Rapid Needs Assessment: Deir-ez-Zor Governorate
Northeast Syria, December 2019

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OVERVIEW

Residents of Northeast Syria (NES) face a new humanitarian crisis since the escalation of conflict in October 2019; this resulted in significant displacement from the region, both internally and towards the Kurdish Region of Iraq (KR-I).[1] A majority of internally displaced persons (IDPs) originate from sub-districts directly affected by conflict, such as Ras Al Ain, Tel Abiad and Tal Tamer; however, significant preventive displacements have occurred from most communities near the border with Turkey, with IDPs traveling south to communities further from the border.[2] Days after a ceasefire agreement was reached on 17 October,[3] the situation in northeast Syria started to stabilise. Nonetheless, humanitarian access to communities in Deir-ez-Zor Governorate, and other regions across NES, remains limited.

This REACH Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) aims to address existing information gaps and provide a better understanding of the multi-sectoral needs of residents and IDPs residing in communities in Deir-ez-Zor Governorate.

MAIN FINDINGS

Demographics: An estimated 863,876 residents (121,673 households) were living across all assessed communities at the time of data collection. **IDPs were reported to be living in 81 of the 107 assessed communities across Deir-ez-Zor Governorate, making up 12% of the total population** (115, 461 IDPs). IDPs displaced after the escalation of conflict in October 2019 were reportedly present in 13 of the 81 assessed communities where IDPs were present.[4]

Movement Intentions: In 74% of assessed communities hosting IDPs where movement data was available (81 communities), Key Informants (KIs) reported that no IDPs intended to leave the community in the two weeks following data collection. The most commonly cited reason for intent to stay among IDPs was the stability of the security situation, followed by the presence of other family or community members.

Protection: Protection concerns were reported in 43 of the assessed communities; **child labour was reportedly a concern across 72% of these**.[5] Intercommunal tensions were reported in 48 of the assessed communities. Among these, **intercommunal tensions over an actual or perceived increase of commodity prices were reported in 97% of cases.**

Shelter & Non-food items: Shelter was reported among the three main priority needs in 58% of IDP-hosting communities. The availability of non-food items was found to be high but affordability limited, **with household, hygiene, fuel and winter items reportedly available in markets but unaffordable for most households**.
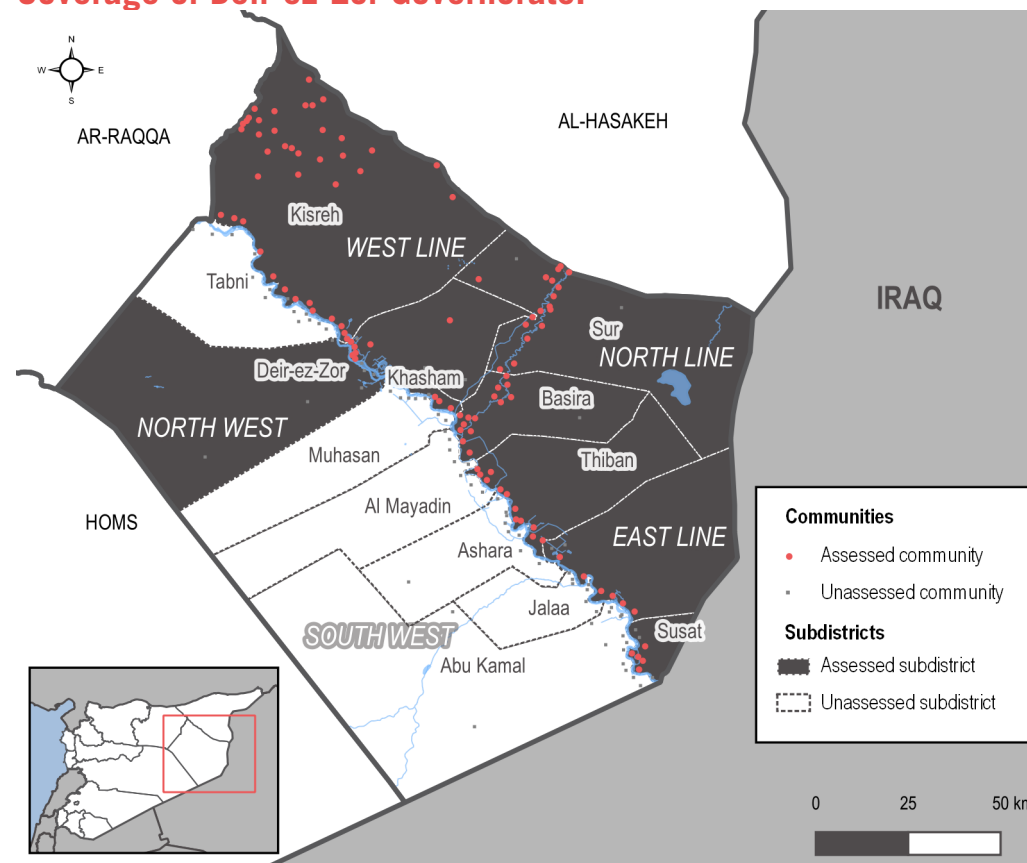
Food Security & Livelihoods: Food insecurity was reported in 26% of all assessed communities and in 35% of assessed communities hosting IDPs. IDPs were reportedly relying on daily labour, remittances or loans, and regular work, as their most common sources to meet their basic needs.

Health: Healthcare was reported as a **priority need in 64% of assessed communities;** services such as **surgery, skilled care during childbirth, and diabetes care were reportedly unavailable in 71%, 50% and 41% of communities, respectively.**

Education: It was reported that less than half of IDP children were attending school in the two weeks prior to data collection in 76 assessed IDP host communities where IDPs were present and data was available. **The need for children to help with earning an income, lack of supplies, and an unsuitable environment for learning were reported as the most common barriers to education in these communities.**

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene: KIs reported that **one quarter or more of the population did not have access to a sufficient amount of water to meet their basic needs in 73% of assessed communities,** in the two weeks prior to the assessment. One or more public sanitation issues were reported in 93% of all assessed communities, including lack of a functioning sewage system (75%), garbage accumulation (28%), and open defecation (20%).[5]

Coverage of Deir-ez-Zor Governorate:

Communities
- Assessed community
- Unassessed community

Subdistricts
- Assessed subdistrict
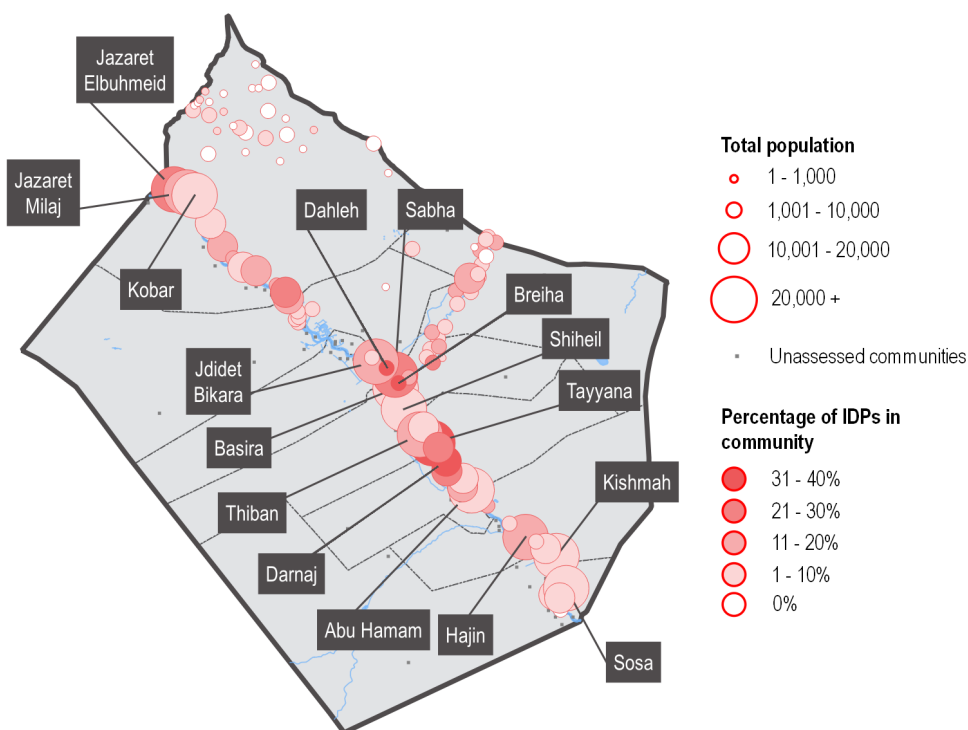- Unassessed subdistrict

0   25   50 km

METHODOLOGY

A remote data collection methodology was employed for this RNA, at the community level or lower, through phone interviews. On average, 2 KIs were interviewed per assessed community. KIs were selected, wherever possible, based on their knowledge of IDP and resident populations in the community, as well as their sector-specific expertise in relation to the different sections throughout the assessment e.g. shelter, healthcare, etc. Due to the inevitably lower reliability of remote data collection compared to direct data collection, a confidence rating system was applied to each individual KI, based on the level of expertise that they held regarding the situation and sector on which they are reporting.[6]
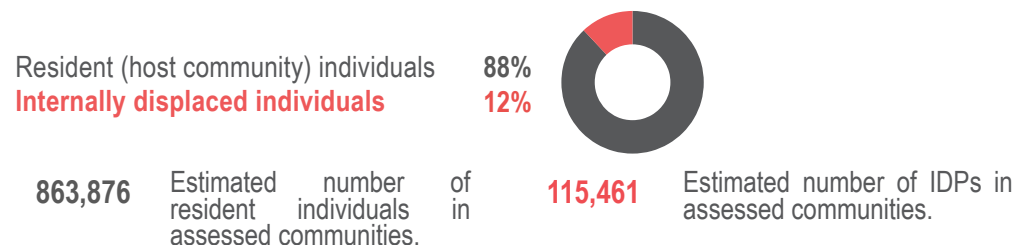
KIs were asked to report at the neighbourhood or community level. A total of 107 communities were covered. Data was collected between 19 and 26 December, looking at the two weeks prior to data collection. Findings are indicative rather than representative, and should not be generalised across the region. The complete dataset can be found here.

Total populations reported in assessed communities, as of the date of data collection:

Total population
- 1 - 1,000
- 1,001 - 10,000
- 10,001 - 20,000
- 20,000 +
- Unassessed communities

Percentage of IDPs in community
- 31 - 40%
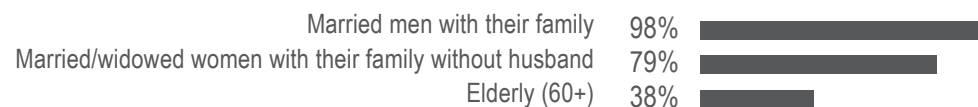- 21 - 30%
- 11 - 20%
- 1 - 10%
- 0%

DEMOGRAPHICS [CL: 3/3]*6

An estimated 863,876 residents (121,673 households) were living across all assessed communities at the time of data collection. Of these communities, KIs reported that a total of 85 communities were hosting 115,461 IDPs (18,327 IDP households), with **IDPs making up 12% of the total population**. KIs reported that 13 of the assessed communities were hosting IDPs who had been displaced since the escalation of conflict at the beginning of October.

Resident (host community) individuals **88%**
Internally displaced individuals **12%**

863,876 Estimated number of resident individuals in assessed communities.

115,461 Estimated number of IDPs in assessed communities.

Top three IDP household profiles, by proportion of assessed communities, as reported:[5]

Married men with their family	98%
Married/widowed women with their family without husband	79%
Elderly (60+)	38%

PRIORITY NEEDS [CL: 3/3]*

Top three reported priority needs, by number of assessed communities, for residents and IDPs:[5]

	1st	2nd	3rd
Safety and security	8	0	1
Shelter	22	3	0
Health	30	24	15
NFIs	2	4	4
Food	1	13	14
Education	1	2	11
Water, sanitation and hygiene	4	7	20
Protection	0	1	3
Livelihoods	32	35	19
Winterisation or equivalent	7	18	20

Top three reported priority needs, by number of assessed communities, for new IDP arrivals:[5]

	1st	2nd	3rd
Safety and security	1	0	0
Shelter	10	0	0
Health	0	6	3
NFIs	0	1	0
Food	0	1	4
Education	0	1	0
Water, sanitation and hygiene	0	0	0
Protection	1	0	1
Livelihoods	0	1	1
Winterisation or equivalent	1	3	4

*CL: average Key informant confidence level.

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MOVEMENT INTENTIONS [CL: 3/3]*6

In the 81 IDP-hosting communities assessed where movement data was available, KIs in a majority of these (74%) reported that no IDPs had intentions to leave in the two weeks after data collection. The most commonly cited reasons to stay, among IDPs, were the stability of the security situation, and the presence of other family or community members. Comparatively, in the 26% of assessed communities where KIs reported intentions to leave among IDPs, lack of income and employment opportunities was cited as a primary movement factor.

15% Proportion of assessed communities, where data was available, where it was reported that **some residents** intended to leave in the two weeks following data collection.

26% Proportion of assessed IDP hosting communities, where data was available, where it was reported that **some IDPs** intended to leave in the two weeks following data collection.

PROTECTION [CL: 3/3]*6

KIs in 60% of all assessed communities reported no protection concerns. However, among the 43 assessed communities where protection concerns were reported, child labour was the most widely cited protection concern (72%). Forced and early marriage (51%), domestic violence (37%), exploitation (26%), and lack or loss of civil documentation (14%) were also reported.[5]

Intercommunal tensions where reported in 45% of communities assessed; across these, **intercommunal tensions over perceived or actual price increases were reported in 94% of cases**. **Tensions over income/employment opportunities (63%), and tensions over access to humanitarian assistance (58%)** were also widely reported.[5]

IDP-hosting communities: most commonly reported protection concerns in the two weeks prior to data collection:[5]

Child Labour	68%
Forced and early marriage	45%
Domestic Violence	32%
Exploitation	29%

IDP-hosting communities: most commonly reported intercommunal tensions in the two weeks prior to data collection:[5]

Tensions over perceived/actual price increases in the area	95%
Tensions over access to income/employment opportunities	59%
Tensions over access to humanitarian assistance	59%
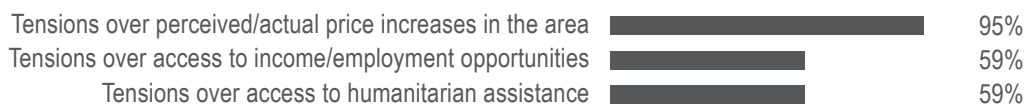
Top three reported intended destinations, for IDPs:[5]

Movement intentions for IDPs	#	%
1. Go back to community of origin	13	62%
2. Host communities (in the same or another governorate)	6	29%
3. Camps within the same governorate	1	5%

Of the communities where IDPs were reportedly intending to leave, the top three reported reasons to leave were:[5]

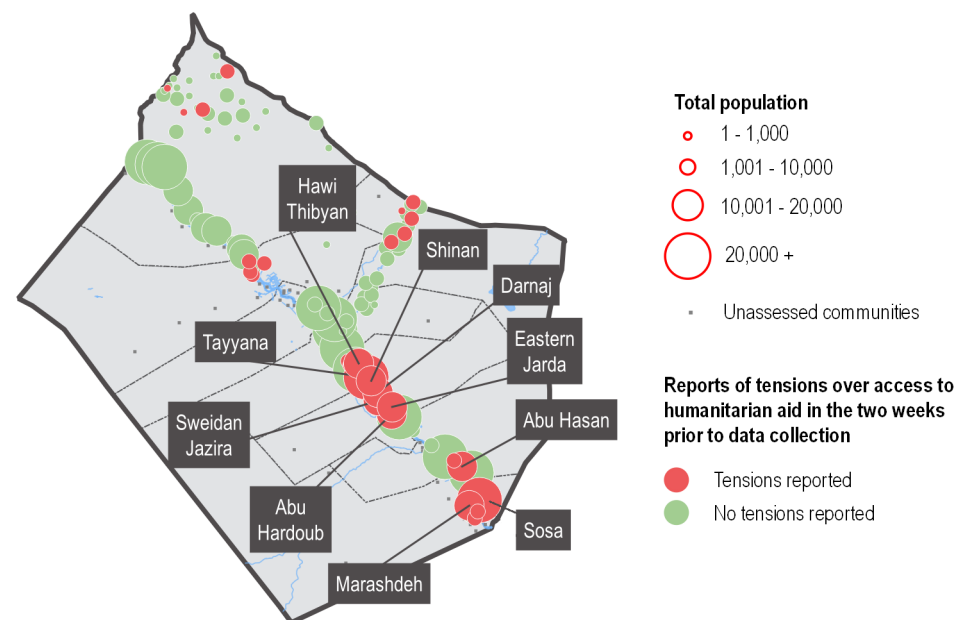| Reasons to leave for IDPs	#	%
1. Lack of access to income and employment opportunities here	15	71%
2. Cost of living is too high here	8	38%
3. Access to water here is not sufficient	4	19%

Main reported intended destinations, for residents:[5]

Movement intentions for residents	#	%
1. Leave for outside Syria	10	63%
2. Host community within the same governorate	4	25%
3. Host community in another governorate	2	13%

Of the communities where residents were reportedly intending to leave, the top three reported reasons to leave were:[5]

Reasons to leave for residents	#	%
1. Lack of access to income and employment opportunities here	12	75%
2. Access to water is not sufficient	11	69%
3. Access to electricity is not sufficient	7	44%

Tensions reported in assessed communities, in the two weeks prior to data collection:

Total population
- 1 - 1,000
- 1,001 - 10,000
- 10,001 - 20,000
- 20,000 +
- Unassessed communities

Reports of tensions over access to humanitarian aid in the two weeks prior to data collection
- Tensions reported
- No tensions reported
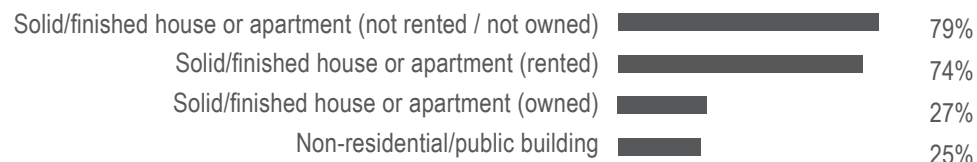
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SHELTER [CL: 3/3]*6

Shelter was more commonly reported among the three main priority needs in communities hosting IDPs, compared to communities without IDPs. Notably, KIs reported shelter as a priority need in 58% of communities hosting IDPs and 77% of communities with new IDP arrivals since October. None of the communities assessed reported assistance in the two weeks prior to data collection.
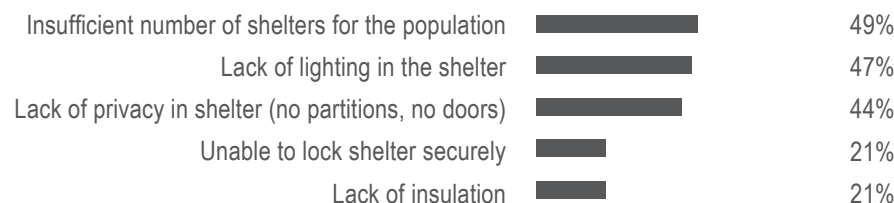
58% Proportion of assessed communities hosting IDPs in which KIs reported shelter among the top 3 priority needs.

49% Proportion of assessed communities hosting IDPs where KIs reported insufficient number of shelters for the population.
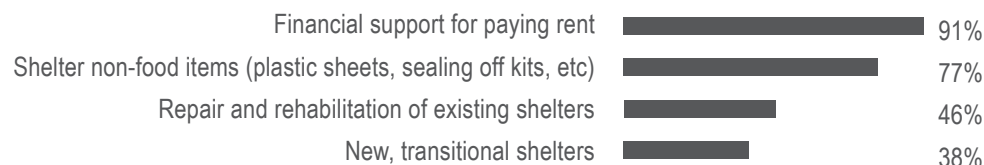
Most commonly reported shelter types of IDPs, by proportion of assessed communities where IDPs were present:[5]

Solid/finished house or apartment (not rented / not owned)	79%
Solid/finished house or apartment (rented)	74%
Solid/finished house or apartment (owned)	27%
Non-residential/public building	25%

Most commonly reported shelter adequacy issues for IDPs, by proportion of assessed communities where IDPs were present:[5]

Insufficient number of shelters for the population	49%
Lack of lighting in the shelter	47%
Lack of privacy in shelter (no partitions, no doors)	44%
Unable to lock shelter securely	21%
Lack of insulation	21%

Most commonly reported shelter support needed to address IDP shelter inadequacies, by proportion of assessed communities where IDPs were present:[5]

|	
Financial support for paying rent	91%
Shelter non-food items (plastic sheets, sealing off kits, etc)	77%
Repair and rehabilitation of existing shelters	46%
New, transitional shelters	38%

NFI NON-FOOD ITEMS and ELECTRICITY [CL: 3/3]*6

Non-food items (NFIs) were reported among the top three priority needs in 9% of communities assessed, with no significant difference between communities hosting IDPs and communities where IDPs were reportedly not present. **Winterisation[7] items were among the three main priority needs in 42% all of communities assessed, 54% of IDP-hosting communities, and 62% of communities with newly arrived IDPs.**

9% Proportion of assessed communities in which NFIs were reported to be a priority need.

**42%** Proportion of assessed communities in which winterisation was reported to be a priority need.[7]

Change in access to electricity, since the beginning of October:

Access to electricity improved 4%
No change 92%
Access to electricity got worse 4%
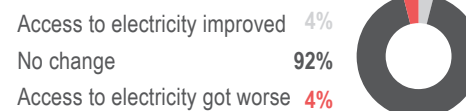
Hygiene items needed in IDP-hosting communities:[5]

	#	%
Diposable diapers	66	81%
Sanitary pads	24	30%
Soap	54	67%
Toothpaste	1	1%
Washing powder (for clothes)	49	60%
Cleaning liquid (for house)	16	20%
Deteregent (for dishes)	33	41%

Availability of NFIs in markets in assessed communities, in the two weeks prior to data collection:

Household items	Winter items	Fuel	Hygiene items
79% 19% 2%	79% 19% 2%	57% 43%	69% 31%
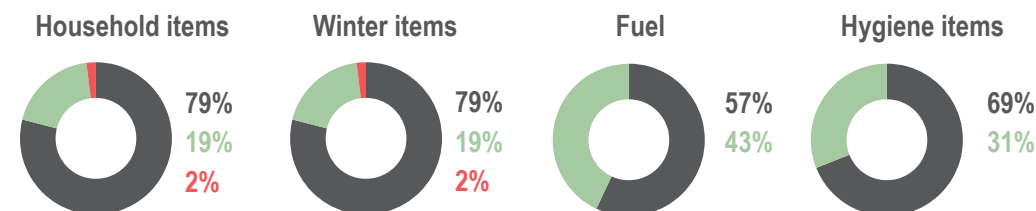
■ Most of these items are available and affordable
■ Most of these items are available but are unaffordable for a majority of people
□ Not sure
■ Most of these items are unavailable in markets

Household items include: bedding items (sheets, pillows), mattresses/sleeping mats, carpets/mats for the floor, cooking utensils,cooking stoves, sources of light/solar lamps, jerry cans, batteries.

Winter items include: heaters, heating fuel containers, blankets, winter clothes, winter shoes.

Fuel items include: fuel for generators; fuel for cooking; fuel for heating.

Hygiene items include: disposable diapers, sanitary pads, soap, toothpaste, washing powder (for clothes), cleaning liquid (for house), detergent (for dishes).

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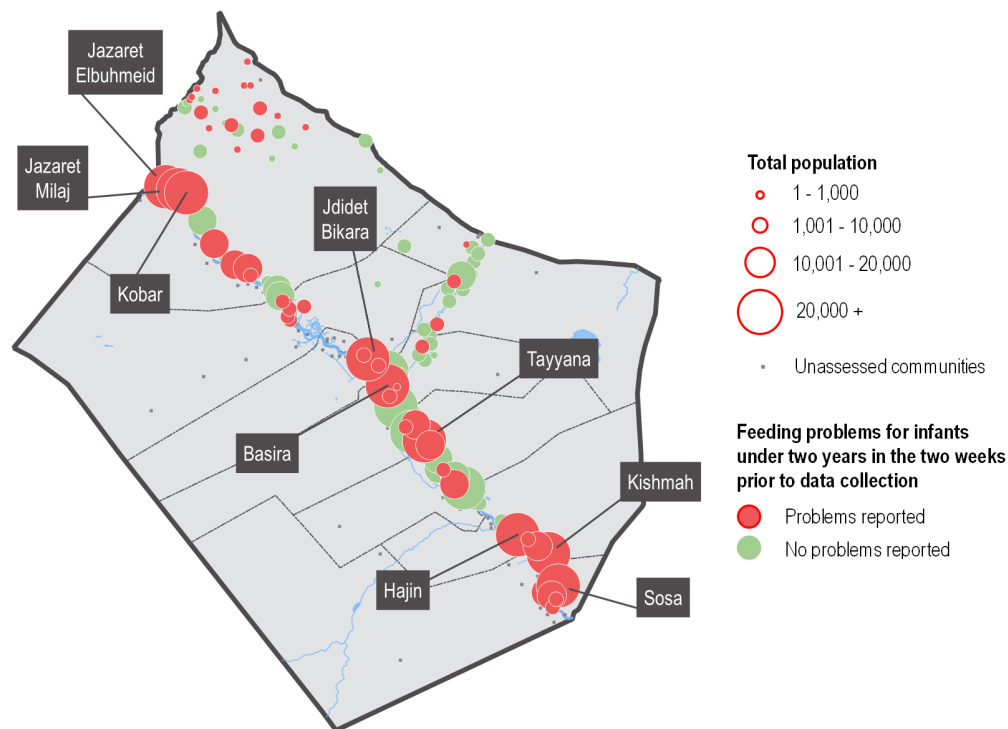
*CL: average Key informant confidence level.

🌾 FOOD SECURITY [CL: 3/3]*6 & 💰 LIVELIHOODS [CL: 3/3]*6

Livelihoods was the most commonly reported priority need across all communities, with **80% of communities reporting it as a priority need**. Food was reported among the top three priority needs in 26% of all assessed communities. This percentage was higher among communities hosting IDPs (35%). **KIs in 51% of assessed communities reported problems with feeding infants and children under 2 years old, and KIs in 84% of these communities cited lack of infant milk products or baby bottles as the primary problem.**

93% Proportion of all assessed communities where KIs reported the use of one or more food coping strategies to deal with a lack of food in the last two weeks.[5]

90% Proportion of assessed communities hosting IDPs in which daily labour was reported among the three main sources for IDPs to meet their basic needs.[5]

Most commonly reported sources of food for IDPs in the two weeks prior to data collection:[5]

Purchasing from stores	90%
Borrowing	59%
Assistance from NGOs	52%
Own production / farming	27%
Assistance from local councils	21%

Reported problems with feeding infants and children <2 years, in the two weeks prior to data collection:

Jazaret Elbuhmeid

Jazaret Milaj

Kobar

Jdidet Bikara

Tayyana

Basira

Kishmah

Hajin

Sosa

Total population
- ○ 1 - 1,000
- ○ 1,001 - 10,000
- ○ 10,001 - 20,000
- ○ 20,000 +
- · Unassessed communities

Feeding problems for infants under two years in the two weeks prior to data collection
- 🔴 Problems reported
- 🟢 No problems reported

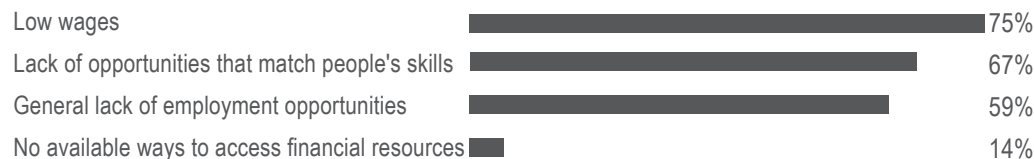**Most commonly reported strategies used by households to cope with a lack of food, in the two weeks prior to data collection:[5]**

	#	%
1. Buying food with money usually used for other things	90	91%
2. Purchasing food on credit/borrowing money to buy food	56	57%
3. Children working to provide additional financial resources to cover for the expenses	39	39%
4. Skipping meals	34	34%

Most commonly reported main sources for IDPs to meet their basic needs, in the two weeks prior to data collection:[5]

Waged labour - daily labour	90%
Loans and remittances	42%
Waged labour - regular work	32%

Most commonly reported barriers to accessing livelihoods faced by IDPs in assessed communities, in the two weeks prior to data collection:[5]

Low wages	75%
Lack of opportunities that match people's skills	67%
General lack of employment opportunities	59%
No available ways to access financial resources	14%

*CL: average Key informant confidence level.

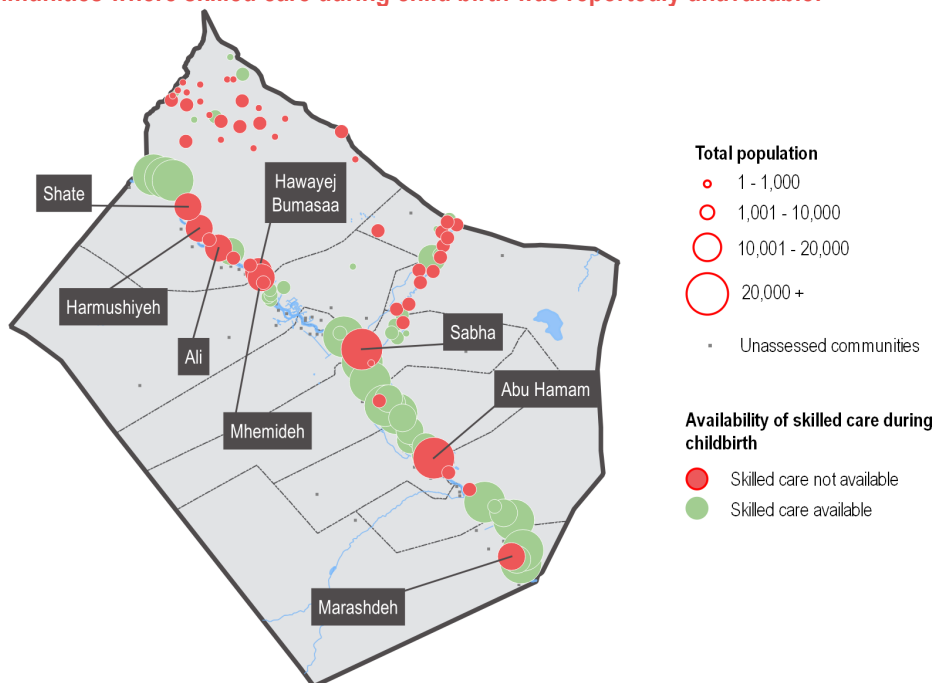**REACH** Informing more effective humanitarian action

HEALTH [CL: 3/3]*6

KIs in all assessed communities except one reported that households were able to access health services at nearby facilities, however healthcare remained among the top 3 priority needs in 64% of the communities assessed. Patients were reportedly transferred to health facilities by car, most commonly, in nearly all communities assessed (98%). KIs in 80% of assessed communities assessed reported that the nearest health facilities did not have ambulances.

Type of health facilities available to households (in the assessed community or in other/nearby communities)	#	%
Mobile clinics / field hospitals	2	2%
Informal emergency care points	69	62%
Private clinics	56	50%
Primary care facilities	63	57%
Hospitals	22	20%

Communities where the following medical services were reportedly UNAVAILABLE	#	%
Child immunisation	20	18%
Diarrhea management	13	12%
Emergency care (accidents and injuries)	39	35%
Skilled care during childbirth	56	50%
Surgery	80	72%
Diabetes	46	41%

Communities where skilled care during child birth was reportedly unavailable:

Total population
- 1 - 1,000
- 1,001 - 10,000
- 10,001 - 20,000
- 20,000 +

· Unassessed communities

Availability of skilled care during childbirth
- Skilled care not available
- Skilled care available

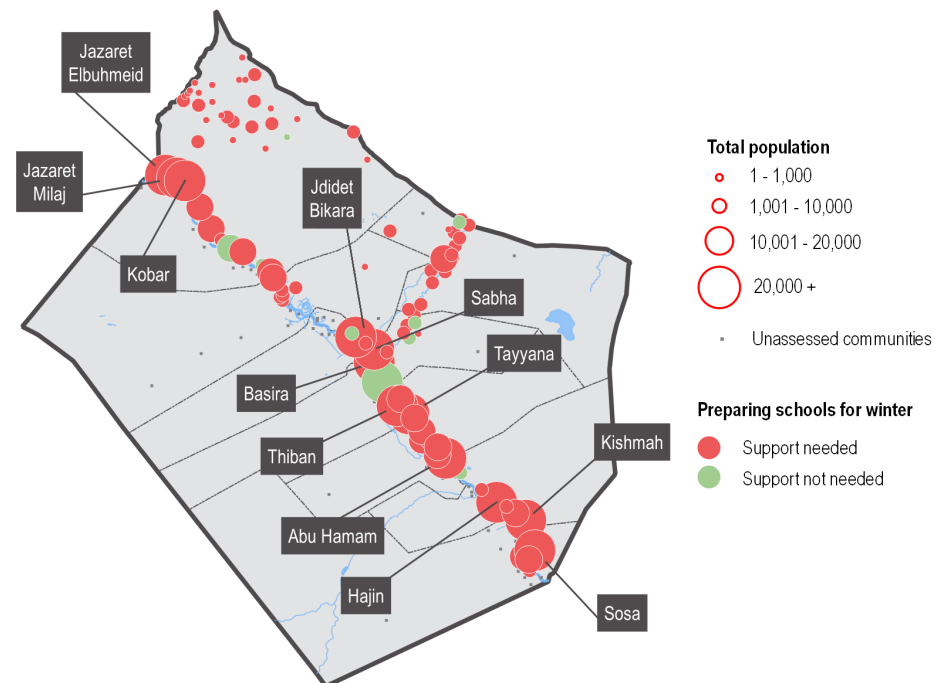Map labels: Shate, Hawayej Bumasaa, Harmushiyeh, Ali, Mhemideh, Sabha, Abu Hamam, Marashdeh

EDUCATION [CL: 3/3]*6

KIs in 13% of all assessed communities reported education as a priority need. Further, while school facilities were reportedly available in all but six of the communities assessed, primary school attendance rates among IDP populations were reportedly low, with less than 50% of IDP children (5-11 years old) attending school in the 76 IDP hosting communities where data was available.

Most commonly reported reasons IDP children in the community did not go to school in the two weeks prior to data collection	#	%
Children needed to help parents	41	64%
Unsuitable environment (insufficient or no heat, electricity, toilets, furniture, ventilation, etc.)	31	48%
Not enough teaching or learning supplies (stationary, textbooks, etc.)	30	47%

Most commonly needed education support, as reported by KIs in assessed communities	#	%
Prepare schools for winter (repair windows/doors, provide heaters and fuel, etc.)	97	91%
Provide learning supplies (textbooks, stationery, etc.)	81	76%
Provide school furniture	38	36%

Communities where winterisation of schools was reported as a priority education need:[5,7]

Total population
- 1 - 1,000
- 1,001 - 10,000
- 10,001 - 20,000
- 20,000 +

· Unassessed communities

Preparing schools for winter
- Support needed
- Support not needed

Map labels: Jazaret Elbuhmeid, Jazaret Milaj, Kobar, Jdidet Bikara, Sabha, Basira, Tayyana, Thiban, Kishmah, Abu Hamam, Hajin, Sosa

*CL: average Key informant confidence level.

💧 WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH) [CL: 3/3]*6

Water, sanitation and hygiene was reported as a priority need in 29% of assessed communities, with KIs reporting that **one quarter or more of the population did not have access to a sufficient amount of water to meet their basic needs in 73% of communities,** in the two weeks prior to data collection.

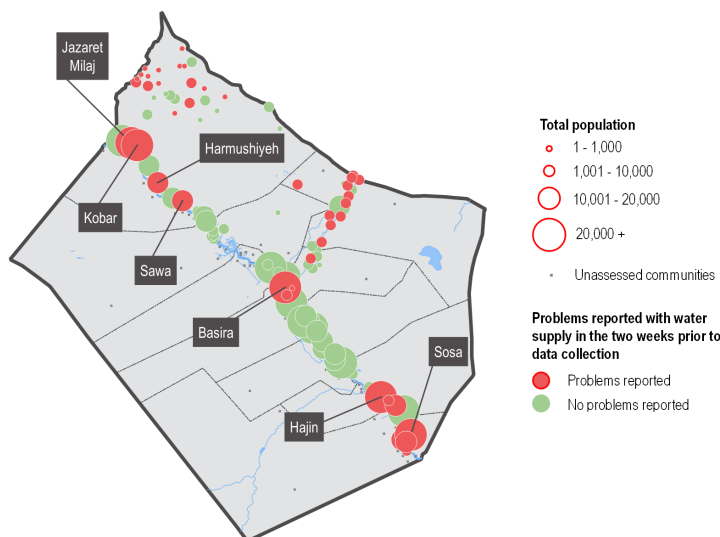## Most common sources of drinking water in the two weeks prior to data collection:

Informal water trucking **45%**
Main network **34%**
Formal water trucking **21%**
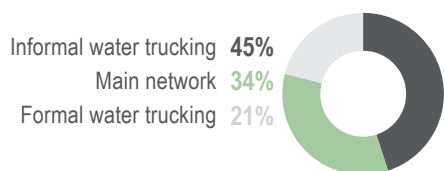
Quality of water from main drinking water source, in the two weeks prior to data collection:

Water was safe to drink **57%**
Issues with quality of water **43%**

Most commonly reported sanitation issues in the two weeks prior to data collection across the 100 communities where sanitation issues were reported:5

No sewage system in the community	75%
Garbage in the streets	28%
Open defecation	20%

Communities reporting issues with water quality:5

Jazaret Milaj
Harmushiyeh
Kobar
Sawa
Basira
Sosa
Hajin

Total population
○ 1 - 1,000
○ 1,001 - 10,000
○ 10,001 - 20,000
○ 20,000 +
· Unassessed communities

Problems reported with water supply in the two weeks prior to data collection
🔴 Problems reported
🟢 No problems reported

SURVIVAL MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET (SMEB)8,9

MEDIAN SMEB FUEL PRICES:9

SMEB Fuel	Median Price (SYP)
Manually refined kerosene (1 litre)	200
Government petrol (1 litre)	500
Manually refined petrol (1 litre)	250
Government diesel (1 litre)	130
Manually refined diesel (1 litre)	180
LP cooking gas (20 litres)	3000

MEDIAN SMEB HYGIENE PRICES:9

SMEB Hygiene	Median Price (SYP)
Laundry powder (1 kilo)	800
Bathing soap (1 bar)	300
Dishwashing liquid (1 litre)	650
Toothpaste (1 tube)	350
Sanitary pads (1 pack of 10)	600

MEDIAN SMEB FOOD PRICES:9

SMEB Food	Median Price (SYP)	SMEB Food	Median Price (SYP)
Flour (1 kilo)	400	Cucumbers (1 kilo)	450
Rice (1 kilo)	600	Tomato paste (1 kilo)	1000
Bulgur (1 kilo)	500	Chicken meat (1 kilo)	1350
Lentils (1 kilo)	700	Cooking oil (1 litre)	1000
Ghee (1 kilo)	1000	Eggs (pack of 30)	1500
Sugar (1 kilo)	450	Salt (1 kilo)	225
Potatoes (1 kilo)	275	Bread (8 pieces)	200
Tomatoes (1 kilo)	450	Baby formula (1 kilo)	7000
Onions (1 kilo)	250		

INFORMAL EXCHANGE RATE MEDIAN ACROSS 8 ASSESSED SUB-DISTRICTS9

(BASIRA, DEIR-EZ-ZOR, HAJIN, KHASHAM, KISREH, SUR, SUSAT, THIBAN)

1 USD = 880 SYP

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*CL: average Key informant confidence level.

ENDNOTES

[1] OCHA Northeast Syria – As half a million people gradually regain access to safe water – the number of displaced people nears 180,000. 22 October 2019.

[2] Northeast Syria - HNAP Flash Update #10 - 23 October 2019.

[3] OCHA. Syria Flash Update #7, Humanitarian impact of the military operation in north-eastern Syria. 16-18 October 2019

[4] Figures in this report do not include IDPs in informal settlements and sites in Deir-ez-Zor Governorate, when these are located outside of community boundaries. This is due to the limited extent of coverage as well as limitations inherent to the methodology adopted.

[5] By proportion of assessed communities reporting. KIs were allowed to select multiple options.

[6] Confidence levels were defined in consultation with field teams, based on the expertise and knowledge each KI type was expected to hold for each question. The confidence levels associated with each question are presented in the final dataset and the confidence matrix is available on request. Findings reported in sections with lower KI confidence levels should be viewed with increased caution.

[7] Winterisation is the process of preparing for winter; winterisation activities may include the distribution of items including blankets, quilts, kerosene, heating stoves, jerry cans, as well as thermal floor mats and insulation to make shelters warmer and more resistant to harsh winter conditions.

[8] The Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) represents the minimum, culturally adjusted items required to support a 6-person household for a month. The commodities are typically sold in markets and consumed by average Syrian households.

[9] SMEB prices reported in this assessment do not include all SMEB items typically covered in the REACH Market Monitoring Exercise, nor do they represent the requisite quantities per item as established in the SMEB. Additionally, the methodology used for this assessment differs from that of Market Monitoring and Rapid Market Monitoring assessments. These prices represesnt the median price for the specified quantity of each good across all assessed locations, as reported by KIs. Please refer to the December 2019 Northeast Syria Market Monitoring Exercise for additional data on prices.