

Protecting the Most Vulnerable

VULNERABILITY TO PROTECTION CONCERNS AND GAPS IN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE IN NORTHERN SYRIA, 2019

BACKGROUND

The conflict in Syria is soon entering its ninth year. Thus far, the violence has killed over 500,000 people and resulted in 5.6 million refugees, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

However, millions of people remain inside the country, with 6.6 million internally displaced people (IDPs) as well as community members who remained. Some of the most pressing issues facing populations are protection concerns, such as gender-based violence (GBV), civil documentation, and child rights violations. Vulnerable populations such as IDPs, the elderly, women and children are particularly at risk. Despite billions of dollars in humanitarian funding to Syria, huge gaps in key protection interventions—such as psychosocial support, GBV response and child friendly spaces—remain.

This project aims to answer the spatial questions: *Where are populations most vulnerable to protection concerns in northern Syria? Where are there gaps in protection activities provided by humanitarian actors compared to where vulnerable populations are?*

Doing so may help humanitarian actors target key areas of need: those with high vulnerability and few protection activities. In order to do so, a vulnerability analysis was conducted on select sub-districts in five governorates.

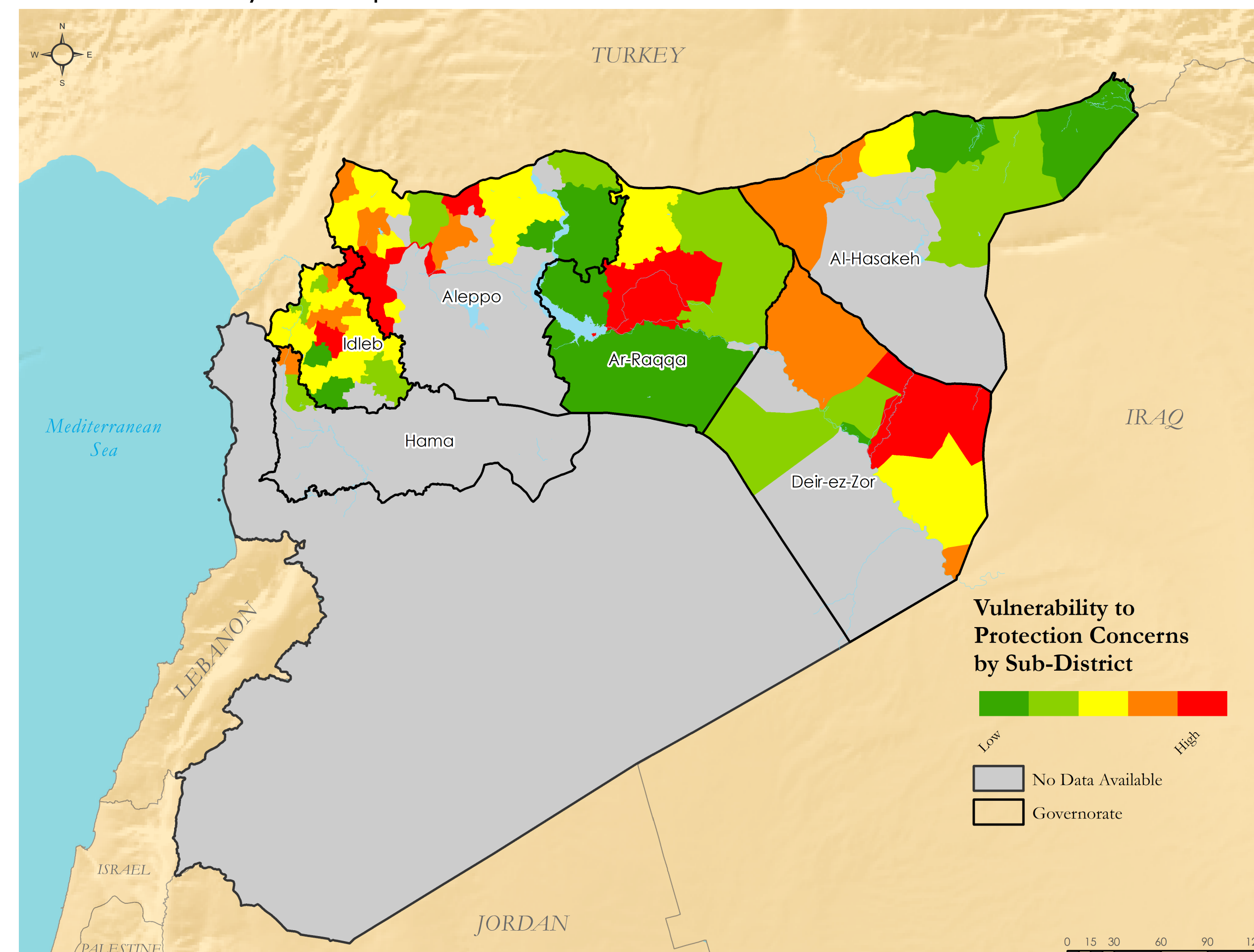
METHODS

Data from community-level assessments conducted in September 2019 by REACH Initiative was used to construct a vulnerability analysis of protection concerns. The analysis used 11 indicators to classify areas of vulnerability on a scale from 1 (least vulnerable) to 5 (most vulnerable). Indicators used were (1) adequacy of shelter for IDPs, (2) adequacy of electricity source, (3) adequacy of water source, (4) reported access to health facilities, (5) prevalence of maternal and infant health issues, (6) sufficient amount of food, (7) sufficient income, (8) prevalence of child labor (work or begging), (9) proximity to the nearest school, (10) prevalence of nearby conflict incidents, and (11) lack of privacy, security and/or gender separation at latrines. Euclidean distance was employed to determine distance from operating schools as of 2019, provided by Assistant Coordination Unit. Spatial join was used for number of conflict incidents reported by ACLED for Sept - Nov 2019. Other factors used percentage



of communities reporting, using a spatial join and reclassifying by natural jenks. An intersection was then applied between reported protection activities from UN OCHA (normalized by number of communities) and areas of highest vulnerability.

Populations Most Vulnerable to Protection Concerns in Northern Syria, September 2019



Governorate	Sub-District	People in Need of Protection Assistance	No Health Facilities	Income Sufficiency	% of Communities Reporting Child Labor	Maternal & Infant Health Problems	Latrine Protection Risks	Proximity to School (km)	Conflict Incidents (#)
Aleppo	Zarbah	78,216	85	0	100	56	0	1 - 5	65 - 129
	Altareb	182,718	47	3	97	68	0	0 - 1	10 - 30
	Daref Azza	84,581	64	0	92	64	0	0 - 1	0 - 9
	Haritan	14,891	25	0	100	29	0	5 - 10	10 - 30
Deir-ez-Zor	Sur	39,831	65	0	65	14	14	25 - 112	10 - 30
Aleppo	Ar-Ra'ee	11,444	88	39	54	42	0	0 - 1	10 - 30
	Dana	441,235	0	0	10	97	12	0 - 1	10 - 30
Idlib	Ariha	94,954	35	0	53	57	0	0 - 1	31 - 64
Deir-ez-Zor	Basira	37,575	14	0	79	17	21	10 - 25	31 - 64
Ar-Raqqa	Ar-Raqqa	265,555	57	4	62	38	0	10 - 25	10 - 30

Table 1. Ten Most Vulnerable Sub-Districts in Northern Syria, September 2019

LIMITATIONS

Data was limited to the sub-districts in which REACH Initiative conducted assessments. Total population data for both IDPs and host community members was unavailable, which would have helped to normalize some factors. Based on this, most vulnerability indicators rely on percentage of communities reporting prevalence of a given indicator.

Additionally, protection interventions measured included awareness raising sessions, which ideally would have been disaggregated as it heavily skewed the overall intervention figures. Finally data ultimately rely on reports from community members and may not accurately reflect reality.

RESULTS

Based on the analysis, most vulnerable sub-districts are located throughout the assessed region, though most prevalently in Idlib governorate (See Table 1). Income sufficiency is of particular concern, as the majority of communities reported not having enough income for basic provisions. This increases the likelihood of

negative coping mechanisms such as child labor, as seen in this analysis. Protection risks at latrines, examined due to increased risk to GBV they pose, are low; however, other indicators may be much higher in the same sub-districts. This shows the importance of looking at specific indicators to create a targeted response to the indicator(s) of highest concern.

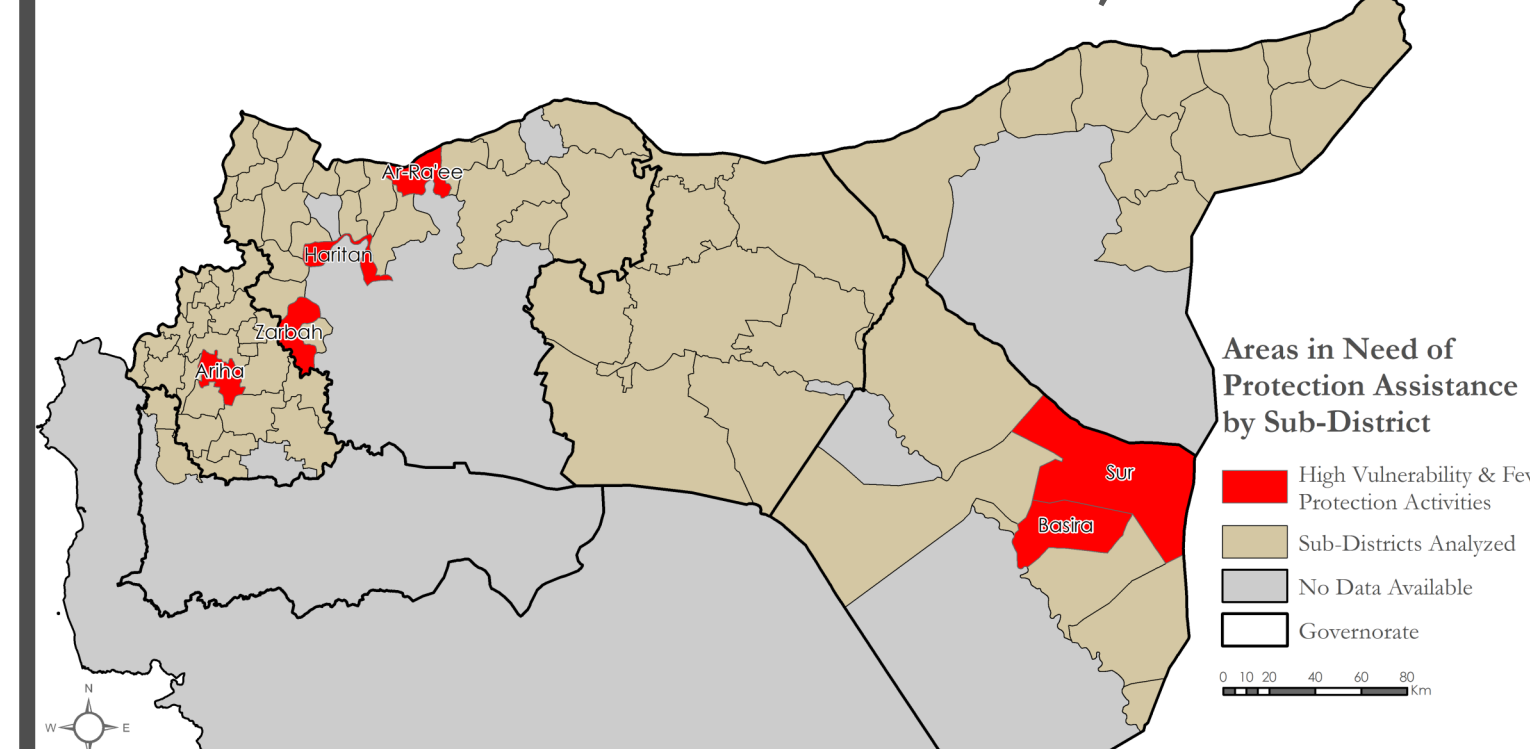
Governorate	Sub-District	People in Need of Protection Assistance
Aleppo	Haritan	14,891
	Zarbah	78,216
	Ar-Ra'ee	10,414
Idlib	Ariha	79,234
Deir-ez-Zor	Basira	54,254
	Sur	33,931

Table 2. Sub-Districts Most in Need of Protection Assistance

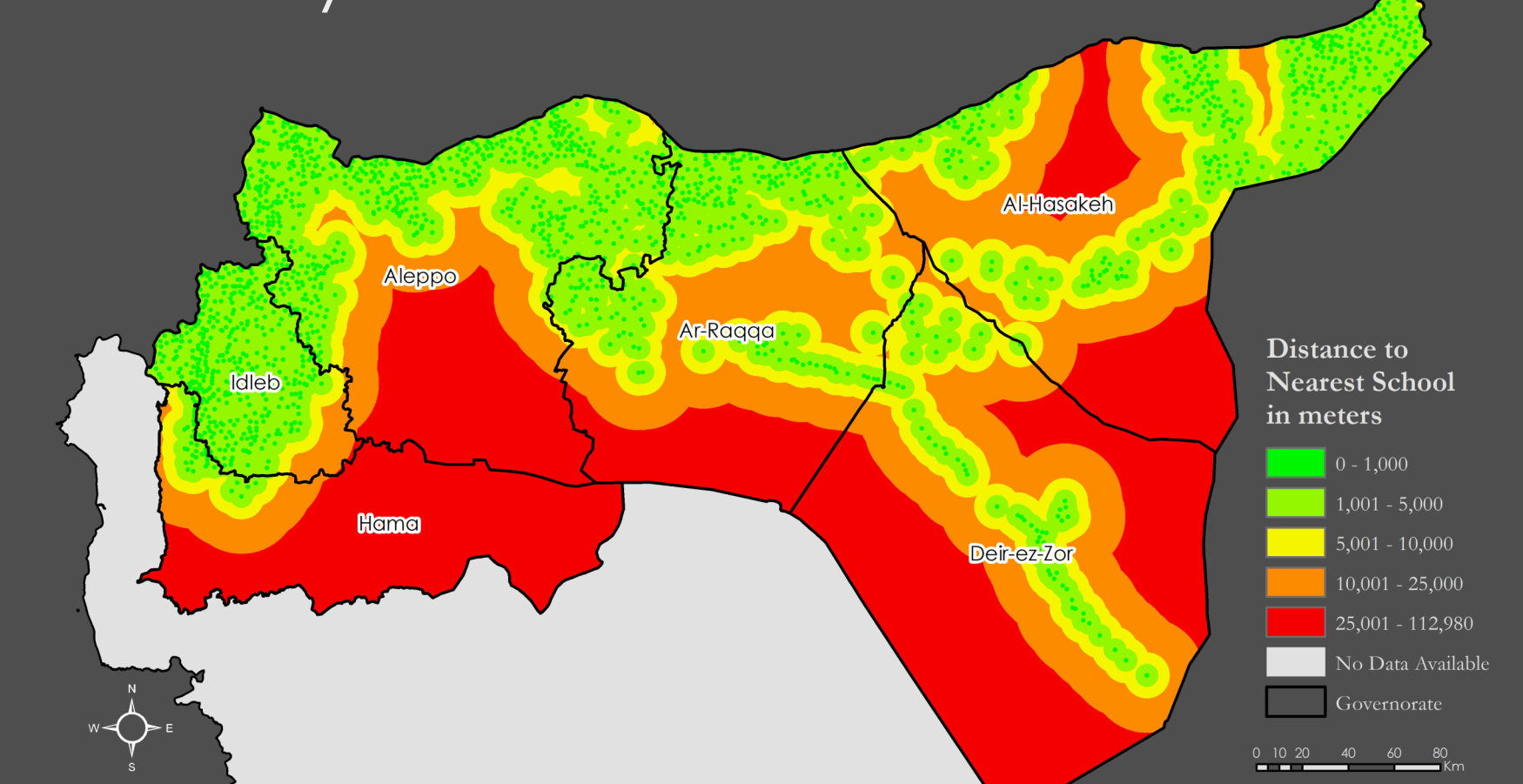
Comparing areas of high vulnerability to protection activities enabled the identification of six sub-districts in high need of protection assistance (See Table 2). They all had reported high levels of vulnerability and low levels of

protection activities. Conducting such analyses helps to avoid duplication in protection activities and target areas that may have been missed in previous humanitarian interventions.

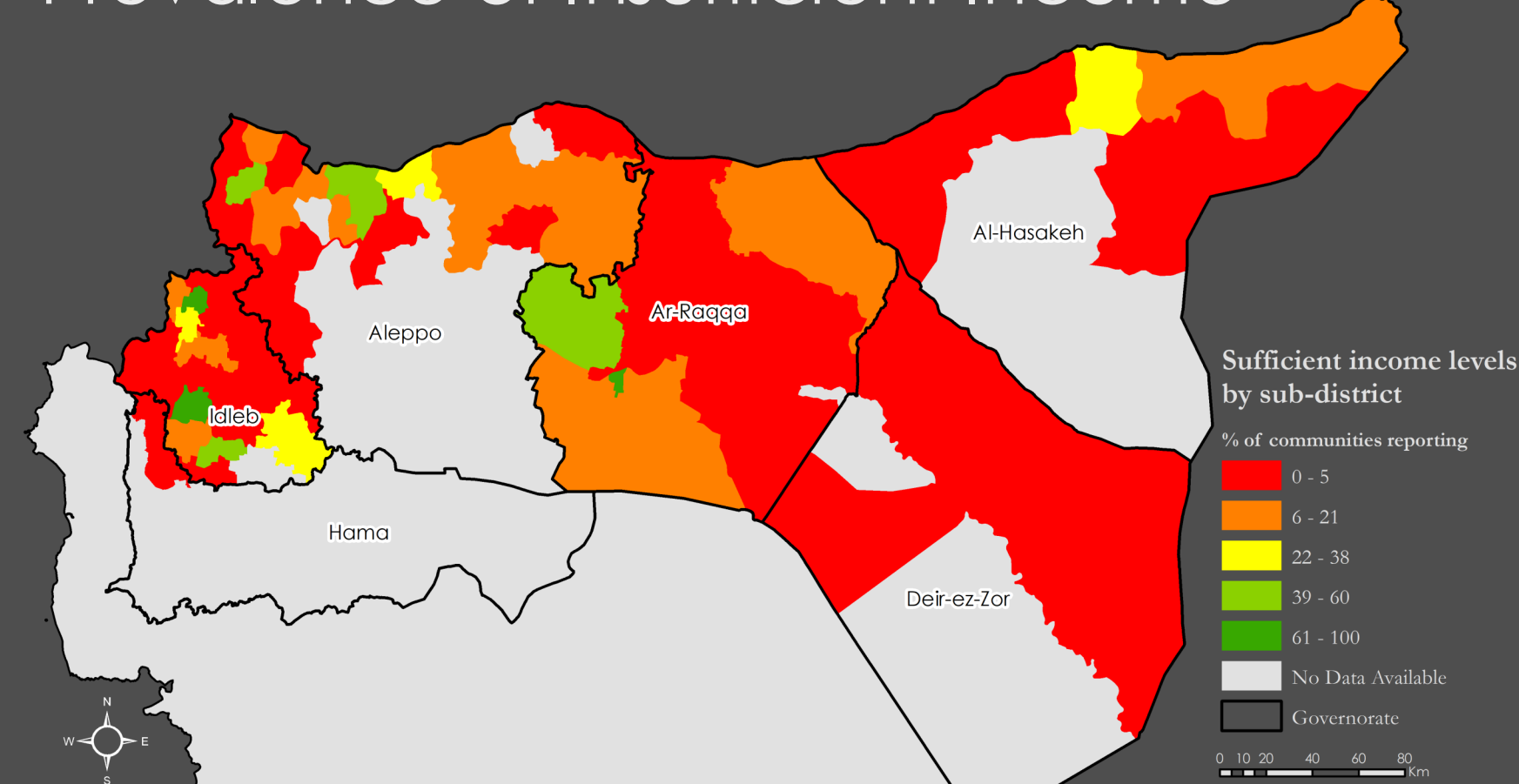
Sub-Districts in Northern Syria Most in Need of Protection Assistance, 2019



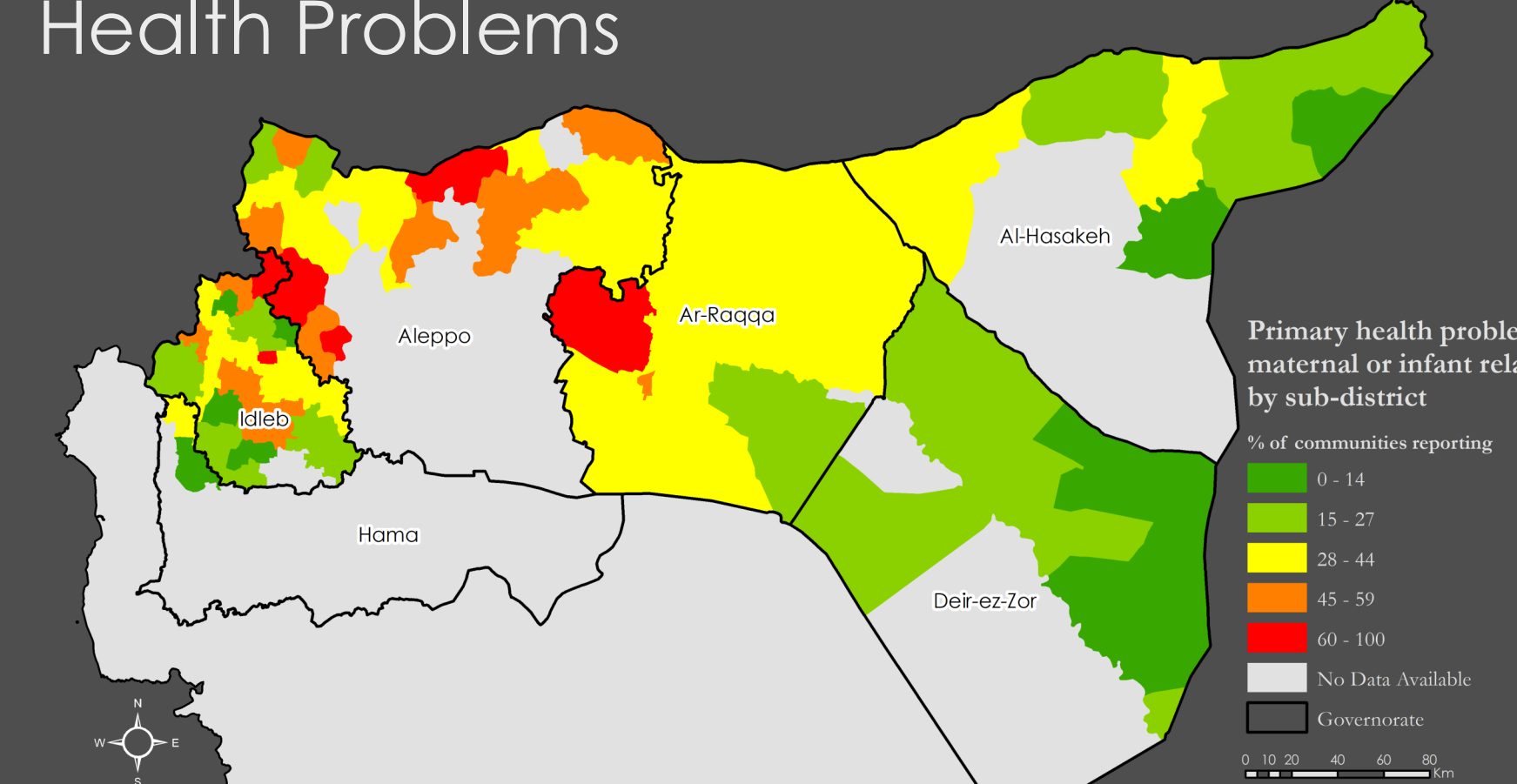
Proximity to School



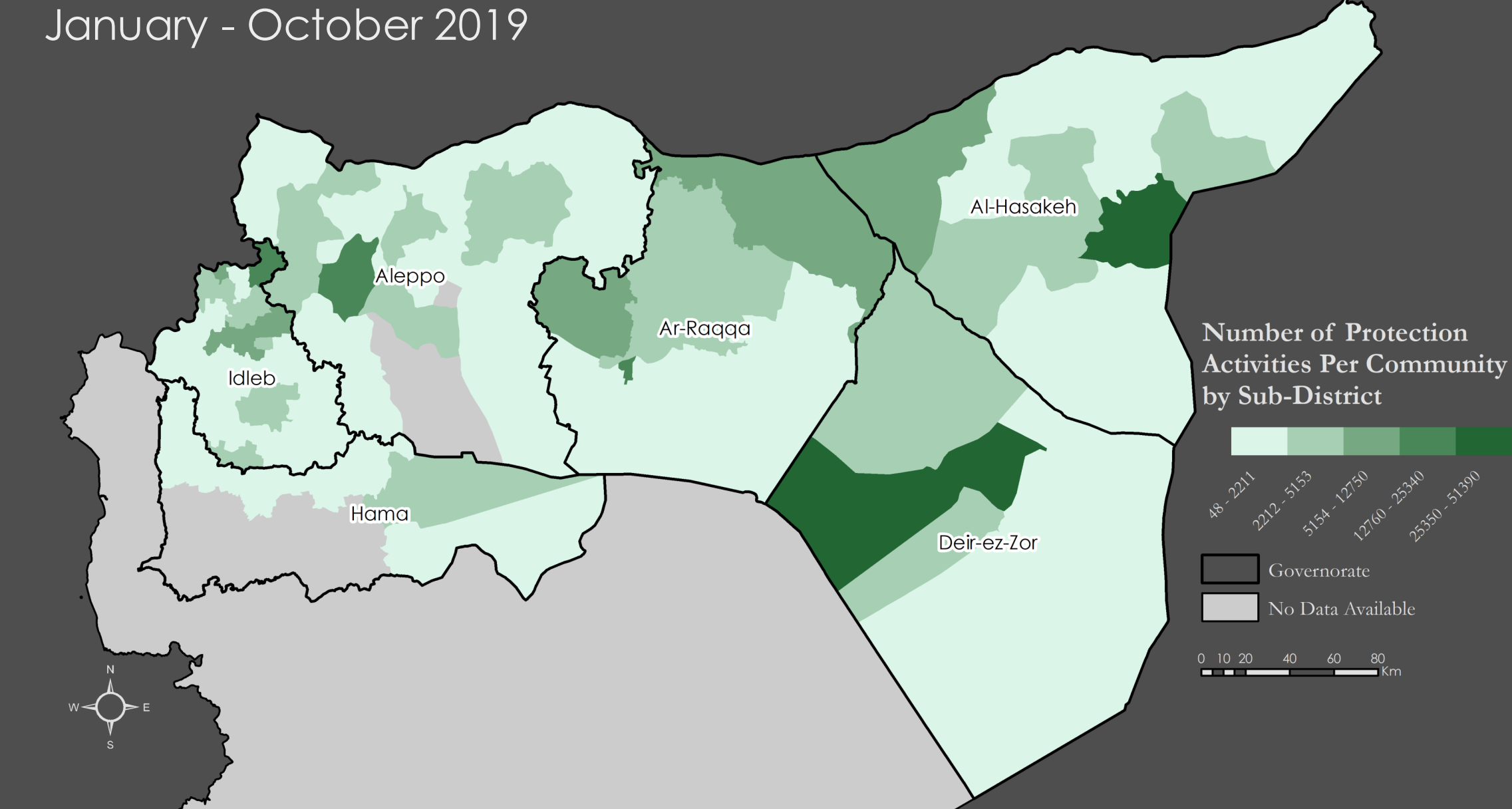
Prevalence of Insufficient Income



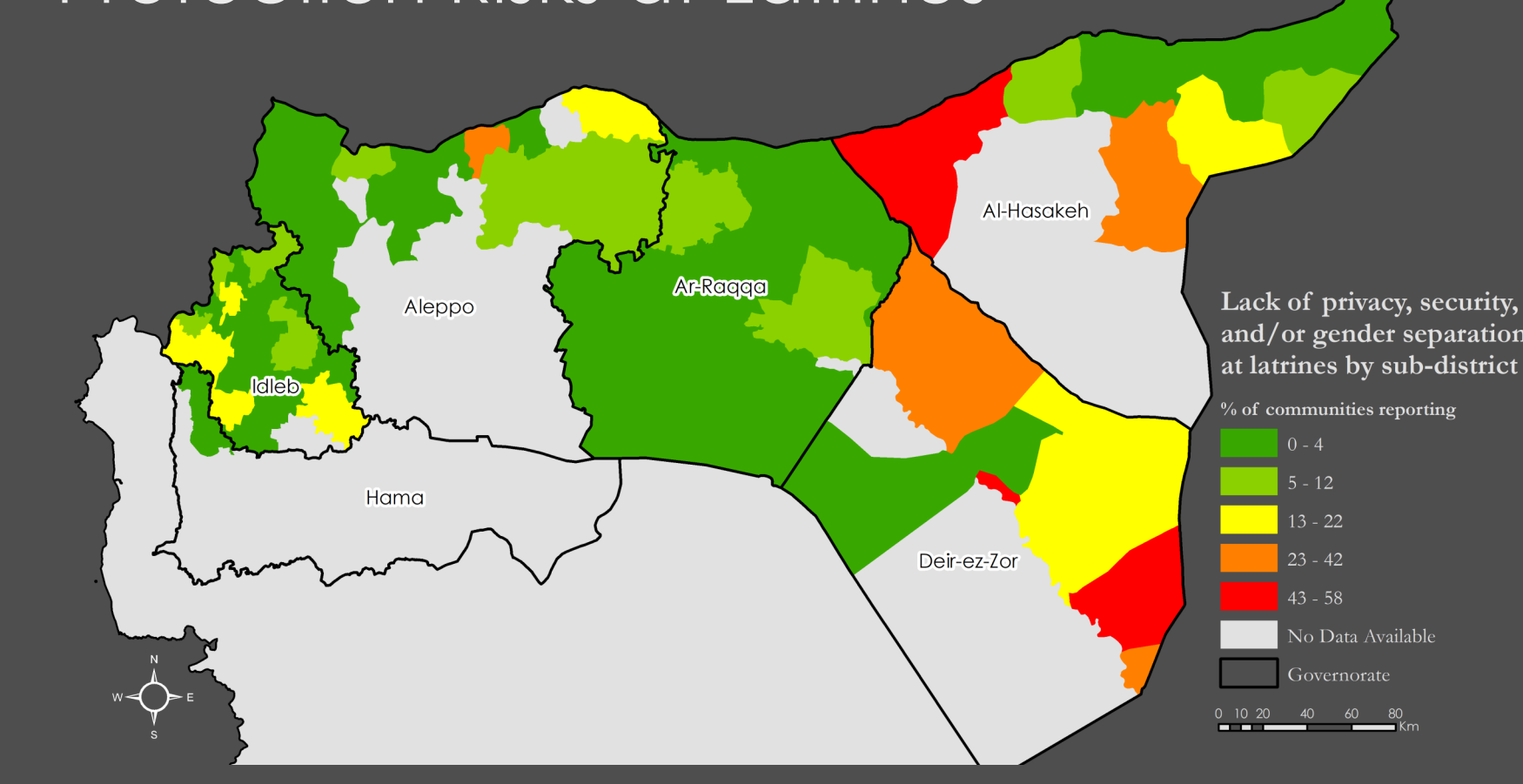
Prevalence of Maternal and Infant Health Problems



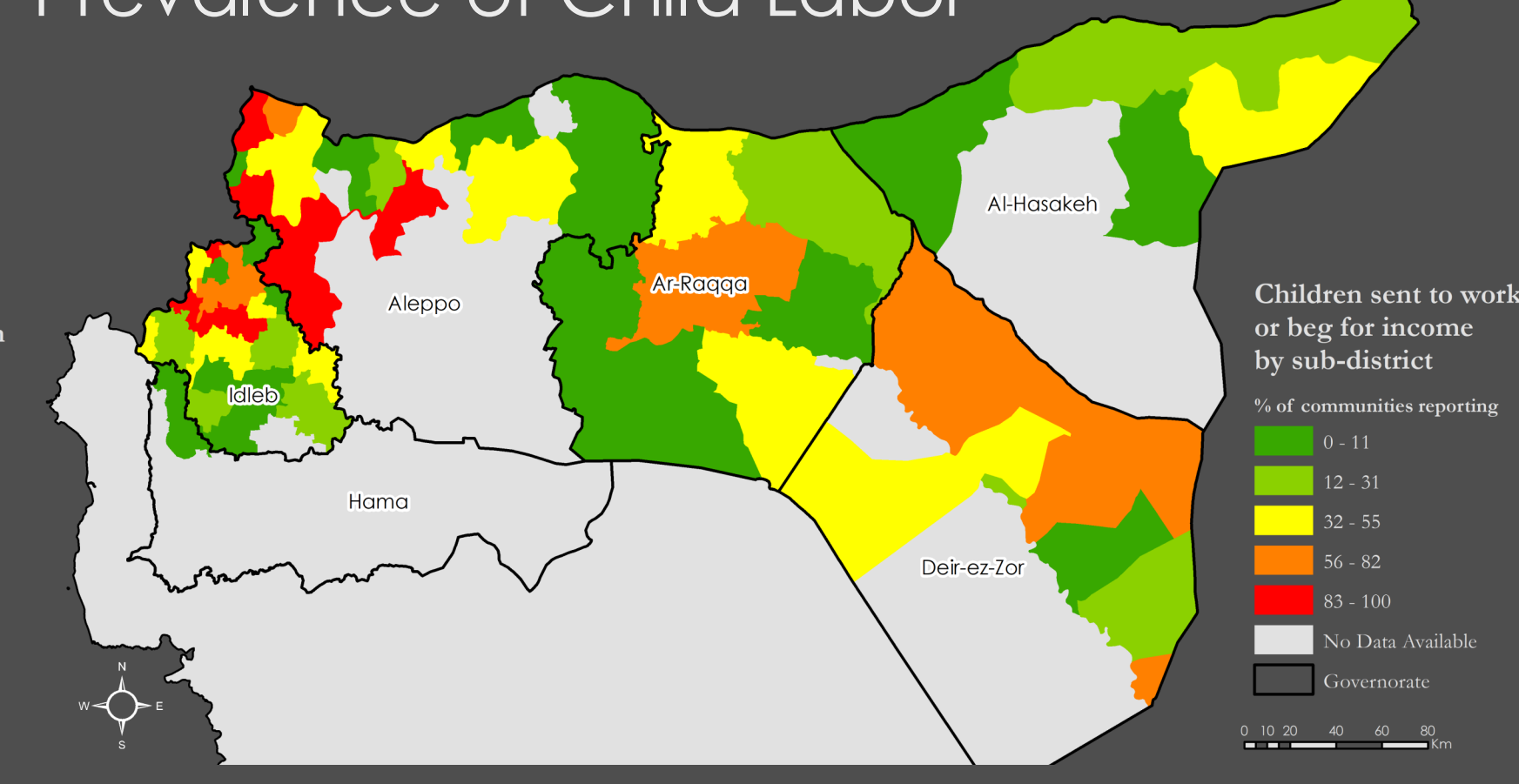
Protection Activities Conducted in Northern Syria January - October 2019



Protection Risks at Latrines



Prevalence of Child Labor



Lack of Access to Functioning Health Facilities

