

INTRODUCTION

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 average Syrian households, including food and non-food items, water, 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. See SMEB contents text box on the right of this page for more details.

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IN THIS FACTSHEET



As the JMMI generates a large amount of data, this factsheet is limited to a snapshot of key trends. For more detailed data, consult the [dataset](#) and [online dashboard](#). The dashboard is designed to allow users to navigate more easily and draw geographical and temporal comparisons across different currencies.

January data collection

- 8 supporting partners
- 4 governorates
- 11 districts
- 30 sub-districts
- 62 communities
- 1,946 shops (vendor key informants)

SMEB CONTENTS

Food			
Bread	37 kg	Rice	19 kg
Bulgur	15 kg	Salt	1 kg
Chicken	6 kg	Sugar	5 kg
Eggs	6 kg	Tomato paste	6 kg
Ghee/veg. oil	7 kg/L	Vegetables (fresh)	12 kg
Red lentils	15 kg		
Hygiene (NFI)			
Bathing soap	12 bars	Toothpaste	200 g
Laundry/dish soap	3 kg	Sanitary pads	4 packs of 10
Other			
Cooking fuel	25 L	Phone data	1 GB
Water trucking	4500 L	"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.

Key findings

- The NES January SMEB total was the **highest seen in SYP** in the seven years of the JMMI.
- Key food items were expensive but widely available.
- High quality transport fuels were expensive and widely unavailable.
- In January, 54% of surveyed vendors reporting unavailability of heating fuel.
- The price of cooking fuels **decreased** by 47% since six months ago.
- Winter clothing was widely available across NES.
- Markets and supply chains were under pressure, but continued to function and respond to external pressures.

COST OF NES SMEB¹

784,790 SYP ▲ +2%

128 USD 0%

COST OF NES FOOD BASKET¹

634,272 SYP ▲ +6%

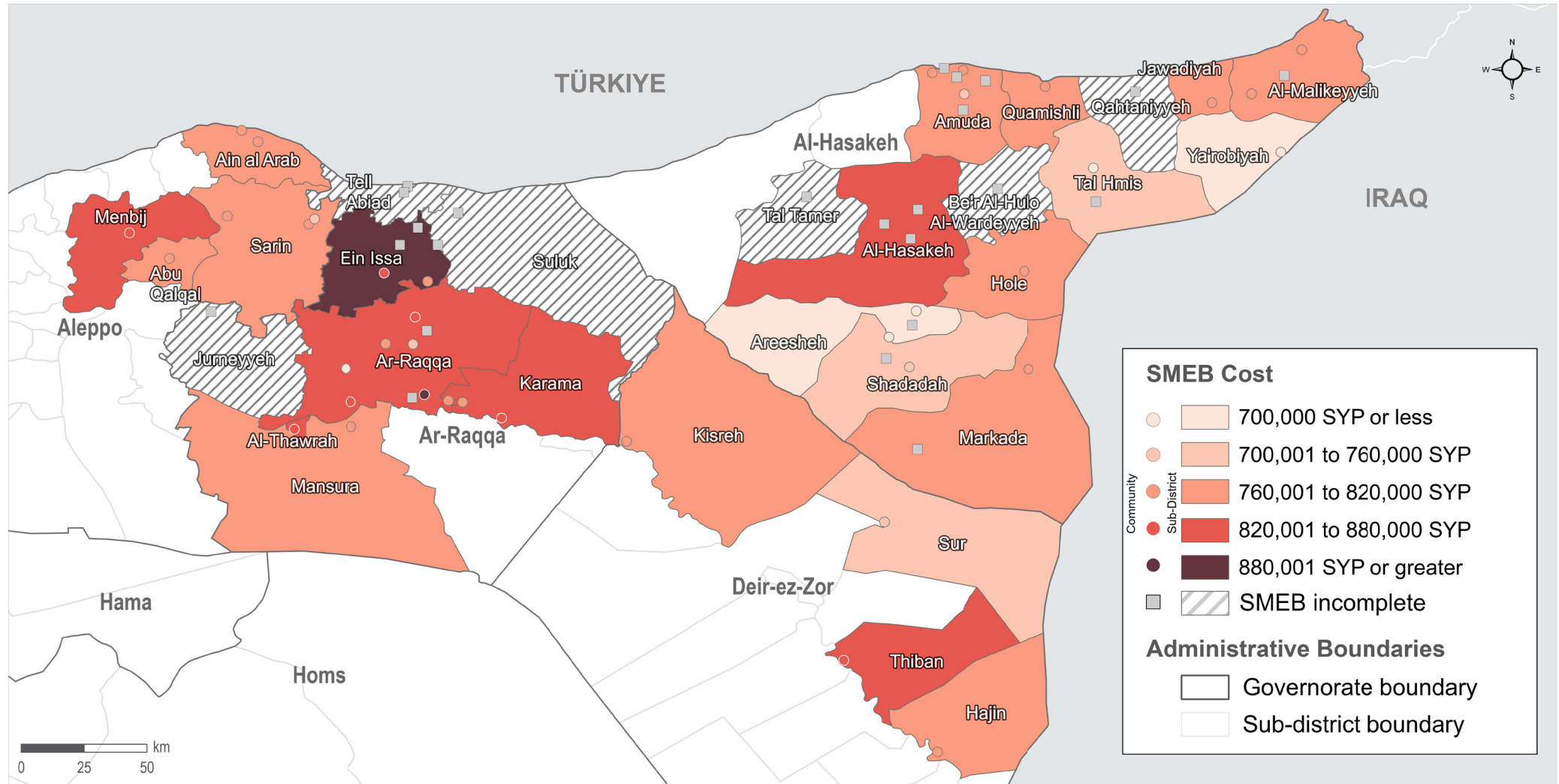
104 USD ▼ +5%

NES EXCHANGE RATE¹

USD/SYP

6,070 SYP ▲ +0.4%

Median SMEB price per sub-district (SYP)

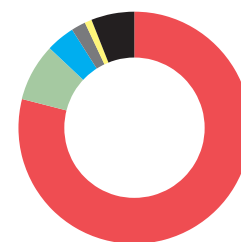


1. For price and change % calculations, only the communities within a sub-district with consistent coverage across months are included. This also applies to the following tables.

Median SMEB price per sub-district

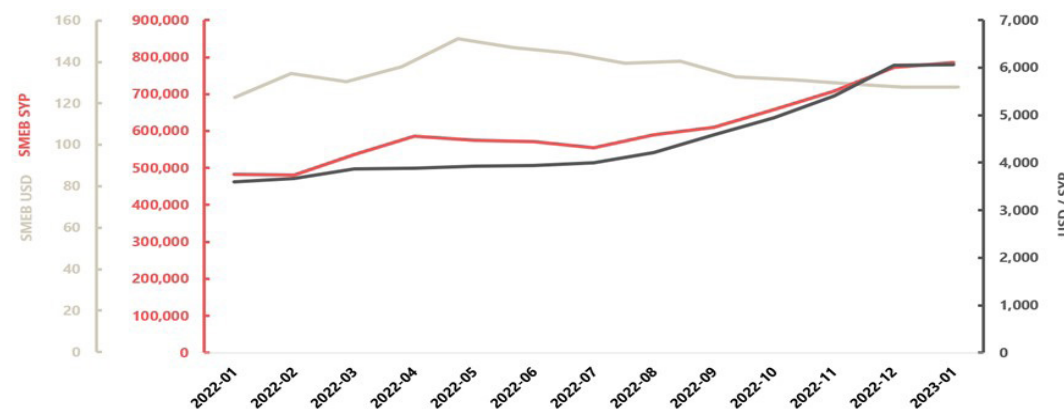
	SMEB SYP	1 month change	6 month change	SMEB USD ²
Northeast Syria (NES) SMEB³	784,790	2%	41%	128
Northeast Aleppo Governorate	781,518	5%	47%	133
Abu Qalqal	762,191	3%	37%	127
Ain al Arab	784,790	8%	60%	122
Menbij	854,511	NA	50%	140
Sarin	778,245	5%	54%	128
Al-Hasakeh Governorate	768,768	0%	33%	144
Al-Hasakeh	838,061	6%	51%	140
Al-Malikeyyeh*	808,952	2%	41%	134
Amuda*	775,424	4%	41%	129
Areeshah	680,270	2%	18%	115
Hole	769,602	8%	NA	127
Jawadiyah*	765,830	10%	47%	116
Markada	769,399	-6%	33%	128
Quamishli	768,137	-1%	16%	126
Shadadah	743,779	-3%	12%	120
Tal Hmis*	737,565	3%	NA	118
Ya'robiyah*	670,869	6%	40%	112
Ar-Raqqa Governorate	868,436	7%	55%	140
Al-Thawrah*	845,552	10%	NA	136
Ar-Raqqa	868,436	7%	55%	141
Ein Issa	929,786	3%	80%	153
Karama	838,654	7%	45%	NA
Mansura*	760,397	7%	39%	128
Deir-ez-Zor Governorate	811,649	4%	48%	137
Hajin	810,221	5%	53%	134
Kisreh	813,076	3%	45%	136
Sur	732,505	-5%	32%	120
Thiban	840,256	7%	54%	130

NES SMEB composition⁴



Food	79%
NFI/Hygiene	8%
Water	4%
Cooking fuel	1%
Phone data	0.4%
Additional float	7.4%

USD and SYP SMEB prices vs informal exchange rate



PRICE TRENDS

- The value of the SMEB in SYP in January increased by 2%, a notably reduced rate of increase compared to previous months.
- In the last six months the exchange rate has increased by over 50% and been the major driver of price inflation.
- The value of the SMEB in USD has come down since April 2022 following the initial shock of the Ukraine crisis.

2. USD values are calculated as per the informal exchange rate recorded in the same geographical area (see dataset).

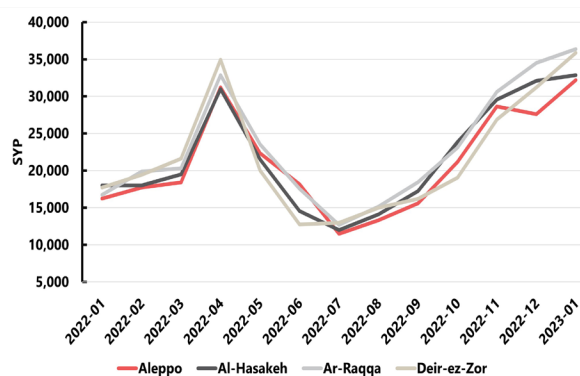
3. * For these sub-districts, water trucking prices were not available and is not included in the SMEB price.

4. Due to rounding figures may not total 100%

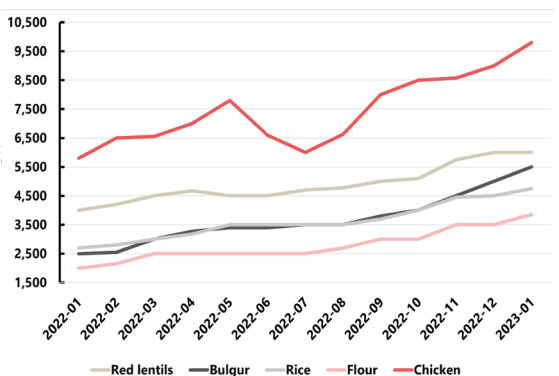
Vegetable prices are extremely high when local produce is out of season resulting in high reliance on imports in the context of the escalating [fuel crisis in Government of Syria areas](#) and [high customs duties imposed](#) at key crossing points.

Currency depreciation impacts key imported items. The price of chicken in particular has been impacted by ongoing increases in the cost of [key inputs sensitive to exchange rate fluctuations](#) such as fuel and chicken feed.

SMEB vegetable prices



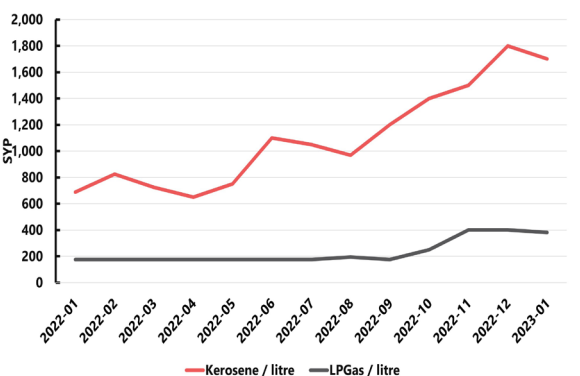
Key food item prices per kg



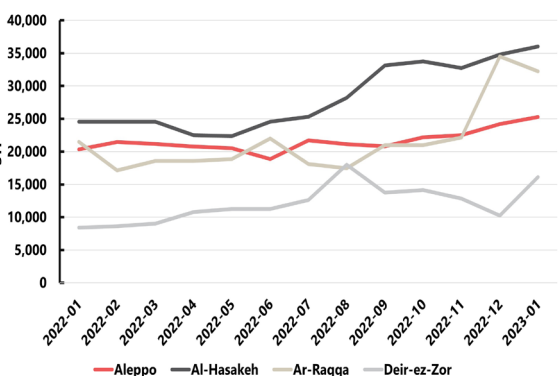
SMEB cooking fuel prices decreased for the first time since September 2022 likely due to a resumption of centrally distributed gas reducing reliance on free market prices. This follows a period of market shortage as a result of [Turkish attacks on key gas facilities](#). Gas in Deir ez-Zor remained widely unavailable.

Rising fuel costs continue to push water trucking prices up. [Alouk water station](#) has been non-operational since August 2022 due to lack of electricity supply in the context of heightened tensions with Türkiye; this has increased demand for private water trucking and pushed prices up in Al-Hasakeh.

Cooking fuel prices per litre



SMEB water trucking prices

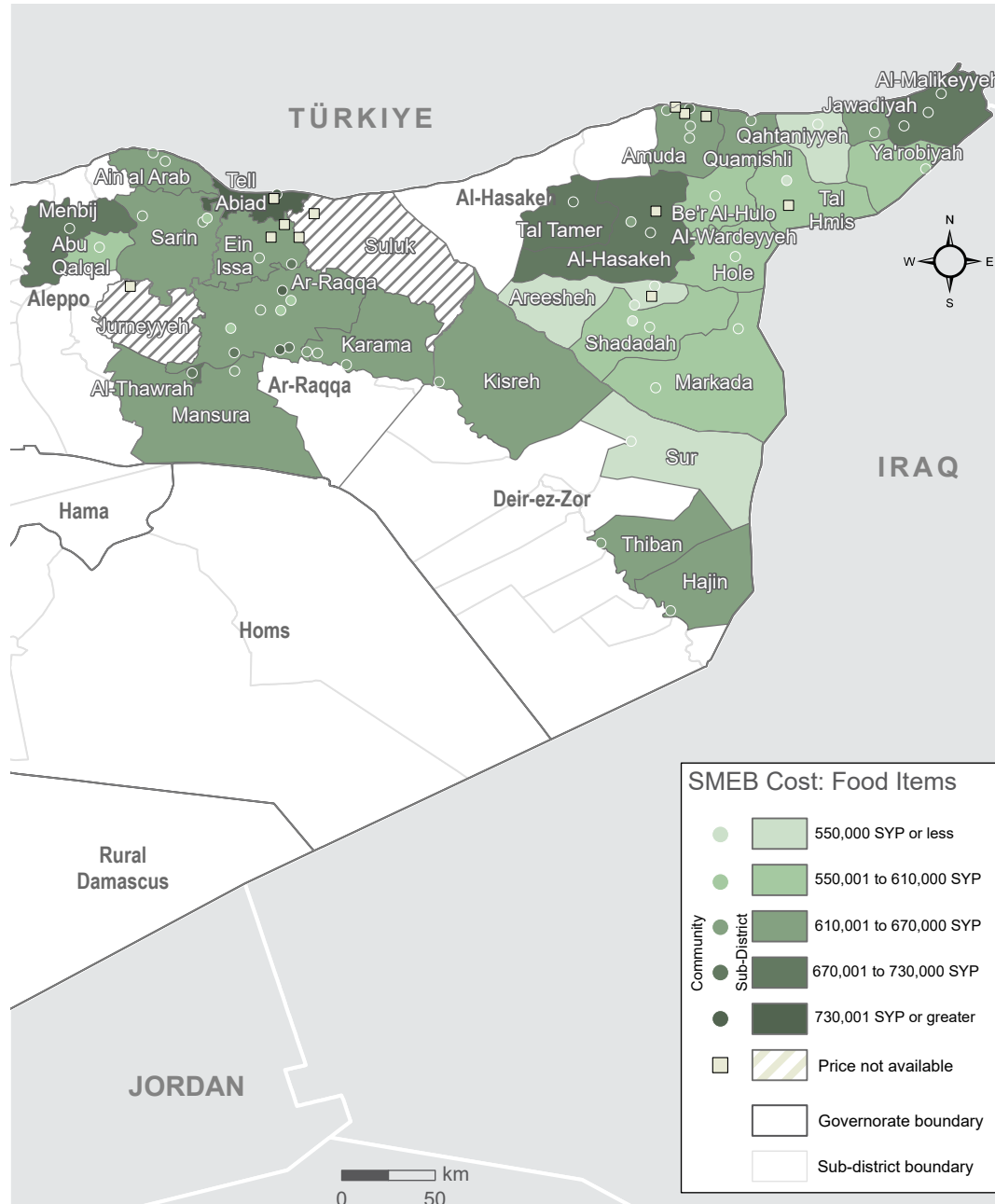


Price of SMEB items

Item	Unit ⁵	Price SYP	1 month change	6 month change	Price USD ²
Northeast food Syria SMEB		634,272	6%	49%	104
Bulk food items	SMEB	338,875	3%	45%	55.83
Bulgur	1 kg	5,500	10%	57%	0.91
Red lentils	1 kg	6,000	0%	28%	0.99
Rice	1 kg	4,750	6%	36%	0.78
Salt	500 g	1,000	25%	67%	0.16
Sugar	1 kg	5,000	11%	67%	0.82
Tomato paste	1 kg	8,000	-2%	60%	1.32
Fresh vegetables	SMEB	33,000	0%	168%	5.44
Tomatoes	1 kg	3,000	7%	173%	0.49
Potatoes	1 kg	2,200	-12%	69%	0.36
Cucumbers	1 kg	3,350	-4%	319%	0.55
Onions	1 kg	2,500	25%	194%	0.41
Cooking oils	SMEB	70,000	0%	14%	11.53
Ghee	1 kg	10,000	0%	14%	1.65
Vegetable oil	1 L	10,150	2%	13%	1.67
Non-veg perishables					
Bread	8 pc	400	0%	0%	0.07
Chicken	1 kg	9,800	9%	63%	1.61
Eggs	30 pc	14,000	0%	47%	2.31
Non-food items	SMEB	60,060	7%	46%	9.89
Bathing soap	1 pc	2,125	6%	52%	0.35
Sanitary pads	10 pc	2,500	0%	25%	0.41
Toothpaste	100 g	3,247	1%	30%	0.53
Laundry powder	1 kg	5,950	3%	19%	0.98
Dish soap	1 L	5,000	4%	43%	0.82
Cooking fuels	SMEB	9,375	-29%	NA	1.54
Kerosene (manually refined)	1 L	1,700	-6%	62%	0.28
LP gas	1 L	381	-5%	118%	0.06
Water trucking	SMEB	29,455	12%	34%	4.85
Water trucking (1000 L)	1 m3	6,545	12%	34%	1.08
Other					
Phone data	1 gb	3,250	8%	8%	0.54

5. The SMEB unit refers to the current SMEB allocation of the item, as outlined on [page 1](#).

Cost of SMEB food component by sub-districts and communities



MARKET FUNCTIONALITY

- Availability of lower USD denominations is particularly low in Al-Hasakeh and Ar-Raqqa governorates. 94% of informal exchange vendors in Ar-Raqqa governorate reported limited stock of 20 USD notes.
- There was a notable decrease in availability of 10 and 20 USD denominations in Deir ez-Zor governorate in January.
- Lower denominations have been increasingly unavailable since September 2022 potentially linked to growing demand for USD in the context of [escalated tensions and new displacements](#).

% of informal exchange vendors reporting limited stock of USD notes⁶

Al-Hasakeh

Limited stock of 5 USD	80%	▲ 7%	
Limited stock of 10 USD	80%	▲ 4%	
Limited stock of 20 USD	78%	▲ 3%	

Ar-Raqqa

Limited stock of 5 USD	59%	0%	
Limited stock of 10 USD	66%	▼ 15%	
Limited stock of 20 USD	94%	0%	

Aleppo

Limited stock of 5 USD	36%	▼ 2%	
Limited stock of 10 USD	40%	▲ 2%	
Limited stock of 20 USD	60%	▲ 7%	

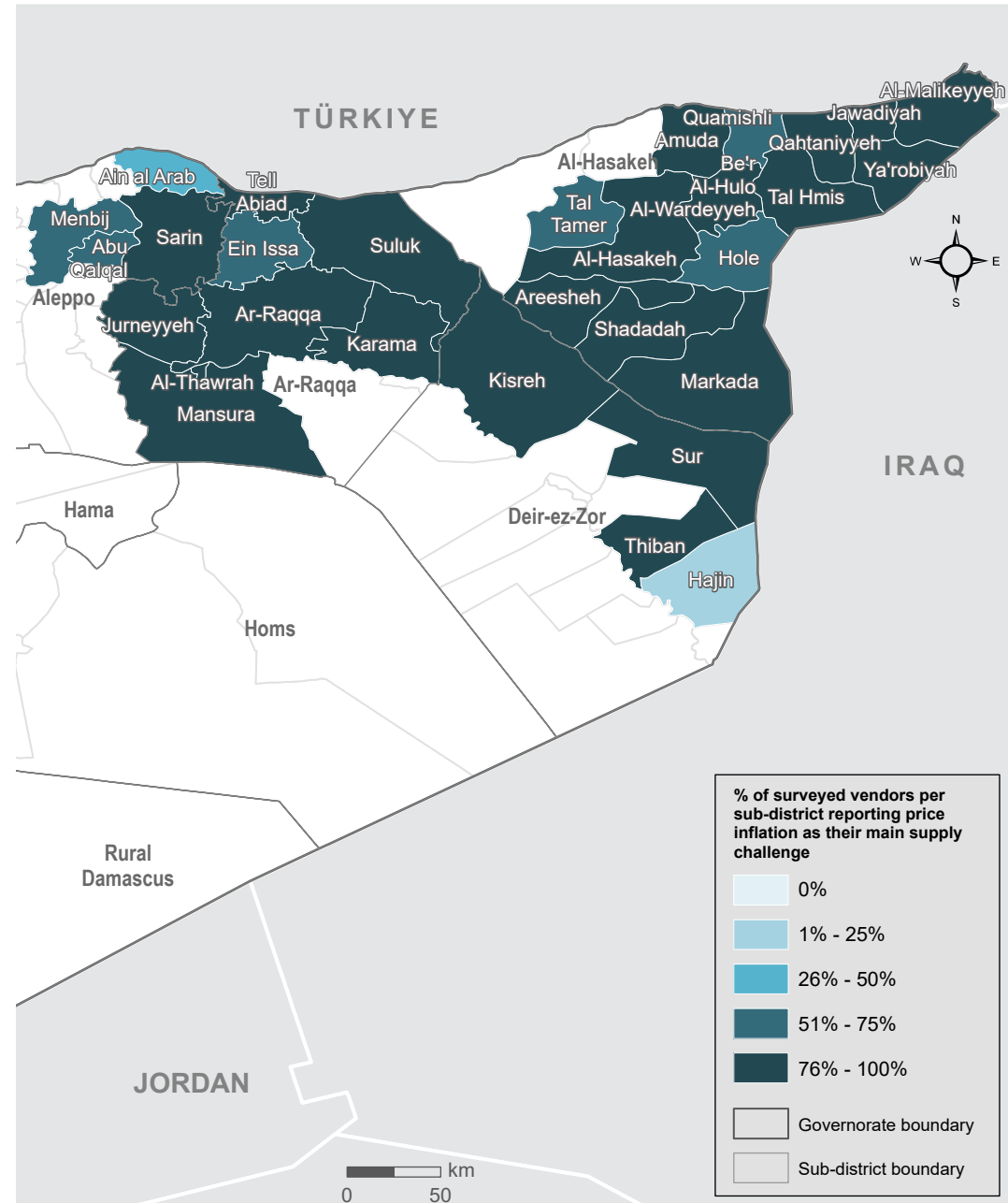
Deir-Ez Zor

Limited stock of 5 USD	27%	0%	
Limited stock of 10 USD	82%	▲ 27%	
Limited stock of 20 USD	55%	▲ 10%	

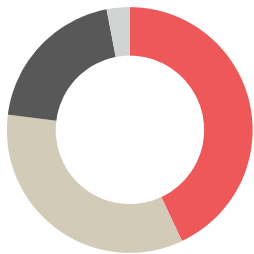
6. % changes represent percentage point changes in from the previous month.

- Price inflation remained the predominant supply challenge reported by vendors.
- Only 2% of surveyed shops in NES (31 vendors) reported in January that they are currently unable to re-stock. All of these vendors were located in Al-Hasakeh governorate with gas vendors being the most common shop type reporting an inability to re-stock (8 vendors).
- The number of vendors reporting being unable to re-stock has more than doubled in the past 6 months in NES, most notably gas vendors in Al-Hasakeh governorate.

Vendors reporting price inflation as their main supply challenge



Time until out of stock, among the 31 vendor reporting they are not able to re-stock



43% less than 3 days
34% more than 1 month
20% 1 to 3 weeks
2% (1 vendor) 3 to 7 days

Most commonly reported supply challenges (% of surveyed vendors)⁷

	AREA	REPORTED %
PRICE INFLATION	NES	80%
	NE Aleppo	57%
	Al-Hasakeh	87%
	Ar-Raqqa	87%
	Deir-Ez-Zor	75%
NO ISSUES	NES	15%
	NE Aleppo	40%
	Al-Hasakeh	4%
	Ar-Raqqa	11%
	Deir-Ez-Zor	18%
SUPPLY CANT MEET DEMAND	NES	13%
	NE Aleppo	2%
	Al-Hasakeh	16%
	Ar-Raqqa	9%
	Deir-Ez-Zor	42%
SUPPLIER LIMITED SUPPLY	NES	8%
	NE Aleppo	10%
	Al-Hasakeh	11%
	Ar-Raqqa	4%
	Deir-Ez-Zor	4%

7. Multiple choice responses are not expected to total 100%. Please see this month's JMMI dataset for all supply challenges reported by vendors.

METHODOLOGY

The exercise assesses the availability and prices of 36 basic commodities that are typically sold in markets and consumed by average Syrian households, including food and non-food items, water, 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.

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. For more details about the methodology, access the online [JMMI dashboard](#).

In light of the fluctuation of the Syrian Pound (SYP)'s value and resulting market disruption, prices should be seen as representative only of the markets and dates where and when information was collected (2 - 9 January 2023).

LIMITATIONS

All JMMI data is only indicative for 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 standardize 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.

It is important to keep in mind that some vendors might feel more or less inclined to share their actual experiences (fearing that the information shared might be used by competitors or in some way against their business), while others might adjust their answers based on the expected effect that they will have on humanitarian programming. Similarly, even though all enumerators received the same training, some might have more previous experience and might therefore be better able to produce higher quality data.

Part of the data collection takes place remotely using vendor contact information collected in advance by the JMMI partners,

in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Market monitoring can be challenging, especially through remote interviews. At the same time, the JMMI has over seven years of accumulated experience, strong internal coordination and external relation with vendors, and vast longitudinal data, which supports the accuracy of findings.

JMMI AND THE CASH WORKING GROUP

The JMMI exists within the framework of the Cash Working Group (CWG). In northwest Syria (NWS), 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

PARTNERS

Each month, around 20 different organizations 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.

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, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms.

For more information about REACH, please contact the REACH JMMI focal point, Safa'a Harahsheh, at safaa.harahsheh@reach-initiative.org or visit the [REACH Syria Resource Centre](#).

