

Introduction

The ongoing conflict in Syria has led to displacement from and within Deir-ez-Zor governorate. Since the last REACH Situation Overview of Deir-ez-Zor governorate in [February 2019](#), the progressive de-escalation of active conflict continued and humanitarian access improved in the governorate. However, there are still significant access and security limitations in various areas of the governorate and the displacement context remains dynamic. Humanitarian actors face substantial information gaps in terms of the locations and priority needs of non-displaced residents, spontaneous returnees (SRs), and internally displaced persons (IDPs). REACH has conducted a sixth round of the Deir-ez-Zor Situation Overview in order to inform the humanitarian response in the governorate on the multi-sectoral needs of the conflict-affected populations.

Key Findings

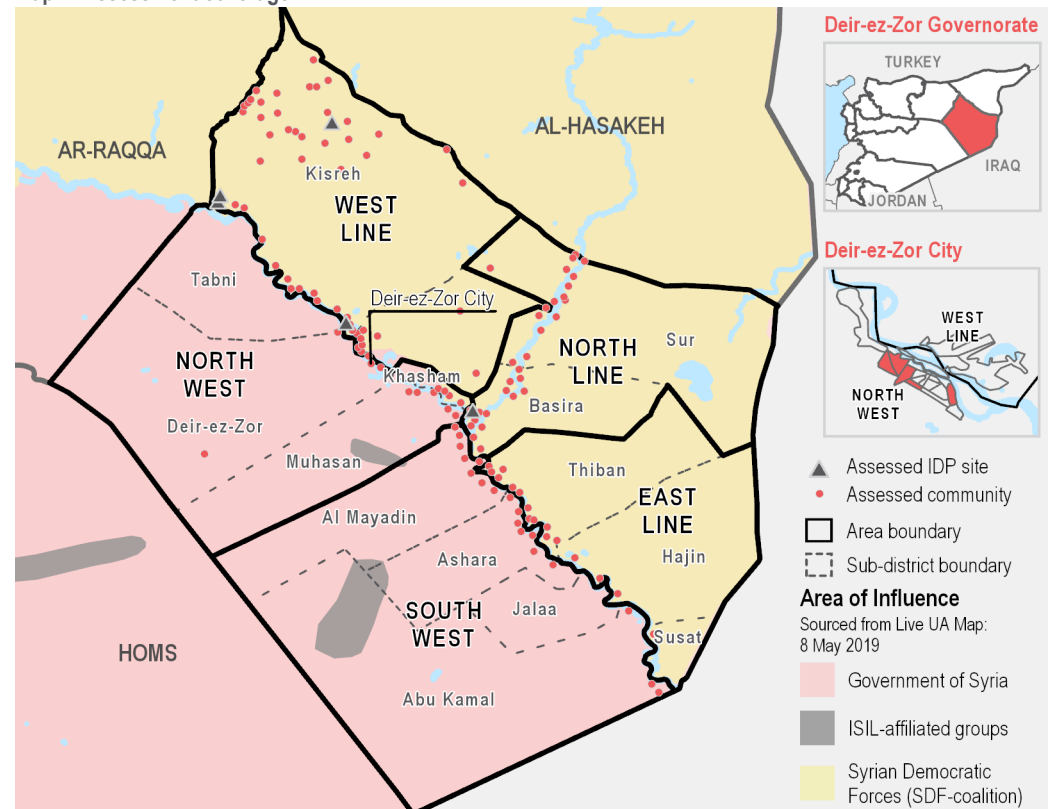
- **Displacement:** Spontaneous returnees movements have occurred since the previous assessment and the end of active conflict in the governorate. SRs have come from other governorates and from within Deir-ez-Zor itself, towards locations all over the governorate. The estimated number of IDPs in the area remains high (76,300 individuals) despite large movements to Al Hasakeh governorate since January 2019.
- **Food Security & Livelihoods:** Livelihoods remain the most reported priority need, since a large proportion of the population cannot access them. The use of negative coping strategies by households to fulfill their basic needs has been reported, which may be linked to the increased cost of living, changing exchange rates and market supply chain issues, as well as a disrupted local economy due to the conflict.
- **Education:** Despite improved coverage by accessible primary education facilities, the overall estimated attendance rate has decreased since February 2019 and IDPs continue to access education at a significantly lower rate than host community children. Child labour continues to be a significant barrier to accessing education, as it was one of the reported strategies used by households to cope with a lack of income.
- **Protection:** In addition to the high prevalence of child labour, rates of early marriage have reportedly increased across the governorate. In the Southwest and the Northwest, IDPs reportedly faced restrictions on movement and the confiscation of documents. In the East Line, IDPs reportedly faced threats from explosives and armed groups, in relation to the active conflict that was ongoing during the reporting period.
- **Shelter:** IDPs, as well as SRs who have not returned to their former homes, were commonly reported to be living in unfinished or damaged shelters, especially in the Northwest and the Southwest. Across all areas, 22% of shelters reportedly have at least a minor damage. Unaffordably high prices of repair materials and professional repair services were the most frequently listed barriers to shelter repair.
- **WASH:** Insufficient access to water was reported to be an issue in the East Line, the North Line, and the West Line, where the main reported barriers were the high cost to obtain water and partial or complete inoperability of the main network. In these areas, the most commonly reported sanitation issues were flooding in the streets, open defecation, and the absence of a functioning sewage network.
- **Health:** Many areas across the entire governorate faced gaps and challenges in terms of health services coverage, accessibility and functionality. The main reported barriers to accessing healthcare were the cost of services, a lack of skilled and female medical professionals, and the time and money required to travel to facilities.

Methodology

138 communities, neighbourhoods, and IDP sites in Deir-ez-Zor governorate were assessed between 23 April and 6 May 2019 through remote Key Informant (KI) interviews, with three KIs per assessed location. Separate tools were used to assess communities and informal sites and identify population estimates and multi-sectoral needs. Identified IDP sites were only assessed separately if they were located outside the boundaries of permanent communities. The data were triangulated with secondary sources. Initial findings were presented to the enumerators involved in data collection in order to get input on the context and possible interpretations of the data.

While efforts were made to cover as many locations as possible, the list of assessed sites and communities was compiled on the basis of accessibility, and should therefore not be considered to be fully comprehensive. Information should only be considered as relevant to the time of data collection, given the dynamic situation in the governorate. Findings are not statistically representative and should be regarded as indicative only, particularly as they are aggregated across communities and sites within which humanitarian conditions may vary widely between households.

Map 1: Assessment coverage



Population, Returns, and Internal Displacements

- 814,100 individuals were estimated to be living in the 133 assessed communities where population data is available in Deir-ez-Zor governorate.
- Around 76,300 individuals were estimated to be currently displaced in the assessed locations within the governorate. IDP Taskforce data¹ suggests that the main IDP movements in the area were from Deir-ez-Zor governorate to Al-Hasakeh governorate, and IDPs who returned to their homes within the governorate between January and April 2019. The largest proportions of IDPs were recorded in Khasham and Kisreh, followed by Thiban sub-districts.
- An estimated 565,300 individuals in the assessed communities in Deir-ez-Zor were reportedly spontaneous returnees², who had previously been displaced both inside and outside Deir-ez-Zor governorate¹. SRs are estimated to represent 77% of the host community population across all assessed communities in the governorate.

Map 2: Estimated spontaneous returnee population proportion per community

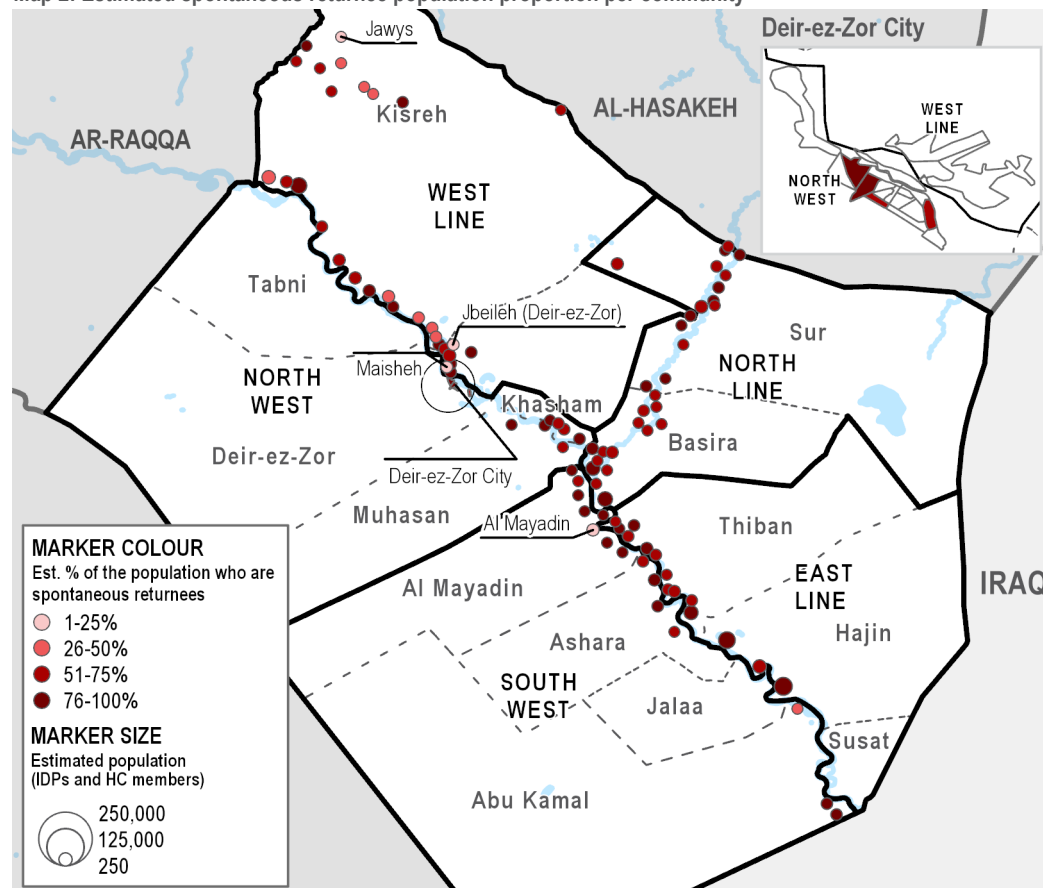
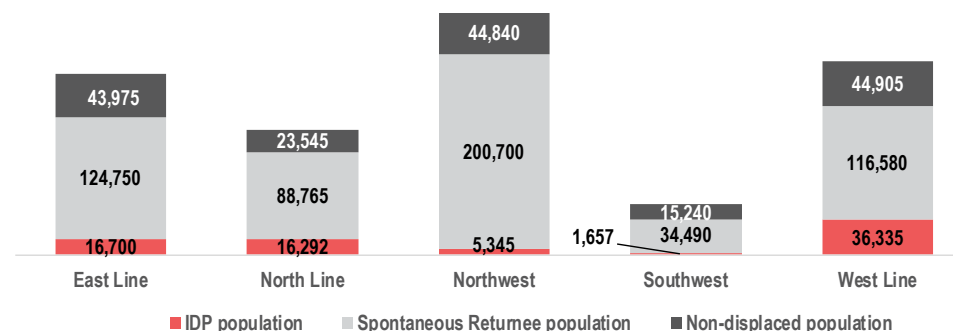
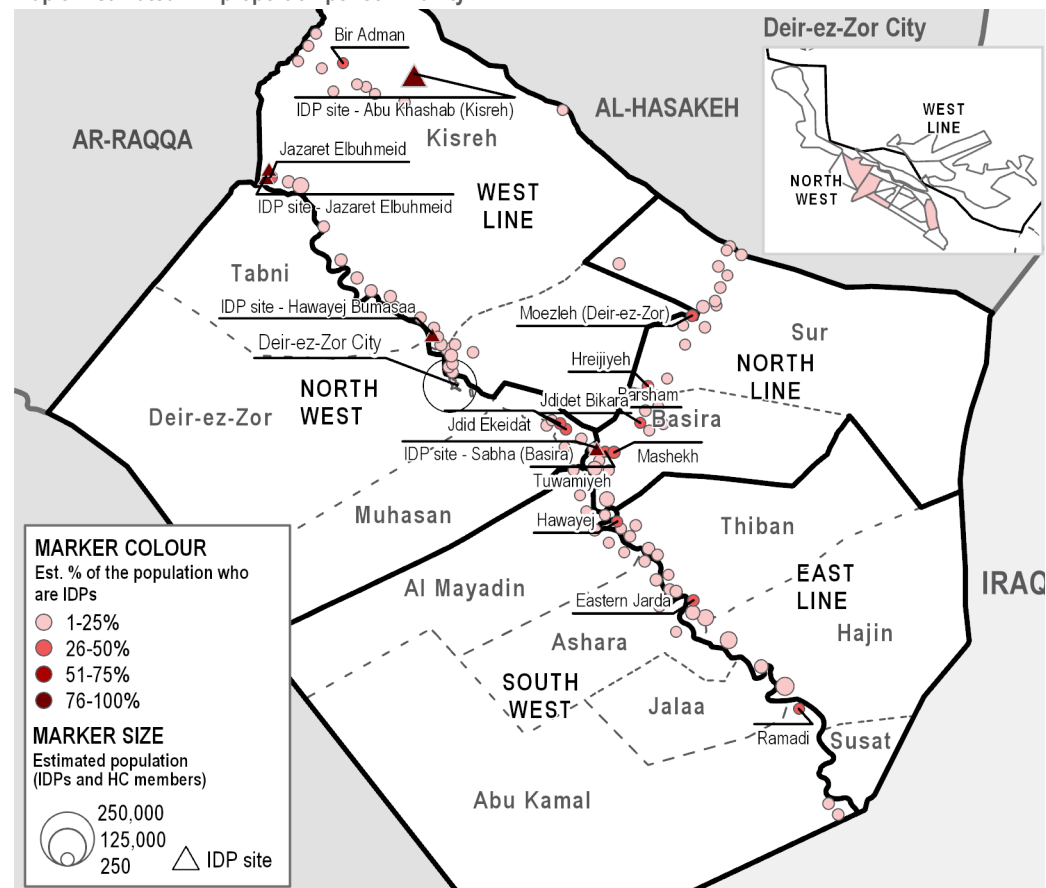


Figure 1: Total estimated IDPs, SRs and non-displaced populations (in individuals)²



Map 3: Estimated IDP proportion per community





Food Security & Livelihoods

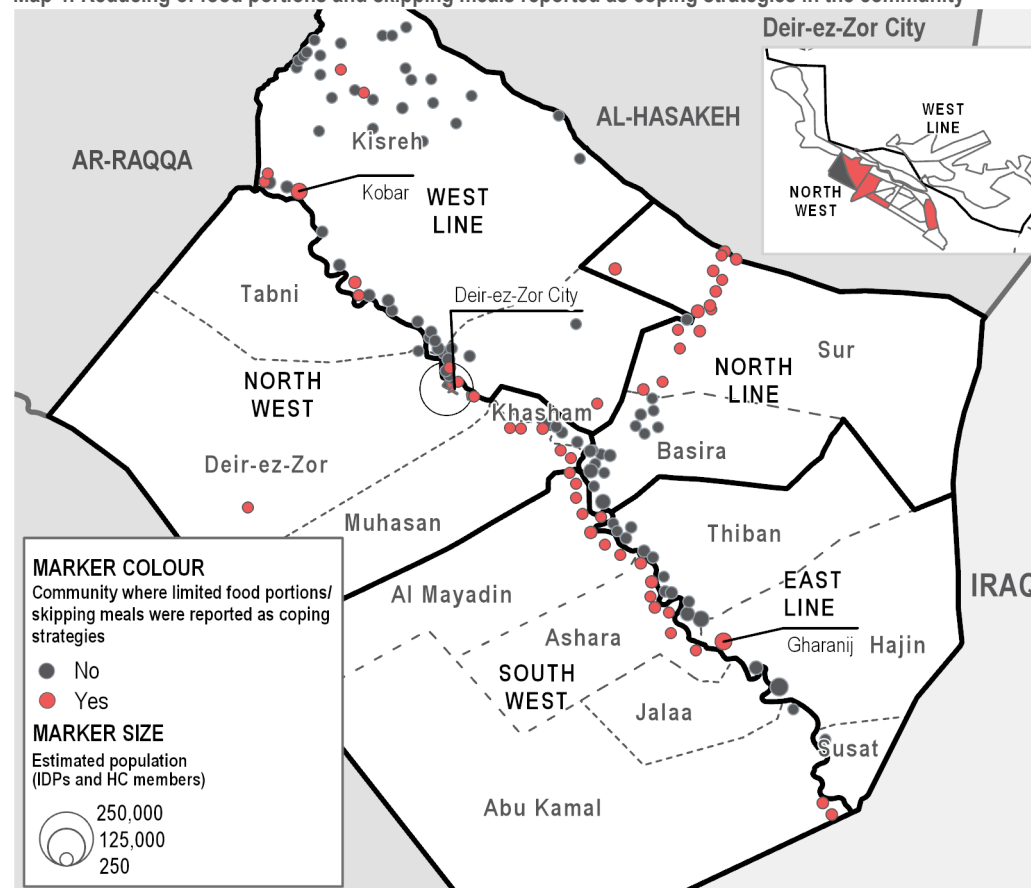
- In almost all assessed communities, a general lack of employment opportunities was reported to be one of the key barriers preventing households from accessing livelihoods, followed by low wages.
- Growing crops was the most commonly reported first source of income across all assessed areas of the governorate, especially in the Southwest (94%) and the West Line (75%). In communities where KIs reported growing crops as a main income source, the most common crops were wheat and barley (99%), vegetables (97%), cotton (43%) and lentils (15%), as well as chickpeas in the Southwest (29%).
- Although KIs in 98% of communities expected the upcoming harvest to be either good or very good, NDVI analysis³ indicates a lower than average growth of crops along the Euphrates river, possibly due to conflict conditions.
- Overall, the most commonly reported barriers to crop production in assessed communities were the high prices and limited availability of seeds and fertiliser, followed by the limited availability of agricultural equipment and seeds. Another barrier to crop production reported by KIs in the North Line (63%) and the Northwest (20%) was the need for irrigation.
- Raising or shepherding livestock was commonly reported as a top-three source of income, especially in the East Line (81%) and the Southwest (83%). In communities where KIs reported that raising or shepherding livestock was a top-three livelihood source, the most commonly reported types of livestock were sheep (98%), goats (81%), cattle (62%), and chicken (59%).
- Remittances were reported as a main source of income by KIs in communities assessed in the East Line and the North Line. Skilled trades were most commonly reported in communities in the South West (89%) and the North West (40%).
- In all assessed communities within the governorate (98%) but three, KIs reported that more than half of households were able to cover their basic needs through their sources of income in the 30 days prior to the assessment. However, 76% to 99% of the households in the community were reported to be able to cover their basic needs in only in 30% of all assessed communities. This may be explained both by a lack of income sources, and by the progressive increase of the median Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) cost since May 2018⁴.

Table 1: Primary sources of income in the community, by % of assessed communities⁵

	East Line	North Line	Northwest	Southwest	West Line
First source of income	Remittances (75%)	Remittances (53%)	Growing crops (47%)	Growing crops (94%)	Growing crops (75%)
Second source of income	Raising livestock (75%)	Raising livestock (40%)	Raising livestock (47%)	Raising livestock (72%)	Raising livestock (36%)
Third source of income	Growing crops (38%)	Trade / shops (40%)	Skilled trades (40%)	Skilled trades (89%)	Remittances (39%)

- Buying items from shopkeepers on credit was the most commonly reported strategy used to cope with insufficient income, especially in the East Line (100% of communities), the North Line (100%), and the West Line (97%). The second most reported coping strategy was receiving donations or loans (67%), especially in the Southwest (100%) and the Northwest (87%). In 94% of communities in the Southwest, 80% in the Northwest, and 50% in the North Line, decreasing of food portions and skipping meals were reported used as coping strategies.
- In 45% of assessed communities, the most commonly reported source of bread in the 30 days prior to data collection was home baking (mainly in the Southwest), followed by public bakeries (22%) and private bakeries (20%).
- Flour was reported as not available or affordable in the month prior to data collection in 91% of assessed communities in the East Line, North Line and West Line. Additionally, chicken and tomatoes were reported as not available or affordable respectively in 68% and 64% of all assessed communities.

Map 4: Reducing of food portions and skipping meals reported as coping strategies in the community



3) "NDVI [is a] value that, over time, can be averaged to establish the normal growing conditions for the vegetation in a given region for a given time of the year." [NASA Earth Observatory](https://www.nasa.gov/content/5m8x0001/visualizing-vegetation-health/). Specific imagery of the assessed area can be found on: [GIMMS MODIS NDVI Global Agricultural Monitoring System](https://gimms.modis.noaa.gov/), NASA.

4) Between January and April 2019, the median SMEB cost has increased by 7% in Northeast Syria. [Northeast Syria Market Monitoring Monthly Snapshot, REACH, January - April 2019](#).

5) KIs were asked to rank the three primary sources of income of households in the community.

Education

- **Primary education was available in almost all assessed communities (98%).** In 6% of communities in the East Line and 3% in the West Line, KIs reported that there were no accessible functional education facilities at all.
- **The presence of intermediate schools was reported to be high in the Southwest and in the Northwest,** where respectively 100% and 73% of communities reportedly had at least one intermediate school. In all other areas, intermediate schools were reported to be unavailable in most communities.
- **Secondary education was available in 9% of assessed communities,** with reported facilities concentrated in and around larger cities.
- **Estimated attendance rates were significantly lower for IDP children than for host community children across all assessed areas,** most notably when it comes to primary education in the West Line, the North Line, and the East Line. Overall, intermediate and secondary school attendance rates were very low in all assessed areas.
- **The two main reported barriers to accessing education were child labour, reported in 77% of assessed communities, and customs/tradition, such as early marriage, which prevent girls from attending school and were reported in 65% of communities.**
- **In half of all assessed communities (49%), at least one functional educational facility was reportedly in need of rehabilitation.** This need was especially high in the North Line and the East Line, where schools in respectively 80% and 75% of communities reportedly required rehabilitation of walls, sanitation, windows, water systems, electrical systems, or roofs.
- **The presence of non-functional education facilities was reported in 11% of assessed communities,** concentrated in Abu Kamal and Al Mayadin sub-districts in the South West. The main reported reasons why schools were not functional were the lack of electricity, water, sanitation, and furniture, as well as severe damage to buildings.

Figure 2: Estimated primary school attendance rates for IDP and host community children, by % of assessed communities

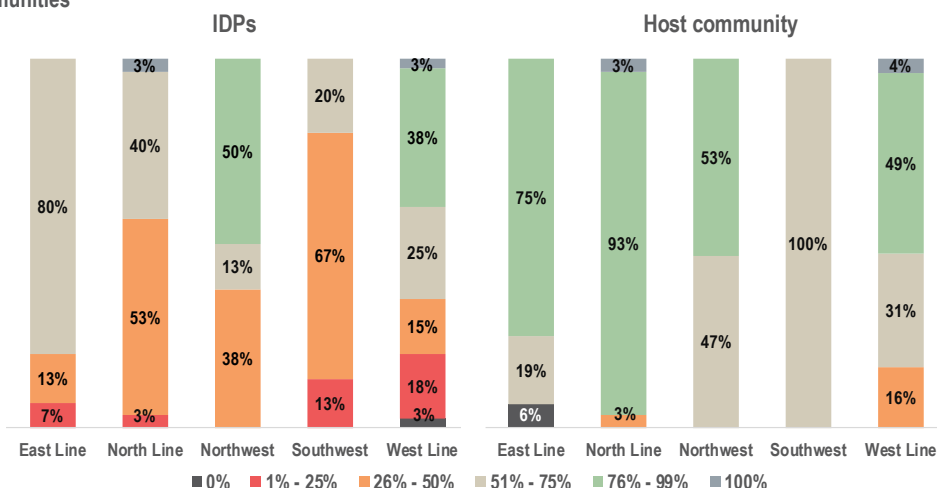
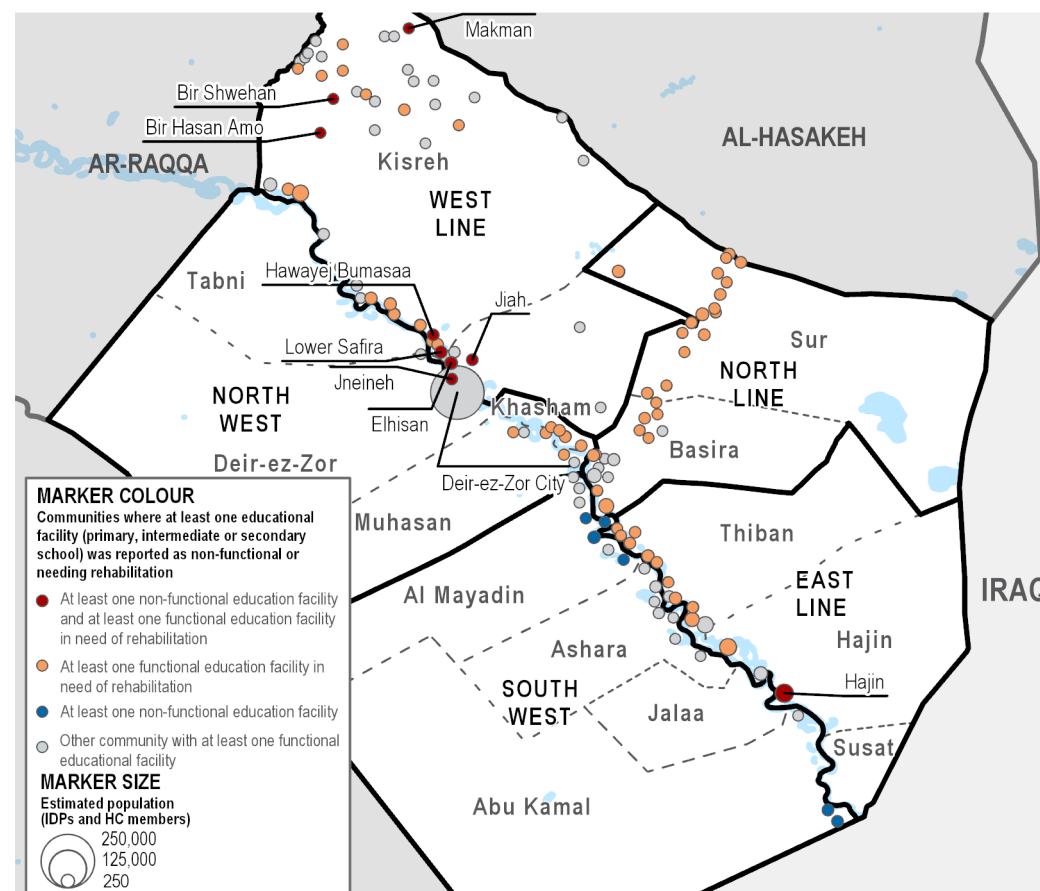


Table 2: Most commonly reported barriers to accessing education, by % of assessed communities⁶

	East Line	North Line	Northwest	Southwest	West Line
1	Schools not in good condition (87%)	Schools not in good condition (67%)	Children have to work (100%)	Children have to work (100%)	Children have to work (89%)
2	Lack of teaching/learning materials (87%)	No education available for students of a certain age (63%)	Customs, tradition (e.g. early marriage) (73%)	Customs, tradition (e.g. early marriage) (100%)	Customs, tradition (e.g. early marriage) (68%)
3	Customs, tradition (e.g. early marriage) (73%)	Children have to work (60%)	Schools not in good condition (27%)	Schools not in good condition (6%)	No education available for students of a certain age (44%)

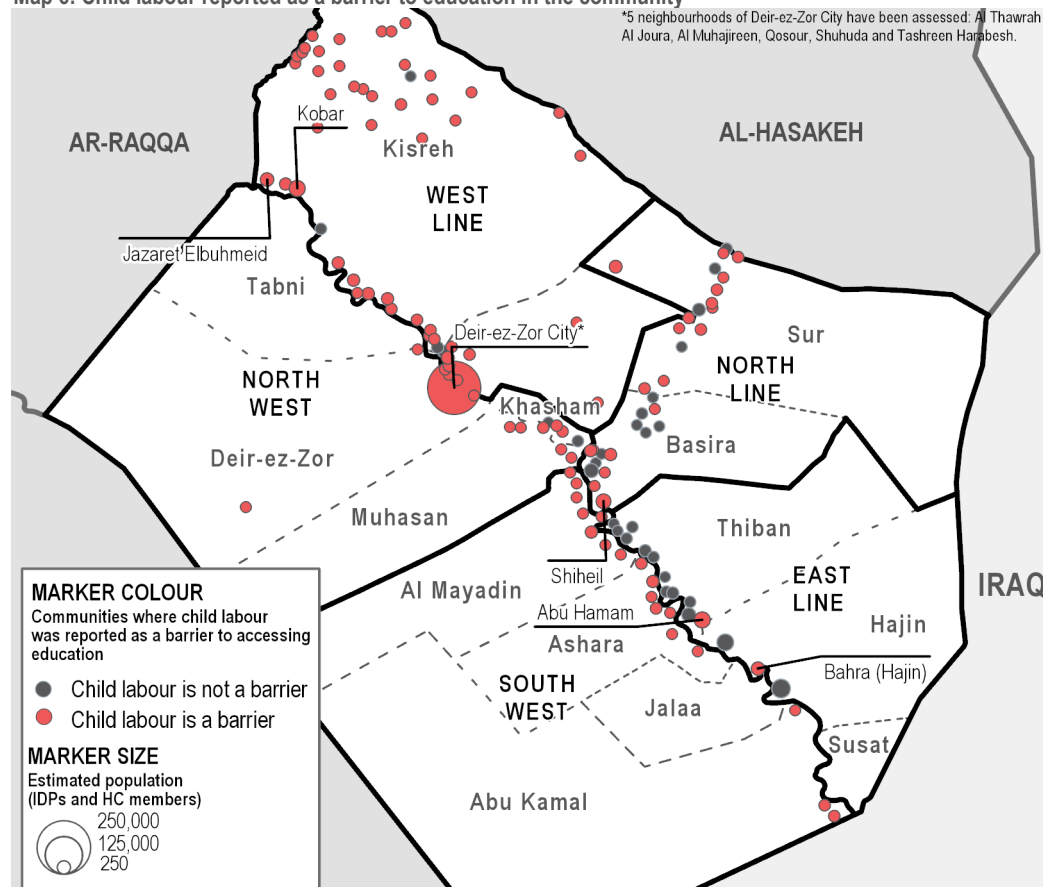
Map 5: Presence of non-functional schools or functional schools in need of rehabilitation in the community



Protection

- Forced restrictions to movement, usually due to the presence of checkpoints, as well as safety and security issues were reported present in all assessed communities of Susat sub-district in the East Line, where active conflict was ongoing in the past months.
- The insufficient availability of transportation options was reported to be a barrier to movement in 94% of communities in the Southwest. Additionally, the high cost of transportation was the most commonly reported barrier to movement in the Southwest, the Northwest, and the North Line. Conversely, in most of the assessed communities in the West Line (90%) and in the East Line (88%), KIs reported that there were no barriers for residents to move outside their communities.
- The two most common child protection issues reported by KIs across the governorate were child labour (by children under 16) and early marriage, respectively in 93% and 67% of assessed communities. Involvement of children under 18 in armed activities was also reported by KIs in communities in the West Line (22%) and the East Line (11%).

Map 6: Child labour reported as a barrier to education in the community



- The most commonly reported protection issues in communities where IDPs were present varied between assessed areas. In the East Line, the most commonly reported issues in communities with a presence of IDPs were a threat of explosive devices⁷ (67%) and from armed groups (40%). IDPs were reportedly at risk of having their documentation confiscated or their movements restricted in both the South West (93%) and the North West (50%).

Table 3: Most commonly reported child protection risks, by % of assessed communities⁸

	Early marriage	Child labour	Children involved in illicit activities	Children involved in armed activities
East Line	88%	94%	0%	0%
North Line	37%	87%	0%	0%
Northwest	73%	80%	7%	0%
Southwest	100%	100%	0%	6%
West Line	64%	97%	0%	0%

Reported Priority Needs

- Jobs and other sources of income were the most commonly reported first priority need⁹ in the South West (94%), Northwest (87%) and North Line (60%).
- In the East Line, the first priority need reported by KIs was water. In the West Line, it was safety and security.
- Overall, other most commonly reported priority needs were healthcare, electricity, and water. NFIs were reported as a priority need in the Southwest and the Northwest. Safety and security was reported as a priority need in the East Line.

Table 4: Most commonly reported priority needs in the community, by % of assessed communities⁹

	East Line	North Line	Northwest	Southwest	West Line
First priority need	Water (69%)	Jobs/Sources of income (60%)	Jobs/Sources of income (87%)	Jobs/Sources of income (94%)	Safety and security (27%)
Second priority need	Healthcare (50%)	Healthcare (53%)	Healthcare / NFIs (33%)	Electricity (89%)	Jobs/Sources of income (53%)
Third priority need	Safety and security (44%)	Electricity (33%)	NFIs (40%)	NFIs (83%)	Healthcare (36%)

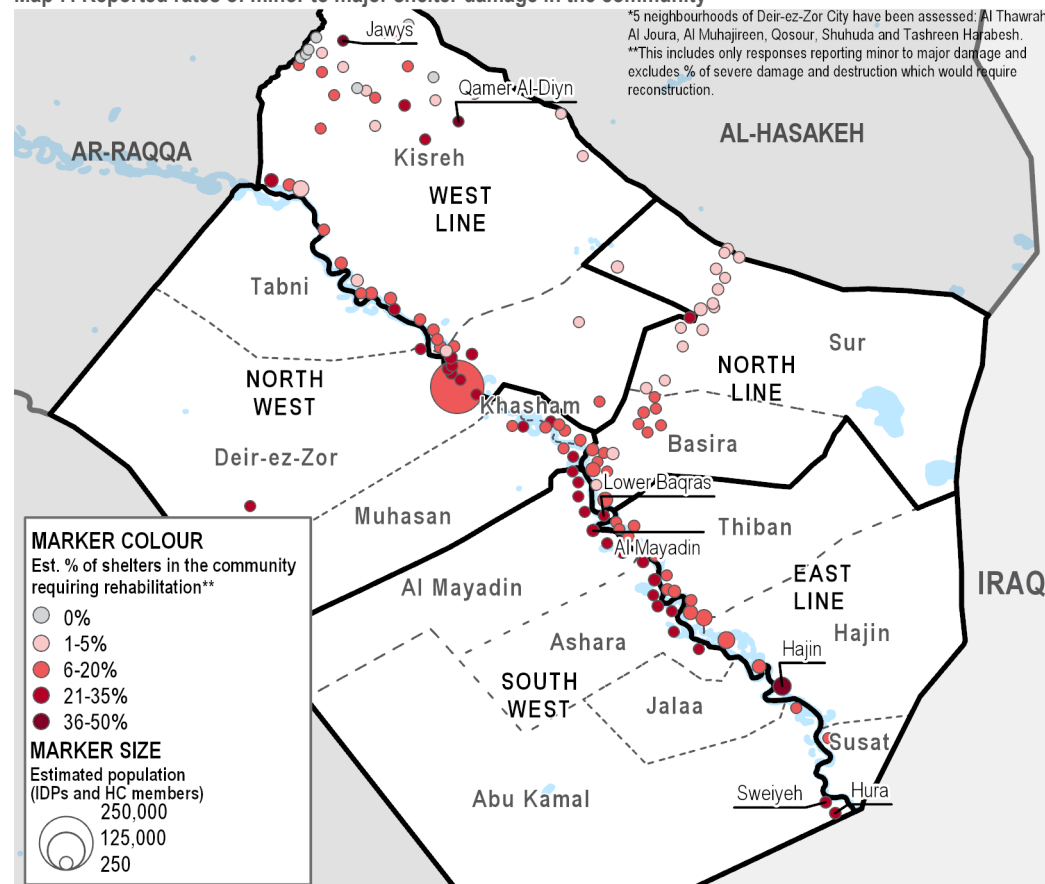
7) IEDs, SVBIEDs or BBIED were listed as examples.

8) KIs were asked to select all that applied.

9) KIs were asked to rank the three primary priority needs of households in the community.

- In 79% of assessed communities with spontaneous returnees, KIs estimated that 84% of them had returned to the same properties they had lived in prior to being displaced. The most commonly reported reasons for spontaneous returnees not to have returned to their previous residences were that the shelters were being rented out to others, that they were damaged, the presence of squatters, and the inability to pay rent.
- Spontaneous returnees who had not returned to their former homes reportedly most commonly lived in finished and undamaged houses or apartments. However, KIs also reported that at least some spontaneous returnees lived in unfinished and damaged buildings in 61% of assessed communities, especially in the Northwest and the Southwest.
- The majority of KIs reported that most IDPs in assessed communities lived in solid finished houses or apartments. IDPs were reportedly living in unfinished, or damaged buildings, with higher portions reported in the Southwest and the Northwest.

Map 7: Reported rates of minor to major shelter damage in the community



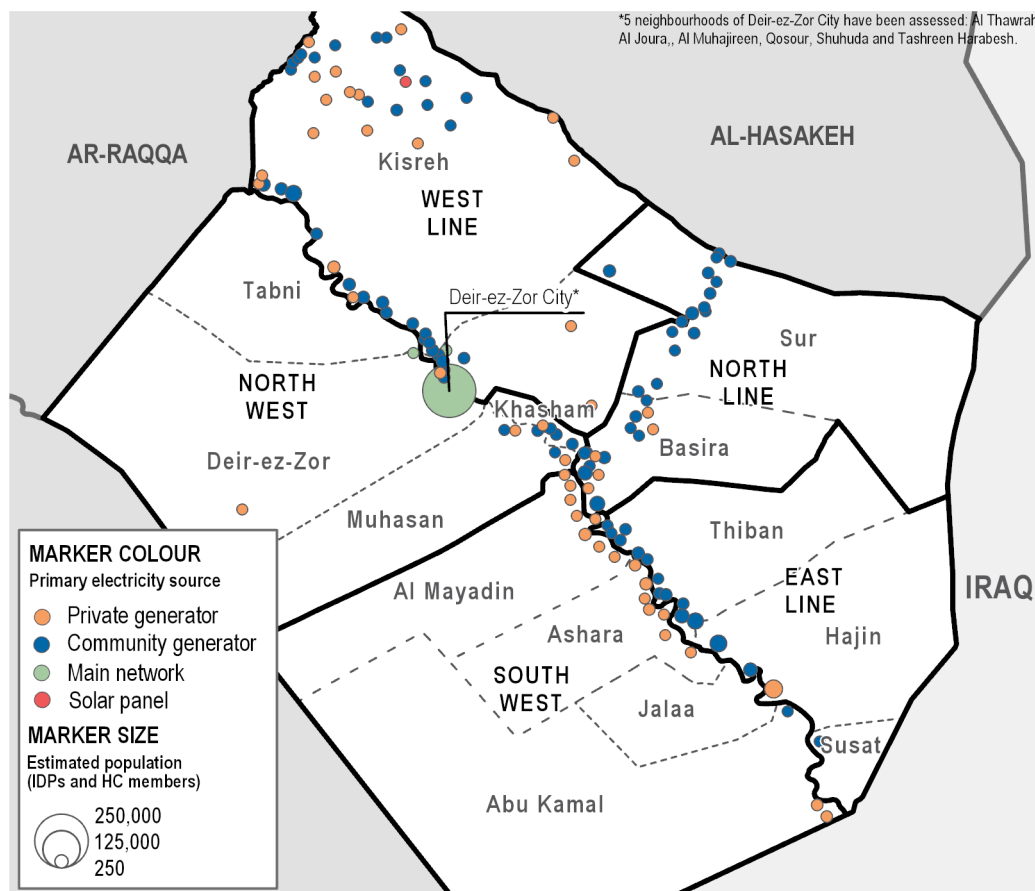
- According to KIs, an estimated 2% of IDPs in assessed communities were living in collective centres, the majority of which were originally school buildings. Most IDPs living in assessed IDP sites were reported living in Abu Kashab informal camp. Other IDPs living in assessed IDP sites were reported living in informal tented settlements or public buildings (Jazaret Elbuhmeid site).
- Following a significant increase in rental prices reported in January 2019, KIs in 32% of all assessed communities reported that rental prices had remained stable in the three months prior to data collection. An increase of rental prices has been reported by KIs in 24% of all assessed communities, while a decrease of rental prices, concentrated in the East Line, was reported in 14% of all assessed communities.
- KIs in assessed communities, estimated that, on average, 30% of buildings in communities in the Southwest, 17% of buildings in communities in the Northwest and the East Line, 16% of buildings in the West Line, and 9% of buildings in the North Line had sustained minor or major damage. Across all assessed areas, 5% of shelters were estimated to be severely damaged or completely destroyed.
- The high cost of repair materials was the most frequently named barrier to shelter repair, reported by KIs in 84% of all assessed communities in all areas. The inability to afford the services of a professional was also reported as one of the main barriers to shelter repairs, especially in communities in the Northwest, the Southwest, and the East Line. Additionally, repair materials were reportedly unavailable in 17% of assessed communities, most notably in 31% of communities in the West Line.
- The two most commonly reported shelter inadequacies were a lack of lighting around the shelter, reported in 80% of assessed communities, and a lack of lighting inside the shelter, reported in 59% of assessed communities. In Sur sub-district, a lack of toilets was reported by KIs in all assessed communities. Additionally, KIs in 91% of assessed communities in the Southwest and the East Line reported that a lack of heating was a key shelter issue.

Table 5: Main challenges in repairing shelters, by % of assessed communities¹⁰

	Shelter/repair materials are too expensive	Repair professionals are not affordable	Shelter/repair materials are unavailable in the market	Repairs professionals are not available	Lack of authorisation to do repairs	None
East Line	100%	63%	6%	13%	0%	0%
North Line	97%	33%	0%	10%	0%	3%
Northwest	93%	73%	13%	0%	0%	0%
Southwest	89%	83%	11%	6%	6%	0%
West Line	69%	29%	31%	14%	2%	27%

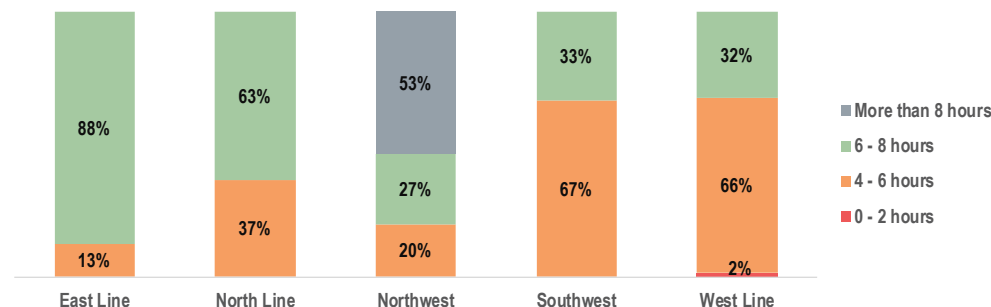
- Private generators were the most commonly reported main source of electricity in the Southwest, while community generators were reportedly more common in the East Line, the North Line, and the West Line. In the North West, the use of mixed electricity sources was reported, including the main network (primarily in Deir-ez-Zor sub-district), community generators, and private generators.
- KIs in almost all assessed communities (99%) reported that residents had access to at least four hours of electricity per day. The higher estimated access to electricity was reported in the Northwest, while the estimated average number of hours of electricity available were reported to be lower in communities in the Southwest and the West Line.

Map 8: Reported primary source of electricity in the community



- In Deir-ez-Zor sub-district, where the main network was commonly reported as the primary source of electricity, residents reportedly had access to electricity for more than 8 hours per day. Conversely, one community in Kisreh sub-district in the West Line reportedly had access to electricity for less than 2 hours per day.

Figure 3: Estimated average daily hours of electricity available in the community, by % of assessed communities¹¹



NFI Non-food Items (NFIs)

- Sources of light, cool boxes, and disposable diapers were the top reported priority NFI needs across all areas for the next three months. Additionally, in the North Line and the Northwest, KIs most commonly reported a need for cooking fuel (70% of communities). Batteries were commonly reported as a top NFI need in 25% of assessed communities, including 67% of communities in the Southwest. Access to NFIs was considered to be a priority need in the South West and in Muhasan sub-district in the Northwest.

Table 6: Most commonly reported top NFI needs in the community, by % of assessed communities¹²

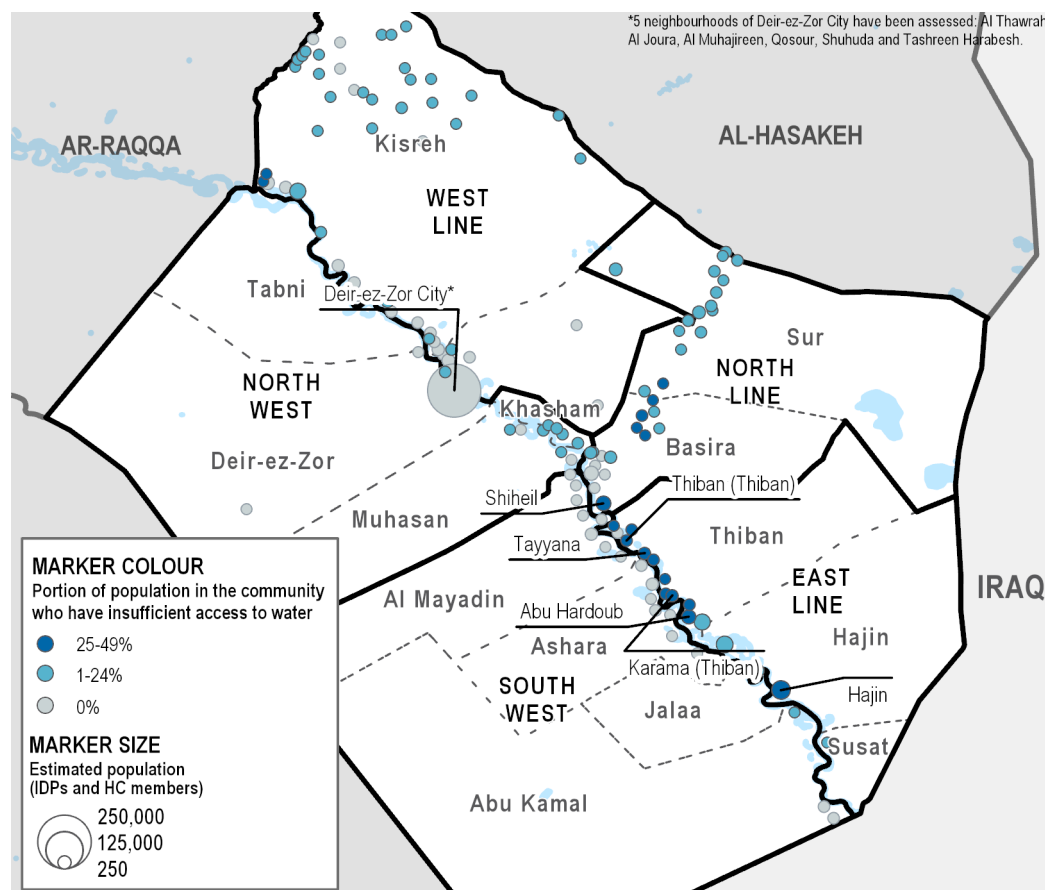
	East Line	North Line	Northwest	Southwest	West Line
1	Disposable diapers (88%)	Cooking fuel (73%)	Cooking fuel (67%)	Sources of light (100%)	Sources of light (68%)
2	Cool box (75%)	Sources of light (70%)	Heating fuel (60%)	Batteries (67%)	Disposable diapers (56%)
3	Batteries (38%)	Cool box (70%)	Sources of light (47%)	Heating fuel (50%)	Cool box (44%)
4	Water containers (31%)	Disposable diapers (43%)	Batteries (33%)	Cool box (39%)	Water containers (31%)
5	Sources of light (25%)	Water containers (17%)	Cool box (27%)	Cooking fuel (33%)	Cooking fuel (29%)

11) KIs were allowed to select one option.

12) KIs were allowed to select up to three options.

- KIs in the majority of communities in the East Line, in the North Line, and the West Line reported that at least some residents did not have access to enough drinkable water to cover their needs, with a higher rate of population (25% to 49%) without access to enough drinkable water reported in communities in the East Line. In the Northwest and the Southwest, most KIs in assessed communities reported that residents faced no issue of access to enough drinkable water to cover their needs.
- The main reported barrier to accessing sufficient drinking water in the 30 days prior to the assessment was the high cost reported in 59% of assessed communities, especially in the North Line (92%) and the West Line (64%). KIs in the majority of communities (73%) in the East Line reported that a key barrier was that the main network had either partially or completely stopped functioning.

Map 9: Reported access to enough drinkable water to cover needs in the community



- Use of the water network as the primary source of drinking water was reported in all assessed communities of the Northwest and the Southwest. The majority of assessed communities in the North Line (90%) reportedly used water trucking as their primary source of drinking water. Finally, in the East Line, residents in 69% of assessed communities reportedly primarily used bottled water. This was particularly the case in Thiban district, where bottled water mainly refers to filtered water from treatment plants, which has been bottled in large water containers. Water sources in the West Line were mixed, with water trucking as the most commonly reported primary water source (58%), followed by use of the water network (42%).
- KIs in a majority of assessed communities (68%) reported that there were issues with drinking water quality, especially in the North West and the South West, where issues with the colour, taste, and smell of the water were reported in 76% of all assessed communities. In the West Line and the North Line, the most commonly reported issue was that water had a bad colour. Water quality was reportedly best in the East Line, where KIs in 81% of all assessed communities reported that there were no issues with the main sources of water.
- KIs in 85% of all 108 assessed communities with IDPs (including IDP sites), reported that IDP community members had access to private latrines inside their homes. However, in 34% of assessed communities with IDPs, KIs reported the use of communal toilets by IDPs, especially in the East Line (73%). KIs also reported the practice of open defecation in 37% of all assessed communities with IDPs, especially in the East Line (67%), the North Line (57%), and the West Line (30%). In Sur sub-district, in the North Line, KIs in all communities with IDPs reported the practice of open defecation, as well as in 82% of communities in Thiban sub-district, in the East Line.
- Reported sanitation issues varied between assessed areas. In the majority of assessed communities in the Southwest (89%) and the Northwest (87%), KIs reported that there were no sanitation issues. Sanitation issues were reportedly more common in the East Line (83%) and in the North Line (76%), where the most commonly reported issues were flooding in the streets, open defecation, and the sewage network not working or being nonexistent. In the West Line, the two main reported issues were flooding in the streets (41%) and sewage flowing into the streets (20%).

Table 7: Sanitation issues reported, by % of assessed communities¹³

	No issue	Flooding in the streets	Open defecation	No sewage network	Sewage flowing onto the streets
East Line	25%	81%	38%	6%	6%
North Line	30%	70%	53%	50%	3%
Northwest	87%	13%	0%	0%	7%
Southwest	89%	0%	0%	0%	0%
West Line	59%	41%	20%	2%	20%

13) KIs were allowed to select all options that applied.

- **KIs reported that no health services were present in 52% of the assessed communities across all areas.** The most commonly reported accessible health services were private (in 38% of assessed communities), especially in the East Line, followed by community health services, which were reportedly present in 22% of all assessed communities. Additionally, pharmacies were reportedly present in 83% of all assessed communities.
- **KIs in 69% of all assessed communities in the East Line reported that at least one health facility in their community was no longer functional.** Across all of these communities, the reasons cited were a lack of medical supplies, of medical staff, and of equipment and furniture.
- **Overall, the main reported barriers to accessing healthcare varied between assessed areas.** The most commonly reported barriers were the high cost of services (57%), a lack of skilled medical

professionals (46%), a lack of female medical staff (40%), the amount of time required to reach health facilities (36%), and the high cost of transportation (23%). A lack of sufficient specialised services was also reported in the Southwest, the West Line and the North Line

- In the 32 communities where the cost of transportation was reported to be a barrier, **the average reported cost to travel back and forth to the nearest health service was 4,703 SYP¹⁴**, which represented around 7% of the Northeast Syria SMEB¹⁵ in April 2019. **In the 32 communities where the amount of time required to reach healthcare facilities was reported to be a barrier, travel times were reported to be between one and three hours.**

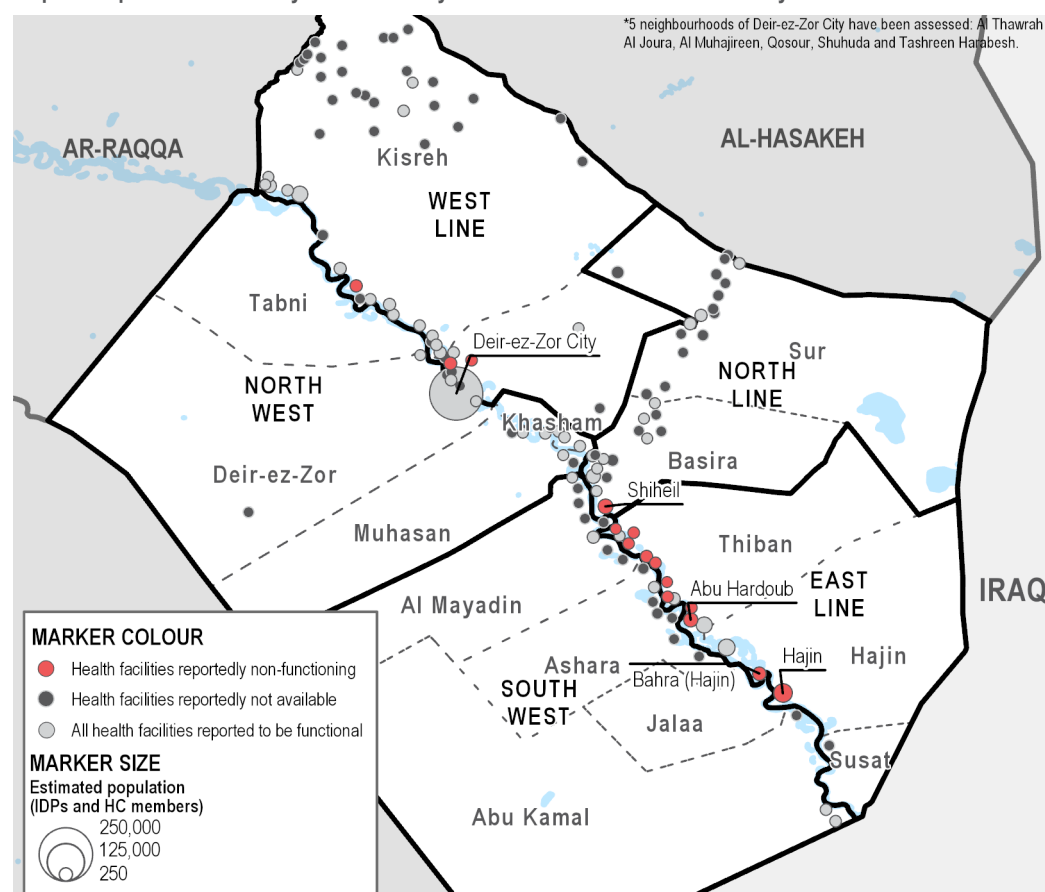
Table 8: Reasons for non-functional status of health facilities, by % of assessed communities with one or more non-functioning health facilities¹⁶

	Lack of health staff	Lack of medical supplies	Lack of equipment and furniture	Building severely damaged
East Line	100%	100%	100%	0%
North Line	100%	100%	50%	50%
West Line	0%	0%	0%	100%

Table 9: Most commonly reported barriers to accessing healthcare services, by % of assessed communities¹⁷

	Cost of services	Lack of female medical professionals	Lack of skilled medical professionals	Time required to reach facilities	Cost of transportation	Lack of equipment/medication
East Line	69%	75%	38%	6%	0%	31%
North Line	97%	17%	67%	67%	20%	0%
Northwest	20%	47%	20%	53%	40%	7%
Southwest	6%	56%	39%	50%	56%	0%
West Line	58%	36%	46%	19%	17%	15%

Map 10: Reported functionality and availability of health facilities in the community⁵



¹⁴) Approximately equivalent to 8.68 USD in April 2019.

¹⁵) Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB).

¹⁶) KIs were allowed to select all options that applied.

¹⁷) KIs were allowed to select up to three options.