Situation Overview: Zoom-In Northern Idleb Governorate
Northwest Syria, August 2019

REACH Informing more effective humanitarian action

CONTEXT

Since the escalation of conflict in northwest Syria at the end of April 2019, hostilities have continued largely unabated in the area, causing the increased movement of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in subsequent months.[1] REACH Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) of July 2019 estimated that, between 1 May and 13 June 2019, approximately 170,000 IDPs from northern Hama and southern Idleb governorates arrived to Dana sub-district (Harim district, Idleb governorate). Furthermore, an estimated 70,300 IDPs arrived to areas across Idleb governorate in July 2019 alone, with thousands more fleeing conflict-affected areas in August following the collapse of a ceasefire at the beginning of the month.[2, 3] After years of hosting IDPs, already overburdened communities in northern Idleb have had their capacity further stretched by new influxes of IDPs from the latest increase in hostilities.[4] In particular, large numbers of IDPs have arrived to densely-populated sub-districts along the Turkish border in northern Idleb governorate, where they settle in both over-crowded, often makeshift camps as well as in host communities.[5, 6, 7]

In order to fill existing information gaps and inform the humanitarian response regarding the varied conditions and priority needs of communities in this area, REACH assessed 125 communities in 9 sub-districts across Harim and Jisr-Ash-Shugur districts of Idleb governorate. Across both community and camps and sites settings, IDPs make up approximately 72% of the population in the 6 assessed sub-districts in Harim district, and 53% of the population in the 3 assessed sub-districts of Jisr-Ash-Shugur district.[8] This REACH assessment refers exclusively to conditions and needs in community settings, and does not include information from camp and sites settings.

KEY FINDINGS ON PRIORITY NEEDS

Health
- Healthcare was the most commonly reported need across all assessed communities. Key informants (KIs) in 42% of all assessed communities reported that there were no functioning medical facilitaties in their communities in August. Transportation-related barriers were most commonly cited as limiting access, with lack of transportation to facilities reported in 58% of communities, and high cost of transport to facilities reported in 31% of communities.

Food Security
- Food security was the second most commonly reported priority need across all assessed communities, with challenges to accessing food reported in 74% of communities in August. A lack of resources to buy food was reported as a barrier in 67% of communities, and the high cost of some food types was reported as a barrier in 52% of communities. While KIs in 7% of assessed communities reported that food was insufficient (all located in Jisr-Ash-Shugur district), KIs in 71% of communities reported that food was only somewhat sufficient.
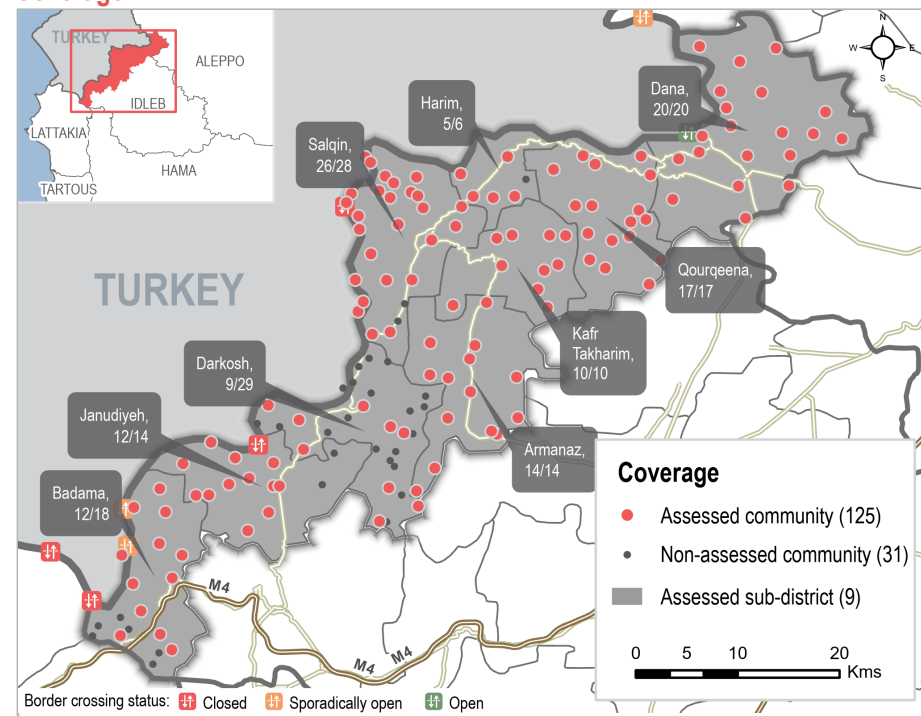
Livelihoods
- Livelihoods followed food security as the third most commonly reported priority need, with the average household income in 78% of assessed communities reported to be less than 50,000 SYP. Furthermore, KIs in 87% of communities reported the use of coping strategies due to a lack of income. Specifically, borrowing money from family and friends was reported by KIs in 58% of communities, and children being sent to work or beg was reported by KIs in 48% of communities.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)
- Water access was reported as a common priority need at the same level as livelihoods across the assessed area, followed by sanitation and hygiene. Water insufficiency was reported by KIs in 47% of assessed communities, and problems with latrines were reported by KIs in 46% of communities.

Coverage:

Coverage
- ● Assessed community (125)
- ● Non-assessed community (31)
- ▮ Assessed sub-district (9)

Border crossing status: Closed · Sporadically open · Open

0 5 10 20 Kms

Situation Overview: Zoom-In Northern Idleb Governorate

PRIORITY NEEDS

Reported priority needs, by number and percentage of all assessed communities:[9]

OVERALL PRIORITY NEEDS	#	%
1. Healthcare	62	50%
2. Food security	58	46%
3. Livelihoods	53	42%
4. Water access	53	42%
5. Hygiene and Sanitation	31	25%
6. Shelter	21	17%
7. Non-Food Items (NFIs)	17	14%
8. Education	15	12%
9. Early recovery	15	12%
10. Nutrition	7	6%
11. Protection	2	2%

Reported priority needs, by number and percentage of communities per sub-district:*[9]

PRIORITY NEEDS BY SUB-DISTRICT		#	%
Armanaz	Hygiene and Sanitation	8	57%
	Food security	8	57%
Badama	Livelihoods	9	75%
Dana	Food security	20	100%
Darkosh	Food security	9	100%
Harim	Food security	3	60%
Janudiyeh	NFIs	8	67%
	Livelihoods	8	67%
Kafr Takharim	Water access	8	80%
Qourqeena	Healthcare	13	76%
	Livelihoods	13	76%
Salqin	Livelihoods	12	46%

* Total communities assessed per sub-district: Armanaz 5, Badama 12, Dana 20, Darkosh 9, Harim 5, Janudiyeh 12, Kafr Takharim 10, Qourqeena 17, Salqin 26.

**Top four reported priority needs in assessed communities*:**

1. Health

67% of assessed communities reported difficulties in accessing healthcare.

Healthcare was reported as the first priority need in **62 (50%)** of the assessed communities. KIs reported in **87 (70%)** assessed communities that severe diseases affecting those aged less than 5 was the most common health problem. This health problem was reported by KIs in all **(100%)** communities in Darkosh, Dana and Harim sub-districts. KIs in **69** communities reported challenges to accessing healthcare for particular groups in their communities. Of these, KIs in **17 (25%)** communities reporting that children were experiencing problems with accessing healthcare, indicating that children's health remains of concern.

2. Food Security

Reported food sufficiency in the community to meet household needs:

7%	Food is insufficient
71%	Food is somewhat sufficient
21%	Food is sufficient
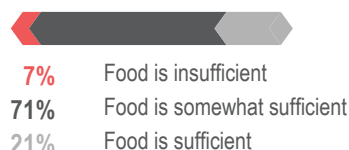
In **58 (46%)** of all assessed communities, food security was reported as a top priority need, with KIs in only **26 (21%)** communities reporting food to be sufficient. While the majority of communities **(71%)** reported that food was only somewhat sufficient, KIs in **9 (7%)** of communities (all located in Janudiyeh and Darkosh sub-districts) reported food insufficiency. KIs in **52 (42%)** assessed communities reported receiving food distributions, although there was wide variation between sub-districts (Dana **80%**, Darkosh **0%**).

3. Livelihoods

**Estimated monthly household income of most households in the community:**

78% of assessed communities reported that most households in their communities earn less than 50,000 SYP per month.**

Livelihoods was a top priority need according to KIs in **53 (42%)** of assessed communities. In August, KIs in only **16 (13%)** of assessed communities reported that the income of households in their community was sufficient to cover household needs. Across all assessed communities, KIs in **115 (92%)** communities reported income derived from unstable daily employment to be the most common source of income. KIs in only **six** communities in Salqin, **one** in Harim, **one** in Kafr Takharim, and **one** community in Armanaz (all sub-districts located in Harim district), reported the provision of cash assistance from humanitarian organizations.

4. WASH

Reported water sufficiency:

47%	Water is insufficient
53%	Water is sufficient
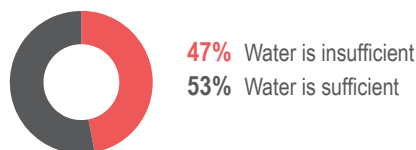
Water access was reported to be a priority need by KIs in **53 (42%)** of communities and hygiene and sanitation were reported as a priority need by **31 (25%)** of KIs. KIs in **59 (47%)** of all assessed communities reported that water was insufficient, with insufficiency reported in the majority of communities across Kafr Takharim **(100%)** and Salqin **(73%)** sub-districts. The reported sources of drinking water varied between sub-districts, but overall the most commonly reported source of drinking water was water trucking, reported by KIs in **48 (38%)** assessed communities, and particularly in Dana sub-district with KIs in **85%** of assessed communities reporting.

REACH Informing more effective humanitarian action

* Readers can find hyperlinks to each section by clicking on the number of the sectoral headings.

** REACH Market Monitoring Dataset August 2019 reports a USD/SYP exchange rate of 1 USD = 602 SYP.

Situation Overview: Zoom-In Northern Idleb Governorate

⚕ 1. Health

Healthcare was reported as the most common overall priority need in assessed communities in northern Idleb governorate. KIs in 53 (42%) of communities reported the absence of functioning medical facilities within their community as seen on the map to the right. This was, in particular, reported most commonly by KIs in Kafr Takharim (9 out of 10 communities, 90%), and Salqin (15 out of 26 communities, 58%) sub-districts. Of those reporting barriers to accessing healthcare services, KIs in 34 (27%) communities indicated the lack of transportation and KIs in 30 (24%) assessed communities cited the high cost of transportation as the key challenges. Moreover, the top healthcare services reported as most needed across all communities were provision of medicines (58 out of 125; 46%) and psychosocial support (53 out of 125; 42%).
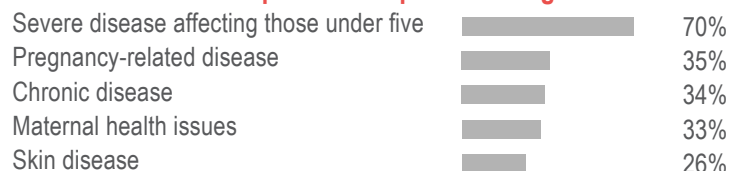
Communities in which KIs reported some population groups experienced barriers to accessing health care:[9]
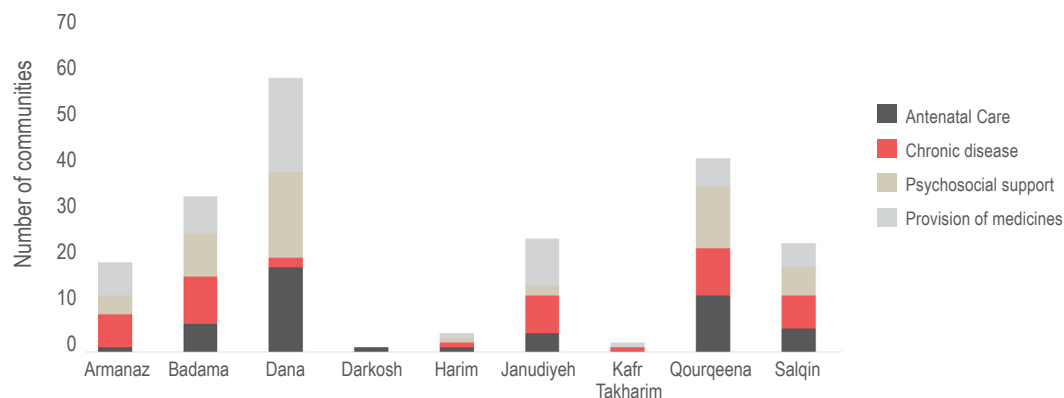
69 Communities

- Women (23)
- Elderly (21)
- Children (17)
- IDPs (11)

KIs in 69 (55%) communities reported barriers to accessing healthcare for certain groups. Barriers for women and elderly were most commonly reported in Armanaz sub-district. Barriers for children were most commonly reported in Salqin sub-district and barriers for IDPs were highest reported in Badama.

Most common health problems reported in August:[9]

Health problem	%
Severe disease affecting those under five	70%
Pregnancy-related disease	35%
Chronic disease	34%
Maternal health issues	33%
Skin disease	26%

KIs in 70% of communities (87 out of 125) reported severe diseases affecting children under 5 as the most common health issue. In Dana sub-district, KIs reported this issue as well as maternal health issues in all (100%) of the 20 assessed communities.

Top four services reportedly needed in all assessed communities in August by sub-district:[9]

- Antenatal Care
- Chronic disease
- Psychosocial support
- Provision of medicines

Presence of health facilities in assessed communities in August 2019 :

Functioning Health Facilities

Community level
- 🏥 Reported as not present or not functioning
- 🏥 Reported as present and functioning
- • Community not assessed
- ⊙ Governorate capital

Sub-district level
- Reportedly present in all assessed communities
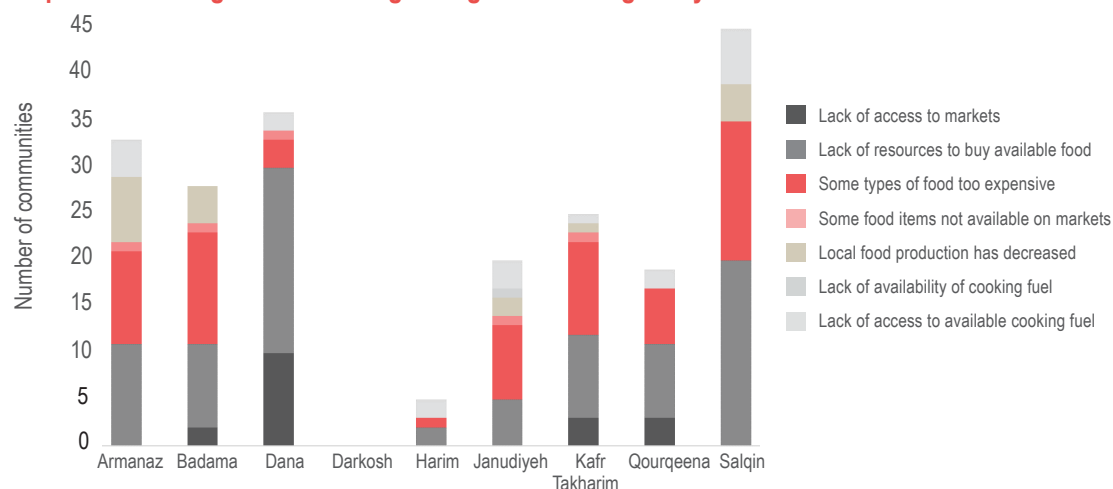- Not present in 40-90% of assessed communities
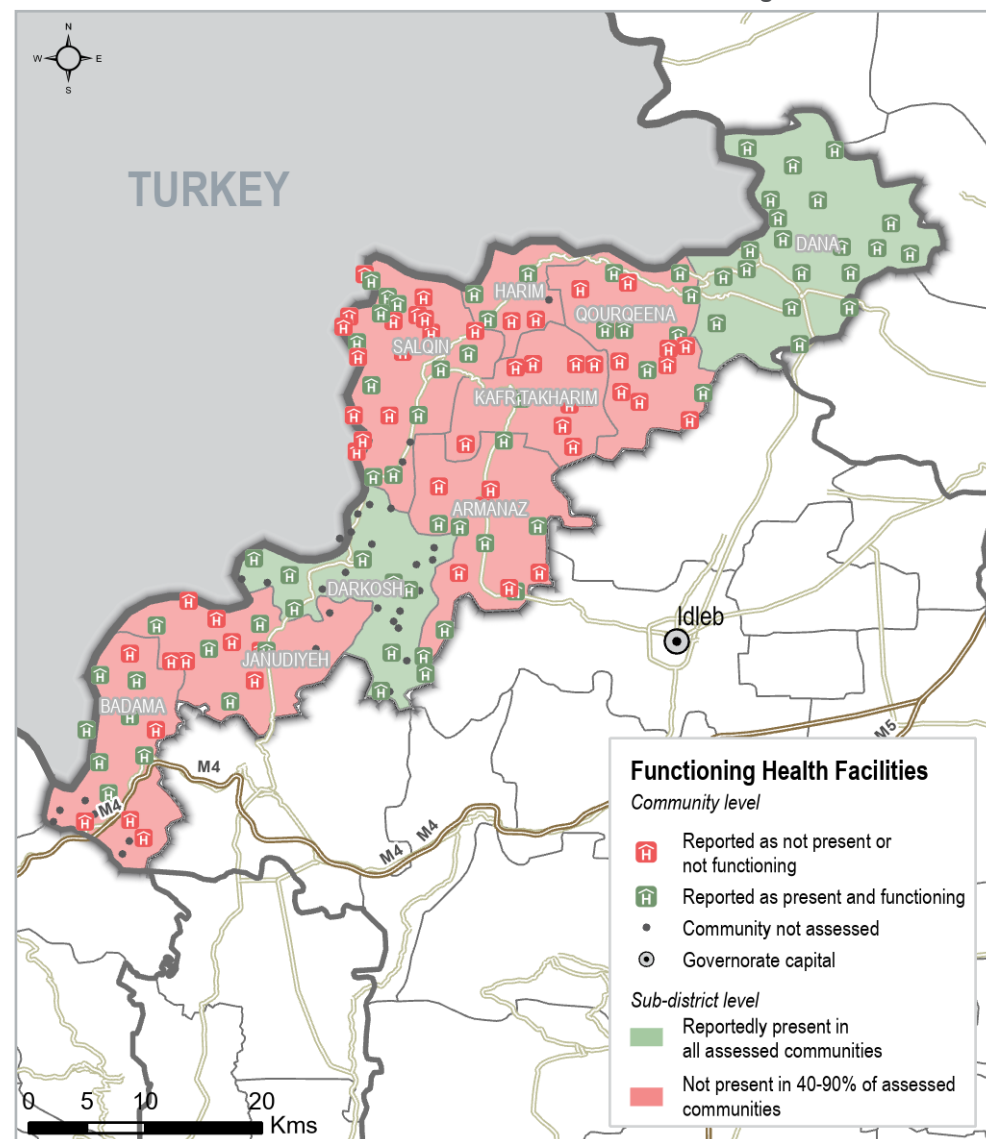
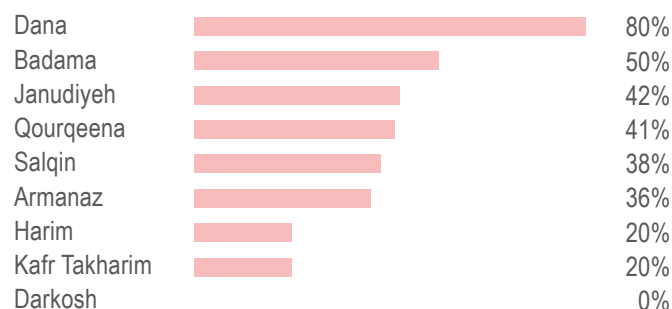# Situation Overview: Zoom-In Northern Idleb Governorate

🍚 2. Food Security

With the price of the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) increasing by up to 10% in the north of Idleb governorate, as shown in REACH's Market Monitoring August 2019 assessment, food security was a key concern in August and the second most reported priority need across communities in all assessed sub-districts. Challenges to accessing food varied between sub-districts, as seen in the graph below. In Dana sub-district KIs in all (20) communities reported a lack of resources to buy available food, while KIs in all communities in Badama (12) and Kafr Takharim (10) reported that some types of food were too expensive. Further, in Armanaz sub-district, KIs mainly reported that local food production had decreased (7 out of 14 communities) while KIs in Dana sub-district reported a lack of access to markets (10 out of 20 communities). Particularly in Salqin sub-district, a lack of access to cooking fuel was reported (6 our of 26 communities), while no barriers were reported in Darkosh sub-district. This highlights that distinct and tailored approaches to reduce and overcome food security challenges are needed within each of the assessed sub-districts of northern Idleb governorate.

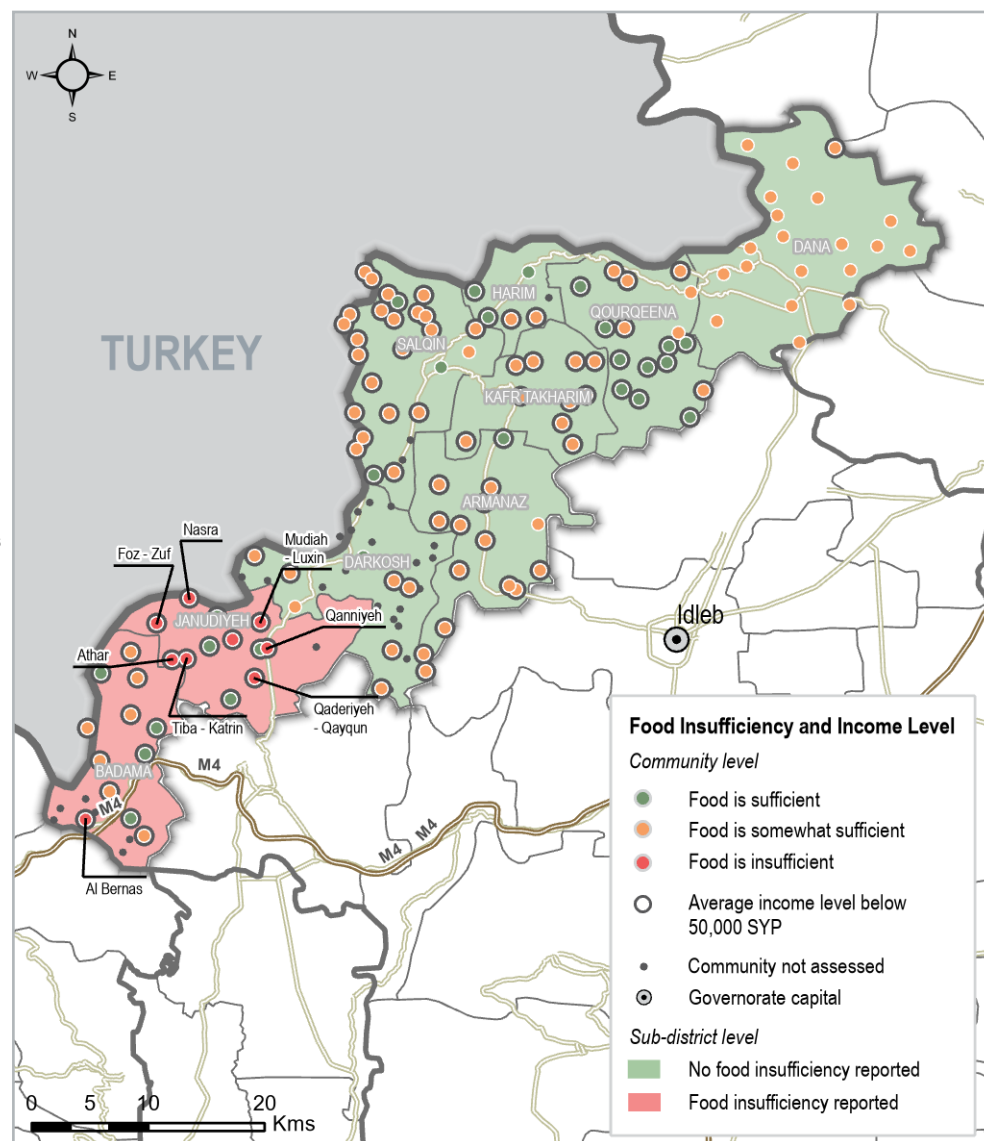### Reported challenges in accessing enough food in August by sub-district:[9]

Legend:
- Lack of access to markets
- Lack of resources to buy available food
- Some types of food too expensive
- Some food items not available on markets
- Local food production has decreased
- Lack of availability of cooking fuel
- Lack of access to available cooking fuel

Sub-districts in which KIs reported receiving food distributions in August:[9]

Sub-district	Percentage
Dana	80%
Badama	50%
Janudiyeh	42%
Qourqeena	41%
Salqin	38%
Armanaz	36%
Harim	20%
Kafr Takharim	20%
Darkosh	0%

A difference in where food distributions reportedly occurred was noticeable across the assessed sub-districts. While in Dana sub-district, KIs in 80% of communities reported that food distributions took place, this was significantly less reported in the other sub-districts, and not at all in Darkosh sub-district. Considered alongside geographic patterns of reported food insufficiency, this suggests the need to expand food security-related response activities across the assessed area.

Reported food insufficiency in August 2019:

Food Insufficiency and Income Level

Community level
- 🟢 Food is sufficient
- 🟠 Food is somewhat sufficient
- 🔴 Food is insufficient
- ⭕ Average income level below 50,000 SYP
- · Community not assessed
- ◉ Governorate capital

Sub-district level
- 🟩 No food insufficiency reported
- 🟥 Food insufficiency reported

REACH Informing more effective humanitarian action

Situation Overview: Zoom-In Northern Idleb Governorate

3. Livelihoods

Livelihoods was identified as a overall priority need across assessed sub-districts, with KIs in 78% of communities (98 out of 125) reporting average monthly household incomes to be less than 50,000 SYP.[10] One exception, however, was Dana sub-district, where KIs in 95% of communities reported an average income range of between 50,000 to 100,000 SYP, likely due to cash programmes and job opportunities in construction.[11] As a result of a lack of livelihood opportunities, a variety of coping strategies were reported across assessed sub-districts as seen in the graph below, with the prevalence of the top two most common strategies, borrowing money from family/friends and sending children to work or beg, depicted in the map to the right. Significantly, KIs in 48% (60 of 125) of all assessed communities reported children being sent to work or beg, particularly in Harim sub-district (5 out of 5 communities; 100%) and Darkosh sub-district (9 out of 9; 100%).

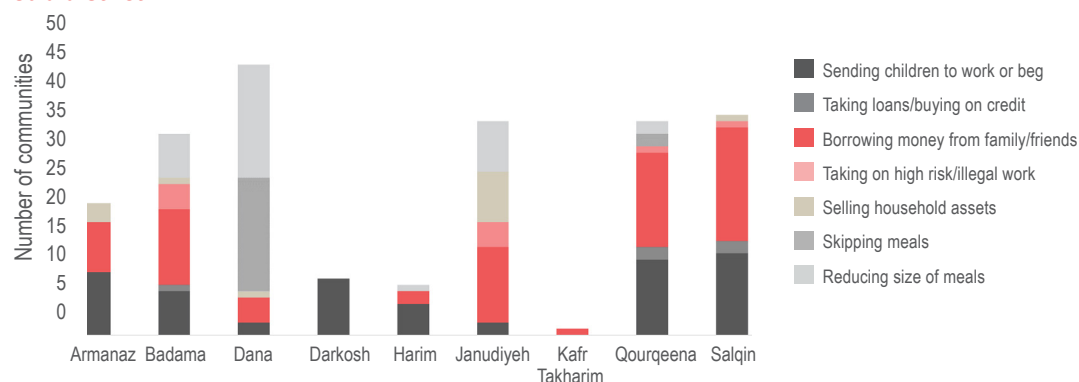### Estimated monthly household income of most households in the community:*

78% Less than 50,000 SYP
22% From 50,000 to 100,000 SYP
0% From 100,000 to 150,000 SYP

Most commonly reported main sources of income in August:[9]

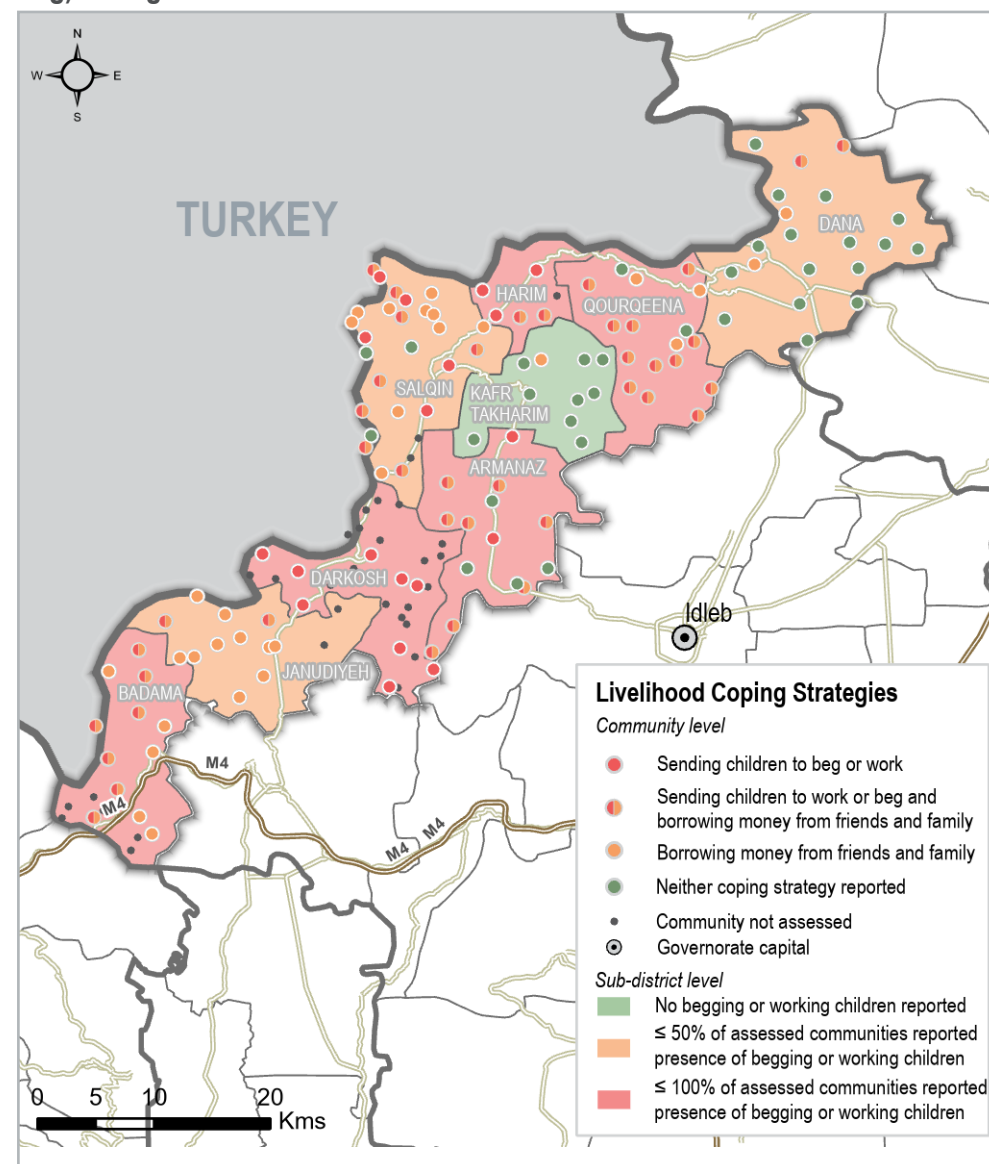| Source	%
Unstable daily employment	92%
Income from farm ownership	74%
Business or trade	64%
Family/friends support in Syria	14%
Savings	10%
Humanitarian non-cash items	10%
Remittances	9%

Unstable daily employment, followed by farm ownership and business or trade were the most commonly reported income sources across all communities. However, variation in other sources was seen, for example, in Dana sub-district where KIs in 50% of communities reported that people were receiving support from family or friends, and in Badama where remittances were reported by KIs in 42% of communities.

Most commonly reported coping strategies used for dealing with a lack of income in August by sub-district:[9]

Legend:
- Sending children to work or beg
- Taking loans/buying on credit
- Borrowing money from family/friends
- Taking on high risk/illegal work
- Selling household assets
- Skipping meals
- Reducing size of meals

Sub-districts: Armanaz, Badama, Dana, Darkosh, Harim, Janudiyeh, Kafr Takharim, Qourqeena, Salqin

Prevalence of the top two most commonly reported livelihood coping strategies (borrowing money from friends and family and children being sent to work or beg) in August 2019:


Livelihood Coping Strategies

Community level
- Sending children to beg or work
- Sending children to work or beg and borrowing money from friends and family
- Borrowing money from friends and family
- Neither coping strategy reported
- Community not assessed
- Governorate capital

Sub-district level
- No begging or working children reported
- ≤ 50% of assessed communities reported presence of begging or working children
- ≤ 100% of assessed communities reported presence of begging or working children

* REACH Market Monitoring Dataset August 2019 reports a USD/SYP exchange rate of 1 USD = 602 SYP.

4. WASH

Water access was a reported priority need across 42% of all assessed communities, amid a context of conflict-related damage to water systems and increased reliance on unsafe or less accessible sources across northwest Syria.[12] Water insufficiency was reported to different degrees across sub-districts, most commonly in Kafr Takharim where KIs in 100% of assessed communities reported insufficiency. Where water insufficiency was reported (all sub-districts except Darkosh), coping strategies for lack of water also differed by sub-district, as displayed in the graph below. For example, KIs in all eight sub-districts with water insufficiency reported that people spent money usually spent on other things on water instead. However, KIs in only five of eight sub-districts with water insufficiency reported that people reduced their drinking water consumption, and KIs in only four of those eight sub-districts reported that people received water on credit or borrowed water/money for water. Beyond water access, KIs in 58 (46%) assessed communities reported problems with latrines, with the bottom graph demonstrating that the most common latrine-related problems KIs reported differed widely between each sub-district and, again, indicate the need for a specialized approach.
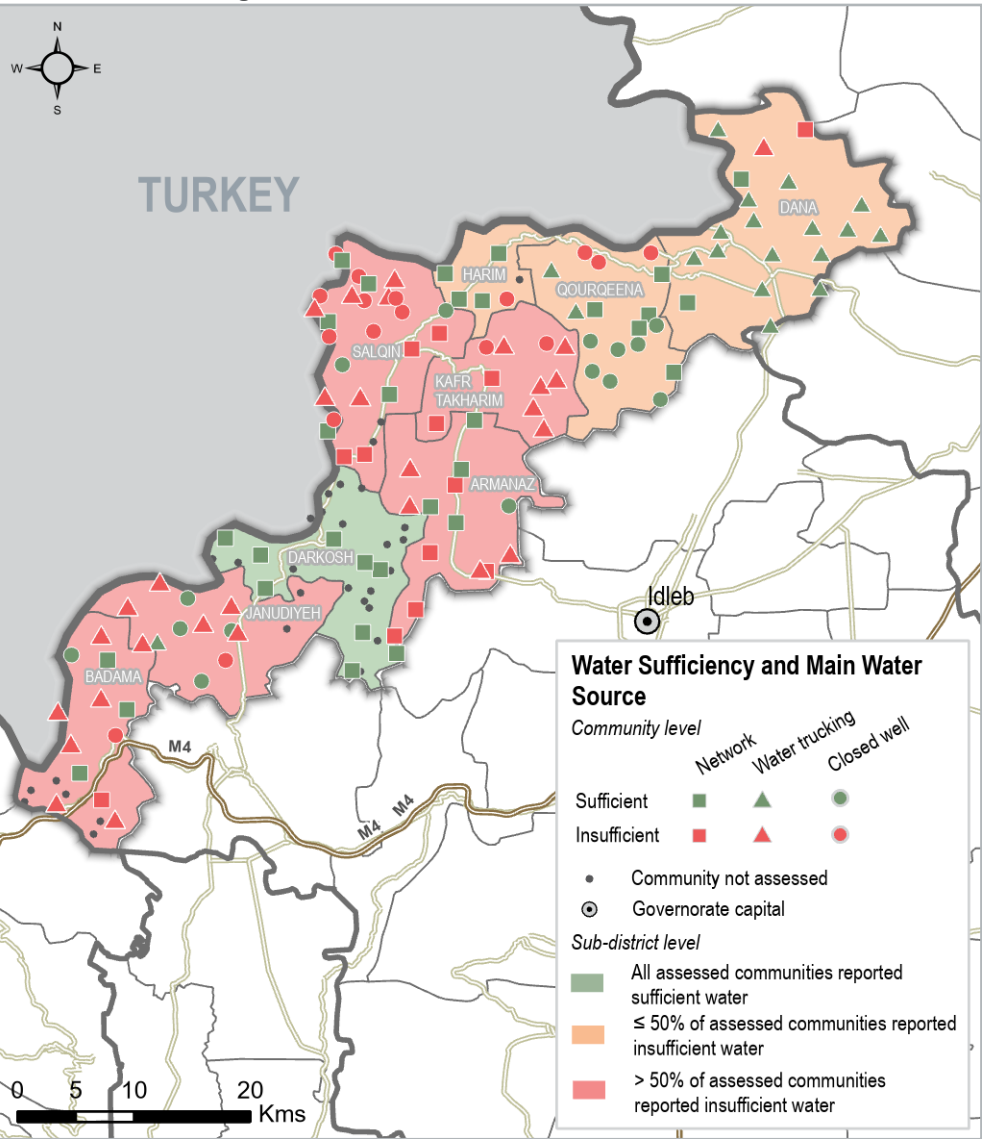
Most commonly reported ways in which communities coped with a lack of water in August, per sub-district:[9]

Reported water insufficiency and main sources of water in assessed communities in August 2019:
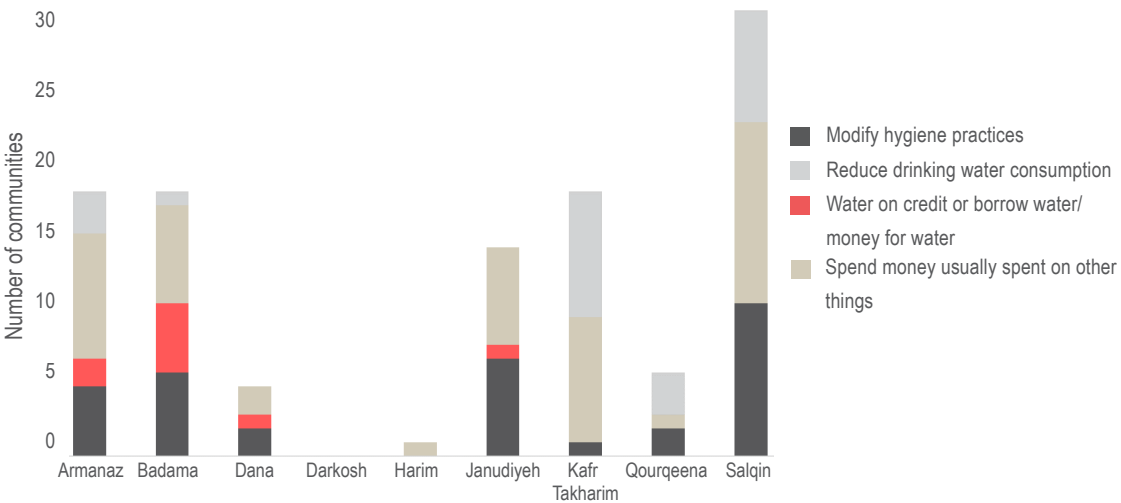
Top four sub-districts in which KIs reported problems with latrines (in # and % of communities):[9]

Sub-district	#	%
1. Kafr Takharim	7	70%
2. Badama	7	58%
3. Armanaz	8	57%
4. Salqin	14	54%

Problems with latrines varied widely between sub-districts. In Kafr Takharim, the most commonly reported problem was a lack of water to flush the latrine. In Badama, KIs reported most commonly an inability to empty the septic tank. In Armanaz, the three most commonly (equally) reported problems were a lack of water to flush, a lack of privacy, and a lack of separation between men and women. Lastly, in Salqin, KIs cited most commonly that the connection to the sewage was blocked.

ENDNOTES

1. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). 2 August 2019. Allocation Strategy Paper. Syria Cross Border Humanitarian Fund (SCHF). 2019 2nd Reserve. Allocation - Idleb response. Available online: www.humanitarianresponse.info.

2. Camp Coordination, Camp Management (CCCM), OCHA Syria and Humanitarian Needs Assessment Programme (HNAP). July 2019. IDP arrival data and movements maps July. Available online: https://data.humdata.org and www.humanitarianresponse.info.

3. OCHA. 29 August 2019. Humanitarian Update. Syrian Arab Republic. Issue 05. Available online: www.reliefweb.int.

4. OCHA. August 2019. MSNA Findings Presentation HNO Workshop Cairo. Slide available upon request.

5. Assessment Capacities Project (ACAPS). 9 May 2019. Syria: Displacement in the Northwest. Available online: www.acaps.org.

6. International Rescue Committee (IRC). 30 May 2019. Idlib: Children show signs of severe distress after being forced to flee -- again. Available online: www.reliefweb.int.

7. OCHA. 25 April 2019. Statement by Panos Moumtzis, Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria Crisis on Escalation of Violence in Idleb Governorate [EN/AR]. Available online: www.reliefweb.int.

8. OCHA Syria Population Task Force. July 2019.

9. Assessed using select multiple questions (selecting up to three).

10. REACH Market Monitoring Dataset August 2019 reports a USD/SYP exchange rate of 1 USD = 602 SYP.

11. Contextual information regarding livelihoods in Dana sub-district provided by the REACH field team.

12. OCHA. 23 August 2019. Syrian Arab Republic. Recent Developments in Northwestern Syria. Situation Report No. 10 - as of 23 August 2019. Available online: www.reliefweb.int.