

INTRODUCTION

To inform humanitarian cash programming, the northeast of Syria (NES) Cash Working Group (CWG) conducts a monthly Joint Market Monitoring Initiative in northern Syria. The exercise assesses 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 cell phone data.

Of these, 18 items comprise the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB; see [fig. 8-9](#); and [11](#)) which represents the minimum, culturally adjusted items required to support a 6-person household for a month. For further information, please see our [methodology](#).

ON-LINE DASHBOARD

To facilitate the interaction with the JMMI, an interactive dashboard is available on-line. The dashboard is designed to allow users to navigate more easily and draw geographical and temporal comparisons across different currencies. To use the on-line interactive dashboard, click [here](#).

- 7 supporting partners

- 4 governorates

- 11 districts

- 30 subdistricts

- 57 communities

- 1,748 shops (vendor key informants)

COST OF NES SMEB^A

658,771 SYP ▲ +8%
131 USD ▼ -1%

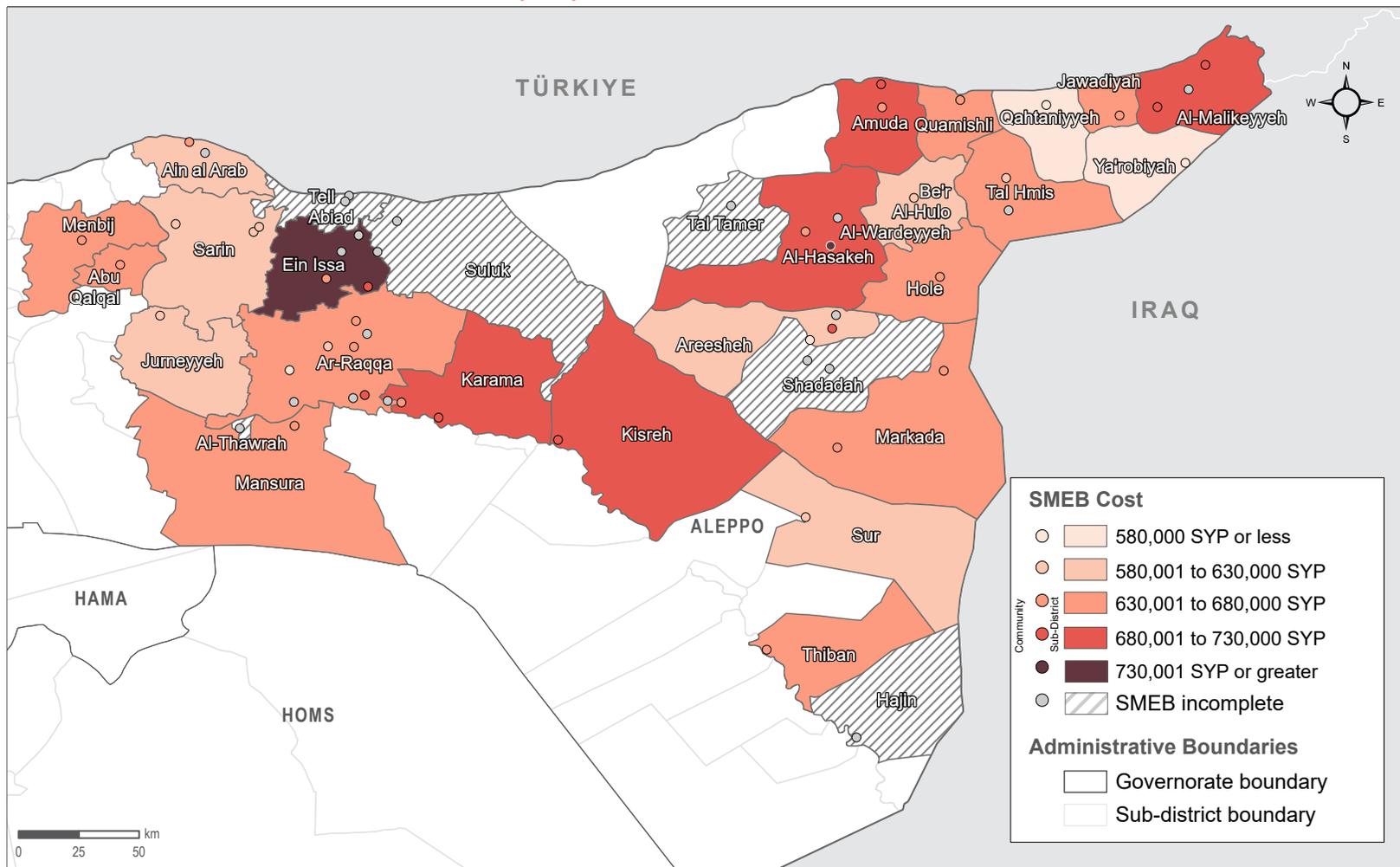
COST OF NES FOOD BASKET^A

514,240 SYP ▲ +9%
104 USD ▲ +1%

NES EXCHANGE RATE^A

USD/SYP
4,950 SYP ▲ +8%

MEDIAN SMEB PRICE PER SUB-DISTRICT (SYP) - FIG. 1



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

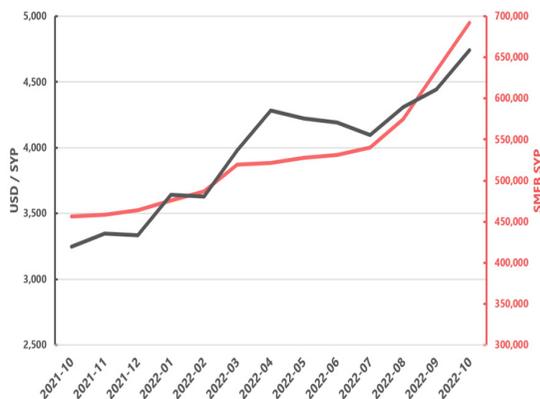
IN THIS FACTSHEET

As the JMMI generates a large amount of data, this factsheet is limited to a high level analysis. For more detailed data, consult the [dataset](#) and [online dashboard](#).

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NORTHEAST SYRIA SMEB PRICE TRENDS VS USD TO SYP INFORMAL EXCHANGE RATES - FIG. 2



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In October the regional price of the SMEB was recorded to be 658, 771 SYP (131 USD), representing an 8% increase from September. The continued increase in cost is in large part due to ongoing increases in the USD exchange rate which has risen steeply in the past three months. In October the USD/SYP exchange rate was recorded at 4,950 SYP representing an 8% increase (depreciation) since September and the highest ever JMMI recorded exchange rate (fig. 2).

The regional SMEB food component was recorded at 514,250 SYP (104 USD) which represents a 9% increase in price since September. Majority of food items increased in price, most notably fresh vegetables, chicken, eggs, and tomato paste (fig.11). Continued increases in the price of imported bulk food items as well as non-food items is strongly linked to the exchange rate. Vegetable prices in general have been rising with the end of the agricultural production season, increasing reliance on imported vegetables (fig. 4).

Bread prices increased overall in October, most notably in Aleppo governorate (fig. 5). The price of subsidised bread has reportedly increased in some areas despite the fact no official decision has been announced. The price of flour remained stable overall in October despite increases in price in Aleppo and Al-Hasakeh governorates (fig. 6). The price of flour however has increased by 20% in the past six months contributing to higher bread prices overall.

The price of cooking fuels increased significantly in October largely attributed to notable increases in the price of gas (fig. 11). This was as a result of an official decision to reduce the subsidy on gas raising it to 7000/7500 SYP for a cylinder. This puts the price at almost double what it has been up until now. Gas was reportedly unavailable in 6% of communities in NES where it had previously been available in all assessed communities.

The price of water trucking increased slightly in October and remains highest in Al-Hasakeh governorate (fig. 7). This is due to depletion of water wells as a result of the drought and suspension of pumping from Alouk water station for the past two months, which is critical to water availability in Al-Hasakeh.¹

MEDIAN SMEB PRICE PER SUB-DISTRICT - FIG. 3

	SMEB SYP	1 month change	6 month change	SMEB USD ^B
Northeast Syria SMEB ^C	658,771	8%	13%	131
Northeast Aleppo Governorate	632,009	9%	14%	130
Abu Qalqal	640,366	10%	19%	132
Ain al Arab	623,651	8%	13%	129
Menbij	673,706	17%	20%	140
Sarin	611,310	6%	10%	125
Al-Hasakeh Governorate	658,771	8%	11%	129
Al-Hasakeh	727,735	13%	17%	142
Al-Malikeyyeh*	685,371	10%	27%	135
Amuda*	681,393	5%	24%	133
Areesh	599,877	6%	1%	113
Be'r Al-Hulo Al-Wardeyyeh*	597,028	5%	NA	NA
Hole	671,626	11%	NA	134
Jawadiyah*	637,932	21%	17%	129
Markada	658,771	7%	6%	129
Qahtaniyyeh*	576,571	9%	14%	116
Quamishli	653,089	7%	23%	128
Tal Hmis*	636,681	18%	12%	124
Ya'robayah*	577,260	11%	20%	116
Ar-Raqqa Governorate	684,942	2%	9%	141
Ar-Raqqa	653,036	4%	12%	133
Ein Issa	741,775	3%	16%	148
Jurneyyeh*	600,482	1%	-8%	NA
Karama	684,942	NA	9%	NA
Mansura*	637,690	16%	12%	131
Deir-ez-Zor Governorate	668,435	9%	15%	131
Kisreh	684,972	2%	20%	143
Sur	616,226	0%	4%	129
Thiban	668,435	9%	13%	131

B. USD values are calculated as per the informal exchange rate recorded in the same geographical area. Please see this month's JMMI dataset for informal exchange rates by area.

C. * For these sub-districts, water trucking prices were not available and is not included in the SMEB price.

SMEB COMPONENT ANALYSIS

The regional SMEB food component was recorded at 514,250 SYP (104 USD) which represents a 9% increase in price since September. Majority of food items increased in price, most notably fresh vegetables, chicken, eggs, and tomato paste (fig. 11). Price increases this month come within the context of a recent decision by the Directorate of Supply and Consumer Protection in NES to no longer issue price regulations on food commodities in an effort to spur commercial competition.² This is expected to make prices in NES even more sensitive to exchange rate fluctuations.

Continued increases in the price of imported bulk food items is strongly linked to the exchange rate. The increase in the price of rice could also be attributed to rising global prices as global production shrinks as a result of extreme weather events.³ The continued steep increase in the price of tomatoes in the past months has, according to field teams, impacted demand for tomato paste which may be contributing to the increase in price observed of more than 50% since July 2022. Vegetable prices in general have been rising with the end of the agricultural production season, increasing reliance on imported vegetables (fig. 4). In addition, the price of poultry products has been rising since July 2022, which is reportedly linked to higher prices of imported chicken feed, as well as increases in other inputs, an issue impacting the price of agriculture and livestock production broadly.⁴

Bread prices increased overall in October, most notably in Aleppo governorate (fig. 5). The price of subsidised bread has reportedly increased in some areas despite the fact no official decision has been announced.⁵ Over the past months, residents in NES have complained about the quality of subsidised bread, forcing some to buy bread from private bakeries where it is sold for 2,200 SYP per kg.⁶ Authorities have indicated that official rises in the price of bread will be part of an effort to cover production costs and improve quality.⁷ The price of flour remained stable overall in October despite increases in price in Aleppo and Al-Hasakeh governorates (fig. 6). The price of flour however has increased by 20% in the past six months contributing to higher bread prices overall. Ongoing supply chain disruptions as a result of the Ukraine crisis and global uncertainty about continuation of wheat exports through the Black Sea are impacting global prices.⁸ A recent iMMAP mapping of wheat to bread processing facilities in NES found that only 34% of surveyed

bakeries have access to locally milled flour as a result of the drought which has reduced their overall productivity.⁹ The market price of imported flour is 18% higher than locally milled flour, and both have increased in price compared to previous assessment at the end of 2021.⁹

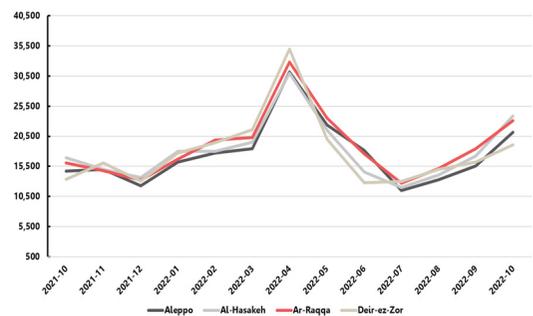
Reduced wheat production in NES critically impacts food security. In 2022 the Autonomous Administration was 150,000 tons short of purchasing the required amount to feed people in the region.¹⁰ Agricultural production in general in NES has been heavily impacted by the drought and consecutive failed harvests, as well as security risks in key agricultural areas that put farmers and daily labourers at risk.¹¹ Reduced access to wells and water for irrigation has real implications for agricultural outputs, increasing reliance on imported produce. Uncertainty around security and fears of potential military offenses as a result of escalating tensions between Türkiye and the Autonomous Administration since May 2022 has reportedly made farmers in NES reluctant to invest in their farms and many have stopped storing seeds from their harvest for the next season.¹¹

The price of cooking fuels increased significantly in October largely attributed to notable increases in the price of gas. This was as a result of an official decision to reduce the subsidy on gas raising the price from 2500 SYP to 7000 SYP for a cylinder.¹² The decision took effect formally after the data collecting period however certain areas raised prices in anticipation of the official announcement.¹³ This puts the price at almost double what it has been and it will likely be higher in some areas due to transportation costs on top of the set 7000 SYP.¹⁴ Gas was reportedly unavailable in 6% of communities in NES where it had previously been available in all assessed communities. In addition, the amount of gas allocated to each family has been reduced from 12 cylinders annually to 9, which means now a cylinder must last a family up to 45 days likely forcing families to buy additional cylinders to last them until the following distribution.¹⁴

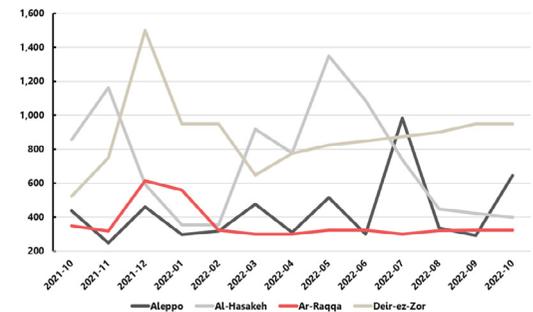
The price of water trucking increased slightly in October and remains highest in Al-Hasakeh governorate (fig. 7). This is due to depletion of water wells as a result of the drought and suspension of pumping from Alouk water station for the past two months, which is critical to water availability in Al-Hasakeh.¹⁵ Residents in Deir ez-Zor have also been struggling with water cuts

for the past two months following the closure of the water pumping station for maintenance which has been delayed due to difficulty securing equipment from outside the region.¹⁶ This is forcing residents to rely on water filled from the Euphrates river against warnings of contamination.¹⁷ In addition, water truckers face issues filling tanks from wells where water levels are low forcing them to travel greater distances; many wells in the area are not monitored or sterilized contributing to the spread of cholera.

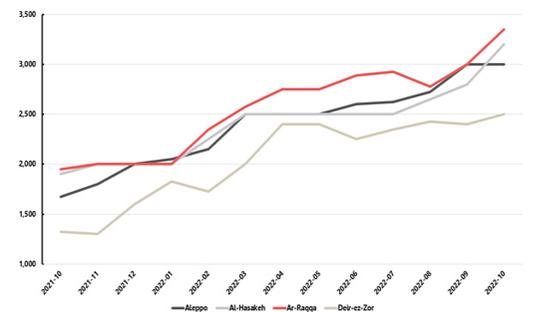
SMEB VEGETABLE PRICES IN NES - FIG. 4



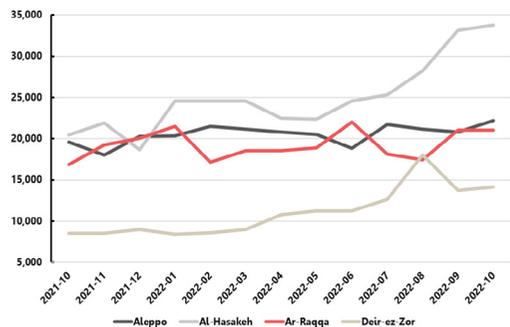
BREAD PRICES IN NES - FIG. 5



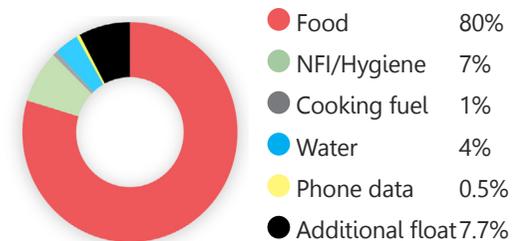
FLOUR PRICES IN NES - FIG. 6



SMEB WATER TRUCKING PRICES IN NES - FIG. 7



SMEB COMPOSITION^p FOR NORTHEAST SYRIA - FIG. 8



SMEB CONTENTS - FIG. 9

Food			
Bread	37 kg	Rice	19 kg
Bulgur	15 kg	Salt	1 kg
Chicken	6 kg	Sugar	5 kg
Eggs	6 kg	Tomato paste	6 kg
Ghee/veg. oil	7 kg/L	Vegetables (fresh)	12 kg
Red lentils	15 kg		

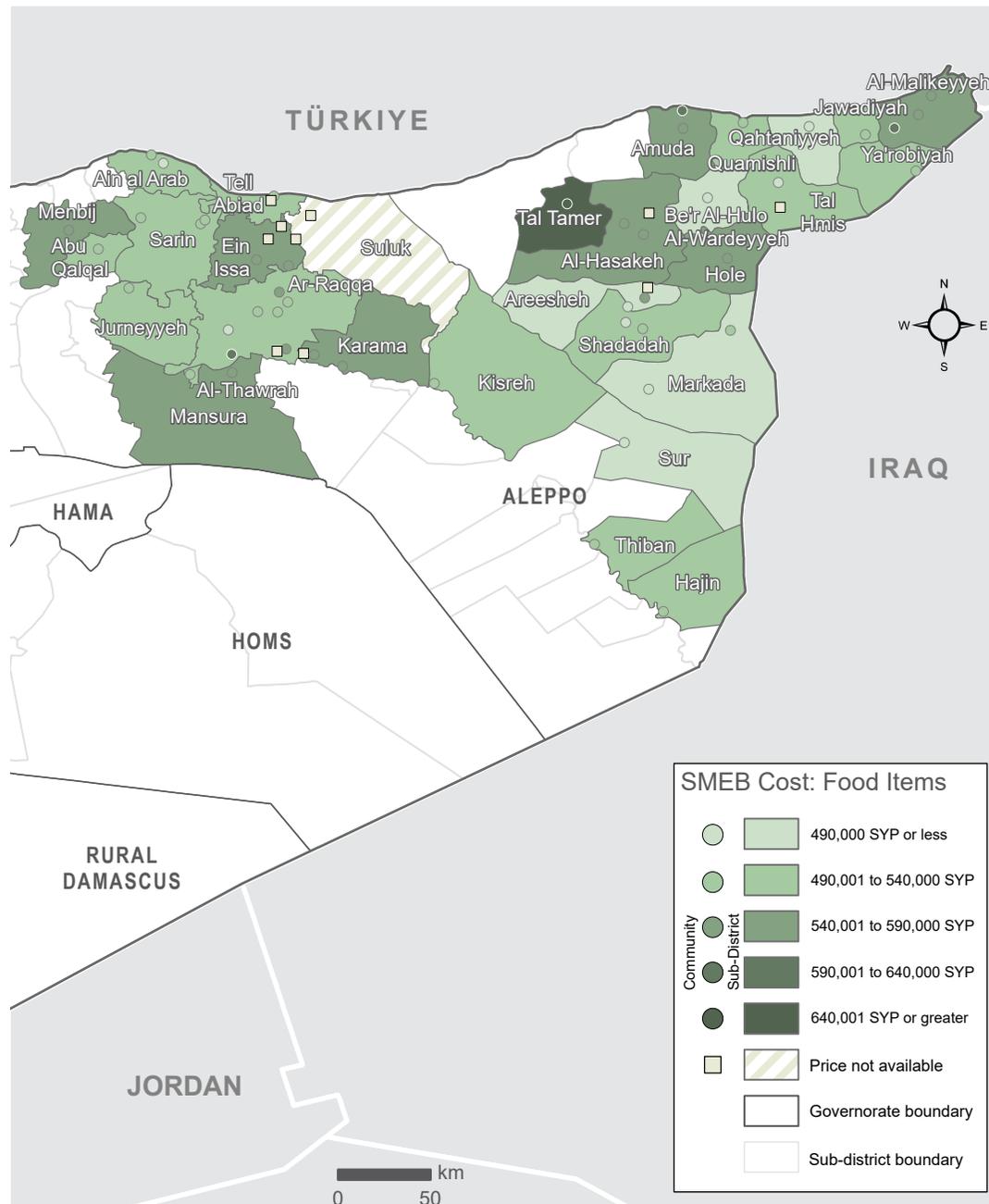
Hygiene (NFI)			
Bathing soap	12 bars	Toothpaste	200 g
Laundry/dish soap	3 kg	Sanitary pads	4 packs of 10

Other			
Cooking fuel	25 L	Phone data	1 GB
Water trucking	4500 L	"Float"/other costs	7.5% of total

The SMEB Total is the median cost of the minimum, culturally adjusted items required to support a 6-person household for a month.

D. Due to rounding figures may not total 100%

SMEB FOOD COMPONENT COST ACROSS NES, BY SUBDISTRICTS AND COMMUNITIES - FIG. 10



PRICE OF ALL SMEB ITEMS - FIG. 11

Item	Unit ^E	Price SYP	1 month change	6 month change	Price USD ^F
Northeast food Syria SMEB		514,250	9%	12%	104
Bulk food items	SMEB	272,625	5%	19%	55.08
Bulgur	1 kg	4,000	5%	22%	0.81
Red lentils	1 kg	5,100	2%	9%	1.03
Rice	1 kg	4,000	8%	26%	0.81
Salt	500 g	700	0%	33%	0.14
Sugar	1 kg	3,800	9%	10%	0.77
Tomato paste	1 kg	7,750	24%	51%	1.57
Fresh vegetables	SMEB	22,725	32%	-28%	4.59
Tomatoes	1 kg	2,200	29%	-37%	0.44
Potatoes	1 kg	2,500	36%	25%	0.51
Cucumbers	1 kg	1,550	38%	-56%	0.31
Onions	1 kg	1,200	20%	0%	0.24
Cooking oils	SMEB	64,125	2%	-6%	12.95
Ghee	1 kg	9,000	0%	-5%	1.82
Vegetable oil	1 L	9,000	0%	-10%	1.82
Non-veg perishables					
Bread	8 pc	364	9%	-9%	0.07
Chicken	1 kg	8,500	6%	21%	1.72
Eggs	30 pc	14,000	17%	30%	2.83
Non-food items	SMEB	47,517	4%	30%	9.60
Bathing soap	1 pc	1,500	0%	50%	0.30
Sanitary pads	10 pc	2,225	3%	17%	0.45
Toothpaste	100 g	2,900	16%	12%	0.59
Laundry powder	1 kg	5,375	10%	33%	1.09
Dish soap	1 L	4,000	0%	14%	0.81
Cooking fuels	SMEB	7,000	75%	NA	1.41
Kerosene (manually refined)	1 L	1,400	17%	NA	0.28
LP gas	1 L	250	43%	NA	0.05
Water trucking	SMEB	22,500	3%	18%	4.55
Water trucking (1000 L)	1 m3	5,000	3%	18%	1.01
Other					
Phone data	1 gb	2,750	-8%	7%	0.56

E. The SMEB unit refers to the current SMEB allocation of the item, as outlined in [fig. 9](#)

F. USD values are calculated as per the informal exchange rate recorded in the same geographical area. Please see this month's JMMI dataset for informal exchange rates by area.

MARKET FUNCTIONALITY

The price of transport fuels decreased slightly overall attributed to a notable drop in the price of manually refined petrol in Al-Hasakeh governorate. The price of high-quality imported fuels continued to increase and remain highly unavailable across NES.

In general shortages of diesel from public fuel stations in NES cause long queues and the quantities available is often insufficient to meet the allocations of those with fuel cards; access to cards is a challenge for many.¹⁸ The official fuel allocation for public and private vehicles was reduced by 50% in October.¹⁹

High inflation remains the predominant challenge facing traders in NES. Field teams reported that the reduced purchasing power of the population has meant stores are facing

reduced sales and are forced to sell goods to people on informal credit. In October, there was a reduction in the number of vendors reporting border crossings and road closures as a supply challenge. In general, the complex routes to secure supplies in NES mean goods often cross multiple borders to arrive at their destination.²⁰ This greatly increases transport costs as well as customs duties applied at multiple points.²¹

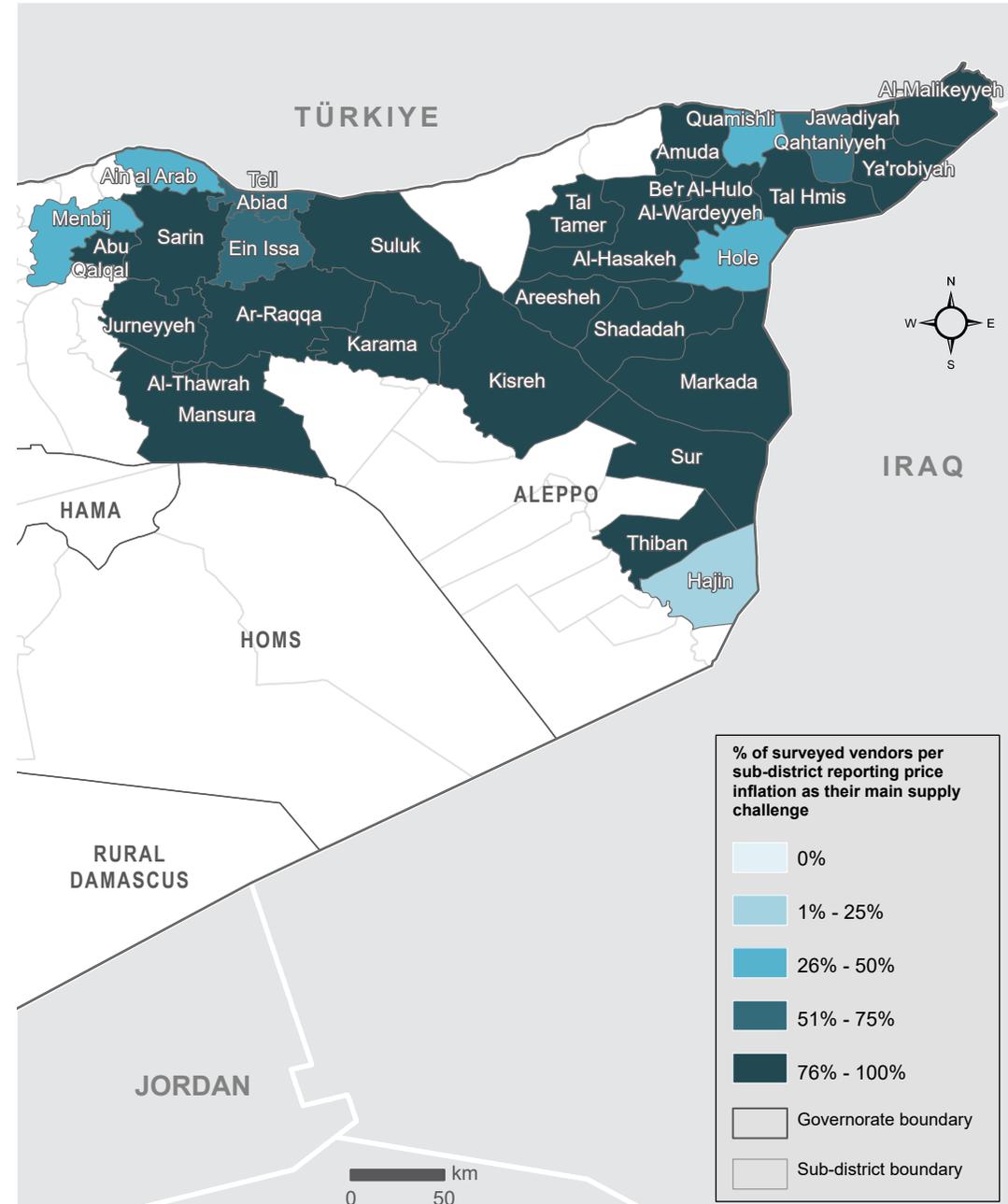
43% of vendors reported they would run out of stock in less than three days if unable to re-stock. Nevertheless, all key food items remained available in approximately 94% of reporting communities. Limited stock of USD remains a challenge across NES with over half of vendors reporting limited stock of all USD denominations except for 1 USD.

SUPPLY CHALLENGES REPORTED^G BY SURVEYED VENDORS - FIG. 12

	AREA	REPORTED %
	NES	77%
PRICE INFLATION	NE Aleppo	61%
	Al-Hasakeh	85%
	Ar-Raqqa	76%
	Deir-Ez-Zor	74%
	NES	15%
NO ISSUES	NE Aleppo	36%
	Al-Hasakeh	4%
	Ar-Raqqa	17%
	Deir-Ez-Zor	17%
	NES	16%
SUPPLY CANT MEET DEMAND	NE Aleppo	3%
	Al-Hasakeh	21%
	Ar-Raqqa	14%
	Deir-Ez-Zor	28%
	NES	10%
SUPPLIER LIMITED SUPPLY	NE Aleppo	8%
	Al-Hasakeh	15%
	Ar-Raqqa	5%
	Deir-Ez-Zor	8%

G. Multiple choice responses are not expected to total 100%. Please see this month's JMMI dataset for all supply challenges reported by vendors.

VENDORS REPORTING PRICE INFLATION AS THEIR MAIN SUPPLY CHALLENGE ACROSS NES - FIG. 13



ABOUT

To inform humanitarian cash programming, the northeast of Syria (NES) Cash Working Group (CWG) - in partnership with local and international NGOs - conducts a monthly JMMI in northern Syria. The exercise assesses 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 cell phone data.

METHODOLOGY

In order to be included in the JMMI, 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.

Prices are calculated by taking the median of the next level of aggregation: community and sub-district prices are both drawn from the median prices collected from different vendors. District medians are calculated from sub-district medians, governorate figures are calculated from district medians, and regional figures are calculated from governorate medians.

For more details about the methodology, access the online [JMMI dashboard](#).

In light of the fluctuation of the Syrian Pound (SYP)'s value and resulting market disruption, prices should be seen as representative only of the markets and dates where and when information was collected (3 - 10 October 2022).

LIMITATIONS

All JMMI data is only indicative for the specific timeframe within which it was collected, and trend lines in graphs may not be continuous where data is missing. Usually, data is collected during the first Monday-to-Monday of each month. The JMMI data collection tool requires enumerators to record the cheapest available price for each item, but does not require a specific brand, as brand availability may vary. Therefore, price comparisons across regions may be based on slight variants of the same product. Non-food items (NFIs) are particularly challenging to standardize as they vary significantly in terms of types, brands, and specifications. The JMMI methodology aims to balance consistency and comparability considerations with geographical variations in availability.

Due to issues of access, security and partner capacity, the markets included in the JMMI may vary on a monthly basis. As such, the reported changes in the more aggregate levels (governorate, district) may be driven by shifts in coverage rather than actual changes. For this reason, we recommend all users to consider local markets and lower levels of aggregation (sub-district, community) when using JMMI data for more specific trend analyses.

It is important to keep in mind that some vendors might feel more or less inclined to share their actual experiences (fearing that the information shared might be used by competitors or in some way against their business), while others might adjust their answers based on the expected effect that they will have on humanitarian programming. Similarly, even though all enumerators received the same training,

some might have more previous experience and might therefore be better able to produce higher quality data.

Part of the data collection takes place remotely using vendor contact information collected in advance by the JMMI partners, in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Market monitoring can be challenging, especially through remote interviews. At the same time, the JMMI has over seven years of accumulated experience, strong internal coordination and external relation with vendors, and vast longitudinal data, which supports the accuracy of findings.

JMMI AND THE CASH WORKING GROUP

The JMMI exists within the framework of the Cash Working Group (CWG). In northwest Syria (NWS), the 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. In northeast Syria (NES), the CWG was established in 2018, to fulfil a similar purpose in that region.

For more information about the CWG in NES, please contact the cash working group coordinator at cashcoordnes@gmail.com

PARTNERS

Each month, around 20 different organizations work together to collect market data. Participating organisations train their enumerators on the JMMI methodology and data collection tools using standard training materials developed

by REACH, who is then responsible for processing the data.



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.

For more information about REACH, please contact the REACH JMMI focal point, Safaa Harahsheh, at safaa.harahsheh@reach-initiative.org or visit the [REACH Syria Resource Centre](#).

ENDNOTES

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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