

# Syria Market Monitoring Exercise

July 2017

Cash-Based Responses  
Technical Working Group

**REACH** Informing  
more effective  
humanitarian action

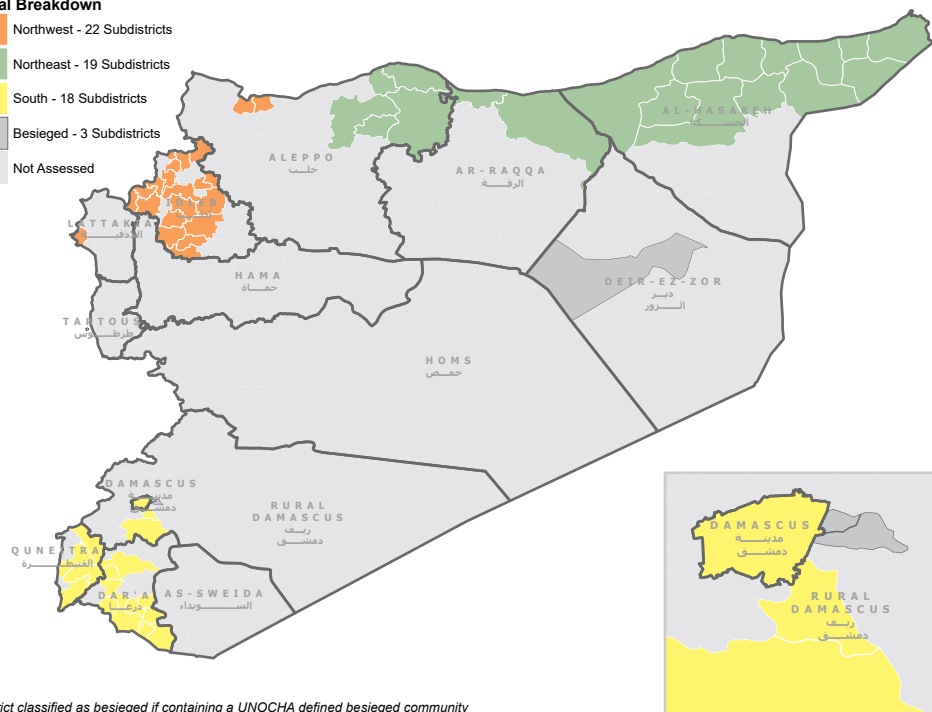
## KEY FINDINGS

- The most significant trend across Syria in July was the slowing decline in the median price of assessed vegetables. This price drop began after prices peaked in April, and continued through June.
- The average prices of tomatoes and potatoes both fell by another 20% and 25%, respectively. However, the average price of onions did not change from June, and the price of cucumbers increased in July.
- An average 1% decline in SMEB costs was reported in the 58 subdistricts covered in the assessment in both June and July.
- No notable change was observed in the median prices of half of assessed food items, including oil, ghee, sugar, tea and most grains, in any of the three regions.
- The median exchange rates for USD/SRY, JOD/SRY and TRY/SRY across assessed subdistricts increased by approximately 2% in July.

## ASSESSED AREAS

### Regional Breakdown

- Northwest - 22 Subdistricts
- Northeast - 19 Subdistricts
- South - 18 Subdistricts
- Besieged - 3 Subdistricts
- Not Assessed



\* Subdistrict classified as besieged if containing a UNOCHA defined besieged community

## OVERVIEW

- To inform humanitarian actors' cash and voucher programming, REACH and the Cash-Based Responses Technical Working Group (CBR-TWG) conduct monthly monitoring of key markets throughout Syria to assess the availability and affordability of key commodities.
- Monitored commodities reflect those that are typically available, sold in markets and consumed by an average Syrian household, including food items, non-food items, fuel, water and smartphone data.
- Many are components of the **Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB)**, detailed below, which represents the minimum culturally adjusted

group of items required to support a six-person Syrian household for one month.

- Between **16 and 24 July 2017**, a network of **10 NGOs** involved in cash-based responses in Syria (ACTED, CARE/Shafak, Concern, GOAL, IRC, Mercy Corps, People in Need, REACH, Solidarités International and Violet) contributed data from **62 subdistricts spanning 10 governorates**. See map at left for coverage.
- [Situation overviews](#) and cleaned [data sets](#) from all months of the Market Monitoring Exercise are available on the REACH Resource Centre and are distributed to the broader humanitarian community.
- For additional details on methodology and shifts in coverage, please consult the appendix at the end of this document.

## SURVIVAL MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET (SMEB) CONTENTS

	Item	Quantity
<b>Food Items</b>	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
<b>Non-Food Items</b>	Tomato paste	6 kg
	Bathing soap	12 bars
	Laundry/dish soap	3 kg
	Sanitary pads	4 packs of 10
<b>Fuel</b>	Toothpaste	2 pieces
	Cooking fuel*	25 L
<b>Water</b>	Water	4500 L
<b>Telecom</b>	Smartphone data	1 GB
<b>Other</b>	Float (other costs)**	7.5% total value

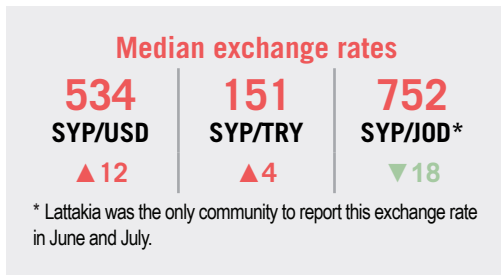
\* Kerosene in northern Syria; LPG in southern Syria.

\*\* Float was excluded from SMEB calculations due to the commonality of incomplete baskets.

## CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

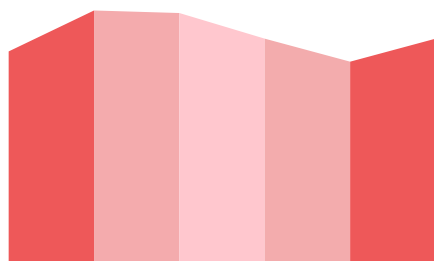
- As the Syria Market Monitoring Exercise currently includes 10 partners based in 3 hubs, achieving a consistent approach is inherently challenging. Participating organisations are therefore requested to adopt harmonised data collection methodologies and tools to ensure that the data uploaded are as accurate as possible.
- Due to the escalation of the conflict in Idlib governorate during the data collection period, coverage was slightly reduced in Idlib governorate compared to June. It is expected that coverage will resume as the security situation improves.
- Confirming commodity shortages in certain communities was difficult due to a lack of information about general market availability. When follow-ups were unable to confirm these shortages, this is stated in the text.
- Given security and access constraints in the divided cities of Deir-ez-Zor, al-Hasakeh and Quamishli, markets on only one side of the frontline could be surveyed.

## CURRENCY



### Median SYP/USD exchange rate

Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
527	552	551	535	522	534



Note: Visualizations of monthly trends in this report do not account for monthly variations in subdistrict coverage.

## FOOD ITEMS

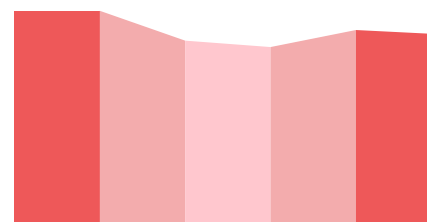
### Noteworthy price changes since June:

- Cucumbers (+88%)
- Eggs (-13%)
- Tomatoes (-0%)
- Potatoes (-14%)
- Flour (+11%)
- Onions (-0%)
- The median reported prices of cucumbers, tomatoes and onions all reached their lowest points in 2017 in June. **The median reported price of cucumbers increased by 81 SYP per kilo in July, while the median price of tomatoes and onions did not change significantly.**
- The median reported price of potatoes across almost all of the northwest reached its lowest recorded value of 2017 in July. The price peaked in April, and a continuous decline has been observed since, although this slowed in July.
- The median reported price of eggs across almost all subdistricts in the northwest has declined by approximately 10% every month since at least December, when the reported median price for 30 eggs was 1,463 SYP. In July, the median reported price was 688 SYP per 30 eggs.

- The median reported price of flour increased by approximately 14 SYP per kilo across subdistricts in the northwest in July. However, price variation between subdistricts was large so no strong or systematic trend could be conclusively observed from the data.
- Similarly, the large variation in the price of rice across subdistricts meant no conclusive trend in price changes could be observed for that food item in the northwest.
- For the remaining 10 assessed food items, median price changes of 5% or less were reported in July.

### Median bread prices (SYP)

Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
150	150	129	125	137	134



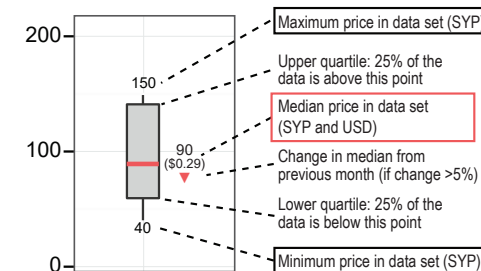
## WATER

- The median reported rate for private water trucking services across subdistricts in the northwest was 0.62 SYP per litre of water in July, with no significant change from June.

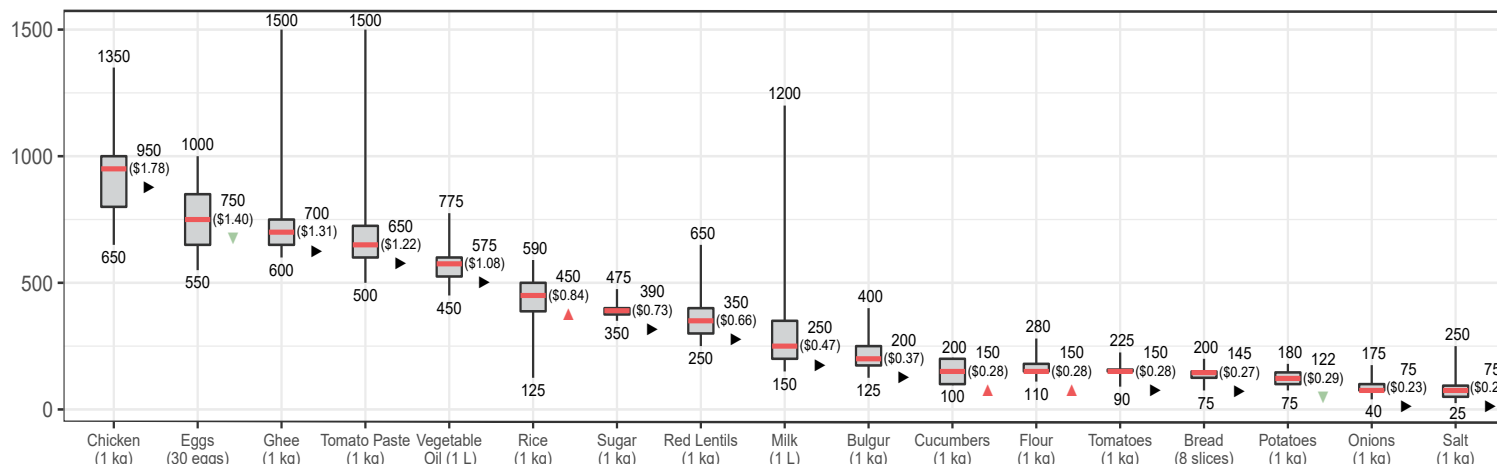
## MOBILE DATA

- The median rate for a gigabyte of data in July was reported at 650 SYP, with no change from June.

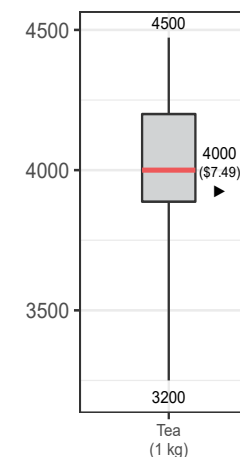
### How to read a box plot



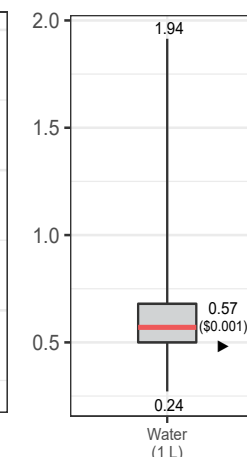
## Food item prices



## Tea prices

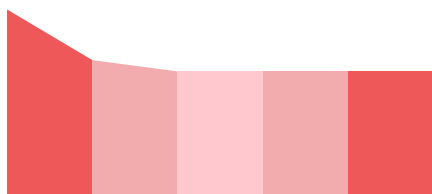


## Water trucking prices



## Median kerosene prices (SYP)

Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul
350	310	300	300	300	300



- Although enumerators in individual subdistricts reported difficulties in accessing either the manually refined or government produced version of particular fuel items, all assessed subdistricts reported having access to petrol, diesel and LPG.

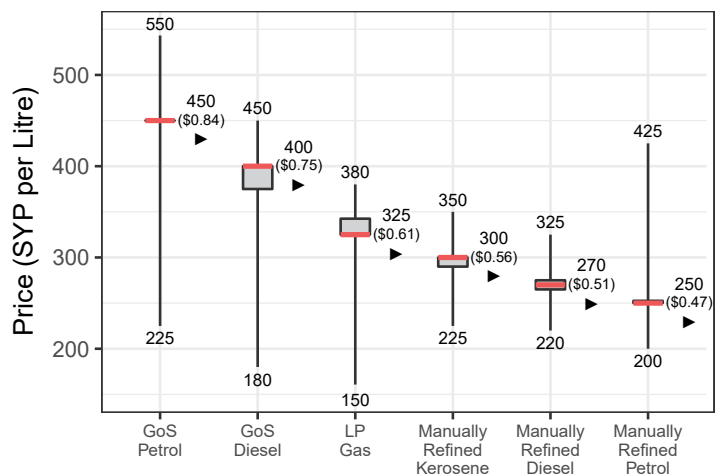
## HYGIENE AND SANITATION ITEMS

- The median price of sanitary pads across northwestern subdistricts increased by 18% in July. However, due to the large variation in trends between subdistricts no systematic regional trend could be observed.
- The median prices for all remaining assessed hygiene and sanitation items across the northwest subdistricts did not change significantly in July.

## FUEL

- The median reported price of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) across almost all subdistricts in the northwest continued to decline, decreasing by another 5% in July to 290 SYP per litre. This decline has been observed since prices peaked in the northwest in April.
- The median prices for the remaining five assessed fuel items did not change significantly in July.

## Fuel prices



## AVAILABILITY ISSUES

None confirmed

## SMEB (SURVIVAL MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET)

- The median cost of a complete SMEB in northwest Syria was 60,451 SYP (113.20 USD).
- No significant change in the median cost was observed in the 19 subdistricts which reported complete SMEBs in June and July.
- Complete SMEBs could be assembled for 20 of the 22 assessed subdistricts in northwest Syria in July.
- Additional information on prices, shortages and price changes of SMEB items can be found in the gray sidebar to the right.

## Selected subdistrict SMEBs in July

### Most expensive

- Lattakia (76,700 SYP, 143.63 USD)
- Badama (67,836 SYP, 127.03 USD)
- Darkosh (65,560 SYP, 122.77 USD)

### Least expensive

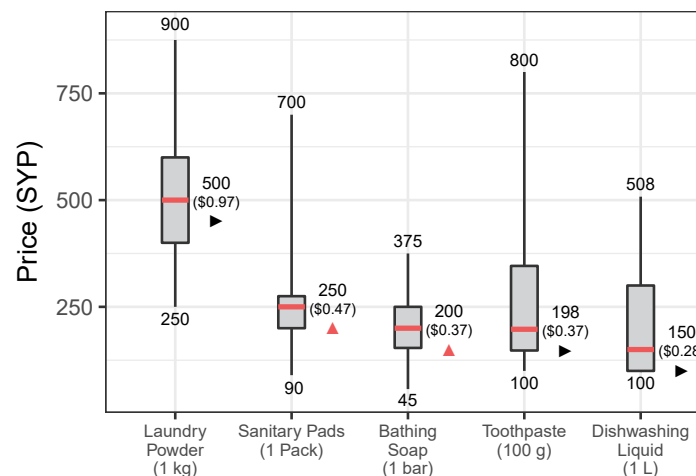
- Janudiyeh (54,031 SYP, 101.18 USD)
- Kafr Nobol (50,542 SYP, 94.65 USD)
- Heish (49,951 SYP, 93.54 USD)

## Subdistricts with incomplete SMEBs in July

Subdistrict	Missing items
A'zaz	Bread, Smartphone Data
Lattakia	Water

Note: A lack of data for a SMEB item does not necessarily imply a shortage of that item.

## Sanitation and hygiene item prices



## Largest changes in monthly SMEB costs

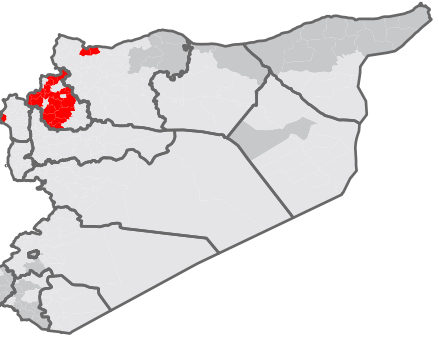
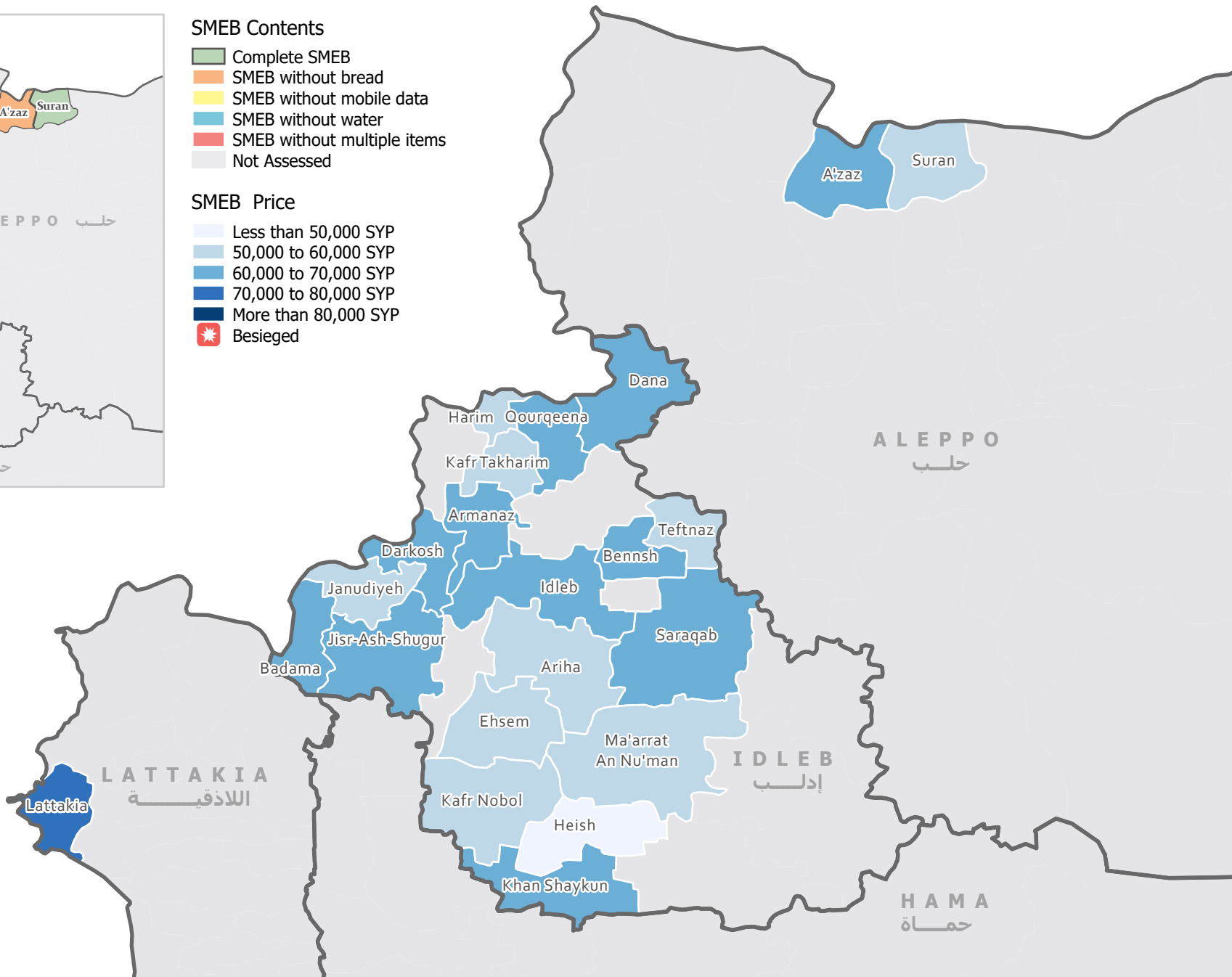
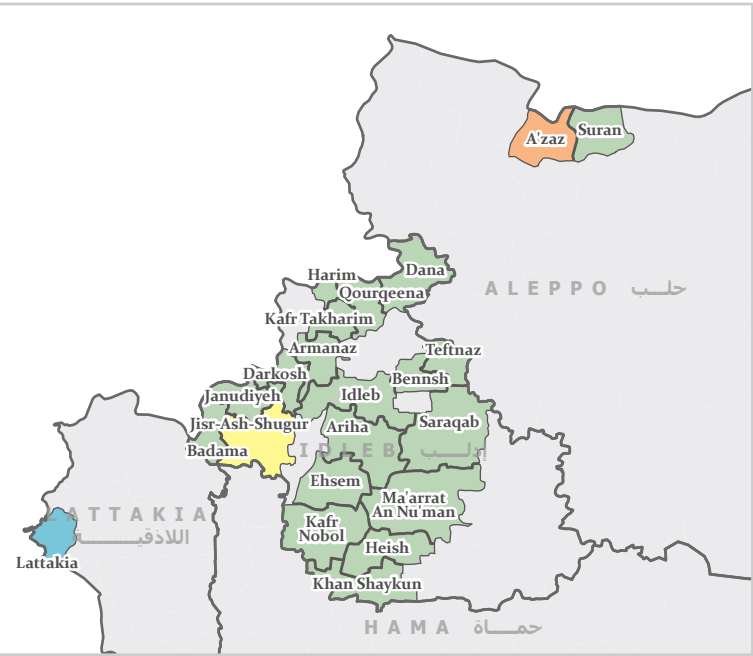
- Qourqeena (▲ +16%)
- Ariha (▲ +11%)
- Kafr Nobol (▼ -8%)

### SMEB Contents

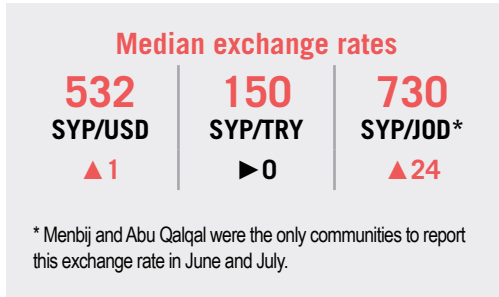
- Complete SMEB
- SMEB without bread
- SMEB without mobile data
- SMEB without water
- SMEB without multiple items
- Not Assessed

### SMEB Price

- Less than 50,000 SYP
- 50,000 to 60,000 SYP
- 60,000 to 70,000 SYP
- 70,000 to 80,000 SYP
- More than 80,000 SYP
- Besieged

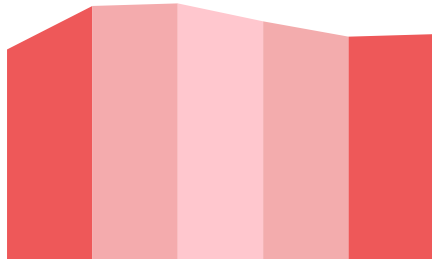


## CURRENCY



## Median SYP/USD exchange rate

Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
524	550	551	540	531	532



Note: Visualizations of monthly trends in this report do not account for monthly variations in subdistrict coverage.

## FOOD ITEMS

### Noteworthy price changes since June:

- Tomatoes (-35%)
- Potatoes(-33%)
- Cucumbers (+17%)
- Chicken (-21%)
- Onions (0%)
- Milk (+71%)

• The median reported prices of most vegetables across almost all of the northeast were at the lowest recorded values in 2017. Most assessed vegetable prices peaked in April, and continuous declines have been observed since, although this slowed in July.

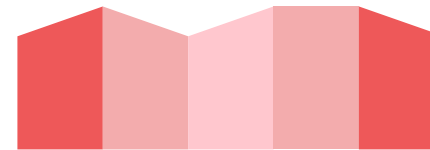
• The median reported price of cucumbers has generally followed similar trends to the prices of other vegetables in the northeast. However, this price reached its lowest point in June, and the median reported price of cucumbers increased by 25 SYP per kilo in July.

• The median reported price of chicken decreased by an average of 250 SYP per kilo in July, after having increased by over 300 SYP in June. No consistent trends in the median price of chicken in the northeast were observed prior to June in 2017.

- The median reported price of milk doubled in six of the 11 subdistricts assessed in Al-Hasakeh governorate, after these same subdistricts reported price reductions greater than 50% in June. No conclusive trend in the median price of milk was observed in the remaining subdistricts in the northeast in July.
- Median price changes of 5% or less were reported for 12 assessed food items in July.

## Median bread prices (SYP)

Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
80	100	80	100	100	80



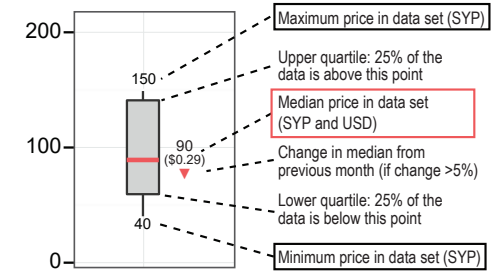
## WATER

- No water trucking price data was recorded for Al-Hasakeh governorate.
- The median rate for private water trucking services across the reporting subdistricts in the northeast in June was 0.67SYP per litre of water, a 0.10 SYP per litre rate increase from June.

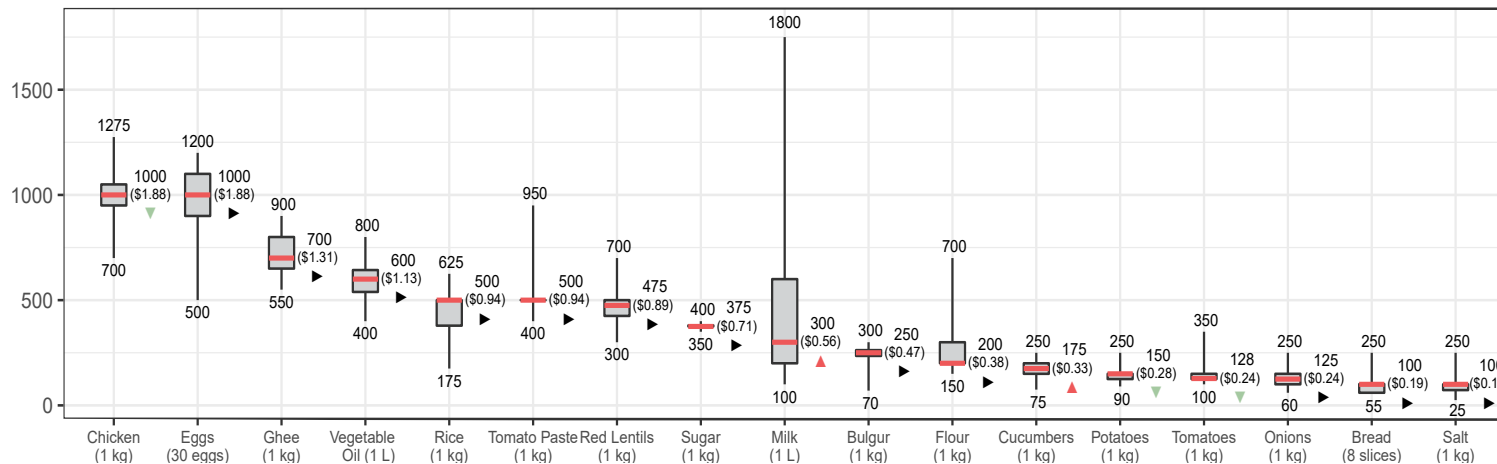
## MOBILE DATA

- The median rate for a gigabyte of data in July was reported to be 1,850 SYP, a 250 SYP increase from June.

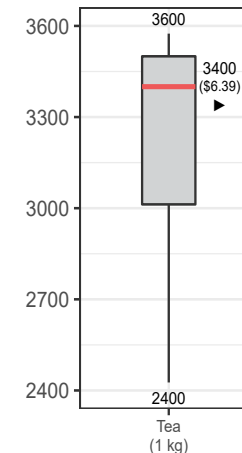
## How to read a box plot



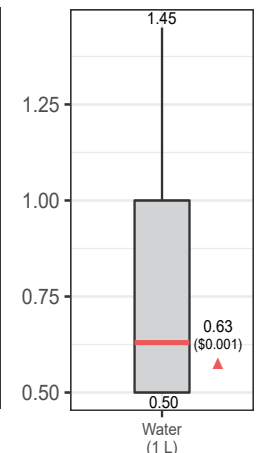
## Food item prices



## Tea prices



## Water trucking prices



## Median kerosene prices (SYP)

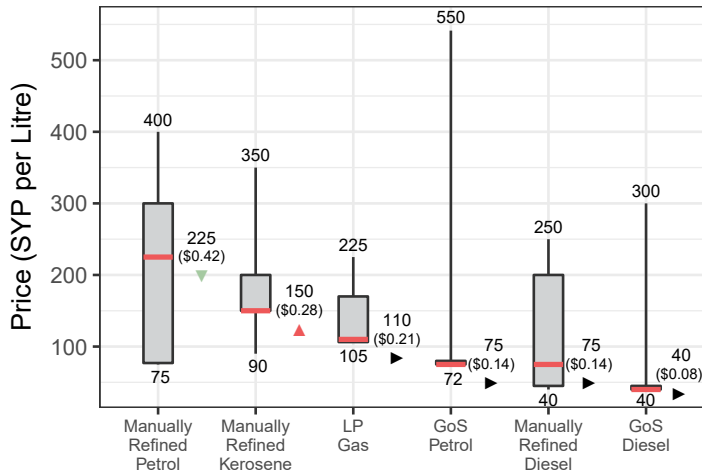
Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
100	125	100	100	125	150



## FUEL

- In July, the median reported price of manually refined petrol increased by 33% in the Ar-Raqqa and Al-Hasakeh governorates to a median value of 225 SYP per litre. No change was reported in the Aleppo subdistricts in the northeast.
- The median price of manually-refined kerosene across all subdistricts in the northeast continued to increase, albeit with only 5 SYP per litre in July. Given the low price of manually refined kerosene in this region, the significance of this change may be limited.

## Fuel prices

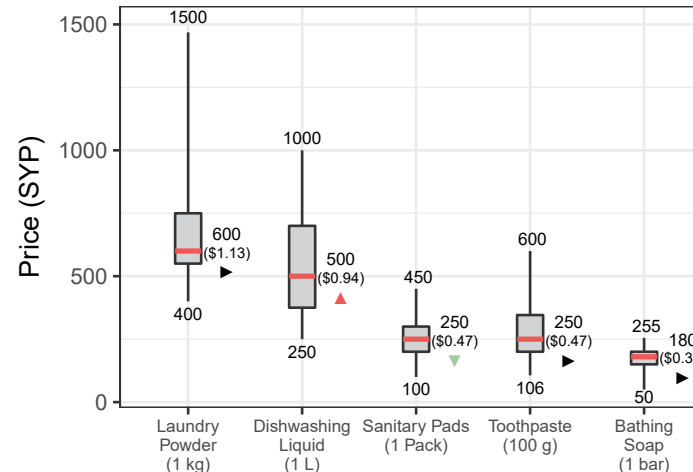


- No changes were observed in the median reported prices of the remaining four fuel items in northeastern subdistricts in July.
- Although individual subdistricts reported an inability to access either the manually refined or government produced version of particular fuel items, all assessed subdistricts reported having access to petrol, diesel, and LPG.

## HYGIENE AND SANITATION ITEMS

- The median price of sanitary pads across northwestern subdistricts increased by 13% in July, with increases primarily observed in Al Hasakeh governorate.
- The median price of dishwashing liquid across northwestern subdistricts increased by 7% in July. However, due to the large variation between subdistricts no systematic regional trend could be observed.
- The median prices of the remaining hygiene and sanitation items did not change significantly in July, as had been the case since May.

## Sanitation and hygiene item prices



## AVAILABILITY ISSUES

None confirmed

## SMEB (SURVIVAL MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET)

- The median cost of a complete SMEB in northwest Syria was 54,685 (102.79 USD).
- An approximate 3% decrease in the median cost was observed in the 16 subdistricts which reported complete SMEBs in June and July.
- Complete SMEBs could be assembled for 16 of 19 assessed subdistricts in northeast Syria in July.
- Additional information on prices, shortages and price changes of SMEB items can be found in the gray sidebar to the right.

## Selected subdistrict SMEBs in July

### Most expensive

Suluk (70,895 SYP, 133.26 USD)

Tell Abiad (63,351 SYP, 119.08 USD)

Al-Malikeyyeh (63,260 SYP, 118.91 USD)

### Least expensive

Tal Tamer (51,179 SYP, 96.20 USD)

Al-Darbasiyeh (51,026 SYP, 95.91 USD)

Be'r Al-Hulo Al-Wardeyyeh (47,268 SYP, 88.85 USD)

## Subdistricts with incomplete SMEBs in July

Subdistrict	Missing items
Lower Shyookh	Chicken, vegetables, toothpaste
Sarin	Sanitary Pads, Water
Tal Tamer	Smartphone Data

Note: No water data was collected in any assessed subdistrict in Al-Hasakeh.

Note: A lack of data for a SMEB item does not necessarily imply a shortage of that item.

## Largest changes in monthly SMEB costs

- Suluk (▲ +29%)
- Tell Abiad (▲ +29%)
- Amuda (▲ +26%)

# NORTHEAST Syria: SMEB Prices

Al-Hasakeh, Deir-ez-Zor, ar-Raqqa, eastern Aleppo governorates

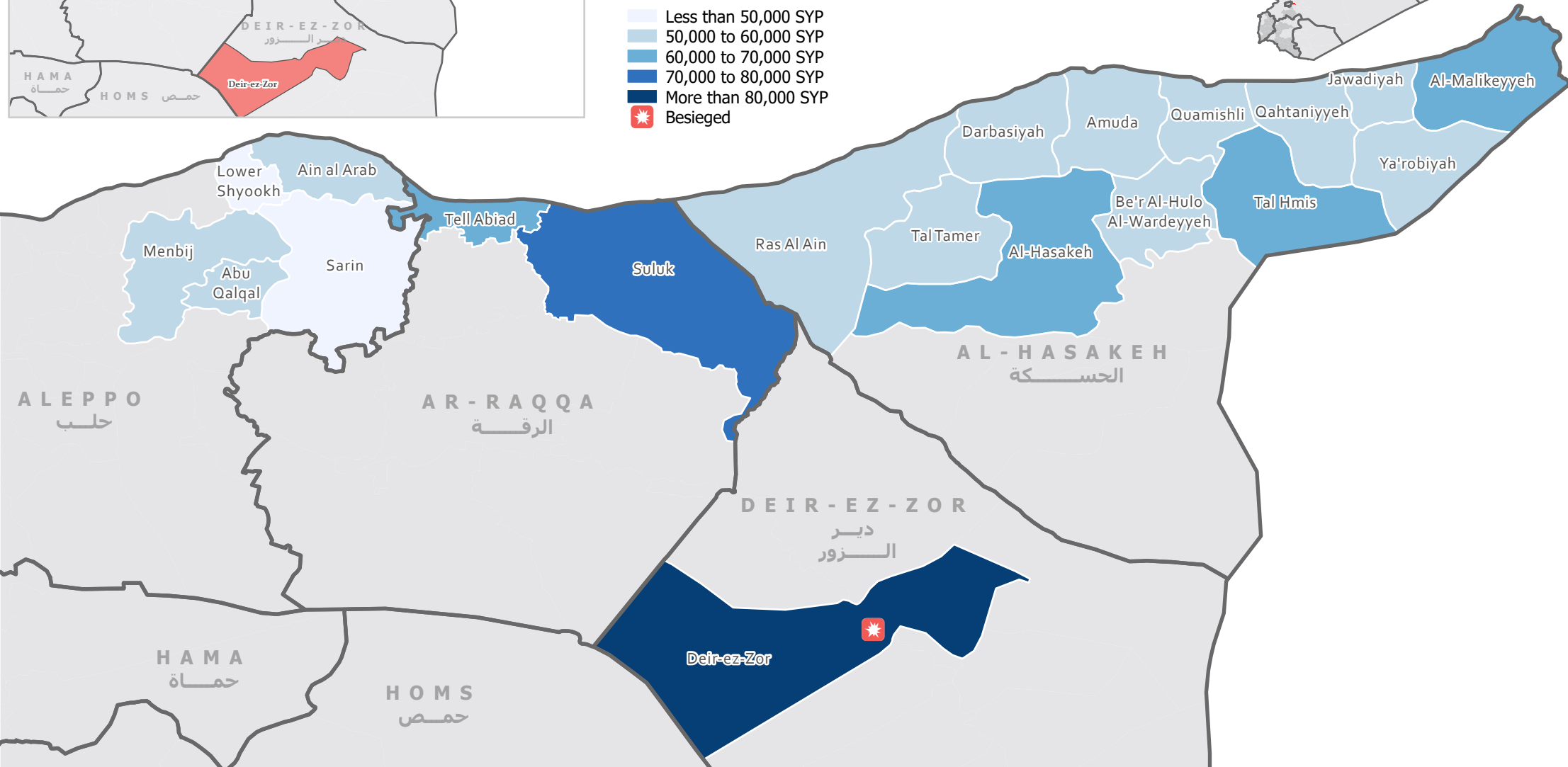
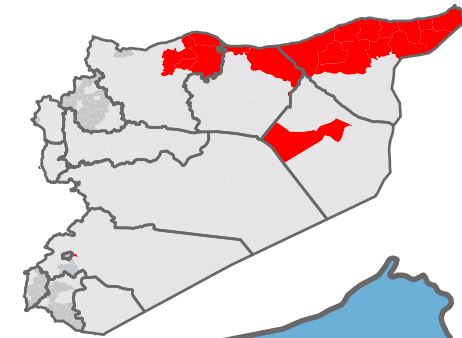


## SMEB Contents

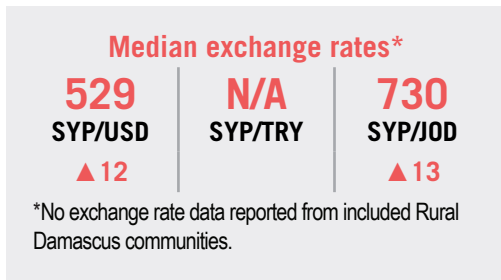
- Complete SMEB
- SMEB without bread
- SMEB without mobile data
- SMEB without water
- SMEB without multiple items
- Not Assessed

## SMEB Price

- Less than 50,000 SYP
- 50,000 to 60,000 SYP
- 60,000 to 70,000 SYP
- 70,000 to 80,000 SYP
- More than 80,000 SYP
- Besieged



## CURRENCY



## FOOD ITEMS

Noteworthy price changes since June:

- Tomatoes (-50%)
- Eggs (-6%)
- Cucumbers (0%)
- Potatoes (-23%)
- Chicken (-8%)
- Onions (0%)
- **The prices of tomatoes and potatoes continued to decline in July, falling to 80 SYP per kilo and 115 SYP per kilo, respectively.** The median reported prices of both items peaked at around 400 SYP per kilo in April, and have declined every month since.
- **The median prices of cucumbers and onions remained stable at 150 SYP per kilo and 116 SYP per kilo, respectively.** Prices of these food items had previously declined since April, when median reported prices of both items exceeded 300 SYP per kilo.
- **The median price of chicken across assessed subdistricts in Dar'a and Quneitra governorates decreased by an average of 88 SYP in July to reach a median value of 968 SYP per kilo.** Previously, in June, this price had increased by approximately 175 SYP per kilo. Prior to June, prices had been stable at around 920 SYP per kilo since February.

- **The median price of eggs declined by 6% to reach a median value of 988 SYP per kilo in July.** Since data was first collected in February 2017, the median price of eggs has steadily declined in the south, when the median reported price for a kilo of eggs was 1,400 SYP. This trend mirrors a general price reduction observed in the majority of assessed subdistricts across Syria.
- Median prices of 5% or less were reported for the remaining 11 assessed food items from last month.

## WATER

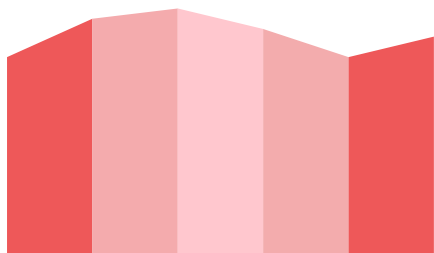
- The median rate for private water trucking services across southern subdistricts in July was 0.50 SYP per litre of water, with no significant change since coverage began in February 2017.

## MOBILE DATA

- The median rate for a gigabyte of data across southern subdistricts was reported to be 3,500 SYP in July, a 250 SYP increase from June.

### Median SYP/USD exchange rate

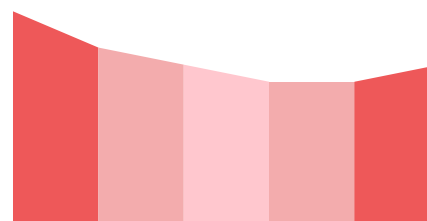
Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
518	540	546	534	519	529



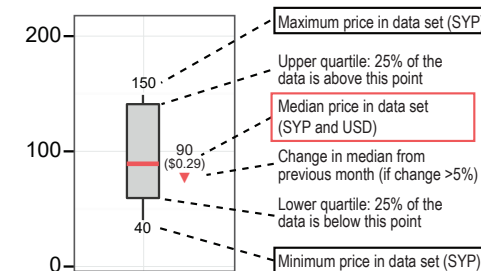
Note: Visualizations of monthly trends in this report do not account for monthly variations in subdistrict coverage.

### Median bread prices (SYP)

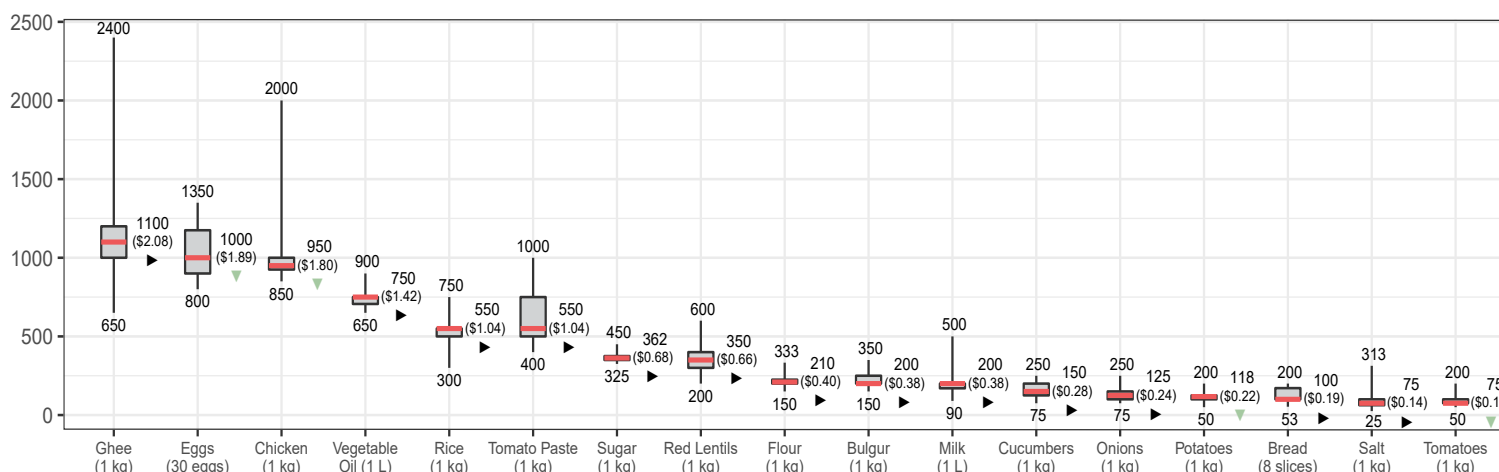
Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul
150	125	113	100	100	113



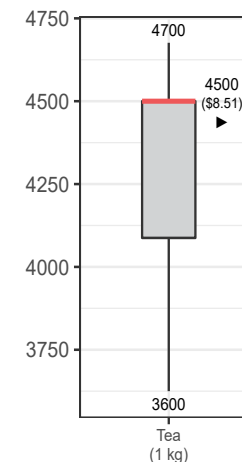
### How to read a box plot



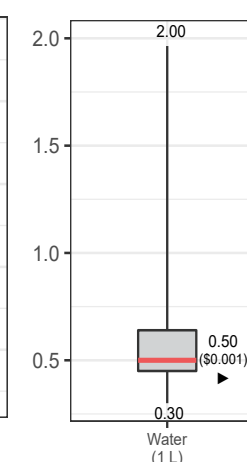
### Food item prices



### Tea prices

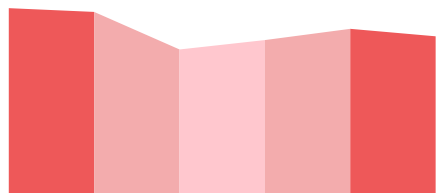


### Water trucking prices



## Median LP gas prices (SYP)

Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
500	488	388	413	444	425



## FUEL

- The median price of manually refined diesel increased by approximately 30% in the subdistricts adjacent to Dar'a, although this change was not observed in Dar'a subdistrict itself. No significant change in the reported median price of government produced diesel was indicated.
- The median price of LPG returned to May levels with an average 5% decrease in median prices reported across the south.

- The median prices of all remaining assessed fuel items in the south did not notably change in July.
- Although difficulties in accessing either the manually refined or government produced versions of petrol or diesel were reported in individual subdistricts, all subdistricts reported having access to at least one version of the fuel items.
- No community in the south reported having access to manually refined kerosene, as it is reportedly rarely used in the region.

## HYGIENE AND SANITATION ITEMS

- No significant changes were observed in the median prices of any assessed hygiene and sanitation item across southern subdistricts in July.

## AVAILABILITY ISSUES

None Confirmed

## SMEB (SURVIVAL MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET)

- The median cost of a complete SMEB in southern Syria was 70,378 SYP (133.04 USD).
- A 2.4% decrease in the median cost was observed in the 17 subdistricts which reported complete SMEBs in June and July.
- Complete SMEBs could be assembled for all 18 assessed subdistricts in southern Syria in July.
- Additional information on prices, shortages and price changes of SMEB items can be found in the gray sidebar to the right.

## Selected subdistrict SMEBs in July

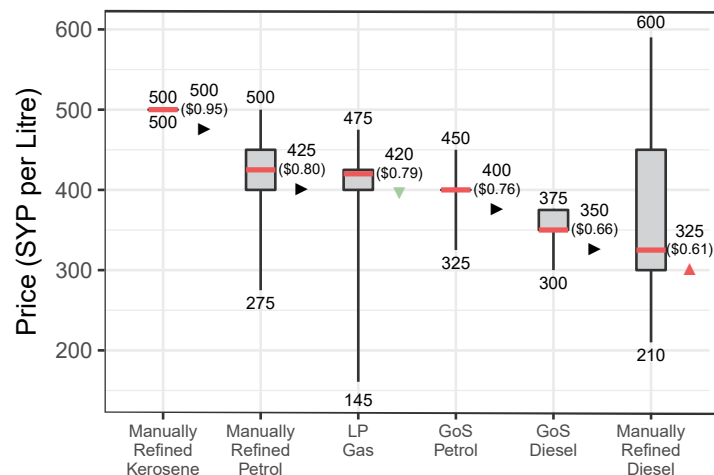
### Most expensive

- Jizeh (83,783 SYP, 158.28 USD)
- Da'eI (72,004 SYP, 136.11 USD)
- Damascus (71,457 SYP, 135.08 USD)

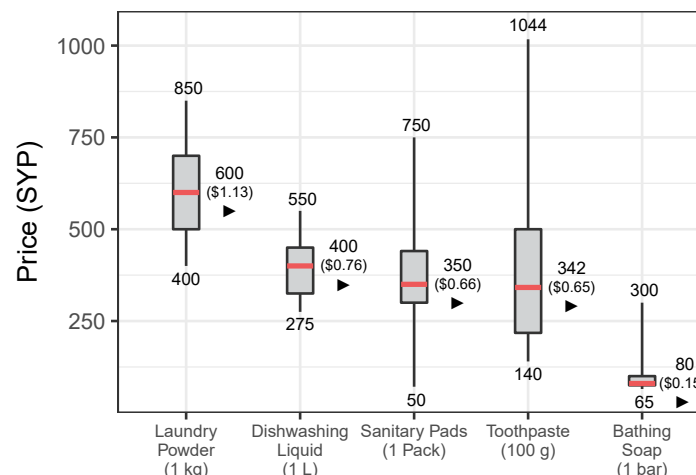
### Least expensive

- Babella (67,194 SYP, 127.02 USD)
- Hrak (66,531 SYP, 125.77 USD)
- Jasim (66,158 SYP, 125.06 USD)

## Fuel prices



## Sanitation and hygiene item prices

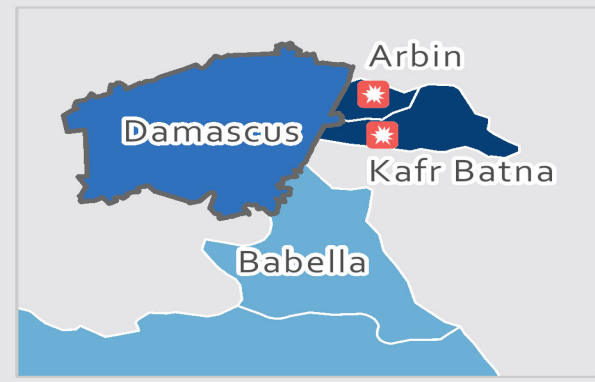
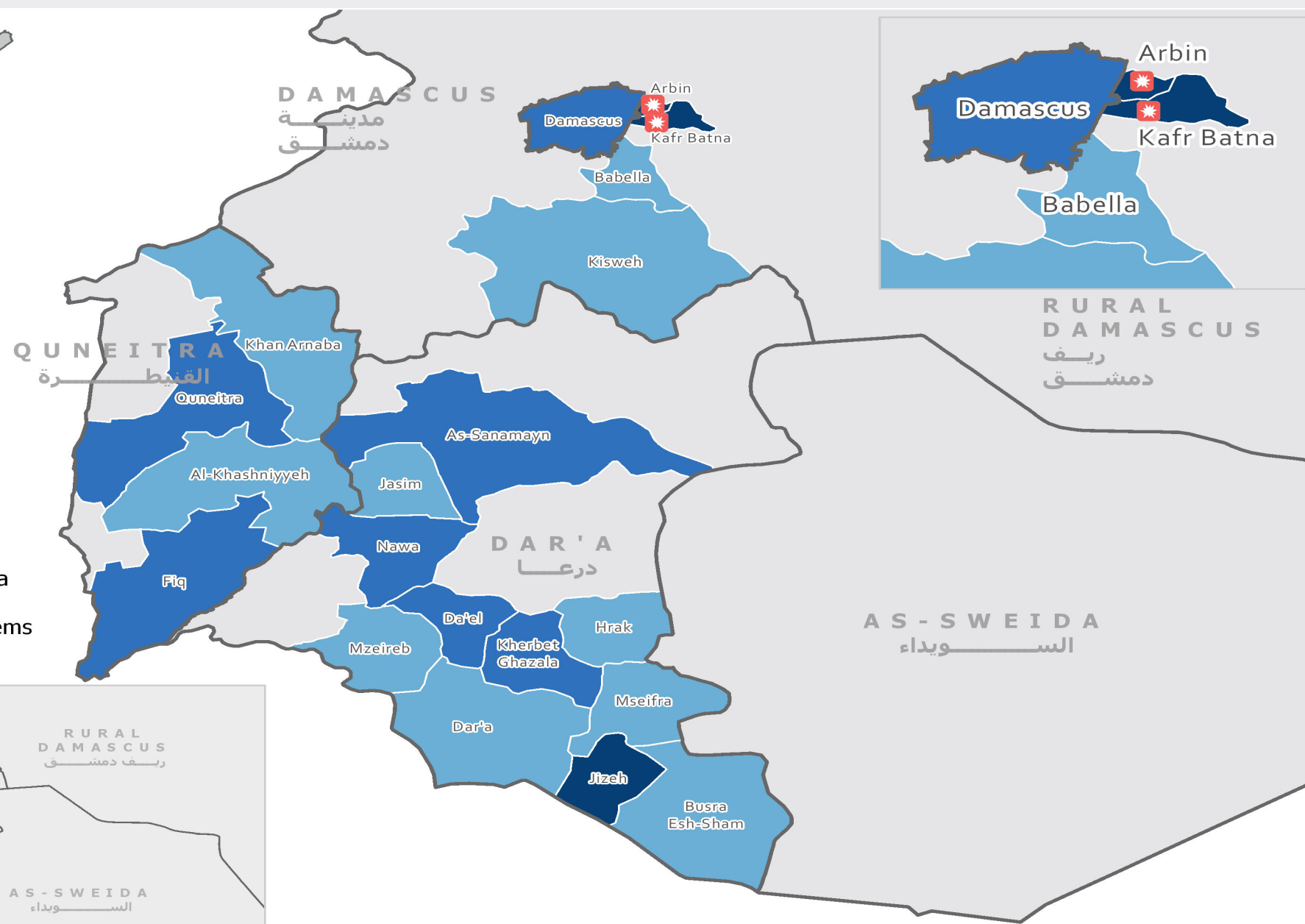
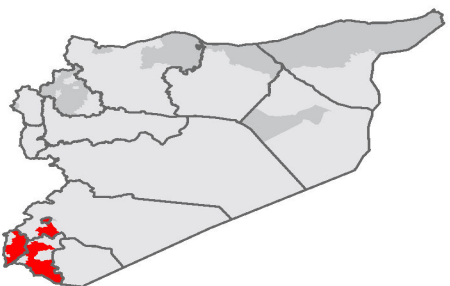


## Subdistricts with incomplete SMEBs in July

Subdistrict	Missing items
None	None

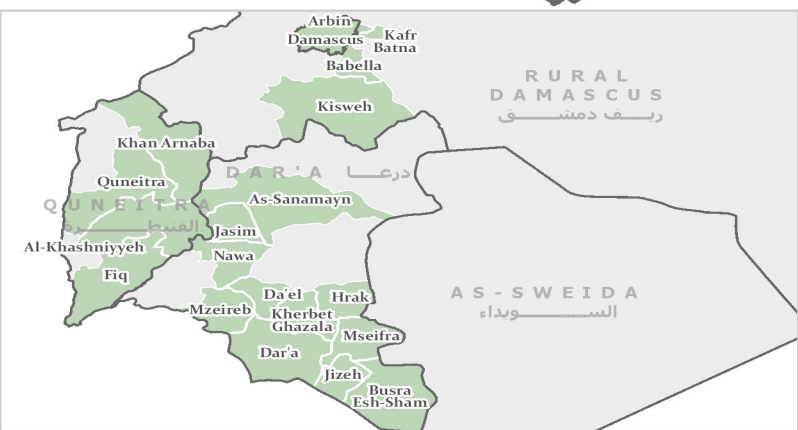
## Largest changes in monthly SMEB costs

- Hrak (▼-8%)
- Jasim (▼-6%)
- Da'eI (▼-6%)



- SMEB Price**
- Less than 50,000 SYP
  - 50,000 to 60,000 SYP
  - 60,000 to 70,000 SYP
  - 70,000 to 80,000 SYP
  - More than 80,000 SYP
  - Besieged

- SMEB Contents**
- Complete SMEB
  - SMEB without bread
  - SMEB without mobile data
  - SMEB without water
  - SMEB without multiple items
  - Not Assessed



## BESIEGED COMMUNITIES

### Overview

Syria Market Monitoring Exercise partners collect data from eight currently besieged communities across three subdistricts.

Subdistrict	Assessed Communities
Deir-ez-Zor	Joura and Qosour
Kafr Batna	Saqba, Ein Terma, Hammura, Jisrein, Beit Sawa, Kafr Batna
Arbin	Arbin

### Partial SMEB costs in July

**Deir-ez-Zor**  
(354,840 SYP, 628.04 USD) **► 0%**

### Complete SMEB costs in July

**Arbin**  
(251,156 SYP, 514.66 USD) **▲ 6%**

**Kafr Batna**  
(266,314 SYP, 545.73 USD) **▲ 12%**

### Missing SMEB Items

Subdistrict	Item
Deir-ez-Zor	<i>SMEB</i> : Chicken, Fresh Vegetables, Red Lentils, Sugar, Toothpaste, Sanitary Pads, Smartphone Data, Water
	<i>Other items</i> : Flour, Milk, Dishwashing Liquid, LP Gas
Arbin and Kafr Batna	Other items <sup>**</sup> : Flour, Tea, Milk, Dishwashing Liquid

*\*\*No price data for these items is currently collected in these communities and thus this should not be considered indicative of a shortage.*

for inclusion.

Enumerators from 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 subdistrict, using surveys to collect information about prices, current product inventory and the time needed to replace current stocks. In subdistricts where direct surveying by enumerators is not possible, such as Lattakia and Deir-ez-Zor, data collection is conducted remotely through key informants such as shop owners, suppliers and consumers.

Five survey forms are 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 commodity and by subdistrict. Prices are divided into quartiles and boxplots are created to help CBR-TWG members understand the distribution of prices. To illustrate local variations in prices and availability, REACH uses the collected data to map the price of an SMEB in each subdistrict. The cleaned data sets are available on the REACH Resource Centre and are distributed to all participating partners, as well as to interested clusters and the broader humanitarian community.

## CALCULATION OF SURVIVAL MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET (SMEB) COSTS

The cost of a SMEB is calculated for each assessed subdistrict by calculating the median price of each SMEB commodity in that subdistrict, then multiplying these medians by the number of units that an average Syrian household must purchase in a month. The composition of the SMEB can be found on page 1.

## ABOUT REACH INITIATIVE

REACH is a joint initiative of two international non-governmental organizations—ACTED and IMPACT Initiatives—and the UN Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT). REACH's mission is 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 at [www.reach-initiative.org](http://www.reach-initiative.org), contact us directly at [geneva@reach-initiative.org](mailto:geneva@reach-initiative.org) or follow us on Twitter at [@REACH\\_info](https://twitter.com/REACH_info).

## APPENDIX

### WHAT IS THE CASH-BASED RESPONSES TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP?

The Cash-Based Responses Technical Working Group (CBR-TWG) was established in March 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 CBR-TWG have been partners on the Syria Market Monitoring Exercise since early 2015. Since February 2017, the exercise expanded coverage into the South, bringing monthly market assessments to

communities in Damascus, Rural Damascus, Dar'a and Quneitra governorates.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON METHODOLOGY

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. The shops surveyed within each market must be housed in permanent structures and must sell certain items to be eligible