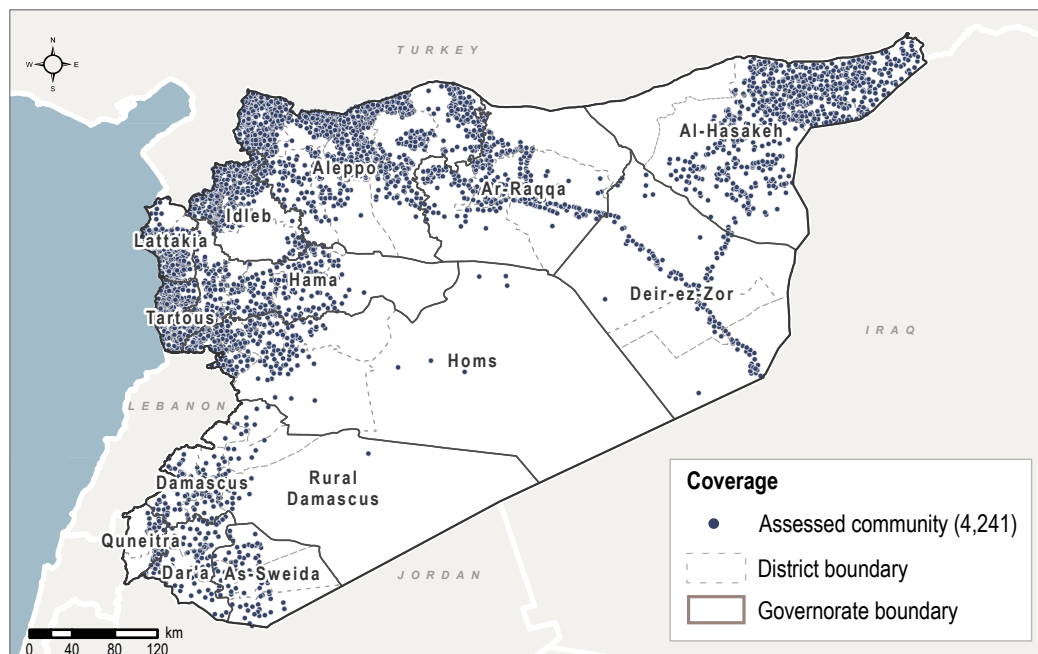


Introduction and Methodology

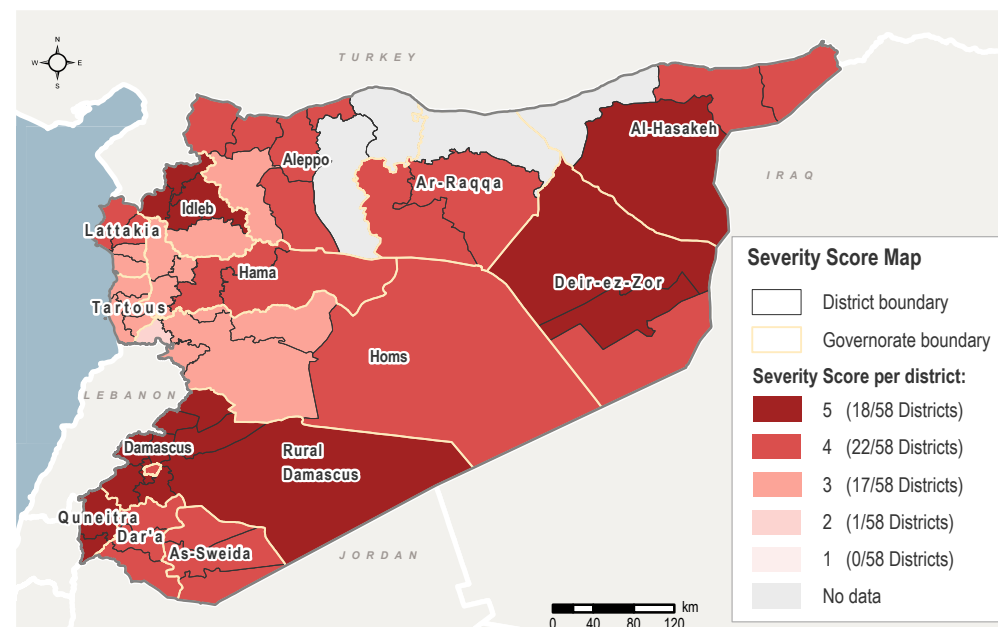
This Quarterly Needs Analysis is a multi-sectoral assessment of the available data about Syria's humanitarian conditions and priority needs. A relative severity score is applied per assessed district to consolidate that information. The present factsheet offers a regional overview of contributive indicators based on humanitarian needs assessment data. These include available humanitarian assistance, shelter and non-food items (SNFI), food security and livelihoods (FSL), water, sanitation & hygiene (WASH), health, education, and protection data as collected by the Humanitarian Needs Assessment Programme (HNAP) and REACH across Syria. Indicator findings and severity scores by district can be found in the [Quarterly Needs Analysis dashboard](#).

The assessments are conducted using a community focal point (CFP) methodology focused at the community level. Three to six CFPs are interviewed per assessed location, and are chosen based on their community-level and sector specific knowledge. The present factsheet represents critical information gathered in **4,241** communities across northwest Syria (NWS) (891 communities), northeast Syria (NES) (1,187 communities), and central and south Syria (CSS) (2,163 communities). Data were collected between 1 March and 7 April 2021 from a network of 16,561 CFPs (32% of whom are female). Unless specified by an endnote, all indicators refer to the situation 30 days before data collection. Findings are indicative rather than representative and should not be generalized across populations or regions.

Coverage Map



Severity Map



Quarterly Needs Analysis

The conflict in Syria is now entering its second decade, and the number of people relying on humanitarian aid for survival continues to grow. HNAP and REACH are working to support the humanitarian response in Syria by conducting needs assessments, like HNAP's extensive Mobility & Needs Monitoring reports and REACH's monthly Humanitarian Situation Overview for Syria. These products deliver timely, accurate information essential to the coordination of the humanitarian response. The present factsheet represents a synchronized effort by HNAP and REACH to expand on that work with a quarterly analysis of the available data. Based on a severity score index for selected indicators, and developed using the Joint Inter-sectoral Analysis Framework (JIAF), this analysis generates Whole of Syria inter-sectoral severity scores similar to those applied in the annual Syria Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO). While regional boundaries are not officially endorsed by REACH or HNAP, findings have been presented regionally to better serve humanitarian partners operating across NES, NWS, and CSS.

Using this analysis, humanitarian response actors and those working to understand the humanitarian conditions across Syria are better equipped to recognize changes that occur in the intervening months between more extensive annual assessments, like the Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA). Moreover, the QNA provides humanitarian actors with an additional source of data and analysis to help contextualize future coordinated response strategies with more up-to-date humanitarian needs data and severity scoring.



Priority Needs



Resident Overall Priority Needs¹



IDP² Overall Priority Needs

1	Livelihoods	67%	Livelihoods	62%
2	Food	43%	Food	52%
3	Healthcare	42%	Winterisation	44%

Humanitarian Assistance indicators	Severity Score ³	Protection indicators	Severity Score
Assessed communities where households reportedly have no access to humanitarian assistance	21% 3	Assessed communities where a lack of civil documentation was reported as a protection risk	40% 4

SNFI indicators	Severity Score ³	Education indicators	Severity Score
Assessed communities where less-suitable shelter types ⁴ were reported as a main shelter type	53% 5	Assessed communities where threats from imminent conflict, airstrikes, shelling, or unexploded ordnances were reported	16% 4
Assessed communities where >50% of essential NFIs ³ are reportedly inaccessible to the majority of the community	88% 2	Assessed communities where child labour or child marriage were reported as protection risks	63% 4
Average overcrowding proportion reported across communities	13% 3	Education indicators	
		Average reported % of school-aged children not in school in assessed communities	50% 5

WASH indicators	Severity Score ³	Context indicators	Severity Score
Average proportion of households in communities reported to have insufficient access to water	14% 4	Proportion of returnees and IDPs to residents in assessed communities	62% 5
Assessed communities where severe sanitation issues (garbage left in streets/ sewage in the streets/open defecation) are reported	<1% 0	Assessed communities where occurrences of conflict were reported in March	29% 4
Assessed communities where 2 or more severe water coping strategies were reported	34% 4	Assessed communities where occurrences of displacement or natural hazards were reported in March*	61% 4



Health indicators

Severity Score

Assessed communities where no access to a functioning medical facility inside the community was reported	56%	3
Assessed communities where an absence or shortage of healthcare workers was reported	14%	3



FSL indicators

Severity Score

Assessed communities where borrowing was reported in two or more sectors	67%	3
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Findings - Northwest Syria

Needs assessment findings show most areas of Syria are facing high need and significant challenges to accessing essential services. Some areas are being particularly hard-hit, with regions of NWS facing damaged infrastructure, high prices, and lack of economic opportunities compounded by years of conflict and subsequent displacement. It is reflected in the high composite scores of districts like Ariha and Harim.

In assessed locations in NWS, half of the school-aged children are not in school, according to CFPs. That is higher than regional averages in NES or CSS areas. A possible contributing factor is older children pulled from school to work, as households struggle to afford increasingly high priced goods and services. NFIs are reportedly inaccessible in 88% of assessed communities in NWS and, notably, are reportedly inaccessible in 100% of communities in Al Ma'ra district.

Constant conflict and lack of employment opportunities are sending people to other locations looking for safety and opportunity across NWS. War, as well as economic push factors, are causing increasing incidents of displacement in NWS. According to the REACH Emergency Needs Tracking (ENT) dataset, in March there were 565 reported displacements in NWS of more than 40 IDPs (in 24-72 hours). ENT also recorded 27 natural hazard events, including storms and floods affecting households in March, displacing people and damaging shelters and infrastructure. Understandably, unsuitable shelter types such as damaged houses, non-residential structures, or tents were reportedly used more frequently in NWS than in other regions. In 53% of assessed locations in NWS, at least one of these shelter types was reportedly the most commonly used in the community.

Although lower than last year^a, the number of conflict incidents in NWS was higher than other locations across Syria in March 2021. The threat of conflict was still reported more frequently across NWS than other regions in March. Previous hostilities in the region still leave their mark, however. According to the HNAP Monthly Mobility and Needs Monitoring^b, in March 2021 the proportion of the regional population that is or had been displaced is highest in NWS, at 62%, compared to 21% in NES and 24% in CSS controlled areas. This figure is exceedingly high in Harim district in Idleb, reporting at 75%.




Overall, district composite scores in NWS are high, with many above 4.5 out of 5. Some of the most severe contributing factors are the use of unsuitable shelter types, the proportion of displaced individuals compared to the community population, and the rate of school-aged children reportedly out of school.

*The data source for this indicator is the [REACH Emergency Needs Tracking Dataset](#), which only has coverage in NWS.






Priority Needs

Resident Overall Priority Needs¹

1	 Livelihoods	72%
2	 Healthcare	65%
3	 WASH	53%

IDP Overall Priority Needs

 Livelihoods	77%
 Food	70%
 Healthcare	57%

NGO Humanitarian Assistance indicators

Severity Score³

Assessed communities where households reportedly have no access to humanitarian assistance 75% 5

SNFI indicators

Assessed communities where less-suitable shelter types⁴ were reported as a main shelter type 6% 3

Assessed communities where >50% of essential NFIs³ are reportedly inaccessible to the majority of the community 97% 4

Average overcrowding proportion reported across communities 17.5% 4

WASH indicators

Average proportion of households in communities reported to have insufficient access to water 16% 4

Assessed communities where severe sanitation issues (garbage left in streets/ sewage in the streets/open defecation) are reported 2% 2

Assessed communities where 2 or more severe water coping strategies were reported 22% 3

Protection indicators

Severity Score

Assessed communities where a lack of civil documentation was reported as a protection risk 15% 2

Assessed communities where threats from imminent conflict, airstrikes, shelling, or unexploded ordnances were reported 5% 3

Assessed communities where child labour or child marriage were reported as protection risks 64% 4

Education indicators

Average reported % of school-aged children not in school in assessed communities 37% 4

Context indicators

Proportion of returnees and IDPs to residents in assessed communities 21% 3

Assessed communities where occurrences of conflict were reported in March 11% 3

Health indicators

Severity Score

Assessed communities where no access to a functioning medical facility inside the community was reported 73% 4

Assessed communities where an absence or shortage of healthcare workers was reported 10% 2

FSL indicators

Severity Score

Assessed communities where borrowing was reported in two or more sectors 68% 3

Findings - Northeast Syria

While displacement challenges in northeast Syria are comparatively lower than those reported in NWS, access to services is more challenging in many sectors. Among all reporting communities, 75% do not have access to humanitarian assistance, compared with 46% across all assessed locations. Regional geopolitical and stakeholder complexities, administrative processes, rural population distribution, and COVID-19 have been known to affect access to humanitarian services and the ability of humanitarians to access communities. That is particularly concerning for in-person interventions, such as education, health, and protection programming.

Communities are facing access challenges to other services as well. Access to sufficient water is also lower than average in NES. An average of 16% of community residents have challenges accessing enough water for their needs in NES, compared to 12% in assessed locations across Syria. Access to water has been a constant challenge in NES, with inconsistent water provision at the Alouk water station, which supplies water to 460,000 residents^c. Additionally, 73% of CFPs reported no access to a functioning health facility in the community, compared with 54% of communities without access to a health facility across all of Syria.

Of particular concern in March was the extreme rise in COVID-19 cases in NES, followed by the implementation of a 10-day lockdown across self-administration areas^{d,e}, overwhelming existing health facilities and adding additional barriers to economic engagement. We see this reflected in the priority needs reported in northeast Syria. In NES, livelihoods is the most frequently reported priority need for both groups, and healthcare is the second most commonly reported need for residents, and third for IDPs. NES has been hit hard by the rising prices of essential goods across the country. In 97% of communities assessed, more than half of essential NFIs are inaccessible to most of the population - a rate higher than that of NWS (88%) or CSS (80%). However, inaccessibility of goods is reported across the Whole of Syria at high rates. Price increases of food and NFIs and a depreciating Syrian Pound are affecting households' ability to afford essential goods, according to REACH Market Monitoring trends and WFP price monitoring data^{f,g}. Furthermore, families are reportedly employing coping strategies that have a direct impact on children. Early marriage or child labour were reported in 64% of communities across NES and a higher 87% of communities in Ar-Raqqa district. And in assessed locations in NES, 37% of school-aged children reportedly are out of school.

Overall, district composite scores in NES are between 3.75-4.5. Some of the most severe contributing factors are the lack of access to humanitarian assistance, lack of access to water and resulting coping strategies, and health facilities in the community.



Priority Needs



Resident Overall Priority Needs¹



IDP Overall Priority Needs

1	Food	89%	Food	92%
2	Livelihoods	72%	Livelihoods	79%
3	Winterisation	43%	Shelter	63%

Humanitarian Assistance indicators	Severity Score ³	Protection indicators	Severity Score
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Assessed communities where households reportedly **have no access to humanitarian assistance** 39% 4

Assessed communities where a **lack of civil documentation was reported as a protection risk** 29% 3

SNFI indicators
Assessed communities where **less-suitable shelter types⁴ were reported** as a main shelter type 7% 3

Assessed communities where **threats from imminent conflict, airstrikes, shelling, or unexploded ordnances were reported** 10% 4

Assessed communities where **child labour or child marriage were reported as protection risks** 36% 2

Assessed communities where **>50% of essential NFIs⁵ are reportedly inaccessible** to the majority of the community 80% 1

Education indicators

Average **overcrowding proportion** reported across communities 10% 2

Average reported **% of school-aged children not in school** in assessed communities 13% 2

WASH indicators

Context indicators

Average proportion of households in communities reported to have **insufficient access to water** 10% 3

Proportion of returnees and IDPs to residents in assessed communities 24% 4

Assessed communities where **severe sanitation issues** (garbage left in streets/ sewage in the streets/open defecation) are reported 2% 2

Assessed communities where **occurrences of conflict** were reported in March 7% 2

Assessed communities where **2 or more severe water coping strategies** were reported 20% 3



Health indicators

Severity Score



FSL indicators

Severity Score

Assessed communities where **no access to a functioning medical facility inside the community** was reported 42% 3

Assessed communities where **borrowing was reported in two or more sectors** 65% 2

Assessed communities where an **absence or shortage of healthcare workers** was reported 35% 4

Findings - Central and South Syria

While regional findings in CSS areas show less severe needs, there remain specific districts where severe needs or conditions were reported. In Rural Damascus governorate, many district composite severity scores reach the maximum category of 5. Our findings show low levels of humanitarian access are frequent in Rural Damascus governorate, with no access reported across all locations in Darayya and Az-Zabdani districts.

Al Tall district in Rural Damascus, just north of Eastern Ghouta, is experiencing particularly severe conditions, according to findings from the assessment. All assessed communities are reportedly borrowing money to access essential services like food and water. A heavy dependence on lending suggests that households may exceed lending capacity and resort to more severe coping strategies in the future. Unsuitable shelter types are reported in 90% of assessed communities, and a shortage of healthcare workers is a barrier to accessing healthcare in all reporting communities of Al Tall. CFPs of Al Tall district also reported a high proportion of displaced/returned population, at 73%, compared to 24% regionally.

In Damascus city, the severity of need was relatively lower, with a composite severity of 3.75, which is lower than that of districts in the surrounding country. Urban characteristics of Damascus uniquely impact regional needs. Increased reports of overcrowding in Damascus neighbourhoods were reported, 16%, compared to 10% across CSS. Additionally, the need for civil documentation, likely related to urban labour market conditions, is more acute. Further protection concerns are evidenced by increased child protection risks such as child labour and early marriage.

Severe sanitation issues were not commonly reported in assessed locations across CSS, with only 2% of communities where their presence was reported, although that number jumped to 53% in Duma district in Rural Damascus. In Duma, most of the WASH infrastructure is not functioning because of damage in 2012 that has still not been fixed, according to field teams. That affects households' access to sufficient water, with 55% of households reportedly unable to access adequate supplies of water in Duma. Damage from past hostilities in Duma could also be affecting living conditions. Overcrowded shelter conditions reportedly affect 45% of households in communities in Duma, much higher than the rate across CSS of 10%. Duma's composite severity score is a 5, the maximum possible.

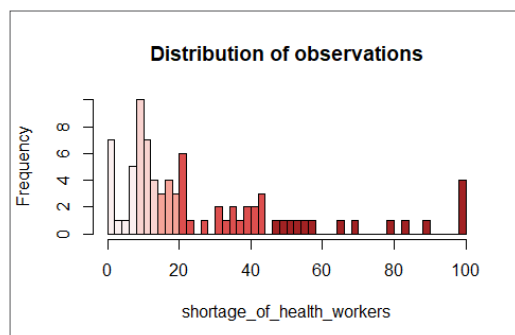
Districts across CSS range in overall severity, with some locations comparatively lower and others in Rural Damascus and Quneitra with very high severity. Contributing factors in these districts include infrastructure and shelter related needs, and low purchasing power and access to livelihoods. It's important to note here that even locations with comparatively low severity scores are facing significant challenges. Because of dramatic increases in the price of goods across the country, it is widely reported that households are struggling to access basic goods and services. This is the case even in districts that have been found to have relatively low severity scores in indicators such as inaccessibility of NFIs.





Severity Score Methodology

It is important to note that because the QNA is not trying to categorize levels of severity but rather compare severity across districts or other geographic regions, the severity thresholds of each indicator are calculated based on the distribution of data observations for each indicator over the last three months of data collected (HSOS rounds 65-67, January 2020-March 2021). The result is an approximately equal number of districts in each severity category for each indicator. The first range category (0) includes the lowest observations (minimum), the second range category (1) includes the next lowest 20% of observations, the third range category (2) includes the next lowest 20% of observations, and so on until all indicators are classified. By proceeding in this way, the analysis ensures an objective classification while maintaining the ability to compare severity. The histogram below shows the distributions and subsequent categorizations of observed district level data on the shortage of health workers in a community:



Distribution of observations	Assigned Severity Score
0 th percentile	Severity Score: 0
1-20 th percentile	Severity Score: 1
21-40 th percentile	Severity Score: 2
41-60 th percentile	Severity Score: 3
61-80 th percentile	Severity Score: 4
81-100 th percentile	Severity Score: 5

We created the severity scoring to encourage differentiation between district findings, but with the baseline assumption that none of these locations are without major challenges. This means that severity scores are considered only relative to each other, and are not meant to subjectively define severity levels of a any given location independently. Indeed, it's possible that locations with comparatively low severity scores are facing major challenges. For example, it is widely reported that households across Syria are struggling to access basic goods and services. Such is the case even in districts which are found to have relatively low severity scores in corresponding indicators, such as the inaccessibility of NFIs, because a high percentage of need indicated by respondents may still fall within the 35th percentile of its distribution.

NOTE: A challenge in employing this methodology occurs when observations are crowded, since they become less amenable to reasonable severity score thresholds because the standard deviation is very small. Therefore, it is necessary to cap severity scores so that similar observations receive similar attribution. Our analysis of the data pertaining to sanitation issues is an example. With the exception of a single outlier, all relevant observations are below 9%. Therefore, a cap is set on those values to allow for a severity score no higher than 2.

Composite Severity Scores:

The mean of the highest 50% of scores is calculated for all districts, as the JIAF framework recommends, to allow for a sufficiently high number of indicators to determine the district's overall intersectoral severity score. If District A had indicator severity scores as follows: {1,2,4,5,2,1,5,1,2,4,5,3,4,1, 3,2}, the mean of the maximum 50% of scores would be calculated as such: Mean of the maximum 50% = $(5+5+5+4+4+4+3+3)/8 = 4.125$.

District A, therefore, has a final severity score of 4.125. When paired with context for District A and severity scores for all districts across Syria, we can conclude that this is relatively high compared to other districts across the governorate. FSL and health indicators have higher severity scores, while SNFI indicators have lower severity scores. That could be due to reports of high outbreaks of COVID-19 in the area, limiting movement and access to livelihoods and causing overcrowding in health facilities, while infrastructure remains relatively intact.

Sources

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- Reach Syria. (March 2021). Northeast Syria Market Monitoring Situation Overview. Retrieved from <https://www.impact-repository.org/>

Endnotes

- CFPs could select three answers, thus findings might exceed 100%.
- Internally Displaced Persons
- Details on indicator definitions and severity score calculations can be found on tab three of the QNA table, and in the Severity Methodology description to the left.
- Unsuitable shelter types include: unfinished or abandoned residential building, damaged residential building, non residential structure with one family, collective center with more than one family, concrete block shelter, container, tent, makeshift shelter with scavenged materials.
- Essential non-food items include: soap, sanitary pads, jerry cans, washing powder, plastic sheeting, heating fuel and heaters, winter items, adult clothing, children's clothing, shoes, cooking fuel, cooking stove, mattresses/sleeping mats.

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