FACTSHEET

Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI)

July, 2023
Northeast Syria

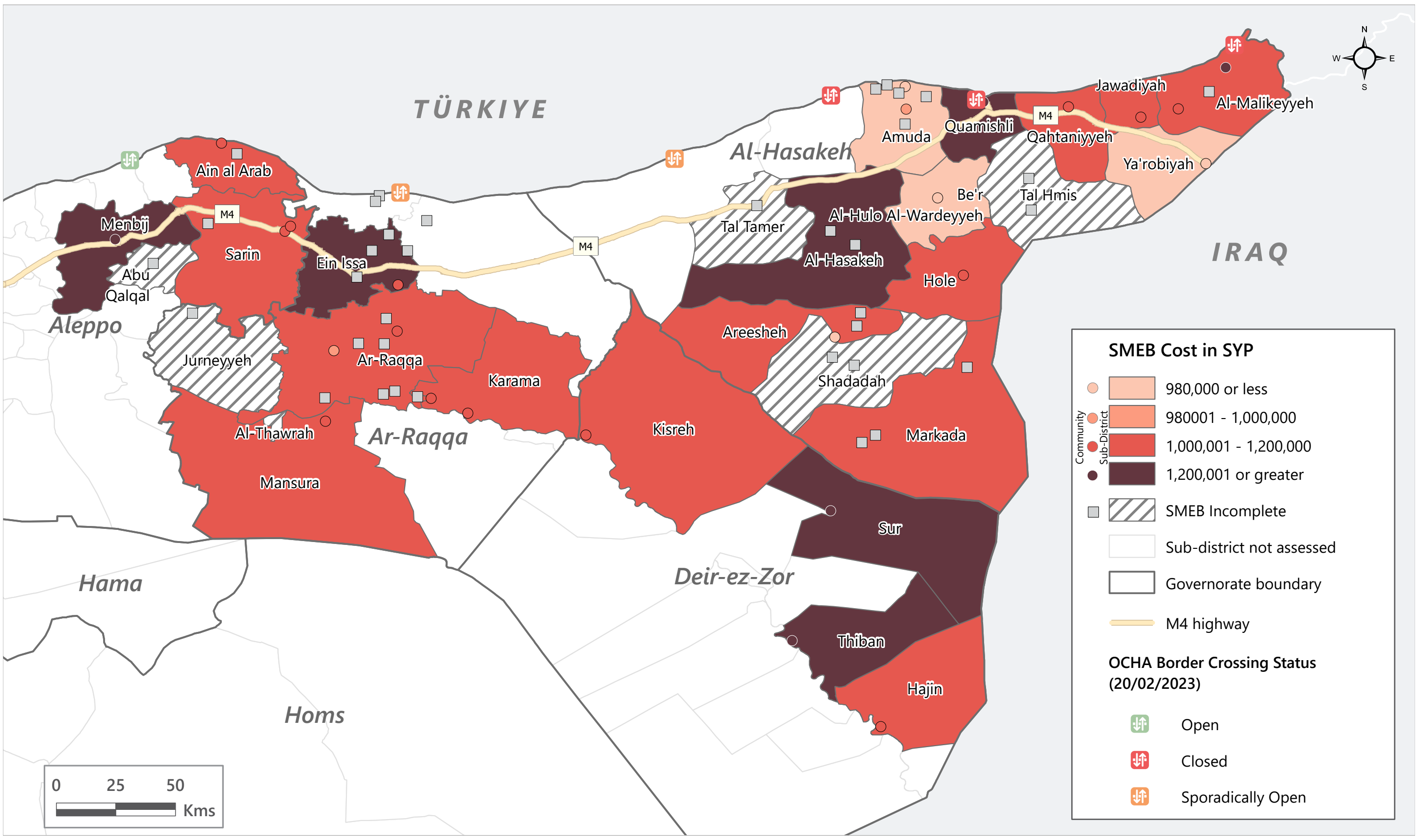
KEY MESSAGES

- The SMEB total increased from June to July following a price decline in June 2023. The price increase in July was mostly driven by an increase in the prices of SMEB vegetables (except tomatoes) following two months of harvest related price declines.
- The SYP-USD exchange rate increased by 6% from June to July.
- The price of water increased by 35%, mostly related to increased demand for water and lower supply during summer months.
- High (45%) and low (122%) quality petrol prices increased in Al-Hasakeh governorate. No considerable changes were detected in other governorates.
- The worsening security situation in Deir-Ez-Zor continued to influence supply challenges in the governorate.

ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

To inform humanitarian cash programming, the Northeast of Syria (NES) Cash Working Group (CWG), in partnership with local and international NGOs, conducts a monthly Joint Market Monitoring Initiative in Northern Syria. The exercise assesses the availability and prices of 36 basic commodities that are typically sold in markets and consumed by the average Syrian household, including food, water and non-food items e.g., fuel, and cell phone data. Of these, 18 items comprise the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB), which represents the minimum, culturally adjusted items required to support a 6-person household for a month.

Median SMEB price per sub-district, SYP*



*See Annex 1 for SMEB values as well as one and six month price trends per sub-district.

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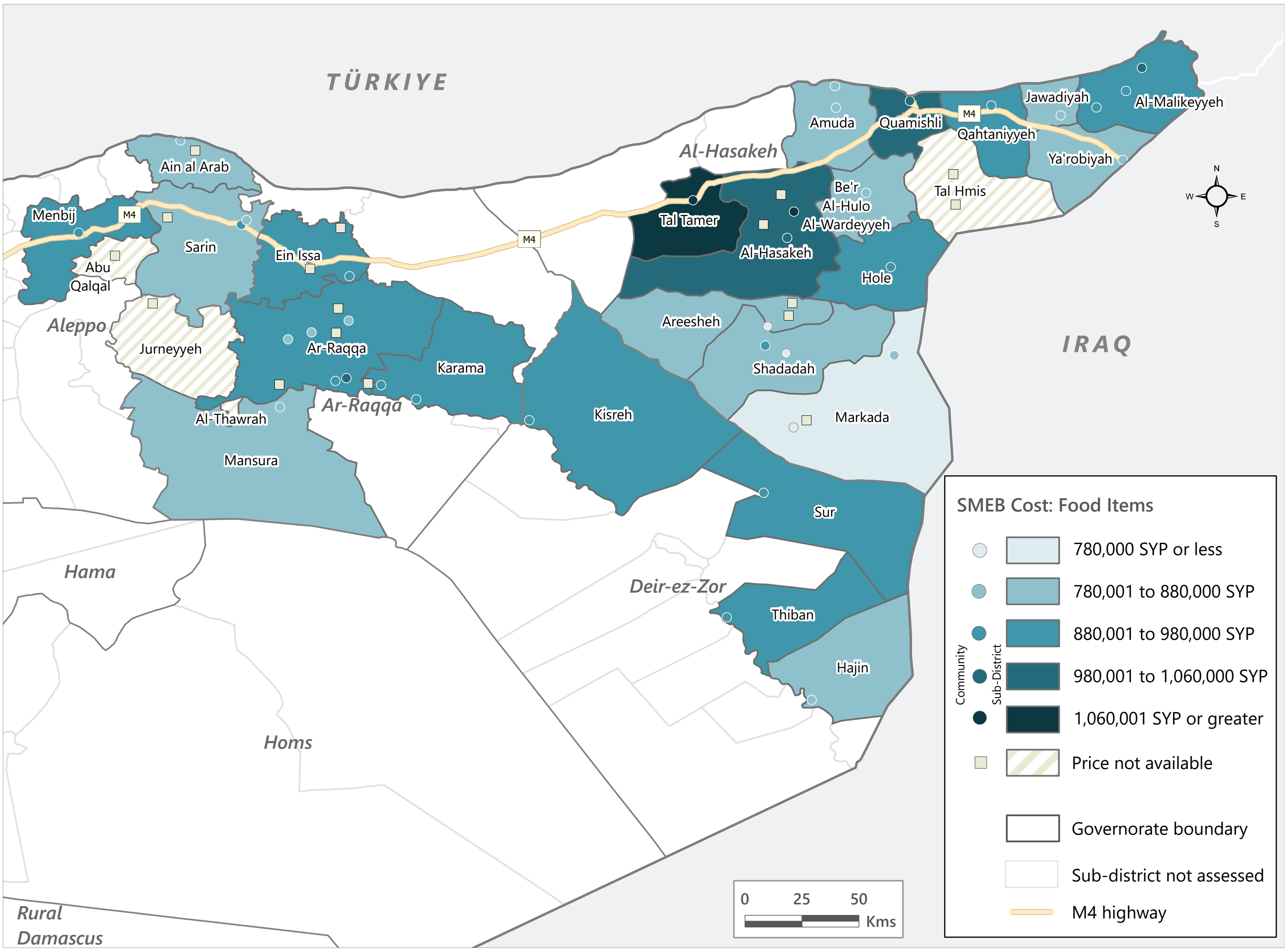
Cost of SMEB food component by sub-districts and communities



SMEB Contents

Food

Bread	37 kg
Bulgur	15 kg
Chicken	6 kg
Eggs	6 kg
Ghee (kg) / veg. oil (L)	7 kg/L
Red lentils	15 kg
Rice	19 kg
Salt	1 kg
Sugar	5 kg
Tomato paste	6 kg
Vegetables	12 kg

Hygiene (NFI)

Bathing soap	12 bars
Laundry/dish soap	3 kg
Toothpaste	200 g
Sanitary pads	4 packs of 10

Other

Cooking fuel	25 L
Water trucking	4500 L
Phone data	1 GB
"Float"/other costs	7.5% of total

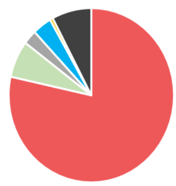
The SMEB Total is the median cost of the minimum, culturally adjusted items required to support a 6-person household for a month.

IN THIS FACTSHEET

As the JMMI generates a large amount of data, this factsheet is limited to a snapshot of key trends. Annex 1 and 2 show prices and percentage changes in SMEB values across assessed sub-districts as well as for individual monitored item prices.

For more detailed data, consult the dataset and online dashboard. The dashboard allows users to navigate more easily and draw geographical and temporal comparisons across currencies.

NES SMEB Composition*



June 2023 Data Collection

8	Supporting partners
4	Governorates
10	Districts
24	Sub-districts
54	Communities
1,540	Shops (vendor KIs)

* Due to rounding figures may not total 100%

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NES SMEB	NES SMEB FOOD ITEMS	NES EXCHANGE RATE
120 USD▲ +4% 1,313,983 SYP▲ +10%	94 USD▲ +4% 884,600 SYP▲ +10%	USD/SYP 9,400 SYP▲ +6%

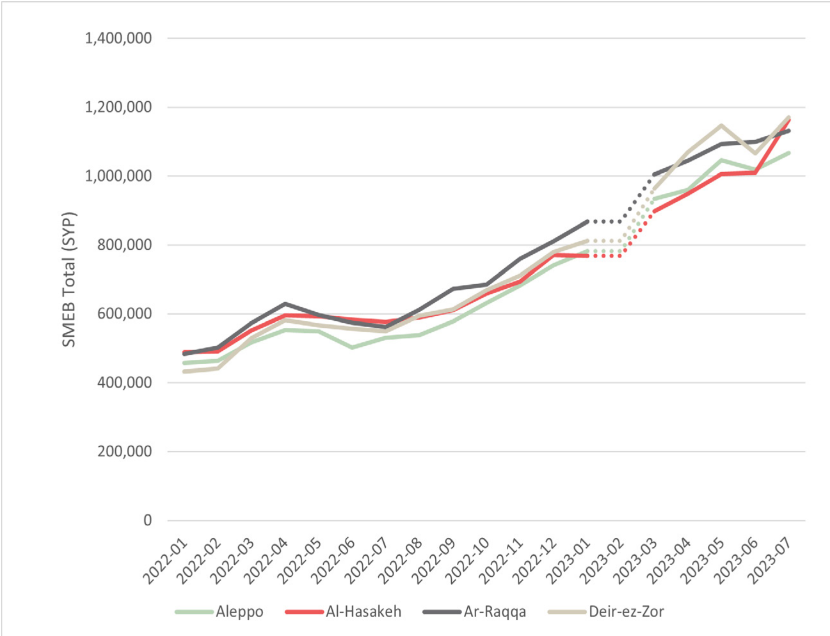
General

The price of the SMEB total increased by 10% following a slight price decline in May to June (-4%). The price of the SMEB in USD increased by 4%, after a 7% price decline last month. The rate of currency depreciation was stable; the SYP increased by 6% against the USD.

The price of the SMEB increased across governorates, particularly in Al-Hasakeh (15%) and Deir-ez-Zor (10%). The higher rate of price increase in Al-Hasakeh may be related to a sharper increase in petrol prices (both high and low quality) from June to July 2023 compared to other governorates (see section on fuel). [1] In Deir-Ez-Zor, the worsening security situation is likely to continue to affect transport prices and, thus, the costs of imported goods.[2]

The SMEB price increase was mostly driven by currency depreciation and increased vegetable prices related to the end of the harvest season. The SMEB price decline in June was largely driven by vegetable price reduction related to the harvest season.

Figure 1 - SMEB prices, 2022-2023, SYP*

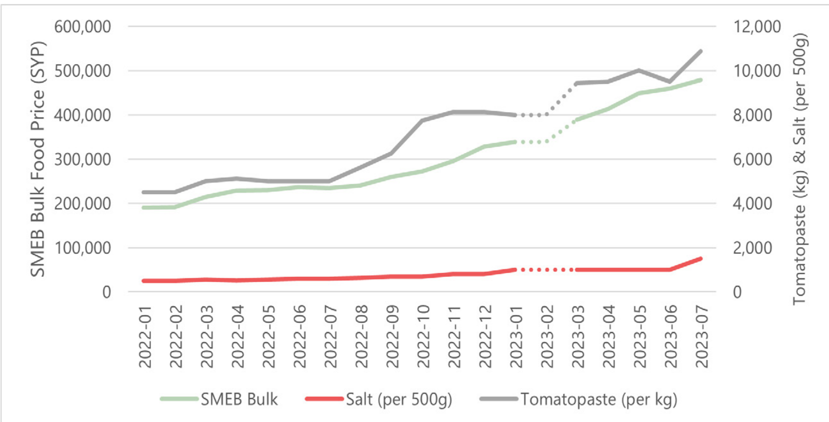


Bulk Food

The price of SMEB bulk foods increased by 4% from June to July 2023. This was mostly driven by price increases in salt (+50%) and tomato paste (14%). Before this, the price of salt has been unchanged since January 2023. Tomato paste increased across governorates, particularly in Aleppo (20%) and Deir-Ez-Zor (38%). According to the REACH field team, this may be related to an increased reliance on imported tomato paste in July compared to June.

The price of red lentils did not change in price, whilst the price of split lentils increased (8%). This is partly explained by an increased unavailability of split lentils over the past few months. The percentage of vendors reporting unavailability of split lentils was 14% in July 2023; the unavailability has gradually increased from March where only 6% of vendors reported unavailability of split lentils. The REACH field team furthermore confirmed that red lentils are primarily consumed during the winter season where it is used for soups, whilst split lentils are in demand all year.

Figure 2 - Bulk foods, 2022-23, SYP*



* The dotted line represents the month of February when no data was collected due to the earthquake.

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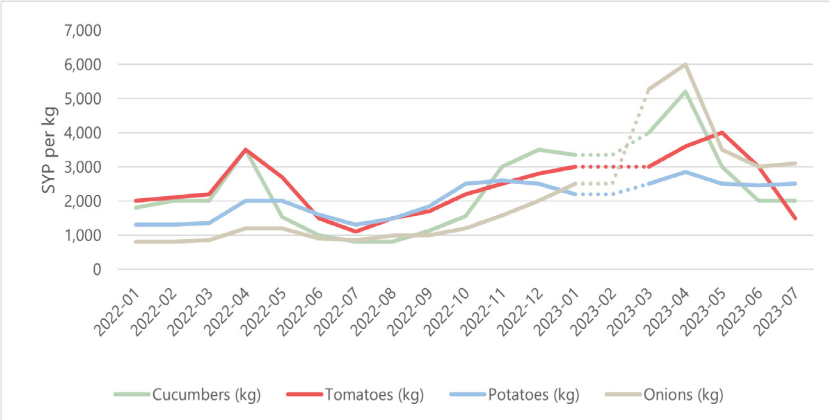
Fruits and Vegetables

The price of SMEB vegetables declined by 6%, largely due to the price decline in tomatoes (-50%). The prices of potatoes (+2%) and onions (+3%) increased slightly, whilst the price of cucumber remained unchanged (0%). This was following two months of harvest-related price declines. Historical JMMI data suggests that prices of SMEB vegetables typically decline in May and June and start to increase in July and August as the harvest season ends. Similar trends were seen across the governorates.

The 2023 harvest season in Syria has been considered to be more fruitful than the harvest in 2022. Yet, prices remained higher in July 2023 compared to July 2022 (see Figure 3).[3]

Figure 3 - Vegetables, 2022-23, SYP*



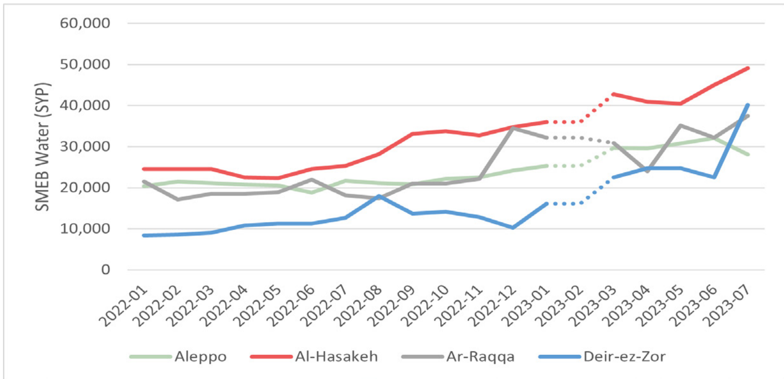
% Price increases since July 2022

- **Onions** – 265%
- **Potatoes** – 92%
- **Cucumbers** – 150%
- **Tomatoes** – 36%

Water

The price of trucked water increased for the first time considerably on a regional level since March 2023 (+35%). The price of trucked water is influenced by multiple factors, including the distance the water is trucked, water availability from water infrastructure (including piped network and boreholes), water quality in the water network, and fuel and electricity prices influencing the capacity at water stations. Historical JMMI data shows that during summer months, water shortage is common in NES and as a result, prices often increase. In July, water shortage was reported across Syria by OCHA.[4]

Figure 4 - SMEB Water Trucking prices, 2021-2023, SYP*



From June to July, the price of water increased most considerably in Deir-Ez-Zor (78%), followed by Ar-Raqqa (17%) and Al-Hasakeh (9%). The price of trucked water declined in Aleppo (-12%). Water remains the most expensive in Al-Hasakeh where the Alouk water station has been suspended frequently since 2019[5]. According to OCHA, the water station has been functioning at limited capacity since May and completely ceased functioning on 23 June 2023. This has been linked to a lack of electricity, maintenance, and attacks on power supplies. The suspension affects over 1 million people, mostly in Al-Hasakeh governorate.[6]

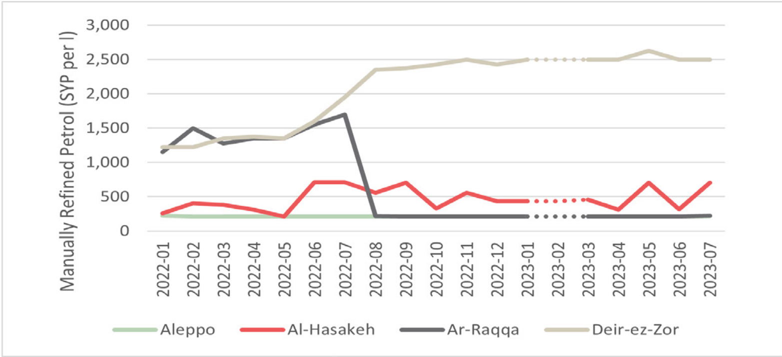
Water scarcity in NES is further exacerbated by low levels of water in the Euphrates. The self-administration has also increased prices of fuel for borehole owners from 100 Syrian pounds per liter to 450 Syrian pounds per liter. This has further impacted the prices of water. In Deir-Ez-Zor, water prices tend to flucuate to greater extent than other governorates, partly related to greater unreliability of the water network here; the majority of communities in Deir-Ez-Zor are reliant on private water trucking.[7]

* The dotted line represents the month of February when no data was collected due to the earthquake.

Fuel

Manually refined kerosene increased by 33% from June to July regionally, following a slight decline in June. The increase was largely driven by increases in Aleppo, where the price of manually refined kerosene increased by 150%. The price of manually refined kerosene has been much lower and remained mostly stable in Aleppo compared to other governorates. Since May 2023, the price of manually refined kerosene has increased considerably in Aleppo. The percentage of vendors reporting unavailability of manually refined kerosene declined from 44% to 38%.

Petrol, 2021-2023, SYP*



The prices of low- and high-quality petrol increased by 122% and 45% respectively in Al-Hasakeh governorate. The prices of these fuel types did not change considerably in the other governorates. The prices of both high- and low-quality diesel did not change considerably in July 2023. The petrol price increases in Al-Hasakeh may be related to a recent increase in fuel prices by the self-administration.[8] As fuel prices influence the costs of transport and, thus, transported goods, the petrol price increases may have influenced the general price increase observed in Al-Hasakeh in July. It is likely that prices will further increase in August, since the Self-administration decided to increase prices of transport in July.[9]

LIQUIDITY ISSUES

Availability of USD denominations remained a challenge across NES. Limited stock of at least 1 USD denomination has throughout the past months been close to 100% of surveyed vendors. From June to July, there were no considerable changes in the type of notes that were unavailable on a regional level except for 1 USD notes; in July 37% of surveyed vendors reported unavailability of 1 USD compared to 29% in June 2023.

Number of informal exchange vendors reporting limited stock of USD notes

Al-Hasakeh (53 vendors)	
Limited stock of 5 USD	35/53
Limited stock of 10 USD	44/53
Limited stock of 20 USD	44/53
Limited stock of 50 USD	41/53
Limited stock of 100 USD	34/53

Aleppo (20 vendors)	
Limited stock of 5 USD	4/20
Limited stock of 10 USD	7/20
Limited stock of 20 USD	12/20
Limited stock of 50 USD	18/20
Limited stock of 100 USD	20/20

Ar-Raqqa (22 vendors)	
Limited stock of 5 USD	10/22
Limited stock of 10 USD	14/22
Limited stock of 20 USD	18/22
Limited stock of 50 USD	19/22

Deir-Ez Zor (12 vendors)	
Limited stock of 5 USD	9/12
Limited stock of 10 USD	10/12
Limited stock of 20 USD	8/12
Limited stock of 50 USD	9/12

* The dotted line represents the month of February when no data was collected due to the earthquake.

Most commonly reported supply challenges (% of surveyed vendors)*

	AREA	REPORTED %
	NES	**70%**
PRICE INFLATION	Al-Hasakeh	82%
	Aleppo	41%
	Ar-Raqqa	72%
	Deir-ez-Zor	68%
	NES	**18%**
SUPPLIER LIMITED SUPPLY	Al-Hasakeh	22%
	Aleppo	9%
	Ar-Raqqa	8%
	Deir-ez-Zor	47%
	NES	**11%**
SUPPLY COULD NOT MEET DEMAND	Al-Hasakeh	22%
	Aleppo	3%
	Ar-Raqqa	2%
	Deir-ez-Zor	1%
	NES	**4%**
TRANSPORT ROADS ARE INSECURE	Al-Hasakeh	1%
	Aleppo	0%
	Ar-Raqqa	0%
	Deir-ez-Zor	39%

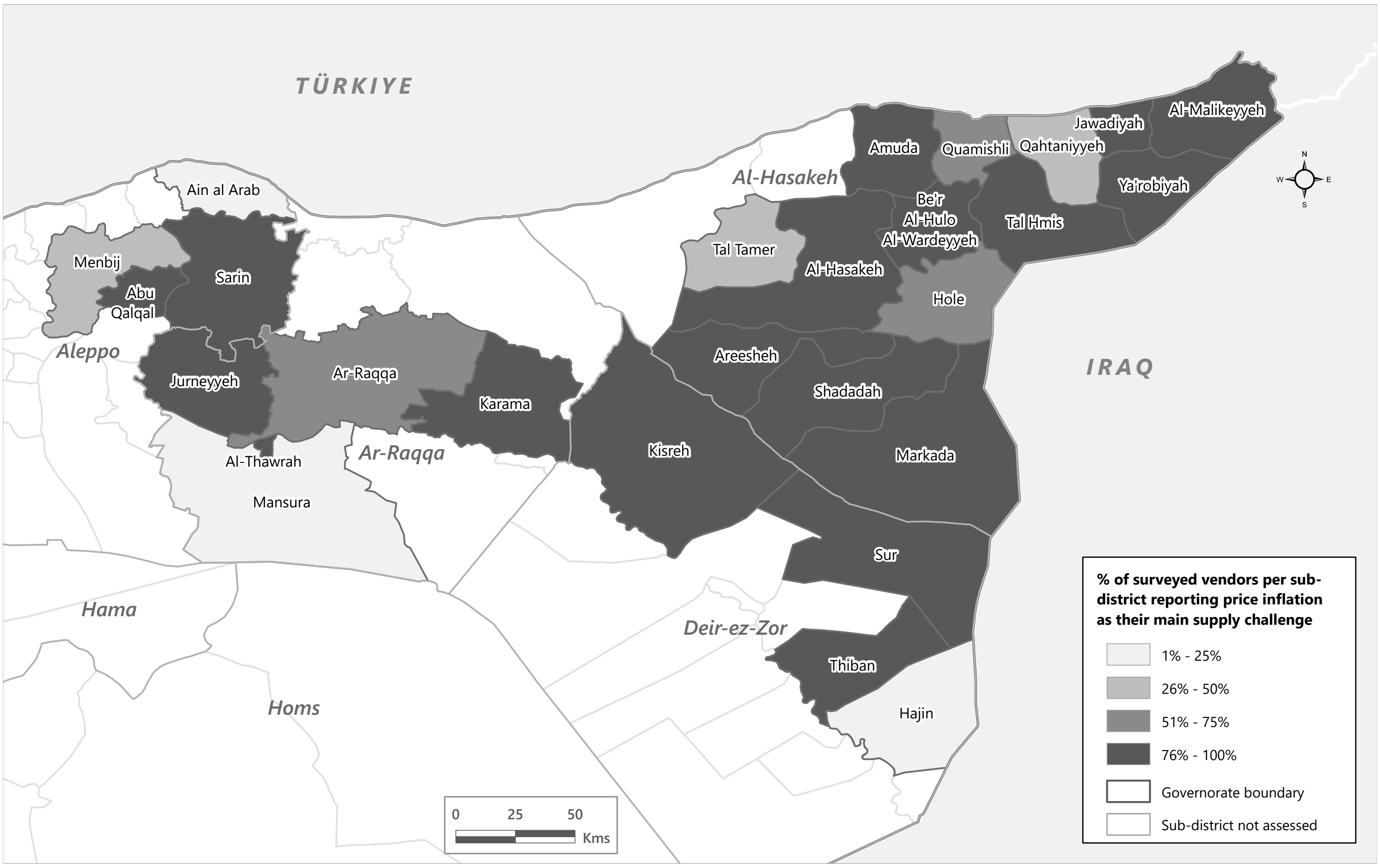
SUPPLY CHALLENGES

Price inflation remained the most commonly reported challenge by vendors (70%) followed by suppliers have limited supply (18%), supply cannot meet demand (11%) and insecure transport (4%).

A large proportion of vendors reported that suppliers having limited supply were a challenge in July (18%) compared to June (10%). Only 3% of surveyed vendors reported challenges because of border closures in July compared to 14% in June 2023.

The increasing security challenges in Deir-Ez-Zor were reflected in more vendors reporting insecure transport roads (39% compared to 0% in June). The security challenges are likely to affect the supply of goods in Deir-Ez-Zor[10]; more vendors reported that suppliers had limited supply (47% compared to 6% in June) as well as that suppliers did not have authorization for movement (19% compared to 9% in June).

Vendors reporting price inflation as their main supply challenge



* Multiple choice question and therefore percentages may not equal 100%. See the summary page of the dataset for percentages of all reported supply challenges per governorate.

METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

In order to be included in the JMMI, markets must be permanent in nature, large enough to support at least two wholesalers, and diverse enough to provide a sufficient variety of goods and commodities. Additionally, the shops surveyed within each market must be housed in permanent structures and must sell certain items to be eligible for inclusion. Median prices at each higher administrative level of aggregation (district, governorate, region) are calculated by taking the medians from sub-district level prices. Community and sub-district level prices are both drawn from the median prices collected from vendors.

LIMITATIONS

All JMMI data is only indicative of the specific time frame within which it was collected, and trend lines in graphs may not be continuous where data is missing. Usually, data is collected during the first Monday-to-Monday of each month.

The JMMI data collection tool requires enumerators to record the cheapest available price for each item, but does not require a specific brand, as brand availability may vary. Therefore, price comparisons across regions may be based on slight variants of the same product. Non-food items (NFIs) are particularly challenging to standardise as they vary significantly in terms of types, brands, and specifications. The JMMI methodology aims to balance consistency and comparability considerations with geographical variations in availability.

Due to issues of access, security and partner capacity, the markets included in the JMMI may vary on a monthly basis. As such, the reported changes in the more aggregate levels (governorate, district) may be driven by shifts in coverage rather than actual changes. For this reason, we recommend all users to consider local markets and lower levels of aggregation (sub-district, community) when using JMMI data for more specific trend analyses.

JMMI AND THE CASH WORKING GROUP

The JMMI exists within the framework of the Cash Working Group (CWG). In Northeast Syria (NES), the CWG was established in May 2014 to analyse the impact of the ongoing conflict on markets in Syria and guide the implementation of humanitarian cash and voucher programmes within those markets. In northeast Syria (NES), the CWG was established in 2018, to fulfil a similar purpose in that region.

For more information about the CWG in NES, please contact the cash working group coordinator at cashcoordnes@gmail.com

REACH

REACH Initiative 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. All activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms.

For more information about REACH, please contact the REACH JMMI focal point, Cecilia Hoegfeldt, at cecilia.hoegfeldt@impact-initiatives.org or visit the REACH Syria Resource Centre.

PARTNERS

Each month, around 20 different organisations work together to collect market data. Participating organisations train their enumerators on the JMMI methodology and data collection tools using standard training materials developed by REACH, who is then responsible for processing the data.

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بنفسج VIOLET
SARD
Samaritan's Purse INTERNATIONAL RELIEF

Annex 1: Median SMEB price per sub-district

	SMEB SYP*	SMEB USD	1 month change	6 month change
Northeast Syria SMEB				
Aleppo				
Ain al Arab	1,037,563	111	2%	32%
Menbij	1,200,033	128	23%	40%
Sarin	1,067,145	114	4%	37%
Al-Hasakeh				
Al-Hasakeh	1,226,037	128	16%	46%
Al-Malikeyyeh*	1,131,251	119	20%	40%
Amuda*	977,677	106	-1%	26%
Areesheh	1,020,155	107	5%	50%
Be'r Al-Hulo Al-Wardeyyeh*	964,771	NA	NA	NA
Hole	1,162,207	119	13%	51%
Jawadiyah*	1,069,195	111	9%	40%
Markada	1,053,903	109	1%	37%
Quamishli	1,330,758	139	34%	73%
Ya'robiyah*	968,147	104	NA	44%
Ar-Raqqa				
Ar-Raqqa	1,162,729	124	1%	34%
Ein Issa*	1,123,101	116	-6%	NA
Karama	1,131,983	120	NA	35%
Mansura	1,039,238	108	-1%	NA
Deir-ez-Zor				
Hajin	1,081,043	116	NA	33%
Kisreh	1,124,575	123	NA	38%
Sur	1,263,852	134	19%	73%
Thiban	1,214,995	134	NA	45%

* USD values are calculated as per the informal exchange rate recorded in the same geographical area.
** For these sub-districts, water trucking prices were not available and are not included in the SMEB price.

Annex 2: Price of SMEB items in NES

Item	Unit*	Price SYP**	1 month change	6 month change	Price USD**
NWS SMEB food items		**884,600**	-	-	**91**
SMEB bulk food items	SMEB	479,500	4%	41%	51.01
Bulgur	1 kg	7,400	6%	35%	0.79
Red lentils	1 kg	8,000	0%	33%	0.85
Rice	1 kg	7,500	0%	58%	0.80
Salt	500 g	1,500	50%	50%	0.16
Sugar	1 kg	9,000	6%	80%	0.96
Tomato paste	1 kg	10,875	14%	36%	1.16
SMEB vegetables	SMEB	28,350	-6%	-14%	3.02
Tomatoes	1 kg	1,500	-50%	-50%	0.16
Potatoes	1 kg	2,500	2%	14%	0.27
Cucumbers	1 kg	3,100	3%	24%	0.33
Onions	1 kg	2,000	0%	-40%	0.21
SMEB cooking oils	SMEB	90,475	3%	29%	9.63
Ghee	1 kg	13,469	4%	35%	1.43
Vegetable oil	1 L	12,000	0%	18%	1.28
Non-veg perishables					
Bread	8 pc	458	28%	15%	0.05
Chicken	1 kg	16,000	7%	63%	1.70
Eggs	30 pc	21,500	8%	54%	2.29
SMEB non-food items	SMEB	84,705	5%	51%	9.57
Bathing soap	1 pc	3,125	4%	47%	0.33
Sanitary pads	10 pc	3,500	17%	40%	0.37
Toothpaste	100 g	5,250	5%	62%	0.56
Laundry powder	1 kg	8,875	-1%	49%	0.94
Dish soap	1 L	9,750	18%	95%	1.04
SMEB cooking fuels	SMEB	9,625	-4%	5%	1.02
Kerosene (manually refined)	1 L	2,000	33%	18%	0.21
LP gas	1 L	425	6%	11%	0.05
SMEB water trucking	SMEB	45,000	3%	49%	4.79
Water trucking (1000 L)	1 m3	10,000	3%	49%	1.06
Other					
Phone data	1 gb	1,434	0%	24%	0.15

* The SMEB unit refers to the current SMEB allocation of the item, as outlined on page 2.
** USD values are calculated as per the informal exchange rate recorded in the same geographical area. Please see this month's JMMI dataset for informal exchange rates by area.

Endnotes

1 ARK News. (2023, August 5). The high prices of public transportation fares burden the citizens of al-Hasakah | ARK News.

2 Kurdistan 24news. (2023, July 12). SDF underlines operations in Deir ez-Zor related to ISIS.

3 MEMO. (2023, July 19). Bumper potato harvest brings joy to farmers in northern Syria – Middle East Monitor. ; World Grain. (2023, June 6). Syria expects large cut in wheat imports | World Grain.

4 OCHA. (2023, July 31). Humanitarian Update Syrian Arab Republic - Issue 13 | June 2023 - Syrian Arab Republic | ReliefWeb.

5 OCHA. (2023b, January 2021). Syria: Alouk Water Station - Flash Update: Disruption to Alouk Water Station - Syrian Arab Republic | ReliefWeb.; Tasnim News Agency. (2023, May 3). Water Cut Off to Hasaka City Due to Terrorist Attack - World news - Tasnim News Agency.

6 OCHA. (2023, July 31). Humanitarian Update Syrian Arab Republic - Issue 13 | June 2023 [EN/AR] - Syrian Arab Republic | ReliefWeb.

7 Baladi-news. (2023, July 23). The Autonomous Administration raises transportation fares in areas under its control in Al-Hasakah governorate | Baladi Media Network.

8 ARK News. (2023, August 5). The high prices of public transportation fares burden the citizens of al-Hasakah | ARK News.

9 Kurdistan24.net. (2023, July 1). Suspected ISIS cells attack internal security police in Deir ez-Zor.

10 Kurdistan24. (2023, August 1). Water cut for nearly one million people in Hasakah Province since June 23: UN report. ; REACH (2023, August 7), HSOS Trends Dashboard.