INTRODUCTION

To inform humanitarian cash programming, the northeast (NES) and northwest (NWS) Syria 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 fg. 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.

4 supporting partners

11 governorates

29 subdistricts

63 communities

2,077 shops (vendor key informants)

COST OF NES SMEB[1]

482,565 SYP ▲ 11%

134 USD ▲ 6%

COST OF NES FOOD BASKET[1]

367,250 SYP ▲ 6%

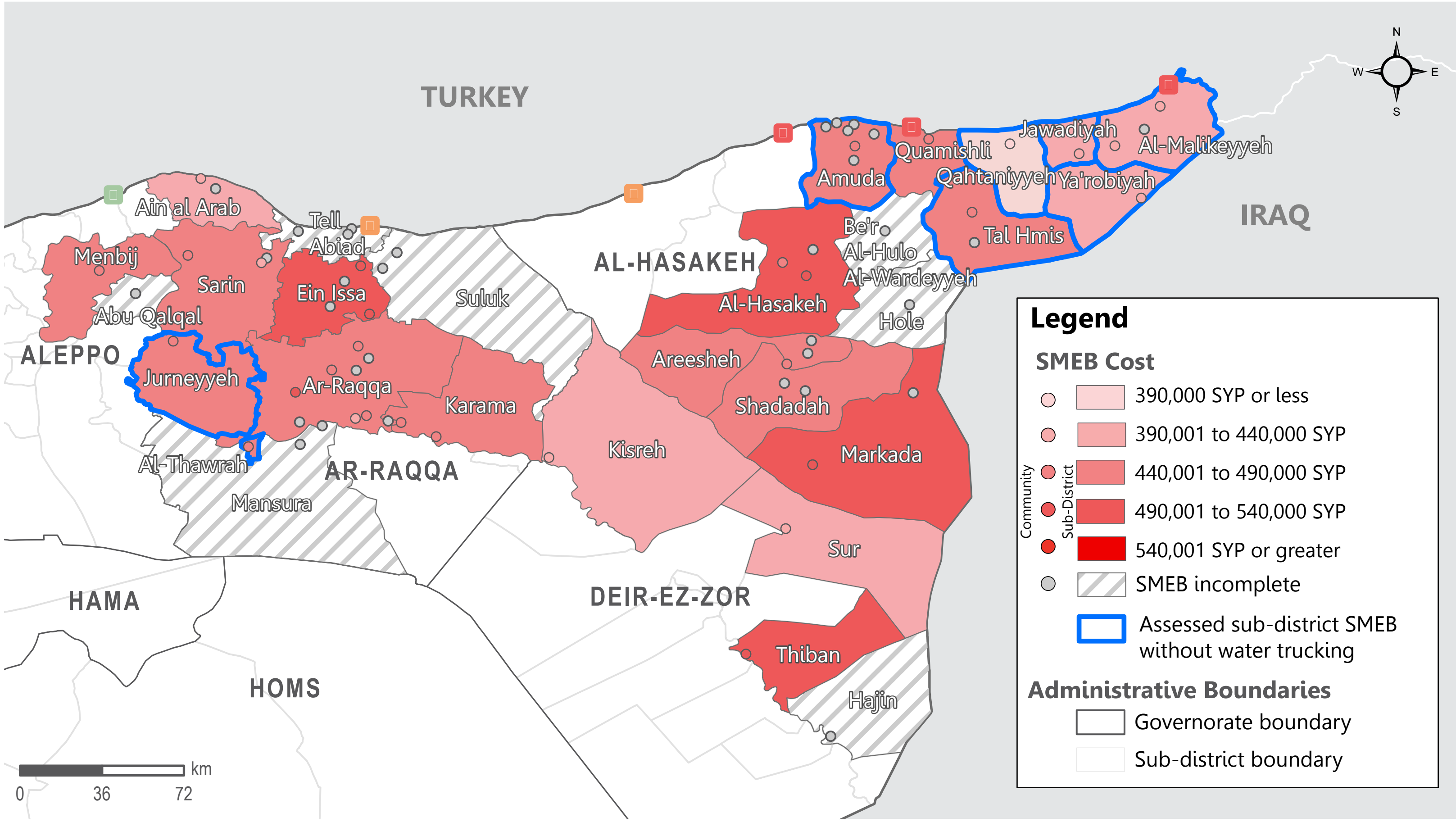
102 USD ▲ 6%

NES EXCHANGE RATE[1]

USD/SYP

3,600 SYP ▲ 2%

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



#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.

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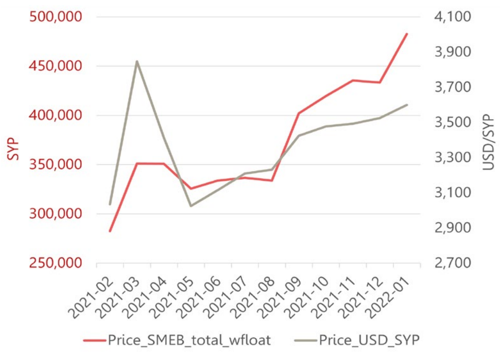
NORTHEAST SYRIA SMEB PRICE TRENDS VS USD TO SYP INFORMAL EXCHANGE RATES - FG. 2



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In NES, the price of the SMEB in SYP for January rose to the highest recorded SMEB in SYP and the third highest recorded SMEB in USD in the seven years of the JMMI.

There were rising costs for fresh vegetables (which had been decreasing in price since the end of the peak of the water crisis in October 2021), bulk foods, and non-food items (NFI), which is attributed to the sharp depreciation of the Turkish Lira in November and December against the USD as many of these items are imported from Turkey, although this increase appeared to stabilize at a high 14 TRY to the dollar in January. That is double the exchange rate compared to this time last year, which had been stable at 7 TRY. The SYP continues to depreciate against the USD, although at a much slower, albeit continuous rate.

Market functionality indicators in NES showed somewhat positive trends compared to December, despite the border closures that most likely caused the price increases. Fewer vendors cited that they would run out of stock in the next 3 days, and overall, there was no change in the number of vendors who reported supply challenges compared to last month. However, while the number of those vendors citing price inflation as their main challenge fell only slightly, those citing border crossing closures as their main challenge more than doubled, to almost a quarter of vendors.

As usual, almost all vendors reported that they had a limited stock of at least one denomination of USD notes, although more than half of all vendors reported an adequate stock of the 1 USD or 5 USD denominations. This relative stability suggests supply chains are still managing to function in NES. However, the effects of additional challenges including boarder closures, currency woes and price inflation are expected to have long term impacts well into 2022. See page 5 for further market functionality data.

SMEB PRICE PER SUB-DISTRICT - FG. 3

	SMEB SYP	1 month change	6 month change	SMEB USD[2]
Northeast Syria SMEB	**482,565**	**11%**	**43%**	**134**
NE Aleppo Governorate Median	456,824	8%	36%	130
Abu Qalqal	NA	NA	NA	NA
Ain al Arab	422,370	0%	51%	118
Menbij	487,018	NA	39%	136
Sarin	456,824	8%	NA	127
Al-Hasakeh Governorate Median	488,689	10%	43%	139
Al-Hasakeh	506,239	7%	44%	140
Al-Malikeyyeh	409,888	3%	26%	114
Amuda	475,419	8%	42%	132
Areesheh	488,689	7%	45%	135
Be'r Al-Hulo Al-Wardeyyeh	NA	NA	NA	NA
Hole	NA	NA	NA	NA
Jawadiyah	423,227	7%	39%	118
Markada	496,968	6%	50%	138
Qahtaniyyeh	349,572	4%	19%	98
Quamishli	458,882	9%	27%	127
Shadadah	465,682	7%	45%	129
Tal Hmis	467,852	6%	44%	131
Ar-Raqqa Governorate Median	483,445	5%	41%	137
Ya'robiyah	397,823	9%	41%	110
Al-Thawrah	471,052	1%	47%	131
Ar-Raqqa	483,445	7%	43%	134
Ein Issa	500,232	8%	44%	139
Jurneyyeh	445,086	NA	36%	NA
Karama	481,684	1%	NA	134
Mansura	NA	NA	NA	NA
Suluk	NA	NA	NA	NA
Tell Abiad	NA	NA	NA	NA
Deir-ez-Zor Governorate Median	432,284	1%	33%	123
Hajin	NA	NA	NA	NA
Kisreh	432,284	1%	38%	120
Sur	425,521	7%	25%	117
Thiban	516,269	NA	66%	144

#2 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.

SMEB FOOD ITEMS

Overall, key food items continued to increase in price, and the highest food basket price was recorded in Thiban subdistrict in Deir-Ez-Zor governorate (fg. 10). In January, this was predominantly driven by a large increase in vegetable prices (fg. 4) especially for tomatoes. JMMI field team reported that vegetable prices increased due to being out of season, as the winter season requires more vegetables to be either planted in greenhouses – requiring higher production costs and transportation fees – or imported which was hampered by the closure of the border.

JMMI observations show that there were rising costs for most key food items and non-food items (NFIs), which was attributed to the closure of border crossings as many of these items are imported. This is in line with WFP Syria reports that "[f]ood prices have reached a new record high for the fourth consecutive month in December. Food prices are now 97% higher compared to the same time last year." This may contribute to the critical levels of food insecurity reported by MC HAT's Thematic Report: Food (in)security in government-held Syria, that "[f]ood insecurity has reached critical levels in Syria, with 59% of the population now food insecure."

According to the Precipitation Analysis shared by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) "[i]nsufficient and poorly distributed rainfall in the 2020/21 agricultural season, together with several heatwaves, the high cost of inputs, limited availability of irrigation water and high cost of fuel for pumping, resulted in a contraction of the harvestable cereal area. The harvested wheat area is estimated at 787,000 hectares, slightly over half of the area harvested in 2019." For a broader, national overview of the market context in Syria, please view the WFP Syria mVAM Bulletin for January 2022. For insights on food security across Syria, please see the WFP Hunger Map or the WFP Syria Emergency Dashboard for January 2022.

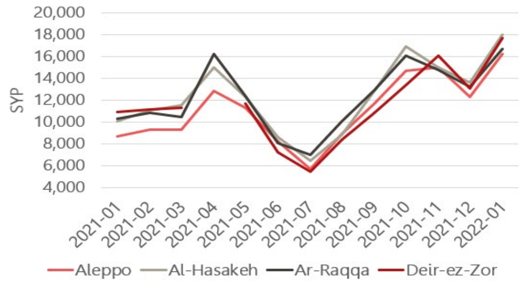
All bulk food items apart from salt saw price increases in January in NES. According to JMMI field teams, bulk food items are typically imported, as such their prices increased due to depreciation of the SYP and Turkish Lira (TRY) against the USD and the impact of the border closure which has been reported by the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) and ECHO Daily Flash. Most notably, sugar prices increased by 26% (fg. 11), and 24% of vendors reporting sugar to be unavailable in their community/neighbourhood. This is in line with SOHR and COAR Global reports, and is attributed to the closure of the border, an absence of price controls, and monopolization in the sugar market.

Bread prices continued to fluctuate (fg. 5), attributed to both the depreciation of the SYP and general subsidies by the authorities. As such, prices for bread vary largely between governorates, although bread was one of the only key food items to decrease in price in January. However, there are reports of the falling quality of bread across the region. SOHR reported in January that the subsidized bread in NES governorates was of inferior quality and that residents complained of bad quality as well as an inadequate portion of bread distribution. In general, price fluctuations of bread are attributed to both the depreciation of the SYP against the USD, and general subsidies by the authorities.

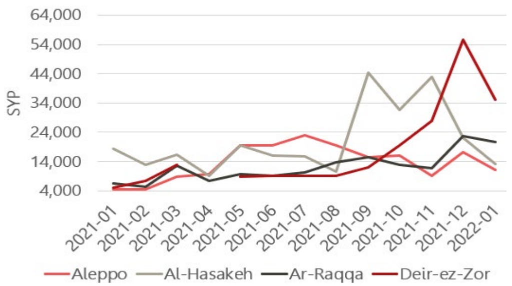
Flour has been increasing in price in a more stable pattern across the region relative to bread (fg. 5 and 6). For a deeper analysis of the agricultural context in Syria, please see the FAO Agriculture Input and Commodity Bulletin for December 2021. For further understanding of how agricultural inputs and food price fluctuations in Syria affect a household's overall food security and livelihood restoration, please see the iMMAP Quarter 3 Bulletin which incorporates both REACH and WFP market data.

Water prices remained stable at the regional level, but some areas in NES are already seeing some increases in water trucking costs (fg. 7). This is expected to worsen in the coming months due to the long term water crisis in the region.

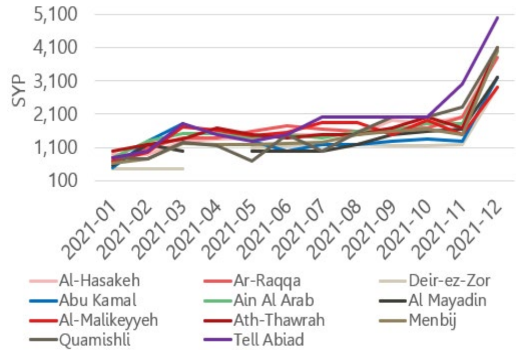
SMEB VEGETABLE PRICES IN NES - FG. 4



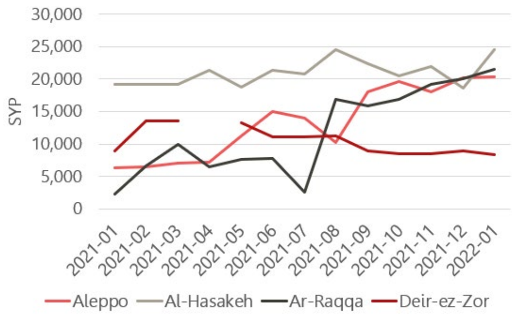
SMEB BREAD PRICES IN NES - FG. 5



FLOUR (KILO) PRICES IN NES DISTRICTS - FG. 6



SMEB WATER TRUCKING PRICES IN NWS - FG. 7



SMEB COMPOSITION[3] FOR NORTHEAST SYRIA - FG. 8

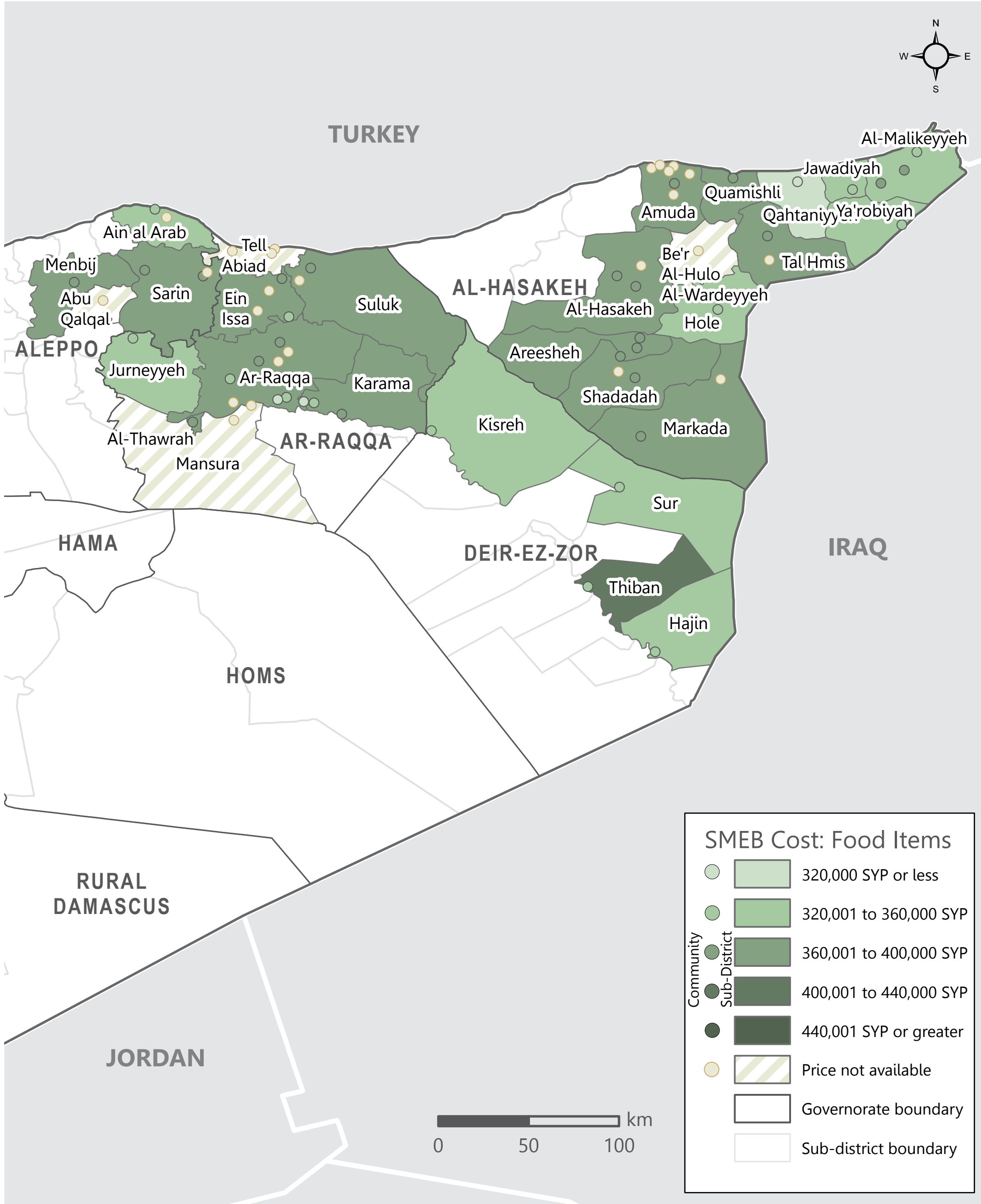
SMEB CONTENTS - FG. 9

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.

#3 Due to rounding figures may not total 100%

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



PRICE OF ALL SMEB ITEMS - FG. 11

Item	Unit[4]	Price SYP	1 month change	6 month change	Price USD[2]
Northeast food Syria SMEB		**367,250**	**6%**	**44%**	**102**
SMEB bulk component	SMEB	189,700	8%	49%	52.69
Bulgur	1 kg	2,500	9%	67%	0.69
Red lentils	1 kg	4,000	5%	65%	1.11
Rice	1 kg	2,700	8%	35%	0.75
Salt	500 g	500	0%	13%	0.14
Sugar	1 kg	2,900	26%	56%	0.81
Tomato paste	1 kg	4,500	13%	35%	1.25
SMEB vegetables component	SMEB	17,250	32%	167%	4.79
Tomatoes	1 kg	2,000	67%	400%	0.56
Potatoes	1 kg	1,300	8%	117%	0.36
Cucumbers	1 kg	1,800	50%	227%	0.50
Onions	1 kg	800	14%	60%	0.22
Cooking oils	SMEB	43,400	3%	29%	12.06
Ghee	1 kg	21,963	5%	39%	6.10
Vegetable oil	1 L	21,000	0%	20%	5.83
SMEB non-veg perishables					
Bread	8 pc	400	-36%	33%	0.11
Chicken	1 kg	5,800	7%	16%	1.61
Eggs	30 pc	9,200	-3%	44%	2.56
Non-food items component	SMEB	32,089	3%	21%	8.91
Bathing soap	1 pc	900	13%	20%	0.25
Sanitary pads	10 pc	1,500	0%	7%	0.42
Toothpaste	100 g	2,208	-3%	38%	0.61
Laundry powder	1 kg	4,000	0%	12%	1.11
Dish soap	1 L	2,800	0%	12%	0.78
Cooking fuels component	SMEB	12,500	0%	0%	3.47
Kerosene (manually refined)	1 L	688	-11%	38%	0.19
LP gas	1 L	175	0%	17%	0.05
Water trucking component	SMEB	17,438	1%	9%	4.84
Water trucking (1000 L)	1 m3	3,875	1%	9%	1.08
Other					
Phone data	1 gb	2,800	8%	7%	0.78

#4 The SMEB unit refers to the current SMEB allocation of the item, as outlined in fg. 9

MARKET FUNCTIONALITY

In January, 89% of surveyed vendors reported facing supply challenges in NES (fg. 13), which is no change compared with the previous month. The most reported supply challenge was price inflation at 81% (fg. 14), which was a slight decrease from the previous month.

Across shop types, surveyed **water trucking vendors (93%), butchers (86%) and vegetable vendors (85%)**, most commonly reported that they would run out of stock in less than 3 days if unable to restock. These types of vendors are typically only able to keep small stores of stock at any one time due to the perishable nature of their produce.

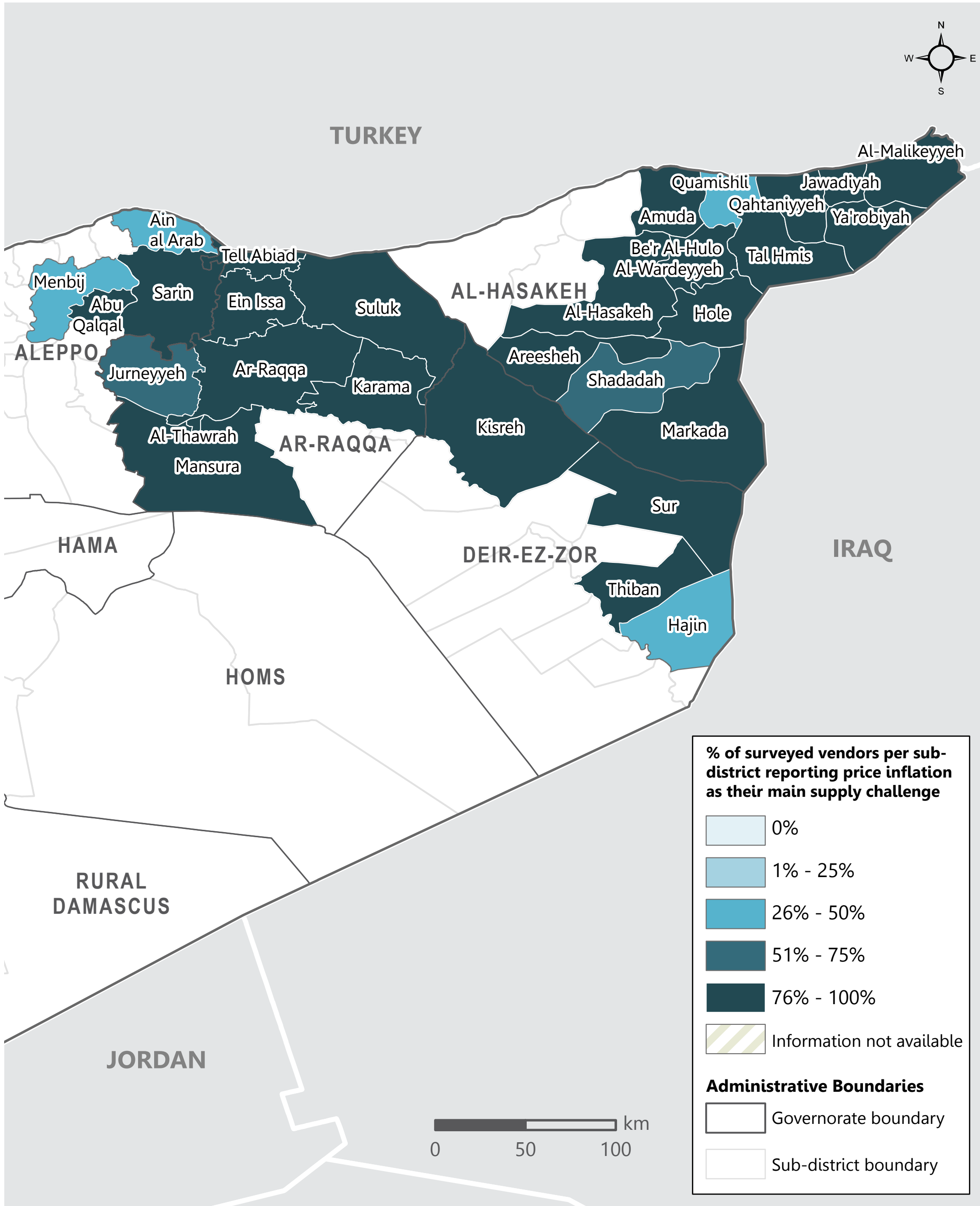
Notably, **100% of water** trucking vendors in Deir-Ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa, 91% in Al-Hasakeh and 89% in NE Aleppo reported that they would **run out of supply in less than 3 days** if supply lines were cut. Furthermore, **100% of vegetable vendors and butchers** in Deir-Ez-Zor reported the same.

97% of informal currency exchange vendors reported having **limited stock of one or more USD denominations.** However, **more than half** of these vendors appeared to have an **adequate supply of the 1 USD or 5 USD** denominations.

SUPPLY CHALLENGES REPORTED[5] BY SURVEYED VENDORS - FG. 12

	AREA	REPORTED %
	NES	**81%**
PRICE INFLATION	NE Aleppo	66%
	Al-Hasakeh	84%
	Ar-Raqqa	86%
	Deir-Ez-Zor	81%
	NES	**23%**
BORDER CROSSINGS CLOSED	NE Aleppo	3%
	Al-Hasakeh	38%
	Ar-Raqqa	15%
	Deir-Ez-Zor	28%
	NES	**19%**
SUPPLY CAN'T MEET DEMAND	NE Aleppo	7%
	Al-Hasakeh	32%
	Ar-Raqqa	7%
	Deir-Ez-Zor	29%
	NES	**11%**
NO ISSUES	NE Aleppo	7%
	Al-Hasakeh	32%
	Ar-Raqqa	7%
	Deir-Ez-Zor	13%

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



#5 multiple choice, responses not expected to total 100%. Please see this month's JMMI dataset for all supply challenges reported by vendors.

ABOUT

To inform humanitarian cash programming, the northeast (NES) and northwest (NWS) Syria 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 prices draw their medians from different vendors, sub-districts from communities, districts from sub-districts, and regional figures are calculated by taking the medians of the minimum reported prices of a region's districts.

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 (3rd - 10th January 2022).

LIMITATIONS

All JMMI data is only indicative for the specific timeframe within which it was collected. 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

INTER-AGENCY CWG CASH WORKING GROUP NorthWest Syria (NWS)

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 and producing outputs.

ACTED ATAA DCA actalliance NRC NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL PEOPLE IN NEED SHAFAK GOAL Nasaem Khair REACH Informing more effective humanitarian action SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL VIOLET Samaritan's Purse INTERNATIONAL RELIEF SARD

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, Gemma Bennett, at gemma.bennett@reach-initiative.org or visit the REACH Syria Resource Centre.