

## OVERVIEW

Residents of Northeast Syria (NES) have experienced a new humanitarian crisis since escalation of conflict in October 2019; this resulted in significant displacement from the region, both internally and towards the Kurdish Region of Iraq (KR-I).<sup>1</sup> A majority of internally displaced persons (IDPs) originate from sub-districts directly affected by conflict, such as Ras Al Ain, Tel Abiad and Tal Tamer; however, significant preventive displacements have occurred from most communities near the border with Turkey, with IDPs travelling south to communities further from the border.<sup>2</sup> Days after a ceasefire agreement was reached on 17 October,<sup>3</sup> the situation in northeast Syria started to stabilise, nonetheless access of humanitarian actors to the region remains limited.

Accessibility and security issues within this area have so far impaired systematic data collection efforts – limiting the effectiveness of humanitarian planning and implementation. This REACH Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) aims to address existing information gaps and provide a better understanding of the multi-sectoral needs of residents and IDPs residing in communities in Hasakeh governorate.

## MAIN FINDINGS

**Demographics:** At the time of data collection an estimated 32,052 IDPs (7,262 IDP households) were reported to be living across 49 of the 169 communities assessed in Hasakeh governorate, with IDPs reportedly making up 10% of the total population; IDPs displaced after the escalation of conflict in October 2019 were reportedly present in 29 out of the 49 assessed communities where IDPs were present, and represented 16% of the overall IDP population.<sup>4</sup>

**Movement Intentions:** In all 15 IDP-hosting communities where data was available, some IDPs reportedly intended to leave in the two weeks following data collection; the main intended destination was outside of Syria; this was also true for residents, in the 51 assessed communities where some residents intended to leave. The high cost of living, a lack of employment opportunities and safety and security concerns were the main reported reasons for leaving.

**Protection:** In 77% of assessed communities, safety and security were reportedly among the top three priority needs.<sup>5</sup> Intercommunal tensions over actual or perceived increase of commodity prices were reported in nearly all (97%) communities assessed.

**Shelter & Non-food items:** Shelter was most commonly reported among the three main priority needs in IDP-hosting communities (38%); compared to last round, affordability of non-food items in markets had reportedly decreased, with household, hygiene, fuel and winter items being reportedly available in markets but unaffordable for some or most households.

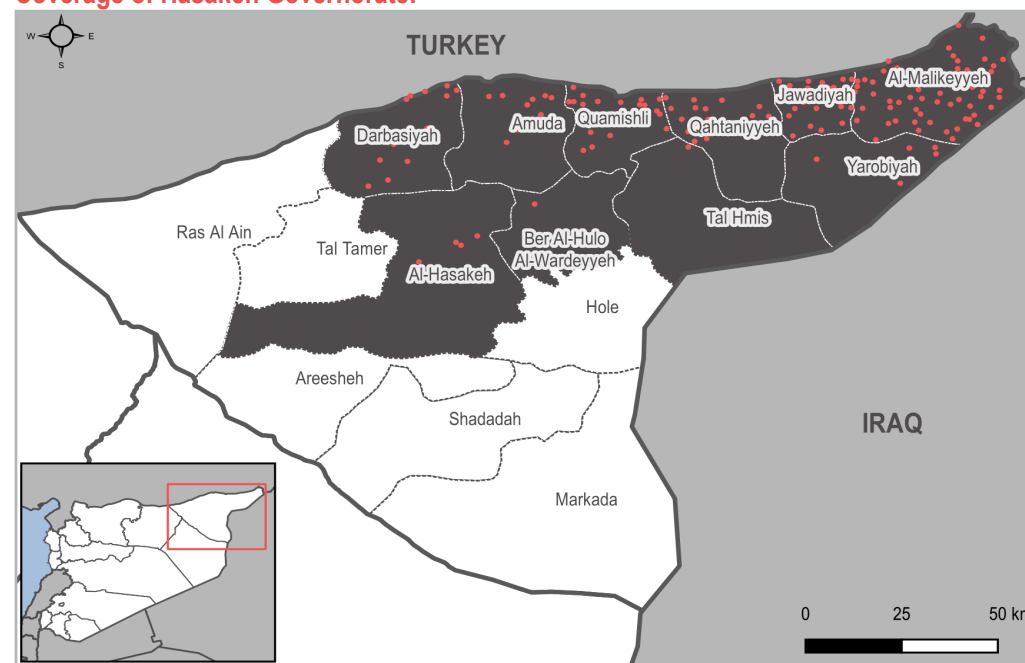
**Food Security & Livelihoods:** Either skipping meals, reducing meal size, or spending days without eating were reported as strategies to cope with a lack of food in all communities where new IDP arrivals had been reported. IDPs were reportedly relying on daily labour, remittances or loans and food aid as most common sources to meet their basic needs.

**Health:** Healthcare was reported as a priority need in 57% of assessed communities; services such as surgery, diabetes care and skilled care during childbirth were reportedly unavailable in 24%, 17% and 11% of communities, respectively.

**Education:** It was reported that less than half of IDP children had been attending school in the two weeks prior to data collection in 67% of the communities where IDPs were present. A lack of documentation to enrol, as well as the need for children to help with earning an income were reported as most common barriers to education in 29% of these communities.

**Water, Sanitation and Hygiene:** One quarter or more of the population reportedly did not access a sufficient amount of water to meet their basic needs in the two weeks prior to the assessment, in 13% of assessed locations; these were mostly situated in Qamishli and Al-Malikeyyeh sub-districts.

### Coverage of Hasakeh Governorate:



## About REACH

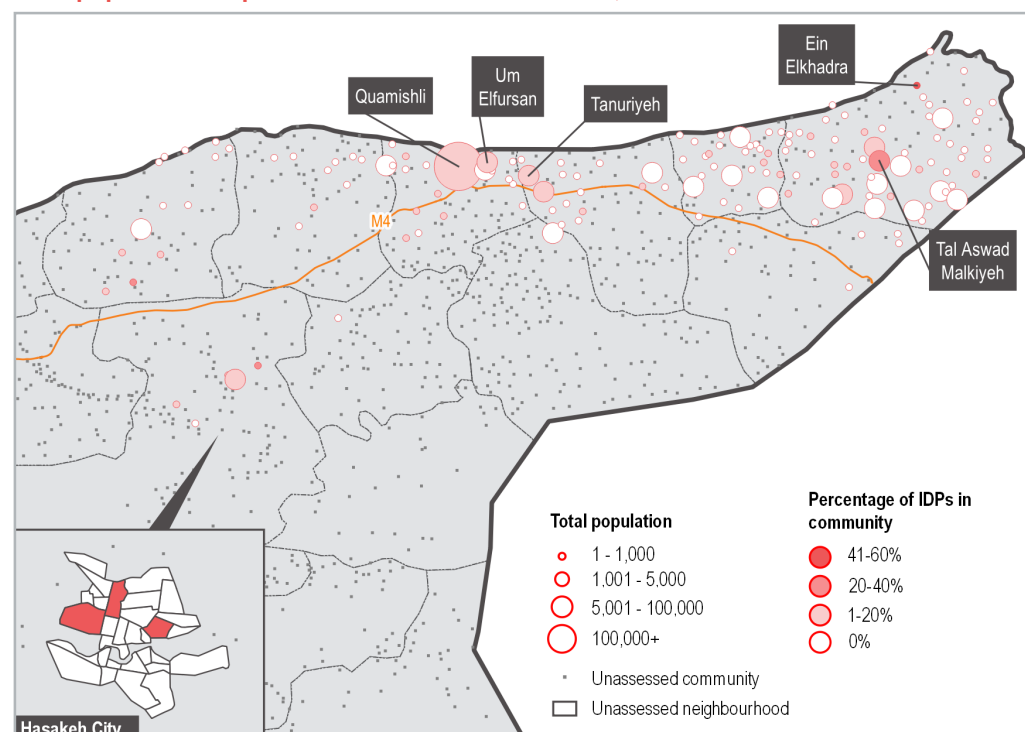
REACH aims to strengthen evidence-based decision making by aid actors through efficient data collection, management and analysis before, during and after an emergency. By doing so, REACH contributes to ensuring that communities affected by emergencies receive the support they need. All REACH activities are conducted in support to, and within the framework of, inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. For more information, please visit our website: [www.reach-initiative.org](http://www.reach-initiative.org). You can contact us directly at: [geneva@reach-initiative.org](mailto:geneva@reach-initiative.org) and follow us on Twitter: @REACH\_info.

## METHODOLOGY

An Area of Knowledge (AoK) methodology has been employed for this RNA. Participants living in refugee camps in the KR-I reported information on their communities of origin in NES by contacting multiple KIs (or a minimum of 1 KI) in their respective community. On average, 4 KIs per assessed community were interviewed. KIs were selected, wherever possible, based on their knowledge of IDP and resident populations in the community, as well as their sector-specific expertise in relation to the different sections throughout the assessment e.g. shelter, healthcare, etc. Due to the inevitably lower reliability of remote data collection compared to direct data collection, a confidence rating system was applied to each individual KI, based on the level of expertise that they were expected to hold regarding the sector on which they were reporting.<sup>6</sup>

KIs were asked to report at the neighbourhood or community level. A total of 169 locations were covered, including 157 communities, 9 out of 27 neighbourhoods in Qamishli city and 3 out of 31 neighbourhoods in Al-Hasakeh city.<sup>7</sup> Data was collected between 3 and 15 December, looking at the two weeks prior to data collection. Findings are indicative rather than representative, and should not be generalised across the region. The complete dataset can be found [here](#).

**Total populations reported in assessed communities, as of the date of data collection:**



## DEMOGRAPHICS [CL: 2/3]\*<sup>6</sup>

In total, KIs reported that an estimated 299,979 residents (59,768 households) were living across all assessed communities at the time of data collection. Of these communities, KIs reported that a total of **49 communities were hosting 32,052 IDPs** (7,262 IDP households), with IDPs making up 11% of the the total population. KIs reported that 29 of the assessed communities were hosting IDPs who had been displaced since the escalation of conflict at the beginning of October, with **16% of IDPs across all assessed communities reported to be new arrivals**.<sup>4</sup>

Resident (host community) individuals  
**Internally displaced individuals**

89%  
11%



299,979

Estimated number of resident individuals in assessed communities.

32,052

Estimated number of IDPs in assessed communities.

**Top three IDP household profiles, by proportion of assessed communities:<sup>5</sup>**

Married men with their family	96%	
Married/widowed women with their family without husband	45%	
Elderly (60+)	33%	

## PRIORITY NEEDS [CL: 2/3]\*

**Top three reported priority needs, by number of assessed communities, for residents and IDPs:<sup>5</sup>**

	1st	2nd	3rd
Safety and security	105	14	11
Shelter	0	2	2
Health	21	39	37
NFIs	2	9	13
Food	5	35	11
Education	6	21	26
Water, sanitation and hygiene	1	6	10
Protection	13	1	3
Livelihoods	3	23	19
Winterisation or equivalent	13	18	28

**Top three reported priority needs, by number of assessed communities, for new IDP arrivals:<sup>5</sup>**

	1st	2nd	3rd
Safety and security	28	4	2
Shelter	0	0	2
Health	4	11	11
NFIs	0	5	4
Food	3	10	1
Education	0	4	6
Water, sanitation and hygiene	0	2	0
Protection	6	0	0
Livelihoods	1	5	7
Winterisation or equivalent	4	4	9

\*CL: average Key informant confidence level.

### MOVEMENT INTENTIONS [CL: 2/3]\*6

Of the 15 IDP-hosting communities where data was available, all KIs reported that at least part of the IDP population was intending to leave in the two weeks after data collection. The cost of living was the most commonly cited reason for intending to leave. Comparatively, KIs in 30% of all assessed communities (51) reported that some residents intended to leave, and safety and security concerns was the most commonly cited reason for resident populations to leave their community of origin.

**30%** Proportion of assessed communities where it was reported that some residents intended to leave in the two weeks following data collection.

**100%** Proportion of assessed IDP hosting communities, where data was available, where it was reported that some IDPs intended to leave in the two weeks following data collection.

### PROTECTION [CL: 3/3]\*6

Safety and security was the most reported priority need across all communities, with **77% of communities reporting it as a priority need**. Most commonly reported protection concerns varied significantly between IDP-hosting communities, where lack or loss of civil documentation, child labour and exploitation were more often reported as concerns, and communities where no IDPs were present, where no protection concern (33% of communities) and concerns over remote violence (15% of communities) were the most commonly cited responses.

Intercommunal tensions were reported across all assessed communities except one, and were most commonly related to **tensions over perceived or actual price increases (97%) and access to education (76%)**.<sup>5</sup> Intercommunal tensions over access to shelter were more commonly reported across communities where an IDP presence was also reported.

**IDP-hosting communities: most commonly reported protection concerns in the two weeks prior to data collection:**<sup>5,8</sup>

Lack or loss of civil documentation	36%
Child labour	32%
Exploitation	32%

**IDP-hosting communities: most commonly reported intercommunal tensions in the two weeks prior to data collection most commonly reported tensions were:**<sup>5</sup>

Tensions over perceived/actual price increases in the area <sup>9</sup>	100%
Tensions over access to education	76%
Tensions over access to shelter	71%

**Top three reported intended destinations, for IDPs:**<sup>5</sup>

Movement intentions for IDPs	#	%
1. Leave for outside of Syria	10	67%
2. Go back to community of origin	3	20%
3. Host communities (in the same or another governorate)	2	13%

**Of the communities where IDPs were reportedly intending to leave, the top three reported reasons to leave were:**<sup>5</sup>

Reasons to leave for IDPs	#	%
1. Cost of living is too high here	8	53%
2. Lack of access to income and employment opportunities here	7	47%
3. Safety and security concerns here	6	40%

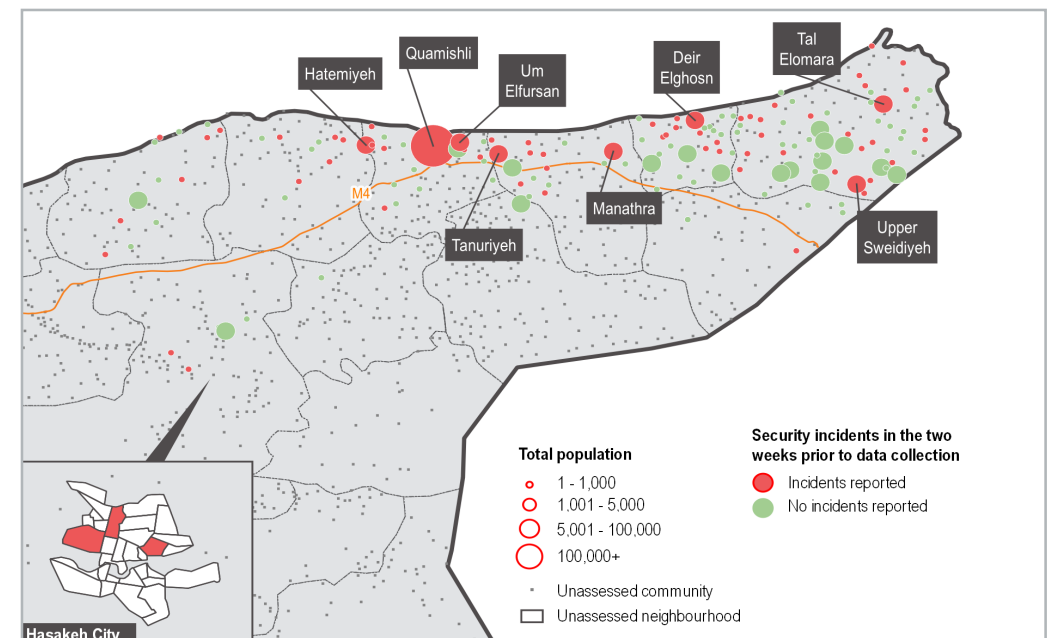
**Main reported intended destinations, for residents:**<sup>5</sup>

Movement intentions for residents	#	%
1. Leave for outside of Syria	47	90%
2. Host communities within the same governorate	5	10%

**Of the communities where residents were reportedly intending to leave, the top three reported reasons to leave were:**<sup>5</sup>

Reasons to leave for residents	#	%
1. Safety and security concerns here	35	67%
2. Cost of living is too high here	34	65%
3. Lack of access to income and employment opportunities here	16	31%

**Security incidents reported in assessed communities, in the two weeks prior to data collection:**

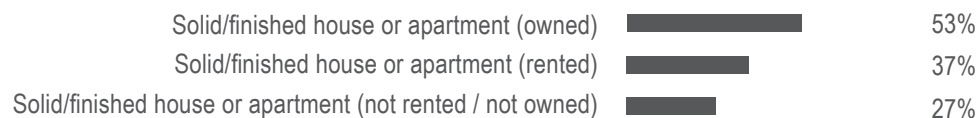


### **SHELTER** [CL: 2/3]\*6

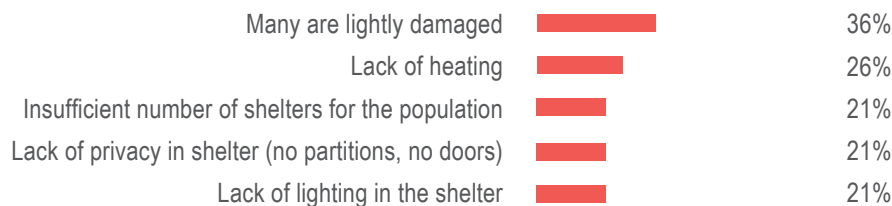
Shelter was more commonly reported among the three main priority needs in communities where new IDP arrivals had also been reported since the beginning of October, compared to communities where no new arrivals were reported. Similarly, access to shelter was reported as a source of intercommunal tension in 71% of communities with a reported IDP presence, compared to only 8% of all other communities.



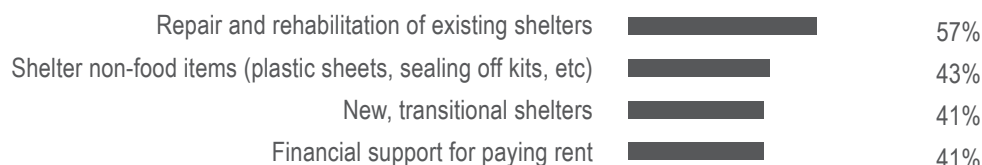
#### Most commonly reported shelter types of IDPs, by proportion of assessed communities where IDPs were present:<sup>5</sup>



#### Most commonly reported shelter adequacy issues for IDPs, by proportion of assessed communities where IDPs were present:<sup>5</sup>



#### Most commonly reported shelter support needed to address IDP shelter inadequacies, by proportion of assessed communities where IDPs were present:<sup>5</sup>

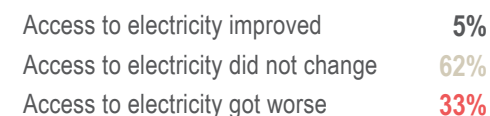


### **NON-FOOD ITEMS and ELECTRICITY** [CL: 2/3]\*6

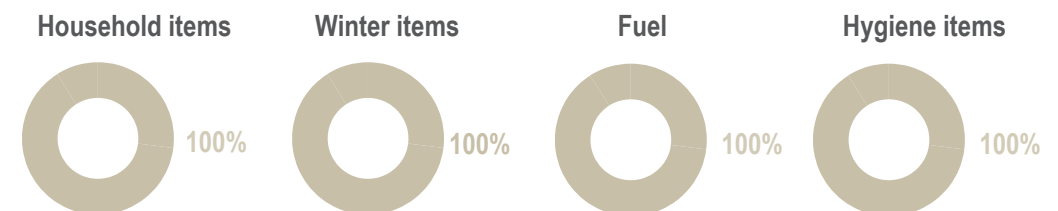
Non-food items (NFIs) were reported among the top three priority needs in 14% of communities assessed, with no significant difference between communities hosting IDPs and communities where IDPs were reportedly not present. Conversely, **winterisation<sup>9</sup> items were among the three main priority needs in 55% of communities where new IDP arrivals were reported since October**, compared to only 5% of communities where no IDPs were present.



#### Change in access to electricity, since the beginning of October:



#### Availability of NFIs on markets in assessed communities, in the two weeks prior to data collection:



Household items include: bedding items (sheets, pillows), mattresses/sleeping mats, carpets/mats for the floor, cooking utensils, cooking stoves, sources of light/solar lamps, jerry cans, batteries.

Winter items include: heaters, heating fuel containers, blankets, winter clothes, winter shoes.

Fuel items include: fuel for generators; fuel for cooking; fuel for heating.

Hygiene items include: disposable diapers, sanitary pads, soap, toothpaste, washing powder (for clothes), cleaning liquid (for house), detergent (for dishes).



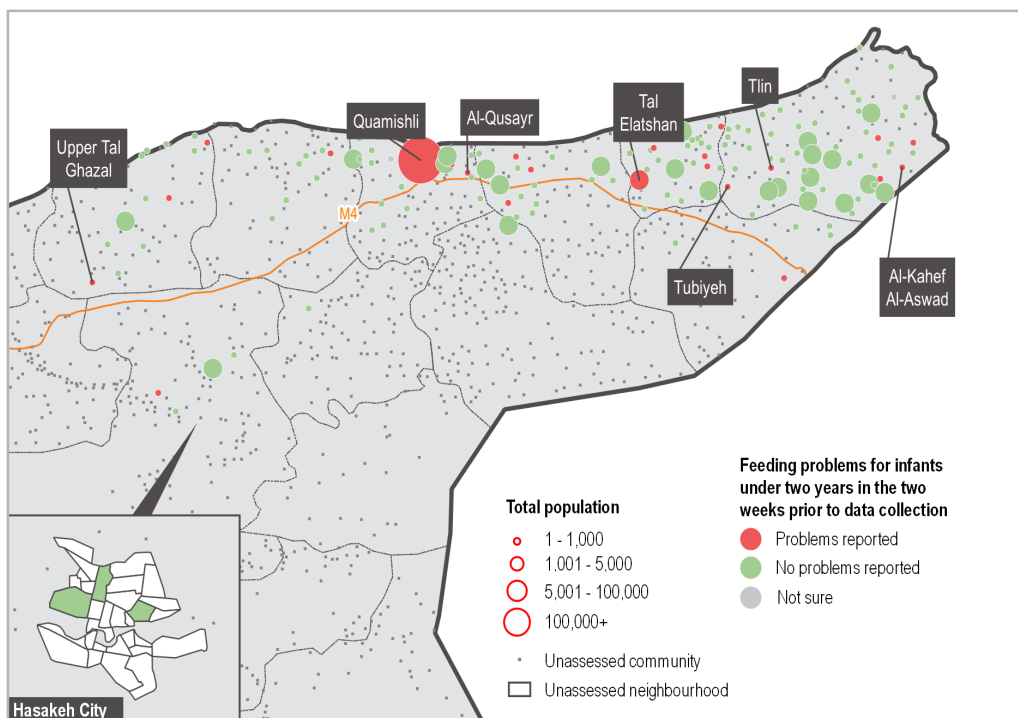
## FOOD SECURITY [CL: 2/3]\*6 & LIVELIHOODS [CL: 3/3]\*6

Food was reported among the top three priority needs in 30% of all assessed communities. This percentage was lower when considering only communities where new IDP arrivals since October were reported (14% of communities). Despite this, skipping meals, reducing meal size and spending days without eating were reportedly the most commonly adopted strategies to cope with a lack of food in most communities hosting new IDP arrivals. Food assistance was reportedly delivered in 93% of all communities assessed, and was mostly provided by NGOs (37%), local authorities (30%) and host communities (26%).

**30%** Proportion of assessed communities in which food was reported to be among the top 3 priority needs.

**81%** Proportion of assessed communities in which food items were reportedly almost always available in the two weeks prior to data collection.

**Reported problems with feeding infants and children <2 years, in the two weeks prior to data collection:**



**Most commonly reported coping strategies for lack of food used by households in assessed communities in the two weeks prior to data collection:<sup>5</sup>**

Strategies adopted to cope with a lack of food - all communities	#	%	Strategies adopted to cope with a lack of food - communities hosting new IDP arrivals	#	%
1. Reducing meal size	132	80%	1. Skipping meals	20	69%
2. Purchasing food on credit/borrowing money to buy food	86	52%	2. Reducing meal size	13	45%
3. Buying food with money usually used for other things	65	39%	3. Spending days without eating	6	21%

**Most commonly reported main sources for IDPs to meet their basic needs, in the two weeks prior to data collection:<sup>5</sup>**

Waged labour - daily labour	85%
Loans and remittances	44%
Food aid	29%

**Most commonly reported barriers to accessing livelihoods faced by IDPs in assessed communities, in the two weeks prior to data collection:<sup>5</sup>**

Lack of opportunities that match people's skills	67%
Low wages	53%
General lack of employment opportunities	33%
Women not allowed to access job opportunities	13%

## EARLY RECOVERY [CL: 3/3]\*6

**Reported decrease in local production and provision of services in the two weeks prior to data collection, where data was available (121 communities)**

	#	%
Decrease in local food production due to the displacement of farmers	3	2%
Decrease in health services provision due to health workers being displaced	3	2%
Decrease in number of shops open due to shop owners being displaced	4	3%
Decrease in availability of education services due to teachers being displaced	9	7%
Decrease in access to electricity provided through the network	10	8%
Decrease in access to water provided through the network	3	2%
Decrease in commercial vehicle mobility due to rubble or other road infrastructure issues	1	1%
None of the above (cannot be selected with any other option)	88	73%

\*CL: average Key informant confidence level.

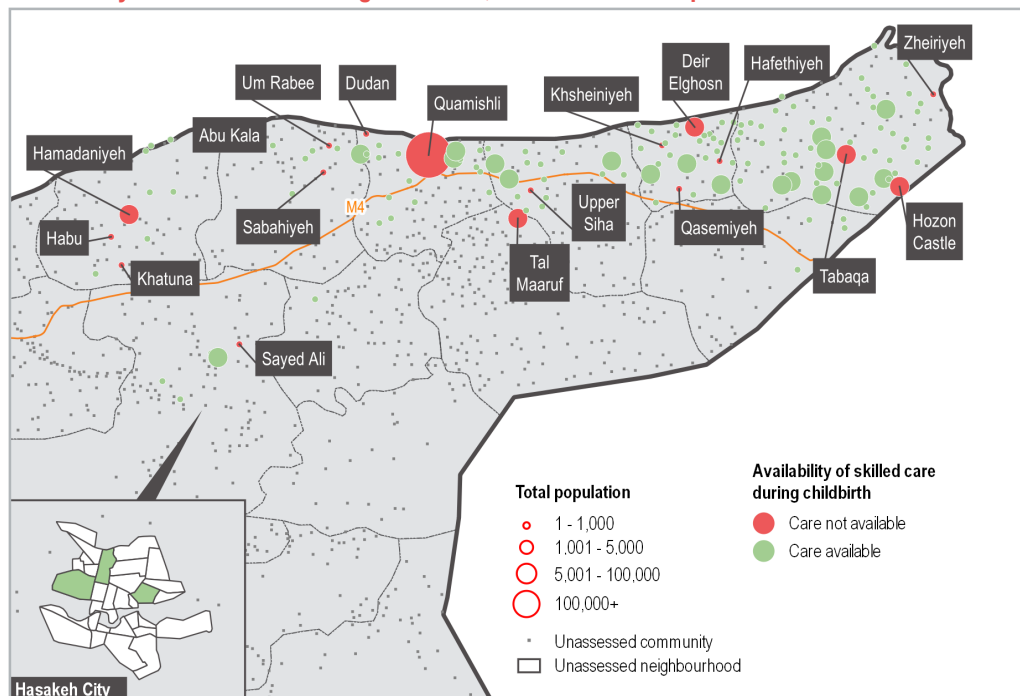


## HEALTH [CL: 2/3]\*6

KIs in all assessed communities reported that households were able to access health services at nearby facilities, however healthcare remained among the top 3 priority needs in 57% of the communities assessed. Patients were reportedly transferred to health facilities by car, most commonly, in nearly all communities assessed (97%); however, KIs in 82% of communities assessed reported that the nearest health facilities disposed of an ambulance.

Type of health facilities available to households, in the assessed community or in nearby one	#	%	Type of health services available to households, in the assessed community or in nearby one	#	%
Mobile clinics / field hospitals	6	4%	Child immunisation	162	96%
Informal emergency care points	4	2%	Diarrhea management	166	98%
Private clinics	103	61%	Emergency care (accidents and injuries)	165	98%
Primary care facilities	145	86%	Skilled care during childbirth	150	89%
Hospitals	124	73%	Surgery	129	76%
			Diabetes care	140	83%

### Availability of skilled care during childbirth, in the two weeks prior to data collection:

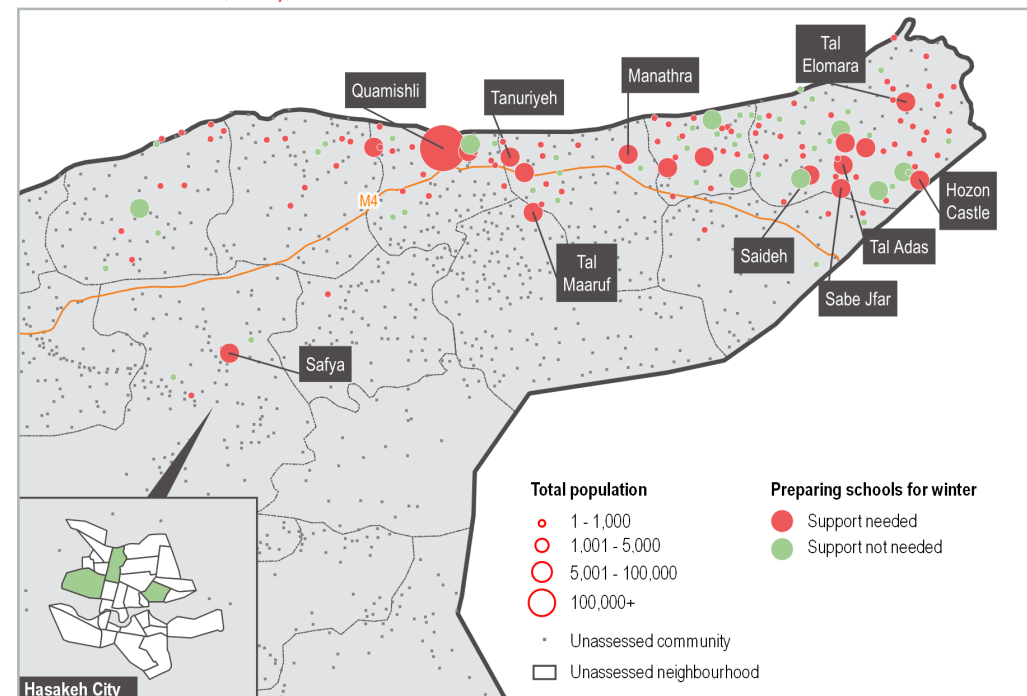


## EDUCATION [CL: 3/3]\*6

KIs in **31% of all communities reported education as a priority need**. Further, while school facilities were reportedly available in all but nine of the communities assessed, primary school attendance rates among IDP populations were reportedly low, with less than 50% of IDP children (5-11 years old) attending school in 67% of the communities where IDPs were present.

Most common reasons why IDP children did not attend school in the two weeks prior to data collection	#	%	Most commonly needed education support, as reported by KIs in assessed communities	#	%
Lack of personal documentation required to enrol in schools	10	29%	Prepare schools for winter (repair windows and doors, provide heaters and fuel, etc.)	111	66%
Children needed to help parents	7	29%	Provide learning supplies (textbooks, stationery, etc.)	82	49%
Parents cannot afford to send children to school	8	23%	Rehabilitate school buildings	36	21%
			Provide teaching staff	35	21%

### Reported need for winter preparation support in schools (windows and doors repair, provision of heaters and fuel, etc.), across assessed communities:

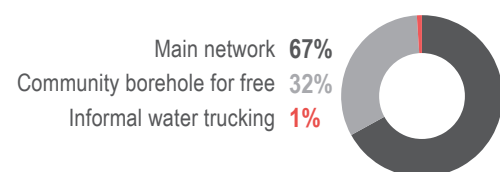




### WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH) [CL: 2/3]<sup>6</sup>

Water, sanitation and hygiene was reported as a priority need in 11% of assessed communities, with KIs reporting that one quarter or more of the population did not have access to a sufficient amount of water to meet their basic needs in 13% of assessed communities, in the two weeks prior to data collection. In an overwhelming majority of communities where access to water was deemed insufficient, the most commonly reported reasons were the **limited number of hours during which water pumps function (83%)**, followed by a lack of sufficient pressure for pumping water (32%).

**Most common sources of drinking water for IDPs, in the two weeks prior to data collection:**



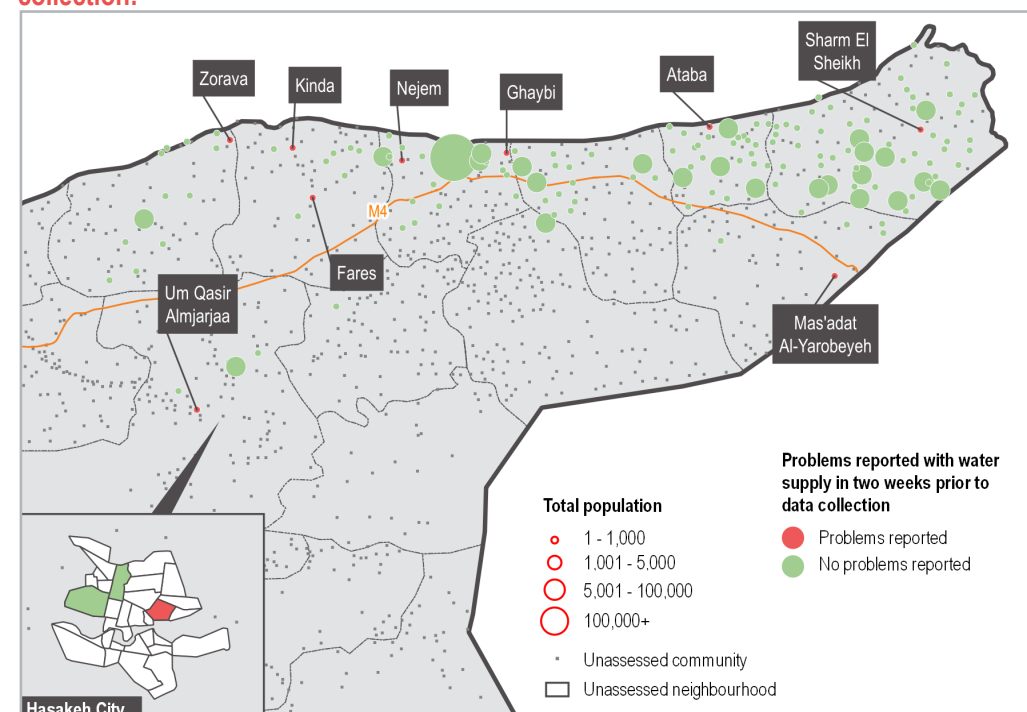
**Quality of water from main drinking water source used by IDPs, in the two weeks prior to data collection:**



**Most commonly reported sanitation issues in the two weeks prior two data collection, across communities where sanitation issues were reported (73):<sup>5</sup>**



**Reported problems with main source of drinking water, in the two weeks prior to data collection:**



## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> OCHA Northeast Syria – As half a million people gradually regain access to safe water – the number of displaced people nears 180,000. [22 October 2019](#).

<sup>2</sup> Northeast Syria - [HNAP Flash Update #10](#) - 23 October 2019.

<sup>3</sup> OCHA. Syria Flash Update #7, Humanitarian impact of the military operation in north-eastern Syria. [16-18 October 2019](#)

<sup>4</sup> Figures in this report do not include IDPs in informal settlements and sites in Hasakeh governorate, when these are located outside of community boundaries, nor IDPs located in sub-districts known to have witnessed high population movements, such as Tal Tamer; this is due to the limited extent of coverage as well as limitations inherent to the methodology adopted.

<sup>5</sup> By proportion of assessed communities reporting. KIs were allowed to select multiple options.

<sup>6</sup> Confidence levels were defined in consultation with field teams, based on the expertise and knowledge each KI type was expected to hold for each question. The confidence levels associated with each question are presented in the final dataset and the confidence matrix is available on request. Findings reported in sections with lower KI confidence levels should be viewed with increased caution.

<sup>7</sup> Neighbourhoods assessed in Hasakeh city are: Al Kallasa, Aziziyah and Tal Hajar; neighbourhoods assessed in Qamishli city are: Hay Al Gharbi, Hay Allayah, Hay Antreyeh, Hay Big Jarnik, Hay Kournish, Hay Maiysalon, Hay Qanat Alsouys, Hay Qudourbak, Hay Small Jarnik,

<sup>8</sup> Although KIs did report that there were protection issues, it was often reported that they were unsure what these issues were.

<sup>9</sup> Winterisation is the process of preparing for winter; winterisation activities may include the distribution of items including blankets, quilts, kerosene, heating stoves, jerry cans, as well as thermal floor mats and insulation to make shelters warmer and more resistant to harsh winter conditions.

\*CL: average Key informant confidence level.