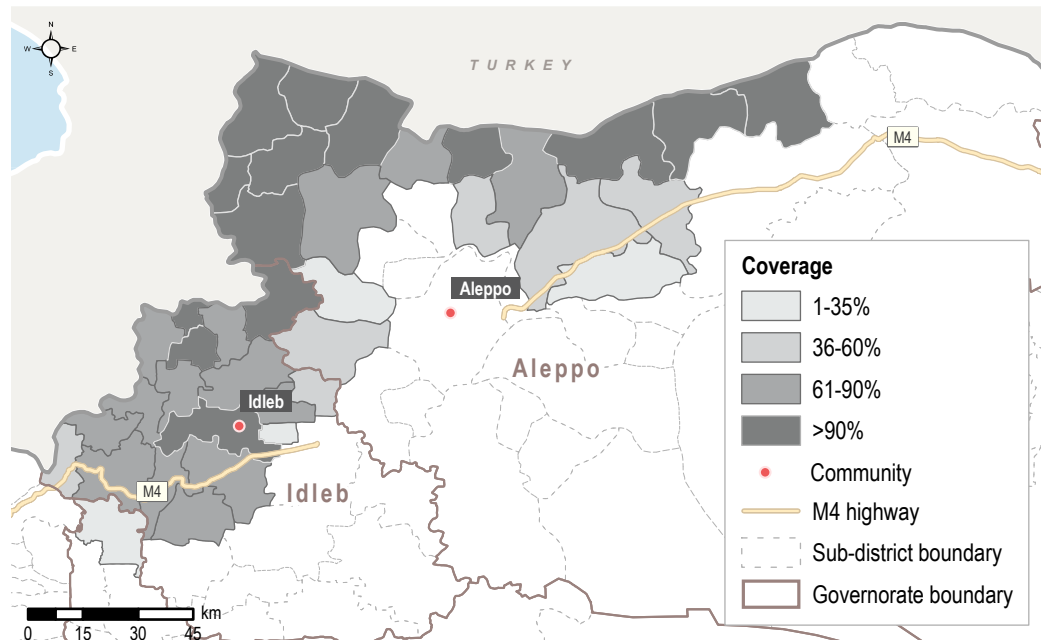


## Introduction and Methodology

HSOS is a monthly assessment that provides comprehensive, multi-sectoral information about the humanitarian conditions and priority needs inside Syria. This factsheet presents a thematic review based on the HSOS assessment of the priority needs and humanitarian assistance, economic conditions, living conditions, access to basic services, COVID-19 situation, and security and protection situation in Northwest Syria. **Sector-specific indicator findings by location can be found on the [HSOS dashboard](#).**

The assessment is conducted using a key informant (KI) methodology at the community level. REACH enumerators are based inside Syria and interview three to six KIs per assessed location, either directly or remotely (via phone). KIs are chosen based on their community-level and sector-specific knowledge. This factsheet presents information gathered in **891 communities** across the greater Idlib area<sup>1</sup> (375 communities) and northern Aleppo area (516 communities). **Data was collected between 7-18 of March 2021 from 3,307 KIs** (19% female). Unless specified by an endnote, all indicators refer to the situation in the 30 days prior to data collection (February 2021/ March 2021). Findings are indicative rather than representative, and should not be generalized across the population and region. Findings that are calculated based on a subset of the community are indicated by the following footnote ♦, with each subset specified in the endnotes.

The complete monthly HSOS dataset is available on the [REACH Resource Centre](#).



## Key Highlights

**A worsening of the security situation in Northwest Syria (NWS) negatively impacted civilians' lives. Airstrikes, shelling, and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) resulted in civilian casualties and hindered access to markets and schools. These incidents also caused material damage to a hospital and losses of humanitarian supplies. The economic crisis continued to affect households' ability to purchase essential goods and the quality of services.**

- **Ongoing hostilities continued to pose significant threats to civilians and negatively impacted access to services and markets.** According to the UN Human Rights Office, from 24 February to 23 March, at least 27 civilians were killed, and 83 were injured due to shelling, airstrikes and explosions in NWS.<sup>a</sup> On 21 March, a surgical hospital in Atareb Sub-district was hit by shelling and put out of service.<sup>b</sup> On the same day, shelling near the Bab Al Hawa border crossing with Turkey resulted in the loss of humanitarian supplies.<sup>a</sup> Missile strikes in the area of Northern Aleppo caused material damage to oil refineries and oil tankers.<sup>c,d</sup> IED incidents continued to be frequent across NWS.<sup>a</sup> In Afrin Sub-district, more than 75% of the assessed communities reported the threat from IEDs. In the same area, one-third of the assessed communities reported that markets were unsafe and travelling to and from schools was unsafe.

- **The depreciation of the Syrian Pound (SYP) continued to decrease households' purchasing power and particularly affected their ability to secure sufficient food quantities.** In March, the SYP value hit a historical low at 4,760 SYP/US Dollar.<sup>a</sup> According to [REACH Market Monitoring](#) data, the cost of the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) food component in NWS increased by 20% in the last month and 30% compared to the beginning of the year. The unaffordability of food was the most commonly reported barrier to accessing sufficient food. To cope with the lack of food, households in more than half of the assessed communities reportedly resorted to skipping meals. Nearly one in every five assessed communities reported that food was the top priority need for residents and internally displaced person (IDPs) alike.

- **Both the security situation and the economic crisis posed challenges to accessing education and impacted education quality.** In Ariha and Ehsem sub-districts, the escalation of violence reportedly made schools and travelling to schools unsafe. Access to education was particularly problematic for IDPs: in nearly 60% of the assessed communities in NWS, half or less of the IDP community's school-aged children were reportedly attending schools. Lack of funding reportedly affected the quality of teaching and learning.<sup>e</sup> In more than half of the assessed communities in Idlib governorate, teachers' salaries were indicated as a priority need for education. Moreover, not having enough teaching or learning supplies was the most commonly reported challenge students faced in NWS.

## HSOS Dashboard

For a breakdown of sector-specific indicators by location, please see the [HSOS dashboard](#). The interactive HSOS dashboard provides a monthly sectoral overview of key indicators disaggregated at the sub-district and community level.



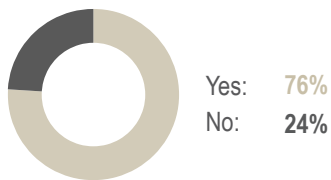
## Priority Needs and Humanitarian Assistance



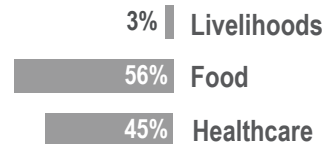
Most commonly reported **first, second, and third** and **overall** priority needs for residents (by % of communities) <sup>2,3</sup>

	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD	OVERALL	
1	Healthcare	NFIs <sup>▲</sup>	Livelihoods	Livelihoods	67%
2	Livelihoods	Food	NFIs	Food	43%
3	Food	Winterisation	Winterisation	Healthcare	42%

% of communities where any of the resident households were able to access humanitarian assistance



% of communities where KIs reported the presence of the following **types of assistance** for residents <sup>4</sup>



Most commonly reported barriers that resident households faced in accessing humanitarian assistance (by % of communities) <sup>4,♦</sup>

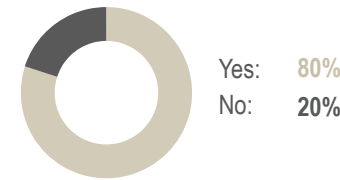
Communities reporting access to humanitarian assistance		Communities reporting no access to humanitarian assistance	
Assistance provided was insufficient to cover all people in need	61%	1	93%
<b>Assistance provided was not relevant to all needs</b>	57%	2	3%
Quantity of assistance provided to households was insufficient	36%	3	2%
			No humanitarian assistance was available
			Not aware if assistance was available
			Distribution points were too far or the routes were inaccessible



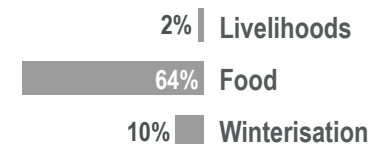
Most commonly reported **first, second, and third** and **overall** priority needs for IDPs (by % of communities) <sup>2,3</sup>

	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD	OVERALL	
1	Shelter	Food	Livelihoods	Livelihoods	62%
2	Food	NFIs	NFIs	Food	52%
3	Livelihoods	Livelihoods	Winterisation	Winterisation	44%

% of communities where any of the IDP households were able to access humanitarian assistance



% of communities where KIs reported the presence of the following **types of assistance** for IDPs <sup>4</sup>



Most commonly reported barriers that IDP households faced in accessing humanitarian assistance (by % of communities) <sup>4,♦</sup>

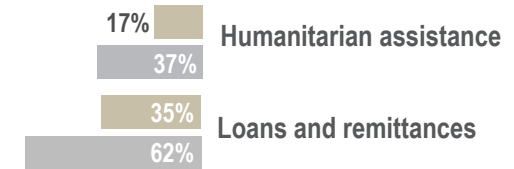
Communities reporting access to humanitarian assistance		Communities reporting no access to humanitarian assistance	
Assistance provided was insufficient to cover all people in need	62%	1	94%
<b>Assistance provided was not relevant to all needs</b>	57%	2	3%
Quantity of assistance provided to households was insufficient	39%	3	2%
			No humanitarian assistance was available
			Not aware if assistance was available
			Distribution points were too far or the routes were inaccessible



## Economic Conditions

Region	Estimated median monthly household expense for water for a household of six <sup>5,6</sup>			Estimated median monthly rent price for a two bedroom apartment <sup>5,6</sup>			Estimated median daily wage for unskilled labour <sup>5,7,8</sup>		
	SYP	TRY <sup>▲</sup>	USD	SYP	TRY	USD	SYP	TRY	USD
Northwest Syria	20,418 SYP			51,045 SYP			6,636 SYP		
Greater Idleb area	22,970 SYP			74,525 SYP			7,657 SYP		
Northern Aleppo	19,000 SYP			38,283 SYP			6,125 SYP		
% of communities where indicator was reported in following currencies *	40%	60%	0%	35%	48%	17%	44%	56%	0%

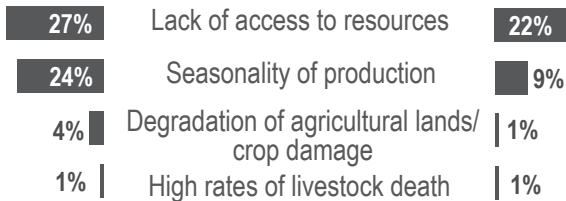
% of communities where KIs reported the presence of residents and IDP households relying on non-productive sources of livelihoods to meet their basic needs <sup>4</sup>



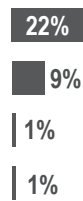
Intersectoral findings on **unaffordability** hindering access to goods and services

% of communities where barriers to accessing income from agriculture to meet basic needs were reported <sup>4</sup>

### Residents



### IDPs



# 86% and 94%

% of communities where KIs reported daily waged labour as a common source of income for **residents** and IDPs

# 64 days

Number of days the average day labourer would need to work to earn the monthly cost of basic SMEB items <sup>5,9</sup>

# 94% and 54%

% of communities where KIs reported the **insufficient income of households** and general lack of employment opportunities as barriers to meeting basic needs <sup>8</sup>

% of communities where common livelihood sources from agriculture were reported <sup>4</sup>

Livelihood source	Residents	IDPs
Food from crop production	67%	17%
Cash from crop production	59%	6%
Livestock products	64%	55%
Sale of livestock	22%	30%



KIs in **66%** of communities cited that **rent prices** were unaffordable for the majority of people



KIs in **65%** of communities cited the high cost of **fuel for generators** as a common challenge



KIs in **55%** of communities cited the high cost of **water trucking** as a common challenge



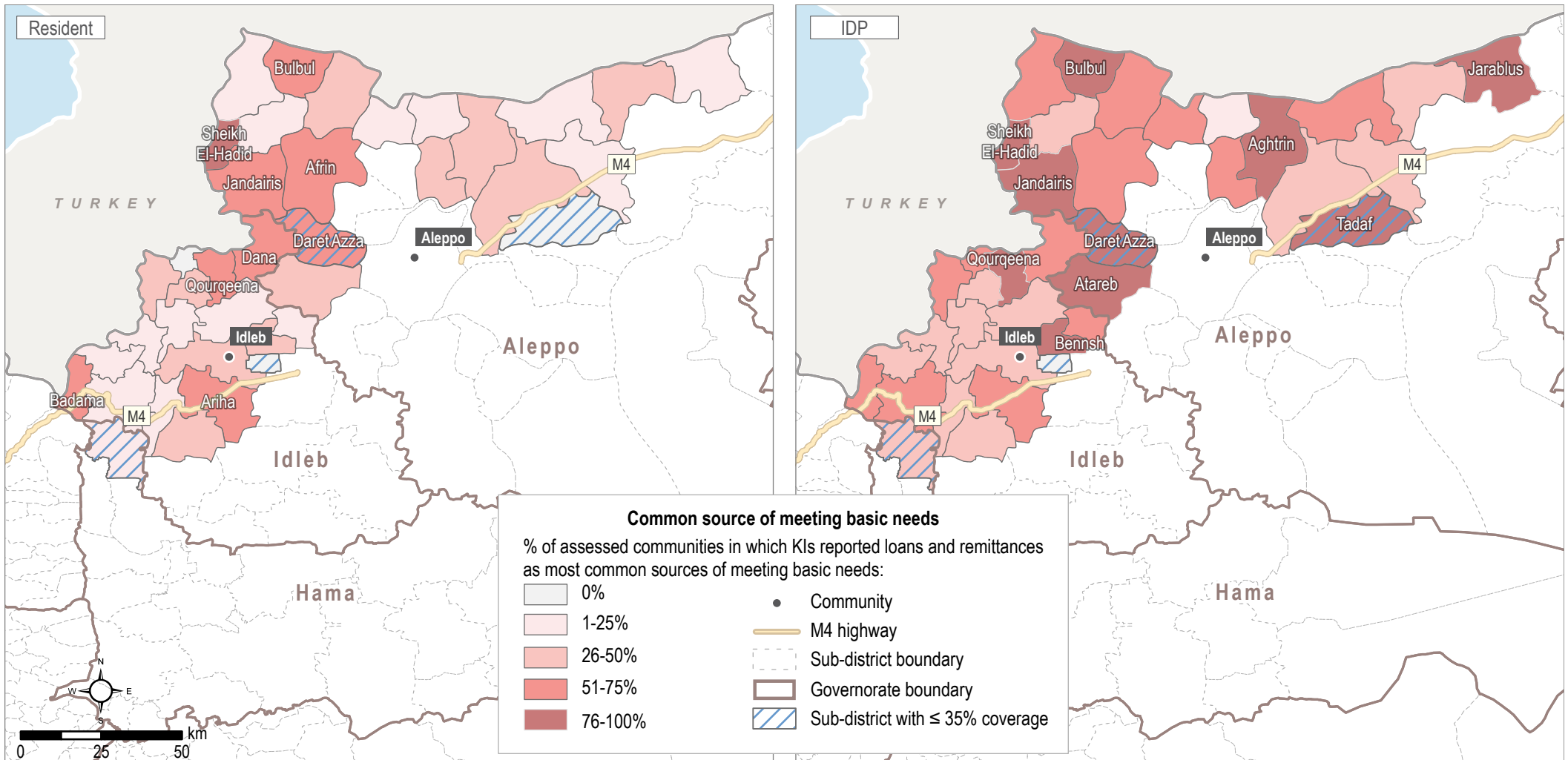
KIs in **84%** of communities cited the high cost of **food** as a common challenge <sup>8</sup>



KIs in **44%** of communities cited the high cost of **health services** as a common challenge



KIs in **30%** of communities cited the high cost of **a private tutor** as a common challenge <sup>8</sup>



## Loans and Remittances as Common Sources of Meeting Basic Needs

### Note on the map

These maps show the percentage of communities reporting loans and remittances as a common source of meeting basic needs. The highest percentage for the resident population was found in Sheikh El-Hadid Sub-district. The highest percentages for the IDP population were found in Tadamr and Bennaish Sub-districts.



## Living Conditions

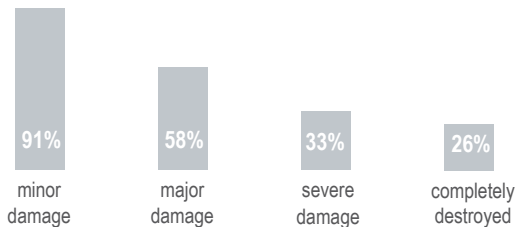


A lack of bathing facilities was reported as a shelter issue for IDPs in **9%** of communities



A lack of toilets was reported as a shelter issue for IDPs in **15%** of communities

Reported presence of occupied shelters with damage across communities where damages reported <sup>5,10</sup>



In **95%** of communities reportedly at least **80%** of the resident population owned their shelter

In **66%** of communities reportedly none of the IDP households owned their shelter

In **15%** of communities at least one fifth of the IDP population reportedly lived in unfinished or abandoned residential buildings

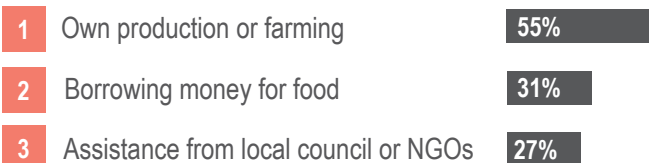
In **26%** of communities at least one fifth of the IDP population reportedly lived in tents



**97%** % of communities where KIs reported that households experienced barriers to accessing sufficient food <sup>8</sup>

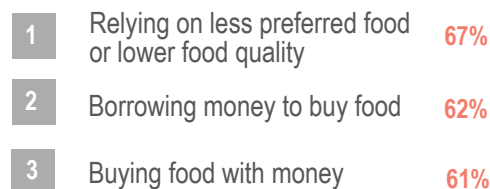
In 18% of these communities, KIs reported that the unavailability of certain food items was a challenge to accessing sufficient food <sup>8</sup>

Commonly reported **sources of food** for households other than markets (by % of communities) <sup>4</sup>



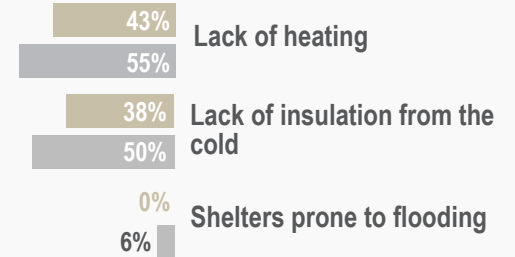
**High price of suitable foods formula** was the most commonly reported challenge to feeding young children (reported by KIs in 90% of communities) <sup>12</sup>

Most commonly reported coping strategies for a lack of food (by % of communities) <sup>4</sup>

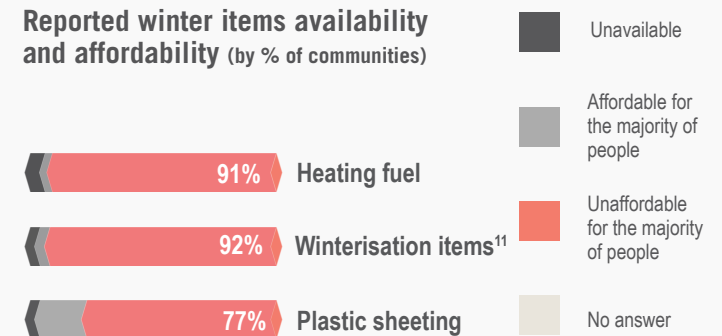


## Winter-related findings

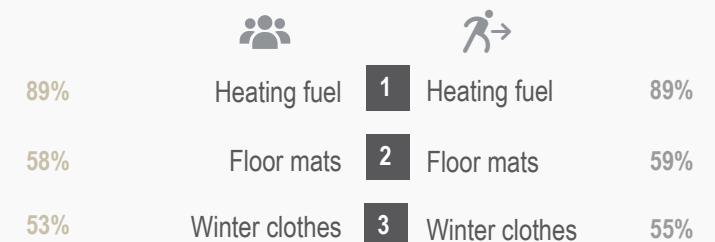
% of communities where winter-related shelter inadequacies for residents and IDPs were reported



Reported winter items availability and affordability (by % of communities)



Top three most commonly reported winterisation needs for residents and IDPs (by % of communities)







## Access to Basic Services



### Access to Electricity

**5-6** hrs per day

was the most commonly reported range for hours of electricity accessible to households (reported by KIs in 29% of communities)

### Solar panels

was the most commonly reported main source of electricity (reported by KIs in 48% of communities)

**47%**

% of communities where KIs reported the main network is partially or completely not functioning as a barrier for electricity access <sup>†</sup>



### Access to Water

**69%**

% of communities where KIs reported that not all households had access to sufficient water



7 days	1%
5-6 days	3%
3-4 days	7%
1-2 days	36%
0 days	53%

Days per week water from the network was available (by % of 662 communities connected to a water network) <sup>†</sup>

### Private water trucking

was the most commonly reported source of drinking water (reported by KIs in 45% of communities)

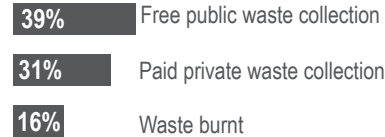


### Access to Sanitation

**44%**

% of communities where KIs reported that no sewage system was present

Most commonly reported ways people disposed of solid waste (by % of communities)



**37%**

% of communities where KIs reported waste removal services as a WASH<sup>▲</sup> priority need <sup>8</sup>



### Access to Markets

**25%**

% of communities in which households reportedly were unable to access markets in the assessed location

Not enough consumers to support markets in the assessed location

was the most commonly reported reason for why markets were not functioning (reported by KIs in 77% of communities where households were unable to access markets in their own location)

**65%**

% of communities where KIs reported that the lack of transportation to markets was a barrier to physically accessing food markets

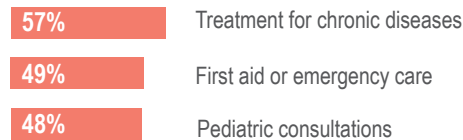


### Access to Health Services

**56%**

% of communities where KIs reported that the households did not have access to health services in the assessed location

Most commonly reported health priority needs (by % of communities) <sup>8</sup>



### Going to the pharmacy instead of a clinic

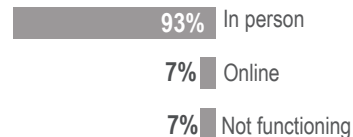
was the most commonly reported coping strategy for a lack of healthcare (reported by KIs in 88% of communities)



### Access to Education Services

**31%**  
**59%**

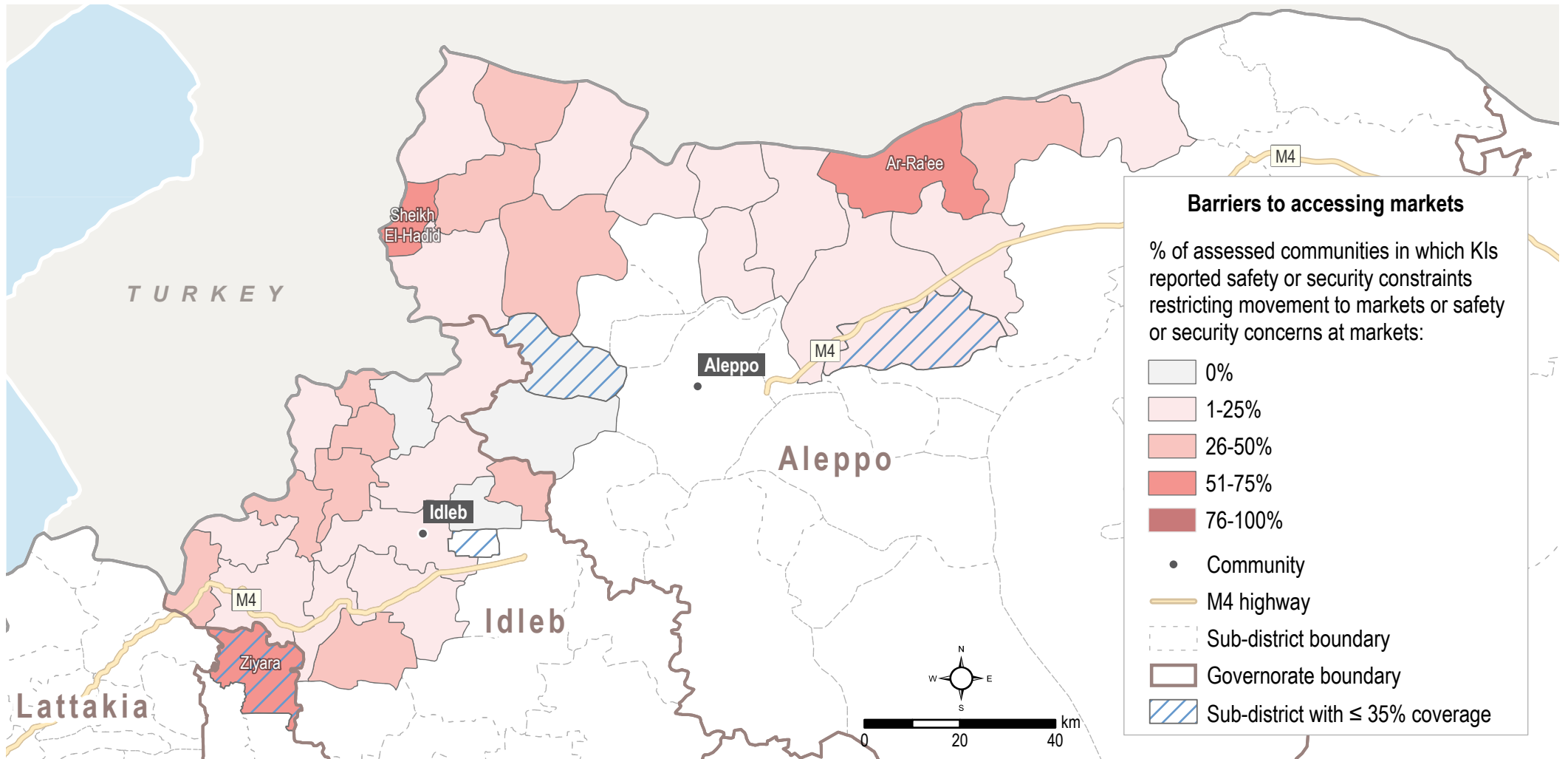
% of communities in which half or less of the school-aged children accessed school in the last 30 days for residents and IDPs



% of communities where KIs reported on the functioning of education services in the assessed location <sup>4</sup>

**10%**

% of communities where KIs reported that the lack of access to internet, electricity and/or equipment was a barrier to accessing (online) education services <sup>8</sup>



### Safety and Security Barriers Accessing Markets

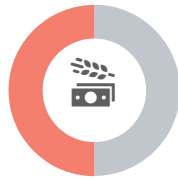
#### Note on the map

This map shows the percentage of communities reporting safety/security constraints restricting movements to markets or safety/security concerns at markets. The highest percentages were found in Sheikh El-Hadid, Ziyara and Ar-Ra'ee Sud-districts, where around 60% of the communities reported safety or security concerns at markets.



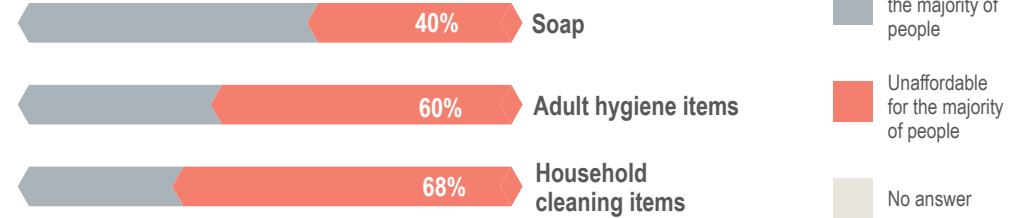
### COVID-19

Effects of COVID-19 on livelihoods sectors in the community (by % of communities)

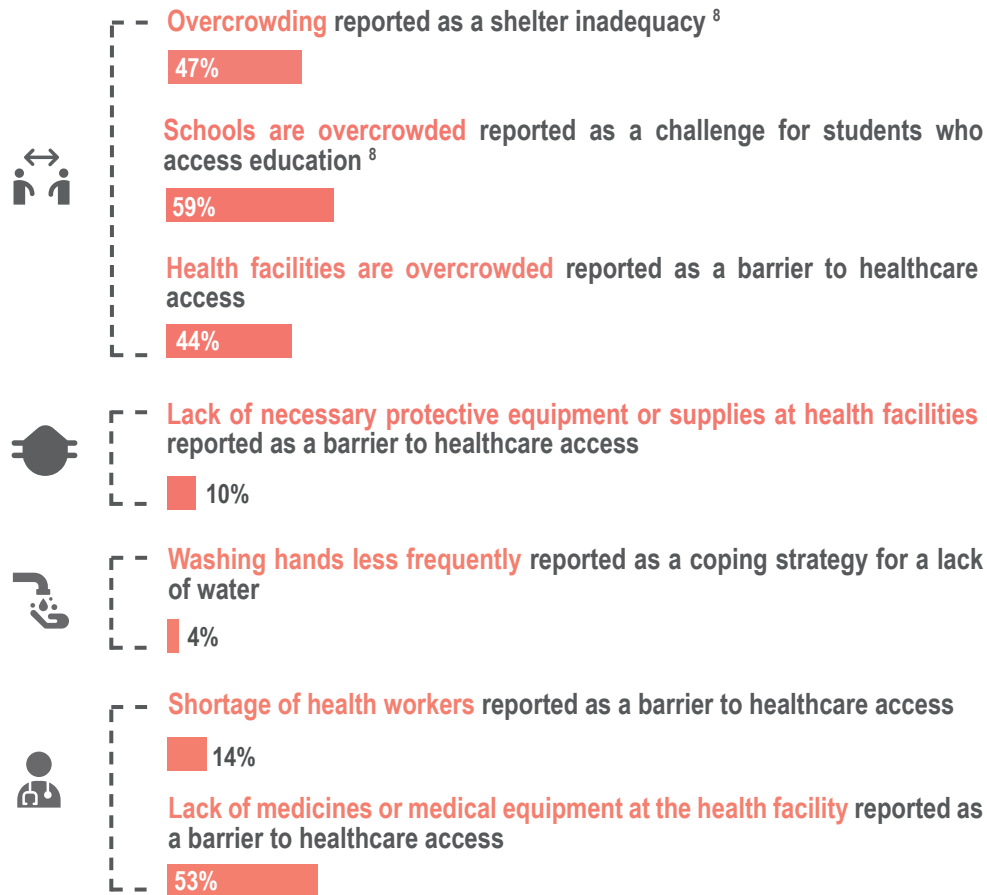


None of the available livelihood sectors were affected 50%  
At least one of the available livelihood sectors was partially or totally affected 50%

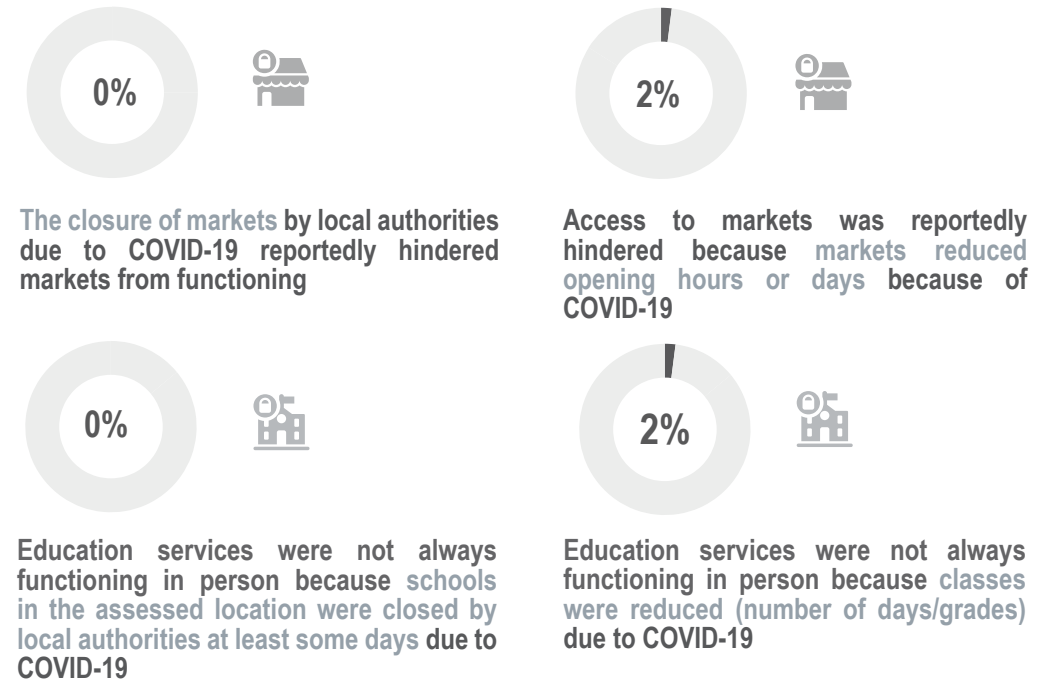
Reported hygiene item availability and affordability (by % of communities) <sup>13</sup>



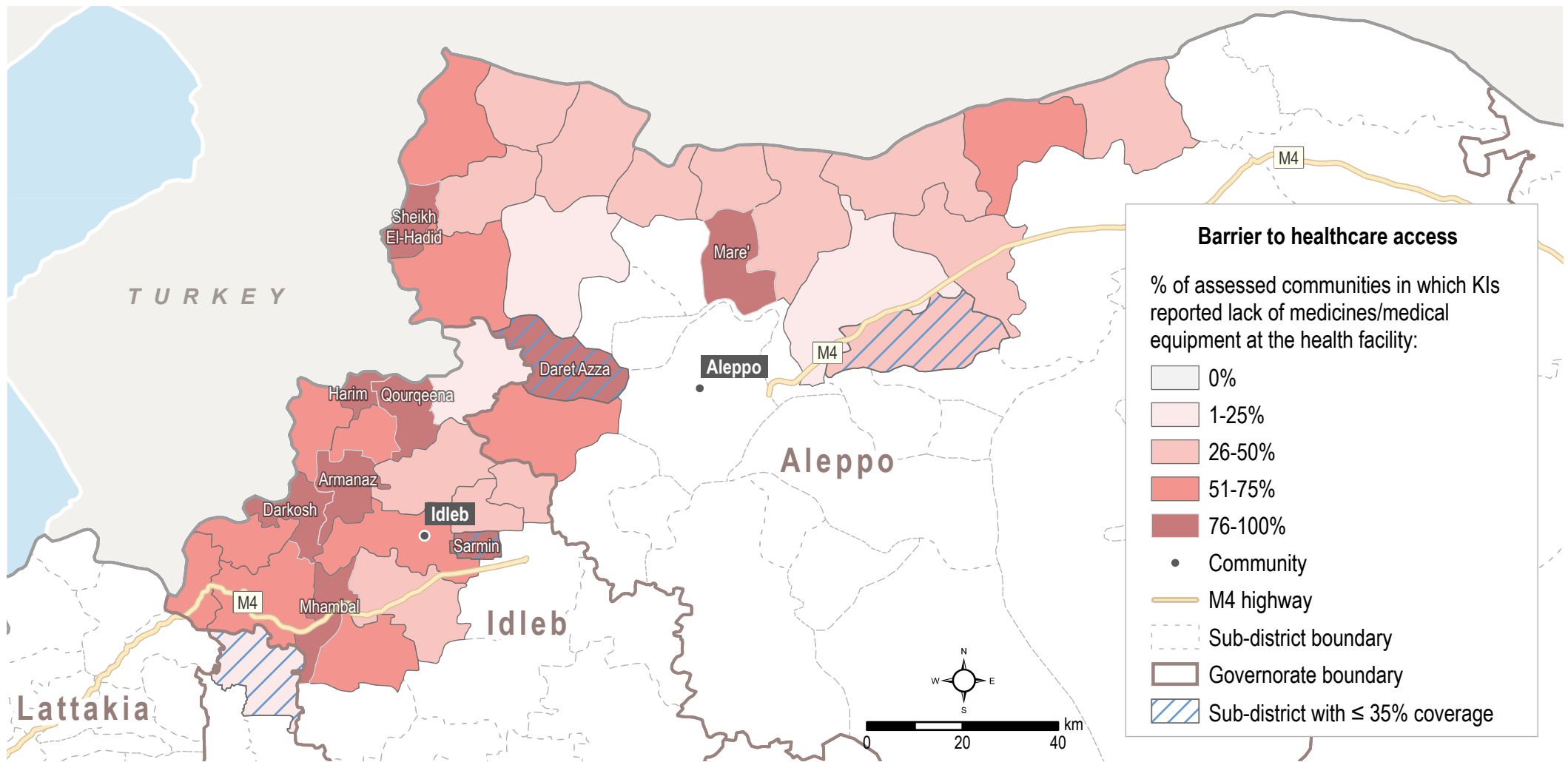
% of communities where COVID-19 risk indicators were reported



% of communities where COVID-19 related barriers to access to services were reported







### Lack of Medicines or Medical Equipment at Health Facility

**Note on the map**

This map shows the percentage of communities reporting the lack of medicines or medical equipment at the health facility as a barrier to accessing healthcare in the last 30 days. In 20 out of the 38 assessed Sub-Districts, more than half of the assessed communities reported this barrier.



## Security and Protection

### Intersectoral findings on security



General safety and security concerns restricting movement to markets was a reported barrier to market access in **7%** of communities

General safety and security concerns at markets was a reported barrier to market access in **21%** of communities

Markets not opening because of security issues was a reported barrier to markets not functioning in **2%** of communities



Threat from airstrikes was reported as a protection risk in **118 communities**<sup>8</sup>

Threat from shelling, sniper or gunfire was reported as a protection risk in **111 communities**<sup>8</sup>

Threat from improvised explosive devices (IEDs), mines or unexploded ordnances was reported as a protection risk in **181 communities**<sup>8</sup>

Fear from imminent conflict was reported as a protection risk in **73 communities**<sup>8</sup>



The inability to lock homes securely was reported as a shelter inadequacy in **33%** of communities<sup>8</sup>

Lack of lighting around the shelter was reported as a shelter inadequacy in **86%** of communities<sup>8</sup>

The security situation was reported as a barrier to shelter repairs in **10%** of communities



General safety and security concerns at the health facility was reported as a barrier to healthcare in **5%** of communities

### Most commonly reported protection priority needs

(by % of communities)<sup>3,8</sup>

- 1 **81%** Special assistance for vulnerable groups
- 2 **50%** Specialised child protection services
- 3 **42%** Psychosocial support



### % of communities where the lack of civil documentation for residents and IDPs was reported

- 32%** Lack or loss of civil documentation as a protection risk
- 37%** Lack of personal documentation required to enrol in school as a barrier to education access
- 6%**
- 13%**

### % of communities where extreme coping strategies used by residents and IDPs to meet basic needs were reported<sup>4</sup>

#### Residents

- 33%** Early marriage
- 2%** Forced marriage
- 9%** High risk work
- 1%** Sending family members to beg
- 69%** Sending children (15 or below) to work

#### IDPs

- 41%**
- 3%**
- 15%**
- 3%**
- 80%**

### Age, Gender, and Diversity

KIs in **55%** of communities reported a lack of employment opportunities for women as a barrier to meeting basic needs<sup>8</sup>

KIs in **43%** of communities reported a lack of employment opportunities for persons with a disability as a barrier to meeting basic needs<sup>8</sup>

KIs in **15%** of communities reported a lack of privacy for women and girls at health facilities as a barrier to healthcare access

KIs in **38%** of communities reported a lack of market access for people with restricted mobility

Child labour and early marriage were reported to prevent children from going to school in **80%** and **39%** of communities<sup>8</sup>

Children below the age of 12 were reported as a group affected by child labour in **14%** of communities<sup>8</sup>

Hazardous child labour was reported as a protection risk in **7%** of communities<sup>8</sup>

## Endnotes

1. The greater Idlib area includes Idlib governorate, parts of Aleppo western countryside, and parts of Hama northwestern countryside controlled by armed opposition groups (AOGs).
2. KIs were asked to select a first, second, and third highest priority needs in their communities. The ranking shows the sectors most frequently chosen as either first, second or third highest priority. The overall priority need refers to the frequency a sector was selected across all three categories (first, second or third highest priority).
3. KIs could select three answers, thus findings might exceed 100%.
4. KIs could select multiple answers, thus findings might exceed 100%.
5. KIs were asked about the situation currently, instead of the last 30 days.
6. KIs had the option to select the price in United States Dollars (USD), Turkish Lira (TRY), or Syrian Pounds (SYP). When the price was not reported in SYP, the NWS **REACH Market Monitoring** exchange rate was used to calculate the amount in SYP. According to the NWS REACH Market Monitoring March 2021, 1 USD = 3,726 SYP; 1TRY= 515 SYP.
7. According to the NWS **REACH Market Monitoring** March 2021, 1 USD = 3,726 SYP.
8. Findings for residents and IDPs were merged. The merge was calculated as follows: (option was selected for either residents or IDPs) / (communities reporting challenges/barriers/coping strategies for either residents or IDPs).
9. According to the NWS **REACH Market Monitoring** March 2021, the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) = 422,032 SYP.
10. Minor damage (cracks in walls, leaking roof, need of new doors and window repairs, etc.); Major damage (buildings with extensive damage to window frames and doors, but no structural damage to columns, slabs, or loadbearing walls); Severe damage (buildings with significant structural damage to column slabs, or loadbearing walls, cracking, steel elements and deformations visible in concrete; the building would require extensive repairs); Completely destroyed (buildings with structural damage so significant that rehabilitation is not possible).
11. Winterisation items include: winter clothes, winter shoes, and winter blanket.
12. KIs were asked about the situation in the last two months, instead of the last 30 days.
13. Adult hygiene items include: shampoo, toothbrush, and toothpaste. Household cleaning items include: washing powder, liquid, and dish detergent.

### ◆ By number of communities where KIs reported the relevant indicator for the relevant population group(s)

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Subset</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Subset</i>
<i>N.o of communities reporting on:</i>		<i>N.o of communities reporting on:</i>	
Residents	884	Currency used for paying water	847
IDPs	858	Currency used for paying rent	615
Challenges to assistance access (resident)	641	Currency in which wages are paid (merge)	764
Barriers to assistance access (resident)	215	Barriers to accessing sufficient food (merge)	860
Challenges to assistance access (IDPs)	660	Days when water is available from network	662
Barriers to assistance access (IDPs)	173	Barriers to markets functioning	225

- a. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (26 March 2021). Recent Developments in Northwest Syria, Situation Report No. 26 - As of 26 March 2021. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>
- b. Al Jazeera. (21 March 2021). Several killed in gov't attack on hospital in northwest Syria. Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com>
- c. Al Jazeera. (5 March 2021). Missile strikes hit oil refineries in northern Syria, killing one. Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com>
- d. Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. (13 March 2021). Huge blaze after oil facility strike in Syria. Retrieved from <https://www.syriahr.com>
- e. Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. (29 March 2021). Lack of funds and donor organizations | Several schools in Sahl Al-Rouj in north-west Idlib threatened to be closed. Retrieved from <https://www.syriahr.com>

### About REACH

REACH 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. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT). 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).