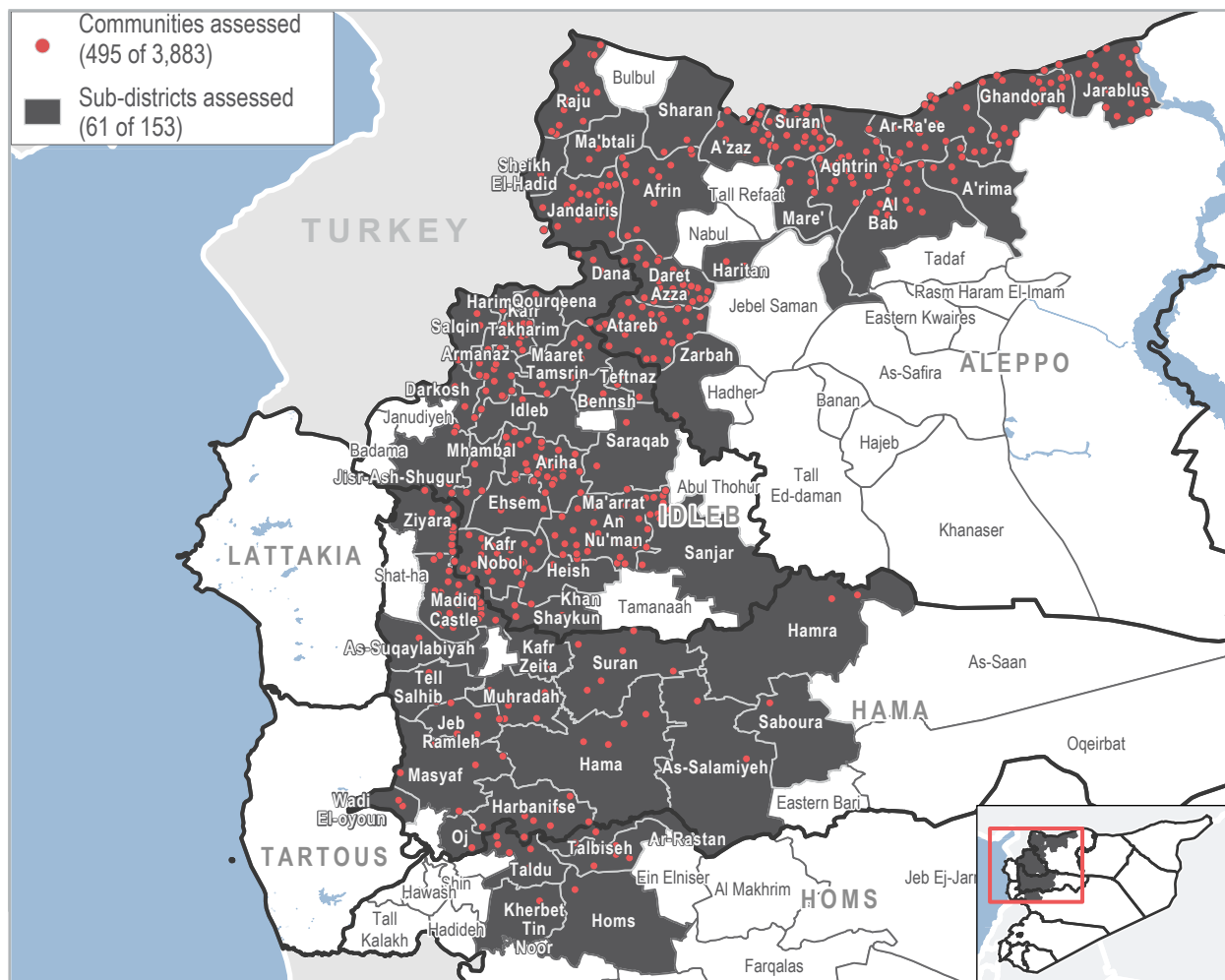


Northwest Syria, September 2018

Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria (HSOS)

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 495 communities across Idlib (155 communities), western Aleppo (245 communities), Hama (82 communities), and Homs (13 communities) governorates. Data was collected during the month of October 2018, and refers to the situation in the northwest region in September 2018. 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.

Top 3 reported priority needs in assessed communities:

- 1** Healthcare
- 2** Food security
- 3** Water access

People in need (PIN) Demographics*

5,696,896 total PIN 2,860,560 2,836,336

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

Average price in **September 2018**: 53,628 Syrian pound (SYP)
 Average price in **August 2018**: 53,650 SYP
 Average price during last six months: 55,245 SYP

* Figures based on [HNO 2018](#) population data for the entire NES region including areas not covered by HSOS.

Key events impacting the humanitarian situation in NWS

Operation "Olive Branch" commences in Afrin. ^a	212,724 individuals spontaneously return to 287 communities in rural Aleppo governorate and 354,682 individuals return to Aleppo city. ^b	Displacement remains high in Afrin with restricted movement and limited spontaneous returns since start of offensive. ^{c,d}	95,000 IDPs reportedly arrived in northwest Syria from Eastern Ghouta, northern rural Homs, and southwest Syria. ^e	Approximately 1.9 million IDPs reported in Idlib, western Aleppo, northern Hama and Eastern Latakia. ^f	Demilitarised zone free of heavy weaponry and certain AOGs established in NWS, to be implemented by 15 October 2018. ^g
January 2018	February 2018	End of May 2018	March-August 2018	End of August 2018	September 2018

Northwest Syria, September 2018

CONTEXT

Idleb governorate, western Aleppo, and northwestern Hama remained one of the last opposition-held territories in September 2018. In the beginning of September, a significant increase in shelling on northern Hama and southern Idleb resulted in further destruction of civilian infrastructure and contributed to displacement throughout northwest Syria (NWS) in the first half of the month. Please see the ISMI [Overview of IDP Movements in Northern Syria, September 2018](#) for further information.

On 17 September 2018, international actors signed an agreement to jointly implement a demilitarized zone free of heavy weapons along conflict lines in NWS. However, significant security and protection issues persisted and humanitarian needs across NWS remained high.^h

KEY HIGHLIGHTS^a

Dependence on humanitarian aid reported for food and livelihoods in Idleb

Of the 155 assessed communities in Idleb, key informants (KIs) in 14% reported that there was an insufficient amount of food to meet household needs in the community. Additionally, KIs reported that in 71% of the assessed communities, the most common barrier to accessing food was a lack of resources to buy available food and in 51% of the assessed communities, KIs reported that some food items were too expensive. In 51%, KIs reported that food was obtained through humanitarian distributions, suggesting that approximately half of the population in assessed communities utilised humanitarian aid to access food.

Among the assessed communities in Idleb, 72% reported an income of less than 50,000 SYP and in 95% of communities, KIs reported unstable daily work as the most common source of income. Furthermore, KIs reported that in 21% of assessed communities, primarily in Ariha, Ma'arrat An Nu'man, and Kafr Nobol sub-districts, the sale of humanitarian aid was the main source of income.

Food production and a lack of income in Homs

Of the 13 communities assessed in Homs, 85% reported that local food production decreased in September. Furthermore, 92% of the assessed communities reported that the main source of income was derived from farm ownership. In parallel, KIs reported that in 85% of the assessed communities, some residents skipped meals or reduced portion sizes in order to cope with the lack of income. Furthermore, medical KIs in 77% of the assessed communities reported that some individuals had been diagnosed with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) in September. This indicates that the adverse affect of a decrease in local food production and a lack of income has negatively impacted public health and food security in Homs.

Access to healthcare services in western Aleppo

Among the 245 assessed communities in western Aleppo, KIs in 81% reported that healthcare was a top priority need in September. KIs in 68% of these communities reported that there were no functioning medical facilities in the community. Furthermore, KIs reported that only 16% of assessed communities had access to anaesthetics and only 12% had access to blood transfusion bags in September. In 30% of the assessed communities, antenatal care was reportedly the most needed health service and in 27%, chronic disease treatment was the most needed health service.



Displacement

- KIs reported 906,100 IDPs residing in the assessed communities in NWS. The highest concentration of IDPs were reported in Afrin (western Aleppo governorate), A'zaz (western Aleppo governorate), and Ma'arrat Tamasrin (Idleb governorate) communities.
- The most commonly reported reasons IDPs remained in the host communities in September were access to employment/income/shelter, family ties, and a lack of money to pay for movement.



Food Security & Livelihoods

- Idleb and Homs governorates reported that food security was the top priority need in September.
- Of the 237 assessed communities in Hama and Idleb governorate, KIs reported that in 21% of the assessed communities there was an inability to access bread on a daily basis due to lack of flour and electricity/fuel.
- Among the 82 assessed communities in Hama, 11% reported eating food waste to cope with the lack of income.
- KIs reported that in the 15 assessed communities in Raju sub-district in western Aleppo governorate, 60% had no access to bread in their communities.



Education

- Of the 495 assessed communities in NWS, 70% reported that school-aged children were able to access education services in September. However, in Hama governorate, KIs reported that of the 82 assessed communities, 52% reported that children did not attend school primarily due to a lack of teaching staff and school supplies.
- KIs reported that of the 495 assessed communities in NWS, in 39%, children were sent to work or beg, impacting their ability to attend educational services.
- Among the 68 assessed communities in Al Ma'ra district (Idleb governorate), 25% reported that girls experienced more challenges in accessing education than boys due to the long distances between the home and service.



WASH

- Among the 495 assessed communities in NWS, 96% reported that water was fine to drink in September. However, of the 20 communities assessed in Jarablus sub-district (western Aleppo governorate), 45% reported water tasted and/or smelled bad.
- Of the 495 assessed communities in NWS, KIs reported that in 42% the network was the primary source of water. In Idleb governorate, of the 155 assessed communities, KIs in 83% reported water trucking was the primary source of drinking water.



Health

- KIs in the 413 assessed communities in western Aleppo, Idleb, and Homs reported that in 73% of the assessed communities, severe diseases affecting children aged less than five were the most common health concern. However, of the 82 assessed communities in Hama, 40% reported that skin disease was the most common health concern.
- Of the 495 assessed communities in NWS, medical KIs in 8% reported that some individuals had been diagnosed with SAM, in September. The majority of these communities were located in Jebel Saman district (western Aleppo governorate) and Ar-Rastan district (Homs governorate).



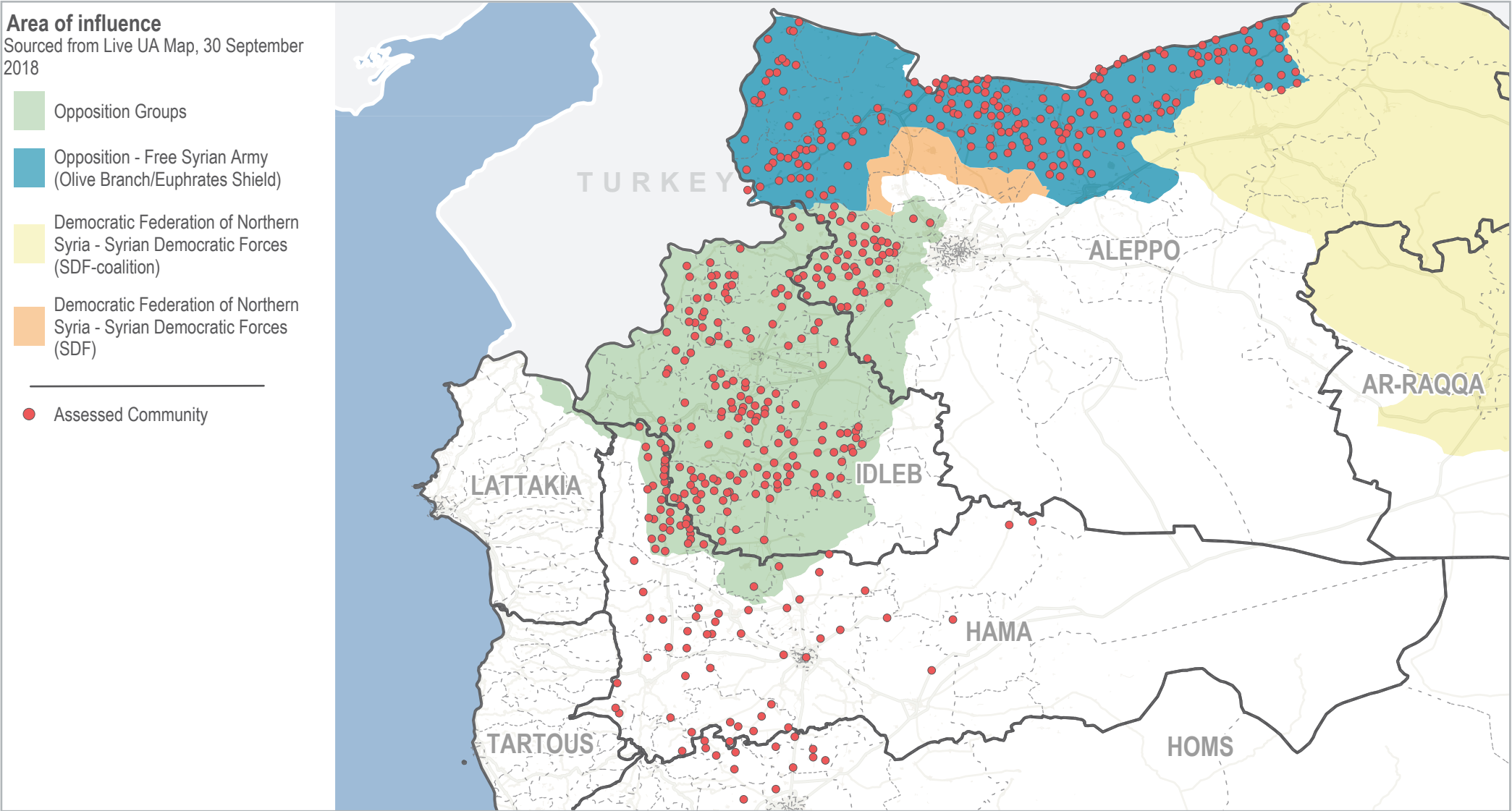
Shelter and NFI

- Among the 245 communities assessed in western Aleppo, 86% reported generators as the most common source of electricity.
- In western Aleppo and Idleb governorates, KIs reported that of the 400 assessed communities, in 9% IDPs primarily resided in tents.
- KIs in the 400 assessed communities in western Aleppo and Idleb governorates reported that in 95% of assessed communities, between 1-25% of buildings were uninhabitable due to damage. However, Jdideh (western Aleppo governorate), Sali and Tal Awar (Idleb governorate) communities reported that between 51-75% of buildings were damaged.

^aThe western part of Aleppo where humanitarian response and coordination is conducted from the northwest rather than the northeast.

Northwest Syria, September 2018

Regional areas of influence:



Northwest Syria, September 2018

DISPLACEMENT

6,620 - 8,100

Estimated number of IDP arrivals in assessed communities in September.

4,160 - 4,750

Estimated number of spontaneous returns in assessed communities in September.⁴

Communities with the largest estimated number of IDP arrivals:

Afrin (Aleppo)	500 - 1,000
Kaftin (Idleb)	480 - 500
Albil (Aleppo)	450 - 500

Top 3 reported subdistricts of origin for IDP arrivals:^{5,6}

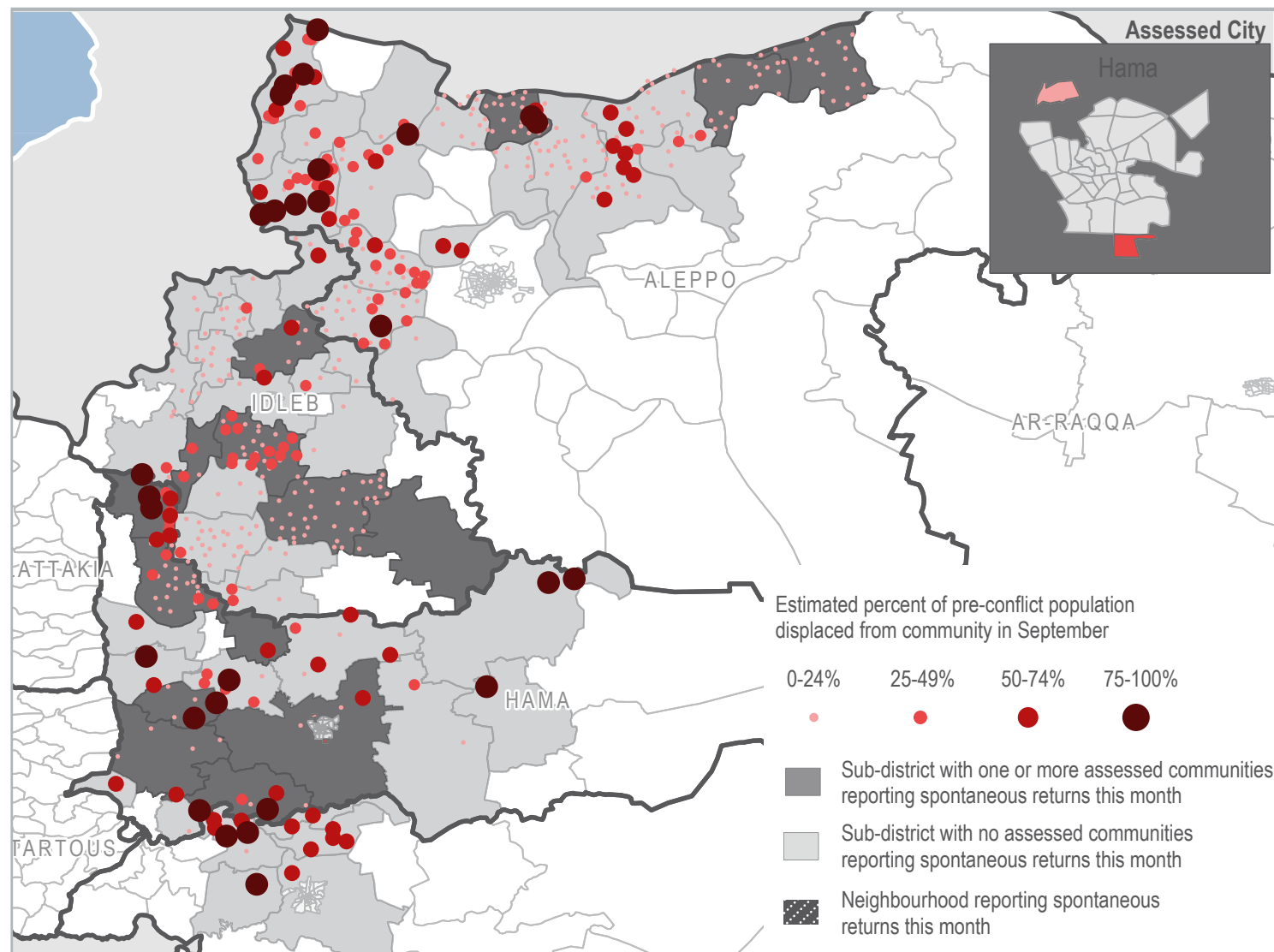
- Tamanaah (Idleb governorate)
- Al Bab (Aleppo governorate)
- Ghandora (Aleppo governorate)

430 communities reported no PCP departures.⁷

Top 3 reasons for PCP departures in the remaining 63 assessed communities:^{5,6,8}

Loss of income	68%
Reduced access to basic services	33%
Escalation of conflict	29%

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



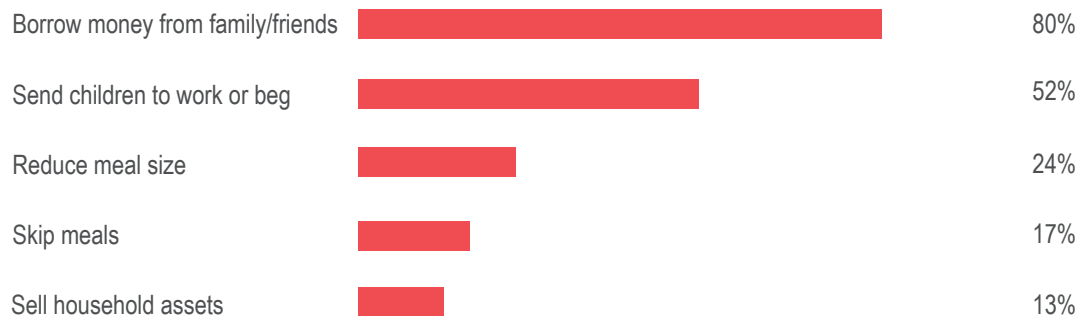
Northwest Syria, September 2018



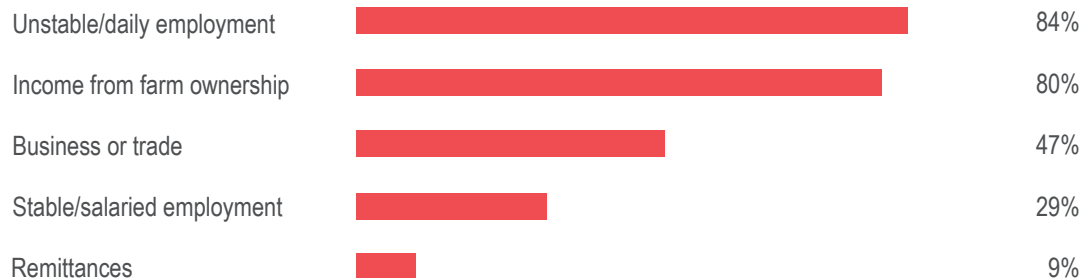
FOOD SECURITY & LIVELIHOODS

- 160/495** Communities reported having received food distributions in the last month.
- 108/495** Communities reported that residents were unable to access shops and markets.
- 9/495** Communities reported that residents used extreme food-based coping strategies to deal with insufficient income.⁹
- Less than 50,000 SYP** Most commonly reported household monthly income range.¹

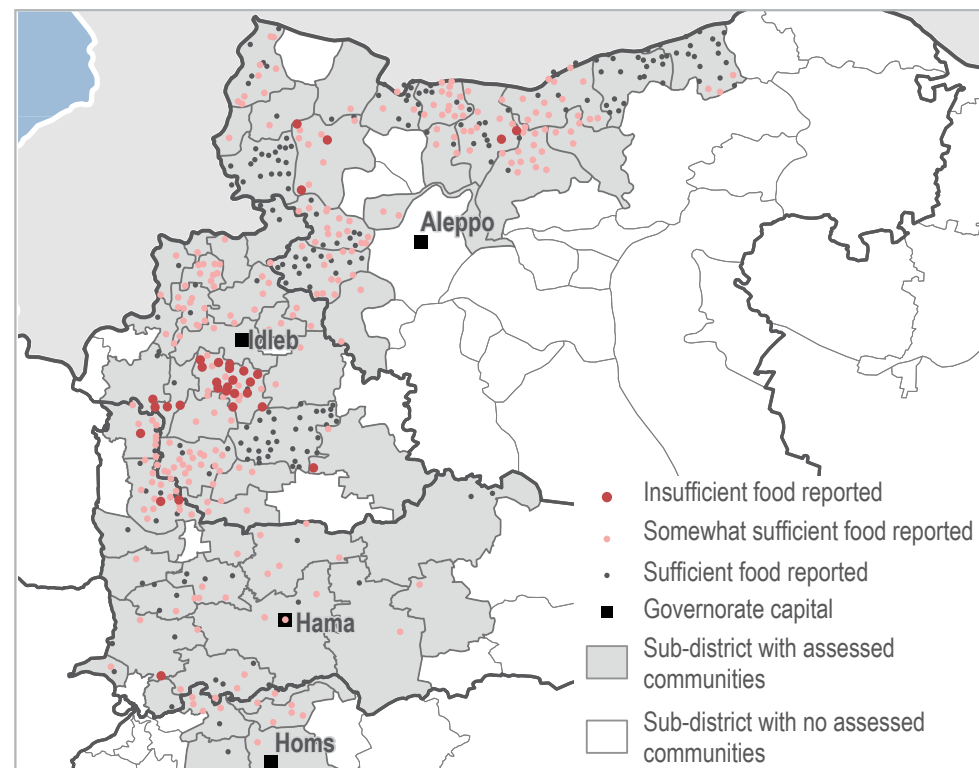
108 communities reported that residents had enough income to cover household needs. The most commonly reported coping strategies to deal with a lack of income in the remaining **378** assessed communities were:^{5,6,8}



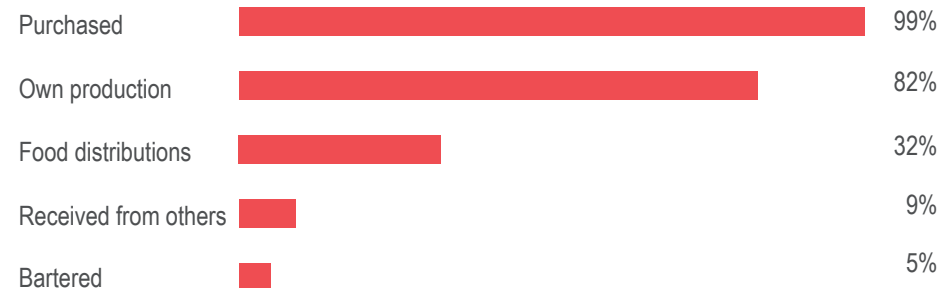
Most commonly reported main sources of income:^{5,6}



Communities that reported having a sufficient quantity of food:¹⁰



Most commonly reported ways of obtaining food:^{5,6}



Northwest Syria, September 2018



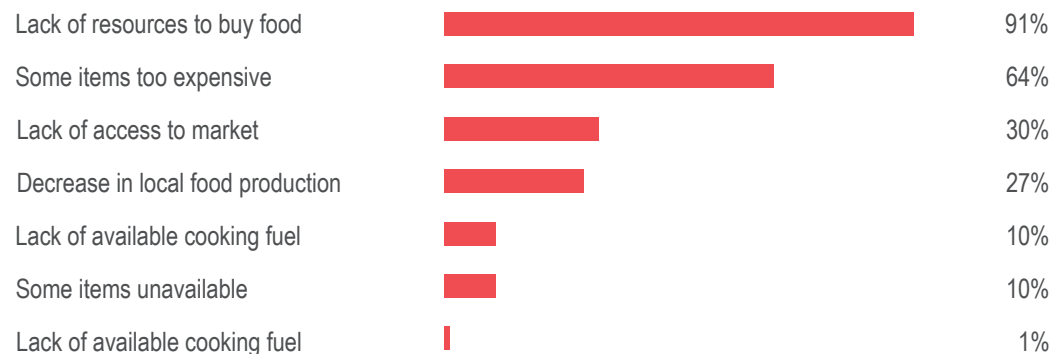
FOOD SECURITY & LIVELIHOODS

Core food item prices reported (in SYP):^{1,11}

Food item:	Regional average price in August:	One month change:	Six month change:
Bread (8 pieces)	150	+20%	0%
Rice (1 kilogram)	300	0%	-14%
Lentils (1 kilogram)	225	0%	-18%
Sugar (1 kilogram)	250	-3%	-17%
Cooking oil (1 litre)*	250	0%	-17%

*includes the combined vegetable oil and ghee prices

137 communities reported that residents experienced no challenges in accessing food. The most common difficulties experienced in the remaining 357 assessed communities were:^{5,6,8}



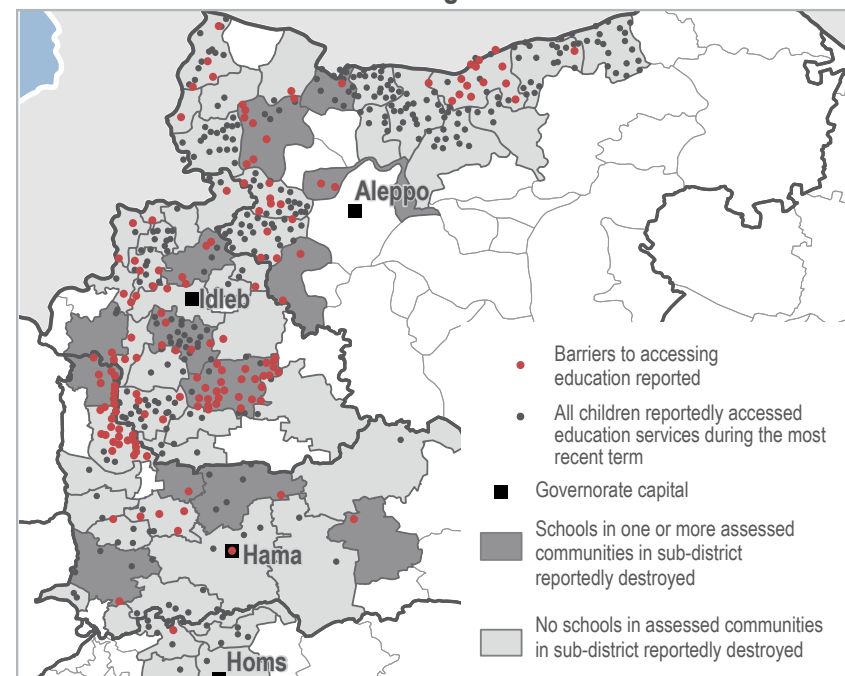
EDUCATION

468/495 communities reported having functioning primary education facilities, while 261 communities reported having functioning secondary education facilities.¹²

342 communities reported that all children were able to access education. The most commonly reported barriers to education in the remaining 148 assessed communities were:^{5,6,8}



Prevalence of barriers to accessing education services:



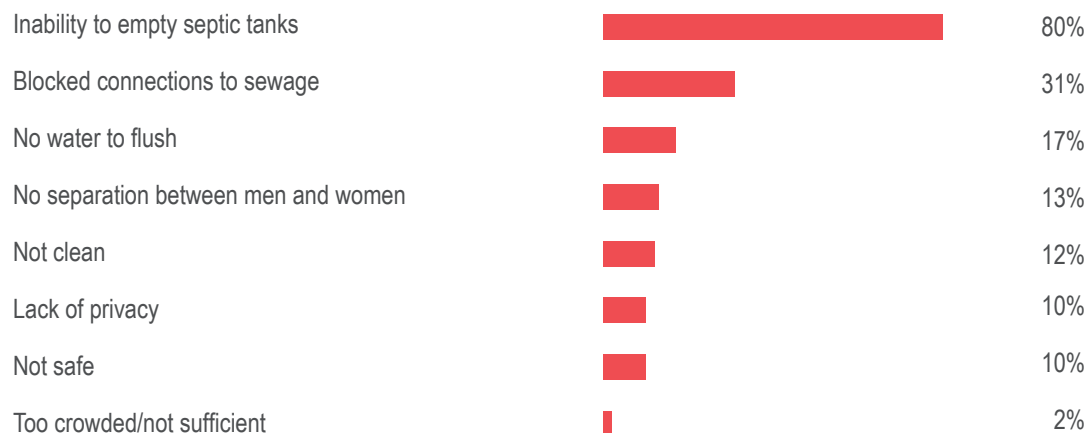
Northwest Syria, September 2018



14/495 Communities reported that water from their primary source tasted and/or smelled bad.

1/495 Communities reported that drinking water from their primary source made people sick.

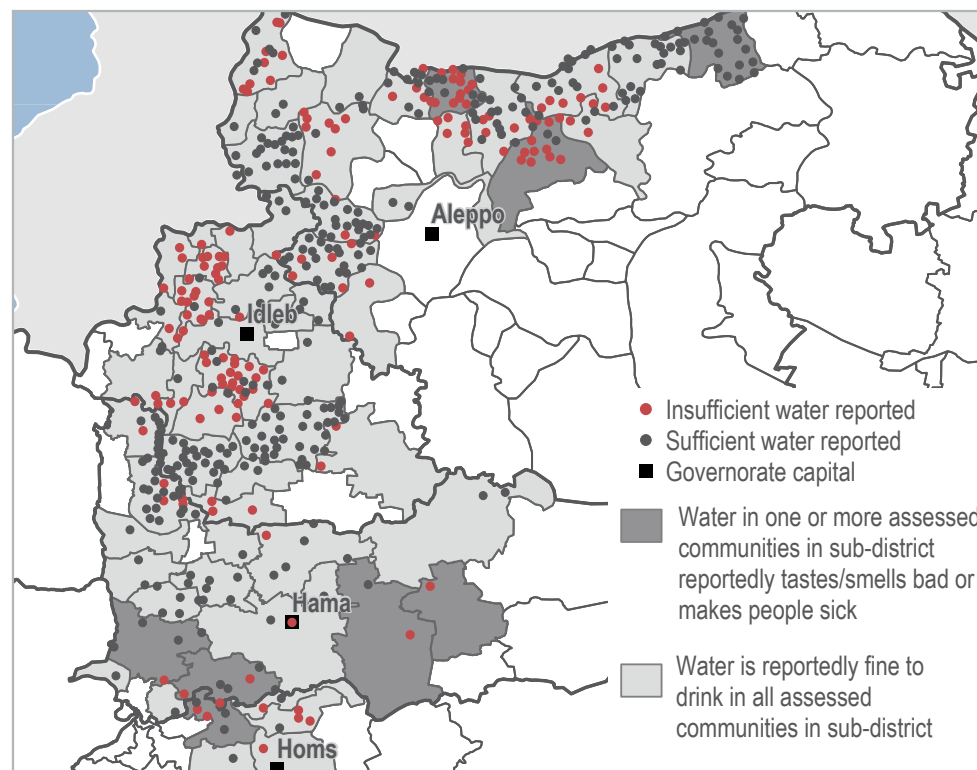
284 communities reported that residents had no problems with latrines. The most commonly reported problems with latrines in the remaining **205 assessed communities** were:^{5,6,8}



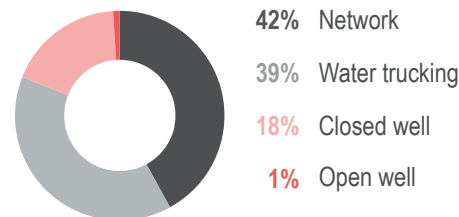
330 communities reported that they had sufficient amounts of water to meet household needs. The most common coping strategies to deal with a lack of water in the remaining **160 assessed communities** were:^{5,6,8}



Communities that reported sufficient amounts of water to meet household needs:¹⁰



Primary drinking water source reported:⁶



Primary method of garbage disposal reported:^{5,6}



Northwest Syria, September 2018

HEALTH

163/495 Communities reported that no assessed medical items were available in their community.¹³

87/495 Communities reported that the majority of women did not give birth in a formal health facility.

40/495 Communities reported that some individuals had been diagnosed with SAM (Severe Acute Malnutrition).¹⁴

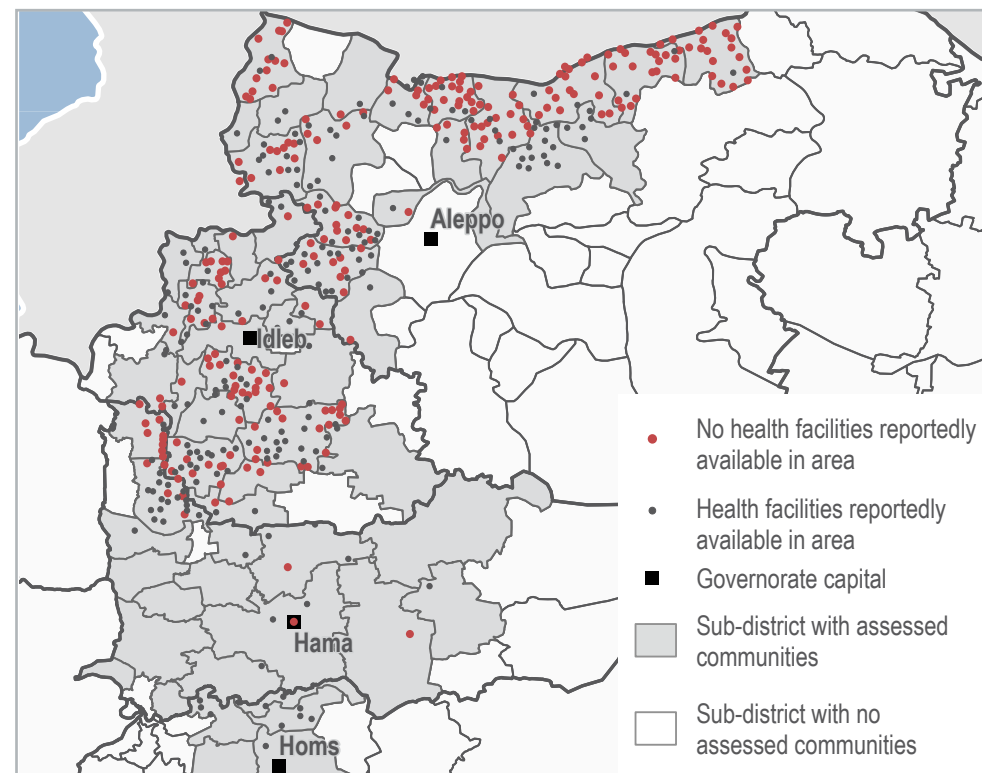
119 communities reported that residents experienced no barriers to accessing healthcare services. The most commonly reported barriers in the remaining **338 assessed communities** were:^{5,6,8}



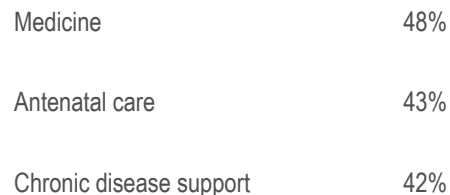
461 communities reported that residents were not using coping strategies to deal with a lack of medical services and items. The coping strategies used in the remaining **25 communities** were:^{5,6,8}



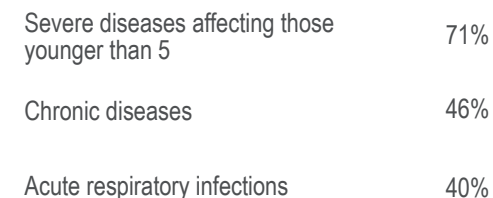
Presence of health facilities in assessed communities:



Top 3 most needed healthcare services reported:^{5,6}



Top 3 most common health problems reported:^{5,6}



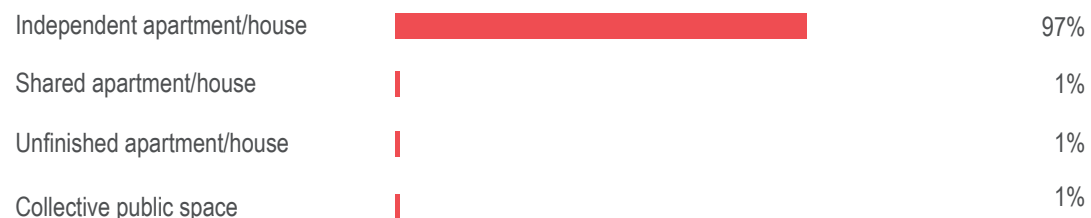
Northwest Syria, September 2018

SHELTER AND NFI

6,080 SYP Regional average monthly reported rent price in SYP across assessed communities.¹

5,351 SYP Northern Syria average monthly reported rent price in SYP across assessed communities.^{1,15}

Most commonly reported shelter type for PCP households:⁶



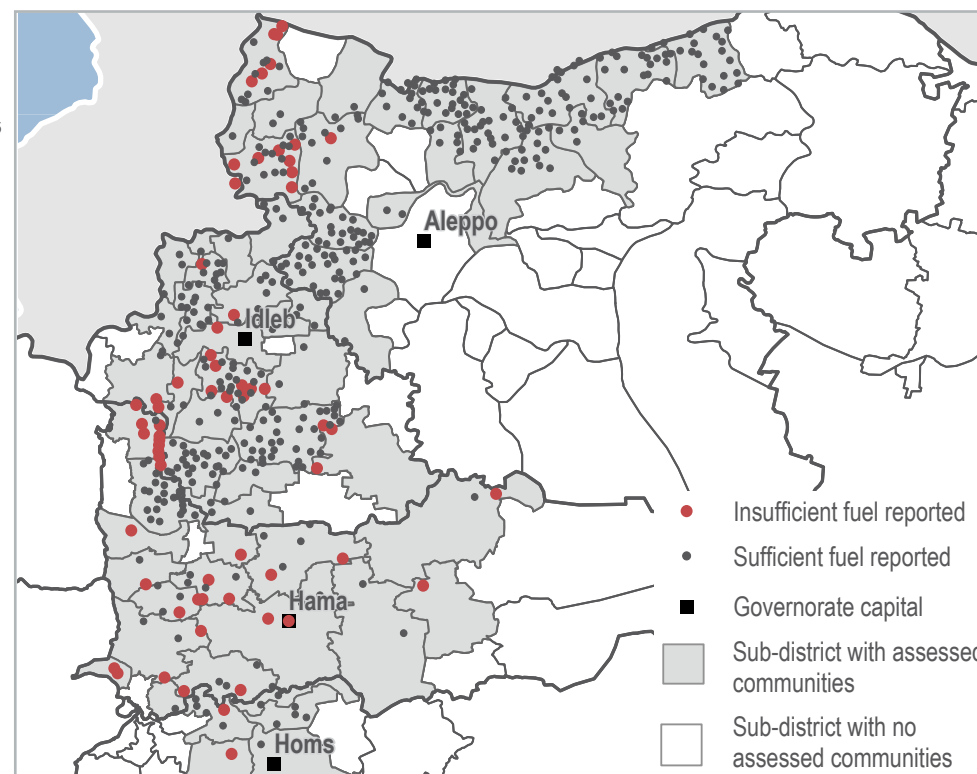
Most commonly reported shelter type for IDP households:⁶



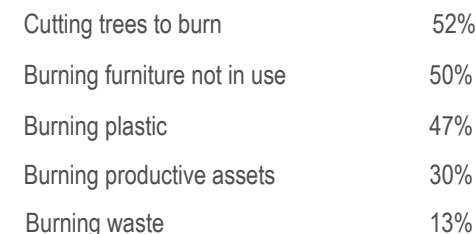
Reported fuel prices (in SYP):^{1,2}

Fuel type (1L):	Regional average price in September:	One month change:	Six month change:
GoS petrol	400	0%	0%
GoS diesel	361	+3%	-7%
Manually refined petrol	250	0%	-5%
Manually refined diesel	193	-1%	-9%
Cooking fuel	250	0%	-17%

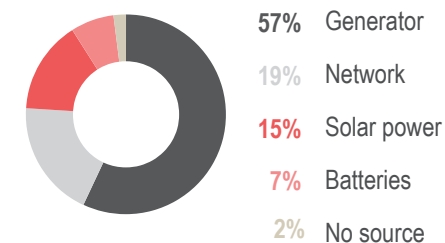
Communities that reported sufficient amounts of fuel to meet household needs:¹⁰



428 communities reported no lack of fuel. Most common strategies to cope with lack of fuel in the remaining **64** assessed communities:^{5,6,8}



Primary source of electricity reported:⁶



METHODOLOGY

HSOS data collection is conducted through an enumerator network in accessible locations throughout Idleb, Aleppo, Hama, Homs, 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, 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. You can contact us directly at: geneva@reach-initiative.org and follow us on Twitter: [@REACH_info](https://twitter.com/REACH_info).

ENDNOTES

MAIN TEXT

¹ 1 USD = 434 SYP (UN operational rates of exchange as of 1 August 2018)

² 18 items comprise the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB), which represents the minimum culturally adjusted items required to support a 6-person household for a month. SMEB items: Bread, bulgur, chicken, eggs, fresh vegetables, ghee/vegetable oil, red lentils, rice, salt, sugar, tomato paste, bathing soap, laundry/dish soap, sanitary pads, toothpaste, cooking fuel, water trucking, smartphone data, float (other costs).

³ All information and figures reported in HSOS factsheets refer to the situation in assessed communities and cannot be generalised to other non-assessed communities of the region.

⁴ Returns are not necessarily voluntary, safe, or sustainable.

⁵ Assessed using select multiple questions

⁶ By percentage of communities reporting

⁷ Pre-Conflict Population (PCP), individuals who have not been displaced since the beginning of the conflict.

⁸ 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 total number of communities assessed and percentages will be calculated based on submitted responses.

⁹ Extreme food-based strategies: eating food waste; eating non-edible plants and spending days without eating.

¹⁰ Based on KI perception of sufficiency.

¹¹ 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 report](#).

¹² 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.

¹³ Assessed HSOS medical items; anti-anxiety medication, contraception, clean bandages, blood transfusion bags, diabetes medicine, anaesthetics, blood pressure medicine, antibiotics, burn treatment.

¹⁴ This information was derived from medical professionals (KIs)

¹⁵ Includes HSOS data for Idleb, Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Deir-ez-Zor, Ar-Raqqa and Al-Hasakeh governorates.

KEY EVENTS AND DEVELOPMENTS

^a Ibrahim and Edelman (26 February 2018). Turkish-backed offensive on Afrin leaves 50,000 students out of school. Retrieved from <https://syriadirect.org>.

^b World Health Organisation (1 March 2018). Health Cluster Weekly Situation Report: Whole of Syria, Week 9 (23 February - 1 March 2018). Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

^c UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (15.06.2018). Syrian Arab Republic: Humanitarian situation update in Afrin District and for IDPs in surrounding communities (as of 15 June 2018). Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>

^d World Health Organization Eastern Mediterranean. (13-19 April 2018). Syria crisis Afrin update. Issue 4 (13 - 19 April 2018). Retrieved from <https://www.emro.who.int>.

^e UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (12.09.2018). Syria: Recent Developments in North-west Syria (as of 12 Sep 2018). Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

^f UN High Commissioner for Refugees. (31.08.2018). Cross-Border Humanitarian Response Fact Sheet - Northwest Syria - August 2018. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

^g Aljazeera, (22.09.2018). Russia, Turkey agree on borders of demilitarised zone in Idlib. Retrieved from <https://aljazeera.com>

^h UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (12.09.2018). Syria: Recent Developments in North-west Syria (as of 12 Sep 2018). Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.