

INTRODUCTION

To inform humanitarian cash programming, the northeast of Syria (NES) Cash Working Group (CWG) 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; see [fig. 8-9](#); and [11](#)) which represents the minimum, culturally adjusted items required to support a 6-person household for a month. For further information, please see our [methodology](#).

ON-LINE DASHBOARD

To facilitate the interaction with the JMMI, an interactive dashboard is available on-line. The dashboard is designed to allow users to navigate more easily and draw geographical and temporal comparisons across different currencies. To use the on-line interactive dashboard, click [here](#).

- 7 supporting partners
- 4 governorates
- 11 districts
- 30 subdistricts
- 57 communities
- 1,706 shops (vendor key informants)

COST OF NES SMEB^A

610,936 SYP ▲ +4%
133 USD ▼ -5%

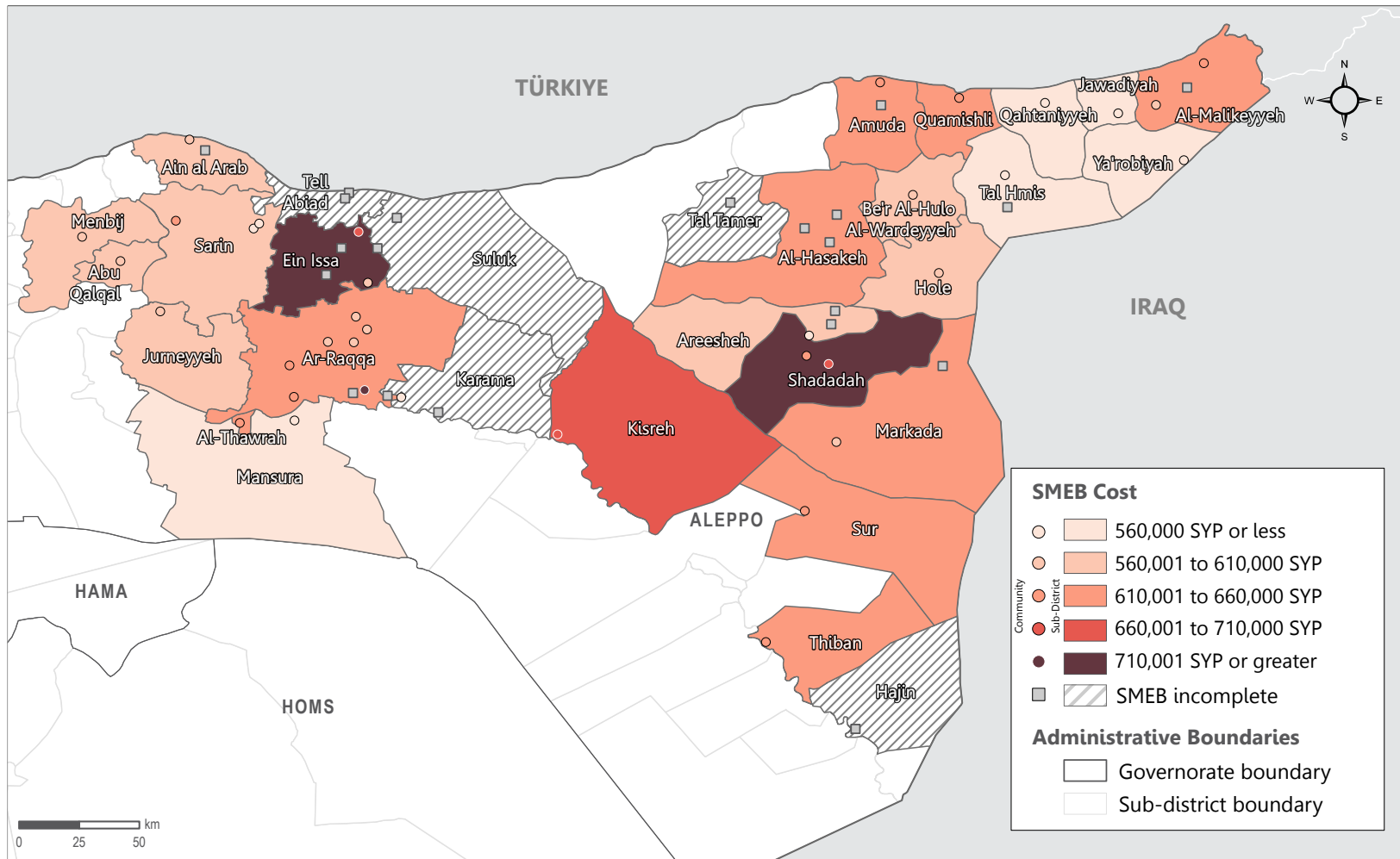
COST OF NES FOOD BASKET^A

471,621 SYP ▲ +5%
103 USD ▼ -4%

NES EXCHANGE RATE^A

USD/SYP
4,585 SYP ▲ +9%

MEDIAN SMEB PRICE PER SUB-DISTRICT (SYP) - FIG. 1



A. 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.

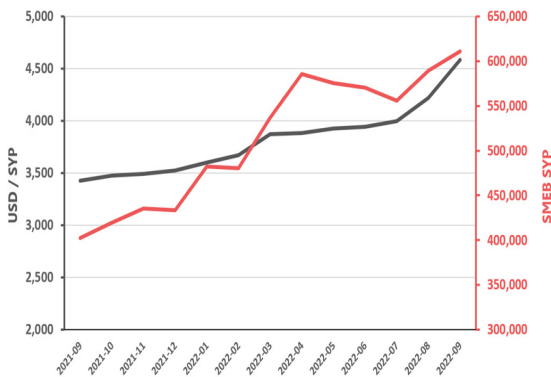
IN THIS FACTSHEET

As the JMMI generates a large amount of data, this factsheet is limited to a high level analysis. For more detailed data, consult the [dataset](#) and [online dashboard](#).

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NORTHEAST SYRIA SMEB PRICE TRENDS VS USD TO SYP INFORMAL EXCHANGE RATES - FIG. 2



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In September, the regional price of the SMEB was recorded to be 610,936 SYP (133 USD), representing a **4% increase** from August. **The SMEB value in NES is currently the highest recorded since JMMI monitoring began in 2016.** The recent increase in cost is in large part due to an increase in the USD exchange rate which has risen steeply in the past two months prompting traders to raise prices to avoid losses (fig. 2). In September the USD/SYP exchange rate was recorded at 4,585 SYP representing a **9% increase** (depreciation) since August and **the highest JMMI recorded exchange rate.**

The regional value of the SMEB food component was recorded at 471,621 SYP (103 USD) which represents a **5% increase** in price since August. **The cost of the SMEB food component in September is also the highest JMMI value recorded.** Majority of food items **increased** in price in September, most notably fresh vegetables, and chicken, as well as other key imported items such as salt and tomato paste which are sensitive to exchange rate fluctuations and monopolization when there are market shortages (fig. 11). **The price of all bulk food items as well as chicken and eggs in September are the highest ever JMMI recorded prices.**

Bread prices **decreased** overall, most notably in Aleppo and Al-Hasakeh governorates. The price of flour comparatively continued to **increase** at a steady rate likely linked to the increase in the exchange rate. The price of water trucking **decreased** slightly in September however **remains the second highest JMMI recorded price and 22% higher than six months ago.**

Transport fuels **increased** overall attributed to increases in the price of both manually refined and high-quality petrol. The price of manually refined and high-quality diesel remained stable. In general, low-quality fuel prices remain significantly more expensive in Deir-ez Zor governorate as a result of supply challenges and unavailability of subsidised fuels.

High inflation remains the predominant challenge facing traders in NES; in September 77% of traders reported it as a key challenge representing a **4% increase** from August (fig. 12).

MEDIAN SMEB PRICE PER SUB-DISTRICT - FIG. 3

	SMEB SYP	1 month change	6 month change	SMEB USD ^B
Northeast Syria SMEB^C	610,936	4%	13%	133
Northeast Aleppo Governorate	577,581	7%	12%	128
Abu Qalqal	583,991	9%	10%	131
Ain al Arab	579,902	16%	18%	129
Menbij	575,199	-7%	5%	125
Sarin	575,261	6%	14%	126
Al-Hasakeh Governorate	610,197	3%	11%	132
Al-Hasakeh	641,345	11%	14%	139
Al-Malikeyyeh*	624,548	8%	31%	137
Amuda*	650,323	7%	16%	142
Areeshah	567,088	-5%	3%	124
Be'r Al-Hulo Al-Wardeyyeh	588,924	NA	NA	127
Hole	606,844	NA	NA	132
Jawadiyah*	529,339	-3%	7%	116
Markada	618,434	5%	12%	134
Qahtaniyyeh*	529,471	6%	34%	114
Quamishli	610,197	4%	22%	132
Shadadah	736,163	12%	28%	158
Tal Hmis*	538,353	NA	-1%	121
Ya'robayah*	518,392	NA	24%	113
Ar-Raqqa Governorate	672,831	10%	18%	147
Al-Thawrah*	632,947	NA	NA	142
Ar-Raqqa	625,193	14%	17%	137
Ein Issa	720,468	12%	19%	157
Jurneyyeh*	594,801	6%	12%	NA
Mansura*	549,110	-5%	8%	118
Deir-ez-Zor Governorate	613,234	3%	16%	134
Kisreh	669,456	11%	28%	148
Sur	613,234	NA	16%	133
Thiban	611,675	7%	13%	134

B. USD values are calculated as per the informal exchange rate recorded in the same geographical area. Please see this month's JMMI dataset for informal exchange rates by area.

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

SMEB COMPONENT ANALYSIS

The value of the SMEB in September increased overall surpassing the peak recorded in April 2022 following the initial onset of the Ukraine crisis. In April, the SMEB value was around 590,000 SYP, an increase of approximately 20% in the two months since the onset of the crisis attributed largely to a 59% increase in the price of vegetable oil. The SMEB value has remained high since despite resumption of Ukrainian exports through the Black Sea. The cost of the SMEB in September is 27% higher than it was at the beginning of the Ukraine crisis and more than half what it was in September 2021.

In September, the regional SMEB food component was recorded at 471,621 SYP (103 USD) which represents a 5% increase since August. Majority of food items increased in price, most notably fresh vegetables, and chicken, as well as other key items such as salt and tomato paste (fig. 11) which are imported and sensitive to USD exchange rate fluctuations, as well as monopolization when there are market shortages.¹ In addition, field teams reported that traders have raised prices in anticipation of stricter implementation of the 2021 Income Tax Law.² Despite this, the price of sugar, which had been rising steadily in previous months, stabilised following an increase in market supply according to field teams.

The increase in vegetable prices (fig. 4) is likely linked to the end of the agricultural production season, increasing reliance on imported vegetables with associated costs. In addition, many households reportedly stock up on vegetables towards the end of the season to prepare winter supplies such as tomato molasses, jarred peppers, and jams, increasing market demand.³ As vegetable prices have remained high this year many households have been unable to buy the quantities needed to preserve foods for the winter.⁴ Increased prices of chicken and eggs are reportedly linked to higher prices of imported chicken feed, as well as increases in other operation costs such as transport fuels.⁵

Bread prices decreased overall, as was similarly observed in August, most notably in Aleppo and Al-Hasakeh governorates (fig. 5). Bread prices remain high in Deir-ez Zor due to the lack of fuel and unstable security situation which impacts supply routes. Variability in bread prices between governorates is also in part reflective of where subsidised bread is not available, forcing households to rely on market prices. The price of flour comparatively continued to increase at

a steady rate across governorates likely linked to the increase in the exchange rate. In addition, global uncertainty about continuation of wheat exports from Ukraine beyond November may be impacting global prices.⁶

Agricultural outputs in NES have been heavily impacted by water scarcity, drought and erratic rainfall patterns. In addition, the shortage of fuel has impacted irrigation, ground water extraction, food processing and transportation which has in turn pushed market prices up.⁷ Reduced output of cereals, the predominant agricultural output in NES, has been felt most heavily in Al-Hasakeh where majority of Syria's wheat production occurs. It is estimated that the lack of rainfall could eliminate at least half of the planted areas in Al-Hasakeh.⁸ The 2022 cereal harvest was for the second year drastically insufficient to meet needs.⁹

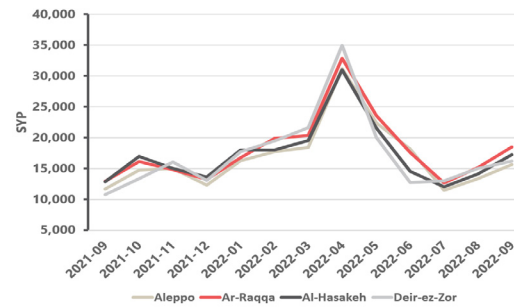
The price of cooking oils in September increased slightly despite declines in global prices (fig. 6). The relatively weaker Syrian pound limits the extent to which Syria is able to benefit from the cooling of global prices since the resumption of Ukrainian vegetable oil exports.¹⁰ In general however the price of cooking oils has recovered moderately from the initial shock of the Ukraine crisis when prices peaked in February and March 2022. The price of non-food items (NFIs) increased overall slightly, most notably in the price of sanitary pads (fig. 11). The price of NFIs, which are imported and sensitive to exchange rate fluctuations, has increased approximately 30% in the past six months. Overall inflation of both food and NFIs have not been counteracted by increases in nominal wage rates resulting in shrinking purchasing power of households.¹¹

The price of water trucking decreased slightly in September however remains the second highest JMMI recorded price (fig. 7). Despite the overall decrease in the price of water trucking, there was a notable increase in price in Al-Hasakeh governorate, where it remains most expensive, and in particular Shaddadah community. This is likely linked to supply disruptions from Alouk water pumping station.¹² Repeated cut offs of the Alouk station since the escalation of the crisis in 2019 causes major delays in water supply and severely impacts the availability of potable water in Al-Hasakeh governorate.¹³

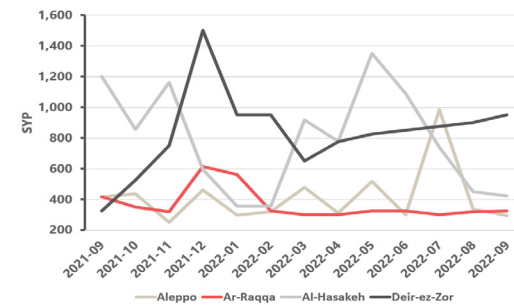
The water and fuel crises in the region have reduced agricultural outputs and increased water

prices, reducing the income households have available to purchase food. To cope households are increasingly relying on coping strategies such as borrowing money, reducing expenditures on other items to pay for food, and skipping or reducing meals.¹³ It is estimated that 12 million Syrians are currently food insecure; worsening economic conditions and agricultural production levels expected to continue to drive these numbers up.¹⁴

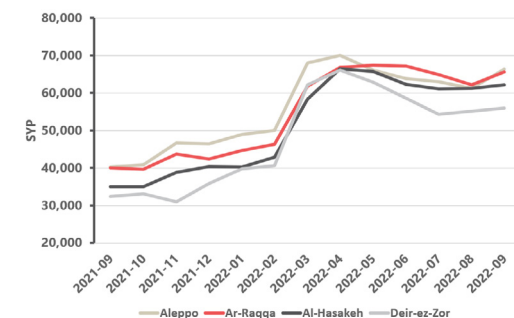
SMEB VEGETABLE PRICES IN NES - FIG. 4



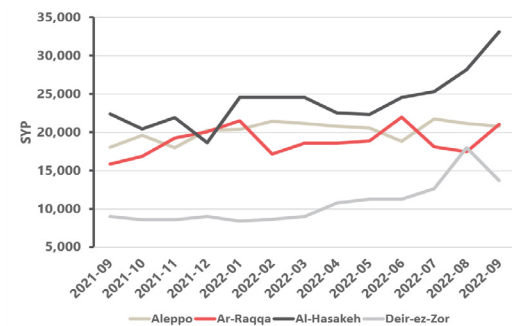
BREAD PRICES IN NES - FIG. 5



SMEB COOKING OILS PRICES IN NES - FIG. 6



SMEB WATER TRUCKING PRICES IN NES - FIG. 7



SMEB COMPOSITION^p FOR NORTHEAST SYRIA - FIG. 8



SMEB CONTENTS - FIG. 9

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		

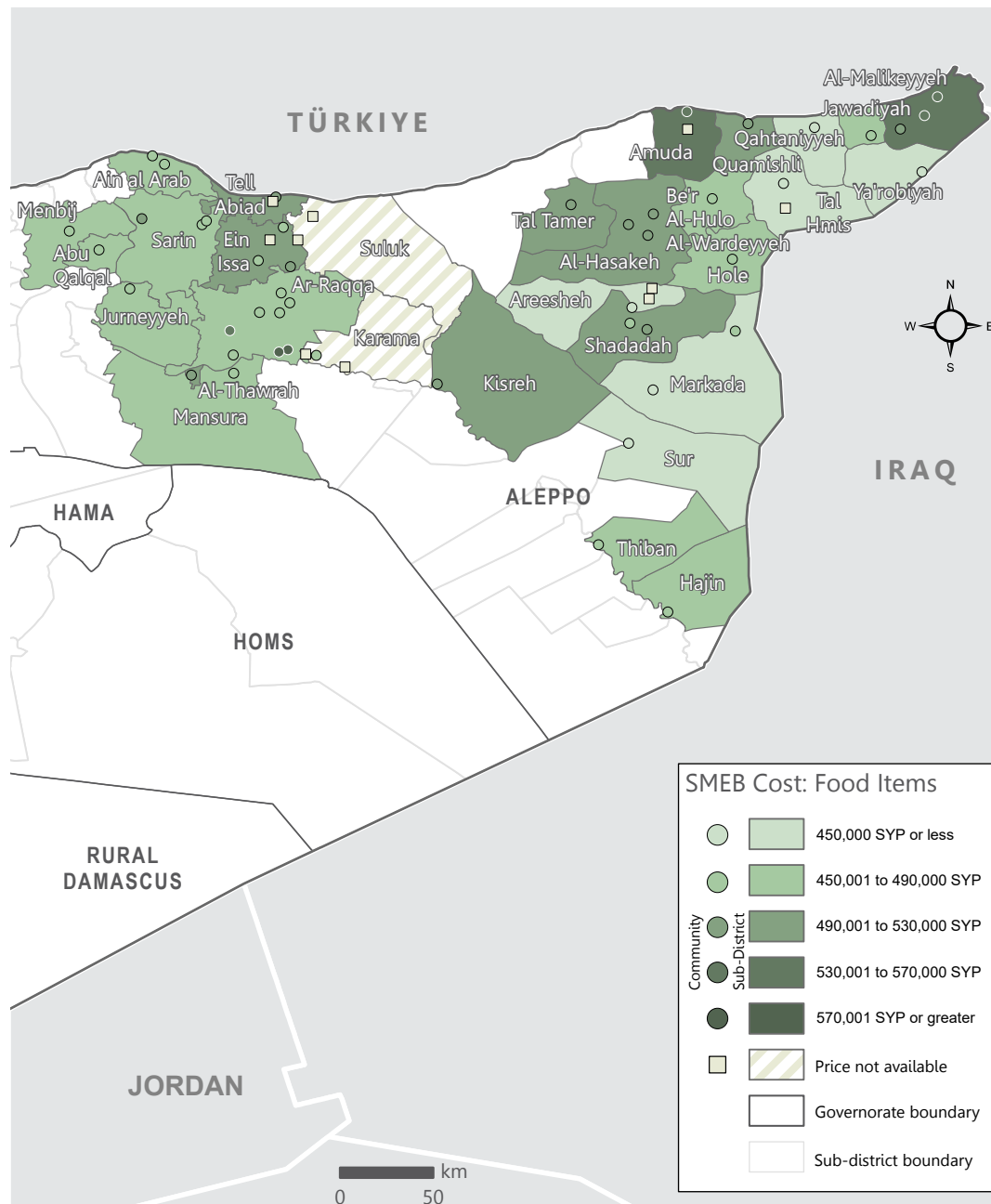
Hygiene (NFI)			
Bathing soap	12 bars	Toothpaste	200 g
Laundry/dish soap	3 kg	Sanitary pads	4 packs of 10

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.

D. Due to rounding figures may not total 100%

SMEB FOOD COMPONENT COST ACROSS NES, BY SUBDISTRICTS AND COMMUNITIES - FIG. 10



PRICE OF ALL SMEB ITEMS - FIG. 11

Item	Unit ^E	Price SYP	1 month change	6 month change	Price USD ^F
Northeast food Syria SMEB		471,621	5%	14%	133
Bulk food items	SMEB	259,500	8%	21%	56.60
Bulgur	1 kg	3,800	9%	27%	0.83
Red lentils	1 kg	5,000	5%	11%	1.09
Rice	1 kg	3,700	6%	23%	0.81
Salt	500 g	700	12%	27%	0.15
Sugar	1 kg	3,500	0%	16%	0.76
Tomato paste	1 kg	6,250	11%	25%	1.36
Fresh vegetables	SMEB	17,250	22%	-13%	3.76
Tomatoes	1 kg	1,700	13%	-23%	0.37
Potatoes	1 kg	1,838	24%	36%	0.40
Cucumbers	1 kg	1,125	41%	-44%	0.25
Onions	1 kg	1,000	1%	18%	0.22
Cooking oils	SMEB	63,000	3%	3%	13.74
Ghee	1 kg	9,000	6%	13%	1.96
Vegetable oil	1 L	9,000	6%	-10%	1.96
Non-veg perishables					
Bread	8 pc	333	-8%	-17%	0.07
Chicken	1 kg	8,000	21%	22%	1.74
Eggs	30 pc	12,000	11%	26%	2.62
Non-food items	SMEB	45,572	3%	54%	9.94
Bathing soap	1 pc	1,500	5%	50%	0.33
Sanitary pads	10 pc	2,150	8%	8%	0.47
Toothpaste	100 g	2,500	4%	13%	0.55
Laundry powder	1 kg	4,900	-2%	23%	1.07
Dish soap	1 L	4,000	0%	11%	0.87
Cooking fuels	SMEB	NA	NA	NA	NA
Kerosene (manually refined)	1 L	NA	NA	NA	NA
LP gas	1 L	NA	NA	NA	NA
Water trucking	SMEB	21,938	-3%	22%	4.78
Water trucking (1000 L)	1 m3	4,875	-3%	22%	1.06
Other					
Phone data	1 gb	3,000	0%	20%	0.65

E. The SMEB unit refers to the current SMEB allocation of the item, as outlined in [fig. 9](#)

F. USD values are calculated as per the informal exchange rate recorded in the same geographical area. Please see this month's JMMI dataset for informal exchange rates by area.

MARKET FUNCTIONALITY

High inflation remains the predominant challenge facing traders in NES with **77%** of traders reported it as a key challenge in September representing a 4% increase from August. In Aleppo governorate there was a decrease in the number of traders reporting they were not facing any issues and an increase in the number of traders reporting high inflation as a key challenge. In Ar-Raqqa governorate there was an increase of 9% in the number of vendors reporting border crossings and road closures as key challenges. In Deir-ez Zor governorate there was a decrease in the number of traders reporting that border closures were impacting supply, however border and road closures and insecure transport routes remain more notable challenges in this governorate compared to the rest of NES.

Moreover, **100%** of pharmacies and telecommunications stores in NES reported they would **run out of stock in less than three days if unable to stock**. In addition, **100%** of bakeries

in Ar-Raqqa and **100%** of petrol stations in Al-Hasakeh reported they would **run out of stock in three days if unable to restock**. Nevertheless, **all key food items remained available in approximately 96% of reporting communities**. Limited stock of USD notes remains a challenge with over half of all vendors reporting inadequate stock of each USD denomination except for the 1 USD denomination.

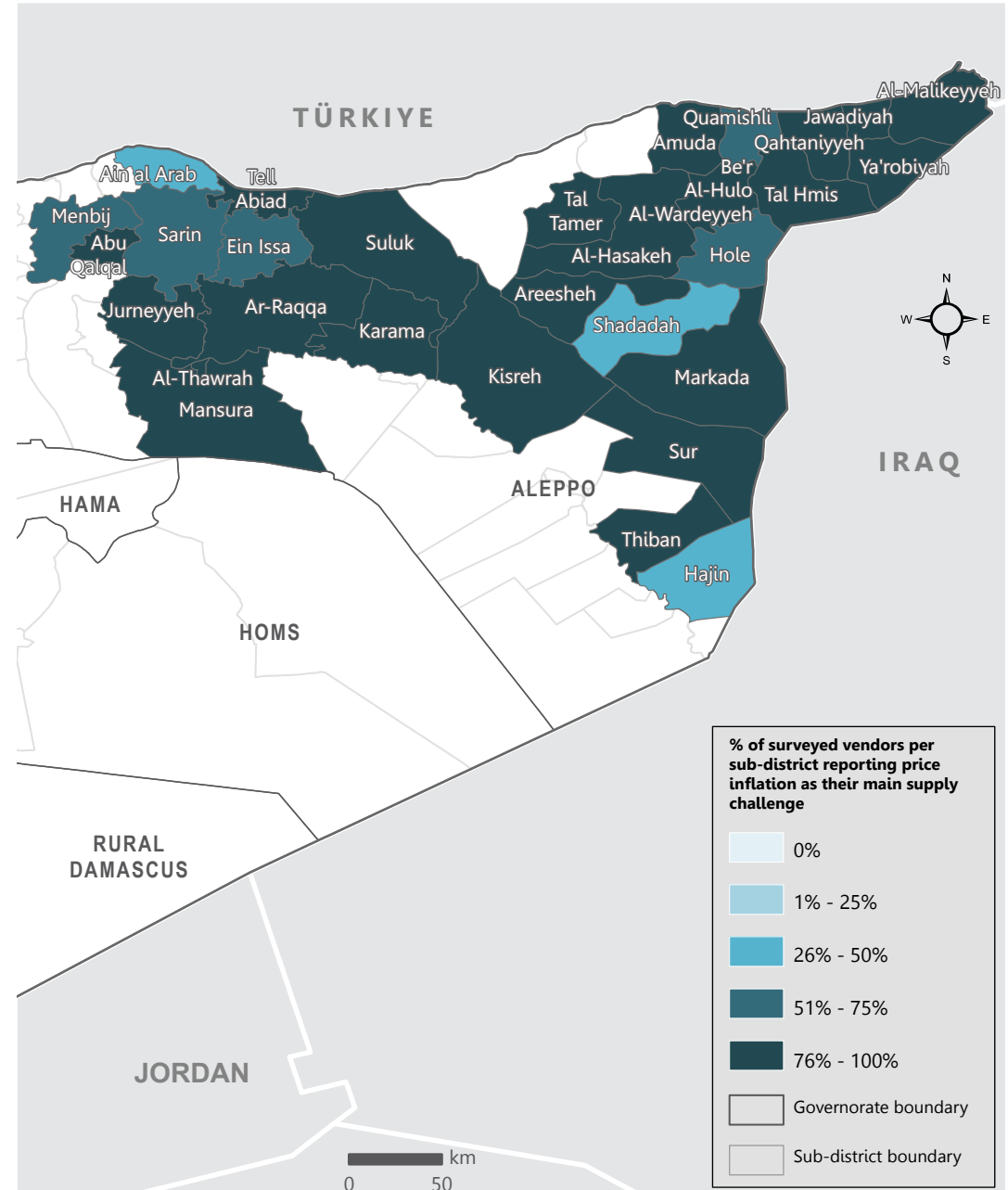
The price of transport fuels increased overall attributed to increases in the price of manually refined and high-quality petrol. The price of manually refined and high-quality diesel remained stable. Low-quality fuels remain significantly more expensive in Deir-ez Zor governorate where subsidised fuel is largely unavailable. In general, shortages of diesel from public fuel services cause long queues across NES and the poor quality of fuel sold damages vehicles leading to higher on-going maintenance costs.¹⁵

SUPPLY CHALLENGES REPORTED^G BY SURVEYED VENDORS - FIG. 12

	AREA	REPORTED %
	NES	77%
PRICE INFLATION	NE Aleppo	62%
	Al-Hasakeh	85%
	Ar-Raqqa	76%
	Deir-Ez-Zor	78%
	NES	17%
NO ISSUES	NE Aleppo	31%
	Al-Hasakeh	8%
	Ar-Raqqa	18%
	Deir-Ez-Zor	19%
	NES	16%
SUPPLY CANT MEET DEMAND	NE Aleppo	4%
	Al-Hasakeh	24%
	Ar-Raqqa	10%
	Deir-Ez-Zor	30%
	NES	12%
SUPPLIER LIMITED SUPPLY	NE Aleppo	14%
	Al-Hasakeh	18%
	Ar-Raqqa	4%
	Deir-Ez-Zor	8%

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

VENDORS REPORTING PRICE INFLATION AS THEIR MAIN SUPPLY CHALLENGE ACROSS NES - FIG. 13



ABOUT

To inform humanitarian cash programming, the northeast of Syria (NES) Cash Working Group (CWG) - in partnership with local and international NGOs - conducts a monthly JMMI 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.

METHODOLOGY

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.

Prices are calculated by taking the median of the next level of aggregation: community and sub-district prices are both drawn from the median prices collected from different vendors. Districts medians are calculated from sub-district medians, governorate figures are calculated from district medians, and regional figures are calculated from governorate medians.

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 (5th - 12th September 2022).

LIMITATIONS

All JMMI data is only indicative for the specific timeframe 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 cashcoorndes@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](#).

ENDNOTES

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14. WFP and FAO and, Hunger Hotspots, FAO-WFP Early Warning on Acute Food Insecurity, October 2022 to January 2023 Outlook, <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000142656/download/>
15. SOHR, ' Fuel Crisis Worsened in SDF-held Areas, Subsidised Diesel Shortage Prompts Long Queues in front of Petrol Stations, September 2022, <https://www.syriaohr.com/en/266086/> and Eye of Euphrates, 'Fuel Prices increase due to the Rise in Public Transport Vehicle Wages in Raqqa', July 2022, <https://eyeofeuphrates.com/ar/news/2022/07/28/5885>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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