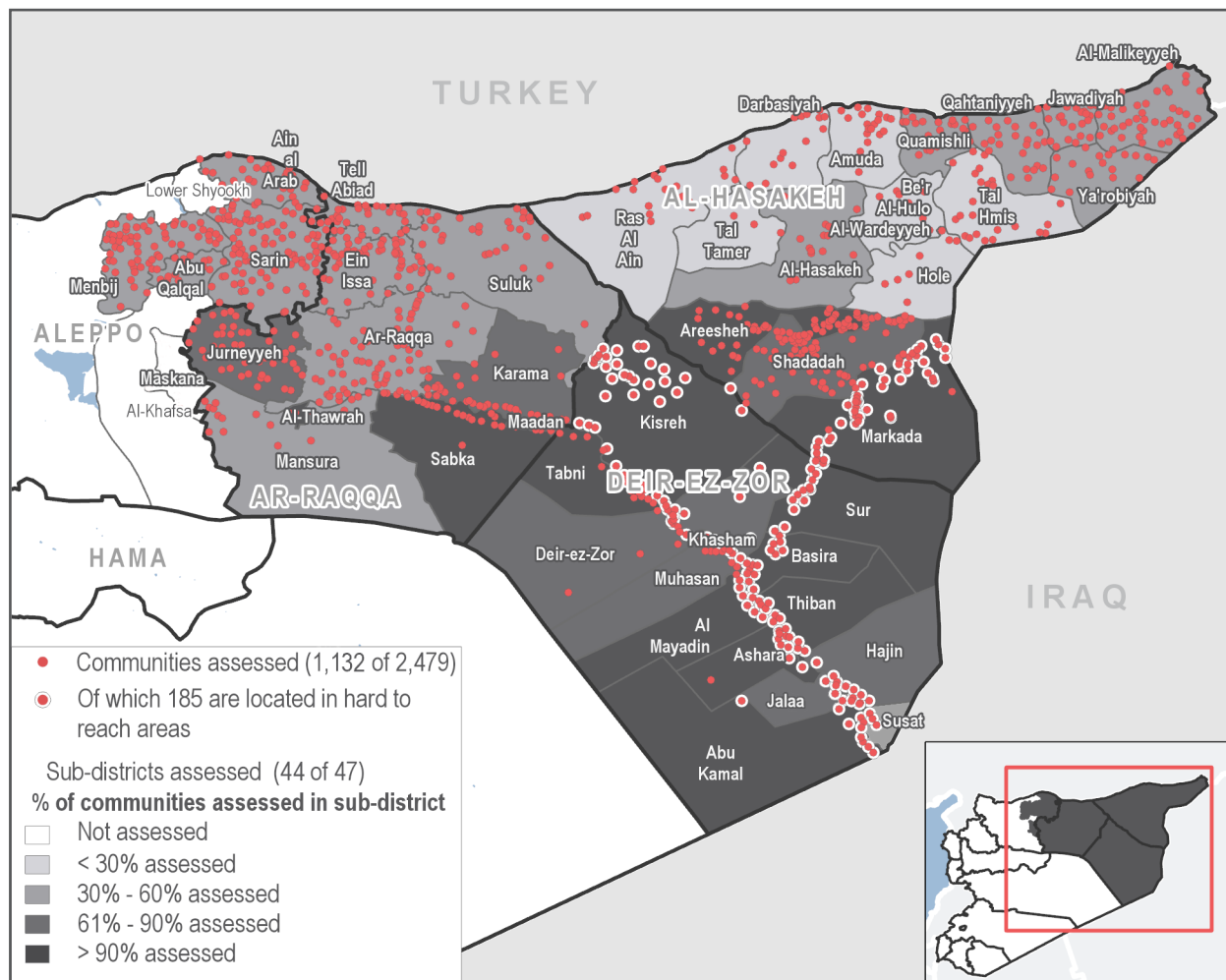


# Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria (HSOS)

Northeast Syria, May 2019

**REACH** Informing more effective humanitarian action

## Coverage



## Introduction

HSOS is a monthly assessment that aims to provide comprehensive, multi-sectoral information about the humanitarian situation inside Syria. The assessment is conducted at the community level covering displacement, food security and livelihoods (FSL), education, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), health, and shelter and non-food items (SNFI).

The factsheet presents information gathered in 1,132 communities across Al-Hasakeh (449 communities), eastern Aleppo\* (199 communities), Deir-ez-Zor (176 communities), and Ar-Raqqa (308 communities) governorates. Data was collected during the month of June, and refers to the situation in Northeast Syria (NES) in May 2019. Following last round, coverage increased from 635 to 1,132 assessed communities. Following last round, coverage increased from 635 to 1,132 assessed communities. Comparisons between April and May 2019 were only done for communities with continuous coverage across both months (620 communities). Findings are indicative rather than representative, and should not be generalised across the region. Community-level datasets are available on the [REACH Resource Centre, the Humanitarian Data Exchange](#), and are also distributed through partners across the humanitarian community.

\*The eastern part of Aleppo where humanitarian response and coordination is conducted from the northeast rather than the northwest.

## Top 3 reported priority needs in assessed communities:

- 1 Healthcare
- 2 Livelihoods
- 3 Education

## People in need (PIN) Demographics\*

**1,367,438** PiN **721,686** People in Acute Need

## Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB):<sup>1,2</sup>

Average price in **May 2019** **71,161 (SYP)**  
 One month change: **+0.3%**  
 Six month change: **+12%**

\* People in Need (PiN) refers to people whose physical security, basic rights, dignity, living conditions or livelihoods are threatened or have been disrupted, and whose current level of access to basic services, goods and protection is inadequate to re-establish normal living conditions within their accustomed means without assistance.

People in Acute Need refers to those facing more severe forms of deprivation in terms of their security, basic rights and living conditions and face life-threatening needs requiring urgent humanitarian assistance ([HNO 2019](#)).

The calculated PiN numbers are indicative as they are calculated using the OCHA dataset and coverage varies slightly.

## Key events impacting the humanitarian situation in NES

Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor cities fully liberated from ISIL. <sup>a,b</sup>	Forces escalate offensive on ISIL in southeastern Deir-ez-Zor governorate and in southern Al-Hasakeh governorate. <sup>c</sup>	Delayed rainfall resulted in late wheat yield. <sup>d</sup> [However, subsequent rainfall in late 2018 and early 2019 resulted in large yields.]	Hostilities in ISIL-held areas of Hajin and Baghouz further intensified, more than 63,000 people got displaced. <sup>e</sup>	Last ISIL-held pockets were captured, few new displacements. <sup>f</sup>	Fires in NES affected large areas of farmland and devastated wheat and barley harvests. <sup>g,h</sup>
October-November 2017	April 2018	October 2018	November 2018 - March 2019	April 2019	May 2019

## CONTEXT

In May 2019, the situation in Northeast Syria (NES) remained relatively stable, despite a few key events with potential destabilising effects. Firstly, fires affected agricultural farmland and impacted wheat and barley harvests in Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor governorates in NES.<sup>9,10</sup> In the [Northern Syria Relativized Burn Ratio Analysis May June 2019](#), REACH analysed the total amount of burned land using satellite imagery to be around 322,500 acres for NES during May and June 2019. With high temperatures, a lack of firefighters and fire trucks, local authorities had difficulties extinguishing the fires.<sup>1</sup> The full effect the fires have had on the NES harvest will become more clear in the upcoming months. Secondly, in May, local communities in Deir-ez-Zor governorate organised various demonstrations; better access to services and jobs, detention of many people over suspected links to terrorist groups, and limited say in decision-making processes were a source of discontent.<sup>1</sup> Concerns and tensions over corruption, forced conscription and perceived discrimination fuelled further the turmoil in Deir-ez-Zor governorate.<sup>8</sup>

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS<sup>2</sup>

### Food sufficiency and own food production declines in Al-Hasakeh governorate and access to agricultural livelihoods declines in Deir-ez-Zor governorate

Al-Hasakeh governorate, known as the bread basket of Northeast Syria, is a vital provider of wheat for the entire region. However, food sufficiency in Al-Hasakeh governorate reportedly declined. In May, Key Informants (KIs) in 17 (9%) of 180 assessed communities in Al-Hasakeh governorate reported food was insufficient. In April, KIs in only 5 (3%) of 180 assessed communities reported this.<sup>\*</sup> A decline in livelihoods related to farming (the most commonly reported source of income in NES) in especially Deir-ez-Zor governorate and a decrease of own production of food in Al-Hasakeh governorate were further noticeable. Farm ownership was reported by KIs in 110 (67%) of 163 assessed communities in Deir-ez-Zor governorate, which shows that had declined in comparison to April, when 128 (79%) of 163 assessed communities reported this. Moreover, in Al-Hasakeh governorate, obtaining food by means of own production had also declined during this period. In May, autonomous food production was reported by 159 (88%) of 180 assessed communities, this was reported by 149 (83%) of 180 assessed communities in April. The link with and effect of the reported fires in NES on the reported increase in food insufficiency and decrease in access to agricultural livelihoods and own food production has yet to be established. However, the food security situation remains to be carefully observed during the upcoming summer harvest season.

### Prices of fuel remain volatile

Whereas [manually refined petrol and diesel saw an increase in cost by 25% and 13%, GoS refined petrol decreased by 72%](#). As the fuel crisis continues, KIs reported a shortage in fuel and high prices. To cope with the lack of fuel, KIs in 29 assessed communities reported cutting trees to burn, KIs in 11 communities reported burning furniture without use, and KIs in 10 communities reported burning agricultural or productive assets.

<sup>\*</sup> Following last round, coverage increased from 635 to 1,132 assessed communities. Comparisons between April and May 2019 were only done for communities with continuous coverage across both months (620 communities).

## ➔ Displacement<sup>4</sup>

- Across NES, no major displacement movements were witnessed in May. KIs in 1,121 (99%) of 1,132 assessed communities reported that no pre-conflict population (PCP) left last month. In 11 communities, KIs reported that PCP left, which was mainly reported by KIs in 9 communities in Al-Hasakeh governorate.
- KIs in 551 (49%) of 1,132 assessed communities reported that no Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) left the community in May.

## 🍲 Food Security and Livelihoods

- In NES, the most commonly reported coping strategy to cope with the lack of income in May, was borrowing money from family or friends, as reported by KIs in 861 (76%) of 1,132 assessed communities.
- The second most commonly reported coping strategy was sending children to work or beg, as reported by 436 (39%) of 1,132 assessed communities, highlighting significant child protection concerns. KIs in 25 assessed communities reported adults in the community begging as a way to cope with the lack of income.

## 📖 Education

- Education remained the third most commonly reported priority need in NES, with KIs in more than two thirds of communities (71%) reporting that not all children were accessing education services.
- In Deir-ez-Zor governorate, KIs in 100 (57%) of 176 communities reported that children did not attend school due to early marriage.
- Overall, distance to services was the third most commonly reported reason why children were not accessing school, after a lack of school supplies and teaching staff. In April 2019, KIs in 129 of 620 assessed communities reported that children were not accessing school because of the distance to services. In May 2019, KIs in 142 of 620 assessed communities reported this, highlighting an increase from 21% to 23%.

## 🚰 Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

- Water access was the second most commonly reported priority need in Al-Hasakeh governorate. Compared to April 2019, when KIs in 21 (12%) of 180 assessed communities reported water access as a priority need, in May this was reported by KIs in 38 (21%) of 180 assessed communities in Al-Hasakeh governorate, clearly demonstrating a large increase in water needs.
- Water was reportedly insufficient across NES in 458 (40%) of 1,147 assessed communities. In Al-Hasakeh governorate, KIs reported in 232 (52%) of 449 communities that water was insufficient and residents in the community did not have enough water to meet households needs, which asserts why water access was the second most reported priority need in this governorate.
- Overall, KIs in 31 assessed communities reported people getting sick after drinking the water. This was mainly reported in Ar-Raqqa (23), Deir-ez-Zor (5), eastern Aleppo (2) and Al-Hasakeh (1) governorates.

## 💊 Health

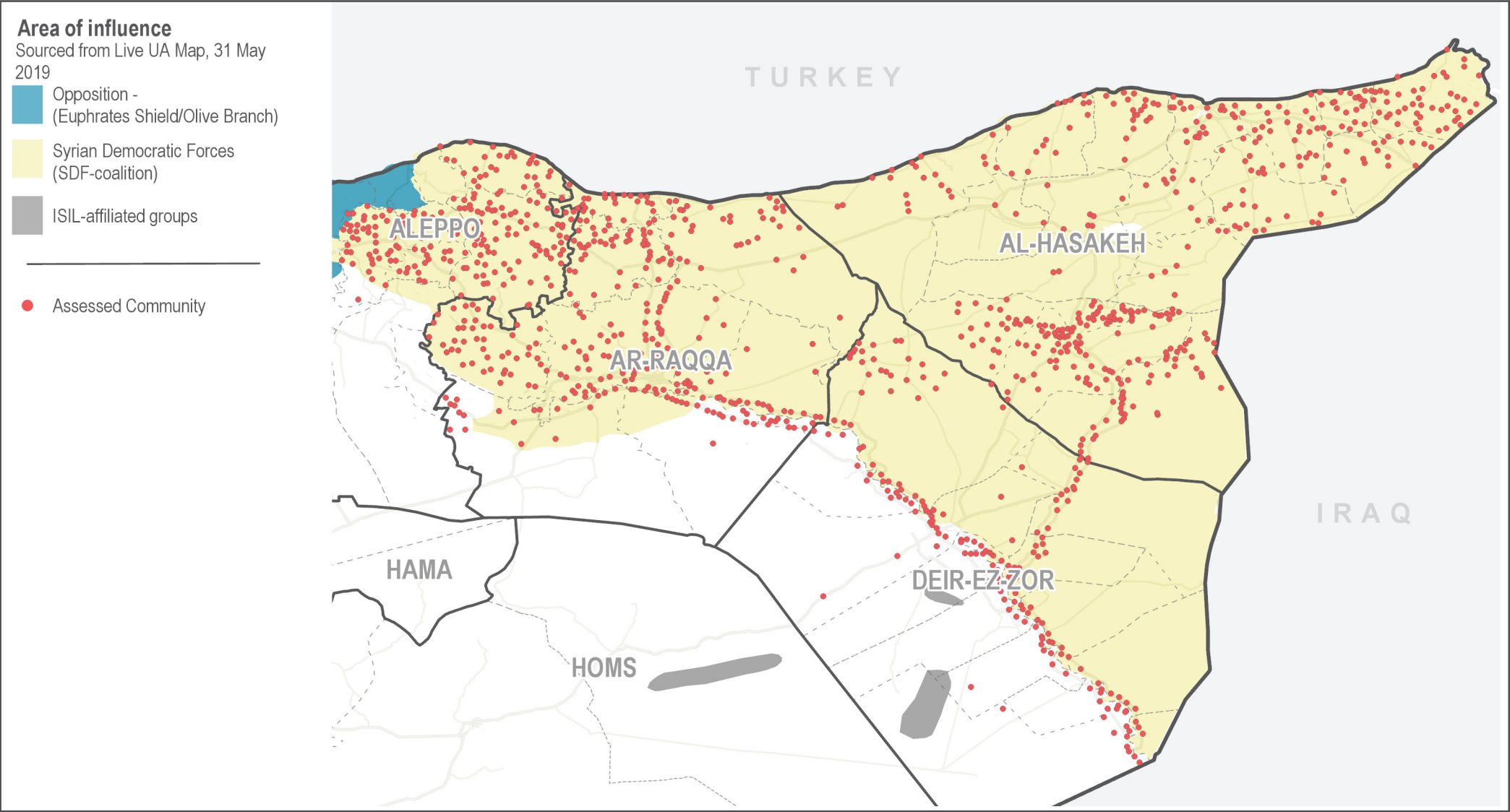
- In Al-Hasakeh governorate, availability of health services deteriorated in comparison to April 2019. In May, KIs in 19 of 161 assessed communities reported that no health services were available, whereas in April KIs in only 1 of 161 assessed communities reported this, highlighting a decrease in health care service provision.
- Across NES, some population groups experienced more barriers accessing healthcare than others. KIs reported that elderly (9%), children (9%), women (8%) and IDPs (2%) faced more barriers to healthcare than other population groups. The highest proportion of assessed communities in which barriers for population groups were reported were located in Ar-Raqqa governorate. There, KIs reported that women (20%), children (17%), elderly (12%) and IDPs (7%) faced more barriers to healthcare, highlighting discriminate access to healthcare.

## 🏠 Shelter and non-food items (NFI)

- Across NES, KIs in 47% of communities reported a damage between 1-25% to buildings in their community. KIs in 2% of communities reported a damage between 26-50%, this was higher for Deir-ez-Zor (5%). Overall, KIs in 49% of communities reported no damage to buildings in their community.

# Northeast Syria, May 2019

## Regional areas of influence:



# Northeast Syria, May 2019

## ➔ DISPLACEMENT<sup>4</sup>

507 - 598

Estimated number of IDP arrivals in assessed communities in May 2019.

8,772 - 10,523

Estimated number of spontaneous returns in assessed communities in May 2019.<sup>5</sup>

### Communities with the largest estimated number of IDP arrivals:

Qosour (Deir-ez-Zor, Deir-ez-Zor) 150 - 200

Khariji (Areesheh, Al-Hasakeh) 150 - 150

Modar (Karama, Al-Hasakeh) 135 - 150

\*Reported as community, (sub-district, governorate)

### Top 5 reported subdistricts of origin for IDP arrivals:<sup>6,7</sup>

Susat, Deir-ez-Zor

Ar-Raqqa, Ar-Raqqa

Deir-ez-Zor, Deir-ez-Zor

Al-Hasakeh, Al-Hasakeh

Quamishli, Al-Hasakeh

\*Reported as sub-district (governorate),

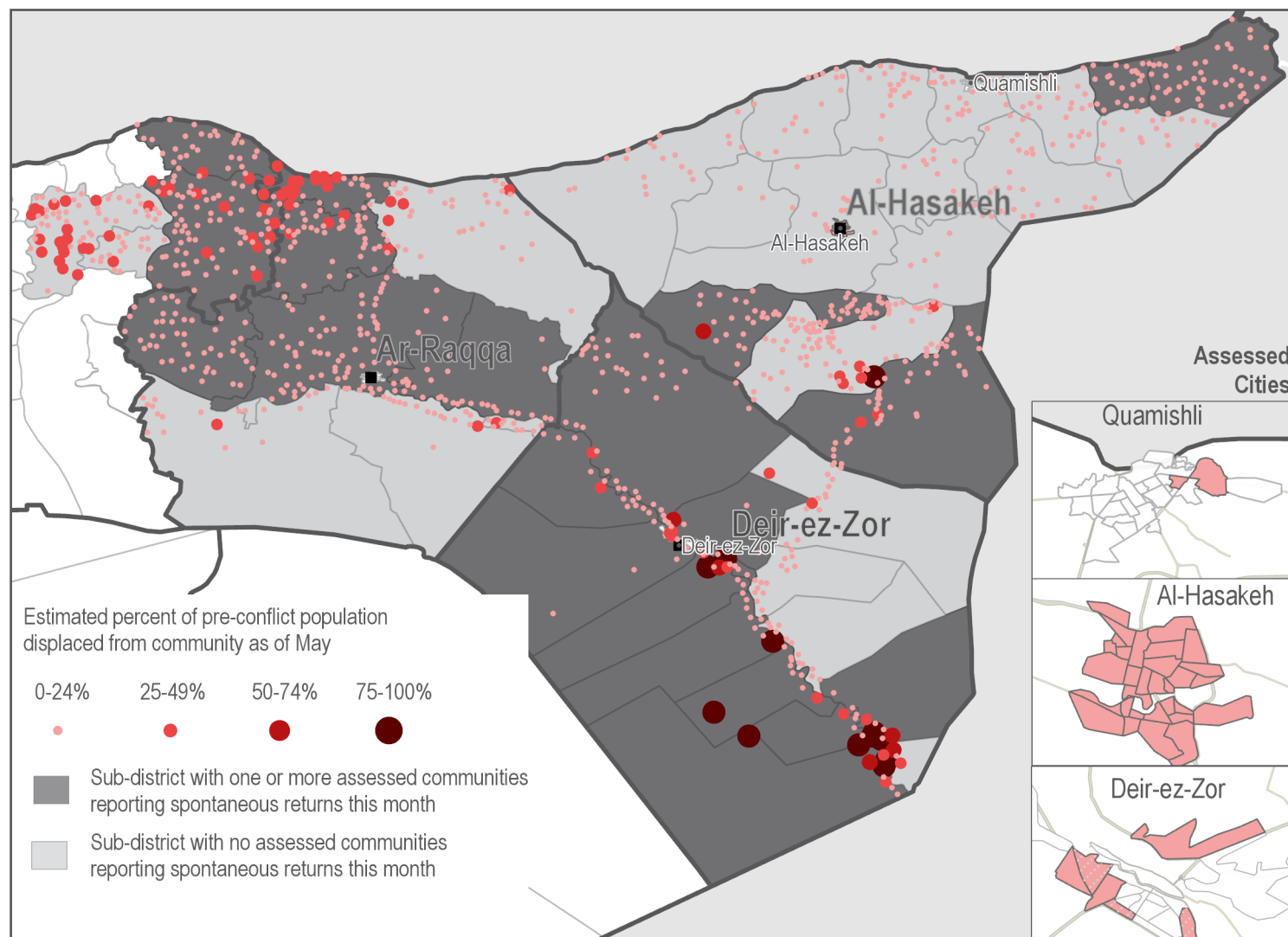
**1,121 communities reported no PCP departures.<sup>8</sup> Top 3 reasons for PCP departures in the remaining 11 assessed communities:<sup>6,7,9</sup>**

Loss of income 64%

Protection concerns 27%

Reduced access to basic services 18%

### Estimated proportion of pre-conflict population (PCP) displaced from community:



# Northeast Syria, May 2019

## FOOD SECURITY & LIVELIHOODS

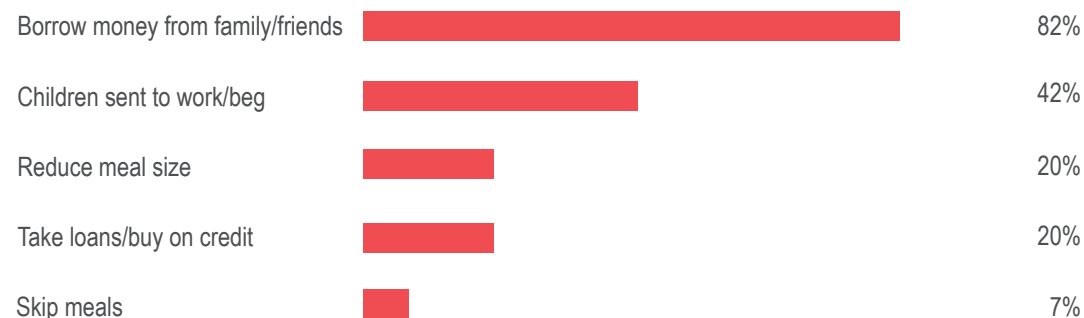
**164/1,132** Communities reported having received food distributions in the last month.

**253/1,132** Communities reported that residents were unable to access shops and markets.

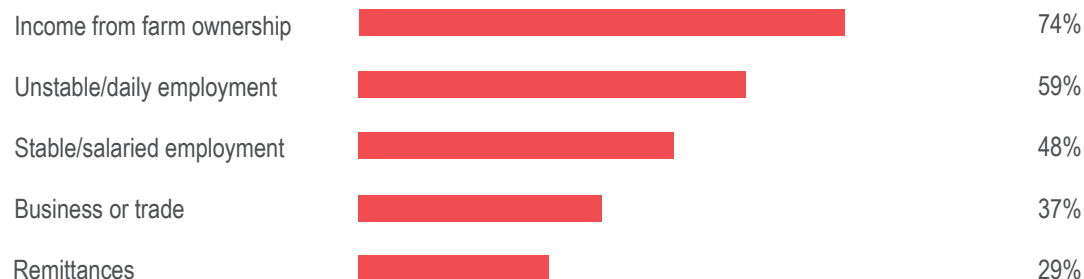
**1/1,132** Community reported that residents used extreme food-based coping strategies to deal with insufficient income.<sup>10</sup>

**From 50,000 to 100,000 SYP** Most commonly reported monthly household income range.<sup>1</sup>

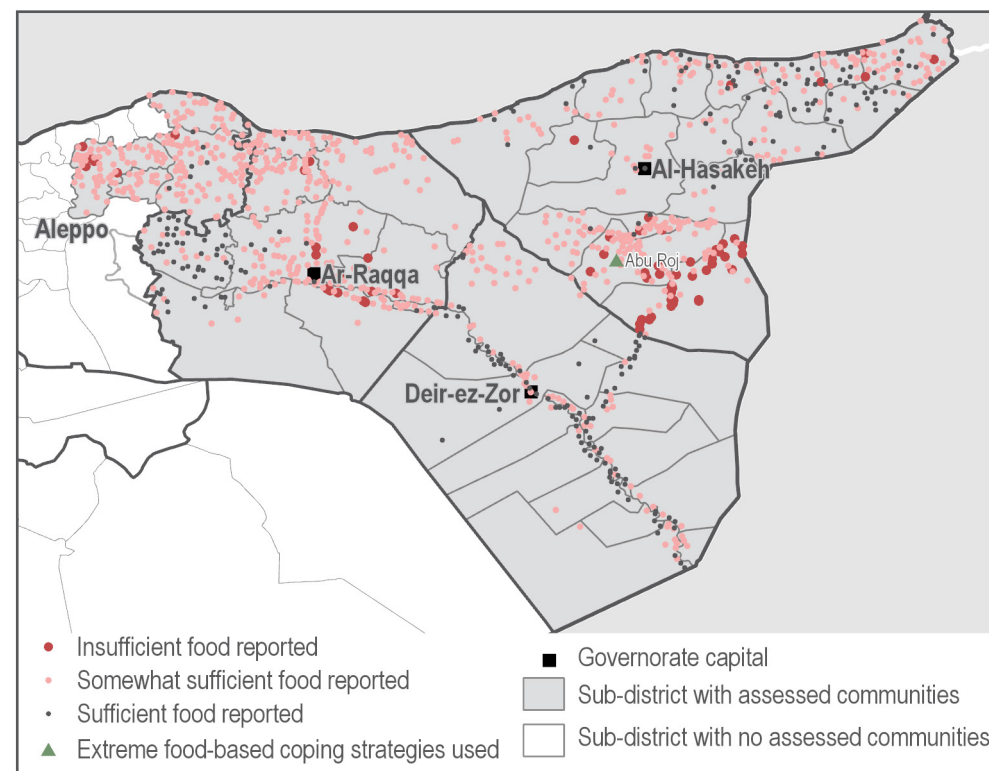
**85 communities** reported that residents had enough income to cover household needs. The most commonly reported coping strategies to deal with a lack of income in the remaining **1,047** assessed communities were:<sup>6,7,9</sup>



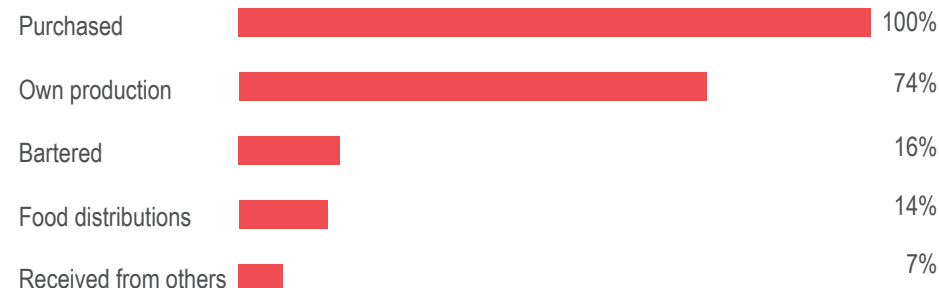
### Most commonly reported main sources of income:<sup>6,7</sup>



### Communities that reported having an insufficient quantity of food:<sup>11</sup>



### Most commonly reported ways of obtaining food:<sup>6,7</sup>



# Northeast Syria, May 2019

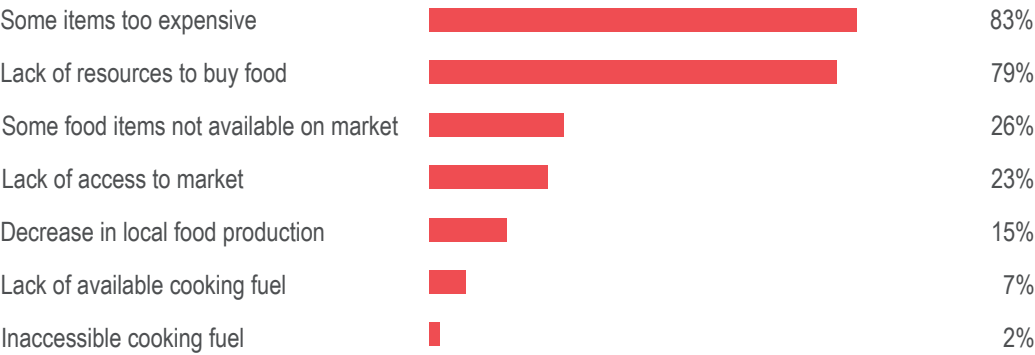
## FOOD SECURITY & LIVELIHOODS

Core food item prices reported (in SYP):<sup>1,12</sup>

Food item:	Regional average price in NA:	One month change:	Six month change:
Bread (8 pieces)	122.5	+23%	-2%
Rice (1 kilogram)	500	0%	+3%
Lentils (1 kilogram)	350	0%	+8%
Sugar (1 kilogram)	350	+8%	+17%
Cooking oil (1 litre)*	4,375	+5%	+12%

\*includes the combined vegetable oil and ghee prices

41 communities reported that residents experienced no challenges in accessing food. The most common difficulties experienced in the remaining 1,106 assessed communities were:<sup>6,7,9</sup>



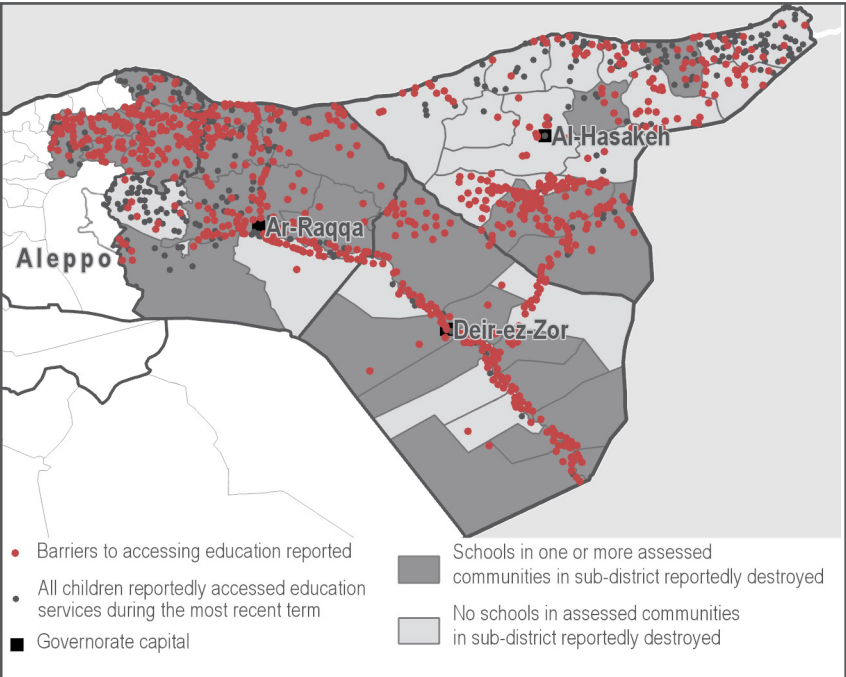
## EDUCATION

1,038/1,132 communities reported having functioning primary education facilities, while 360 communities reported having functioning secondary education facilities.<sup>13</sup>

329 communities reported that all children were able to access education. The most commonly reported barriers to education in the remaining 803 assessed communities were:<sup>6,7,9</sup>



Prevalence of barriers to accessing education services:



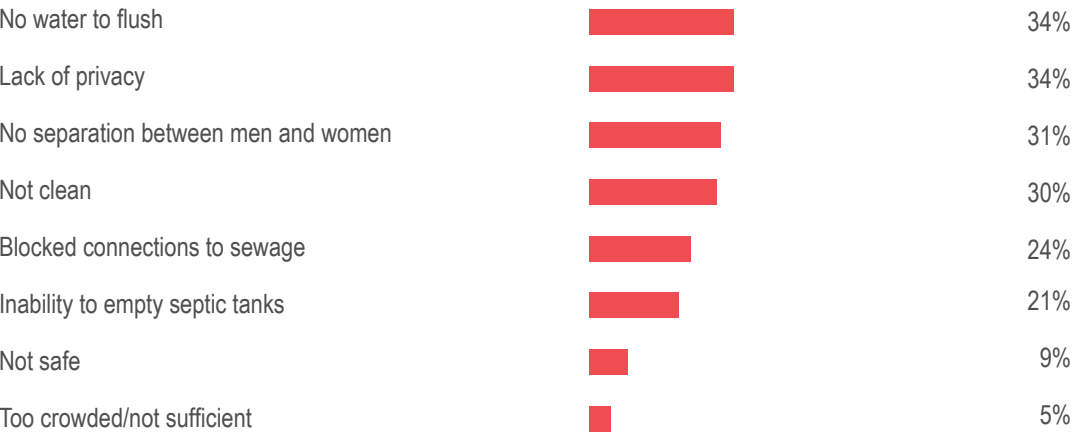
# Northeast Syria, May 2019



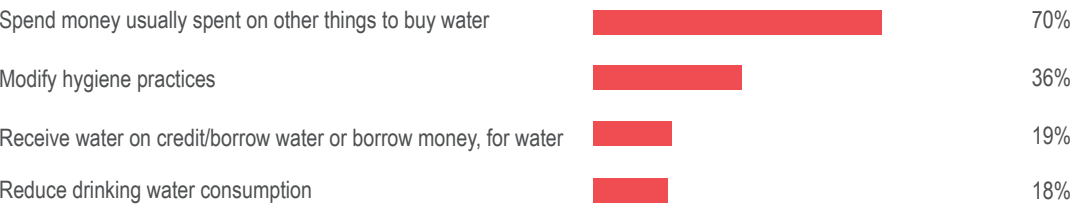
**219/1,132** Communities reported that water from their primary source tasted and/or smelled bad.

**31/1,132** Communities reported that drinking water from their primary source made people sick.

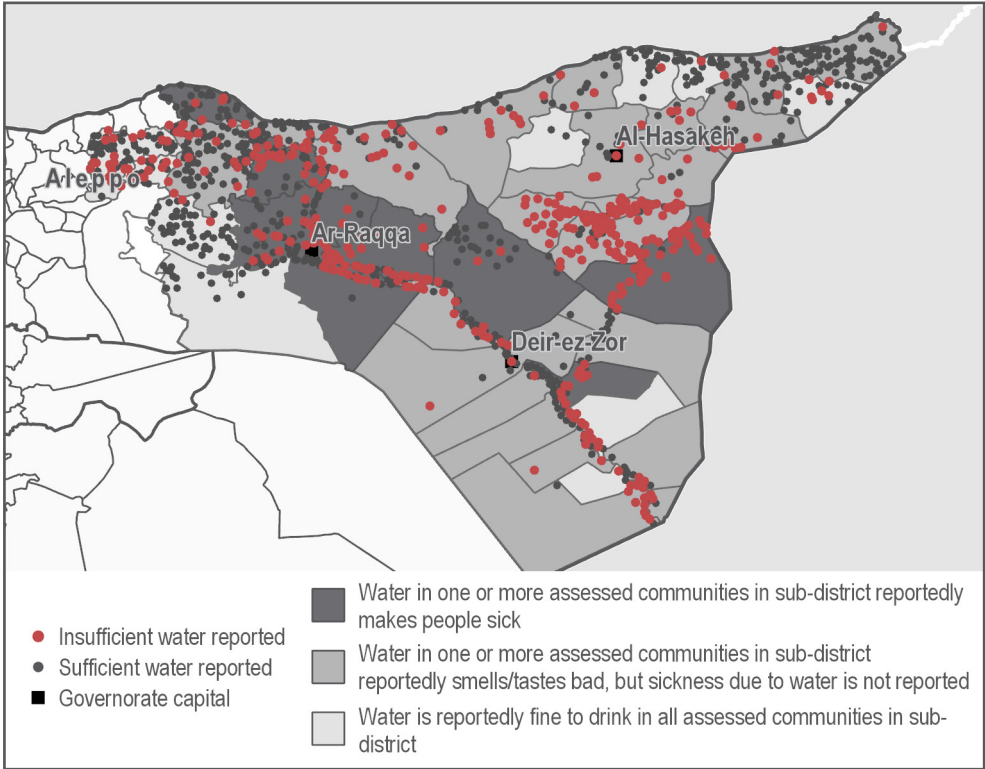
**571** communities reported that residents had no problems with latrines. The most commonly reported problems with latrines in the remaining **561** assessed communities were:<sup>5,7,9</sup>



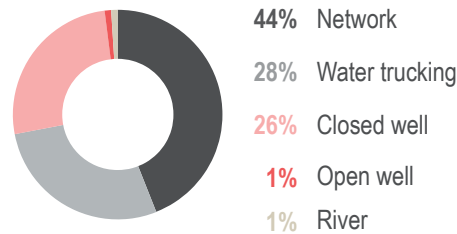
**674** communities reported that they had sufficient amounts of water to meet household needs. The most common coping strategies to deal with a lack of water in the remaining **458** assessed communities were:<sup>6,7,9</sup>



Communities that reported insufficient amounts of water to meet household needs:<sup>11</sup>



Primary drinking water source reported:<sup>7</sup>



Primary method of garbage disposal reported:<sup>6,7</sup>



# Northeast Syria, May 2019

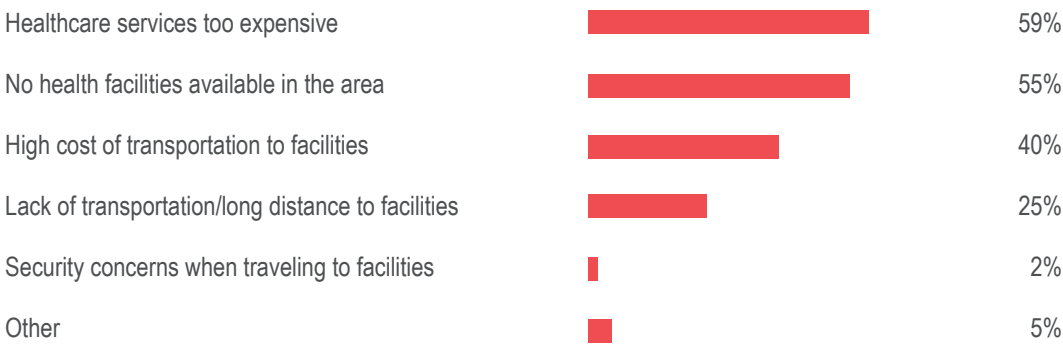
## HEALTH

**641/1,132** Communities reported that no assessed medical items were available in their community.<sup>14</sup>

**338/1,132** Communities reported that the majority of women did not give birth in a formal health facility.

**0/1,132** Communities reported that some individuals had been diagnosed with SAM (Severe Acute Malnutrition).<sup>15</sup>

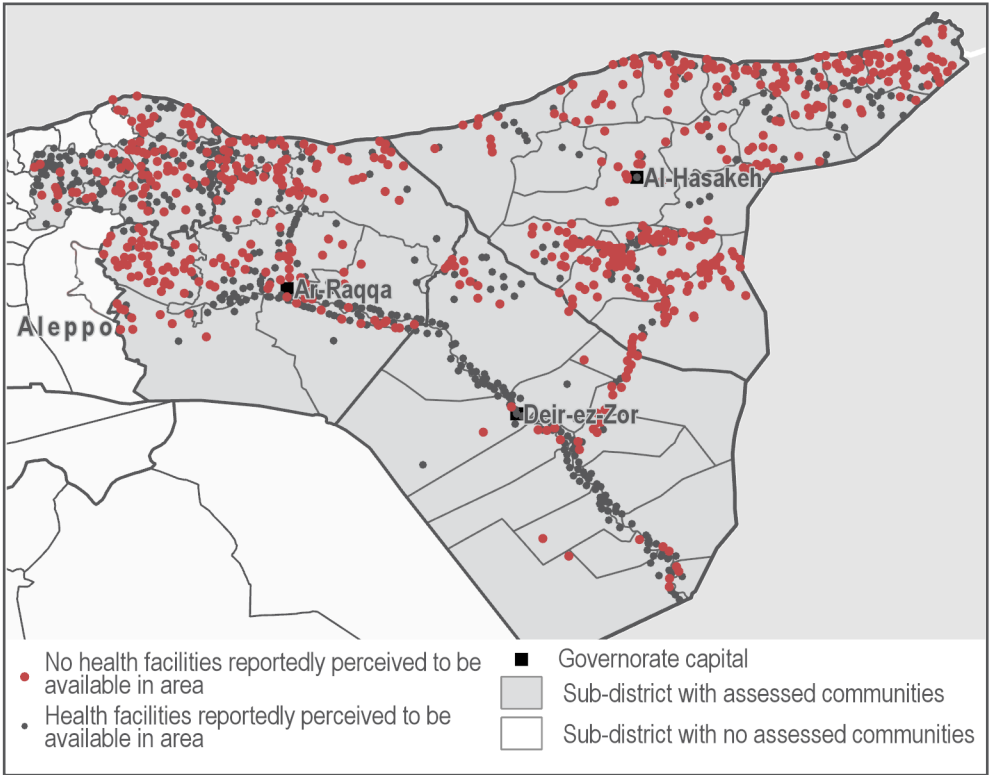
**23** communities reported that residents experienced no barriers to accessing healthcare services. The most commonly reported barriers in the remaining **1,109** assessed communities were:<sup>6,7,9</sup>



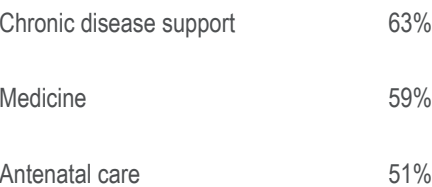
**393** communities reported that residents were not using coping strategies to deal with a lack of medical services and items. The coping strategies used in the remaining **739** communities were:<sup>6,7,9</sup>



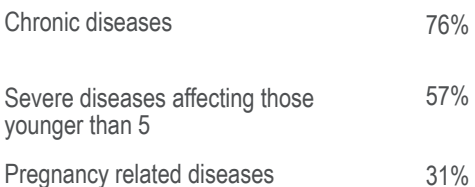
Presence of medical facilities in assessed communities:



Top 3 most needed healthcare services reported:<sup>6,7</sup>



Top 3 most common health problems reported:<sup>6,7</sup>



# Northeast Syria, May 2019

## SHELTER AND NFI

**4,530 SYP** Regional average monthly reported rent price in SYP across assessed communities.<sup>1</sup>

**5,992 SYP** Northern Syria average monthly reported rent price in SYP across assessed communities.<sup>1,16</sup>

### Most commonly reported shelter type for PCP households:<sup>7</sup>



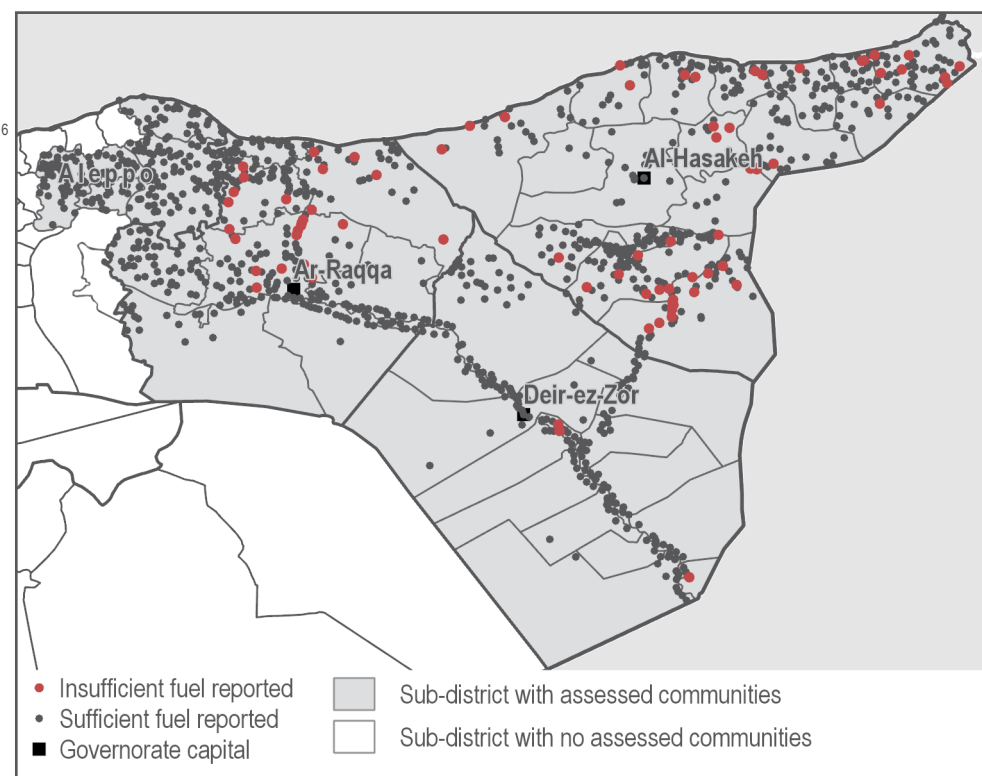
### Most commonly reported shelter type for IDP households:<sup>7</sup>



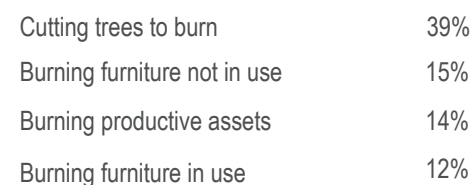
### Reported fuel prices (in SYP):<sup>1,2</sup>

Fuel type (1L):	Regional average price in NA:	One month change:	Six month change:
GoS petrol	85	-72%	-35%
GoS diesel	55	0%	0%
Manually refined petrol	250	+25%	+33%
Manually refined diesel	175	+13%	+43%
Cooking fuel	3,750	-14%	0%

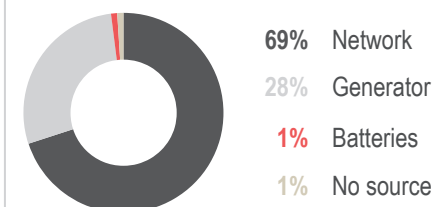
### Communities that reported insufficient amounts of fuel to meet household needs:<sup>11</sup>



**1,058 communities** reported no lack of fuel. Most common strategies to cope with lack of fuel in the remaining **74** assessed communities:<sup>6,7,9</sup>



### Primary source of electricity reported:<sup>7</sup>



## METHODOLOGY

HSOS data collection is conducted through an enumerator network in accessible locations throughout Idleb, Aleppo, northern Hama, Deir-ez-Zor, Ar-Raqqa, and Al-Hasakeh governorates. REACH enumerators are based inside Syria and interview Key Informants (KIs) directly in the community about which they are reporting. Where access and security constraints renders direct data collection unfeasible, some KI interviews are conducted remotely through participants identified in camps and settlements in neighbouring countries by REACH field teams. Participants contact multiple KIs in their community in Syria to collect information about their community. KIs are asked to report at the community level.

KIs generally included local council members, Syrian NGO workers, medical professionals, teachers, shop owners and farmers, among others, and were chosen based on their community-level or sector specific knowledge. In cases where KIs disagree on a certain piece of information, enumerators triangulate the data with secondary sources or select the response provided by the KI with the more relevant sector-specific background. For each question asked, confidence levels are assigned based on the KIs area of expertise and knowledge of the sector-specific situation. The confidence levels associated with each question are presented in the [final dataset](#). The full confidence matrix used to assign confidence levels is available upon request.

Findings are triangulated through secondary sources, including news monitoring and humanitarian reports. Where necessary, follow-up is conducted with enumerators and participants. Findings are indicative rather than representative, and should not be generalised across the region.

## 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) and follow us on Twitter [@REACH\\_info](https://twitter.com/REACH_info).

## ENDNOTES

### KEYEVENTSAND DEVELOPMENTS

<sup>a</sup> Sen. (18 October 2017). After the Battle for Raqqa, Now Comes the Hard Part. News Deeply. Retrieved from <https://newsdeeply.com/syria>.

<sup>b</sup> UNHCR. (21 January 2018). Syria Crisis: Northeast Syria Situation Report No. 20 (1 December – 31 December 2017). Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

<sup>c</sup> Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. (4 April 2018). The International Coalition and SDF prepare for a massive military operation against ISIS amid alertness in the east of the Euphrates River and south of Al-Hasakah. Retrieved from <https://syriahr.com>.

<sup>d</sup> El Dahan, M. (9 October 2018). War and drought produce Syria's smallest wheat crop in 30 years: U.N. Reuters. Retrieved from <https://reuters.com>.

<sup>e</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA). (15 December - 31 March 2019). Syria Crisis: Northeast Syria. Situation Report No. 31. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

<sup>f</sup> BBC. (23 March 2019). IS 'caliphate' defeated but jihadist groups remains a threat. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com>.

<sup>g</sup> Smart News Agency. (26 May 2019). Self-administration reported approximately 2,500 hectares fired in Northeast Syria. Retrieved from <https://smartnews-agency.com>.

<sup>h</sup> Smart News Agency. (26 May 2019). Fire affected areas of wheat and barley fields in Ar-Raqqa governorate. Retrieved from <https://smartnews-agency.com>.

<sup>i</sup> Kurdistan 24. (11 June 2019). Kurdish-led authorities in Syria struggling with wild fires. Retrieved from <https://kurdistan24.net>.

<sup>j</sup> AP News. (9 May 2019). Anti-Kurdish protests in east Syria could endanger US plans. Retrieved from <https://apnews.com>.

<sup>k</sup> Middle East Eye. (8 May 2019). Syrians in Deir Ezzor protest against SDF oil sales to Assad government. Retrieved from <https://www.middleeasteye.net>.

## MAIN TEXT

<sup>1</sup> 1 USD = 569 SYP (see [Syria Market Monitoring Dataset May 2019](#)).

<sup>2</sup> 18 items comprise the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB), which represents the minimum culturally adjusted items required to support a 6-person household for a month. SMEB items: Bread, bulgur, chicken, eggs, fresh vegetables, ghee/vegetable oil, red lentils, rice, salt, sugar, tomato paste, bathing soap, laundry/dish soap, sanitary pads, toothpaste, cooking fuel, water trucking, smartphone data, float (other costs).

<sup>3</sup> All information and figures reported in HSOS factsheets refer to the situation in assessed communities and cannot be generalised to other non-assessed communities of the region.

<sup>4</sup> For population numbers, KIs were asked to provide the number of residents and IDPs present in the community as of 31 May 2019. A minimum of three KIs were interviewed in each assessed community. Where discrepancies in the information provided by KIs was deemed too large, further triangulation with additional KIs and local organizations was conducted. Estimated individual figures in this report are rounded to the nearest tenth.

Discrepancies with other available population data may be the result of any of the following: differences in assessment coverage dates; differences in definitions of population sub-groups (IDPs and residents); differences in geographic scope of assessed locations (e.g. included/excluded nearby camps and sites); differences in KI types interviewed; and differences in average household sizes used to calculate individual numbers, among others.

The definition of IDPs used by enumerators for this assessment was 'Individuals or groups of people who have been forced to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights, or natural or man-made disasters, and who have not crossed an international border'.

<sup>5</sup> Spontaneous returns refers to IDPs or refugees who return to their community of origin that they left due to conflict but not necessarily to their places of habitual residence (their former homes); who intend to remain in the community for an undetermined period; and who do not meet the IASC framework on durable solutions (IASC framework includes "not necessarily voluntary, safe or sustainable" elements).

<sup>6</sup> Assessed using select multiple questions.

<sup>7</sup> By percentage of communities reporting.

<sup>8</sup> The definition of resident (pre-conflict) population (PCP), was 'Individuals or groups of people who

currently reside in their communities of origin, or communities of permanent residence prior to the Syrian conflict. This includes populations that were never displaced as well as previously displaced populations that have returned to their communities of origin'.

<sup>9</sup> Not all surveys have answers for every question, in these scenarios the KI or participant will input no answer. When the dataset has no answer for a particular question the reported number of assessed communities will not add up to the total number of communities assessed and percentages will be calculated based on submitted responses.

<sup>10</sup> Extreme food-based strategies: eating food waste; eating non-edible plants and spending days without eating.

<sup>11</sup> Based on KI perception of sufficiency.

<sup>12</sup> Bread, rice, lentils, sugar, and cooking oil are considered core food items used in food baskets across Syria. For further information on all SMEB items please see the [Syria Market Monitoring May 2019 Dataset](#).

<sup>13</sup> Reported numbers indicate the number of communities with functioning primary and secondary education facilities during the data collection period. It is important to note that simply having a functioning facility is not indicative of students being able to attend said facility. In addition, in some cases KIs reported that children attend schools in a neighbouring community.

<sup>14</sup> Assessed HSOS medical items; anti-anxiety medication, contraception, clean bandages, blood transfusion bags, diabetes medicine, anaesthetics, blood pressure medicine, antibiotics, burn treatment.

<sup>15</sup> This information was derived from medical professionals (KIs). The number of total communities refers to all communities that had a KI as medical professional available.

<sup>16</sup> Includes HSOS data for Idleb, Aleppo, northern Hama, Deir-ez-Zor, Ar-Raqqa and Al-Hasakeh governorates.