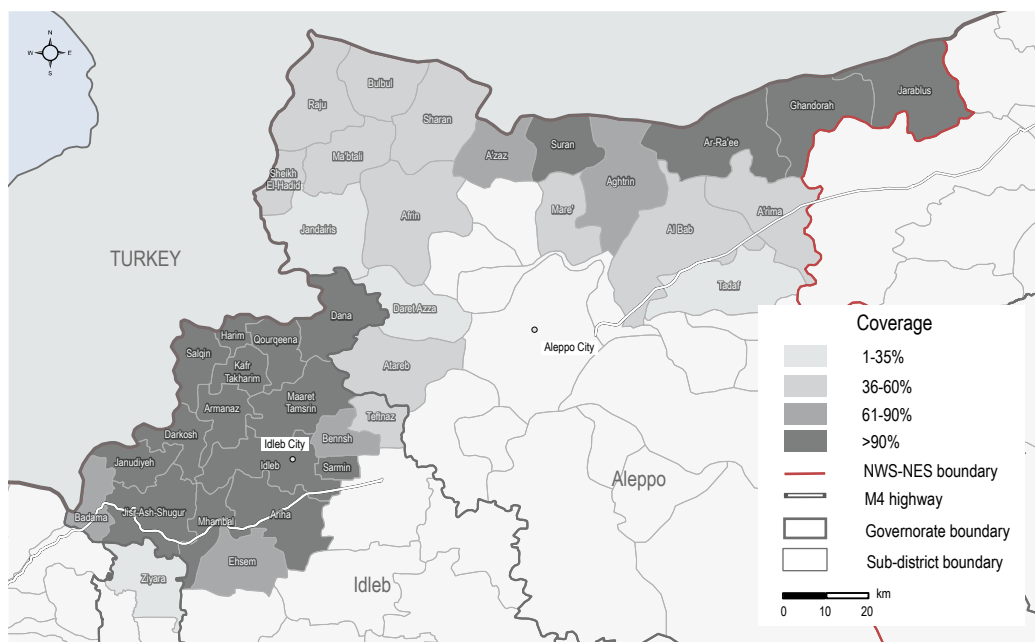


Introduction and Methodology

HSOS is a monthly assessment that provides comprehensive, multi-sectoral information about the humanitarian conditions and priority needs inside Syria. This factsheet presents a thematic review based on the HSOS assessment of the priority needs and humanitarian assistance, economic conditions, living conditions, access to basic services, COVID-19 situation, and security and protection situation in Northwest Syria. **Sector-specific indicator findings by location can be found on the [HSOS dashboard](#).**

The assessment is conducted using a key informant (KI) methodology at the community level. REACH enumerators are based inside Syria and interview three to six KIs per assessed location, either directly or remotely (via phone). KIs are chosen based on their community-level and sector-specific knowledge. This factsheet presents information gathered in **748 communities** across the greater Idlib area¹ (374 communities) and northern Aleppo area (374 communities). **Data was collected between 10-18 of January 2021 from 2,812 KIs** (19% female). Unless specified by an endnote, all indicators refer to the situation in the 30 days prior to data collection (December 2020/January 2021). Findings are indicative rather than representative, and should not be generalized across the population and region. Findings that are calculated based on a subset of the community are indicated by the following footnote ♦, with each subset specified in the endnotes.

The **complete monthly HSOS dataset** is available on the [REACH Resource Centre](#).



Key Highlights

Insecurity and harsh winter weather continued to exacerbate humanitarian needs in northwest Syria (NWS). Ongoing hostilities around the M4 and M5 highways and deadly explosions in Northern Aleppo raised fears of further escalation. Households were also impacted by winter-related challenges, including the flooding of thousands of shelters, reduced access to electricity and damaged schools hampering education access.

- **Continued fighting in southern Idlib as well as a series of attacks in Azaz, Afrin, and Al Bab sub districts in northern Aleppo** resulted in at least 50 civilian casualties, including children.^{a,b} According to REACH field teams, the violence compounded psychological stress among residents and IDPs in the affected areas. Households reportedly attempted to avoid crowded places such as markets as these appear to have been targeted in the latest wave of attacks.^c Relatedly, KIs cited that security issues hindered access to markets in 130 assessed communities, while security concerns restricted movement to markets in 55 communities.
- **Harsh winter weather particularly impacted internally displaced persons (IDPs) in NWS.** Heavy rainfall and strong winds between 14 and 31 January affected nearly 123,000 IDPs across more than 300 IDP sites.^d Some 22,000 tents were damaged, mostly in informal settlements where IDPs live in makeshift shelters on flood-prone agricultural land or near river beds.^{d,e} IDP households living in inadequate shelters in host communities were also reported to be vulnerable to flooding. KIs indicated that a proportion of IDPs in about half of communities lived in tents or unfinished buildings, while proneness to flooding was cited as a shelter issue for IDPs in 59 communities.
- Additionally, **flooding damaged or destroyed some 120 schools affecting over 21,000 children.**^f Education access was already a challenge in NWS. Less than half of school-aged IDP and resident children were reportedly accessing school in 60% and 40% of communities, respectively. Even when able to access services, students faced significant difficulties including inadequate infrastructure and a lack of learning supplies as reported in over 65% of communities.
- Lastly, **winter weather contributed to reduced access to electricity for households across NWS.** With the main power network reportedly not functioning in half of assessed communities, households heavily relied on solar energy to access electricity; solar panels were the most commonly reported power source. As a result, communities have experienced significant challenges in generating sufficient power during the winter months as exposure to sunlight is much more limited during this period.^c KIs reported that households in NWS most commonly accessed between 5-6 hours of electricity per day, while over 100 communities reportedly accessed less than 5 hours of electricity per day.

HSOS Dashboard

For a breakdown of sector-specific indicators by location, please see the [HSOS dashboard](#). The interactive HSOS dashboard provides a monthly sectoral overview of key indicators disaggregated at the sub-district and community level.



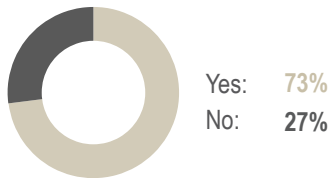
Priority Needs and Humanitarian Assistance



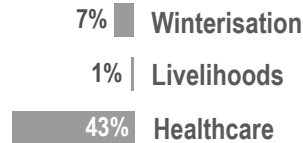
Most commonly reported **first, second, and third** and **overall** priority needs for Residents (by % of communities) ^{2,3,†}

| | FIRST | SECOND | THIRD | OVERALL | |
|---|---------------|---------------|-------------------|------------------|-----|
| 1 | Healthcare | Winterisation | Livelihoods | ❄️ Winterisation | 64% |
| 2 | Winterisation | WASH | Winterisation | 🏠 Livelihoods | 57% |
| 3 | Food | Food | NFIs ^h | 🏥 Healthcare | 40% |

% of communities where any of the resident households were able to access humanitarian assistance [†]



% of communities where KIs reported the presence of the following **types of assistance** for residents ^{4,†}



Most commonly reported barriers that resident households faced in accessing humanitarian assistance (by % of communities) ^{4,†}

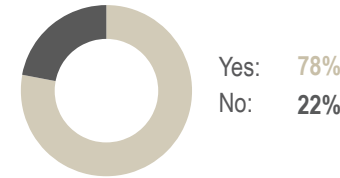
| Communities reporting access to humanitarian assistance | | Communities reporting no access to humanitarian assistance | |
|--|-----|--|---|
| Assistance provided was insufficient to cover all people in need | 73% | 1 | 92% |
| Assistance provided was not relevant to all needs | 56% | 2 | 5% |
| Quantity of assistance provided to households was insufficient | 39% | 3 | 3% |
| | | | No humanitarian assistance was available |
| | | | Not aware if assistance was available |
| | | | People did not comply with the eligibility criteria |



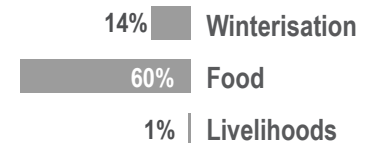
Most commonly reported **first, second, and third** and **overall** priority needs for IDPs (by % of communities) ^{2,3,†,‡}

| | FIRST | SECOND | THIRD | OVERALL | |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|-----|
| 1 | Food | Winterisation | Livelihoods | ❄️ Winterisation | 78% |
| 2 | Shelter | Food | Winterisation | 🍲 Food | 51% |
| 3 | Winterisation | Livelihoods | NFIs | 🏠 Livelihoods | 51% |

% of communities where any of the IDP households were able to access humanitarian assistance [†]



% of communities where KIs reported the presence of the following **types of assistance** for IDPs ^{4,†}



Most commonly reported barriers that IDP households faced in accessing humanitarian assistance (by % of communities) ^{4,†}

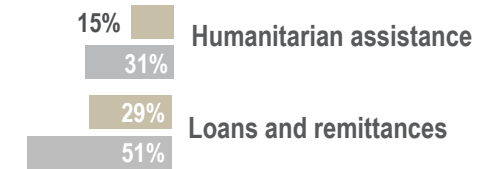
| Communities reporting access to humanitarian assistance | | Communities reporting no access to humanitarian assistance | |
|--|-----|--|---|
| Assistance provided was insufficient to cover all people in need | 72% | 1 | 94% |
| Assistance provided was not relevant to all needs | 58% | 2 | 6% |
| Quantity of assistance provided to households was insufficient | 41% | 3 | 1% |
| | | | No humanitarian assistance was available |
| | | | Not aware if assistance was available |
| | | | People did not comply with the eligibility criteria |



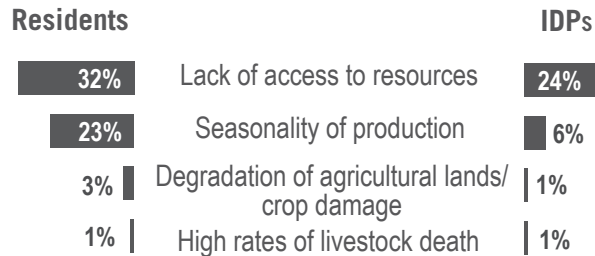
Economic Conditions

| Region | Estimated median monthly household expense for water for a household of six ^{5,6} | | | Estimated median monthly rent price for a two bedroom apartment ^{5,6} | | | Estimated median daily wage for unskilled labour ^{5,7,8} | | |
|---|--|-----|-----|--|-----|-----|---|-----|-----|
| | SYP | TRY | USD | SYP | TRY | USD | SYP | TRY | USD |
| Northwest Syria | 15,400 SYP | | | 38,500 SYP | | | 5,000 SYP | | |
| Greater Idleb area | 17,325 SYP | | | 48,125 SYP | | | 5,000 SYP | | |
| Northern Aleppo | 15,000 SYP | | | 30,000 SYP | | | 5,005 SYP | | |
| % of communities where indicator was reported in following currencies | SYP | TRY | USD | SYP | TRY | USD | SYP | TRY | USD |
| | 52% | 48% | 0% | 43% | 40% | 17% | 51% | 49% | 0% |

% of communities where KIs reported the presence of residents and IDP households relying on non-productive sources of livelihoods to meet their basic needs ^{4,*}



% of communities where barriers to accessing income from agriculture to meet basic needs were reported ^{4,*}



91% and 96%

% of communities where KIs reported daily waged labour as a common source of income for residents and IDPs ^{*}

64 days

Number of days the average day labourer would need to work to earn the monthly cost of basic SMEB items ^{5,9}

94% and 53%

% of communities where KIs reported the insufficient income of households and general lack of employment opportunities as barriers to meeting basic needs ^{8,*}

Intersectoral findings on **unaffordability** hindering access to goods and services ^{*}



KIs in **95%** of communities where challenges for renting shelters were reported, cited that **rent prices** were unaffordable for the majority of people



KIs in **68%** of communities where barriers to accessing electricity were reported, cited the high cost of **fuel for generators** as a common challenge



KIs in **81%** of communities where barriers to accessing sufficient water were reported, cited the high cost of **water trucking** as a common challenge



KIs in **82%** of communities where barriers to accessing sufficient food were reported, cited the high cost of **food** as a common challenge ⁸



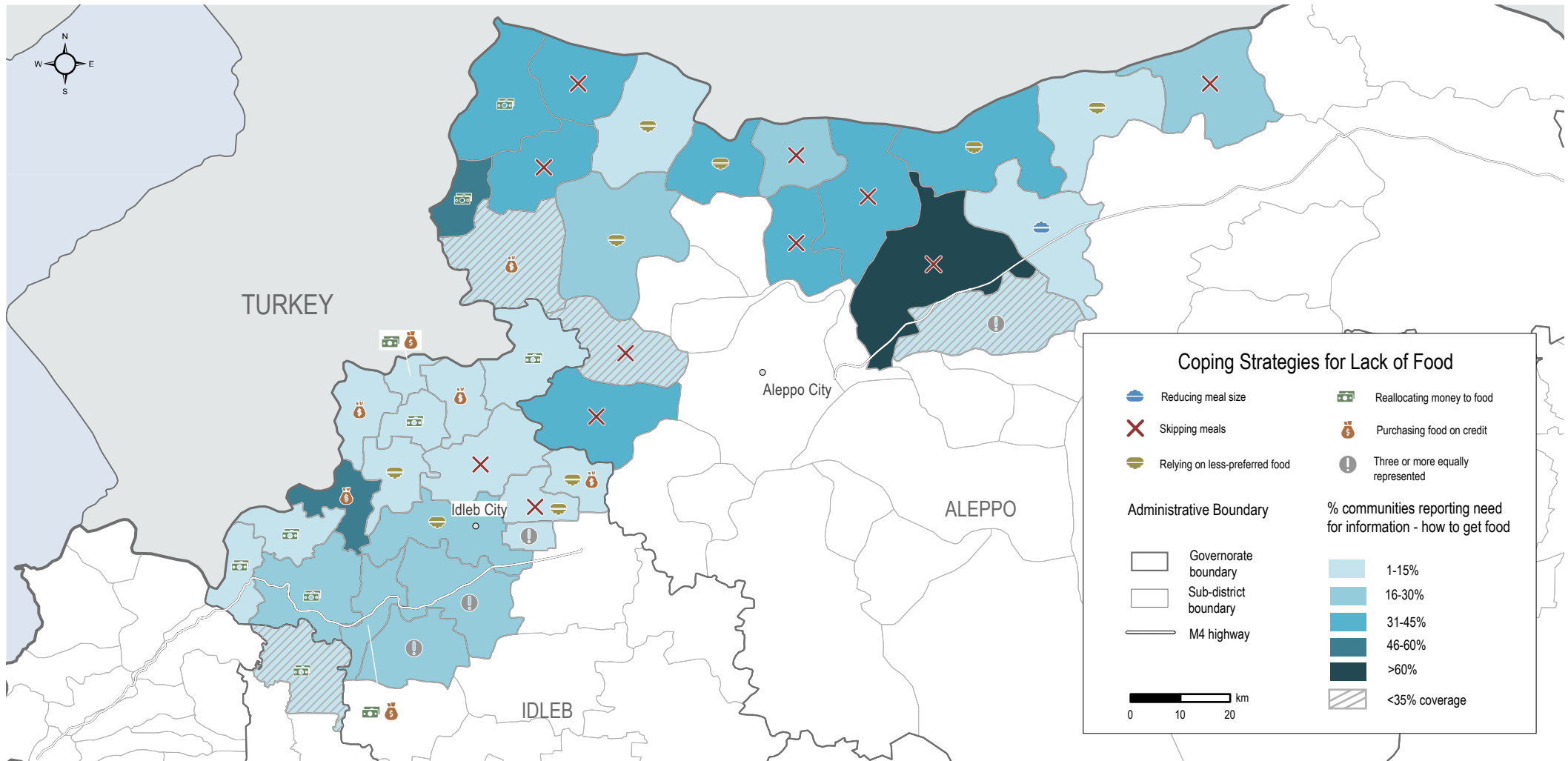
KIs in **46%** of communities where barriers to accessing healthcare were reported, cited the high cost of **health services** as a common challenge



KIs in **28%** of communities where barriers to education access were reported, cited the high cost of **a private tutor** as a common challenge ⁸

% of communities where common livelihood sources from agriculture were reported ^{4,*}

| Livelihood source | Residents | IDPs |
|---------------------------|-----------|------|
| Food from crop production | 66% | 14% |
| Cash from crop production | 64% | 4% |
| Livestock products | 62% | 53% |
| Sale of livestock | 22% | 29% |



Coping strategies for lack of food

Note on the map

This map shows commonly reported coping strategies for lack of food, along with the percentage of communities where information about how to get food was reported as a need. Gray hatches indicate sub-districts where less than 35% of communities were assessed. Need for information was reportedly highest in Al-Bab, Sheikh El-Hadid, and Darkosh sub-districts.



Living Conditions

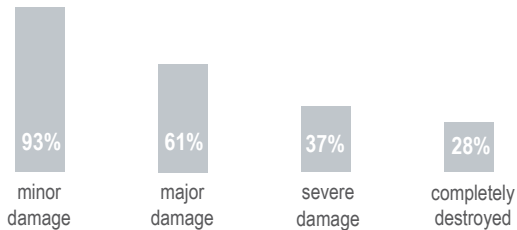


A lack of bathing facilities was reported as a shelter issue for IDPs in **11%** of communities [♦]



A lack of toilets was reported as a shelter issue for IDPs in **17%** of communities [♦]

Reported presence of occupied shelters with damage across communities where damages reported ^{5,10,♦}



In **93%** of communities reportedly at least **80%** of the resident population owned their shelter [♦]

In **67%** of communities reportedly **none** of the IDP households owned their shelter [♦]

In **33%** of communities at least one fifth of the IDP population reportedly lived in unfinished or abandoned residential buildings [♦]

In **54%** of communities at least one fifth of the IDP population reportedly lived in tents [♦]



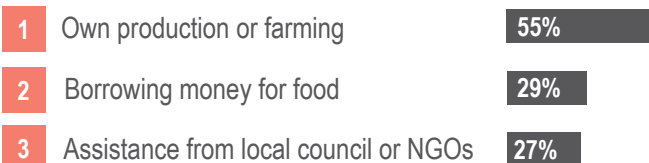
96% % of communities where KIs reported that households experienced barriers to accessing sufficient food ⁸

In **27%** of these communities, KIs reported that the unavailability of certain food items was a challenge to accessing sufficient food ⁸

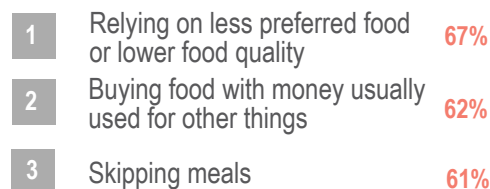


High price of suitable food or formula was the most commonly reported challenge to feeding young children (reported by KIs in **94%** of communities) ^{12,♦}

Commonly reported **sources of food** for households other than markets (by % of communities) ⁴

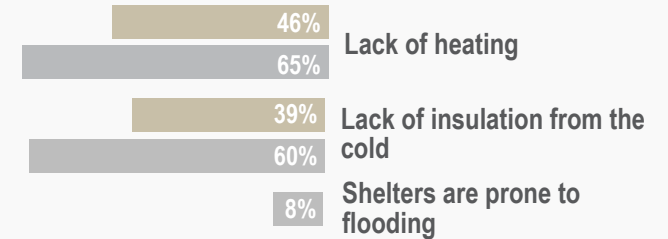


Most commonly reported coping strategies for a lack of food (by % of communities) ^{4,♦}

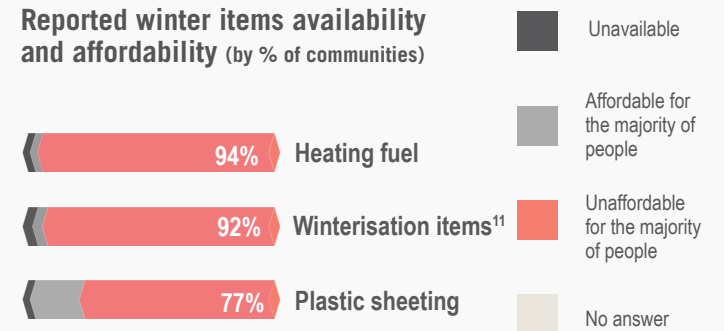


Winter-related findings

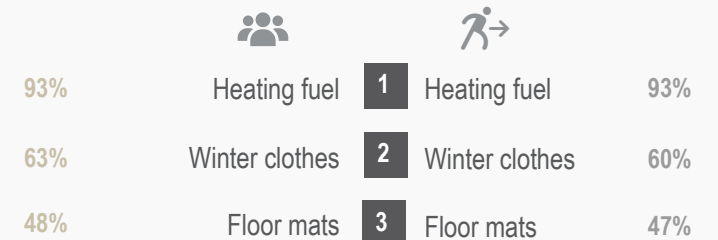
% of communities where winter-related shelter inadequacies for residents and IDPs were reported [♦]

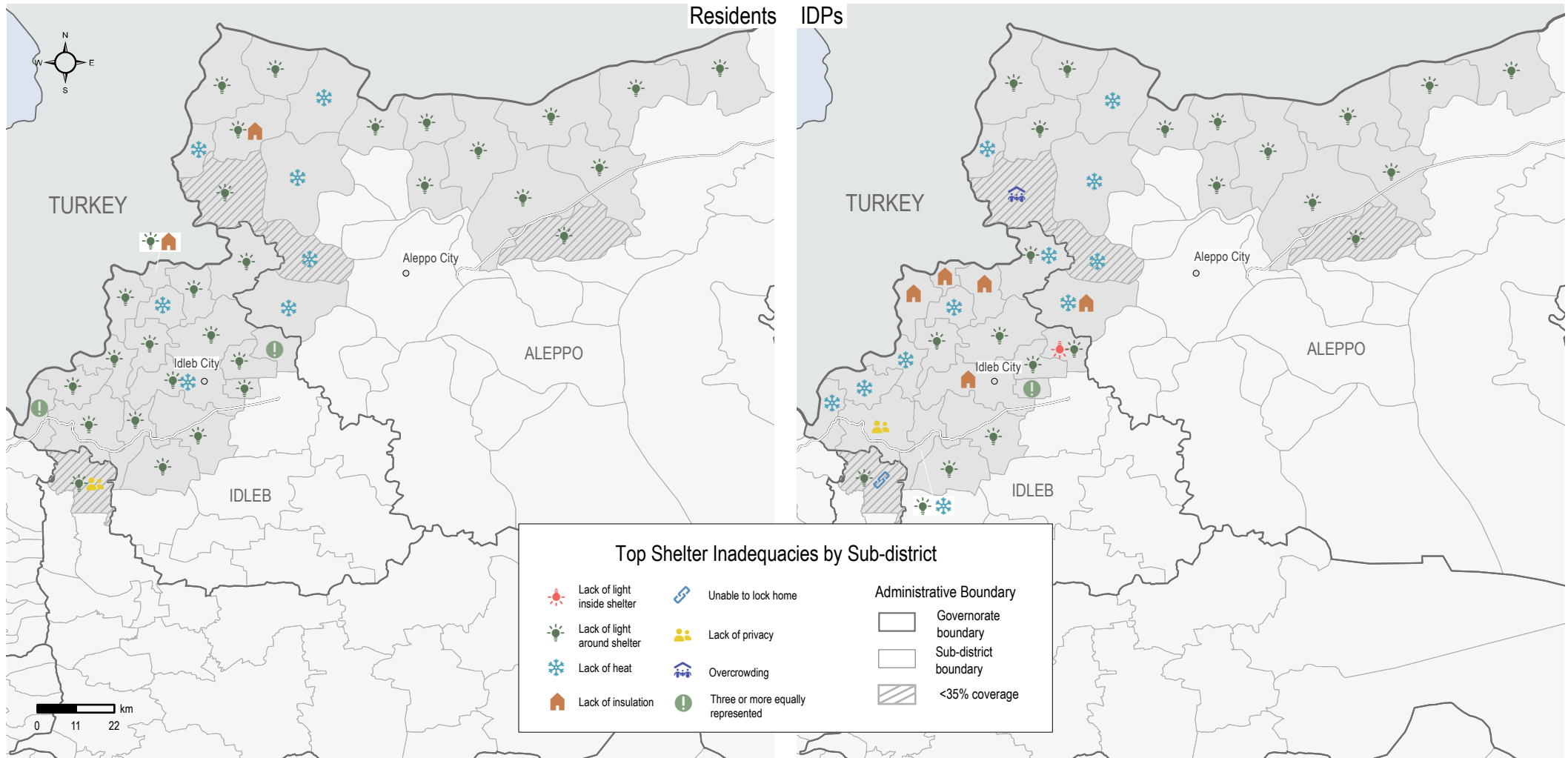


Reported winter items availability and affordability (by % of communities)



Top three most commonly reported winterisation needs for residents and IDPs (by % of communities) [♦]





Shelter inadequacies by sub-district

Note on the map

This map shows the most commonly reported shelter inadequacies by sub-district. In cases where two inadequacies are equally represented, both are symbolized. Gray hashes indicate sub-districts where less than 35% of communities were assessed.



Access to Basic Services



Access to Electricity

5-6 hrs per day

was the most commonly reported range for hours of electricity accessible to households (reported by KIs in 35% of communities)

Solar panels

was the most commonly reported main source of electricity (reported by KIs in 42% of communities)

49%

% of communities where KIs reported the main network is partially or completely not functioning as a barrier for electricity access [†]



Access to Water

68%

% of communities where KIs reported that not all households had access to sufficient water



| | |
|----------|-----|
| 7 days | 1% |
| 5-6 days | 3% |
| 3-4 days | 5% |
| 1-2 days | 40% |
| 0 days | 51% |

Days per week water from the network was available (by % of 550 communities connected to a water network)

Private water trucking

was the most commonly reported source of drinking water (reported by KIs in 44% of communities)

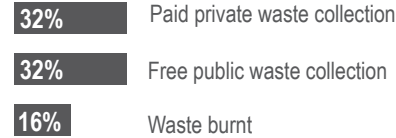


Access to Sanitation

45%

% of communities where KIs reported that no sewage system was present

Most commonly reported ways people disposed of solid waste (by % of communities)



40%

% of communities where KIs reported waste removal services as a WASHⁱ priority need [‡]



Access to Markets

24%

% of communities in which households reportedly were unable to access markets in the assessed location

Not enough consumers to support markets in the assessed location

was the most commonly reported reason for why markets were not functioning (reported by KIs in 70% of communities where households were unable to access markets in their own location)

79%

% of communities where KIs reported that the lack of transportation to markets was a barrier to physically accessing food markets [†]

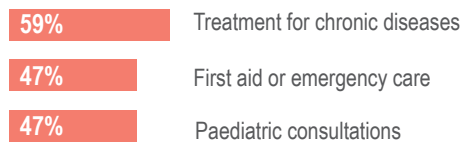


Access to Health Services

54%

% of communities where KIs reported that the households did not have access to health services in the assessed location

Most commonly reported health priority needs (by % of communities) [‡]



Going to a pharmacy instead of a clinic

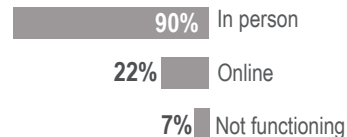
was the most commonly reported coping strategy for a lack of healthcare (reported by KIs in 87% of communities) [†]



Access to Education Services

13

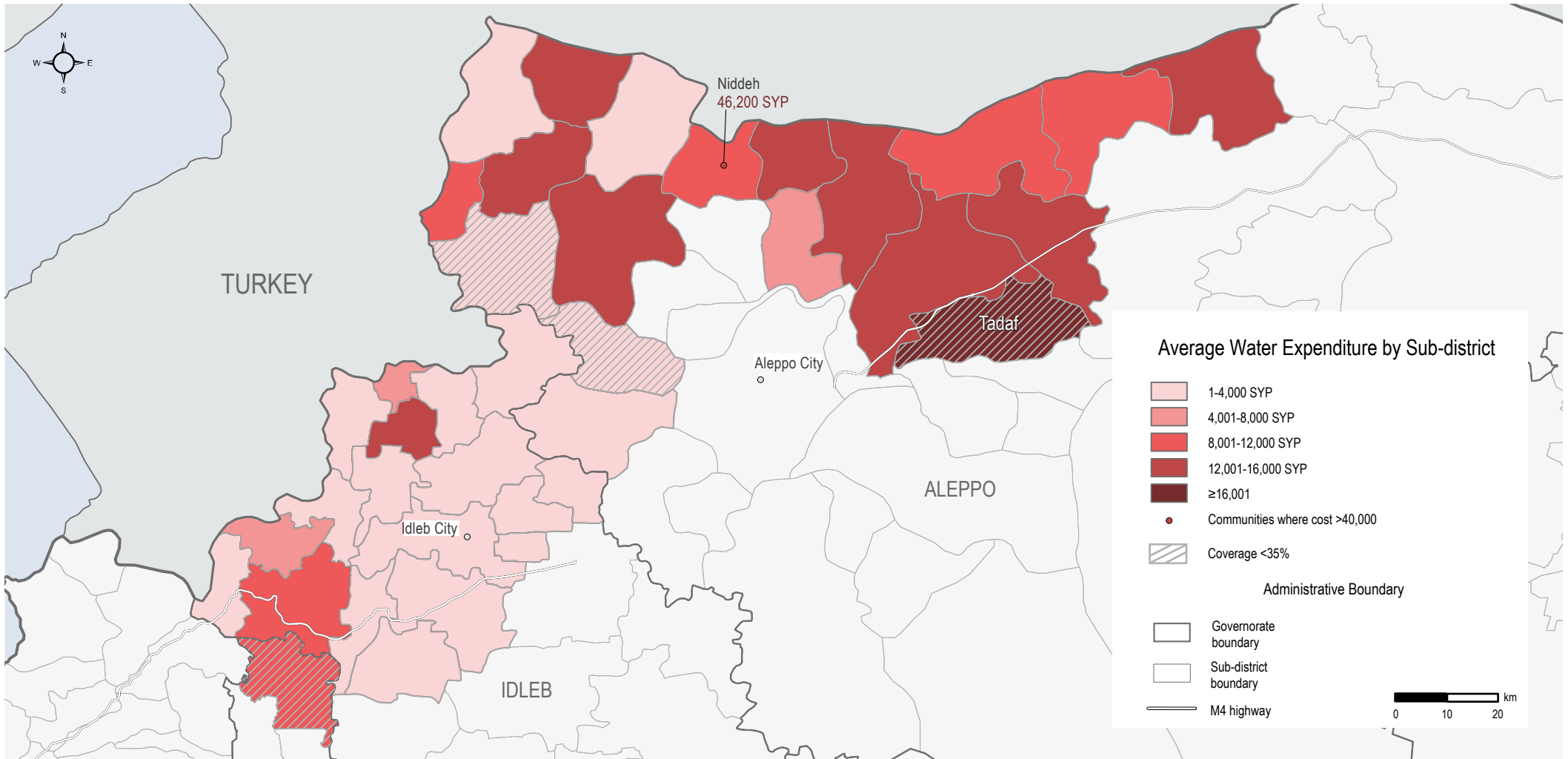
communities where KIs reported that no functioning education services were available in the assessed and nearby community [‡]



% of communities where KIs reported on the functioning of education services in the assessed location [‡]

33%

% of communities where KIs reported that the lack of access to internet, electricity and/or equipment was a barrier to accessing (online) education services ^{‡,†}



Water expenditure by sub-district

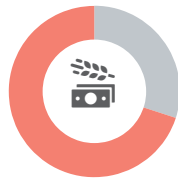
Note on the map

This map symbolizes average water expenditure by sub-district. Gray hashes indicate sub-districts where less than 35% of communities were assessed. The highest average expenditures were reported in northern Aleppo, with the highest price recorded in the community of Niddeh, Azaz.



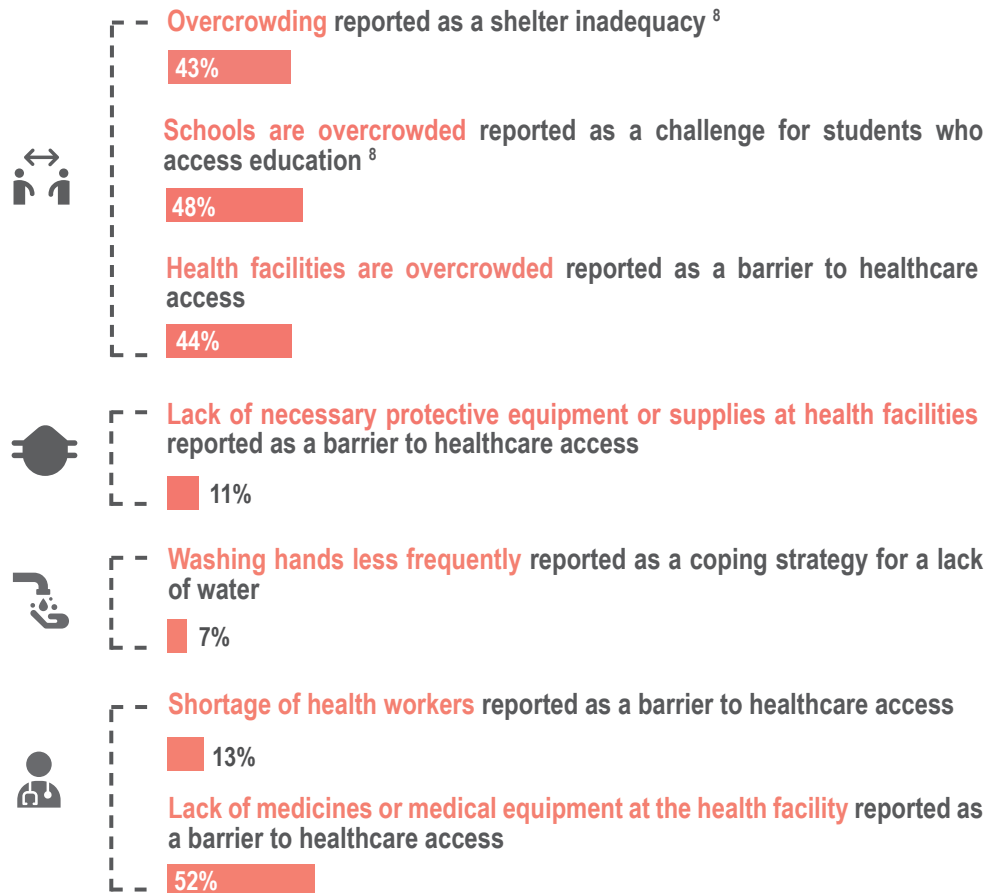
COVID-19

Effects of COVID-19 on livelihoods sectors in the community (by % of communities)

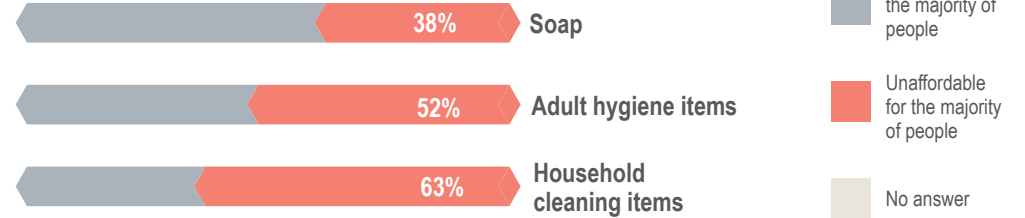


None of the available livelihood sectors were affected 30%
At least one of the available livelihood sectors was partially or totally affected 70%

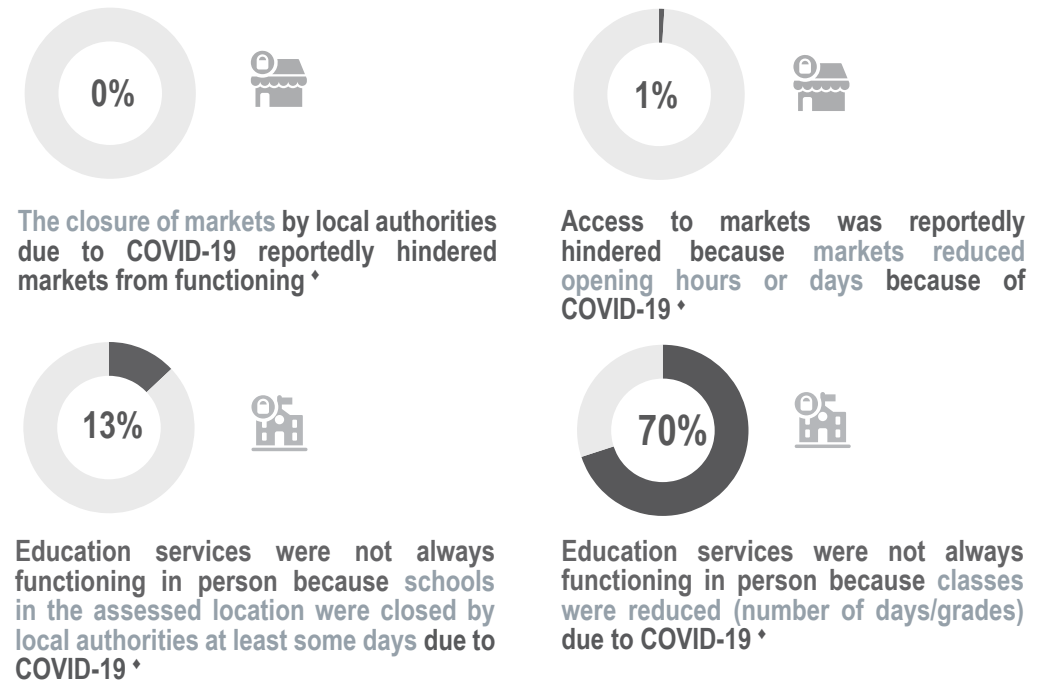
% of communities where COVID-19 risk indicators were reported *



Reported hygiene item availability and affordability (by % of communities) ¹³



% of communities where COVID-19 related barriers to access to services were reported





Security and Protection

Intersectoral findings on security



General safety and security concerns restricting movement to markets was a reported barrier to market access in **9%** of communities [♦]

General safety and security concerns at markets was a reported barrier to market access in **21%** of communities [♦]

Markets not opening because of security issues was a reported barrier to markets not functioning in **9%** of communities [♦]



Threat from airstrikes was reported as a protection risk in **115 communities** ⁸

Threat from shelling, sniper or gunfire was reported as a protection risk in **96 communities** ⁸

Threat from improvised explosive devices (IEDs), mines or unexploded ordnances was reported as a protection risk in **105 communities** ⁸

Fear from imminent conflict was reported as a protection risk in **63 communities** ⁸



The inability to lock homes securely was reported as a shelter inadequacy in **36%** of communities ^{8,♦}

Lack of lighting around the shelter was reported as a shelter inadequacy in **81%** of communities ^{8,♦}

The security situation was reported as a barrier to shelter repairs in **15%** of communities [♦]



General safety and security concerns at the health facility was reported as a barrier to healthcare in **6%** of communities [♦]

Most commonly reported protection priority needs

(by % of communities) ^{3,8,♦}

- 1 **81%** Special assistance for vulnerable groups
- 2 **47%** Psychosocial support
- 3 **42%** Specialised child protection services



% of communities where the lack of civil documentation for residents and IDPs was reported [♦]

- 34%** Lack or loss of civil documentation as a protection risk
- 42%** Lack of personal documentation required to enrol in school as a barrier to education access
- 8%**
- 15%**

% of communities where extreme coping strategies used by residents and IDPs to meet basic needs were reported ^{♦,4}

Residents

- 35%** Early marriage
- 3%** Forced marriage
- 9%** High risk work
- 2%** Sending family members to beg
- 69%** Sending children (15 or below) to work

IDPs

- 42%**
- 3%**
- 11%**
- 4%**
- 80%**

Age, Gender, and Diversity

KIs in **55%** of communities reported a **lack of employment opportunities for women** as a barrier to meeting basic needs ^{8,♦}

KIs in **41%** of communities reported a **lack of employment opportunities for persons with a disability** as a barrier to meeting basic needs ^{8,♦}

KIs in **15%** of communities reported a **lack of privacy for women and girls at health facilities** as a barrier to healthcare access [♦]

KIs in **50%** of communities reported a **lack of market access for people with restricted mobility** [♦]

Child labour and **early marriage** were reported to prevent children from going to school in **78%** and **39%** of communities ^{8,♦}

Children below the age of 12 were reported as a group affected by child labour in **19%** of communities ^{8,♦}

Hazardous child labour was reported as a protection risk in **6%** of communities ^{8,♦}

Endnotes

1. The greater Idleb area includes Idlib governorate, parts of Aleppo western countryside, and parts of Hama northwestern countryside controlled by armed opposition groups (AOGs).
 2. KIs were asked to select a first, second, and third highest priority needs in their communities. The ranking shows the sectors most frequently chosen as either first, second or third highest priority. The overall priority need refers to the frequency a sector was selected across all three categories (first, second or third highest priority).
 3. KIs could select three answers, thus findings might exceed 100%.
 4. KIs could select multiple answers, thus findings might exceed 100%.
 5. KIs were asked about the situation currently, instead of the last 30 days.
 6. KIs had the option to select the price in United States Dollars (USD), Turkish Lira (TRY), or Syrian Pounds (SYP). When the price was not reported in SYP, the NWS **REACH Market Monitoring**¹ exchange rate was used to calculate the amount in SYP. According to the NWS REACH Market Monitoring January 2021, 1 USD = 2,840 SYP; 1TRY= 385 SYP.
 7. According to the NWS **REACH Market Monitoring** January 2021, 1 USD = 2,840 SYP.
 8. Findings for residents and IDPs were merged. The merge was calculated as follows: (option was selected for either residents or IDPs) / (communities reporting challenges/barriers/coping strategies for either residents or IDPs).
 9. According to the NWS **REACH Market Monitoring** January 2021, the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) = 322,441 SYP.
 10. Minor damage (cracks in walls, leaking roof, need of new doors and window repairs, etc.); Major damage (buildings with extensive damage to window frames and doors, but no structural damage to columns, slabs, or loadbearing walls); Severe damage (buildings with significant structural damage to column slabs, or loadbearing walls, cracking, steel elements and deformations visible in concrete; the building would require extensive repairs); Completely destroyed (buildings with structural damage so significant that rehabilitation is not possible).
 11. Winterisation items include: winter clothes, winter shoes, and winter blanket.
 12. KIs were asked about the situation in the last two months, instead of the last 30 days.
 13. Adult hygiene items include: shampoo, toothbrush, and toothpaste. Household cleaning items include: washing powder, liquid, and dish detergent.
- c. Reported by REACH field teams.

◆ By number of communities where KIs reported the relevant indicator (accesses/barriers/inadequacies/damages/coping strategies/risks etc.) for the relevant population group(s)

| <i>Indicator</i> | <i>Subset</i> | <i>Indicator</i> | <i>Subset</i> |
|--|---------------|--|---------------|
| <i>N.o of communities reporting on:</i> | | <i>N.o of communities reporting on:</i> | |
| Residents | 740 | Coping strategies for a lack of food | 720 |
| IDPs | 716 | Coping strategies for a lack of healthcare | 745 |
| Barriers to accessing healthcare | 745 | Coping strategies for a lack of water | 511 |
| Barriers to accessing sufficient food (merged) | 720 | Groups affected by child labour (merged) | 538 |
| Barriers to accessing sufficient water | 511 | Health priority needs (merged) | 741 |
| Barriers to education access (IDPs) | 699 | Main protection risks (IDPs) | 679 |
| Barriers to education access (merged) | 729 | Main protection risks (merged) | 743 |
| Barriers to education access (residents) | 706 | Main protection risks (residents) | 687 |
| Barriers to education quality (merged) | 711 | Protection priority needs (merged) | 736 |
| Barriers to feeding young children | 716 | Reasons education services not funct. | 301 |
| Barriers to assistance access (IDPs) | 161 | Shelter damages | 733 |
| Barriers to assistance access (resident) | 196 | Shelter issues/inadequacies (IDPs) | 711 |
| Barriers to markets functioning | 181 | Shelter issues/inadequacies (merged) | 744 |
| Barriers to physically accessing markets | 611 | Shelter issues/inadequacies (resident) | 711 |
| Barriers to shelter repairs | 666 | Tents (IDPs) | 371 |
| Challenges for renting shelters | 528 | Unfinished or abandoned buildings (IDPs) | 354 |
| Cop. strategies to meet basic needs (IDPs) | 716 | WASH priority needs (merged) | 742 |
| Cop. strategies to meet basic needs (res) | 738 | | |

About REACH

REACH facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT). For more information please visit our website: www.reach-initiative.org. You can contact us directly at: geneva@reach-initiative.org.