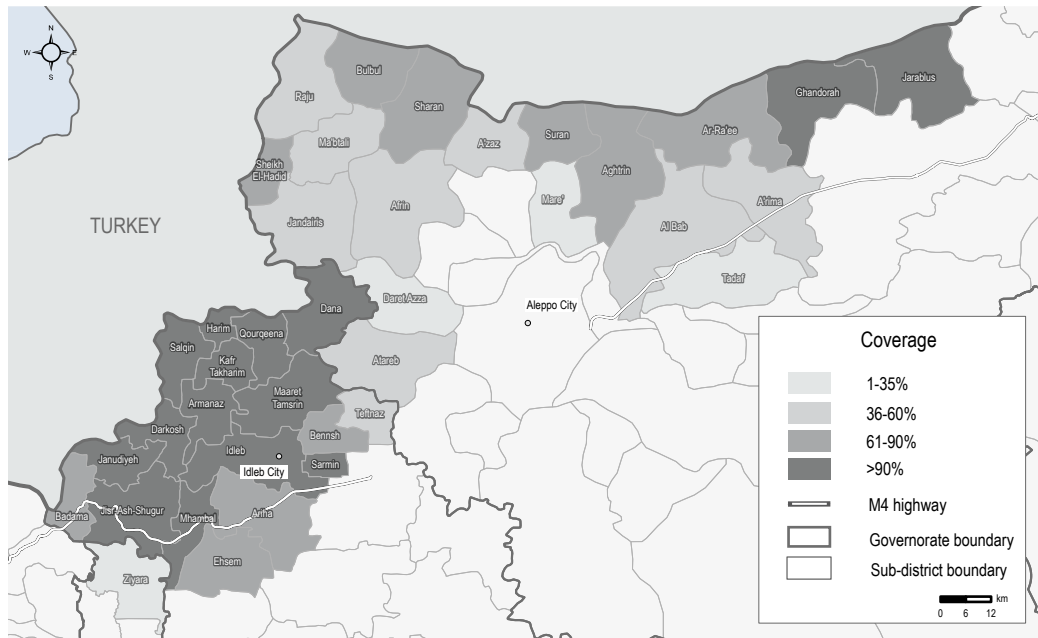


Introduction and Methodology

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 **738 communities** across the greater Idlib area¹ (354 communities) and northern Aleppo area (384 communities). **Data was collected between 2-15 of December 2020 from 2,710 KIs** (19% female). Unless specified by an endnote, all indicators refer to the situation in the 30 days prior to data collection (November/December 2020). 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

Harsh weather conditions were problematic for vulnerable households in Northwest Syria (NWS), with 84% of the assessed communities reportedly in need of winterisation assistance. Further, cold temperatures were particularly **problematic for internally displaced persons (IDPs)**, and **ongoing hostilities** also caused an **increase in displacement**.^a **High prices of basic goods and services** further exacerbated the humanitarian conditions. Finally, the spread of **COVID-19 continues to impact** not only the **health context** of the population of NWS, but also **livelihoods and access to education**.

- **Decreasing temperatures are highly problematic for households living in inadequate shelters.** Winterization was the most commonly reported priority need, and distribution of winter kits in NWS began in November.^b Yet, according to HSOS data, only 1% of the assessed communities received winterisation assistance in November-December. While widely available, heating fuel was reportedly unaffordable for the majority of the population in nearly all assessed communities. Indeed, heating fuel was in high need both among residents and IDPs, with lack of heating reported in more than half of the assessed communities as an existing shelter inadequacy.
- Repeated **ceasefire violations in southern Idlib** led to further displacements of households fleeing affected areas.^c November saw nearly 30,000 people displaced, with departures primarily occurring from Ariha, Ehsen and Idlib.^d Displacements are resulting in an increased population living in camps and the resultant overcrowded conditions. Further, **vulnerability to harsh weather conditions was particularly high for displaced persons living in camps**, as flood incidents affected at least 17 IDP sites in December.^d
- **Households in NWS are facing rising and often unaffordable food prices.** The value of the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) increased by 11% since November, driven primarily by its food and cooking fuel components.^e Fluctuations in fuel prices also contributed to the rise in food prices.^f Connected, KIs in 84% of the assessed communities reported unaffordability as the primary barrier to accessing sufficient food. More than one quarter of the assessed communities indicated food as the first priority need among IDPs.
- **COVID-19 cases continue to rise**, with 19,447 confirmed cases across NWS as of 20 December.^g In 68% of the assessed communities, available livelihood sources were reportedly affected by COVID-19. Educational services were also largely impacted by COVID-19, with school closures being implemented as a preventive measure in more than 50% of assessed communities. Difficulties in social distancing may be contributing to the continued spread of COVID-19. Overcrowding in shelters was reported in 47% of the assessed communities, and in half of the communities where in-person education was available, classrooms were reportedly overcrowded.

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.



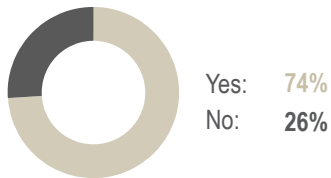
Priority Needs and Humanitarian Assistance



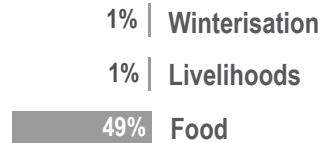
Most commonly reported **first, second, and third** and **overall** priority needs for Residents (by % of communities) ^{2,3,†}

	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD	OVERALL
1	Healthcare	Winterisation	Livelihoods	Winterisation 66%
2	Winterisation	Food	Winterisation	Livelihoods 57%
3	Food	WASH	NFIs ^h	Food 42%

% 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,†}

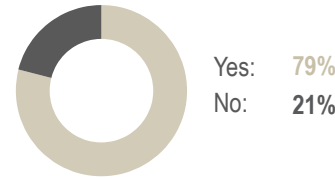
Communities reporting access to humanitarian assistance		Communities reporting no access to humanitarian assistance	
Assistance provided was insufficient to cover all people in need	67%	1	85% No humanitarian assistance was available
Assistance provided was not relevant to all needs	60%	2	6% People did not comply with the eligibility criteria
Quantity of assistance provided to households was insufficient	41%	3	6% Not aware if assistance was available



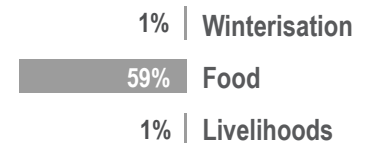
Most commonly reported **first, second, and third** and **overall** priority needs for IDPs (by % of communities) ^{2,3,†,‡}

	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD	OVERALL
1	Food	Winterisation	Winterisation	Winterisation 82%
2	Shelter	Food	Livelihoods	Food 55%
3	Winterisation	Livelihoods	NFIs	Livelihoods 48%

% 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	68%	1	87% No humanitarian assistance was available
Assistance provided was not relevant to all needs	63%	2	8% Not aware if assistance was available
Quantity of assistance provided to households was insufficient	42%	3	3% Distribution points were too far or the routes were inaccessible

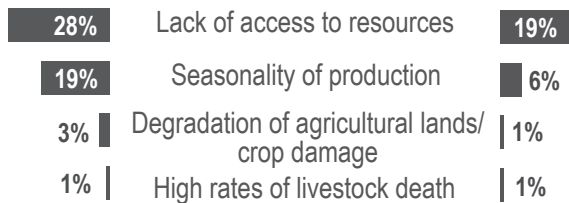


Economic Conditions

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	14,000 SYP			25,000 SYP			4,250 SYP		
Greater Idlib area	12,500 SYP			40,000 SYP			4,000 SYP		
Northern Aleppo	15,000 SYP			25,000 SYP			4,500 SYP		
% of communities where indicator was reported in following currencies	51%	49%	0%	46%	37%	17%	56%	44%	0%

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

Residents



IDPs

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

Livelihood source	Residents	IDPs
Food from crop production	68%	13%
Cash from crop production	72%	5%
Livestock products	63%	55%
Sale of livestock	19%	28%

88% and 96%

% of communities where KIs reported daily waged labour as a common source of income for **residents** and **IDPs** [♦]

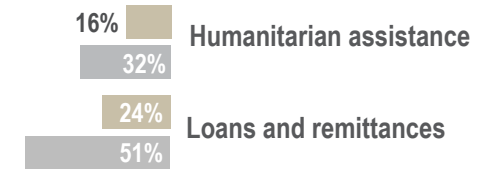
67 days

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

96% 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,♦}

% 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,♦}



Intersectoral findings on **unaffordability** hindering access to goods and services [♦]



KIs in **96%** of communities where challenges for renting shelters were reported, cited that **rent prices** were unaffordable for the majority of people



KIs in **71%** of communities where barriers to accessing electricity were reported, cited the high cost of **fuel for generators** as a common challenge



KIs in **85%** of communities where barriers to accessing sufficient water were reported, cited the high cost of **water trucking** as a common challenge



KIs in **84%** of communities where barriers to accessing sufficient food were reported, cited the high cost of **food** as a common challenge ⁸



KIs in **44%** of communities where barriers to accessing healthcare were reported, cited the high cost of **health services** as a common challenge



KIs in **21%** of communities where barriers to education access were reported, cited the high cost of **a private tutor** as a common challenge ⁸



Living Conditions

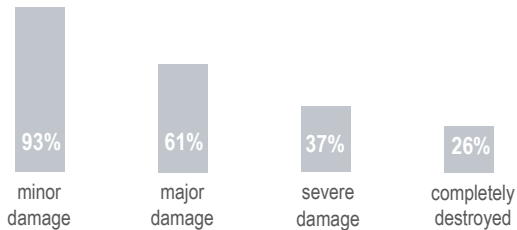


A lack of bathing facilities was reported as a shelter issue for IDPs in **9%** of communities [†]



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 **65%** of communities reportedly none of the IDP households owned their shelter [†]

In **34%** 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 [†]



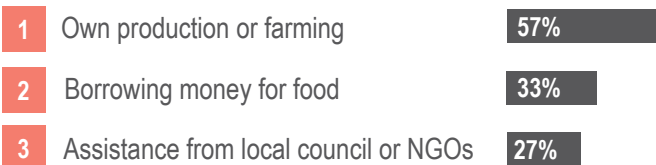
96% % of communities where KIs reported that households experienced barriers to accessing sufficient food ⁸

In 26% of these communities, KIs reported that the unavailability of certain food items was a challenge to accessing sufficient food ⁸

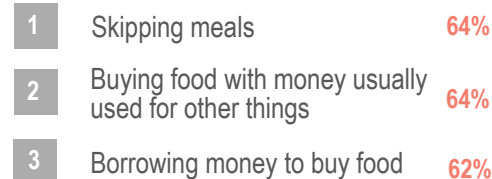


High price of suitable food or formula was the most commonly reported challenge to feeding young children (reported by KIs in 95% of communities) ^{12,†}

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

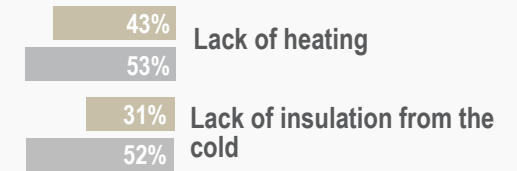


Most commonly reported coping strategies for a lack of food (by % of communities) ^{4,†}

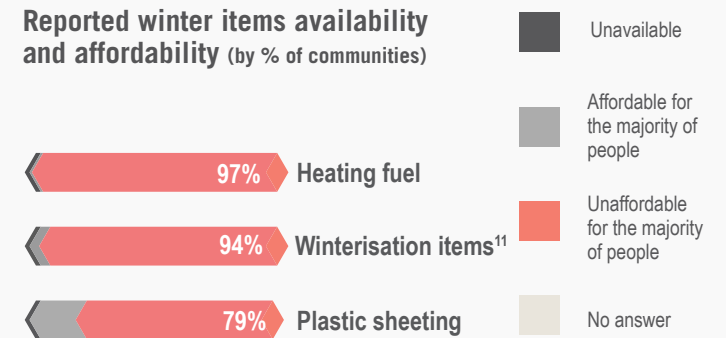


Winter-related findings

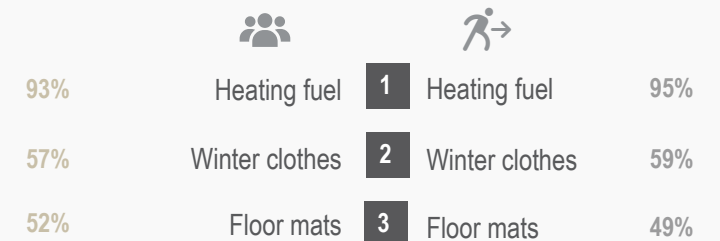
% of communities where winter-related shelter inadequacies for residents and IDPs were reported [†]

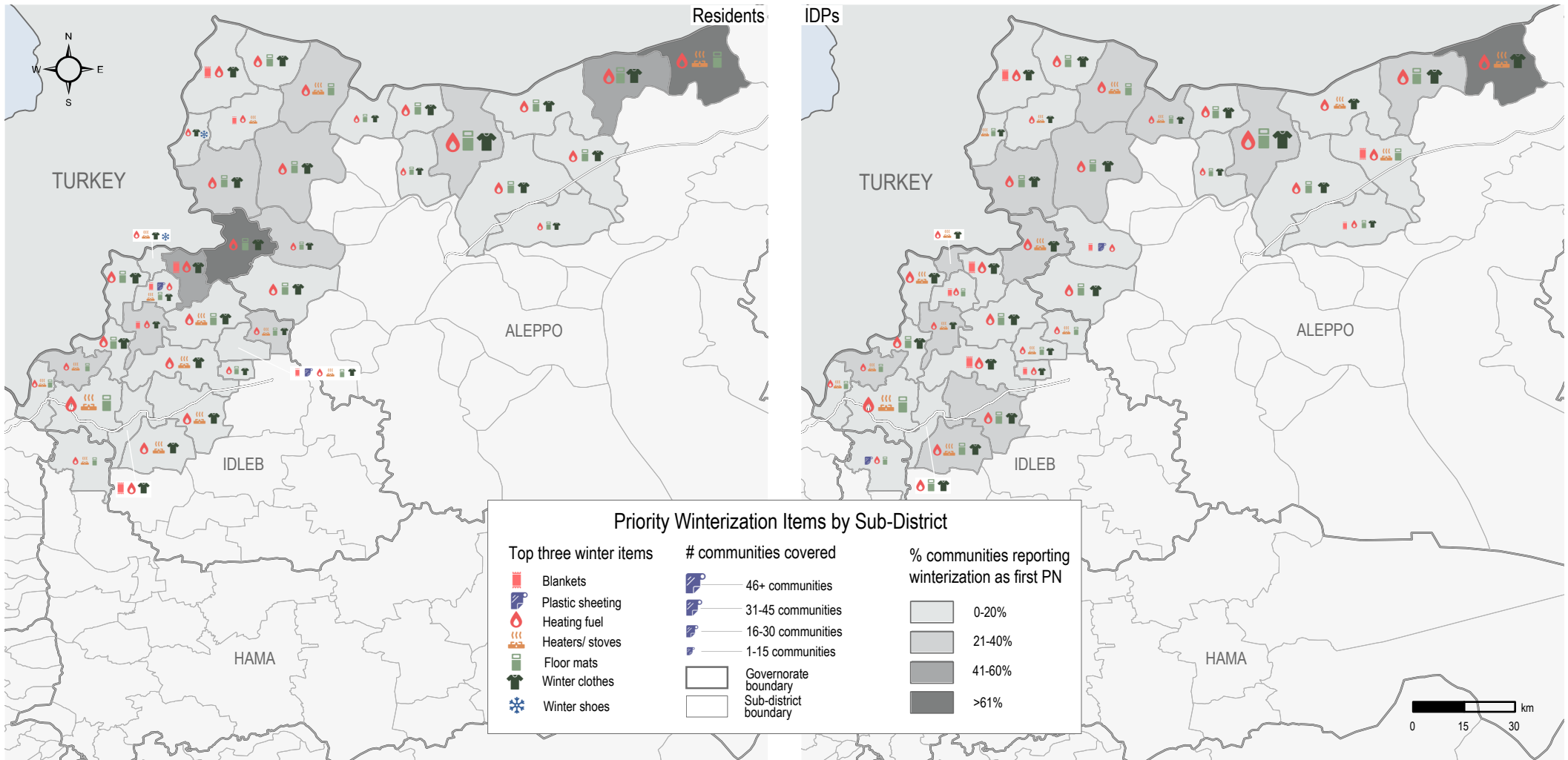


Reported winter items availability and affordability (by % of communities)



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





Priority Needs for Winterization Items by Sub-District

Note on the map

This map shows the winterization items most prioritized by sub-district. The symbol sizes indicate the number of communities covered by HSOS, while the shading represents the percentage of communities reporting winterization as a first priority need. The highest percentages were found in Dana and Jarablus.



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 37% of communities)

Solar panels

was the most commonly reported main source of electricity (reported by KIs in 41% of communities)

54%

% 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	0%
5-6 days	4%
3-4 days	5%
1-2 days	38%
0 days	53%

Days per week water from the network was available (by % of 551 communities connected to a water network)

Private water trucking

was the most commonly reported source of drinking water (reported by KIs in 45% of communities)

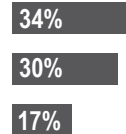


Access to Sanitation

44%

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

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



- Paid private waste collection
- Free public waste collection
- Waste burnt

37%

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



Access to Markets

23%

% 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 66% of communities where households were unable to access markets in their own location)

63%

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

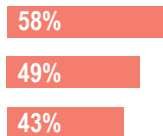


Access to Health Services

53%

% 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) [‡]



- Treatment for chronic diseases
- Paediatric consultations
- First aid or emergency care

Going to a pharmacy instead of a clinic

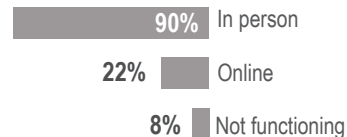
was the most commonly reported coping strategy for a lack of healthcare (reported by KIs in 89% of communities) [†]



Access to Education Services

16

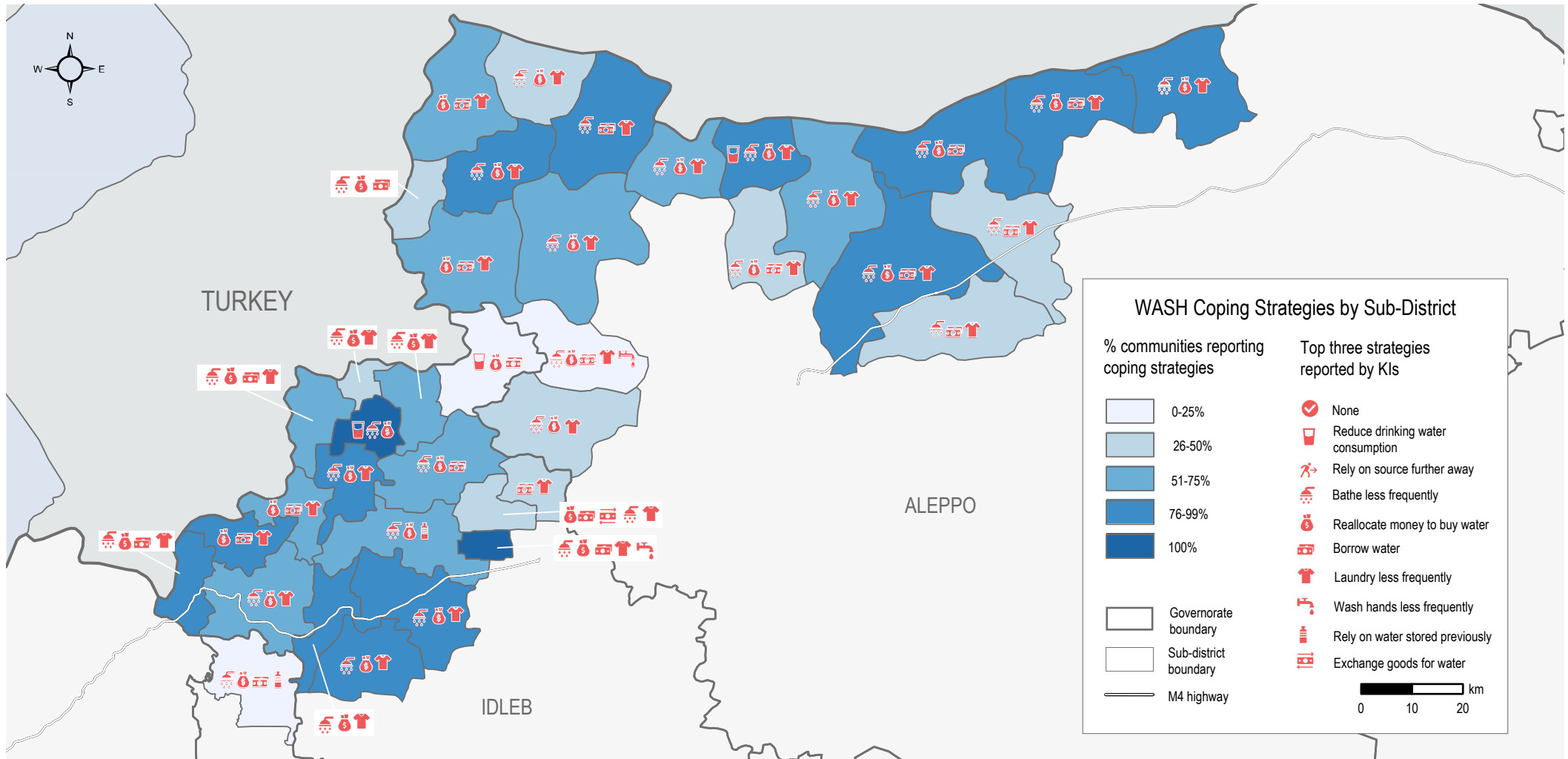
communities where KIs reported that no functioning education services were available in the assessed and nearby community [‡]



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

28%

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



WASH Coping Strategies Reported by KIIs

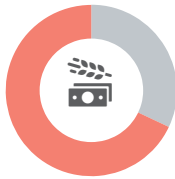
Note on the map

This map shows the distribution of WASH coping strategies by sub-district. Only the three most commonly reported strategies are symbolized, but in cases where more than three are equally represented, more may be shown. In two sub-districts (Sarmin and Kafr Takharim), KIIs in 100% of communities reported at least one WASH coping strategy.



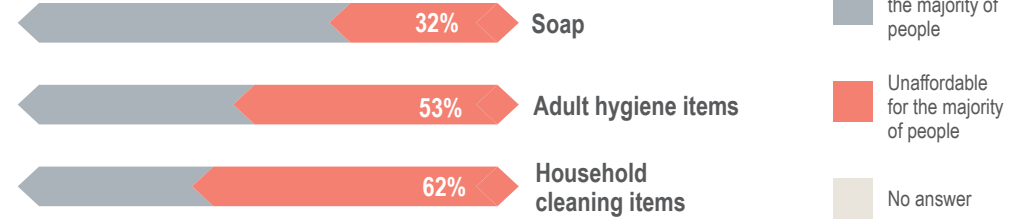
COVID-19

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

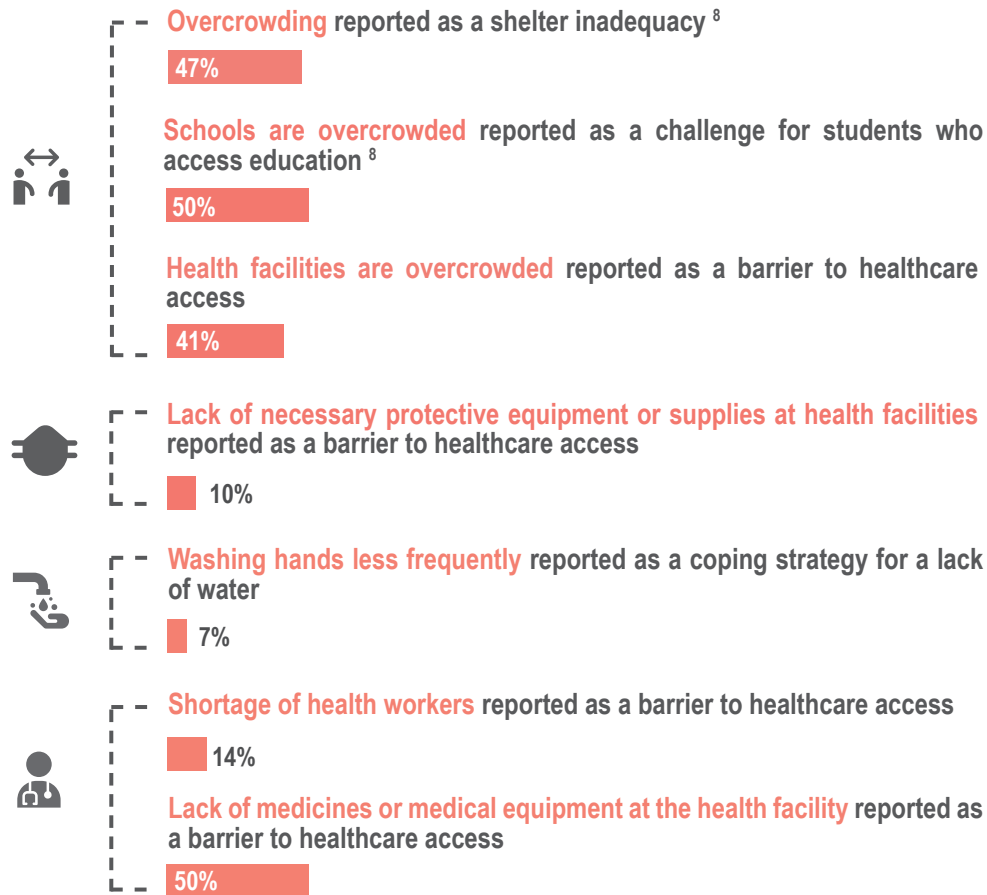


None of the available livelihood sectors were affected 32%
At least one of the available livelihood sectors was partially or totally affected 68%

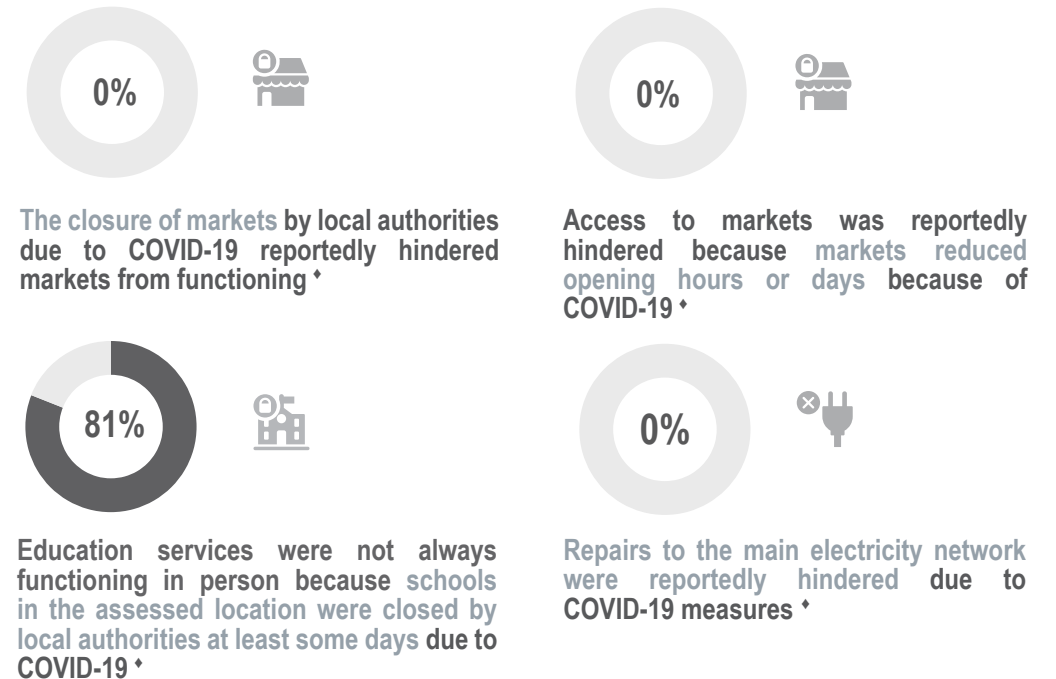
Reported hygiene item availability and affordability (by % of communities) ¹³

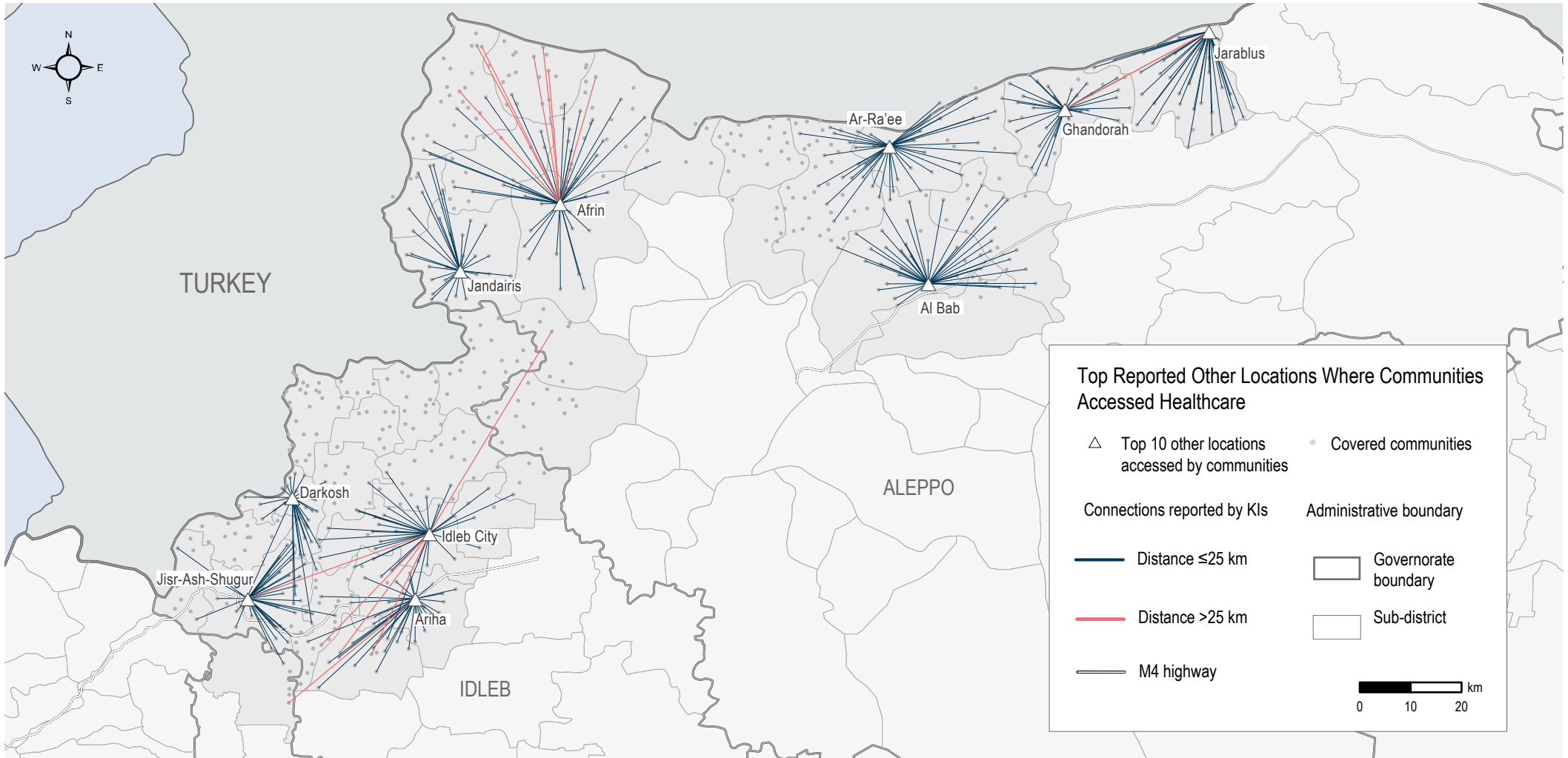


% of communities where COVID-19 risk indicators were reported *



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





Health Network Analysis

Note on the map

This map shows the connections between assessed communities and other locations where health services are most commonly accessed. One line represents one connection, and red lines denote cases where the distance between locations is ≥ 25 kilometers. This map does not estimate travel time, road conditions, or the availability of direct routes between communities.



Security and Protection

Intersectoral findings on security

-  **General safety and security concerns restricting movement to markets** was a reported barrier to market access in **8%** of communities [♦]
- General safety and security concerns at markets** was a reported barrier to market access in **22%** of communities [♦]
- Markets not opening because of security issues** was a reported barrier to markets not functioning in **11%** of communities [♦]
-  **Threat from airstrikes** was reported as a protection risk in **117 communities** ⁸
- Threat from shelling, sniper or gunfire** was reported as a protection risk in **83 communities** ⁸
- Threat from improvised explosive devices (IEDs), mines or unexploded ordnances** was reported as a protection risk in **117 communities** ⁸
- Fear from imminent conflict** was reported as a protection risk in **56 communities** ⁸
-  **The inability to lock homes securely** was reported as a shelter inadequacy in **35%** of communities ^{8,♦}
- Lack of lighting around the shelter** was reported as a shelter inadequacy in **82%** of communities ^{8,♦}
- The security situation** was reported as a barrier to shelter repairs in **14%** of communities [♦]
-  **General safety and security concerns at the health facility** was reported as a barrier to healthcare in **7%** of communities [♦]

Most commonly reported protection priority needs

(by % of communities)^{3,8,♦}

- 81%** Special assistance for vulnerable groups
- 48%** Psychosocial support
- 45%** 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
- 43%** Lack of personal documentation required to enrol in school as a barrier to education access
- 8%**
- 14%**

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

Residents

- 32%** Early marriage
- 3%** Forced marriage
- 8%** High risk work
- 2%** Sending family members to beg
- 74%** Sending children (15 or below) to work

IDPs

- 40%**
- 3%**
- 12%**
- 5%**
- 82%**

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 **35%** 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 **75%** and **39%** of communities ^{8,♦}
- Children below the age of 12** were reported as a group affected by child labour in **21%** of communities ^{8,♦}
- Hazardous child labour** was reported as a protection risk in **8%** 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** exchange rate was used to calculate the amount in SYP. According to the NWS REACH Market Monitoring December 2020, 1 USD = 2,694 SYP; 1TRY= 345 SYP.
7. According to the NWS **REACH Market Monitoring** December 2020, 1 USD = 2,694 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** December 2020, the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) = 282,716 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.

◆ 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	731	Coping strategies for a lack of food	709
IDPs	707	Coping strategies for a lack of healthcare	736
Barriers to accessing healthcare	736	Coping strategies for a lack of water	502
Barriers to accessing sufficient food (merged)	710	Groups affected by child labour (merged)	548
Barriers to accessing sufficient water	502	Health priority needs (merged)	732
Barriers to education access (IDPs)	637	Main protection risks (IDPs)	673
Barriers to education access (merged)	663	Main protection risks (merged)	698
Barriers to education access (residents)	640	Main protection risks (residents)	685
Barriers to education quality (merged)	642	Protection priority needs (merged)	728
Barriers to feeding young children	709	Reasons education services not funct.	468
Barriers to assistance access (IDPs)	150	Shelter damages	724
Barriers to assistance access (resident)	188	Shelter issues/inadequacies (IDPs)	697
Barriers to markets functioning	167	Shelter issues/inadequacies (merged)	727
Barriers to physically accessing markets	621	Shelter issues/inadequacies (resident)	674
Barriers to shelter repairs	645	Tents (IDPs)	377
Challenges for renting shelters	518	Unfinished or abandoned buildings (IDPs)	352
Cop. strategies to meet basic needs (IDPs)	707	WASH priority needs (merged)	733
Cop. strategies to meet basic needs (res)	729		

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.