception of sufficiency.

<sup>12</sup> 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 February 2019](#).

<sup>13</sup> 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.

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

<sup>15</sup> 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.

<sup>16</sup> Includes HSOS data for Idlib, Aleppo, Hama, Deir-ez-Zor, Ar-Raqqa and Al-Hasakeh governorates.