

## Annex A - Sector Analysis

### Information sources

There are 6 main assessment reports which give an overview of the humanitarian situation in Idlib:

**SINA and J-RANS II:** The JRANS II (Joint Rapid Assessment of Northern Syria) was carried out in March 2013 and covered 21 sub-districts in Idlib (81% of the governorate), through interviews with key informants and direct observation. The same 21 sub-districts were assessed in November 2013 during the Syria Integrated Needs Assessment (SINA), using a similar methodology. ([JRANS II 2013/03](#), [SINA 2014/01](#))

**Dynamo:** The Dynamic Monitoring System (Dynamo) was last published in May, covering the period from 1 January to 28 February. The Dynamo is carried out by the Assistance Coordination Unit (ACU). The assessment covers 12 sub-districts in Idlib (54% of the governorate), and is based on key informant interviews and direct observation. ([Dynamo 2014/05/02](#))

**GOAL needs assessment:** A total of 95 households in 9 sub-districts (Armanaz, Badama, Darkoush, Harim, Janudiyeh, Kafr Takharim, Maaret Tamsrin, Qourqeen, and Salqin) were surveyed for a GOAL needs assessment in January. The assessment used a sampling framework which aimed to provide statistically representative results using a small sample. The survey data was triangulated with focus group discussions and direct observations. ([GOAL 2014/01/01](#))

**The EMMA, the Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis,** a rapid market analysis, was carried out in January by GOAL through interviews with actors involved in market systems (potato and tomato, and wheat flour) in Northern Idlib. ([GOAL 2014/01](#))

**PAH WASH-assessment:** In May, 68 villages were covered by a PAH WASH assessment, which looked at water infrastructure and needs through 467 household surveys and direct observation. ([PAH 2014](#))

Assessment data was complemented and triangulated with other secondary data sources, as far as possible, including NGO and INGOs' assessments and reports,

GoS documentation, including the Syrian Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) data and local and international newspapers.

### Information gaps and data limitations

**Baseline:** The last population statistics were gathered in 2004 and there has been no proper update since then. Little sectoral information on Idlib is available, particularly concerning education and shelter. Access to the CBS website has been restricted as well.

**Crisis Information and Geographical Coverage:** Some areas of the Idlib Governorate are inaccessible making full coverage essentially impossible. None of the assessments analysed for this document covered all of the Governorate's sub-districts. As such, there was limited data for certain locations and some data gaps remain. On top of this, the available data is not regularly updated.

**Sectoral coverage:** As for much of Syria, in-crisis statistical data is very limited across all sectors, especially with the CBS and related ministries not updating or publishing available data. The greatest information gaps were in the Education, Protection, and Shelter/NFI sectors.

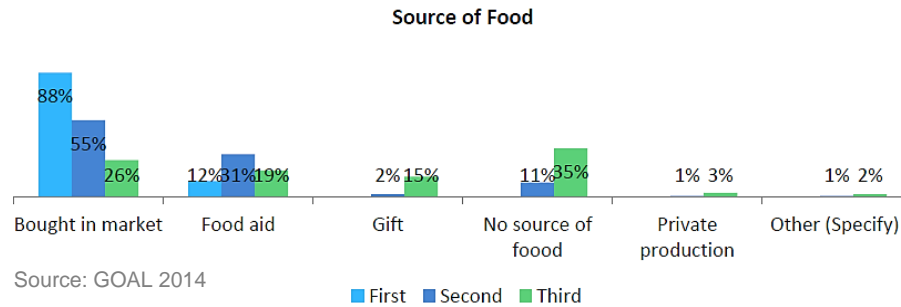
**Relevance of the data:** The information in this report takes into account the humanitarian situation before the crisis and the most updated sectoral information as of May. The situation is dynamically changing and therefore the relevance of certain information over time will decrease.

### Livelihoods and food security

#### Main concerns

**Food security:** An assessment conducted in 9 sub-districts in January found that only 15% of households have acceptable food consumption with 43% falling in the poor food consumption category and 42% in the borderline category. Without an improvement in the current situation, it is expected that those households currently falling in the borderline range will have poor food consumption in the future. ([GOAL 2014/01/01](#))

**Food sources:** The same assessment reports that the main source of food is the food purchased from the market (as in the graph shown below, which indicates first, second and third main source of food) followed by food aid, particularly staple food such as rice, pulses and oil. (GOAL 2014/01/01)



**Markets and Prices:** As the population is largely dependent on purchasing food from local markets, a hike in food prices has a direct impact on access to affordable food.

During the SINA assessment, lack of income, money or resources to purchase food, as well as food being too expensive, was cited in 21 out of 26 assessed sub-districts as the main problem in accessing food. This is consistent with a countrywide research by the Syrian Centre for Policy Research, which found the highest proportion of households living in poverty (80%) in Idleb governorate. (SCPR, 2014/05)

**Bread prices and availability:**

Results of the DYNAMO indicate that the average price of bread in May is around SYP 100. Bread prices differ significantly per sub-districts. Changes in bread prices are a direct consequence of the disruption to Government subsidies and support to various market actors in the wheat flour market system. Lack of subsidised inputs for the wheat production and the

**Bread prices (by sub-district)**

Sub District	Price of subsidized bread (per bag)		Price on street (per bag, not subsidized)	
	April 2013	November 2013	April 2013	November 2013
Armanaz	20	25	110	50
Badama	20	20	22	25
Ehsem	25	125	75	65
Harim	25	35	90	75
Idleb	15	15	100	25
Janudiyeh	15	25	50	80
Maarrat An Numan	30	30	90	125
Qourqeena	35	25	75	65
Salqin	25	25	100	85
Saraqab	35	25	150	175
Tamanaah	50	150	150	75
Teftnaz	15	35	85	125

Source: JRANS II, SINA

flour/bread transformation levels and the limited availability of these inputs on the local market limit the supply capacity. (GOAL 2014/01)

Around 10% (10 out of the 105) of public and private bakeries in Idleb were no longer functioning according to the DYNAMO. This is far below the overall percentage of bakeries found to be non-functioning (33%). The high number of bakeries still working supports the assumption that the main food security problem in Idleb relates to whether people can access sources of food rather than to whether it is available. (Dynamo 2014/05/02)

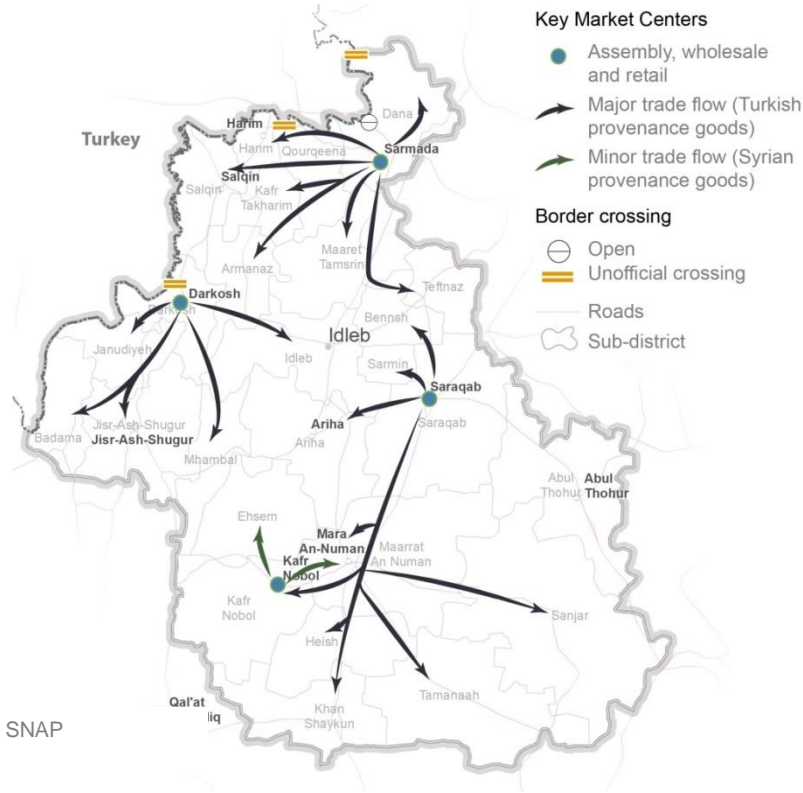
**Transport and fuel:** Price hikes are directly related to the difficulties transporting goods into and within the governorates. As in other governorates affected by conflict, prices have fluctuated significantly depending on the extent that the security situation hinders supply. In the first weeks of January for instance, the price of bread increased by 40% as a result of major disruptions in the supply chain caused by widespread insecurity. A severe shortage of subsidised bread was reported in January. In February, significant shortages of wheat flour and subsidised bread in most rural locations were reported. In April, prices of staple foods such as lentils, rice, cooking oil and wheat flour were reported to have risen in rural areas of the governorate due to insecurity. (WFP 2014/04/07, WFP 2014/01/30, WFP 2014/02/21)

High fuel prices, which increase the costs of transportation, have further impacted food prices. Since mid-2013, there has been an exponential increase in fuel prices with a continuing trend upwards. According to a recent EMMA conducted for wheat and vegetables in the region, prices of fuel have gone up four to five times their base price compared to January 2013. This is further compounded by the increase in smuggling of fuel outside of Syria. (GOAL 2014/01)

**Market structure:** The conflict has led to an increase in smuggling activities and the linkages between market actors has been heavily impacted. According to an EMMA assessment the market structure in January functioned as follows:

**Quality:** The quality of food available is of concern. In Ariha for instance, poor quality frozen meat and chicken imported from Turkey was identified on the

## Trade flows



market. The price of local meat is 15 times higher than the price of the imported meat. (PAH 2014)

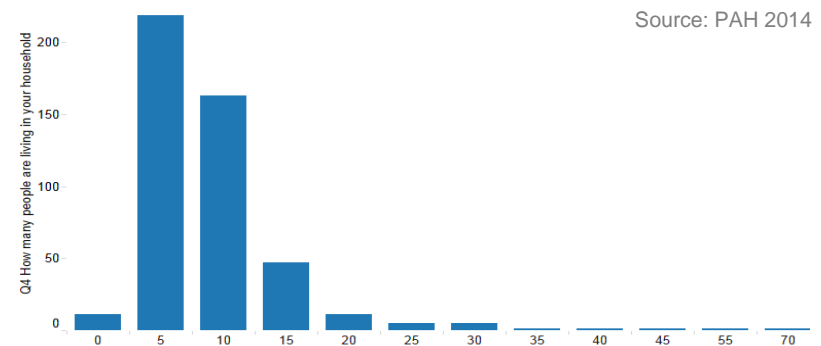
**Income and expenditure:** In 2010, the minimum monthly salary in Syria, amounted to around SYP 8,000, which was insufficient to sustain a typical Syrian family (on average 5.6 persons) above the poverty line. The minimum monthly family salary for assuring food subsistence above the poverty line in 2010 was 13,580 SYP, rising to 22,063 SYP if other needs are taken into account. The average monthly income for a household in Idlib reported in January was calculated at USD 29 (SYP 4,060<sup>1</sup>) whereas expenditure on food alone was USD 37 (SYP 5,180). According to an assessment in September 2013, each household member reportedly consumed around 900 kilo calories each day, which is only

<sup>1</sup> Throughout the document the exchange rate of SYP 140 to USD 1 will be used, with the exception of figures referring to the pre-crisis situation (SYP 75 to USD 1)

37% of the prescribed requirement for a healthy diet. Similar deficiencies have been observed across the board for all micro- and macro-nutrients as well. If all other expenditure (e.g. health, education) were accounted for, the gap between income and expenditure would be far greater. With an increasing size of households as more IDPs reside in host communities, and a decreasing ratio of income earners, nutritional intake is expected to further decrease (EU 2010, GOAL 2013, GOAL 2014/01).

In addition, while the current response is planned to address the needs of an average family in Idlib, based on an average household size of 6 people, recent assessments show that the average household size is higher, with an average of 7.57 members.

### Average household size distribution in 5 sub-districts in southern Idlib (covering 68 villages in Ariha, Ehem, Kafr Nobol, Khan Sheikhoun and Ma'arat an Numan)



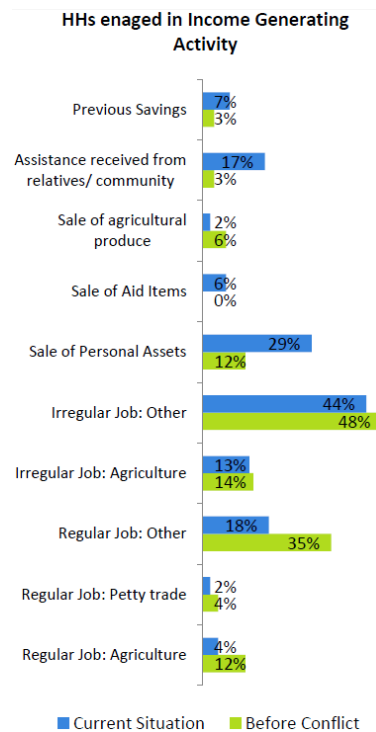
**Dependency ratio:** Assessment data on household sizes indicate that the average number of household members has increased due to the influx of IDPs, putting further pressure on households' expenditure and coping mechanisms.

Data from 607 randomly selected households in three districts of Northern Syria, including Harim, Jisr-Ash-Shogour and Idlib, in September 2013 shows that 30% of households have a pregnant or lactating woman and 27% have a disabled person. In the sample, 37% of households have children aged 2 years and under, 54% have children aged between 3 and 5 years, and 15% have at least 1 member aged 60 years or above. The dependency ratio is low at 1:2, however the ratio of household members generating income to those not contributing anything to the

household income is 1:4. In the sample surveyed, 22% of households did not have any members contributing to income. (GOAL 2013)

In the southern districts Ariha and Al Ma'ra, the ratio of income earners to non-income earners is 1:8 and 1:7 respectively. The average number of people working per sub-district vs. average non-working reaches 1:14 in Kafr Nobol. (PAH 2014)

**Sources of income:** 18% of the respondents to an assessment in January indicated they have a regular job, compared to 35% prior to the conflict (average SYP 15,052). Similarly, income from agriculture and the sale of agricultural produce has decreased significantly. Currently, most households are relying on irregular jobs (44%), sale of personal assets (29%), assistance received from relatives (17%) and previous savings (7%). Especially concerning is the increase in taking on loans to meet daily requirements. Without the means to reimburse these loans, taking on additional loans will become more difficult. As a result, this important coping strategy will become increasingly unavailable to households. (GOAL 2014/01/01)



Source: GOAL 2014

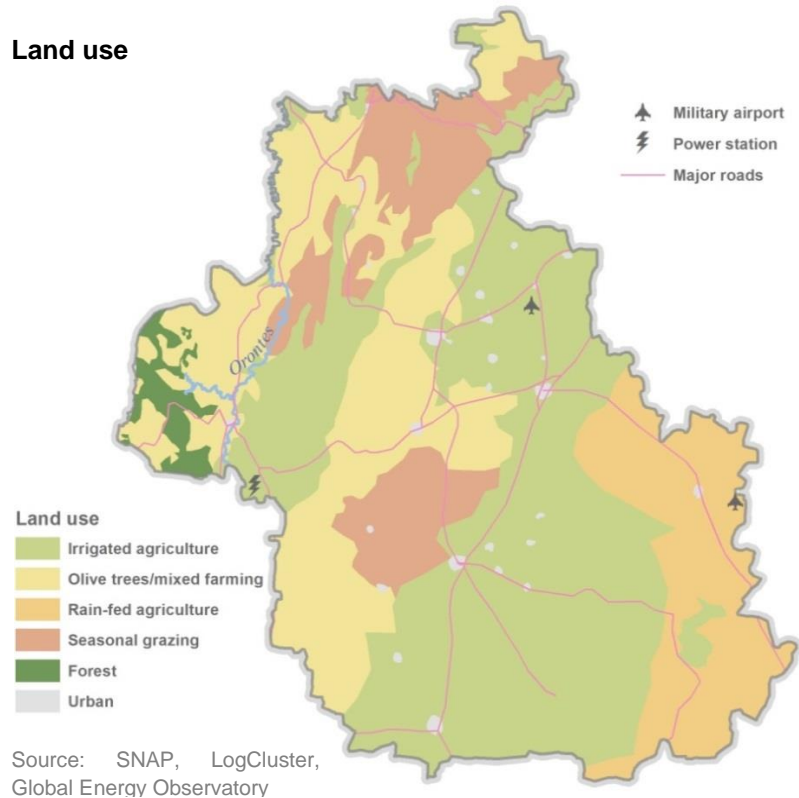
**Source of income per sub-district:** In 5 sub-districts assessed in southern Idleb, the majority of assessed households report coping with the erosion of livelihoods by resorting to small trade of fuel/diesel, cigarettes and other goods:

- **In Kafr Nobol:** the main reported sources of income in the sub-district are agriculture, employment and salaries in civil services as well as small trade.
- **In Ariha:** Average number of working people in the households is 1-2 with an average household size of up to 9 people. The main livelihood is trading with simple materials and with diesel. Agriculture is another main source of income.
- **Ehsem:** The average household size was 8 in households not hosting IDPs. Those hosting IDPs generally contain more than 10 people. The estimated number of people working per household is 2, mostly working in agriculture or in Turkey and sending remittances home.

- **Al Mara:** 0-1 people are working in each family. The main sources of income are still agriculture, remittances from Turkey as well as regular GoS salaries, particularly for teachers. However, agricultural production is hampered as solid waste in agricultural lands has accumulated due to the lack of solid waste management. This has resulted in contamination of the arable land, making it very difficult to cultivate, further reducing income opportunities for families dependent on agricultural production.
- **Khan Sheikhoun:** 0-1 family members are working with an average household size of 12 members. Only civil employees are working. Income opportunities in agriculture nearly stopped due to military activity and the establishment of check-points near agricultural areas. It has been reported that child labour has increased significantly in order to cope with the lack of income/jobs, with children engaged in small trade.
- **Maarat an Numan:** 0-1 person works in each visited household, mostly governmental employees who receive salaries irregularly but in some cases, small businesses. People are coping with the pressure on their economic resources by running small businesses.



## Land use



**Agricultural Production:** Agricultural production has been significantly affected by the conflict. One Government media source states that in the 2013/14 agricultural season, Idleb was the source of 4% of the total cultivated wheat in Syria, consistent with the pre-conflict average. However, according to other sources, total local wheat production volumes are estimated to have sharply decreased by 65% to 70%. (GOAL 2014/01, Tishreen 2014/01/15, GIEWS 2014/05/15).

80% of agricultural production in **Darkoush, Khirbit al Jouz and Ein El Bedar** has stopped due to the conflict. As trusted sources report, olive groves in the northern, mountainous areas of Idleb have been charred during the conflict (2014/05)

Unfavorably dry conditions in Idleb governorate have further compounded these issues. While the long-term precipitation average in Idleb is around 600mm, by May only 200mm of cumulative rain was recorded. The below-average rainfall during January and February coincided with crucial periods of crop germination

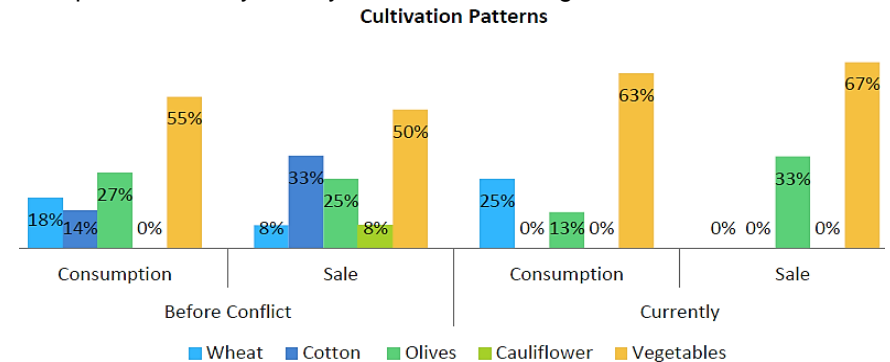
and establishment. In addition, as the GoS no longer supports irrigation networks, irrigated land is estimated to have shrunk by 75% in the Northern Idleb area.

**Crop production and sale:** According to the EMMA, the main barriers to agricultural production for own consumption were reported to be the lack of fertilizer (83%) but also water, tools and seeds (67% respectively). Main barriers to agricultural production for sale included lack of seeds, water and fuel.

Growing vegetables as a main livelihood source has been impacted and has resulted in a significant drop in production, jeopardising income sources for a large part of the population. The EMMA survey found that approximately 25% of the population in Idleb was involved in vegetable production as a livelihood prior to the conflict. (GOAL 2014/01).

High fuel costs have further impacted the transportation of locally produced olive oil to the capital and major cities. As a result, farmers are forced to sell their produce to traders who export it to Turkey. An 18-litre tank is sold to a middleman at 4000SYP, to be sold on at more than 20,000 SYP. (Al-Iqtisadi 2014/03/01)

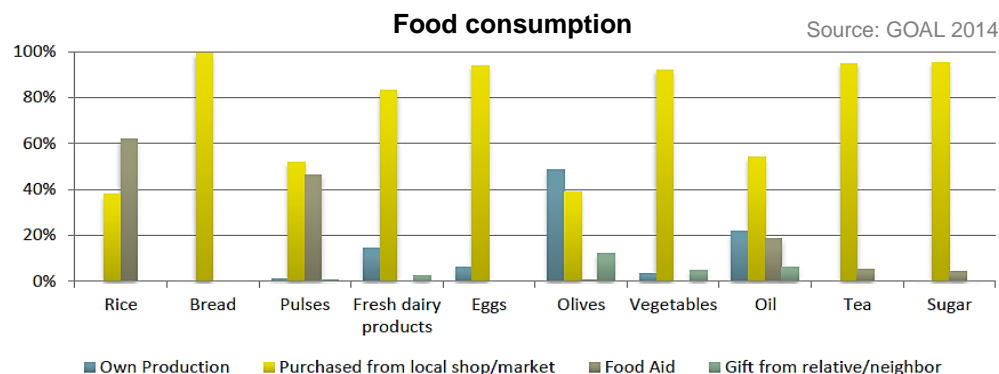
Household consumption patterns have changed due to the crisis' impact on food production. During an assessment of 9 sub-districts in January 2014, 55% of households reported that they produce food for their own consumption as well as crops for sale. However, the number of households cultivating crops for their own consumption (23% of sample) was almost double that of those cultivating for sale (13% of sample). Households are more reliant on wheat and vegetables for their own consumption, whereas before the crisis, part of the wheat, cotton, olive and vegetable harvests was sold at market. Currently, households involved in agricultural production rely mostly on the sale of vegetables and olives alone, as



Source: GOAL 2014 is ceased. (GOAL 2014/01, GOAL 2014/01/01)

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**Food Consumption and nutritional intake:** High prices, lack of access to markets and erosion of livelihoods have resulted in a lack of diversity of foods consumed. Reduced consumption of vegetables, especially tomatoes, at household level, has been reported, with households consuming around 20% of the amount of tomatoes normally consumed at this time of year. Consumption of potatoes currently averages 50% of normal consumption. Households are switching to less preferred foods and the current diet is heavily reliant on bread and vegetables with little dietary diversity. The main additions to their diet are other cereals, comprising of rice, bulgur and pasta. (GOAL 2013/09, GOAL 2014/01).



Numberous households had not consumed fresh foods such as milk, fruits and meat in the three weeks prior to an assessment in September 2013. The main reason given for this limited consumption was that the foods were too expensive. (GOAL 2013/09)

**Negative coping mechanisms:** The adoption of the following negative coping mechanisms has been reported: accumulation of debt, reduction of meal frequency and sizes, depending more on the same type of foods, sale of assets, and increasingly depending on food relief. (PAH 2014, SINA 2014/01, GOAL 2013)

**Vulnerable groups:** A GOAL assessment identified female headed households (FHH) as the most vulnerable group. FHH have fewer income earning members and their food consumption is poorer compared to male headed households. (GOAL 2014/01/01).

In general, those living in rural areas of Syria are amongst the most vulnerable as they often have little or no income, very limited savings and high recurring expenses. In addition, rural women often do not have the necessary skills as they lack access to extension and training to develop their agricultural skills, they are recruited to do manual and repetitive tasks and they are often illiterate and as such cannot access better paying jobs. (IFAD 2002, FAO 2013)

The GOAL assessment found that a slightly higher than average percentage of disabled people have poor food consumption scores. IDPs were found to be more vulnerable than host communities, with IDPs adopting negative coping strategies more often than host communities. (GOAL 2014/01/01)

The SINA found that across all sub-districts in Idlib, displaced persons in collective shelters were reported to be most affected in terms of food security, followed in decreasing order by those in open spaces, those in vacated/unfinished buildings then resident, non-displaced population. IDPs in camps are served with food through the humanitarian partners operating in the camps. (SINA 2014/01).

## Health and nutrition

### Main concerns

**Lack of medicine** During the March 2013 JRANS assessment, access to medicine and a lack of functioning health facilities were identified as the main priorities for intervention in the governorate. By November, during the SINA assessment, the lack of medicines continued to be of high concern. In addition, the lack of vaccinations was identified as a major problem, most likely due to a marked increase in vaccine preventable diseases. A recent assessment confirmed that there is a general lack of medication, particularly for chronic diseases and cancer. (JRANS II 2013/03, SINA 2014/01)

**Disease incidence:** The main health problems reported in the governorate are measles, Leishmaniasis, Polio, typhoid and conflict related injuries:

- **Measles:** In April, ACU's EWARN indicated that Idleb is among the governorates with the highest reported suspected measles cases among the 7 governorates monitored through the surveillance system. This is illustrative of the reported breakdown of routine immunisation within parts of the Governorate that are difficult to access. Measles outbreaks in Idleb were reported by MSF as early as May and June 2013, with over 164 suspected cases. The increase in measles cases is directly linked to large scale displacement flows of people; a June 2013 surge in measles cases, which occurred despite a recent vaccination campaign, was linked to the large influx of IDPs at that time. ([MSF 2013/06/18](#))
- **Leishmaniasis:** Before the crisis Leishmaniasis was already prevalent in Idleb, with an infection rate of around 3 cases out of 1,000, primarily in Ma'arrat an Numan, Saraqeb, Khan Sheikhoun, and Al- Dana. Since the start of the crisis, a high number of cases of Leishmaniasis have been reported and although it is not possible to confirm a trend, the current health and WASH situation are likely to have triggered an increase in incidence of the disease. In the 7 sub-districts assessed by Polish Humanitarian Action (PAH) in May 2014, a high number of cases of Leishmaniasis were reported. During the upcoming summer months, cases are expected to increase due to the disease's seasonal transmission patterns, as well as lower availability of clean water and regular sanitation services. ([Tishreen 2014/08/20](#), [Tishreen 2004/08/07](#))
- **Typhoid:** In September 2013, a typhoid outbreak was identified in Salqin Village and Harim district, with almost 350 cases identified in the 2 weeks between 15 and 28 September. Although a seasonal decline in typhoid cases was reported in November, an assessment in May 2014 confirmed an increase in typhoid cases in Harim district, possibly related to contaminated water coming from trucks. ([PAH 2014/05](#), [Trusted Source 2014/05](#))
- **Polio:** In October 2013, around 100,000 children under 5 were estimated to be at high risk of polio exposure throughout the Governorate. As of May 2014, three confirmed polio cases were reported in Idleb. 248,985 children were vaccinated in the 6<sup>th</sup> round of the house-to-house polio vaccination campaign carried out by the Polio Task Force in the last week of May. ([WHO 2014/03/09](#), [UNICEF 2013/10/10](#), [UNICEF 2013/10/24](#), [Polio Task Force 2014/06](#), [ACU-EWARN 2014/06/07](#), [UNICEF 2014/05/19](#))
- **Conflict related injuries** – With the recent upsurge in violence, more conflict related injuries have been reported by trusted sources. Due to the use of barrel bombing in the country, the type of injuries has changed and even functional

health facilities do not always have the resources required to provide support. ([2014/05](#))

**Health facilities:** In December, the Ministry of Health (MoH) reported that 1 of the 4 public hospitals in the governorate is not functional. This hospital, in Idleb City, has been non-operational since January 2013 and as a result, the population of Idleb City (estimated at 500,000 people) is forced to use private hospitals and health centres, or must travel to other parts of the country to access health care. In some field hospitals, opposition fighters receive free treatment, while civilians have to pay 50% of the fees. It is currently unknown how many private hospitals and makeshift clinics are functioning in the Governorate. However, an assessment in Kafr Nobol, Ariha, Ehsim, Al Ma'ra, Khein Sheikhun and Saraqeb showed that in these areas, health centres are generally available and accessible. ([WHO/MOH 2013/04/30](#), [WHO/MOH 2014/01](#), [UNICEF 2013/10/24](#))

It is of note that attacks on health facilities are on-going. The organisation Physicians for Human Rights documented 15 attacks on health facilities in Idleb Governorate since the start of the crisis and trusted sources reported more attacks in recent weeks. Affected were health facilities in Ad Dana, Salqun, Taftanaz, Idleb, Saraqeb, Ariha, Jebel al Zaqiya, Marat al Nu'man, Khan Sheikhoun and Ehsim. ([PHR 2014/04](#) [2014/05](#) [2014/06](#))

**Nutrition:** It has been noted that there is an overall reduction in access to food throughout the Governorate. This is largely due to reduced income (related to reduced livelihoods opportunities) and increasing prices of food items, rendering them further out of reach of the population. An assessment in January reported that the main source of food is that purchased at local markets, followed by food aid. Additionally, private/individual food production has gone down drastically, further limiting sources of food available to families.

Furthermore, overall calorific intake per person is likely to be further reduced given that average household sizes have reportedly increased as a result of more families hosting IDPs. With more people per household, whatever food is available must be shared between more people – likely resulting in fewer calories consumed per person.

High prices, lack of access to markets and erosion of livelihoods have resulted in reduced diversity of foods consumed. Reduced consumption of vegetables at household level has been reported, especially for tomatoes (households are consuming around 20% of the quantity they would normally consume at this time

of the year); consumption of potato currently averages 50% of normal consumption. Additionally, to cope with these changes, households are switching to less preferred foods, reducing the overall diversity in their diet as been shown in the LFS section. (GOAL 2014/01, PAH 2014/05)

As described in the LFS section, a large portion of respondents in one assessment reported that their current daily diet is heavily reliant on bread and vegetables with little dietary diversity. The main additions to the diet are other cereals, comprising of rice, bulgur and pasta. Fresh foods such as milk, fruits and meat had not been consumed by numerous households in the three weeks prior to the survey. The main reason given for limited consumption was that the fresh foods were too expensive. (GOAL 2013/09)

There are continuous reports of diarrhoea as a health concern. Diarrhoea increases in frequency and duration as a result of poor nutrition - and has also been identified as a leading cause of malnutrition. As such, reports of diarrhoea provide an indication of a population's nutrition status. The SINA found that of the 21 sub-districts assessed in Idlib, 14 reported diarrhoea as one the health problems distinctly linked to the quality of water, and that diarrhoea was a common problem among children. More recently, a trusted source stated that diarrhoea is still a concern in certain communities – and has been associated with malnutrition among community members. (SINA 2014/01 2014/05)

## WASH

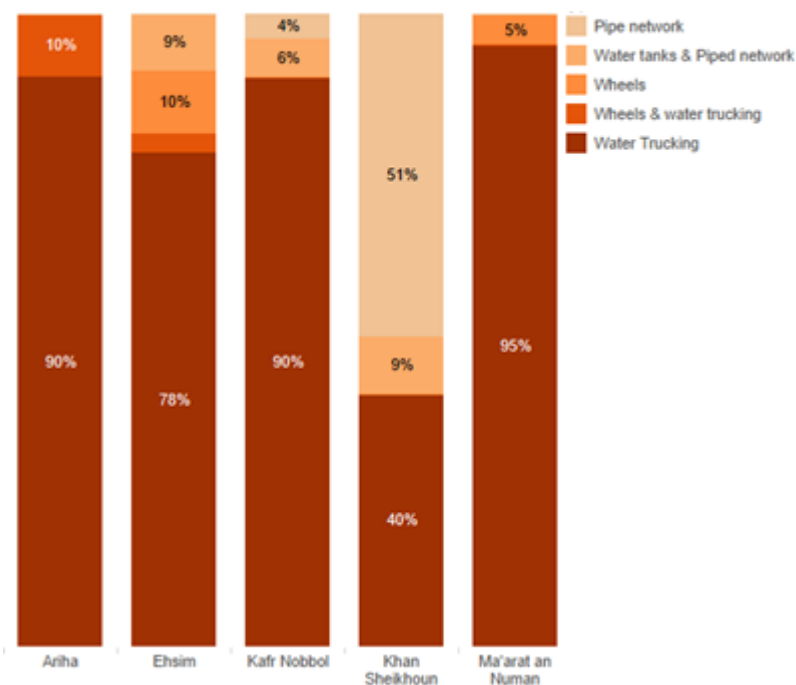
### Main concerns

**Water sources:** An assessment in 9 Idlib sub-districts (Armanaz, Badama, Darkoush, Harim, Janudiyeh, Kafr Takharim, Maaret Tamsrin, Qourqeen, and Salqin) published early 2014 revealed that the availability of mains water supplies fell dramatically from 95% before the crisis to 33%. The main challenges identified are the loss of mains power with limited generator back-up across the network, followed by loss of equipment due to theft, loss of staff due to non-payment, lack of funds to purchase diesel and lack of funds to carry out repairs. Prior to the conflict, the system was heavily subsidised by the government. (GOAL 2014/01/01) The assessment also showed an increase in water tankers as a source of water from 5% tpre-crisis o 79% in the surveyed sub-districts. A GOAL KAPB (Knowledge, Attitude, Practice and Behaviour)-WASH assessment was carried out in January in areas in North Syria that targeted for WASH and FSL interventions. It reported that water tankers are unregulated and do not constitute a source of safe water,

particularly without further treatment at household level. As household resources are stretched, using fuel to boil water would create more pressure on the already stretched household expenditure of many households. (GOAL 2014/02)

The importance of water trucking is also highlighted in an assessment carried out in spring in Kafr Nobol, Ma'arat an Nurman, Ariha, Khan Sheikhoun and Ehsim sub-districts. The assessment showed that all but one of the sub-districts relied very heavily on water trucking as a source of water. Piped water was a significant source of water only in Khan Sheikhoun (PAH 2014) Trucked water is mostly available to those who can pay for it, increasing the vulnerability of poorer people, In general, there is an issue with the availability of safe drinking water. Water trucking itself is unreliable, due to delivery constraints caused by violence.

Percentage of Sources of Water



Source: PAH 2014

According to respondents in an assessment published earlier this year, carried out in 9 sub-districts, mains water was available 1.4 days a week and 6.6 hours on



average on days when it was available. Overall 58% of respondents reported that they did not have enough water to meet their household needs. (GOAL 2014/01/01)

**Garbage disposal:** The accumulation of garbage in public places was reported to be an issue in 17 out of 21 surveyed sub-districts in the SINA. Recent assessments have shown that garbage disposal managed by the local council is functioning in places in some of the sub-districts. In others it has been observed that households burn their waste or dump it because there is no collection system in place anymore, either due to violence or the unavailability of fuel for garbage collection vehicles. Another reason garbage collection has halted is that the workers who used to collect the garbage are not paid anymore as a consequence of declining public service coverage. (PAH 2014) The accumulation of garbage around houses and in streets, especially with summer arriving, increases sand fly breeding grounds, which is likely to add to the already rising number of leishmaniasis cases. Accumulations of rubbish can attract other insects and vermin, potentially affecting the health and psychological well-being of populations.

**Sanitary conditions in schools:** In Kafr Nobol, Eshim and Al Ma'ara the latrines in many of the schools are not working at all or not working well, mainly due to a lack of water. In some schools it would be possible to provide a supply through water trucking, but there are no tanks available in which to store it. In Ehsim sub-district, local councils are the main providers of water to schools, but this provision is limited to the councils' financial ability to buy the water. Where no bathrooms were available, sewage water was being disposed of as surface runoff. Network breakdowns and problems with drainage systems were observed as other reasons for non-functioning latrines in schools. Where toilets are functioning, a large number of people are using the limited number available and female students are forced to share toilets with male students. (PAH 2014) Unhygienic conditions in schools caused by the over-use of sanitary facilities or the use of toilets even though there is no water available increase the likelihood of diseases.

**Sanitation:** In the sample surveyed as part of a needs assessment in 9 sub-districts, only 68% of the respondents reported having a functional toilet facility available for their household. Those that stated that they did not have a functional toilet (32%) gave reasons ranging from it either being communal or not functional because a door, water or connection to the sewerage system were lacking. This situation leads to more people using the functioning toilets, the use of communal toilet facilities and, in absence of any other possibility, defecation in the open. (GOAL 2014/01/01)

During the SINA, more than half of the assessed sub-districts reported having major issues in sanitation. The main problems related to sewage were damage of sewage system, stoppage of sewage treatment and the stoppage of dislodging services (SINA 2014/01). In many cases, people were forced to start using septic tanks, which can cause surface water pollution, as reported in April in the sub-district of Ehsim. (PAH 2014)

**Disease prevalence:** The SINA reported that decreasing access to safe water, overcrowded living conditions and lack of materials to support good hygiene practice were heightening the risk of water-borne disease outbreaks. (SINA 2014/01) Besides diarrhoea, leishmaniasis is prevalent and on the increase in the summer months. Trusted sources report that leeches have been detected in unfiltered drinking water in places in Harim sub-district. Typhoid cases have been identified in Harim subdistrict, supposedly caused by contaminated water delivered by trucks. (2014/05)

## Shelter & NFI

### Main concerns

#### Shelter:

At the time of the SINA, critical shelter issues were identified in Al Ma' ra and Heish sub-districts. The SINA reported that NGOs were struggling to respond to NFI needs because of decreasing access to Idleb as a result of security issues. Shelter needs were under-served due to the small number of organisations engaged in shelter activities, particularly in tent provision. (SINA 2014/01)

Since the SINA was carried out, Idleb has experienced more violence, increasing the displacement of people and the destruction of houses and infrastructure. By January an estimated 40,000 displaced people had taken shelter in Khan Sheikhoun town in Al Ma'ra subdistrict, in the southern part of the governorate, swelling the town's regular population of around 80,000. (UNICEF 2014/01/09) In February, UNICEF reported that thousands of children and families had fled to Idleb city, moving to shelters in schools or other public buildings, or being accommodated in the apartments of friends or family. Severe destruction in Ariha town, 14 km south of Idleb was observed, especially along former conflict lines in the town where many buildings had been completely destroyed. Others featured shell holes or are riddled with bullet holes. Many other parts of the town had reportedly been damaged too. Further displacement of people seeking safe shelter

with relatives and in camps in the Northern parts of the governorate took place in March, April and May ([2014/05](#), [WFP 2014/04/17](#), [WFP 2014/05/19](#), [UNICEF 2014/02/20](#))

Along the Turkish-Syrian border, camps that were established to provide temporary shelter to families and civilians fleeing the conflict have become semi-permanent fixtures, as many have been denied entry into Turkey due to their lack of documentation or due to lack of space in Turkish-run camps. ([Brookings 2014/01/15](#))

There are insufficient adequate shelters available and over-crowding has been reported, for example in places in Harim sub-district. A survey in the sub-districts Armanaz, Badama, Darkoush, Harim, Janudiyeh, Kafr Takharim, Maaret Tamsrin, Qourqeen, and Salqin that was published early 2014 showed that roughly a quarter of respondents lived in communal shelters: either camps (28%) or schools (72%). The majority of these people (88%) did not rent a place because they were unable to afford the rent. ([GOAL 2014/01/01](#))

IDPs originally from Kfaroumeh in Rural Idleb have also taken shelter in the archeological site of Serjilla. About 150 families live in the archeological remains and have no access to electricity or water but feel safe from air attacks. ([Transterramedia 2014/04/05](#))

#### NFI:

**Electricity:** Electricity is generated by stations in areas under control of the GoS, but regular power cuts occur and shortages of electricity affect households and businesses. In some towns citizens have pooled their resources to buy big generators in order to provide shops and residential areas with electricity in return for a monthly subscription fee ([Damascusbureau 2014/02/25](#)).

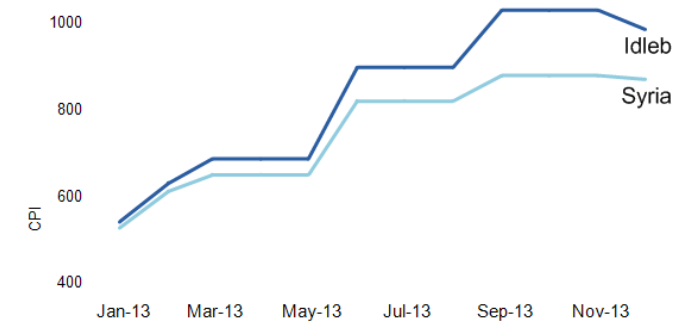
Trusted sources report that In Tamaana the lack of electricity supply has been a problem for the last 3 years of the conflict. In Darkoush the electricity supply has been a recent problem and creates difficulties for food storage. In the coming summer months, the limited electricity supply will become a problem, with the storage of fresh food in refrigerators potentially having an impact on nutrition. Idleb experiences high daytime temperatures in the summer and the lack of electricity means that cooling devices such as air conditioning and fans cannot be used. ([2014/05](#))

**Fuel:** In May the CBS reportedly released information showing that the price of domestic fuels had risen by 118 %, while fuel for transportation in Syria went up 105 % over the last 3 years of conflict. ([DailyStar 2014/05/14](#))

The Consumer price index (CPI) for electricity, gas and other fuels in 2013 reflects this rise in prices. It also shows that the CPI for these NFIs was higher in Idleb compared to the country overall.

With the limited supply of electricity, those who can afford the purchase of generators and fuel can produce electricity with the help of generators. The most vulnerable are poor families who cannot afford to buy fuel or generators.

**Consumer Price Index - Electricity, gas and fuel**  
Jan to Dec 2013  
CBS 2014



**Cooking gas** is in short supply leading, with trusted sources reporting that many families who are reliant on gas for cooking are either sharing the cooking or eating dried food. This reduced ability to cook food could have a negative impact on nutrition and health. ([2014/05](#))

**Clothes and mosquito nets for the summer** are lacking in some villages as trusted sources report. Prices for clothes have gone up and are not affordable for those who currently have no or little income. With the summer months coming up, mosquito nets offering protection from insect bites are lacking. ([2014/05](#))

## Camp Coordination and Management

### Main concerns

**Projections for situation development:** With continued displacement and limited remaining safe spaces available in the Governorate, the number and size of IDP camps is expected to further increase in the coming months, putting pressure on existing camp facilities and service provision. Camps are the last-resort destination for the IDPs. In the majority of cases, people living in the camps are the most vulnerable IDPs, who cannot afford any other solution beside seeking shelter and

assistance in a camp. According to CCCM, as a result of the increased vulnerability of IDPs in general, there are indications that, increasingly, displaced people who once had the financial means to rent accommodation are running out of money and see themselves forced to move into camps. (2014/06)

**Camp management:** The majority of IDP camps are self-settled camps. COAR notes that some camp leaders have been seen to be obstructive to humanitarian intervention. (COAR 2014/01/24) SINA reports that those managing camps are local landowners, IDPs themselves, NGO staff or other local actors. (SINA 2014/01) COAR also noted that the camp management does not always adhere to humanitarian principles and that there is a lack of camp management practices such as site planning, registration, participatory mechanisms and community mobilization - all of which have impacted the level of service provision. (COAR 2014/01/24) The provision of needs-based humanitarian assistance is further hampered by lack of access and lack of engagement mechanisms with the diverse range of camp leaders. (CCCM 2014/06) CCCM members are working to mitigate this by enforcing the establishment of camp committees, providing training on camp management and providing context tailored technical tools and advice. As far as possible they communicate with the camp leaders and negotiate access for assessments.

**Service coverage:** Assessment of service coverage in camps is an ongoing process and it has not yet been possible for all sectors and all camps. Differences in service coverage between different camp cluster locations have not been detected. Where water supply coverage has been assessed, a very good coverage has been noted, as has been the case for NFI distribution and to a lesser extent for sanitation services. The coverage of food services has not been assessed widely as of yet, but numbers indicate that the proportion of camp residents reached is usually about one third; only in a few camps are 50%-100% of the people reached. The SINA reported that food was ranked the highest priority need in camps, followed by shelter and NFIs, WASH and Health, with the camp cluster in Karama showing the highest severity of cross sector needs across 11 surveyed clusters (including all Idleb clusters). (SINA 2014/01) In all cases, the analysis of service coverage needs to be considered together with other factors such as access to camps in terms of liaising with camp management and in terms of where the camp is located so that a more complete picture of the provision of services to people in the camps emerges.

## Protection

## Main concerns

**Physical Security:** One of the major protection concerns in Idleb is physical security with certain areas of Idleb having experienced an intensification of violence in March, April and May. As such, some communities reportedly experience regular shelling and chlorine gas attacks allegedly occurred in Tamaana, in April. (AlJazeera America 2014/04/22) Armed violence in the form of air raids, shelling and ongoing fighting constituted 25% of all the safety and protection issues reported across the 21 Idleb sub-districts surveyed in the SINA. (SINA 2014/01) J-RANS II found that across all assessed sub-districts in Idleb, law and order was ranked as a priority protection intervention, particularly in high conflict areas. (JRANS II 2013/05)

### Child protection concerns:

J-RANS II reported that in Idleb children were particularly affected by the crisis in the 21 sub-districts included in the assessment. Child protection concerns included association with armed groups, child labour, sexual violence, maiming and killing. Of all the governorates in Syria, Idleb also reported one of the highest numbers of children under the age of 18 who were injured during conflict. (JRANS II 2013/05)

**Child Labour:** As in the rest of the country, children in Idleb were reportedly already engaged in labour activities before the conflict, particularly in certain communities in the sub-districts of Janudiyeh, Maarrat An Numan and Badama (SINA 2014/01), where it was known that girls were engaged in agricultural work and boys in selling goods. In these areas, children had limited access to schooling because of the lack of functional learning spaces or unfeasible distances to travel to and from school. With livelihood opportunities increasingly rare due to the conflict, more family members are engaged in various income-generating activities, including children. Trusted sources report that boys in particular are selling items such as fuel and cigarettes on the streets along major routes. (2014/05) The issue of child labour was also identified during the SINA, for example in the district of Harim. (SINA 2014/01)

**Child Recruitment:** In April 2013, the J-RANS II assessment found that the recruitment of children into armed groups was the third most reported protection concern across 12 of the assessed sub-districts in Idleb. At the time it was found that children under 18 were recruited to serve as porters, guards, informers or fighters by both sides of the conflict across all assessed Governorates. (JRANS II

[2013/05](#)) This phenomenon was also captured in the SINA, which found that child recruitment came up among the top 5 protection concerns during debriefings of enumerators covering different areas of Idleb. ([SINA 2014/01](#))

Another recent account by trusted sources indicates that in some communities in particular sub-districts, such as Tamaana, young boys (ages 16-17) were seen carrying weapons and serving as paid “security guards”, escorting drivers through certain unsafe areas. ([2014/05](#)).

**Early Marriage:** Pre-crisis, early marriage (marriage below the age of 15) occurred 3.7% more frequently in Idleb than in other parts of Syria. ([Multiple Cluster Survey 2006](#)). Though there have been no assessments capturing whether this trend has been on the rise since the start of the conflict, anecdotal evidence from different communities across various sub-districts suggests that early marriage is still occurring for girls below the age of 15. Though it was not often reported during the SINA, early marriage has been detected as one coping mechanism employed by families struggling financially. There is a possibility that, given the increased livelihoods challenges faced by families in these communities, early marriages - including polygamous marriages - may be on the rise. In one community in Saraqeb it was reported by trusted sources that it is not uncommon for families with more than one daughter to marry off all the daughters to one man. In other Idleb sub-districts, such as in Tamaana, one reason for the relatively low secondary school attendance rates of girls is marriage. ([2014/05](#)) The associated protection and health issues that may emerge from these patterns should be further assessed and monitored.

**Gender issues:** A recent rapid gender analysis conducted by an INGO highlighted, among other issues, the need for assessing the situation of female-headed households. ([2014/01](#)) With women having lost their husbands in conflict, the vulnerability of these women has not yet been assessed.

#### **Social Beliefs and lawlessness:**

The patterns of conflict and displacement have influenced communities in specific areas of Idleb, and certain areas have begun to report marked changes in social attitudes and beliefs. It is believed that the ensuing lawlessness in some areas is linked to these shifts in attitude. Some of these shifts may have both direct and indirect psychosocial implications and may result in shifting social dynamics over time – though both assertions would require further assessment.

For example, one INGO found that in some communities in Saraqeb there was a low regard for the value of life, given the length of the prevailing conflict. According to one account in areas where GoS forces and rule have been removed had a prevailing sense of “freedom”, which in turn led to a sense of lawlessness and lack of accountability throughout the community. ([2014/05](#)) In May, the creation of 4 “civil” courts under the supervision of the Syria Rebel Front in rebel-held areas in Idleb was announced. In other rebel-held areas, Shariah courts have been created. ([DailyStar 2014/05/12](#))

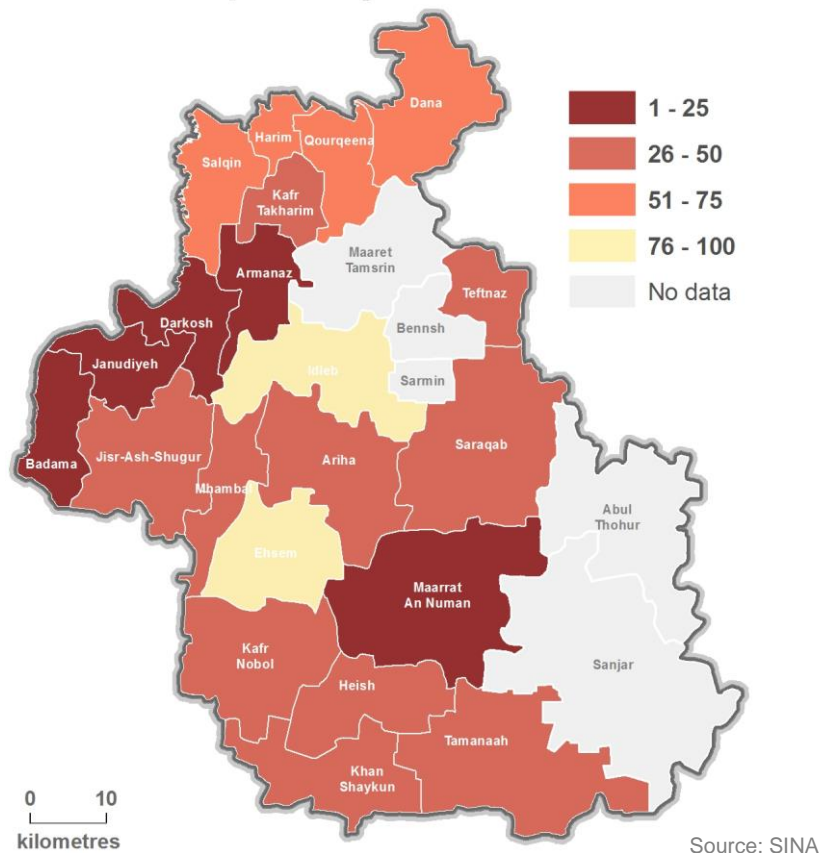
## Education

### Main concerns

**Primary Education attendance rates:** According to the SINA, on average 44% of primary school age children (6-14 years) were going to a learning space at least 4 days a week



## % of children attending primary schools

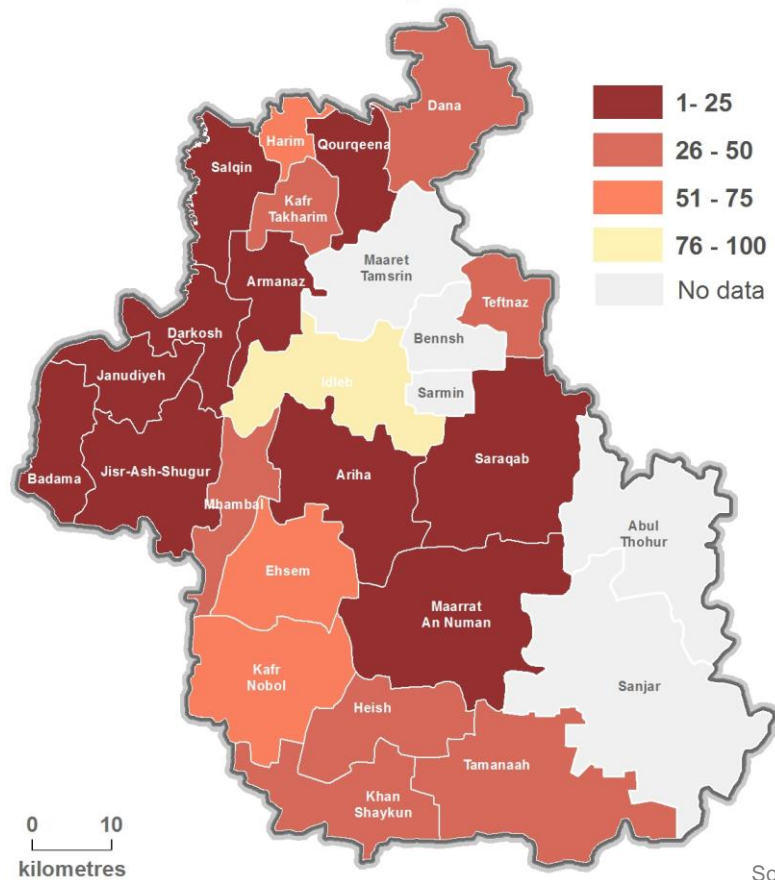


Disaggregated by sex, the primary education attendance rate was 42% for boys and 45% for girls across Idlib. Attendance rates differed significantly by sub-district with, for instance 96% of boys and 90% of girls attending in Idleb city, compared to 10% of boys and 15% of girls in Maarrat An Numan.

Kafr Nobol shows the largest difference between the percentage of boys and girls receiving primary education, with 8% of boys and 50% of girls attending learning spaces. In Tamanaah, although overall levels of attendance were higher, the difference in boy/girl attendance was almost equally big with 30% of boys versus 70% of girls attending. (SINA 2014/01)

**Secondary Education attendance rates:** According to the SINA, the average percentage of secondary school age children (15-18 yrs) going to a learning space at least 4 days per week in the assessed sub-districts of the governorate was 33%. The attendance rate of boys and girls was almost the same at 32% for boys and 34% for girls. In Idleb sub-district, attendance rates were high in both primary and secondary education. In the northern sub-districts of the Governorate the attendance rates for secondary education compared to primary education were lower.

## % of children attending secondary schools



Source: SINA



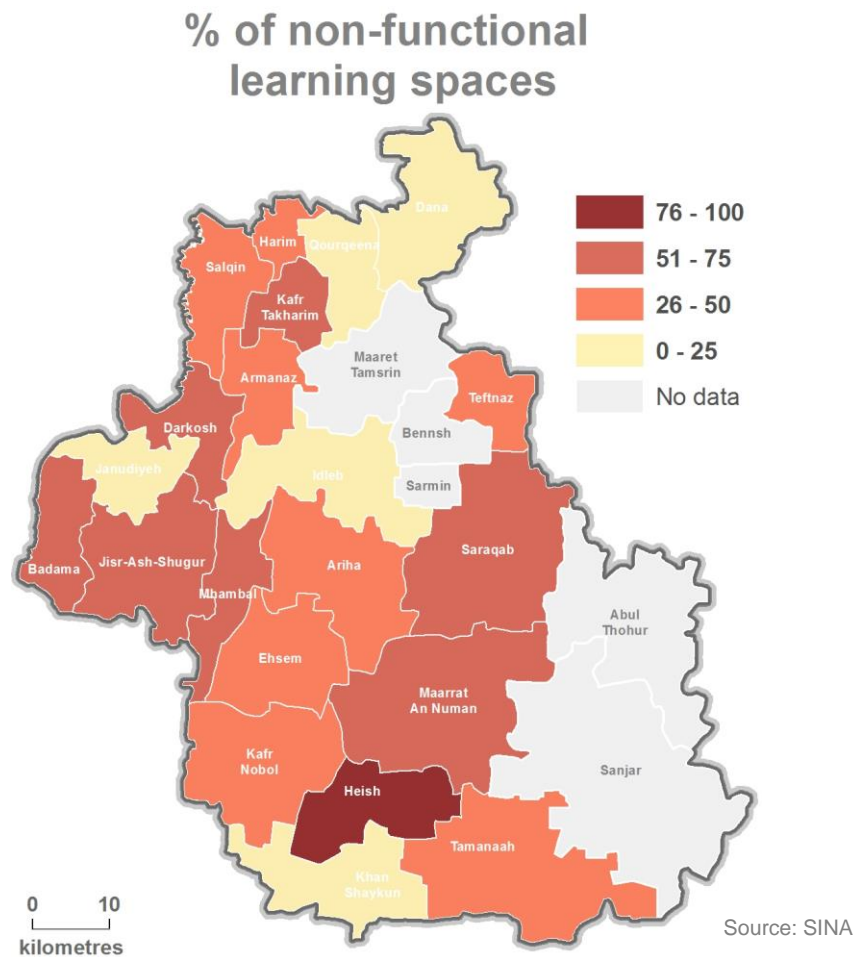
In Janudiyeh, Maarrat An Numan and Badama the secondary school attendance rate was very low overall, with 5% for both boys and girls (2% for girls in Janudiyeh). (SINA 2014/01) Attendance rates in some sub-districts were reportedly already low before the conflict, due to the relatively thin coverage of schools. In villages within the catchment area of the few schools available, distances to travel to school were considered too far for children, there was a lack of transportation, with the main means of transportation being motorcycles, or the transportation costs were unaffordable. Traveling to and from school has become unfeasible for children in some areas with deteriorating security, for example in Ariha, and with increasing transport costs, resulting in lower attendance rates.

According to trusted sources, another cause of low attendance rates is a perception among parents that there is a lack of educational quality. Qualified teachers are not usually present in non-GoS run schools and as exit exams are not held, there is no possibility for certification. (2014/05)

The SINA shows that major gender gaps in attendance rates exist in some sub-districts.,In both Tamanaah and Mhambal, 70% of girls but only 30% of boys attended secondary education, while in Ehsem the rate was 75% and 40% respectively. (SINA 2014/01) Boys' attendance rates are reportedly decreasing further because boys need to engage in income-generating activities in small trade or small crafts industries. In Tamaana for example, boys of 15-17 years have been observed selling fuel and cigarettes; trusted sources report that some boys have joined the FSA or act as bodyguards. (2014/05) These activities are especially found in those families where the male head of the family has died in conflict or been injured or disabled.

**Functional learning spaces available and used:** In December 2013, UNHCR reported that in Idleb, 25% of schools are no longer functioning and less than 30% of children attended school. (UNHCR 2013/12) According to the SINA, in the Saraqeb, Maarrat An Numan, Kafr Takharim, Jisr-Ash-Shogour and Darkoush sub-districts less than 50% of pre-crisis learning spaces were still used for education. (SINA 2014/01) The SINA also showed that in those northern sub-districts assessed, levels of secondary education attendance are very low, even though the number of learning spaces seems relatively unaffected by the conflict. This reflects the need for children to engage in income-generating activities or the security situation, which makes it too dangerous for children to go to school. In other sub-districts, such as Ma'arrat and Numan, a high percentage of non-functional learning spaces corresponded to low attendance rates, as there were not enough functional

learning spaces left to cater for children of school-going age.

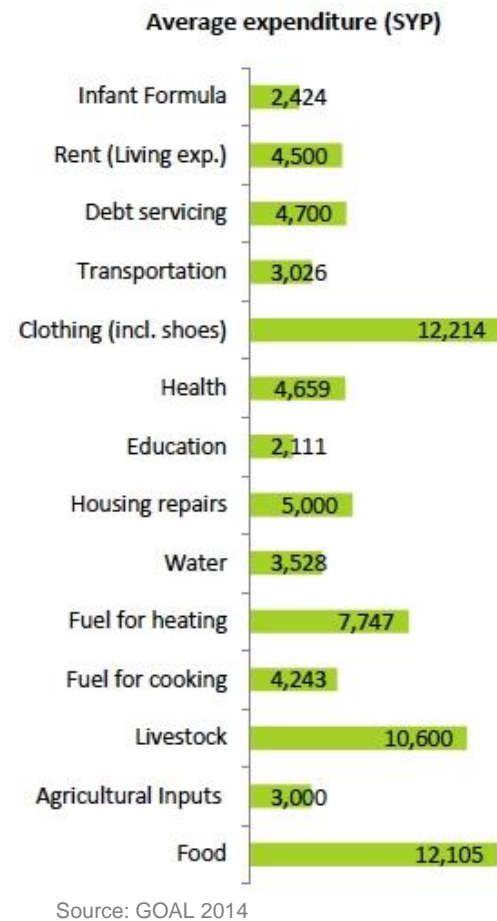


In April and May, PAH and trusted sources observed a varying degree of functioning of schools in the Governorate. In Khan Sheikhoun the majority of schools were not functional as they were being used as collective shelters by IDPs. A high degree of damage to school buildings was also noted. In Ariha, schools were generally in very bad condition, many having been either partially or totally destroyed by shelling and aerial bombardment. In Ehsim, destruction of some schools was observed, yet many others were operational. In Kafar Nobol

and Ma'arrat an Numan many schools in the sub-district were not functional for a variety of reasons such as the presence of IDPs or because they were partially or totally destroyed. A severe lack of furniture, schoolbooks and materials was observed in functioning schools in many subdistricts.

The main coping mechanism for the situation was the introduction of double shifts in those schools that were functional and located in relatively safe areas. In Ariha, schools that were hosting IDPs dedicated some classrooms to education and others to providing shelter. (2014/05, PAH 2014)

**Household expenditure for education:** An assessment carried out in 9 sub-districts (Armanaz, Badama, Darkoush, Harim, Janudiyeh, Kafr Takharim, Maarat Tamsrin, Qourqeen and Salqin) in early 2014 found that around 90% of surveyed households did not have education related expenditure. The remainder spent on average 2,111 SYP on education related expenditure in the month preceding the survey. This compares to 3,528 SYP spent on water or 12,105 SYP for food and was the smallest expenditure in comparison with the other expenditures. (GOAL 2014/01)



## Annex B – pre-crisis governorate profile

### Geography & Demography

Idleb Governorate is located in northwestern Syria, sharing a 30 km border with Turkey along the Orontes River and wedged between the Syrian Governorates of Aleppo, Lattakia and Hama. Geographically, Idleb is characterised by the Harim and Al Zawiyah mountain ranges, the Idleb Plain at an altitude of about 500m and the Orontes River. Covering an area of 6,097km<sup>2</sup>, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) Idleb was home to around 1.5 million residents in 2011 (7% of the total population). It is characterized by a Mediterranean climate, though with less rainfall than the coast. Generally there is enough rainfall for crop irrigation. ([Al Jazeera 2011](#), [CityPopulation 2011](#), [CBS 2011](#), [SyriaMap 2012](#), [Discover Syria 2010](#))

The Governorate is divided into five administrative districts: Arihah (population in 2011 roughly 209,000), Harim (209,000), Idleb (459,000), Jisr-Ash-Shogour (174,000) and Ma'rra (440,000). Its capital, Idleb is in the most populated district, a city 60 km away from Aleppo, 310 km from Damascus and 132 km from Lattakia. 80% of people in Idleb live in the countryside, compared to only 40% of Syria's total population of 20 million, making it the most rural Governorate in the country. The Governorate is also one of the most densely populated in Syria. The population is mostly Sunni muslims but there are also Christians, Alawites, Shiaa and Druze minorities. Idleb ranks among the poorest governorates in terms of income, health and education. ([CBS 2011](#), [OCHA 2011](#), [SyriaMap 2012](#), [Reuters 2012/08/29](#)).

Idleb, historically a major commercial centre, has a strategic location with its Bab El Hawa (Door of the Wind) border crossing with Turkey. It is considered the link between Syria's coastal and central regions and those to the north and the east.. The Governorate is thus a bridge between the agricultural hub in the northeast and the areas on the Syrian coast which specialise in export. ([Discover Syria 2010](#))

### Economy

Idleb is a fertile basin with 60% arable land. The Governorate has a traditional textile souk in Ma'arrat Annu'man and a popular souk for agricultural produce and other goods in the city of Idleb, which covers the whole region. Famous for its beautiful nature, the Ebla ancient Kingdom and other archeological sites which date from the third millennium before the birth of Christ to Islamic eras, Idleb has

developed gradually into a touristic hub. However, investment in tourism and other services in the governorate was still in progress before the crisis started. . ([Discover Syria 2010](#), [eSyria 2009/04/11](#), [SANA 2008/06/21](#), [yuliantours 2007](#), [almasalla 2011/06/19](#))

**Agriculture:** The Governorate is mostly known for its fruit and olive trees and vegetables production:

**Olives:** Idleb's olive agriculture (20% of Syria's olive production) covers 36% of its planted land. The governorate ranks second after Aleppo in olive production and planted trees (13 million fruitful trees making around 16% of Syria's olive trees in 2009). ([Athawra 2013/10/31](#), [Al-iqtisadi 2011/11/12](#))

**Cherries:** Mainly planted in Ariha district, there are on average 1.3 million fruitful cherry trees in the Governorate. 10% of almost 20,000 tons of annual production is used for domestic consumption, while the rest is destined for export to other governorates and foreign countries. ([SANA 2009/06/06](#), [Al Jamahir 2011/08/23](#))

Other agriculture crops include citrus, figs, apples, grapes and vegetables, sesame seeds, almonds, pistachio, cotton, barley, sugar beet and wheat. ([alwehda 2011](#))

#### Pre-crisis Idleb cultivated areas out of total Syrian cultivated areas (ha)

	Trees	Vegetables	Other crops (lentils, etc.)	Wheat and barley
Idleb	147,439	25,955	54,913	134,222
Syria	773,798	143,939	571,283	3,012,286
	<b>19%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>4%</b>

Source: [JRFSNA 2012/06](#)

**Livestock:** Idleb is also known for its livestock production, producing 9% of the country's goats, 8% of poultry, and 6% of cows and horses. ([alwehda 2011](#))

**Tourism, services and manufacturing:** Idleb, famous for its archeological ruins and historical mosques, had enhanced its tourist services in the period before the crisis. In 2009,. Idleb had 68 tourist offices and 5 hotels and other touristic projects were planned. The number of internal tourists to archeological and other tourist

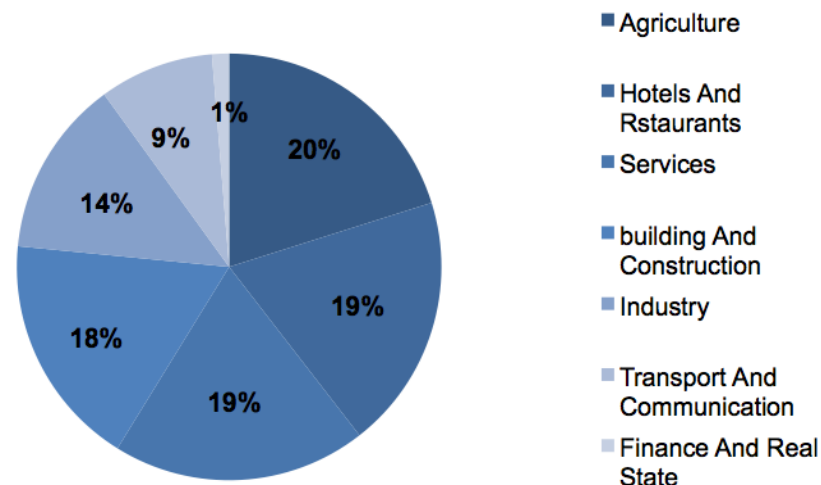
sites increased from 177,000 in the first half of 2008 to 181,400 in the first half of 2009. The number of visitors to the Ebla ruins (Tal Mardikh) alone increased from 26,183 in 2009 to 35,864 in 2010 according to the CBS. ([Al Jazeera 2011](#), [edlib 2014](#), [Discover Syria 2010](#), [aksalser 2009/08/17](#), [alwehda 2011](#), [CBS 2011](#))

Idleb is known for its traditional and handcraft industries, including carpet and mat spinning (Ma'arrit Annu'man and Ariha), shoe and pottery manufacturing, olive oil pressing and agriculture manufacturing (soaps, molasses, cumin, jam etc). Ma'arrit Annu'man was particularly known for its sponge production and several factories were involved in exporting sponges to Lebanon and Iraq. ([al-Jazeera 2014/04/23](#), [rozana 2013/10/14](#), [esyria 2008/08/25](#))

There were 20 branches of public banks in the governorate (commercial, real estate, agricultural and others) and 3 private banks in 2010. ([alwehda 2011](#))

**Livelihoods:** According to the CBS, in 2010, 20% of Idleb's employed population used to work in agriculture. Other sources estimate that 60-70% of the population worked in agriculture. According to the CBS, other economic sectors include tourism (20%), general services (20%) and construction activities (20%). In general, in 2010, 21% of the population worked in the public sector and the rest in the formal (40%) and informal (38%) private sector. (CBS 2011, [Skynewsarabia 2013/01/26](#))

**Distribution of employees by economic activity** (CBS 2011)



In 2011, the unemployment rate in Idleb was estimated at 8% according to the CBS (6% male unemployment rate and 16% female unemployment rate). ([CBS 2011](#))

In Idleb, in 2002 the average farm size was around 3.3 ha, with roughly 45% of farms less than 2 ha, 31% between 2 and 4 ha, and only 25% more than 4 ha. A survey from 2002 suggested that 80% of farmers cultivate their own land while 20% are tenants. ([IFAD 2002](#))

Limited local food production and income-earning opportunities means internal and external migration is frequent, especially among young people, and represents a significant source of income for rural households. On average, in a household of 8, 2 adult males migrate to Lebanon for 4-6 months a year each, and 2 to 3 women migrate within the governorate and in nearby governorates for 6-8 months a year each. Wage labour generates from 40 to 80% of household income. ([IFAD 2002](#))

**Food Security:** As the majority of Idleb's population lives in the countryside, agriculture, including growing vegetables, fruit trees, wheat, cotton and livestock is the basis for food security and nutrition. ([JRFSNA 2012/06](#))

**Poverty:** The poorest regions in Syria generally are in the northern and eastern regions. Idleb is among those northern governorates although the poverty rate decreased between 2004 and 2007. Within the Governorate, the eastern region of Idleb is considered the poorest. Updated poverty rates are not available for the most recent period before the crisis. ([Strategic Research and Communication Centre 2011](#), [Al-Watan 2010/05/24](#), [SCPR 2013/01](#))

In 2002 IFAD reported that priority target groups for rural development in Idleb, from the poverty standpoint, is a population of about 290,000 (about 70% of the rural population of Jabel al Wastani and Jabel al Zawia) living in 106 villages of sizes ranging from 200 to 10,000 inhabitants. The second priority group is the rest of the population (130,000) residing in 46 villages and other pockets of rural poverty in Idleb Governorate.

The main causes of poverty in the project area are rapid population and labour force growth rates, leading to high pressure on natural resources; small farm holdings and low productivity; inadequate and untimely access to inputs and rural finance; inappropriate research activities and an inefficient extension system; limited cropping due to the rocky soil; underdeveloped post-harvest processing and marketing facilities, mainly for fruit and dairy products; and limited opportunities for employment in rural areas. In addition, rural women have poor skills for various reasons: they lack access to training to develop their agricultural skills; they are recruited to do manual and repetitive tasks; and they are illiterate and as such cannot access better paying jobs. ([IFAD 2002](#))

According to the Syrian centre for policy research, the GoS policies before the crisis did not decrease poverty nor reduce the disparities between governorates. Droughts also reduced local food production. Additionally, external factors, represented by increasing international prices for basic food goods and energy products since 2007 and the reduction of fuel subsidy in 2008 increased the economic burden on the poor. ([SCPR 2013/01](#))

## Shelter

Their shelters are of three kinds: historical single-storey houses with rooms on the periphery encircling yards and embellished with decorative columns and arches. This architecture style proved to be of high cost and has been increasingly replaced by multi-storey modern buildings. The building material used for old and

new houses is limestone. Some communities in the countryside still rely on beehive houses which are made up of clay, straw and stones and have high temperature insulation capacities. ([Discover Syria 2010](#), [Syrian Researchers](#))

## WASH

The Orontes River and its tributary, the White River passes through the Governorate. However, the benefit from those two rivers for drinking water purposes is limited because of their narrow valleys and shallowness. The main sources of drinking water in Idleb come from underground water (92%) and springs (8%). The underground water comes from the Orontes and Aleppo basins. On the other hand, springs spread across western Al Zawyah Mountain nourish the surrounding plains. The stock of Idleb's underground water is large, but its depth decreases heading east. This makes the eastern region highly susceptible to the lack of water in case of electricity outages or disability to pump the water because of interruptions in the network. ([MoWR 2013](#), [Discover Syria 2010](#))

Before the crisis, people used to rely heavily on the public network and trucked water from surrounding wells. According to GoS sources, 90% of residents in Idleb had access to the water network in 2009 while 53% had access to the sewage network. ([Tishreen 2009/07/09](#), [SINA 2013/12](#)) According to the 2006 MICS, the majority of Idleb residents had access to safe water, with 82% having water piped directly into their homes. Furthermore, 98% of the population was found to use sanitary means of excreta disposal. ([MICS 2006](#))

## Health

Before the crisis, Syria was in epidemiological transition from communicable to non-communicable diseases with the latest data showing that 77% of mortalities were caused by non-communicable diseases. ([Global Research 2013/01/25](#))

**Infrastructure:** While the health system has been considerably improving in Damascus, Aleppo and the coastal governorates before the crisis, some other governorates such as Idleb remained deprived in terms of the numbers of public hospitals (4% compared to Syrian level) private hospitals (8%), health centres (5%) and number of doctors such as physicians (4%). This is related to the uneven development and distribution of health and medical services across Syrian governorates. ([CBS 2010](#), [Family Health Survey 2009](#))



### Health Infrastructure in Idleb (2009-2010)

2009-2010	Idleb	% of total
Number of public hospitals	4	3%
Number of private hospitals	29	8%
Number of Health centers	76	5%
Number of Physicians	1218	4%

Source: CBS 2010

**Child mortalities:** Child mortality rates in northern governorates including Idleb have been generally high before the crisis. According to a CBS health survey the infant mortality rate was 22% in 2009 and partly attributable to low weight of children and malnutrition. The mortality rate for children less than 5 years old was 27% in the same year. (CBS 2009) Diseases such as respiratory infections or diarrhoea constituted just under a quarter of causes of death among children.

### Children reported diseases in Idleb (2009)

Respiratory diseases	7%
Diarrhoea	13%

Source: CBS 2009

**Vaccination coverage:** The vaccination rate in Idleb was considered among the lowest across the Syrian governorates (75% in Idleb, 58% in Deir-ez-Zor and 61% in Aleppo). A 75% vaccination rate in Idleb is relatively low compared to 93% vaccination rate in Lattakia. Despite the strong immunity in general against measles, whooping cough, diphtheria, pneumonia and meningitis and polio, the children of the northern governorates were already vulnerable. (CBS 2010, [CRASH 2013/11/22](#))

**Tuberculosis:** In the first 6 months of 2011, 88 cases of Tuberculosis (TB) were recorded in the Governorate. This disease was present before the crisis despite the increase in public campaigns which managed to reduce prevalence of the disease since the 90s. TB was generally more prevalent in the north and the centre compared to the south. ([DP-News 2011/09/12](#))

**Leishmaniasis:** Leishmaniasis was already prevalent in the north in general, with around 50,000 cases being detected yearly before the crisis. In Idleb, the percentage of infection was around 3 cases in every 1,000 mostly in Ma'arrat Annu'man, Saraqeb, Khan Sheikhoun, and Al- Dana ([Tishreen 2014/08/20](#), [Tishreen 2004/08/07](#))

**Measles:** A total of 26 measles cases were reported in Syria in 2010. The distribution of these cases according to governorates has not been made public. Other sources mention the complete absence of the disease in the period 2010-2011. ([Telegraph 2014/03/11](#), [Tishreen 2014/08/20](#))

### Protection

**Child Labour:** According to a UNICEF study of child labour in 2002, the highest rates were registered in the north and the east, in areas characterised by large-scale agricultural activity and a high number of children working on family land. In Idleb, known for its largely rural composition, the participation of working age children in economic activity was 23% coming third after Deir-ez-Zor (28%) and Al-Hasakeh (24%). The participation rate of male children in work was much higher (32%) compared to females (13%). A few years later in 2006 and according to Multiple Cluster survey, the highest share of working children was registered in north-eastern governorates and Hama. However, child labour was reportedly relatively low in Idleb, measured at 3% (compared to a national average of 4%). ([ILO/UNICEF 2012/03](#), [Multiple Cluster Survey 2006](#))

**Early Marriage:** Early marriage (before the age of 15) was recorded at 3.7%, a phenomenon that was a bit more common in Idleb than in some other areas of Syria. About 20% of women (aged 20-49) were married before the age of 18, which again was slightly above the national average ([Multiple Cluster Survey 2006](#)). Early marriage mostly took place for women between the ages of 15 and 18 years old in rural communities such as Khan Sheikhoun. ([eSyria 2009/03/27](#))

**Social Beliefs:** There is limited governorate-level evidence available about the perceptions of the roles of men, women, boys and girls pre-crisis. In the National Human Development Report (2005) it was reported that most men and women believed in the traditional roles for men and women, with the woman's main role being in the home and the man being the main decision-maker in the family (84% and 83% of those surveyed). An earlier study showed a similar trend across Syria. While this sentiment was prevalent among the population in Idleb, differences do exist between rural/urban areas and across communities.

In Idleb in particular, one organisation found that overall, while men tended to make major decisions, many household decisions would be made by both men and women together. Additionally, women in Idleb reported being able to move around relatively freely and polygamy was relatively uncommon. (2014/01 INGO)

**Religious Presence:** Idleb society is reportedly conservative and religious. The Muslim Brotherhood used to have a strong presence in the countryside of Idleb even before the crisis started, however, no human right violations against religious minorities were reported. 14 villages of more than 30,000 Druze used to live peacefully in a mostly Sunni area. In Yakoubiyeh and surrounding villages (Jisr-Ash-Shogour), Armenians and Catholics were free to practice their religion without any threat. ([AI-Monitor 2014/01/05](#), [HRW 2013/01/23](#), [Al-akhbar 2013/12/23](#), [investigativeproject 2014/02/27](#), [religiousfreedomcoalition 2013/07/08](#))

## Education

**Illiteracy rate:** The illiteracy rate for residents of Idleb aged 15 years and above was recorded at 18% in 2008, coming sixth after the governorates of Ar-Raqqa (33%), Deir-ez-Zor (32%), Al-Hasakaeh (28%), and Aleppo (24%). The 6 governorates fall in the north and northeast where poverty and school drop-out rates are high. ([ILO/UNICEF 2012/03](#), MoE 2010/07)

**School drop-out:** The school drop-out rate in Idleb in 2009/2010 was reported at 4.3%, considered average between a maximum of 7.5% in Quneitra and 1.5% in Tartous and Hama. Most notably, the drop-out rate for females was found to be higher than that for males in Idleb especially in rural communities and accompanied by extreme poverty and conservative traditions. ([ILO/UNICEF 2012/03](#), MoE 2010/07)

**Infrastructure:** In 2010, Idleb had 1,350 primary and secondary schools (public and private) - 7% of Syria's total schools. ([CBS 2010](#))

According to the SINA assessment, which covered 21 out of 26 sub-districts in Idleb, the number of functional learning spaces was 582 before the conflict. The number of learning spaces varied from 60 in Jisr-Ash-Shogour city to 5 in a village named Heish in Al-Ma'rra district. ([SINA 2013/12](#))

**Attendance rate:** In 2006 the primary school net attendance stood at 97% for both boys and girls, and secondary school net attendance was measured at 48.5% (with male attendance slightly higher than female attendance, at 51.3% and 45.3% respectively).

Thus, Idleb, seemed to have a better stance compared to its neighbouring northern governorates in terms of education awareness despite its weak institutions, low quality of its public services, and lack of reforms especially in the countryside ([Multiple Cluster Survey 2006](#))