

EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE JOINT RAPID ASSESSMENT OF MARKETS

February 2023 | Northwest Syria

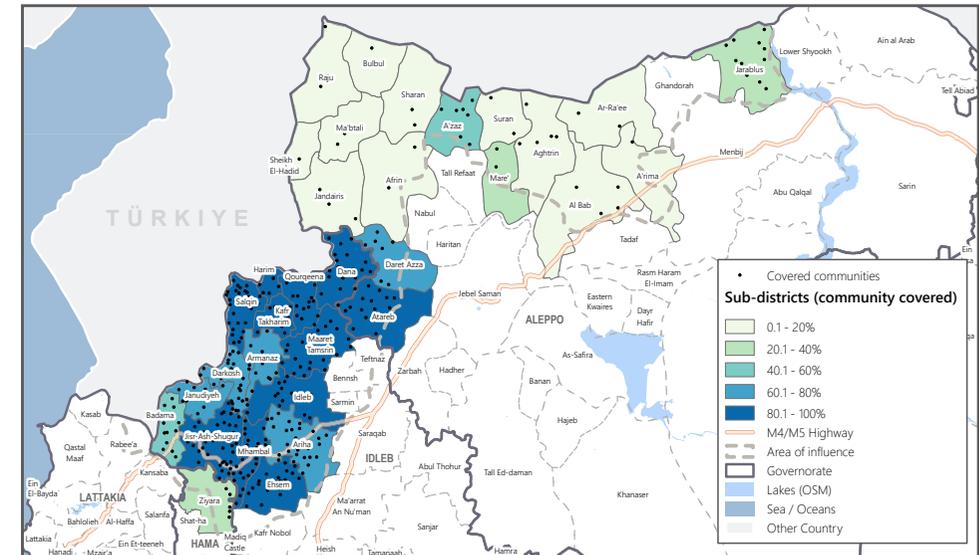
CONTEXT & RATIONALE

Northwest Syria (NWS) has been heavily affected by the earthquake that struck on 6 February 2023. Humanitarian organisations are working to determine how to procure, transport, and deliver urgent assistance to people in need, while facing access and transit challenges. One key consideration is the viability of cash assistance, to mitigate some of the logistical challenges associated with in-kind aid. While one key advantage of cash-based assistance is the agency afforded to crisis-affected people, market functionality and access are key factors for determining cash feasibility. If markets are damaged or destroyed, or are unable to maintain stock due to broken supply chains, then operational actors will take this into consideration before proceeding with cash programming.

KEY MESSAGES

- **Assessed markets across NWS broadly remain open.** In the vast majority of assessed communities, Key Informant (KI) vendors reported that either **all vendors were operating or only a few shops were closed.**
- **Financial service providers are reportedly operating** in over two thirds of assessed communities. However, in approximately a third of assessed communities KIs reported that these services would have **limited or no capacity to meet increased demand.**
- **KI vendors reported that demand for credit in their stores has increased** in more than two thirds of assessed communities since the earthquake. The same communities that reported increased demand for credit also reported **reduced capacity to allow purchases on credit.**
- The findings indicated market shortages and price increases of items in high demand, and where there is high reliance on imports from Türkiye, including **tents, plastic sheets/tarpaulin, blankets, and gas.**
- KI vendors reporting barriers to meeting greater demand said that **lack of resources** in addition to **insufficient stock from suppliers and producers** prevents them from meeting demand.

COVERAGE MAP*



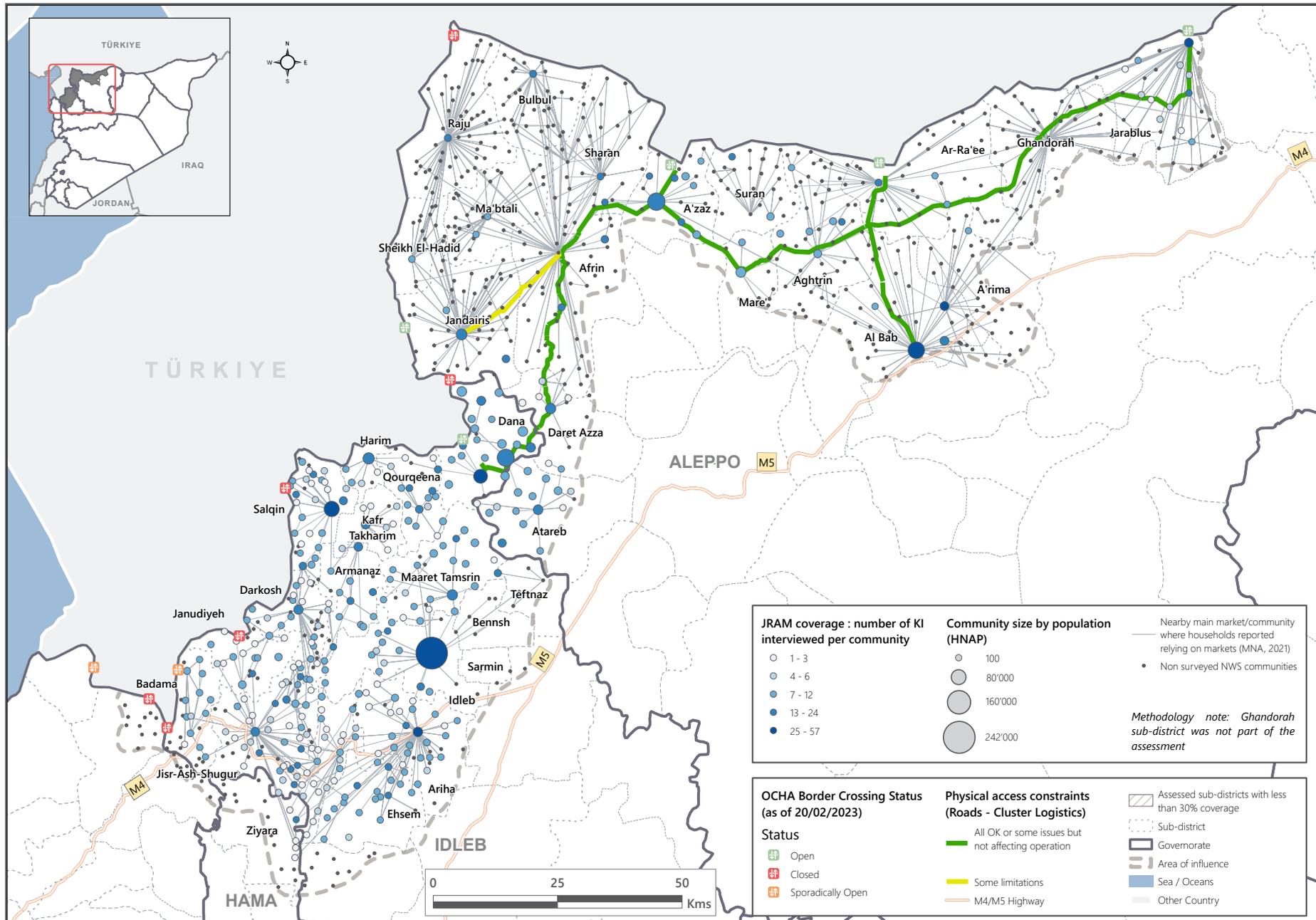
METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

Using a quantitative tool, structured **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with 3395 vendors were conducted between 14 and 16 February** on key indicators of market functionality. Findings are indicative and not statistically representative of the 375 assessed communities. Enumerators interviewed 10-12 vendors per market (depending on the size of the community). Please see the methodology notes/coverage figures on [page 16](#) for details on which communities were included in the sample. Data collection prioritised interviewing vendors that sell key basic commodities. Other vendors were still included in the sample, providing information on market conditions in the community.

This situation overview presents findings from the aggregated data at the sub-district level. **Organisations wanting to use the data for programmatic purposes should consult the [base data for community level findings](#).** For details on how data was aggregated up to sub-district level please see the [methodology notes](#).

* The assessment covered less communities in Northern Aleppo however included the major market hubs and communities with marketplaces known to REACH and partners. Findings are therefore indicative of markets in these sub-districts which communities rely on for their basic needs.

Communities assessed by Joint Rapid Assessment of Markets and market networks identified in REACH's 2021 Market Network Analysis



SHOP CLOSURES

In the vast majority of assessed communities KI vendors reported that **all vendors were operating** in the marketplace (73%) or **only a few vendors were closed** (21%) at the time of data collection. However, a higher proportion of shops were estimated to be closed across sub-districts within **Harim district as well as in Janudiyeh and Jandaris sub-districts.**

Most commonly reported barriers to re-opening, for sub-districts with the highest average proportion of vendors closed (as % of assessed communities, showing barriers reported by more than 50% of communities)*

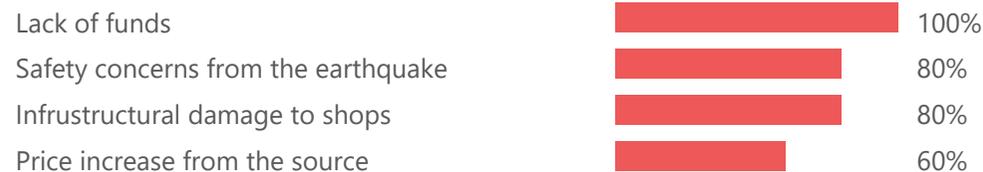
Suran



Jandaris



Harim



53% of communities reported that they closed their shops following the earthquake.¹ for which average closure was for **2.8 days**

Most commonly reported top three barriers to re-opening (as reported by the majority of vendors in % of assessed communities)*

1	Lack of funds	72%
2	Safety concerns related to the earthquake	70%
3	Infrastructural damage to shops	51%

PRICE CHANGES

Overall, the prices of key items were relatively stable according to KI vendors across assessed communities. The findings indicated market shortages and price increases of key items in high demand, and where there is high reliance on imports from Türkiye, including **tents, plastic sheets/tarpaulin, blankets, and gas.**

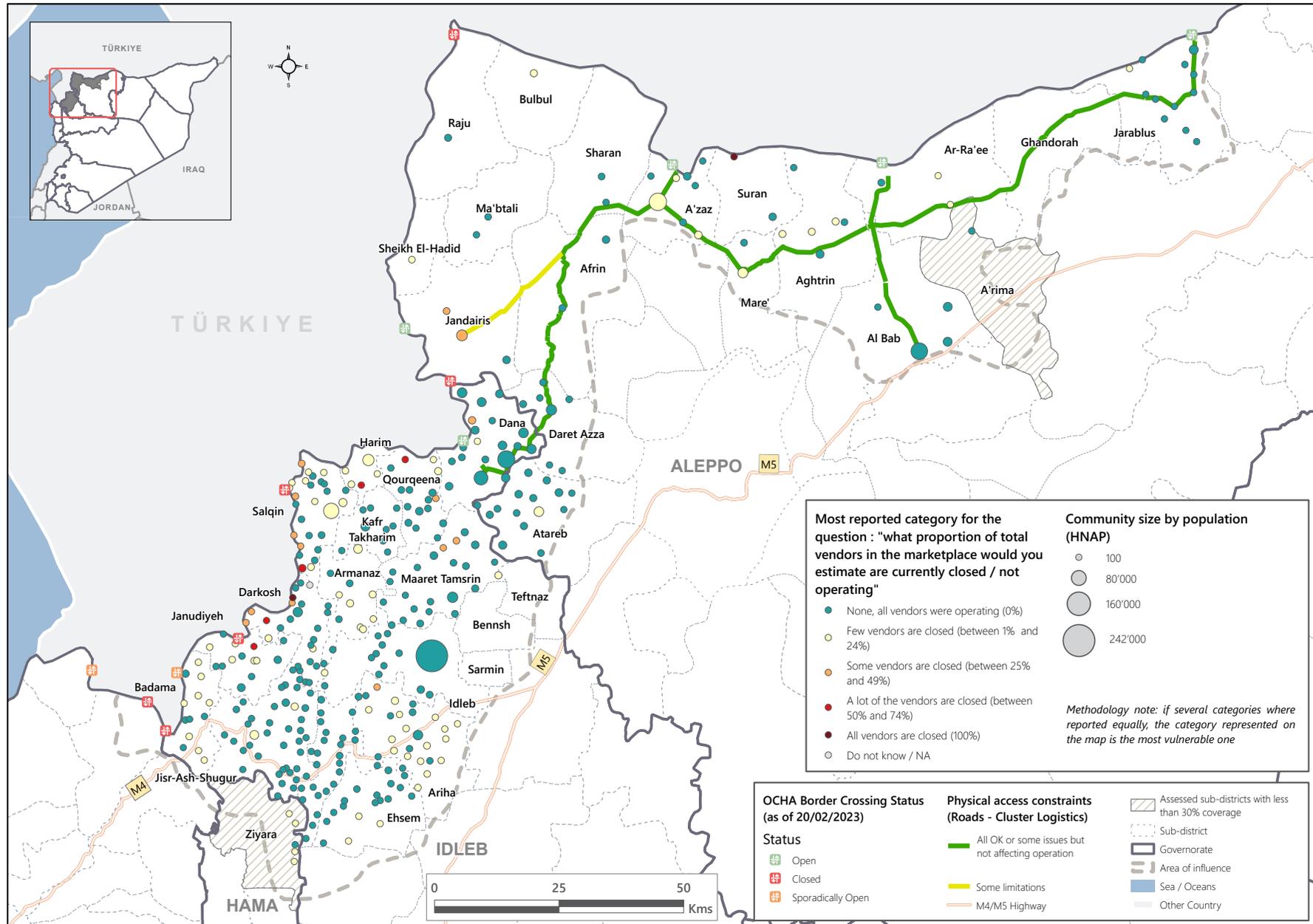
Item	Increased price**	Market shortages	Imported from Türkiye
Blankets	92%	46%	45%
Tents	72%	51%	44%
Plastic sheets/tarpaulin	72%	41%	47%
Gas	52%	45%	55%

* KIs could select three responses and therefore percentages may exceed 100.

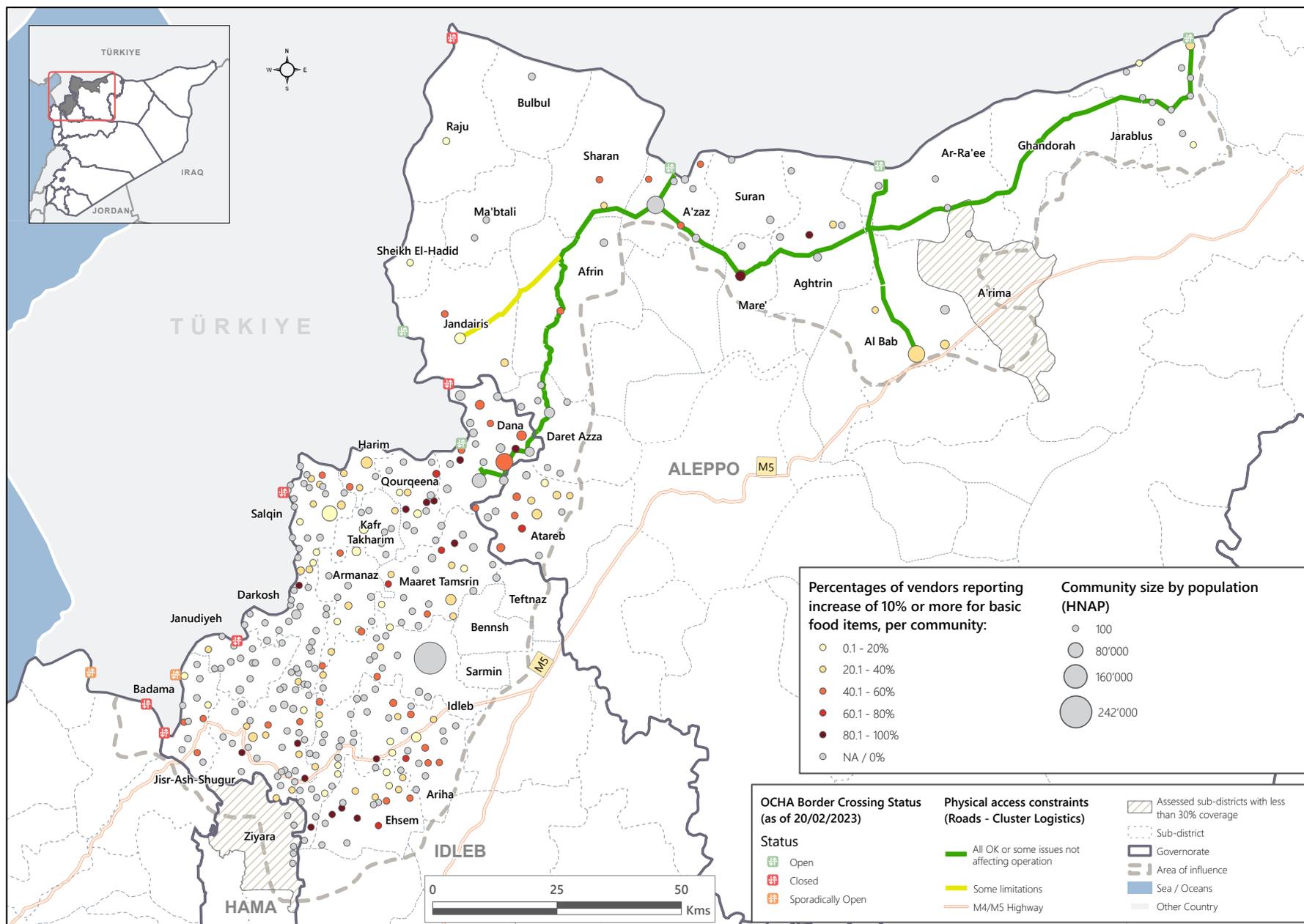
** KIs selling the category of item were asked which specific products have increased most in price since the earthquake.

Proportion of communities reporting on the percentage of vendors currently closed in the market

(as reported by the majority of KIs in assessed communities)

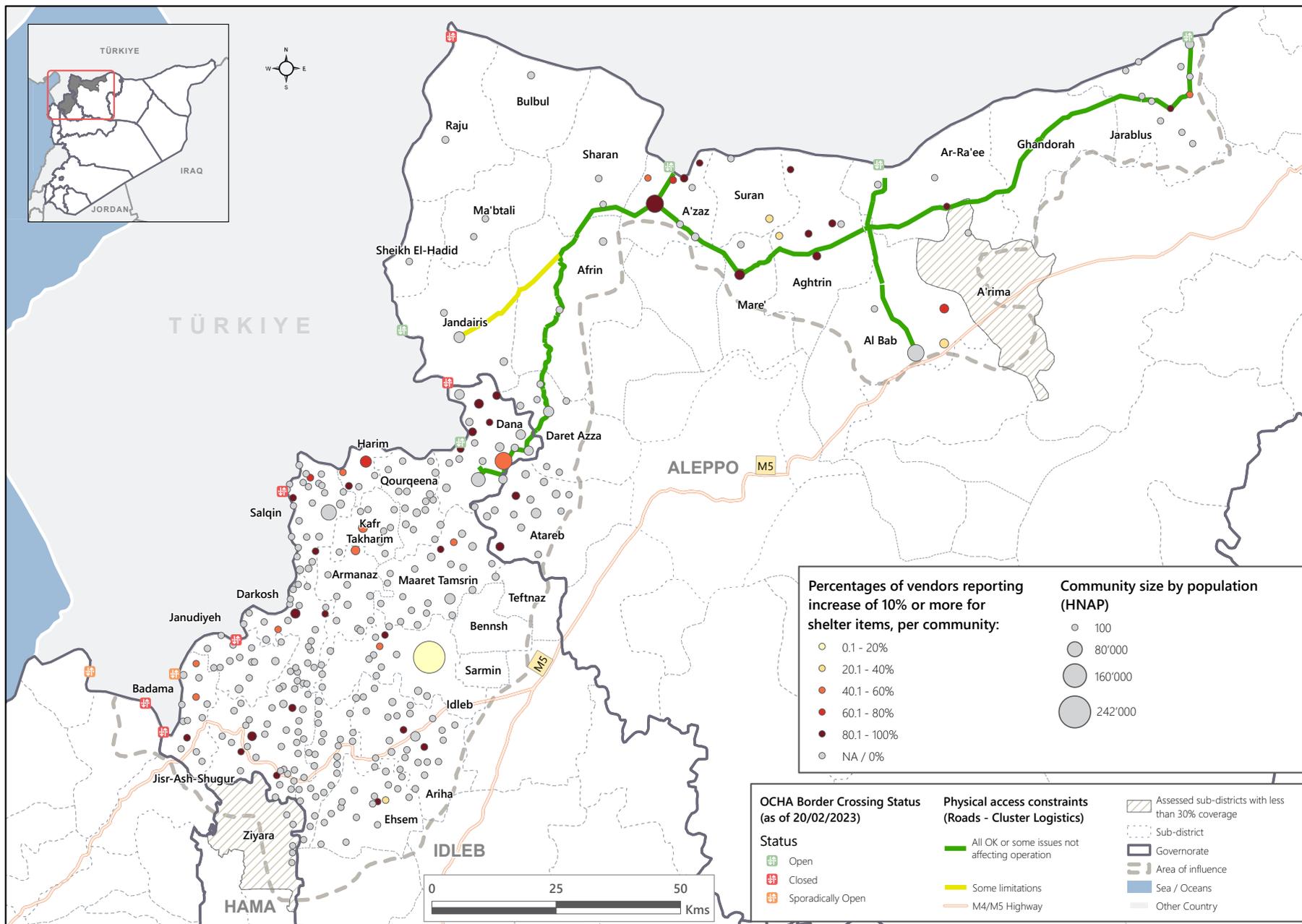


Increase in the prices of basic food items (as reported by the majority of vendor KIs in assessed communities)



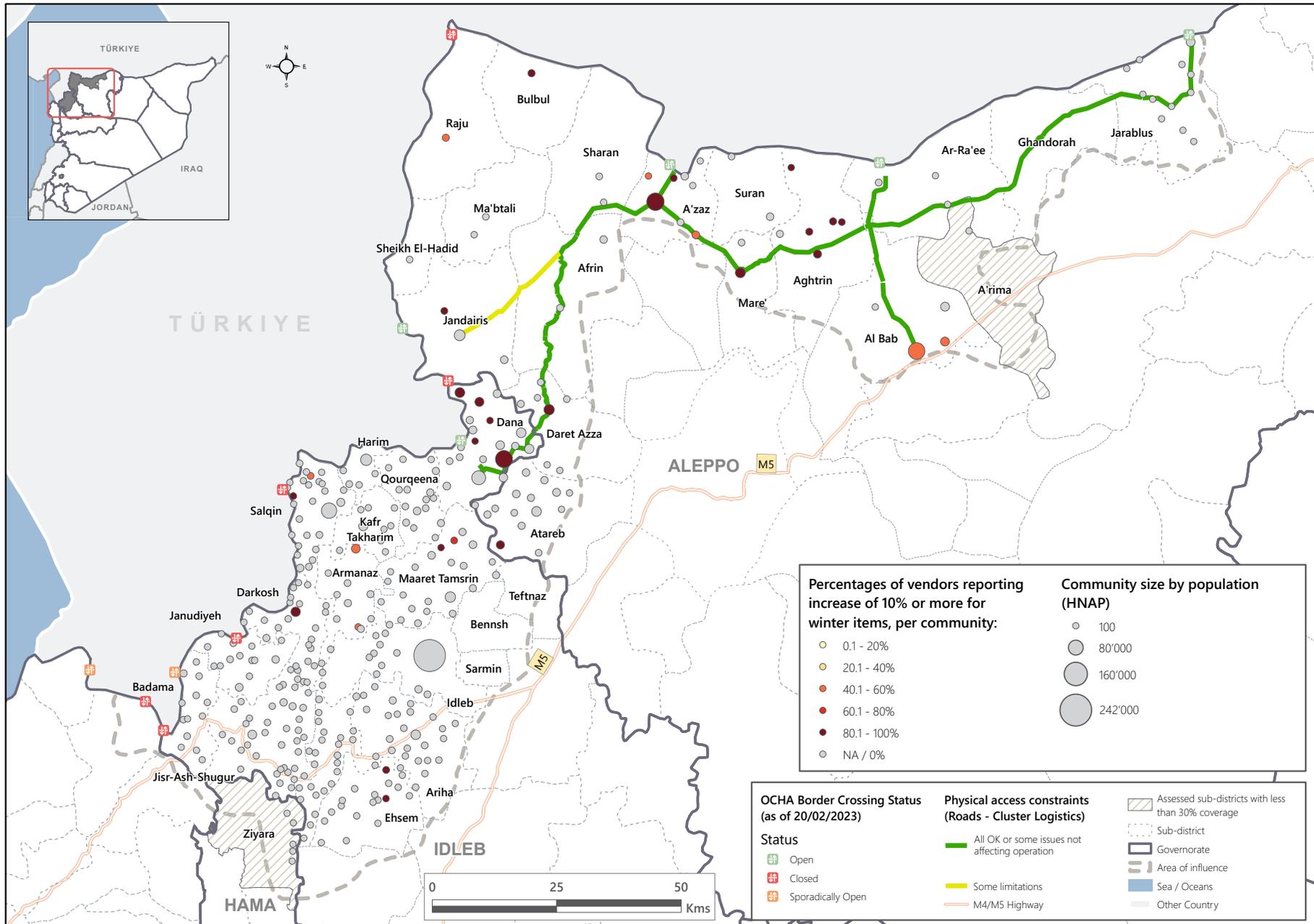
Increase in the prices of shelter items

(as reported by the majority of vendor KIs in assessed communities)



Increase in the prices of winterisation items

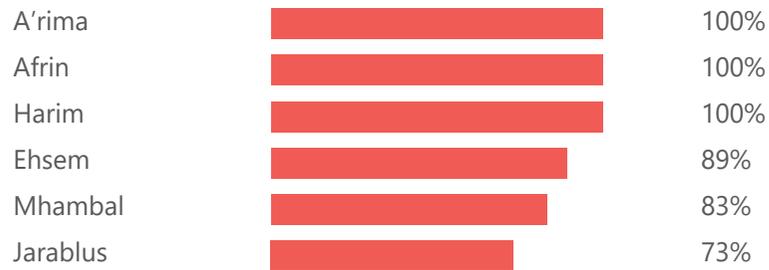
(as reported by the majority of vendor KIs in assessed communities)



FINANCIAL SERVICES

KIs in over two thirds of assessed communities reported that **larger and smaller hawalas as well as specialized currency exchange shops and vendors were operating**. Despite this, KIs in approximately a third of assessed communities reported that these services would have **limited or no capacity to meet increased demand**. This importantly impacts the extent that communities can receive cash in the form of remittances or assistance.

Sub-districts where financial services providers had limited or no capacity to meet increased demand (as % of assessed communities, showing sub-districts where more than half of communities reported limited/no capacity)



% of communities with hawalas² operating
(as reported by vendor KIs)



- 71%** Larger and smaller hawalas were operating
- 19%** Only larger hawalas were operating
- 7%** Neither been operating since the earthquakes

% of communities with money exchange services operating
(as reported by vendor KIs)

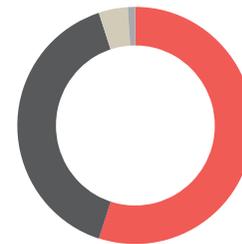


- 67%** Exchange shops and non-specialised vendors were operating
- 26%** Only non-specialised vendors were operating
- 7%** Neither been operating since the earthquakes

* Figures may exceed 100 due to rounding.

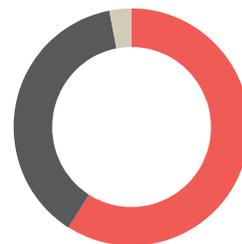
CREDIT AND ECONOMIC VULNERABILITIES

Proportion of customers that currently purchase goods on credit* (as % of assessed communities)



- 56%** Some customers purchase on credit (1%-49%)
- 41%** Most customers purchase on credit (50%-99%)
- 4%** No customers (0%)/no not offer credit to customers
- 1%** All customers (100%) purchase on credit

Change in demand for credit since the earthquakes*
(as % of assessed communities)



- 59%** Demand has increased
- 38%** No change in demand
- 3%** Demand has decreased

56%

of communities saw vendors reporting their **capacity to allow purchases on credit decreased** since the earthquakes.

70%

of vendor KIs who said that demand for credit in their shop has increased also reported that their **capacity to allow purchases on credit had decreased** since the earthquakes.

In general, **the same communities reporting increased demand for credit were also reporting reduced capacity to allow purchases on credit.**

ITEM UNAVAILABILITY

% of communities reporting limited availability of items* (as reported by vendor KIs that reported selling these items)



% of communities reporting shortages of key items (as reported by vendor KIs selling the category of item)

Shelter items	Tents	Plastic sheets/ tarpaulin	None	Foundations**
	51%	41%	34%	28%
Winter items	None	Blankets	Winter clothes	Kerosene/ deisel heaters
	47%	46%	32%	18%
Fuel	Gas	None	Petrol	Diesel
	45%	38%	35%	16%
Basic food items	None	Fresh vegetables	Sugar	Cooking oil
	50%	32%	29%	26%

Those products which KIs most commonly reported experiencing shortages and price increases of overlapped with products that they reported are **imported from Türkiye**.



Shelter and winter items

Approximately a third of assessed communities reported limited availability of winter items and just over half reported limited availability of shelter items. Some sub-districts showed higher proportions of communities reporting limited or no availability of such items.

These included **Jandarir, Harim and A'zaz** sub-districts where between 70% and 100% of communities reported limited availability of **shelter items**. 100% of communities in **Bulbul, Jandarir, and Sheikh El-Hadid** sub-districts reported limited availability of **winter items**.



Fuel

Limited availability of fuel in **Jandairis** (100% of communities) and **Ar-Ra'ee** (67%) sub-districts also impacts those surrounding communities identified in the September 2021 Market Network Analysis (MNA) that specifically rely on these markets for fuel. This includes 36 communities surrounding Jandairis and 17 communities surrounding Ar-Ra'ee ([see map on page 2](#)).



Basic food items

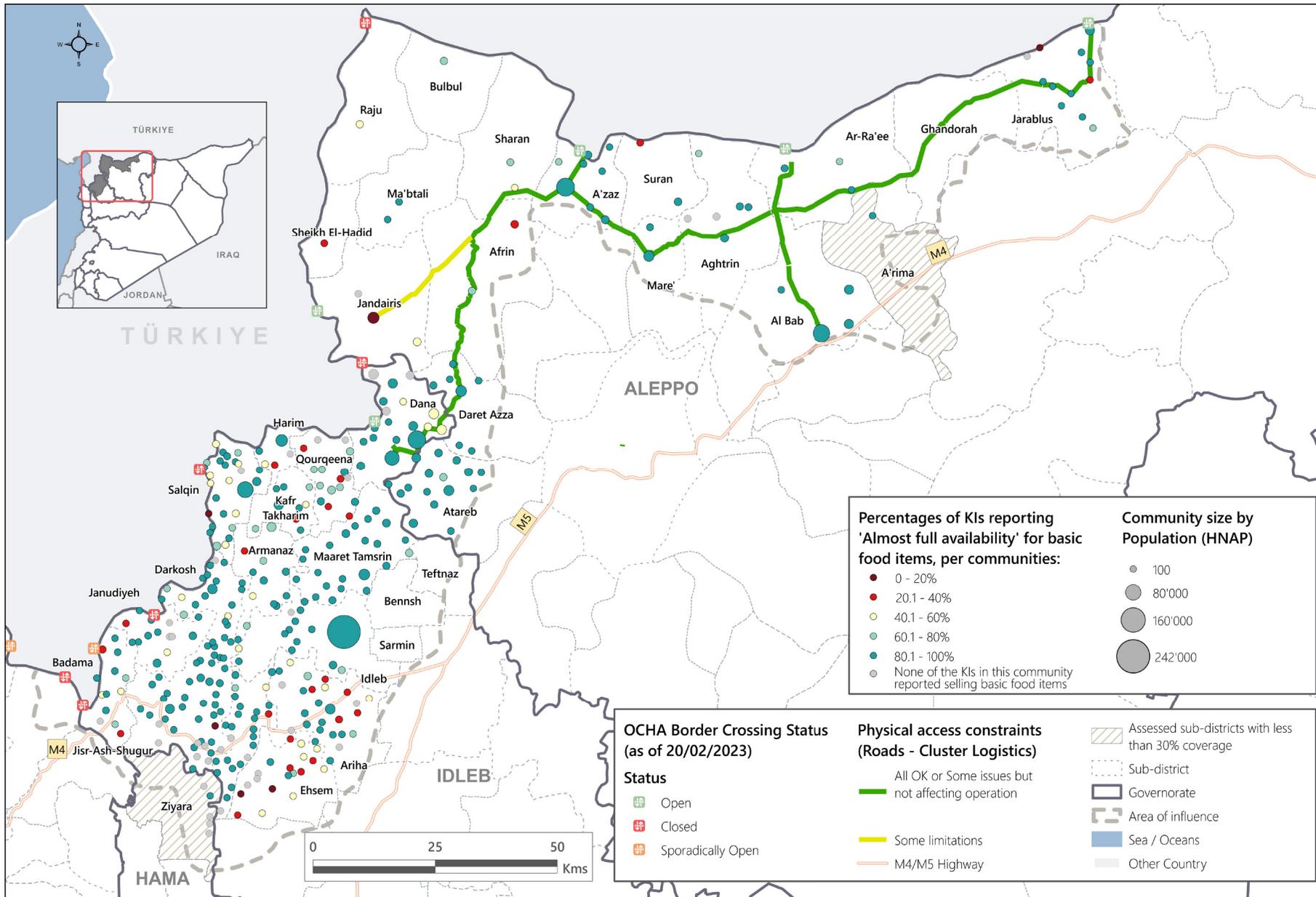
Sub-districts such as **Harim, Jandarir and Sheikh Al-Hadid**, that were heavily impacted by the earthquake reported limited or no availability of **basic food items**; this is particularly concerning given these are markets that several communities reportedly rely on for basic needs.² Other sub-districts that were less impacted by the earthquake, but previously underserved and not main market hubs, such as **Ehsem, Ariha and Ziyara sub-districts** also reported limited or no availability of food items.

* KIs could select multiple responses and therefore values may sum to more than 100.

** For example, cement, sand, gravel, concrete blocks

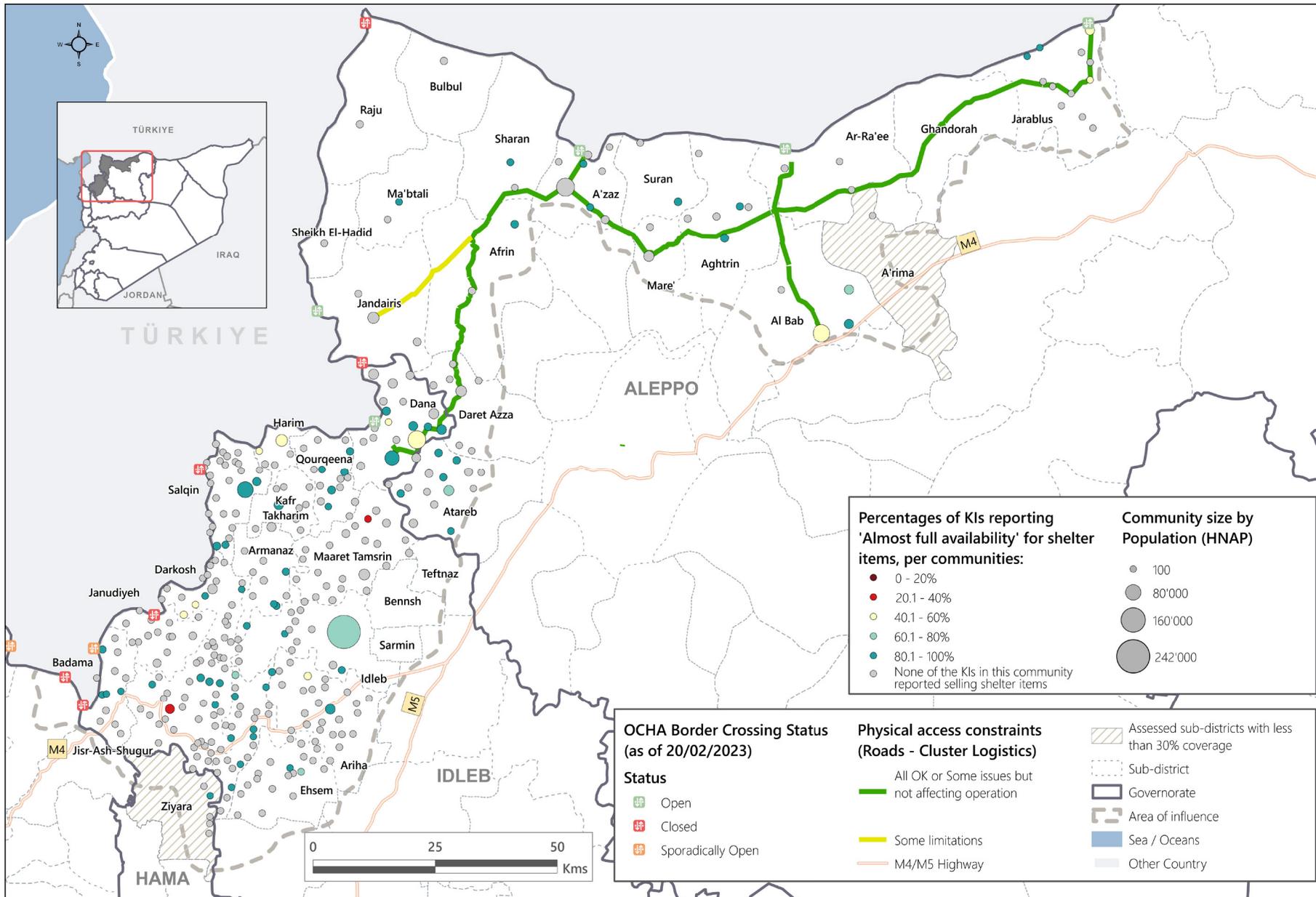
Availability of basic food items

(as reported by the majority of vendor KIs in assessed communities)



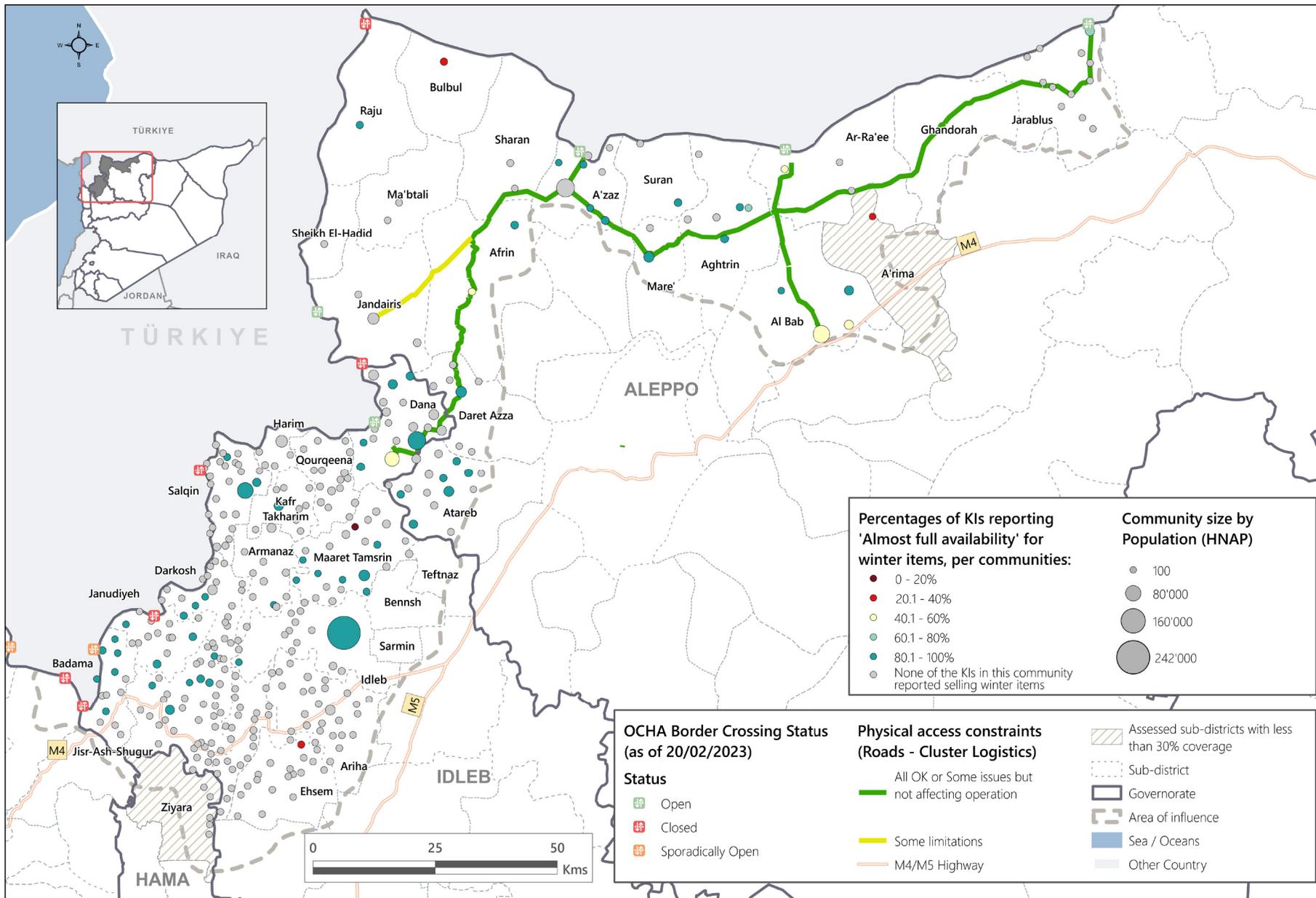
Availability of shelter items

(as reported by the majority of vendor KIs in assessed communities)



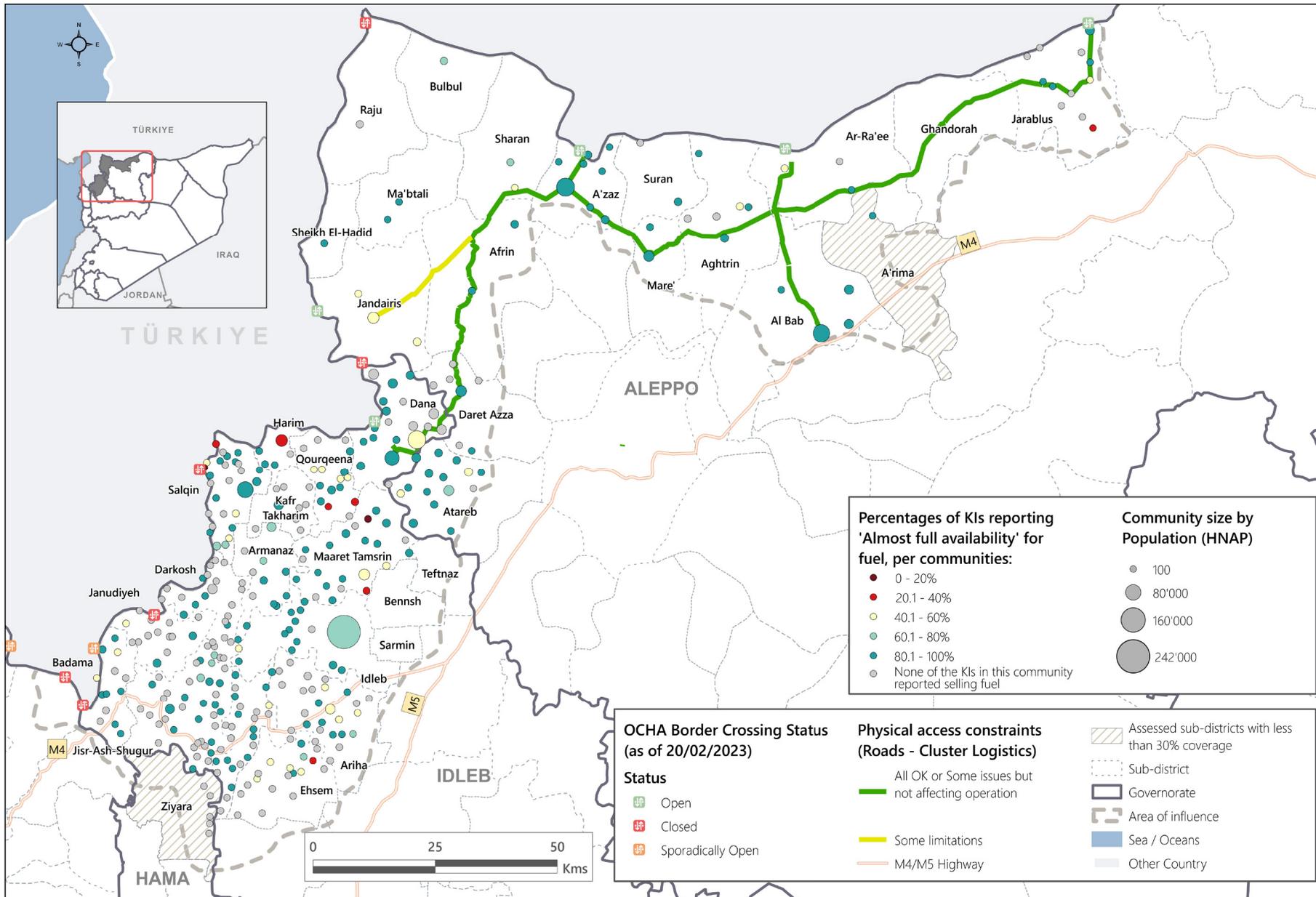
Availability of winterisation items

(as reported by the majority of vendor KIs in assessed communities)



Availability of fuel

(as reported by the majority of vendor KIs in assessed communities)



CHANGES IN DEMAND FOR GOODS

Change in demand for goods since the earthquake
(as % of assessed communities)

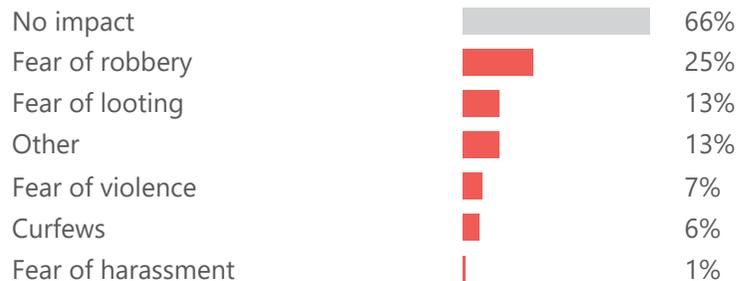


Most commonly reported top three barriers to meeting greater demand
(as % of assessed communities)

1	Lack of resources to purchase additional stock	69%
2	Suppliers are unable to provide enough stock	57%
3	Producers are unable to produce enough to meet demand	51%

SECURITY FACTORS

Security factors currently negatively impacting business*
(by % of assessed communities)



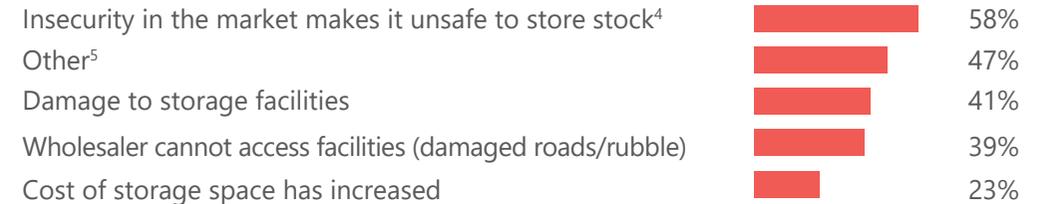
67% of KIs in communities in Al-Bab and Aghtrin sub-districts reported **fear of robbery**, and 67% of KIs of communities in Jandariss sub-district reported **fear of looting** impacting their business.

* KIs could select multiple responses and therefore values may sum to more than 100.

STORAGE CAPACITY

In just under a third of communities KIs reported that their storage capacity had been reduced since the earthquake, with the most commonly reported reason being that **insecurity in the market makes it unsafe to keep goods there**.⁴ Those sub-districts with the highest proportion of communities reporting reduced storage capacity were generally in areas with very strong macroseismic intensity from the earthquake including **Bulbul, Sharan, Sheikh El-Hadid, and Suran**.

Reasons why storage capacity had been reduced* (as reported by KIs in assessed communities who said their storage capacity had been reduced, n=95, 27% of assessed communities)



Zoom in on reduced storage capacity due to damaged to facilities and roads from the earthquake

The sub-districts with the highest proportion of communities reporting damage to storage facilities included **Bulbul, Jandariss, Sharan, Sheikh El-Hadid, Mare' (within Afrin district), Harim, Dana, Aramanz, Qourqeena (within Harim district), Maaret Tamsrin, and Janudiyeh**.

Sub-districts with the highest proportion of communities reporting wholesalers could not access facilities due to damaged roads, rubble etc. included **Bulbul, Jandariss, Sharan, Sheikh El-Hadid (within Afrin district), Armanaz, Qourqeena (within Harim district), Ar-Ra'ee, and Ma'btali**.

ENDNOTES

1. Enumerators sampled primarily shops open at the time of data collection and therefore the sample may be biased.
2. Hawalas are traditional system of transferring money used in Arab countries and South Asia.
3. REACH, Market Network Analysis, September 2021
4. While insecurity refers to danger due to actions of other people (robbery, looting, armed violence), it is reasonable to expect in the aftermath of a disaster that some respondents would have linked insecurity to lack of safety (from one's environment). Indeed, many of the sub-districts with high proportions of communities reporting that insecurity in the market makes it unsafe to store stocks, did not commonly report on security issues that impact their business such as robbery, looting etc.
5. See coverage details on [page 16](#) for information on number of communities assessed per sub-district and % of assessment coverage from total number of known key market areas within each sub-district.
6. The most commonly reported other response was that vendors' ability to stock goods had been reduced due to factors such as lack of funds, price inflation, and low purchasing power of the community. This indicates less of an issue to do with capacity reduction as a result of the earthquake and more that existing economic pressures have been exacerbated by the earthquake. Other respondents reported that their capacity to re-stock had been reduced as suppliers had been affected by the earthquake.

METHODOLOGY NOTES

Aggregation methodology

Aggregation for categorical responses was done using the mode, i.e. the most commonly reported response for that community. In cases where there was no consensus among KIs at the community level, but the responses indicated the same trend, the more severe response was taken to aggregate up to sub-district level. For example, if 50% of KIs within a community reported that prices had increased by less than 10% and 50% of KIs reported that prices had increased by 10-24%, the community level response was that prices had increased by 10-24%, showing the more severe option.

In cases where there was no consensus among KIs at the community level between two options indicating an opposing or illogical trend, that indicator was removed for that community and not aggregated up to the sub-district level. For example, if 50% of KIs in one community reported that financial service providers generally have capacity to meet increased demand and 50% of KIs reported that financial service providers have limited or no capacity to meet demand, then this indicator for this community was not aggregated up to the sub-district level.

This decision was made based on the limitation that the sample was biased towards shops that were open at the time of data collection and therefore potentially not the most severely affected, and also to ensure that those perspectives were not lost in the aggregated data.

There were a few exceptions where the above approach was not applied as it was not relevant for the specific indicator. For the indicator 'percent of customers currently purchasing on credit' responses were grouped as following: (all and most); (a lot and some); and (few and no) customers. This was because KIs answering the question about their own shop could reasonably report varying responses which does not indicate inconsistency when aggregated at the community level. The indicators 'demand for items' and 'point of sale functionality' were removed when there was no consensus at the community level.

Sampling strategy

Communities were selected based on REACH and partner knowledge of communities with key market areas monitored through the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) and the Market Network Analysis (MNA) from 2021, when there was larger coverage. Within the JMMI markets are targeted based on the criteria that they sell a variety of goods, are permanent in nature, and communities rely on them for basic needs. In addition, results from the MNA show key markets hubs and interdependencies between markets and communities.

The aim for this assessment was to cover, where possible, these key market hubs that communities rely on, as this in turn can support identification of other communities likely affected by disrupted market conditions. Assessment coverage ([see page 16](#)) therefore does not include all communities or markets, but indicates market conditions in key known market areas to REACH and partners where there was existing access.

Enumerators predominantly conducted snowball sampling to identify vendors by walking through market areas and visiting open shops. 6% of interviews (214) were conducted remotely using existing vendor contacts from JMMI. This means there was a sample bias towards those businesses that were open at the time of data collection. As such, the results may not capture the perspectives of those most impacted by the earthquake.

ASSESSMENT COVERAGE

Governorate	Sub-district	No# of assessed communities	No# of communities with key markets known to REACH and partners	JRAM coverage
Aleppo	Arateb	15	16	94%
Aleppo	Daret Azza	7	9	78%
Aleppo	Al Bab	4	4	100%
Aleppo	Ar-Ra'ee	3	3	100%
Aleppo	A'rima	1	1	100%
Aleppo	Afrin	2	2	100%
Aleppo	Bulbul	1	1	100%
Aleppo	Jandaris	3	3	100%
Aleppo	Raju	2	2	100%
Aleppo	Sharan	2	2	100%
Aleppo	Sheikh El-Hadid	1	1	100%
Aleppo	Ma'btali	2	2	100%
Aleppo	A'zaz	8	8	100%
Aleppo	Aghtrin	6	6	100%
Aleppo	Mare'	2	2	100%
Aleppo	Suran	2	2	100%
Aleppo	Jarablus	12	12	100%
Hama	Ziyara	5	5	100%

Governorate	Sub-district	No# of assessed communities	No# of communities with key markets known to REACH and partners	JRAM coverage
Idleb	Idleb	18	18	100%
Idleb	Maaret Tamsrin	22	22	100%
Idleb	Harim	5	6	83%
Idleb	Dana	20	20	100%
Idleb	Salqin	27	28	96%
Idleb	Kafr Takharim	9	10	90%
Idleb	Qourqeena	16	17	94%
Idleb	Armanaz	12	14	86%
Idleb	Jisr-Ash-Shugur	45	45	100%
Idleb	Badama	14	14	100%
Idleb	Darkosh	25	26	96%
Idleb	Janudiyeh	14	14	100%
Idleb	Ariha	27	31	87%
Idleb	Ehsem	18	18	100%
Idleb	Mhambal	25	25	100%