



MULTI-SECTORAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SUB-DISTRICTS IN ALEPPO,
HOMS, HAMA, AND SOUTH
IDLEB

December 2024



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ACRONYMS

CEC	Community Education Committees
CFW	Cash for Work
CMAM	Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition
CwD	Children with Disability
FS	Food Security
FSL	Food Security and Livelihood
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HAC	Humanitarian Action Coordination Office
HHs	Households
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
HTS	Hayat Tahrir al-Sham
IDPs	Internally Displaced People
IGA	Income-Generating Activities
KIIs	Key Informants Interviews
KIs	Key Informants
MAM	Moderate Acute Malnutrition
MPCA	Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance
MSNA	Multi-Sectoral Need Assessment
NFI	Non-Food Items
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NWS	Northwest Syria
OOSC	Out Of School Children
OTPs	Outpatient Treatment Centers
PIN	People in Need
PLW	Pregnant and Lactating Women
PWDs	People with Disabilities
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SBGs	Small Business Grants
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SRC	Syrian Red Crescent
SWM	Solid Waste Management
TRY	Turkish Lira
TSFPs	Targeted Supplementary Feeding Programs
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WoS	Whole of Syria

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

People In Need - Syria Multi Sectoral Need Assessment

INTRODUCTION

The fall of Bashar al-Assad's regime on December 8, 2024, marked the end of 54 years of dynastic rule, leaving Syria in turmoil after a devastating 13-year conflict that claimed over 300,000 lives, displaced 12 million people (5.4 million abroad), and destroyed critical infrastructure.

Currently Syria is led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) under a Caretaker Government, Syrians face dire living conditions, with 80% of displaced individuals being women and children, and many residing in deteriorating shelters. Socioeconomic instability exacerbates vulnerabilities, including heightened risks of SEA and GBV for women and girls, while 16.7 million people require assistance.

A Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA) aims to evaluate critical needs in newly accessible areas of Aleppo, Homs, Hama, and Southern Idlib on 17th of Dec, covering essential sectors like Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Early Recovery, Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI), Livelihoods, Food Security, Agriculture, Nutrition, Education, and Community Engagement to guide program expansion, secure funding, and enhance coordination among humanitarian partners.



5 M

Total **population** estimation in the targeted sub-districts



407 K

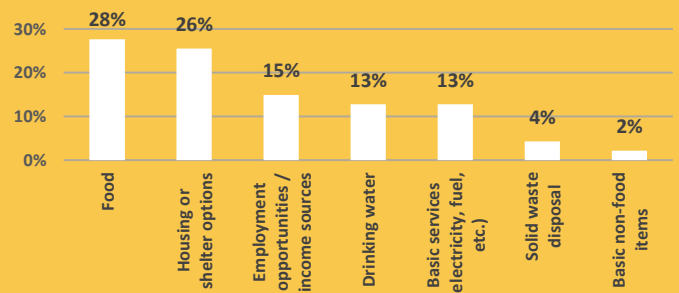
IDPs estimation in the targeted sub-district.



30 K

Estimated current **returnees** to the targeted sub-districts.

Number of returnees are expected to increase in the coming period where key informants (KIs) mentioned shelter challenges prevent them from returning to their home.



The KIs highlighted food and shelter as the most pressing concerns in the targeted locations, reflecting the immediate need for basic sustenance and adequate living conditions. Following these, employment opportunities and access to essential services like drinking water, fuel, electricity, and healthcare were identified as significant challenges.

SHELTER

The shelter situation in the targeted areas has been severely impacted by 13 years of conflict, with widespread attacks and hostilities causing extensive damage to housing and infrastructure. This has made shelter-related challenges one of the most urgent concerns identified by KIs and clearly observed by PIN's team.

In the southern sub-districts of Idlib, over 90% of buildings were highly damaged, leaving many areas completely abandoned. Similarly, in Homs, entire neighborhoods such as Karabis, Qusour, Khaldiya, and others have been heavily impacted, with many buildings destroyed or rendered uninhabitable. In Aleppo city, neighborhoods near the castle, like Ramouseh and Ameriyah, also face dire conditions, while damage in Hama, As-Salamiyeh, Tall ed-daman, and Zarbah sub-districts is less severe. However, minor earthquake damage has been observed in some buildings, and one informal settlement in Hama lacks basic services. Furthermore, many residents continue to live in damaged houses or buildings, and returnees' homes are either destroyed or partially damaged, making it difficult for the displaced population to return. The need for rehabilitation and reconstruction remains critical.

FOOD RESOURCE AND INSECURITY



63% of the population rely on debts as a main food resource across all targeted sub-districts. Also, half of the KIs estimate that 51%-75% of households face daily food insecurity, with the other half reporting levels exceeding 76%. These statistics underscore widespread food shortages and a pressing need for humanitarian intervention and sustainable livelihood support.

Moreover, 63% of the population spend more than 80% of their income on food, highlighting extreme financial strain while the remaining population spend half their income on food according to the KIs.

Common **coping strategies** include selling assets, borrowing, reducing food quantity or quality, and sending children to work. Extreme measures, such as selling property or begging, are less frequent but signify acute vulnerability.

INCOME RESOURCES

1st

Daily labor, which 29% of population rely on

2nd

Fixed job, only 20% of the population rely on a fixed employment

3rd

18% rely on **debts** and other 18% rely on **food crops and agriculture**

According to KIs, most affected Households (HHs) are those led by the elderly, persons with disabilities (PWDs), women, or returnees, as well as displaced families and those in inadequate housing.

MARKET:

50% of KIs reported increased availability in markets, though 38% see no change, and 13% note shortages, indicating regional variability.

AGRICULTURE

The assessment reveals a strong focus on staple crops like wheat and barley, predominantly cultivated in Tel Al-Dhaman and As-Salamiyeh, while vegetables, legumes, and potatoes are grown on smaller scales in areas such as Talbiseh and Jabal Samaan. Economic diversification is evident through profitable crops like cumin and black seed and the significant presence of olive trees in Rastan and Jabal Samaan.

However, agricultural production faces severe constraints, including limited access to their lands due to the insecurity (38%) especially within the previous situation before 8th of December 2024 where many people could not access their lands before which located under previous government area; high input costs (63%), and irrigation challenges. Other barriers include fertilizer unavailability, high irrigation costs, and equipment shortages, which further strain productivity. Also, water resource management highlights reliance on artesian wells (50%) and rain-fed irrigation (38%), with 88% of participants reporting a decline in groundwater levels over five years, indicating issues like over-extraction and climate change. Additionally, 25% of KIs noted groundwater contamination, underscoring the need for water safety. Regular monitoring is inconsistent, with 63% acknowledging entities supervising irrigation systems, while only 38% reported ongoing groundwater quality tests. Recommendations emphasize reducing input costs, improving fertilizer access, and enhancing irrigation systems. Sustainable groundwater management, community awareness, crop diversification, and robust regulatory frameworks are critical to boosting agricultural productivity, ensuring food security, and addressing water resource challenges in the targeted areas.

The WASH assessment highlights significant disparities in water access, sanitation, and solid waste management across all targeted sub-districts with slight variation, underscoring critical challenges in infrastructure and service provision.

WATER ACCESS

88% of respondents report reduction in well water levels over the past five years.

Water networks are present in most sub-districts, except in Tall Ed-Daman, where residents rely entirely on unsafe water from trucks. Several areas, including Zarbah and Haritan, recently experienced disruptions in network functionality due to security events. Alternative water sources include wells, artesian wells, and unique practices like collecting money for fuel to operate wells in Talbiseh with many KIs reported that wells stop working when there is no fuel. However, contamination and declining groundwater levels are common. Many sub-districts require maintenance, expansion of networks, and sustainable water systems, such as drilling new wells, installing storage tanks, and adopting solar-powered systems.

Severe water shortages was reported as most residents rely on trucked water, which is costly and often unclean.

SANITATION

Access to sewage networks varies widely, with sub-districts like Talbiseh and Homs having majority coverage, while areas such as Zarbah and Tall Ed-Daman face severe gaps. Maintenance and expansion of existing networks, along with new systems in underserved areas like Ar-Rastan, are essential to prevent environmental health issues. It's worth noting that Sanitation issues persist was reported due to widespread use of septic tanks in Talbiseh and 75% of the sewage system needs replacement in Ar-rastan.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Most sub-districts face significant challenges in Solid Waste Management (SWM), including inadequate trash collection infrastructure, lack of proper landfill sites, and insufficient workforce support. Areas like Tall Ed-Daman and Zarbah require immediate intervention to address improper waste disposal and its public health implications. Also, there is a landfill in populated areas in Ar-rastan sub-district and needs to be removed.

The lack of personal hygiene material in most sub-districts, except for intermittent efforts in Jebel Saman, highlights a critical gap in hygiene support. Sub-districts like Zarbah, Tall Ed-Daman, and Ar-Rastan face severe public health issues due to waste, pests, water contamination, and disease outbreaks.

EDUCATION

640 K

Enrolled children

70 K

Dropped out children

OOSC

Zero Data for the OOSC

Note: The reported numbers exclude South Idleb, where no children attend school.

The findings identify significant challenges and priorities across the targeted sub-districts, focusing on access, infrastructure, and the quality of education, the most important barriers are:

- Economic challenges (poverty / child labor force children to work, while high education costs prevent access).
- Many schools are partially or completely destroyed, making them inaccessible.
- Schools lack textbooks, fuel, WASH facilities, provision of low salaries for teachers and inclusive infrastructure CwD.
- Safety concerns: Unsafe routes and schools being used as shelters deter attendance.
- Early marriage, family disintegration, and missing documentation further hinder access.

MOST IMPORTANT NEEDS

SCHOOL REPAIRS

HEATING AND SUPPLIES

QUALIFIED TEACHERS

ADDITIONAL LEARNING SPACE

Across the assessed sub-districts (exclude Homs and Southern Idleb due to lack of information and extreme damage), out of all schools, 1,352 are operational, while an average of 20% remain non-operational.

OTHER NOTES AND OBSERVATION RELATED TO EDUCATION

Ten out of 40 schools in Ar-Rastan are non-functional due to damage, resulting in overcrowded classrooms with reported damaged infrastructure (windows, doors, walls) in other areas such as Aleppo, Zarbah, Tel-Al Daman and Talbiseh sub-districts. Also, light rehabilitation needed in Hama and As-Salamiyeh sub-districts with variation where more rehabilitation needed in some poor neighborhoods in Hama city.

Also, schools in all sub-districts has severe challenges include lack of heating fuel and lighting in schools, impacting learning environments. Furthermore, it was mentioned that returnee children face challenges in registration due to lack of documentation.

LIVELIHOOD AND EARLY RECOVERY



Unemployment rate ranges between **51% and 70%** in most of the assessed sub-districts, while the rate reached **to 90% in** Talbiseh and Zarbah. Also, poverty more observed in several sub-districts such as in Talbiseh, As-Salamiyeh, Zarbah, and Tall Ed-daman.



Women constitute **41.6%** of the workforce, primarily engaged in **agriculture** and manual labor. Some also work in education, healthcare, and administration.



Displaced Persons in the Workforce: Agriculture: 16.6% on average, peaking at 35% in Homs while industry and laboratories 10% on average, with 15-20% in Ar-Rastan, Hama, Jebel Saman, and Homs. In addition, markets and transportation: 11.6% average participation.



Markets remain undamaged as they were not exposed to conflicts in Hama and As-Salamiyeh, while 51%-75% of markets show modifiable structural damage in the majority of sub-districts. It is completely destroyed in southern Idleb.



Fully **functional basic and social infrastructure** in 16% of the sub-districts (Hama and As-Salamiyeh). It's heavily damaged, with non-functional infrastructure in 60% of the sub-districts while the remaining sub-districts like Homs, Jabal Samaan (Aleppo) and Ar-rastan report slight damages in the infrastructure. Also, telecom networks are partially damaged.



78% of households face a **challenge** due to income insufficient to **meet basic needs** based on the KIs (e.g. bread cost is 8,000 SP/family per day is unaffordable). KIs reported that shop owners struggle with low sales and debt.



Trade offers the **highest wages**, followed by **agriculture**, while **daily labor jobs** provide the lowest. The average daily wage for unskilled labor is **37,777 SYP (2 to 3 USD)**, ranging from 10,000 SYP in Ar-Rastan and Talbiseh to 75,000 SYP in Aleppo.

CFW

Community priorities for Cash for Work (CFW) activities include **cleaning and rehabilitating roads** and streets, collecting **waste and rehabilitating** public buildings (e.g., schools, hospitals, water stations), maintaining **and rehabilitating public spaces** (e.g., parks, playgrounds, markets) and waste separation and debris removal.



Common **loan** sources are friends, relatives, private vendors (debts), or brokers. However, banks are slightly available in main cities.



No house damages in 16% of the sub-districts (Hama and As-Salamiyeh). It is moderately damaged in 33% of the sub-districts while the remaining sub-districts like Homs, Jabal Samaan (Aleppo) report severely damages in some neighborhoods and completely destroyed in southern Idleb.

The prolonged conflict in Syria has significantly worsened the nutritional status of vulnerable groups, particularly children under five and PLW. Findings of the assessment showed that there are many nutritional challenges affecting infants as the following:

INFANTS (0–6 MONTHS)

- Lack of support for non-breastfed infants.
- Breastfeeding difficulties and inadequate milk provision.
- Poor maternal nutrition and harmful feeding practices drinks.
- Hygiene challenges when preparing food for non-breastfed infants, increasing infection risks.



Young Children (7–23 MONTHS)

- Insufficient food quantity and poor-quality diets lack essential nutrients.
- Limited dietary diversity and absence of age-appropriate food options.
- Cooking constraints due to lack of fuel, particularly noted in Zarbah and Homs.

Moreover, KIs reported broader issues like limited nutritional awareness, especially among young mothers in addition to the poverty which prevents access to diverse, high-quality food, impacting child growth and maternal breastfeeding. When it comes to the nutrition related services, KIs referred that there are no nutrition services for children under five and Pregnant and Lactating Women (PLW), milk product distributions or cash assistance for PLW in the past three months across most assessed sub-districts, the only exception mentioned is a limited cash support for PLW in Jebel Saman (Aleppo city) from local charities.

Health Awareness Campaigns: regular campaigns on reproductive health, communicable diseases, and infant feeding are conducted only in 4 out of 12 sub-districts (As-Salamiyeh, Hama, Jebel Saman, and Homs).

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Assessment shows that no regular social events or activities are held in the majority of the sub-districts where PIN's team observed a social tension in several areas such as Homs, Talbiseh, Ar-Rastan sub-districts. Also, community members in the majority of the assessed areas do not receive training or support to develop skills for contributing to community projects, limiting opportunities for meaningful participation and social cohesion. However, KIs mentioned that few social events were held, (in 4 out of 12 sub-districts) in As-Salamiyeh, Hama, Jebel Saman (Aleppo city), and Homs where women and youths primarily participated in these activities.

Main challenges were reported such as the funding gaps, infrastructure deficiencies, capacity issues and limited awareness. On the other hand, opportunity to initiate social engagement was reported as well where KIs said that community members, especially youth and females, are eager to participate in new social initiatives. Also, KIs indicated that community representatives have shown interest in organizing social activities. However, the current lack of established community structures, such as committees, significantly restricts opportunities for meaningful engagement.

Other observations:

- Economic struggles in the majority of the sub-districts and social unrest observed, particularly in As-Salamiyeh, Ar-Rastan, Talbiseh in addition to some neighborhoods in Aleppo, Homs and Hama cities.
- Safety concerns persist in minority communities in Talbiseh and Homs sub-districts. In addition to high prevalence of drug addiction and mental health issues in the same area.
- Tensions between locals and returnees affect social cohesion in some sub-districts such as (Homs, Ar-rastan and Talbiseh).
- High number of child beggars observed with lack of social protection measures in Aleppo city.

INTRODUCTION

ABSTRACT

In 2011, following a violent crackdown on peaceful pro-democracy protests during the Arab Spring, Bashar al-Assad's regime, in power for 54 years through his family, became embroiled in one of the 21st century's deadliest wars. Over time, the conflict evolved into a proxy war involving multiple foreign powers, including big countries. On 8th December, Bashar al-Assad fled Damascus, and his regime officially fell. Russian state agencies confirmed he and his family were granted asylum in Moscow on humanitarian grounds. This marked the end of his family's long-standing rule and left Syria in significant turmoil with over 300,000 deaths recorded and around 100,000 people disappeared, according to reports from humanitarian agencies like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). (1. The Guardian, 9th of Dec 2024)

The 13-year conflict has left Syria with staggering humanitarian challenges where 12 million Syrians have been displaced, with 5.4 million seeking refuge abroad with a high damages rate of basic and social infrastructures. About 80% are women and children who have experienced displacement multiple times over several years. Around 800,000 individuals live in old tents, the majority of which are over two years old. Currently, HTS has taken over leadership in Syria and announced the establishment of a Caretaker Government. Although Syrians celebrate fall of Bashar al-Assad after five decades of dynastic rule, they are still face a bad living circumstance which related to all aspects and Syria still need support and too many displaced people cannot return their home due to the high damages took place.

The socioeconomic situation is still unstable, negatively impacting social cohesion, and amplifying vulnerabilities. The effects of economic deterioration and lack of livelihood opportunities further expose women and girls to the risk of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and other forms of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in the effort of accessing food and job opportunities. In 2024, 16.7 million people are expected to require assistance, the largest number ever since the beginning of the crisis in 2011. (2. HNO by OCHA, 2024)

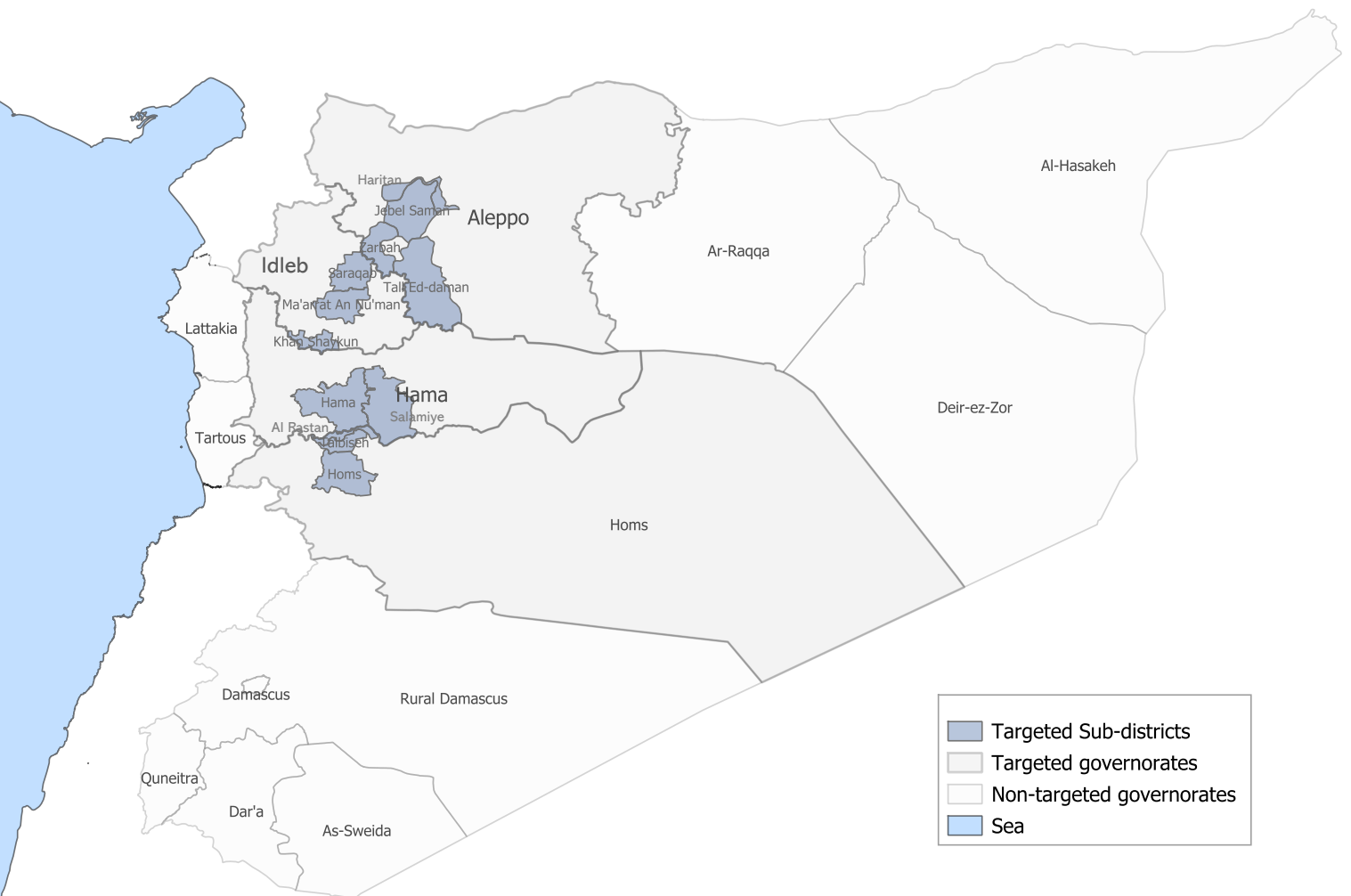
SCOPE OF WORK

This needs assessment aims to provide an overview of critical needs across the areas that were under the old government before 8th of December 2024, particularly 12 sub-districts in Aleppo, Homs, Hama and Southern Idlib. The assessment covers WASH, early recovery, shelter and non-food items, livelihoods, food security, agriculture, nutrition, education, and community engagement sectors to provide a holistic understanding of local conditions and needs of these newly accessible areas.

Sub-districts were selected after calculating the sample systematically based on a discussion with the programme managers considering several criteria, such as the high number of communities or/and population, size of sub-district, strategical reasons and additional data sources such as Rapid Needs Assessment for Aleppo city by Assistance Coordination Unit (ACU) and the overview of humanitarian access by OCHA.

The objective of the MSNA is to provide an overview of the general needs across all sectors that PIN focuses on within the newly accessible governorates. This assessment aims to inform PIN’s potential expansion by establishing the scale of work required in these new locations and to advocate this need to increase the required funding for Syria in the coming period. Additionally, it seeks to share critical observations and identified needs with partners to enhance coordination and unify efforts in addressing the most pressing challenges in these areas.

The map below shows the sub-districts that were targeted within the MSNA:



METHODOLOGY

SAMPLING

Stratified sampling was initially planned to ensure representation across the 62 newly accessible sub-districts in the aforementioned governorates. It was determined that targeting 20% of these sub-districts would be sufficient for identifying trends and informing the assessment. However, due to specific constraints, e.g. high tension or security issues, only 12 sub-districts were ultimately assessed. For such assessments, targeting 20–30% of sub-districts per governorate is generally sufficient to capture reliable trends, but adjustments were necessary to account for practical and security-related challenges.

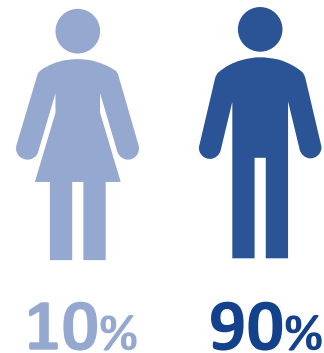
The 12 sub-districts were selected based on several criteria, including feasibility, accessibility, population size, safety and security considerations, and identified priority needs. Modifications to the sampling approach were made due to security concerns, particularly in the southern sub-districts of Idlib, which were significantly damaged and largely depopulated. In these areas, the absence of KIs meant that only direct observation was conducted. The targeted locations of the assessment are outlined in the map and provided table below:

Governorate	District	Sub-district	# of KIs
Aleppo	Jebel Saman	Haritan	6
Aleppo	Jebel Saman	Jebel Saman	7
Aleppo	Jebel Saman	Tall Ed-daman	5
Aleppo	Jebel Saman	Zarbah	5
Hama	As-Salamiyeh	As-Salamiyeh	4
Hama	Hama	Hama	6
Homs	Ar-Rastan	Ar-Rastan	7
Homs	Ar-Rastan	Talbiseh	7
Homs	Homs	Homs	5
Idlib	Al Ma'ra	Khan Shaykun	0
Idlib	Al Ma'ra	Ma'arrat An Nu'man	0
Idlib	Idlib	Saraqab	0

DATA COLLECTION AND TOOL

The data was collected from 17th to 22nd of December 2024 and two primary methods of data collection were utilized:

- Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted with KIs from various sectors, including: local councils and community leaders, ministries, water units, water directorates, and municipalities, engineer assemblies, education directorates, and other local NGOs. coordination with the humanitarian affairs committee (HAC) ensured the necessary approvals to access these institutions and informants. a total of 52 KIs participated in the data collection process, including five women,



ensuring gender inclusion in the process knowing that it was challenge to find more KIIs in the current situation.

- Direct observation and informal interviews: PIN teams conducted direct observations in the targeted sub-districts, complemented by quick interviews with business owners and residents in visited cities. These observations provided additional insights and were particularly valuable in areas where KIIs were not feasible.

TOOLS AND TRAINING: The data collection tool was developed through consultations with PIN MEAL, programme managers, sectoral and data advisers. Designed to collect data in both English and Arabic, the tool was implemented using KoBo Toolbox for KIIs. Observational data and informal interviews were documented through detailed note-taking, which was later scripted, reflected in this report, and used to triangulate the data collected via KIIs.

PIN's team visiting agricultural directorate | Jebel Saman (Aleppo) | 17th of Dec 2024



LIMITATIONS

Although s sampling was utilized to select the sub-districts, the assessment only covered 12 out of 62 sub-districts, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to the entire region. This selection might not capture the detailed needs across other sub-districts. Also, this assessment was done on a sub-districts level due to many reasons (permanent changes in the situation on ground, tight timeline and lack of capacity to reach high numbers of communities in addition to lack of KIs and operational institution/directorate in all smaller communities currently).

The assessment covered covers WASH, early recovery, shelter and non-food items, livelihoods, food security, agriculture, nutrition, education, and community engagement sectors leaving out other important sectors such as health and protection. as a result, the findings do not reflect how the identified needs may impact communities in these other areas, limiting the overall scope of the assessment. However, observations of relevant information were considered.

Also, conducted within a short time frame, the assessment may also be affected by changes in the local context, such as shifts in population dynamics or emerging emergencies, which could reduce the relevance of the findings over time.

Additionally, data was collected from KIs who represent the targeted communities based on their perception/opinion, not direct measurement where the perspectives of households or individuals (including women, PWDs, elderly etc.) were not directly captured, potentially limiting a more granular understanding of community-level experiences. Other limitations can be mentioned as well such as the limited female representation and the potential changes of the returnees' information in the coming period.

Despite these limitations, the assessment provides valuable, targeted insights, though it may not fully address the broader or evolving needs of the wider population.

FINDINGS

GENERAL INFORMATION

DEMOGRAPHY



5 M Total
Population



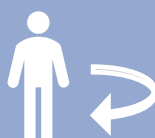
909 K
Households



2% PwDs



407 K IDPs



30 K Returnees
(Estimations)



47 % Children
(0 to 17)

Regarding the demographic composition of the population of the locations targeted in the assessment, the total population is 5 million individuals with a total a proportion of PwDs reached 2% individuals, distributed across 909,000 households, with an average household (HH) size of approximately 5.5 members.

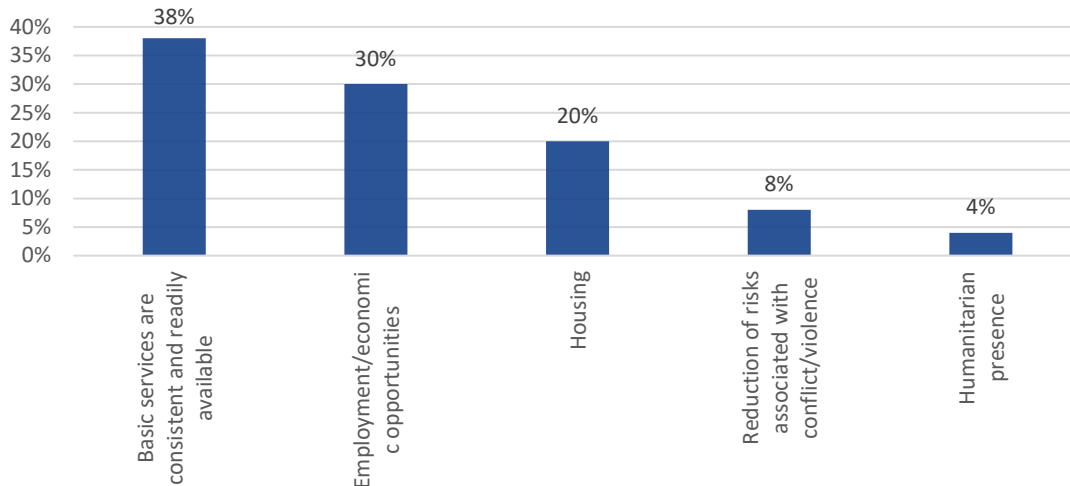
Of the total population, 407,000 individuals are IDPs, making up 8.1% of the population, while 30,000 individuals are returnees, accounting for 0.6% of the total population where this might increase based on the KIs perspective as there are still many challenges preventing displaced people and refugees to return to their home as housing (e.g. shelter rehabilitation, rent) basic services provision (e.g. water, electricity, rubble removal and telecom), education, are prerequisites for returnees.

Children under 18 make up a significant portion of the population, with 47% of the total population. Women and girls represent 51.2% of the population. This data provides a clear demographic overview, highlighting the significant presence of children, women, and IDPs.

MOST IMPORTANT NEED AND CONCERNS

KIs identified several critical concerns in the assessed sub-districts, with access to basic services emerging as the top priority, highlighted by 38% of responses. The availability and reliability of these services are essential for community stability. Employment and economic opportunities were cited by 30% of mentioned concerns, reflecting the pressing need for job creation and financial security. Housing concerns were noted by 20% of responses,

emphasizing the challenges in securing adequate living conditions. Additionally, key informants prioritized reducing risks associated with conflict and violence with 8% of responses, while only 4% of the responses highlighted the presence of humanitarian actors as a key concern and need for the area. These findings underscore the importance of addressing essential services, economic stability, and housing, alongside risks mitigation and humanitarian support.



KIs reported several notable changes in the sub-district over the last two weeks, with a general sense of improvement in wellbeing and safety being widely observed. Approximately 80% of respondents highlighted better psychological wellbeing among residents, attributed to improved security, freedom of movement, and a gradual return of essential services such as bread and fuel availability. Markets have become more active, with increased movement.

A noticeable return of displaced residents to the area has been observed, improved organization and reduced risks have contributed to a sense of general reassurance among the population, with expressing relief over the removal of checkpoints and an overall reduction in fear. Overall, the increased market activity, improved safety, and gradual restoration of services are creating a positive trajectory for recovery and stability in the sub-district.

ACTIVE PRESENCE OF ORGANIZATIONS

Moreover, the assessment revealed that humanitarian assistance was present in only 9% of the assessed sub-districts (1 out of 12) in Hama where essential services and supplies were received, including WASH services; shelter; medical supplies; health services; services tailored for women and girls; winterization supplies; food assistance; and education support where the “Marshafiah church, Syrian Red Crescent (SRC), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and other local social support” who provided this assistance.

However, KIs reported that the assistance provided in Hama was not satisfying the majority of the targeted population as it was not with sufficient quality and quantity to cover the needs of the



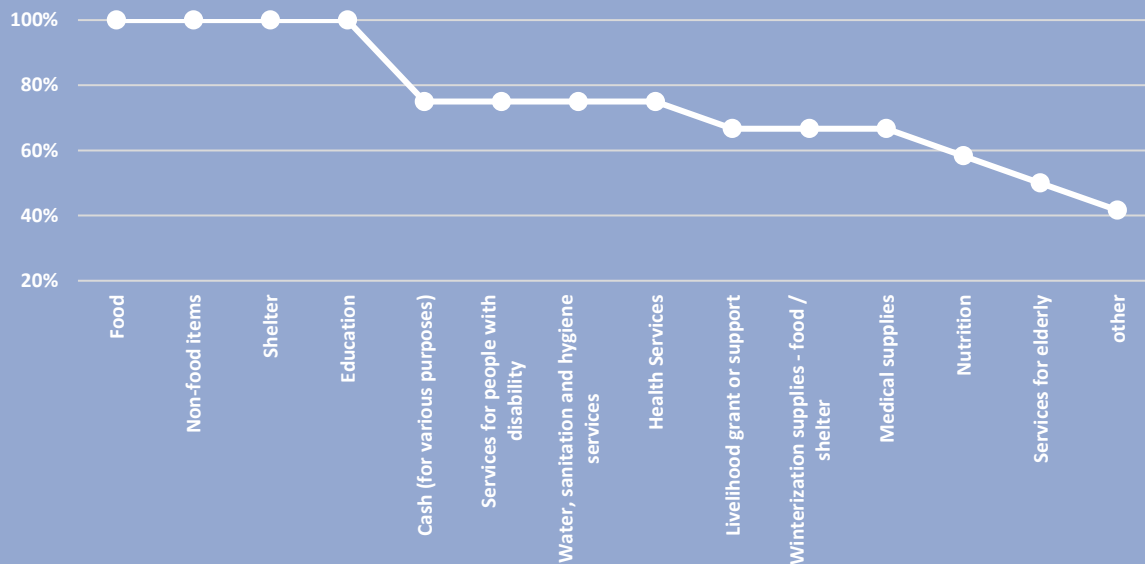
vulnerable population. Also, the assistance was not provided in a fair and impartial manner according to their perspective. In the remaining 91% of sub-districts, no humanitarian presence or assistance was reported, highlighting significant gaps in access to critical services. This underscores the urgent need for expanded humanitarian efforts to address unmet needs across the region.

In addition, KIs were asked about how do the majority of sub-districts' population prefer to submit comments and complaints to relief agencies where majority confirmed a preference of WhatsApp and KIs in only two other sub-districts referred to a preference of face-to-face interviews and complaints box.

GENERAL NEEDS

The following diagram shows the need of the population of the targeted sites for support in the sectors shown, as it appears that there is an urgent need for support in many aspects and sectors. This need varies, of course, successively from one site to another between the sites targeted by the assessment, but the urgent need for support is particularly evident at the level of support in all sub-districts for securing food, shelter support, NFI particularly fuel and winterization support as fuel affecting families and other infrastructure (e.g. electricity and schools), education.

While water, sanitation, hygiene support, health, support for PWDs, income generating and cash assistance were reported as an urgent need in 75% of the sub-districts. However, it is also worth noting the other aspects and sectors that are also considered a priority for the sites population's needs for support, such as nutrition, services for women (e.g. empowerment), legal support and community engagement and empowerment.



OTHER OBSERVATIONS

The recent visit by PIN to Syria highlighted a range of pressing issues impacting communities across various regions. Economic struggles and social unrest were prominently observed in As-Salamiyeh, Ar-Rastan, Talbiseh, and economically challenged neighborhoods in Aleppo, Homs, and Hama cities. In addition to economic difficulties, minority communities in Talbiseh and Homs sub-districts face persistent safety concerns, with a high prevalence of drug addiction and mental health issues further exacerbating the situation.

Ar-Rastan stands out for its social cohesion challenges, as tensions between locals and returnees were noted by observing community leaders' discussions, underscoring the urgent need for integration efforts. In Aleppo city, high numbers of child beggars signal a critical need for enhanced social protection measures. Across most areas visited, the lack of aid assistance remains a significant concern, coupled with the scarcity of fuel in all areas, which directly impacts vital infrastructure such as electricity, homes, and schools. It is worth mentioning that a KI referred that retired teachers are in need of support as they have extremely low salaries with a lack of services in the area. Despite that this was mentioned in Ar-Rastan, it sounds applied on all other areas specially in country sides.

In southern sub-districts of Idlib, complete devastation has left some areas abandoned, while in many other regions, electricity networks require urgent reconstruction and rehabilitation. A KI from Ar-Rastan, working as an assistant head of the electricity directorate, reported that the previous management replaced copper wiring with lower-quality aluminum, leading to frequent outages and rapid infrastructure deterioration. Despite these challenges, religious institutions such as churches and mosques remain operational except in southern sub-districts of Idlib, providing a semblance of normalcy amidst widespread instability.

Moreover, it was observed and mentioned by many KIs in several areas such as Ar-rastan, Talbiseh and other sub-districts that there is lack of the health facilities where people need to travel to reach main cities to have a medical care. Addressing these multi-faceted issues will require coordinated efforts to enhance aid delivery, rehabilitate infrastructure, and strengthen social cohesion across affected regions.

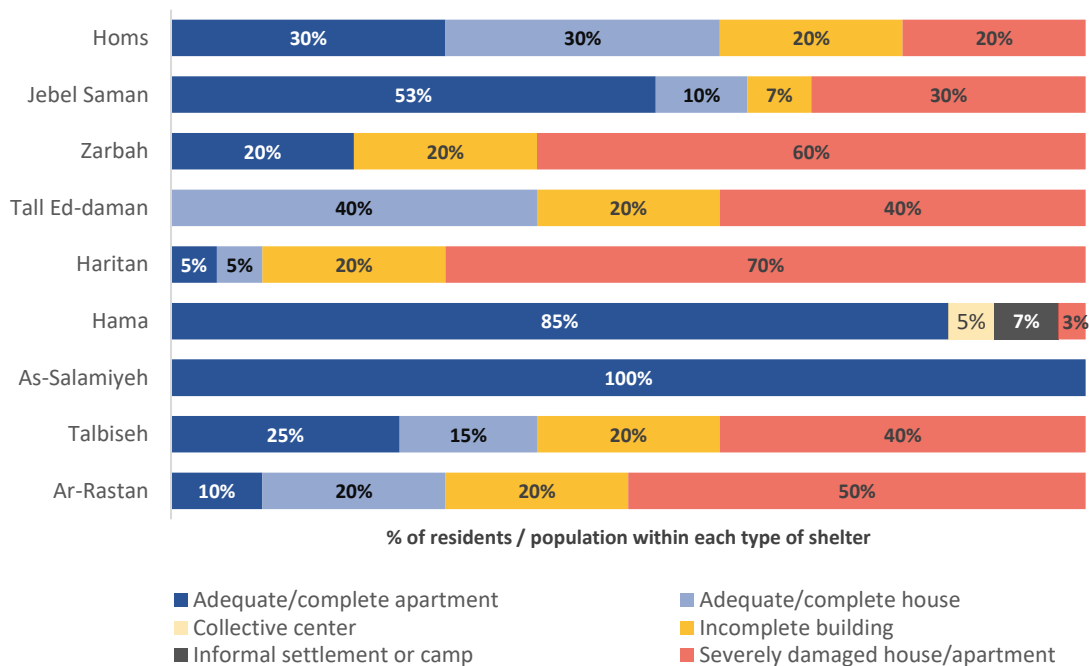
SHELTER AND NFI

The shelter situation in the targeted areas has been severely impacted by 13 years of conflict, with widespread attacks and hostilities causing extensive damage to housing and infrastructure. This has made shelter-related challenges one of the most urgent concerns identified by KIs and clearly observed by PIN's team who participated in data collection.

Seven KIs were conducted across various positions and sectors, with one respondent representing each location. It was obvious during the observation and data collection process the conflict's effects on the houses and buildings in the majority of the targeted sub-districts where in the southern sub-districts of Idleb, more than 90% of buildings have sustained severe damage, leading to widespread abandonment in many areas. Similarly, extensive destruction has been reported in Homs, where neighborhoods such as Karabis, Qusour, and Khaldiya have been significantly affected, with numerous buildings either destroyed or uninhabitable. In Aleppo city, neighborhoods close to the castle, including Ramouseh and Ameriyah, also face critical conditions. In contrast, the damage in Hama, As-Salamiyeh, Tall Ed-daman, and Zarbah sub-districts is comparatively less severe. Nonetheless, some buildings show minor earthquake damage, and an informal settlement in Hama is reported to lack essential services.

TYPE OF SHELTER

Based on the responses from KIs, it was observed that there are unsafe or unsuitable types of shelters within the assessed locations that residents are compelled to use. Among the most notable of these are severely damaged house/apartment, which are prevalent among the population in the sub-districts of Zarbah, Haritan, Talbiseh, Tall Ed-Daman, and Ar-Rastan. Additionally, approximately 20% of residents in several locations reside in incomplete buildings. Conversely, there are indications of suitable shelter types accommodating a significant portion of the population, particularly in Hama, Jebel Saman, and As-Salamiyeh. However, a small percentage of residents in Hama live in informal camps, while others reside in collective shelter center. As clarified in the chart below:



None of the assessed sub-districts faced any issues related to the suitability of shelter (camps or centers) except Hama , as there is a collective center there where many adequacy issues faced by the resident of this collective center and the most common of this issues are lack of bathing facilities, very far away bathing facilities, lack of safety on the way to the facilities, no safe access to cooking facilities, lack of access to safe drinking water, lack of latrines, lack of heating, lack of insulators, lack of lighting inside shelter, lack of lighting around shelter, lack of privacy inside shelter (no doors), latrines are too far away, latrines are not safe, lack of space inside shelter (with a minimum of 21 square meters per family), limited ventilation (less than 0.5m² ventilation in each room including the kitchen) and inability to lock the house.

SHELTER CHALLENGES

According to the responses of the KI's interviewed, the percentage of people who needed to repair their damaged or incomplete shelter and were unable to do so during the past three months ranged from 50-100% in most locations, while this percentage was around 25% in Talbiseh and between 10-25% in Hama sub-districts. Noting that there is no information available on this part for As-Salamiyeh sub-district. The most significant factors preventing residents from carrying out repairs in their shelters include the high cost of shelter supplies, which is the primary challenge in all the sub-districts assessed. This is followed by the inability to afford the services of craftsmen required for the repairs in the majority of the targeted sub-districts in assessment. Additionally, the unavailability of repair supplies in local markets is a notable issue in the Tall Ed-Daman sub-district.



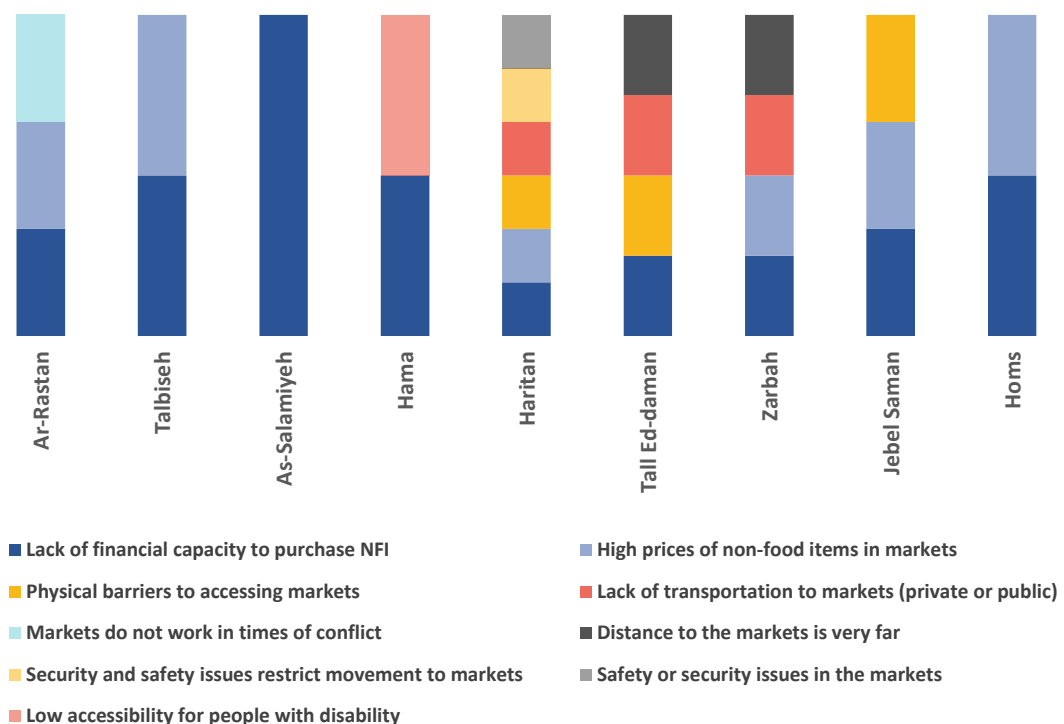
An inhabited damaged house in Hamidye neighborhood | Homs city

The assessment data underscores the importance of tailored repair strategies to address the specific needs of each sub-district while prioritizing universal concerns such as structural and utility repairs. Structural repairs (e.g. walls, ceilings, and cracks) are the most widely reported needs, reflecting the impact of damage on the integrity of shelters. Utility repairs (water lines and electricity networks) are critical in sub-districts like Haritan, Tall Ed-Daman, Zarbah, Homs, and Jebel Saman, indicating localized infrastructure deficiencies. Specialized repairs (e.g., kitchen maintenance, floor maintenance, and earthquake cracks) highlight the varying degrees of impact and the unique needs of certain sub-districts.

RESOURCE AND CHALLENGES

As reported by the key figures interviewed, the most common way to obtain NFI in all the sub-districts assessed was to purchase items from the market, followed by sharing them with friends or relatives as a form of social solidarity, while the distribution by relief Non-Government Organizations (NGO) was mentioned in Hama, As-Salamiyeh, and Jebel Samaan sub-districts.

The assessment data highlights a range of barriers to market access, varying by sub-district. Financial constraints are the most prevalent challenges in all the assessed sub districts, followed by high prices of NFI in markets. While physical, logistical, and security-related issues were less mentioned. Sub-districts like Haritan, Zarbah, and Tall Ed-daman face compounded challenges across multiple dimensions, requiring comprehensive interventions. Meanwhile, an area like As-Salamiyeh has fewer barriers, indicating relatively better access conditions. The chart below demonstrates the challenges impeding



access to markets in the assessed sub-districts during the last month:

COPING MECHANISM

The data highlights the profound impact of NFI shortages on HHs across sub-districts, with coping strategies ranging from common financial adjustments to extreme measures. The widespread reliance on strategies such as selling assets (e.g. house, lands, goods) where mentioned by KIs in all sub-districts in addition to sell the productive assets (e.g. livestock, vehicles) and child labor which mentioned in 77% of the sub-districts. Also, speeding of borrowing money, and reducing essential non-food expenses demonstrates the depth of financial distress in the majority of the assessed sub-districts. It is worth noting that begging was observed and mentioned in 44% of the sub-districts as a negative coping mechanism (Aleppo, Haritan, Hama and As-Salamiyeh).

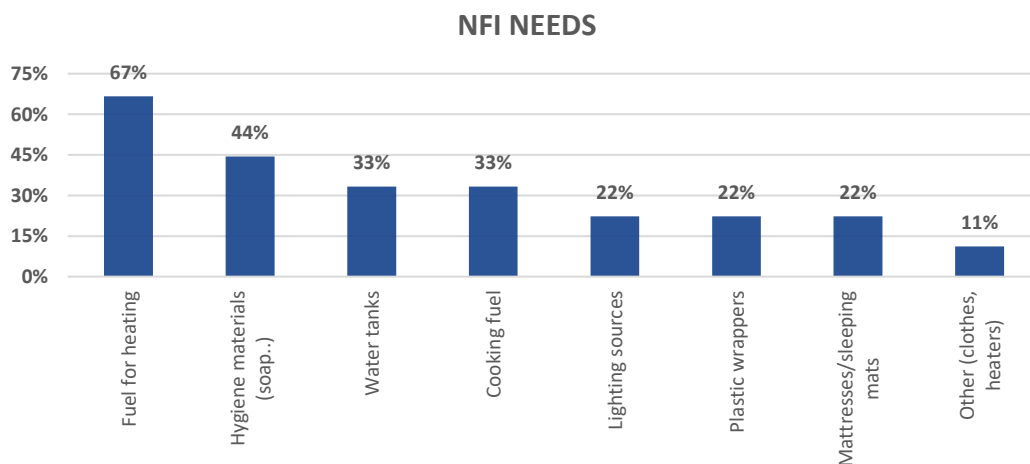
However, the adoption of extreme measures, such as child labor, early marriage, and begging, signals critical vulnerabilities, particularly for children and marginalized groups in the majority of the assessed sub-districts may have many negative effects on the community level.

NFI NEEDS

Based on the data the population in all the targeted sub-districts in the assessment prefer unconditional cash distribution as a non-food support method.

Different sub-districts prioritize varying needs, likely reflecting their unique geographic, economic conditions, climatic, and infrastructural challenges. The three most identified non-food needs across the sub-districts assessed are fuel for heating which is identified as a critical non-food need in 67% of the sub-districts (all assessed sub-districts except Haritan, Jebel Saman and Homs), emphasizing the importance of warmth and energy, especially during cold months. While the hygiene materials (soap, etc.) and fuel for cooking are the key requirements in three sub-districts. As well as the water tanks/lighting sources which are jointly needed in two sub-districts, reflecting issues with access to clean water storage and reliable lighting. Similarly, the plastic wrappers also, are needed in another two sub-districts reflecting issues with access to winter needs.

Noting that there are other needs that have been mentioned in some sub-districts within the most urgent non-food needs such as winter clothes, winter heaters, clothes, bedding supplies, batteries and sleeping mats.



FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE

FOOD RESOURCES AND INSECURITY

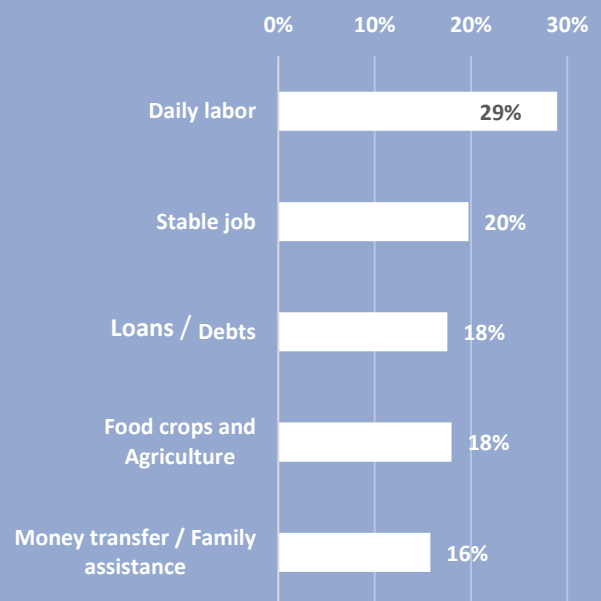
The needs assessment, based on KIs' responses, highlights varying food sources where 44% of the responses refer that population significantly relies on the debt/credit as a main food resource across all targeted sub-districts. This is followed with purchasing food through cash with 41% of the responses while the gifts (support from friends and relatives) and aid assistance comes in the end with a respective percentage 11% and 4%.

These findings reveal significant reliance on credit due to limited cash liquidity, with community support acting as a key safety net. Humanitarian aid was not a priority, reflecting either limited availability or irregular assistance in targeted areas, and minimal personal food production underscores the need for sustainable solutions. Bartering further reflects the economic challenges faced by households.

Also, half of the KIs estimate that 76% of HHs face daily food insecurity, with the other half reporting levels exceeding 51%-75%. These statistics underscore widespread food shortages and a pressing need for humanitarian intervention and sustainable livelihood support.

INCOME RESOURCES

The primary sources of income in the assessed areas reveal a diverse yet challenging economic landscape. Daily labor stands out as the most common source, accounting for 29% of HHs' income, reflecting the reliance on short-term, informal work opportunities. Stable jobs provide income for 20% of the population, offering a degree of security but representing a smaller portion of the overall economic activity. Agriculture, including food crop production, contributes to 18% of income, highlighting the significance of farming in the local economy. Similarly, debts (loans from relatives/friends) and money transfers, such as family assistance, each account for 18% and 16%, respectively, underscoring the dependence on external support and borrowing to meet basic needs. These findings highlight the precarious nature of livelihoods, with many households relying on unstable or supplementary income sources.



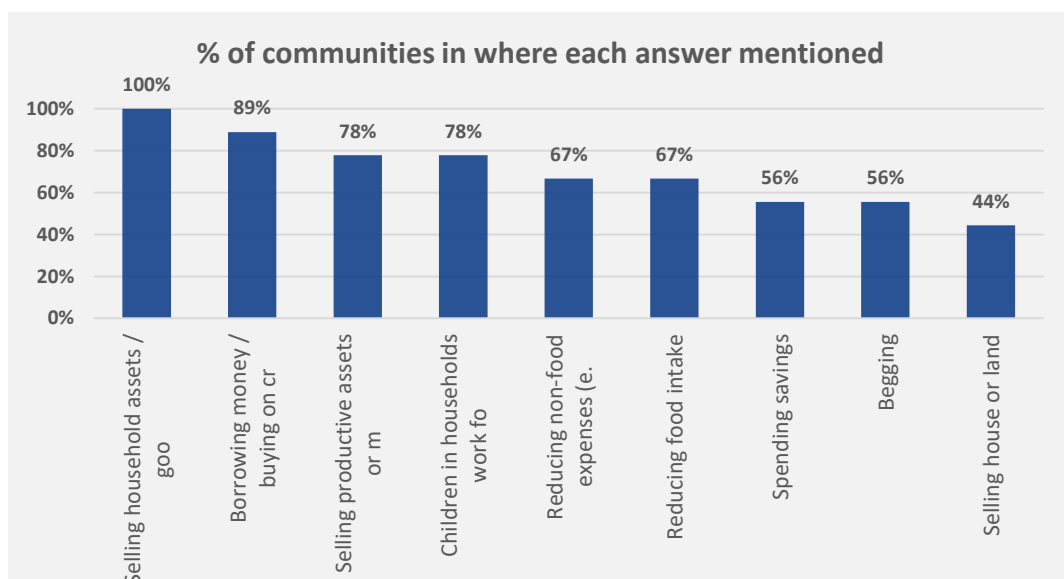
VULNERABILITY

The results of the assessment show that 67% of KIIs believe HHs allocate between 81% and 100% of their income to food, indicating significant financial strain. Meanwhile, 33% think HHs spend between 41%-60% of their income on food, suggesting some flexibility in their income allocation. These findings highlight high economic pressure, a strong prioritization of food, and variations in spending levels among HHs. This affects the vulnerable groups in Syria where KIIs identified the following vulnerable groups:

- HHs headed by elderly individuals or PWDs, highlighting significant challenges in meeting basic needs.
- HHs with elderly individuals, PWDs, or orphans, reflecting the impact of additional care needs.
- Displaced HHs or those in inadequate housing, indicating instability due to displacement and poor living conditions.
- Low-income HHs, emphasizing the difficulties caused by limited financial resources.
- HHs headed by women and returnee HHs, requiring specific intervention

Vulnerability makes high proportion of HHs to use negative coping strategies when they cannot afford food in all sub-districts, HHs primarily rely on selling assets or borrowing as short-term solutions to food insecurity. Reducing food consumption and sending children to work reflect significant economic pressures, while the limited use of selling property or begging indicates these are considered last-resort options, signaling extreme vulnerability. The following coping mechanism was respectively mentioned by the KIIs:

- Selling household items like jewelry, phones, or furniture.
- Selling productive assets or transportation, such as sewing machines or bicycles.
- Borrowing or buying on credit.
- Cutting non-food expenses, such as education or healthcare.
- Reducing food consumption in terms of quantity or quality.
- Sending children to work for extra income.
- Selling homes or land as a last resort.
- Using savings to cover food costs.
- Begging for food.



FOOD AVAILABILITY AND PRICES

Results show that 56% of KIIs reported an increase in food availability in markets within the last two weeks, indicating improvements in supply, while 33% noted no change, and 11% observed a decrease, highlighting challenges in some areas. These findings suggest regional variations in market conditions. It is recommended to monitor areas with food shortages, enhance humanitarian interventions, and collaborate with local traders to improve supply chains.

HHs primarily rely on selling assets or borrowing as short-term solutions to food insecurity. Reducing food consumption and sending children to work reflect significant economic pressures, while the limited use of selling property or begging indicates these are considered last-resort options, signaling extreme vulnerability.

The findings reveal that 56% of KIIs observed a decrease in food prices in the last two weeks, indicating improved supply or reduced demand, while 33% reported an increase, pointing to economic challenges, and 11% noted stable prices. It is recommended to monitor areas with rising prices, ensure aid reaches vulnerable HHs, and work on stabilizing markets by improving supply chains and monitoring operational costs.

BAKERIES

The data on subsidized and non-subsidized bakeries reveals both challenges and disparities in access across the surveyed sub-districts. In terms of subsidized bread, Homs stands out with the highest number of operational bakeries, ensuring broader availability in the region. However, areas like Haritan, Tall Ed-Daman, Zarbah, and Jebel Saman face a significant gap in subsidized bread access, as no operational subsidized bakeries are present. This gap emphasizes the need for urgent support to establish and maintain bakeries in these underserved regions.



Similarly, the non-subsidized bread sector demonstrates regional differences, with Jebel Saman having the most non-subsidized bakeries but also experiencing high closure rates. In contrast, regions such as Ar-Rastan have no operational non-subsidized bakeries at all, further exacerbating food access issues. The findings suggest that both subsidized and non-subsidized bakery operations require targeted interventions to ensure better service availability across all areas, with particular attention to reopening closed bakeries in regions facing significant closures. Ensuring equity in access to both subsidized and non-subsidized bread is crucial for meeting the needs of residents across these sub-districts. The following table shows the number of bakeries in all sub-districts except southern Idleb as it's completely destroyed and uninhabited and all bakeries observed that is extremely damaged:

Sub-district	Status of bakeries the provide subsidized bread		Bakeries the provide non-subsidized bread	
	Working bakeries	Non-working bakeries	Working bakeries	Non-working bakeries
Ar-Rastan	5	0	0	0
Talbiseh_	14	0	14	0
As-Salamiyeh	1	5	24	5
Hama	2	0	55	0
Haritan	0	0	10	10
Tall Ed-daman	0	0	1	2
Zarbah	0	0	1	0
Jebel Saman	0	0	144	50
Homs	25	5	12	0

The data indicate that the average price of 1 kg of subsidized bread across the targeted areas is approximately 3,126 SYP, compared to 5,524 SYP for non-subsidized bread. However, KIs reported that many HHs need 7,000 SYP (0.5 USD¹) per day for bread as they rely on bread due to the high price of food items. The cost of bread may sound cheap, but when it compares with the low income of the HHs, it is unaffordable for high proportion of the population.

This price difference highlights the importance of subsidy programs in reducing bread costs and easing the economic burden on HHs. Moreover, bread availability varies daily between rural and urban areas. While 78% of respondents reported daily availability in all locations, 11% indicated availability in most areas, and another 11% noted no daily availability. These results underscore disparities in access to this essential commodity across regions.

¹ Exchange rate on 17th of Dec. 1 USD equals 14000 SYP.

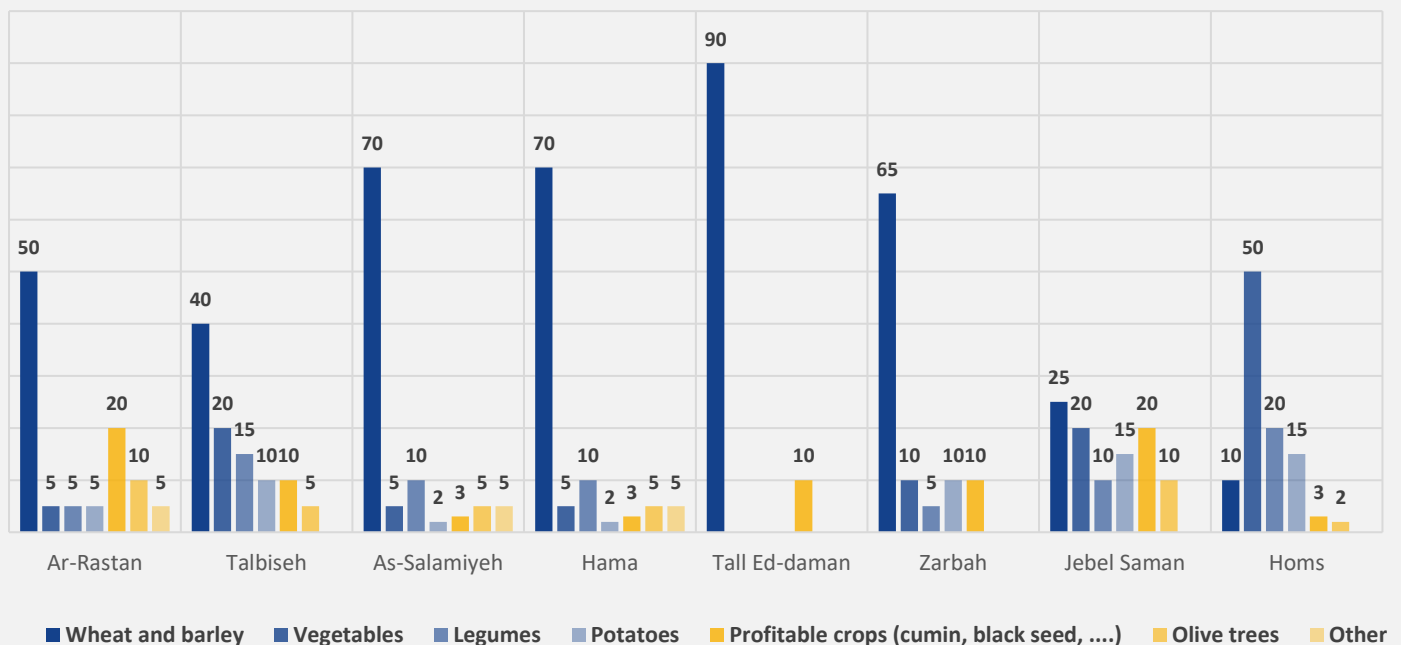
LANDS PER CROP

Based on Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) 2024, providing emergency agricultural assistance to a significant number of vulnerable farmers who have been affected by the decline in agricultural production is crucial in addressing food insecurity in Syria. Early recovery interventions are also necessary. Despite all the difficulties and challenges, the agricultural sector remains the primary lever for the Syrian economy’s recovery as Syria is a first-class agricultural country. Almost 45% of the population depends on agriculture as their primary source of income, and before the crisis, Syria was self-sufficient in food and was even a source of food before the crisis. (2. HNO by OCHA, 2024)

Regarding the crops grown in the targeted sites, the findings are as follows:

- Wheat and barley are the most widely cultivated crops, with particularly high cultivation rates in Tall Ed-Daman (90%) and As-Salamiyeh (70%), reflecting their importance as staple crops.
- Vegetables are grown in notable quantities in Homs (50%) and Aleppo (25%), while smaller areas are dedicated to vegetables in other regions.
- Legumes are moderately cultivated, with Homs (20%) and Aleppo (10%) showing relatively higher rates.
- Potatoes are grown in moderate amounts, particularly in Homs (15%) and Aleppo (15%).
- Profitable crops, such as cumin and black seeds, are cultivated in Ar-Rastan (20%) and Aleppo (20%), indicating a focus on high-return agricultural activities.
- Olive trees are significant in Ar-Rastan (10%) and Aleppo (10%).
- Other crops are grown in smaller percentages, typically in regions like Ar-Rastan (5%) and As-Salamiyeh (5%).

SHARE OF PLANTED CROPS IN EACH SUB-DISTRICT

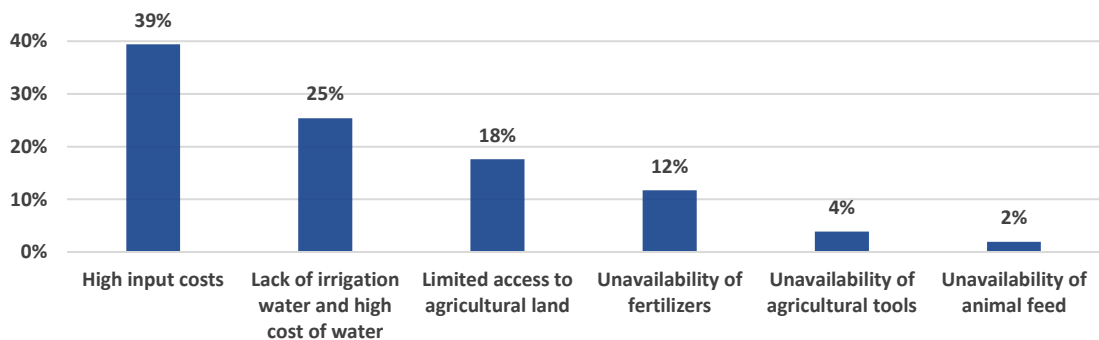




Overall, wheat and barley dominate crop production across the targeted sites, while vegetables, legumes, and potatoes are cultivated in smaller proportions. The presence of profitable crops, such as cumin and black seed, highlights efforts toward economic diversification. The detailed distribution is presented in the figure below.

AGRICULTURAL BARRIERS

This MSNA identifies the constraints that affected local food production during the previous agricultural season. These constraints include economic, environmental, and security challenges that may have hindered farmers' access to agricultural inputs or their land. Below are the main challenges and obstacles:

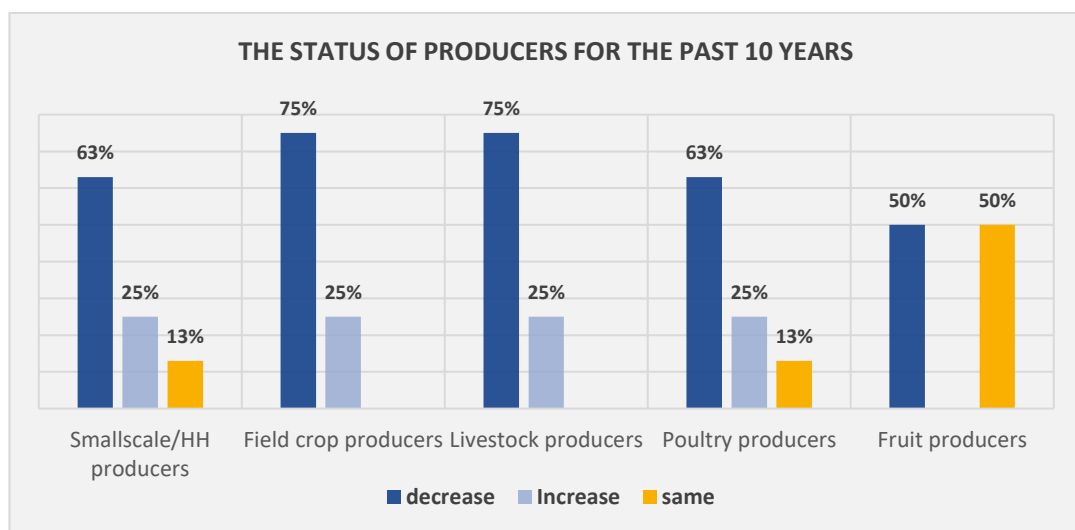


The assessment reveals a range of critical challenges impacting agricultural production in the assessed areas. Among the most pressing constraints, the high costs of inputs emerged and limited access to their lands due to the insecurity especially within the previous situation before 8th of December 2024 where many people could not access their lands before which located under previous government area. These were closely followed by the unavailability of fertilizers and insufficient irrigation water, which further hindered productivity. Secondary constraints include the high cost of irrigation and issues related to the availability or functionality of agricultural tools and equipment, which were reported to have a noticeable effect on production. Additionally, challenges such as the high cost of irrigation, the unavailability of animal feed, and the rising prices of agricultural tools added further strain on farmers, underscoring the multifaceted nature of the obstacles faced by the agricultural sector.

Moreover, 37% of participants confirmed the implementation of tests to assess groundwater quality or discharge capacity, while 63% indicated the absence of such efforts. This highlights the limited monitoring of groundwater in many areas and underscores the urgent need to enhance ongoing evaluation of water quality and discharge capacity, especially given the increasing pressures on water resources.

PRODUCTION

Related to a number of producers the results indicate a significant decline in production across most producer categories. To address these challenges, it is recommended to provide technical and financial support to enhance productivity, conduct studies to address the causes of the decline, strengthen government and private support to ensure the availability of agricultural inputs and improve irrigation systems, launch training programs for producers, and enhance infrastructure to stabilize production and improve market access, figure below present more details.



All participants reported expecting an increase in the number of small producers, home-based producers, crop producers, and livestock producers. Regarding poultry producers, 88% of participants expect an increase in numbers, while 13% believe the situation will remain the same. As for fruit producers, 38% expect an increase in numbers, while 63% think the situation will remain unchanged.

The results indicate optimism about increased production in agricultural and livestock sectors, particularly among small producers, crop producers, poultry and livestock producers. However, there is some stability in the fruit sector where 56% of the KIs referred that fruit sector will stay same and production is not expected to change in the future. Recommendations include providing necessary resources to support growth, enhancing agricultural training and extension services, ensuring market stability, planning for future demand, and monitoring climate changes to address potential challenges.

IRRIGATION AND WATER

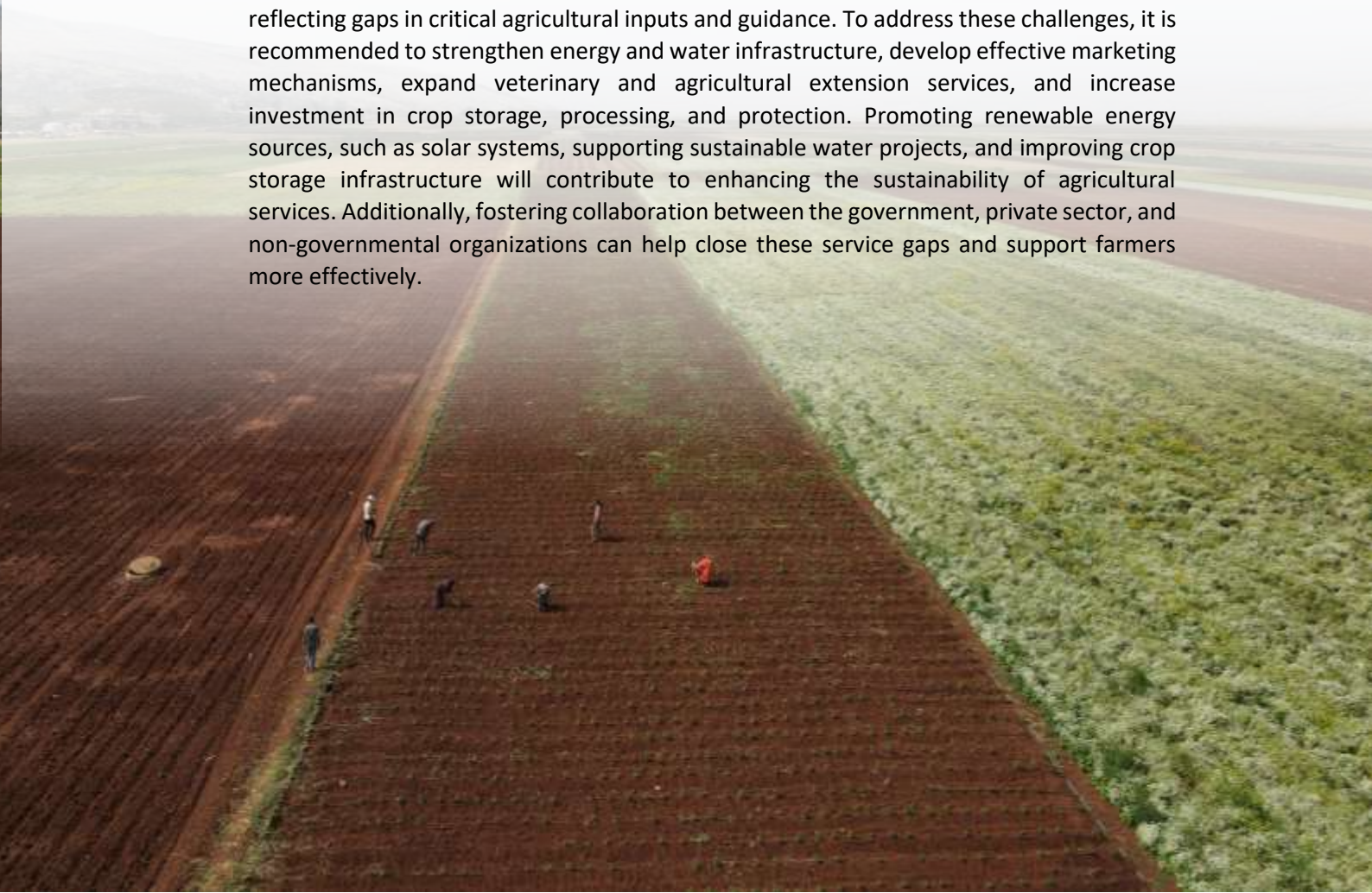
Regarding the irrigation methods used, 56% of KIIs reported relying on artesian wells as the primary source, emphasizing the importance of ensuring the sustainability of groundwater resources. Additionally, 33% depend on rain-fed irrigation, reflecting the challenges posed by climate change on agricultural production. Meanwhile, 11% rely on irrigation canals, highlighting potential infrastructure-related issues and their limited availability in some

areas. Moreover, 89% of participants reported a decline in the availability of water compared to five years ago, while only 11% noted stable levels. This significant decrease suggests potential issues related to water stress or groundwater depletion over the years, likely driven by climate change, over-extraction, or ineffective resource management. Addressing this requires in-depth studies to identify causes, sustainable water management plans, community awareness campaigns on water conservation, initiatives for groundwater recharge (e.g. rainwater harvesting), and collaboration with authorities to improve water infrastructure and ensure long-term availability.

22% of KIIs reported contamination in groundwater wells, including salinization and other pollutants, while 78% observed no issues. This highlights localized water quality concerns potentially linked to factors such as naturally high salinity, chemical runoff from human activities, and environmental changes like declining water levels. Addressing these issues requires comprehensive assessments to ensure water safety for drinking and agriculture.

The data indicates that 67% of participants reported the presence of a regulatory entity overseeing irrigation systems, while 33% noted the absence of such supervision. Areas lacking regulation risk inefficient water resource management. Strengthening oversight in these regions, supporting existing regulatory bodies with adequate resources.

According to the KIIs, farmers face significant challenges in accessing essential services, particularly energy and water. All of the respondents reported a lack of necessary energy sources, and 67% indicated insufficient water provision. While services such as agricultural guidance, veterinary support, crop processing, storage, crop protection, and machinery rentals are available to varying degrees, gaps remain. Further, 56% of respondents reported access to agricultural guidance, 67% to veterinary services, 67% to crop processing, 67% to storage, and 78% to machinery rentals, highlighting areas of partial availability. Marketing and sales support remain a critical challenge, with 56% indicating a lack of adequate services. Similarly, 44% noted insufficient crop protection services, reflecting gaps in critical agricultural inputs and guidance. To address these challenges, it is recommended to strengthen energy and water infrastructure, develop effective marketing mechanisms, expand veterinary and agricultural extension services, and increase investment in crop storage, processing, and protection. Promoting renewable energy sources, such as solar systems, supporting sustainable water projects, and improving crop storage infrastructure will contribute to enhancing the sustainability of agricultural services. Additionally, fostering collaboration between the government, private sector, and non-governmental organizations can help close these service gaps and support farmers more effectively.

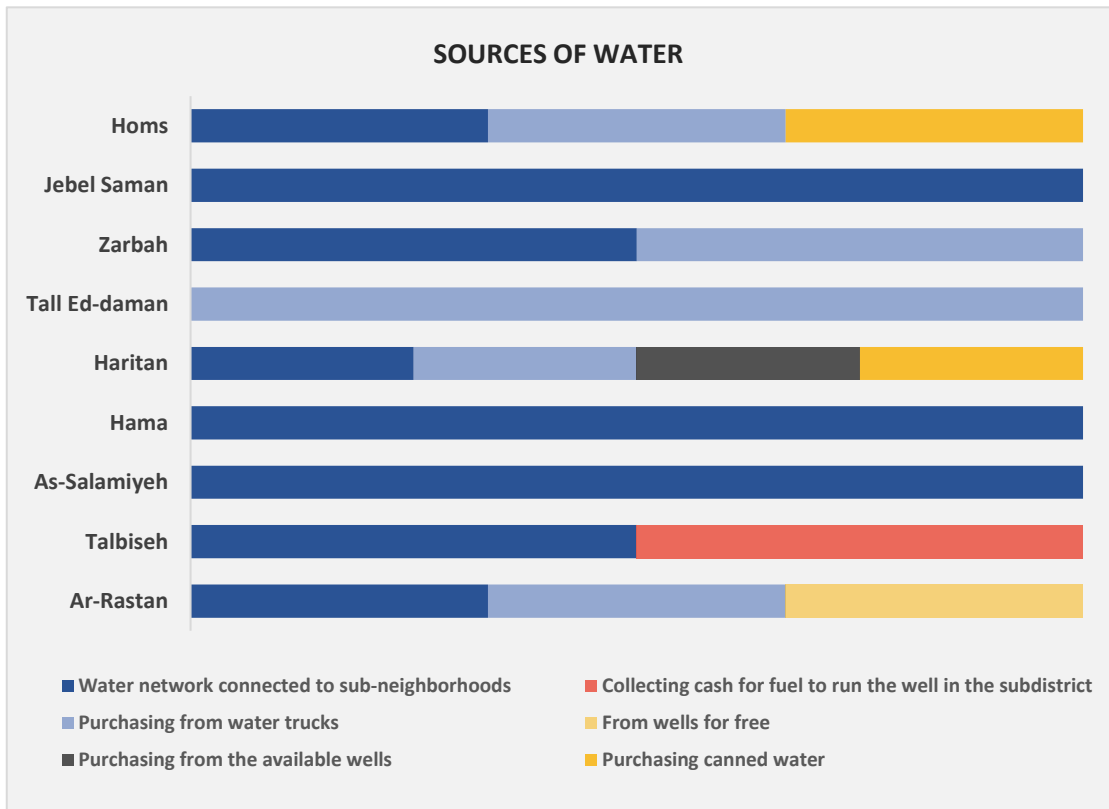


WASH

WATER SECURING

Regarding the presence of water networks within the sites targeted in the assessment, there are water networks connected to homes (fully or partially) in five of the sites in Zarbah, Jebel Saman, Homs, Talbiseh and Haritan. However, network connected to sub-district in majority of sub-districts as shown in the chart below. But population in those sub-districts rely on the water trucking as well which means the network is not sufficient for the whole community’s needs.

The common water provision mechanism in the nine sites, as shown in the diagram below, is the purchase of water through water trucking, which increases the financial burden on individuals in light of the difficult economic conditions in the sites targeted in the assessment. There are other water provision mechanisms in some sites, such as transporting water supported by relief organizations or a water network connected to homes, but they are insufficient, forcing individuals to secure their water needs by purchasing water.



The following table shows the number of operating pumping stations and the number of non-operating pumping stations within each sub-district. It also indicates the presence of ground and elevated water tanks and shows the status of the existing water tanks, whether they are effective or not. It is worth noting that the number of operating wells in Jebel Saman sub-district (184 wells), included the operating wells located in churches and mosques in addition to the wells of the main operating station supplying the sub-district:

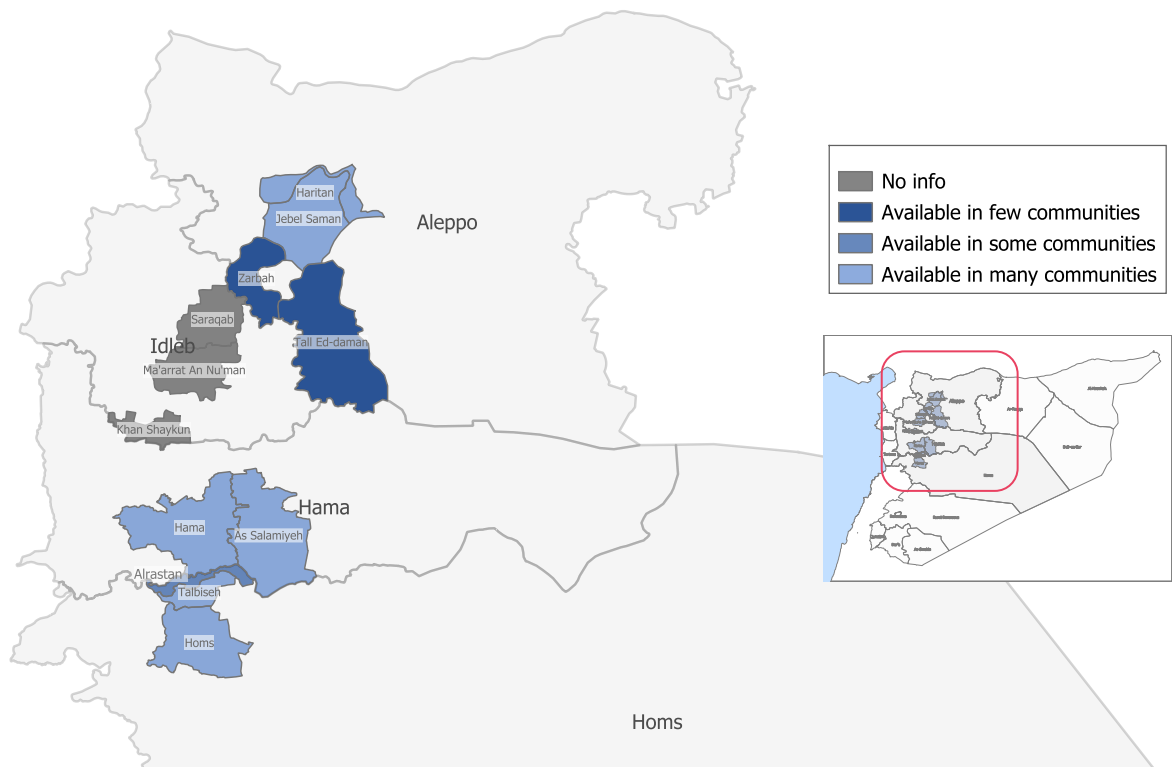
Sub-district	# of working pumping station	# of service pumping station	# of working wells	# of out of service wells	% of high-water tanks in communities	% of ground water tanks in communities	% of them are affective in communities
Ar-Rastan	1	0	3	0	Some of communities	None	Some of communities
Talbiseh	7	0	6	0	Completely yes	None	none
As-Salamiyeh	1	0	3	2	None (no need)	Completely yes	Completely yes
Hama	5	0	45	15	Completely yes	Completely yes	Completely yes
Haritan	1	4	16	13	Completely yes	Few of communities	Few of communities
Tall Ed-daman	0	0	2	0	Some of communities	None	None
Zarbah	2	3	2	3	majority of communities	None	None
Jebel Saman	1	NA	184	NA	majority of communities	majority of communities	Completely yes
Homs	40	0	40	0	Completely yes	Few of communities	Completely yes

SANITATION

This assessment underscores the extent of access to main sewage networks across the sub-districts, categorizing the coverage as being present in a few communities, some communities, or the majority of communities. Below is a narrative description of the findings:

- Majority coverage: the sub-districts Talbiseh, As-Salamiyeh, Hama, Haritan, Homs, and Jebel Saman have main sewage networks in the majority of their communities, indicating well-established infrastructure in these areas. However, it still indicates that there are a few communities that have no access to sewage networks which may lead to environmental issues.
- Partial coverage: sub-district Ar-Rastan has access to the network in some communities, highlighting a mix of coverage levels.
- Limited coverage: sub-districts Tall Ed-daman and Zarbah have access in only a few communities, suggesting significant gaps in sewage infrastructure.

The following map shows the sewage networks availability in each sub-districts:



The KIs interviewed highlighted the variety and scope of water and sanitation services provided across different sub-districts, revealing disparities in infrastructure and service provision. Below is an overall summary:

- **Comprehensive services:** As-Salamiyeh and Hama stand out for their extensive water and sanitation services, including network maintenance, development, waste management, and water safety efforts.
- **Moderate services:** Talbiseh, Jebel Saman, and Homs receive a limited but meaningful range of services, focusing on maintenance and public cleaning.
- **Minimal services:** Ar-Rastan receives only water sterilization services, indicating minimal intervention.
- **No services:** Haritan, Tall Ed-daman, and Zarbah report gaps in water, sanitation, and SWM services, reflecting severe infrastructure challenges for residents.

WASH NEEDS

Key figures interviewed highlighted the critical needs in water supply, sanitation, and SWM across multiple sub-districts. Addressing these gaps is essential to improving public health, environmental sustainability, and the overall quality of life in these sub-districts. The breakdown of water, sanitation and SWM needs in the targeted sub-districts in the assessment as following:

WATER SERVICES

Maintenance and expansion: most sub-districts require maintenance of existing water networks and expansion to reach underserved areas. Also, new water sources where drilling and equipping wells are crucial for areas like Ar-Rastan, As-Salamiyeh, Hama, and Tall Ed-daman. Further, storage infrastructure where high and ground tanks are needed to stabilize

water supply in Ar-Rastan, Haritan, Homs, and Zarbah sub-districts. In addition to the operational support, equipment such as generators, water pumps, and electrical panels is required for efficient well operation and water sterilization for ensuring safe drinking water which is a priority in Talbiseh, Zarbah, Tall Ed-daman and Haritan while sustainable energy like solar panels are needed in many sub-districts to power water infrastructure and reduce reliance on conventional electricity.

SANITATION SERVICES

Sewage system maintenance in all sub-districts require regular maintenance of existing sewage networks to prevent issues like blockages and contamination. Also, require a new sewage network, network expansion and creation in some sub-districts like Ar-Rastan and Homs, while all the sub-districts assessed need expansion to serve the growing population or to serve areas where sewage services are not available.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Collection infrastructure is needed in most sub-districts, trash containers and garbage collection vehicles/tractors are needed to improve waste collection. Also, proper landfill sites are critical for waste disposal in Ar-Rastan, Talbiseh, Tall Ed-daman and Zarbah as it was obviously observed the pests in Tall Ed-daman and Zarbah. Additionally, workforce support such as provision of salaries for SWM workers are essential to ensure consistent cleaning services in the majority of the sub-districts assessed.

There are other needs mentioned within Tall Ed-Daman, Hama, and Jebel Saman sub-districts in the field of water, sanitation and solid waste management, as follows: within Tall Ed-daman, there are no sustainable water systems, and therefore there is a great need to establish a water system with all its components, from a water station, equipping a well and establishing a water network to reduce people's suffering in obtaining water in a safe and sustainable manner. While within Jebel Saman, there is a need to secure the costs of transporting waste to the main landfill. Whilst another need in Hama is to secure equipment and supplies for water station maintenance to repair faults in stations with better efficiency and speed. It worth noting that there is a landfill in a populated area in Ar-rastan sub-district and needs to be removed.

HYGIENE

The assessment revealed a lack of personal hygiene material distribution to IDPs and returnees in all assessed sub-districts over the past three months, except for Jebel Saman, where distributions were infrequent and not periodic. The findings further highlight significant disparities in public health and environmental challenges across the sub-districts. Severe issues were reported in Zarbah, Tall Ed-Daman, and Ar-Rastan, where communities faced problems such as waste accumulation, pest infestations, sewage management failures, water contamination, and disease outbreaks. Moderate challenges were observed in Talbiseh, Hama, Homs, and Haritan, with concerns spanning waste management, sewage issues, water quality, and disease risks. While As-Salamiyeh experienced fewer problems, certain challenges, including street flooding and disease outbreaks, remain substantial. Jebel Saman, by contrast, stood out as the only sub-district with no reported concerns, reflecting effective management and superior infrastructure.

EDUCATION

Following over a decade of conflict, Syria's education system has faced profound challenges, leaving a generation of children and youth struggling to access quality learning opportunities. The prolonged war has resulted in widespread destruction of schools, displacement of millions, and a severe shortage of qualified teachers and educational resources. Many children have missed years of schooling, with some never having the chance to attend at all, creating a significant gap in literacy and essential skills. In the areas where KIs reported security and safety matters, access to education remains limited, while in relatively stable regions, overcrowded classrooms and insufficient infrastructure hinder effective learning. The pursuit of education in Syria remains both a critical need and a symbol of hope for the country's future.

In order to understand the current state of education in the assessed sub-districts, this needs assessment examines key factors such as the number of students enrolled during the current academic year, the condition of schools (functioning and non-functioning), the reasons why schools are not functioning not functioning, and the urgent needs required to address these challenges and support access to education.

The total number of students enrolled across all assessed sub-districts except southern Idlib (as no education yet in those destroyed areas) is estimated to be 640,000 students, with 550,000 students in primary education (56% girls, 44% boys) and 90,000 in secondary education (54% girls, 46% boys). This shows the high rate of dropping out generally and higher in secondary school.

It's worth noting that the girls rate enrolled in school is higher remarkably in Hama, As-Salamiyeh, Zarbah, Ar-rastan and Haritan while it is much lower in Tall Ed-daman sub-district.



PRIMARY EDUCATION



SECONDARY EDUCATION

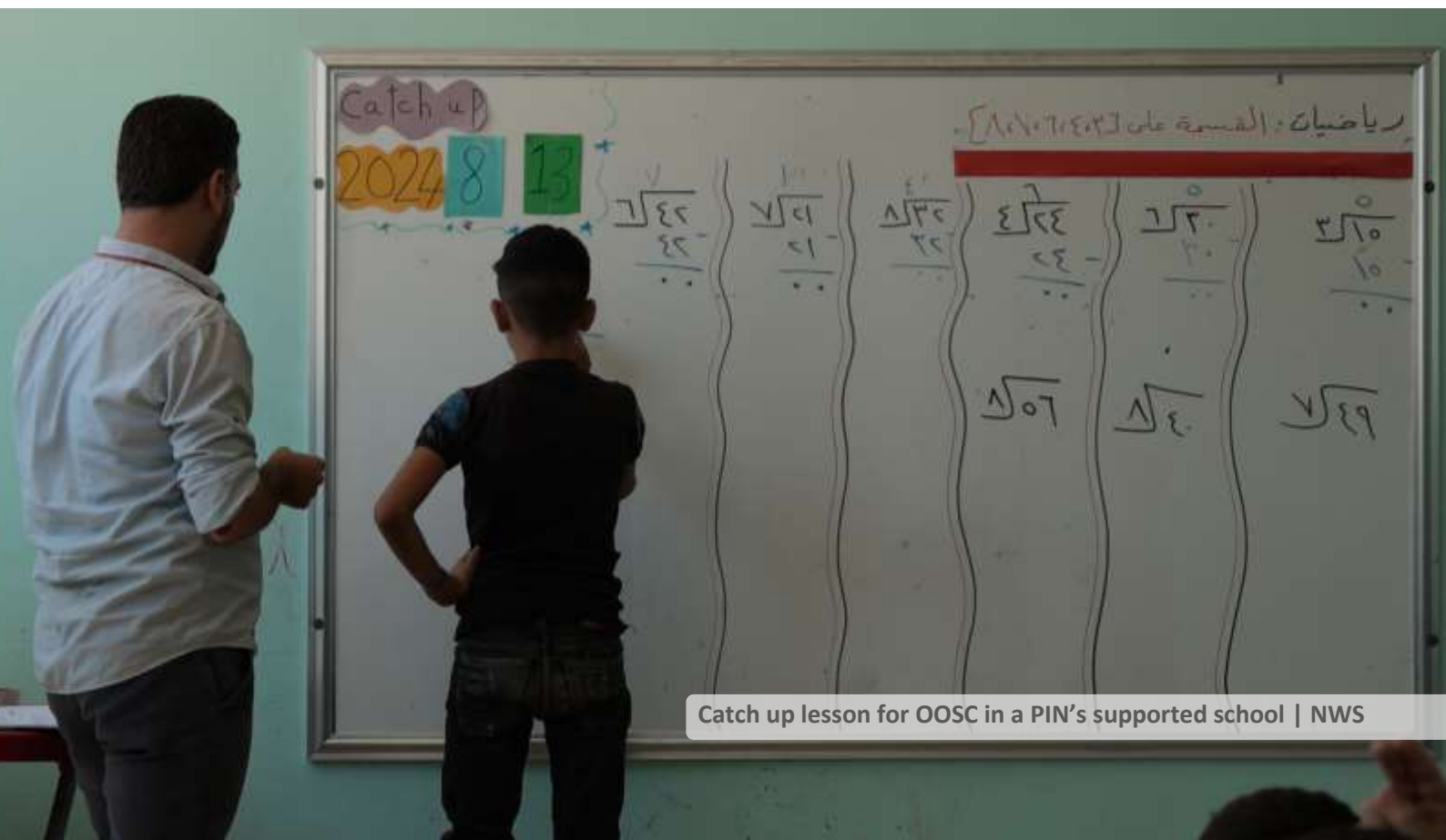
DROP-OUT STUDENTS

Estimation number of dropping out children reached to 70 K in the targeted sub-district, however this does not include southern sub-districts of Idlib. The assessment seeks to understand the reasons behind student dropouts and the primary barriers preventing boys and girls from attending school and continuing their education. KIIs identified the main barriers as follows:

- **Poverty and the need for work:** Poverty is a main factor, forcing children to work to support their families. Nine KIIs across nine sub-districts mentioned child labor as a major barrier for boys, while five out of these nine KIIs also highlighted that girls contribute to family income. Additionally, the inability to afford education costs, including transportation, was identified as another obstacle.

- Damaged or destroyed schools: Many schools are either damaged or completely destroyed, making them inaccessible to students (Haritan, Tall Ed-daman, Zarbah, Jebel Saman and Homs)
- Lack of basic school facilities: Schools lack essential resources such as adequate teachers, textbooks, learning supplies, WASH facilities, and access to clean drinking water.
- Limited access for students with disabilities: Students with disabilities face challenges due to the absence of inclusive infrastructure and support.
- Lack of documentation: Missing documentation or previous educational records prevents children from enrolling in or continuing school.
- Safety concerns: Unsafe routes to school discourage attendance, as many parents and students fear for their safety (Zarbah, Jebel Saman).
- Schools used as shelters: Some schools are being used as shelters for internally displaced persons, disrupting education services. (Zarbah and Homs)
- Child marriage especially affecting girls, was highlighted as a barrier to education.
- Social issues, including family disintegration, were also mentioned as contributing factors preventing children from pursuing education.

Regarding the number of out of school children (OOSC), there are no accurate statistics available.



Catch up lesson for OOSC in a PIN's supported school | NWS

SCHOOLS

The total number of functioning schools (public and private) in the assessed sub-districts except Homs (as no formal number of schools were reported and the education directorate was not operating at the data collection date) is 1,352, while 20% out of all schools are non-functional on average, details below. KIIs highlighted several reasons why these schools are not functioning, making education inaccessible for many children:

- Partial damaged schools in Ar-Rastan, Haritan, Tall Ed-daman, Zarbah and Jebel Saman sub-district leaving buildings unsafe and unsuitable for use.
- Schools completely damaged in Ar-Rastan, Talbiseh, Haritan, Zarbah and Jebel Saman with high number of damaged schools.
- A lack of teachers in the sub-district in Haritan, Tall Ed-daman and Zarbah due to migration, displacement or other reasons.
- Insufficient financial resources and unpaid teacher salaries which was mentioned in Haritan, Tall Ed-daman and Zarbah.
- Schools being repurposed as shelters in Zarbah sub-district.

KIIs emphasized that the type of restoration required varies across damaged schools, depending on the extent of destruction. Generally, schools need significant repairs and replacements to restore functionality and safety. Commonly identified needs include repairing or replacing damaged doors and windows, installing or fixing water tanks and sewage systems, and restoring water wells. Sanitation facilities require rebuilding or repair, including latrines, sinks, mixers, ceramic tiles, and toilet seats. Electrical networks often need extensive repairs or the installation of new systems, while damaged walls and ceiling openings require rebuilding.

Maintenance of outdoor spaces, such as school yards, playgrounds, and fences, is also essential. Schools need new or repaired furniture, including desks, panels, and office cabinets. Debris removal and repainting both the interior and exterior of the buildings are also critical to creating a functional and welcoming learning environment.

EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

It is important to note that KIIs emphasized that even functioning schools require some level of rehabilitation.

Respondents highlighted several pressing educational needs in the sub-districts to ensure schools function effectively and provide improved learning conditions for the current academic year. A top priority is addressing teachers' salaries and incentives, which are critical for maintaining a motivated and skilled teaching workforce. Fuel for heating is urgently needed to create warm and safe learning environments during the colder months; however, no fuel is currently being supplied to schools in the assessed sub-districts, leaving students and teachers vulnerable to harsh winter conditions. Also, educational supplies, including essential kits for both students and teachers, are necessary to support effective teaching and learning. The shortage of qualified teachers remains a significant challenge, emphasizing the need for skilled educators to ensure high-quality education.

Schools also require additional equipment, such as desks and chairs, to accommodate the existing student population, as well as more classrooms, including temporary structures like tents, to alleviate overcrowding. Minor repairs, such as fixing broken windows and doors, are also essential to enhance the safety and functionality of school facilities.

Last but not least, it is worth mentioning that none of the assessed schools offer Psychosocial support or Social Emotional Learning sessions or activities. This highlights a gap and underscores the urgent need for these critical support services to promote the well-being of students.

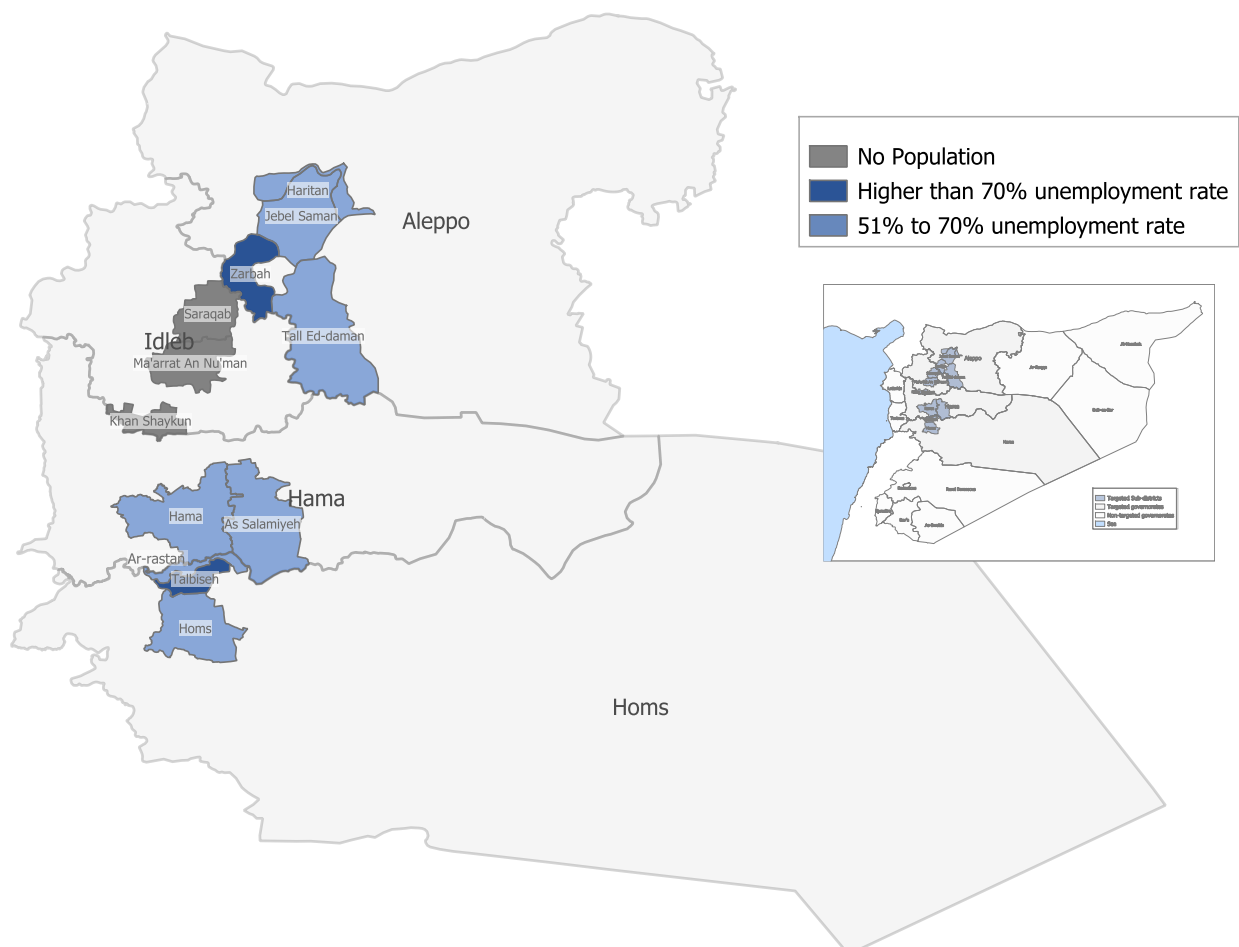


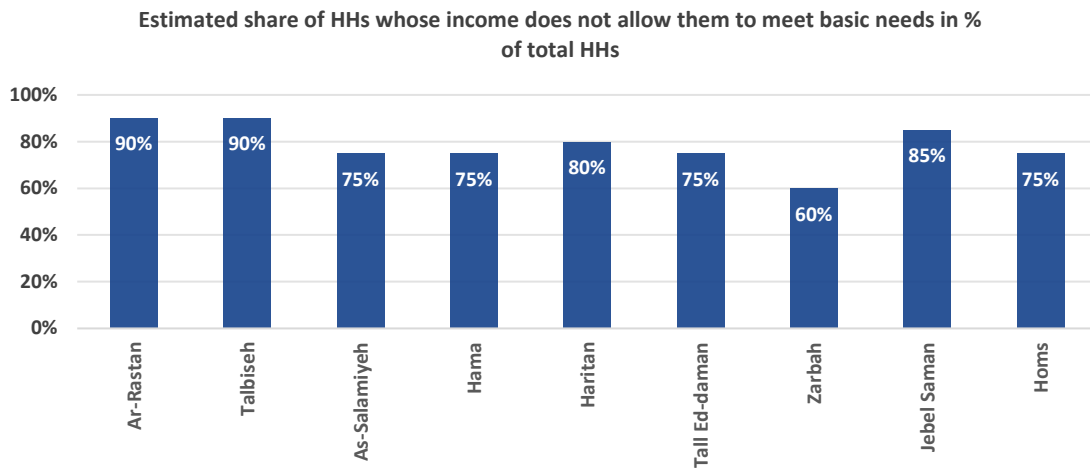
LIVELIHOOD

UNEMPLOYMENT AND WAGES

Over the past 12 years, the livelihood situation in Syria has been severely impacted by prolonged conflict, economic collapse, and natural disasters. The Syrian pound has drastically depreciated, leading to hyperinflation and skyrocketing commodity prices, leaving millions in poverty. This assessment captures the livelihood situation in the assessed location, focusing on the unemployment rate and the condition of basic infrastructure such as roads, electricity, and water. It also evaluates social infrastructure facilities like schools and healthcare centers, along with market functionality, to understand their role in supporting livelihoods and highlights sub-district needs.

The assessment revealed that the unemployment rate ranges between 51% and 70% in most of the assessed sub-districts. However, in Talbiseh and Zarbah, the unemployment rate is very high, reaching 71% to 90%, due to limited opportunities. The table below illustrates the unemployment rate for each sub-district. A lack of opportunities, high unemployment rates, and very low income have forced people to struggle to meet basic needs such as food, rent, healthcare, and education. On average, 78.3% of HHs their income that do not allow them to meet these basic needs, with this percentage rising to 90% in some sub-districts, such as Ar-Rastan and Talbiseh. The figure below provides a breakdown by sub-district. The map below shows the unemployment rate in each sub-districts.



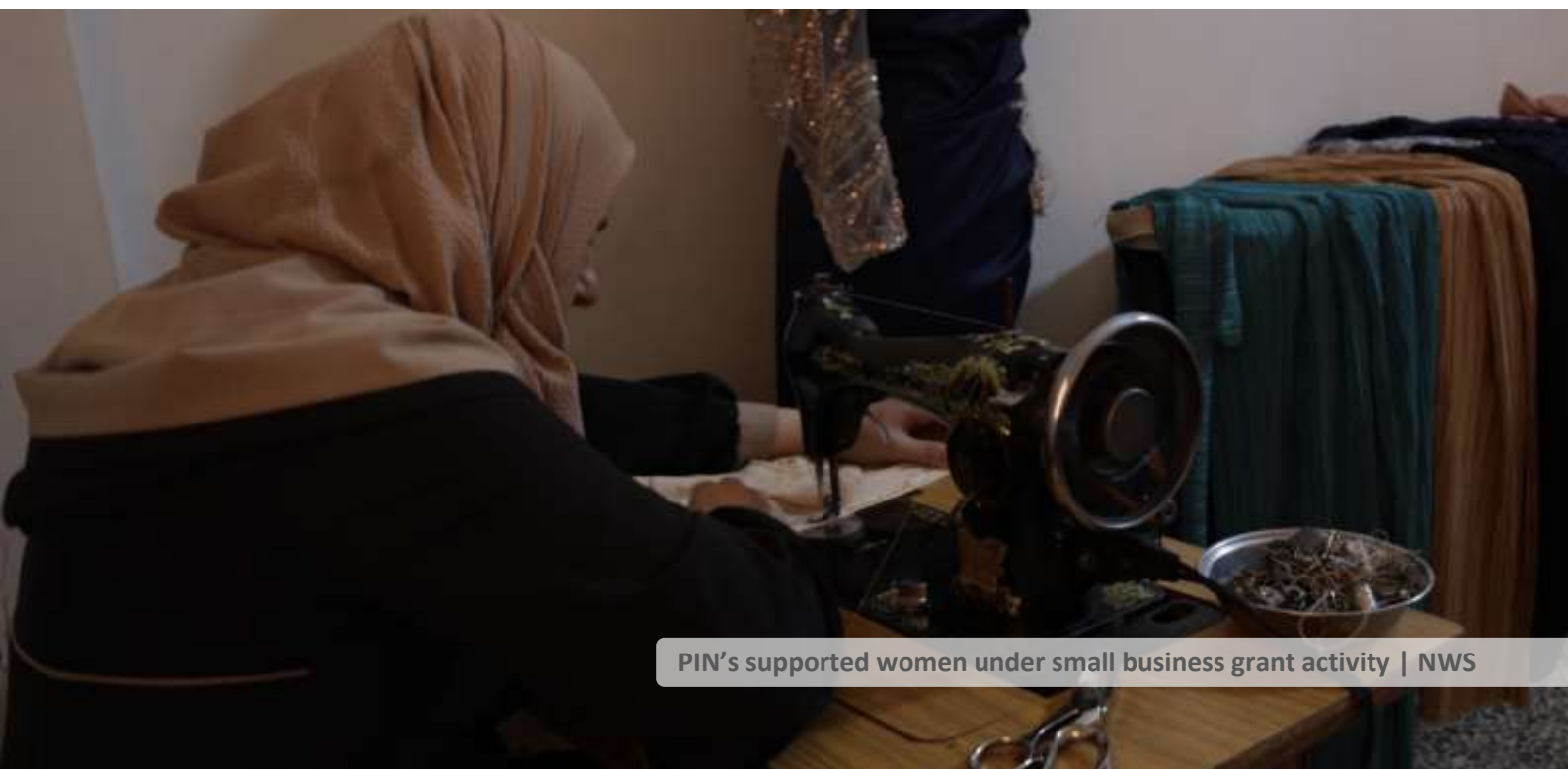


KIIs noted that working in trade provides the highest wages, followed by agriculture, while daily labor jobs (such as porters and daily services) offer the lowest wages in most assessed sub-districts. The average wage for general, unskilled manual daily labor is approximately 37,777 SYP (2.7 USD) varying between sub-districts. The lowest wage is in Ar-Rastan and Talbiseh with 10,000 SYP (less than 1 USD), while the highest is in Aleppo city reaching 75,000 SYP (5.4 USD). *Note: The exchange rate stands at 14,000 SYP per USD*

WOMEN AND IDPs

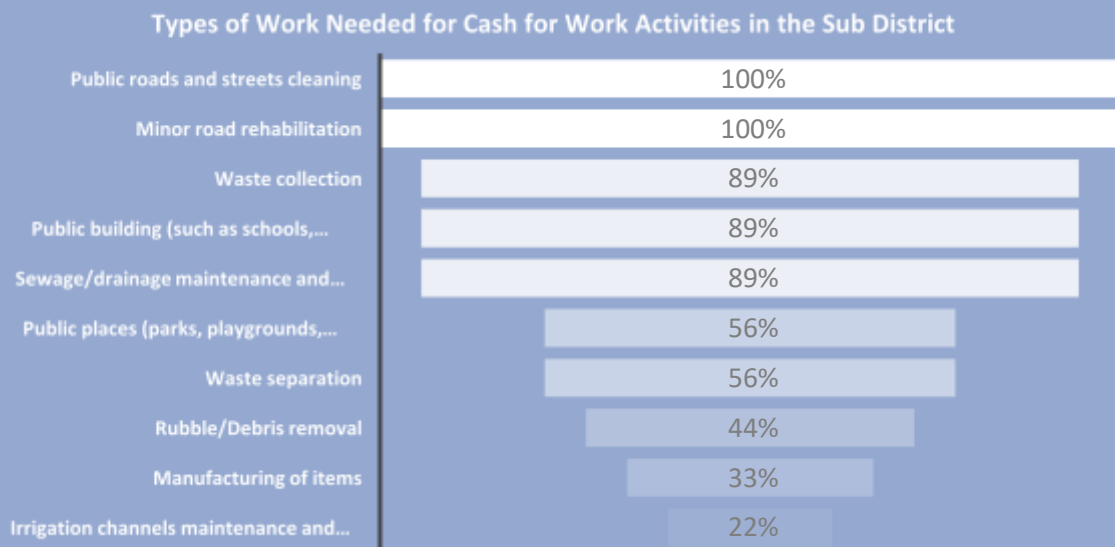
The average percentage of working women in the assessed sub-districts reached 41.6%, with variations ranging from 20% to 80%. Most women are engaged in agriculture or manual labor in nearly all assessed sub-districts, while others work in education, healthcare, and administrative roles. It is worth noting that there are active women's office and/or associations only in As-Salamiyeh, Hama, Jebel Saman (Aleppo city) and Homs city.

In the assessed sub-districts, average 34% of IDPs are working in agriculture with the highest levels reaching 35% in Homs. In other sub-districts, this percentage is lower where it decreases to 7% in Zarbah. In industry and laboratories, the average is 22%, with percentages ranging from 30% to 50% in Ar-Rastan, Hama, Jebel Saman and Homs. Similarly, 24% of the IDPs are working in the Markets and transportation sector with a high rate in Jebel Saman and Zarbah. The remaining 20% of IDPs are working in other domains.



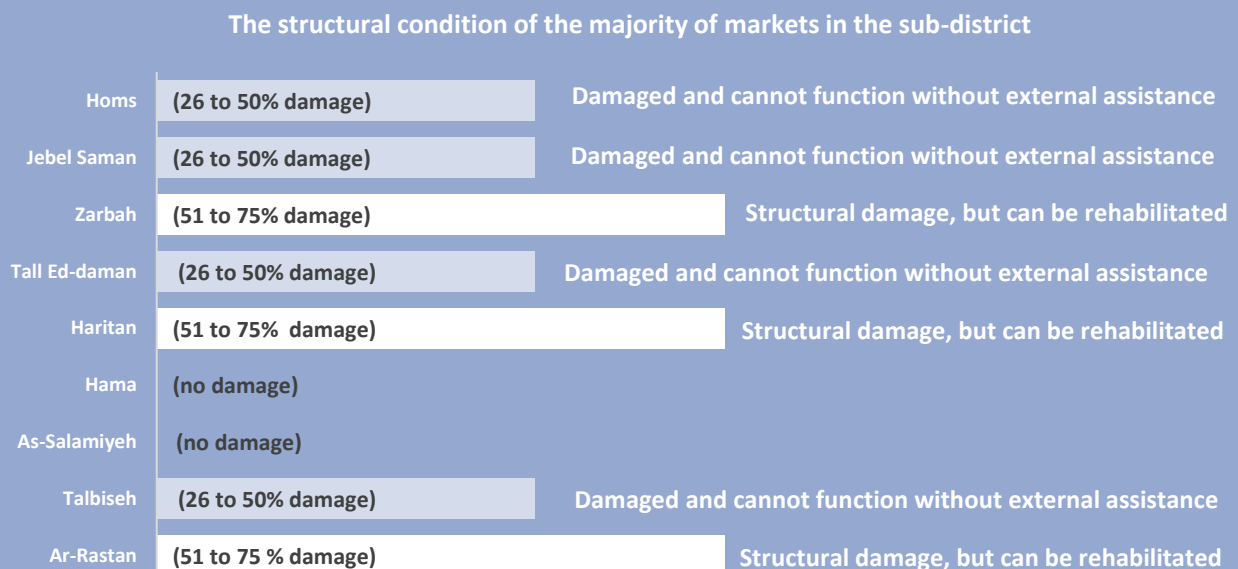
CASH FOR WORK

The assessment highlights a broad range of infrastructure and community service needs that could be addressed through CFW activities, if an organization was to implement such activities in the assessed areas. Cleaning public roads and streets, as well as minor road rehabilitation, were commonly mentioned. Waste collection and minor rehabilitation and maintenance of public buildings, such as schools, hospitals, water stations, and community centers, were also highlighted. Additionally, other activities included maintenance and minor rehabilitation of public spaces like parks, playgrounds, and markets, as well as waste separation and rubble/debris removal. These suggestions reflect the diverse needs of the communities to improve living conditions and infrastructure. The figure below provides more details.



MARKETS

Regarding the structural condition of the majority of markets in the sub-district, it varies between sub-districts. In some sub-districts, such as Hama and As-Salamiyeh, which were not exposed to military operations and conflicts, KIIs stated that markets were not affected by the conflict (no damage). Conversely, markets in Ar-Rastan, Haritan, and Zarbah experienced structural damage, with 51% to 75% of the markets being classified as having modifiable structural damage.



INFRASTRUCTURES

Basic infrastructure facilities, including SWM, water and electricity infrastructure, transportation facilities, civil utilities, roads, and bridges, as well as social infrastructure facilities like schools and health facilities have been affected in most sub-districts, with many being non-functional or heavily damaged. However, in Hama and As-Salamiyeh, no damage was reported. In some sub-districts, these facilities are barely functioning, while in others, they remain operational with varying levels of damage. In Haritan, both basic and social infrastructure facilities are massively damaged and non-functional. In Ar-Rastan, basic infrastructure is barely functioning and mostly damaged. Meanwhile, in Talbiseh and Tall Ed-daman, the facilities are still functioning but have sustained significant damage.

The damage of basic and social infrastructure severely impacts daily life, limiting access to essential services like water, electricity, healthcare, and education. It disrupts mobility, increases public health risks, and hampers economic activities by reducing job opportunities and raising costs.

Regarding homes and buildings, many have been significantly affected in some sub-districts due to the conflicts. The highest level of damage was reported in Haritan, where more than 75% of buildings have sustained major structural damage, requiring extensive rebuilding (75–99% damage). In Talbiseh and Zarbah, damage levels range between 51% and 75%. Conversely, no damage was reported in the sub-districts of Hama and As-Salamiyeh.

Estimated damage to homes, buildings in the sub-districts

Homs	(26 - 50% damage)	Damaged and cannot function without external assistance
Jebel Saman	(26 - 50% damage)	Damaged and cannot function without external assistance
Zarbah	(51 - 75% damage)	Structural damage can be retrofitted
Tall Ed-daman	(26 - 50% damage)	Damaged and cannot function without external assistance
Haritan	(75-99% damage)	Major structural damage, reconstruction required
Hama	(No damage)	
As-Salamiyeh	(No damage)	
Talbiseh	(51 - 75% damage)	Structural damage can be retrofitted
Ar-Rastan	(26 - 50% damage)	Damaged and cannot function without external assistance

The availability of piped water (water network) was reduced comparing to the situation in the pre-crisis period in the sub-districts (Ar-Rastan, Haritan, Zarbah and Jebel Saman), see table below:

Sub-district	Availability of piped water: Pre-Crisis vs. current
Ar-Rastan	Less than 30% reduction
Talbiseh	No piped water available
As-Salamiyeh	No change (0% reduction)
Hama	No change (0% reduction)
Haritan	Less than 60% reduction
Tall Ed-daman	No piped water available
Zarbah	Less than 70% reduction
Jebel Saman	Less than 30% reduction
Homs	Less than 70% reduction

LIVELIHOOD SERVICES

The assessment revealed a significant gap in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) services across the majority of the sub-districts surveyed. Most of these areas lack structured programs to equip individuals with the practical skills necessary to enhance their employability and support local economies. The absence of such services has left many residents, particularly youth and women, without opportunities to gain market-relevant skills, further exacerbating unemployment and economic stagnation. This gap in TVET provision not only limits individual potential but also undermines the broader community's ability to rebuild and recover in the face of ongoing challenges. Addressing this shortfall is critical to fostering economic resilience and enabling sustainable development in these underserved sub-districts.

The availability of income social support of individuals unable to earn a living such as child and spouse allowances, cash grants for people with special needs, maternity benefits, and disability or old-age pensions is limited in the most of assessed sub-districts. In most sub-districts, such schemes are not received at all, reflecting a critical gap in support for vulnerable populations. However, in (As-Salamiyeh, Hama, and Homs) sub-districts, this social support is received in various forms by 10% to 25% of individuals, indicating some level of access but only for a small portion of those in need. This underscores the inadequacy of income-social support in reaching a broader population, leaving many individuals without essential financial assistance to address their basic need.

In most communities in the assessed sub-districts, KIIs mentioned that people access loans mainly from friends or relatives, and also from private businesses (vendors or brokers), often for specific purchases or from particular shops. Access to bank loans is mainly in cities, not in the countryside. In these two sub-districts (Ar-Rastan and Haritan), there is no access to loans at all.

SECURITY: Regarding perceptions of safety and security in the areas assessed. KIIs mentioned that people generally feel safe and secure, with no concerns about moving freely or practicing their daily activities. However, in two sub-districts (Haritan and Jebel Saman), KIIs mentioned that people are aware of minor security or safety issues, and tend to exercise some caution during their normal activities.

NUTRITION

The long period of turmoil in Syria has had a devastating impact on the country's economy, leaving much of the population in poverty and struggling to meet basic needs. The destruction of infrastructure, loss of livelihoods, and collapse of markets have significantly reduced household income, making it increasingly difficult for families to access nutritious food. This economic hardship has particularly affected PLW and infants, whose nutritional needs are critical for healthy development. Many areas lack essential services, including food assistance, nutrition programs, and healthcare, exacerbating malnutrition and related health issues. Without adequate support, PLW and infants face heightened risks of stunted growth, weakened immunity, and long-term health complications, highlighting an urgent need for targeted interventions to address this crisis.

Two female and six male KIIs were interviewed in the assessed sub-districts, four of them are Health workers (doctors/nurse/public health workers) and four of them are community leader/tribal chief/mukhtar/local council member. KIIs from the assessed locations highlighted several nutritional challenges, especially among infants as below:

INFANTS (0–6 MONTHS)

- Lack of support for non-breastfed infants.
- Breastfeeding difficulties and inadequate milk provision.
- Poor maternal nutrition and harmful feeding practices drinks.
- Hygiene challenges when preparing food for non-breastfed infants, increasing infection risks.



INFANTS (7–23 MONTHS)

- Insufficient food quantity and poor-quality diets lacking essential nutrients.
- Limited dietary diversity and absence of age-appropriate food options.
- Cooking constraints due to lack of fuel, particularly noted in Zarbah and Homs.

Additionally, there is lack of nutritional awareness among mothers, especially those married at young age. This gap in knowledge further exacerbates poor feeding practices and nutritional outcomes.

Poverty and the inability to afford diverse, high-quality food further compound these issues. This not only affects children's growth and health but also impacts lactating women, reducing their ability to provide adequate nutrition. In addition to this, there is a lack of support, where all KIIs confirmed that there has been no distribution of milk products in the past three months, nor has any cash assistance been provided for PLW. However, KIIs in Jebel Saman (Aleppo city) reported that some charities provided cash assistance, but it was limited to a very few PLW.

Moreover, there are no services available for children under the age of five, as well as pregnant and lactating women in the sub-districts of Talbiseh, Haritan, Tall Ed-daman, and Zarbah. For more details on the available services for these groups in other sub-districts, refer to the table below:

Sub-district	Services
Ar-Rastan	Infant nutrition services
Talbiseh	None
As-Salamiyeh	Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) treatment stabilization center, Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM)
Hama	CMAM treatment stabilization center, SAM
Haritan	None
Tall Ed-daman	None
Zarbah	None
Jebel Saman	CMAM treatment stabilization center, SAM, infant nutrition services
Homs	CMAM treatment stabilization center, SAM
Khan Sheykhon	None
Saraqib	None
Marat Al Nouman	None

KIIs reported that community health awareness campaigns (such as reproductive health, communicable diseases, and infant feeding) are conducted regularly in the sub-districts of As-Salamiyeh, Hama, Jebel Saman, and Homs. In Ar-Rastan, these campaigns occur but not on a regular basis. No awareness campaigns are held in the sub-districts of Talbiseh, Haritan, Tall Ed-daman, and Zarbah.



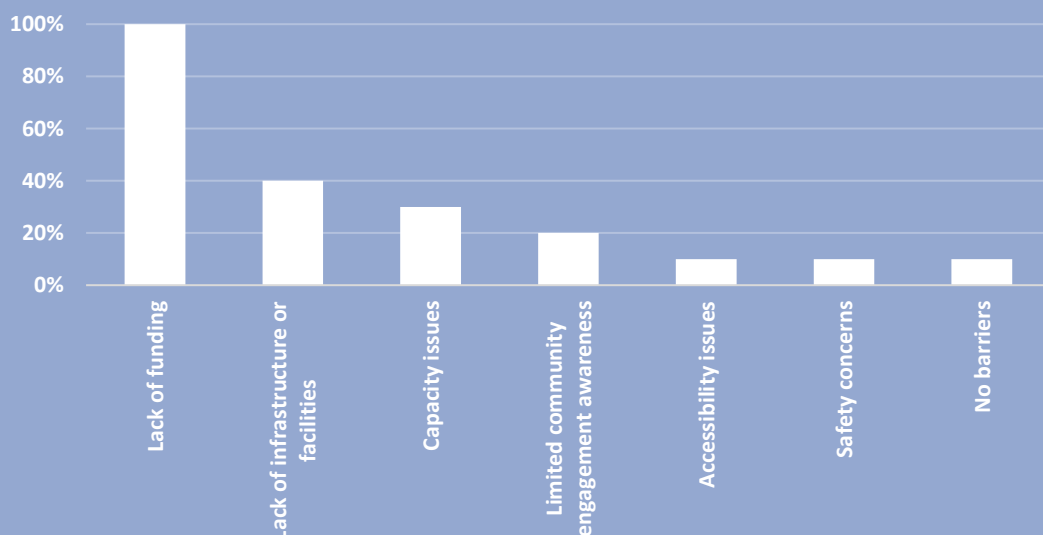
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The crisis in Syria has created significant gaps in community engagement, as the population's focus shifted toward meeting immediate survival needs amid conflict and displacement. With basic necessities like food, water, shelter, and safety taking precedence, opportunities for social cohesion and collective action have diminished. Communities that once thrived on collaboration and shared initiatives now struggle with fragmentation and limited resources. The lack of engagement has further deepened societal divides, weakening community structures and reducing the capacity to address local challenges collectively. This disengagement has compounded the overall situation, leaving communities less resilient and less equipped to rebuild and recover from the ongoing crisis.

The assessment shows that there is a gap in community engagement in some of the targeted locations, as no regular social events or activities are held in Ar-Rastan, Talbiseh, Haritan, Tall Ed-daman and Zarbah. Additionally, community members in these areas have not received training or support to enhance their skills for contributing to community projects. This lack of opportunities limits their ability to engage in meaningful initiatives that could foster social cohesion and development. However, KIIs reported that there are few efforts to hold regular social events and activities in the sub-districts of As-Salamiyeh, Hama, Jebel Saman which include Aleppo city, and Homs. In these areas, community members have received training or support to enhance their skills, enabling them to contribute to community projects. The primary participants in these activities are females, youth, and children.

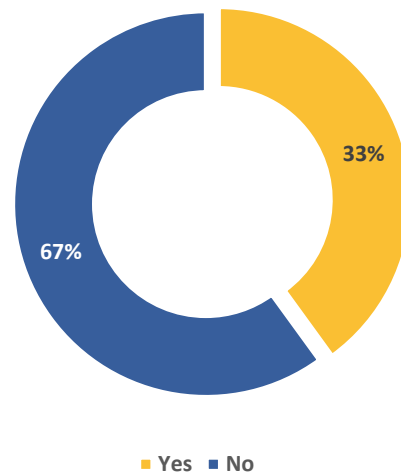
BARRIERS

KIIs identified several barriers to the absence of social activities. The most important is the lack of funding, highlighting the need for financial resources to initiate and sustain such events. They also pointed to the lack of infrastructure or facilities, which makes organizing community activities difficult. Additionally, capacity issues, such as the lack of skills among community members, further hinder engagement, emphasizing the need for training and support. Less commonly, safety concerns and limited awareness about the importance of community engagement were mentioned as barriers.



Despite numerous challenges, KIIs highlighted a strong interest among community members, particularly youth and women, in participating in social initiatives and activities. In cities like Aleppo and Homs, youth and women are already demonstrating their commitment through active involvement in initiatives such as directing traffic and other community-focused efforts where based on the KIIs, only Homs, Hama and As-Salamiyeh has community structure. This eagerness to engage reflects the potential for leveraging their participation to drive social cohesion and development. However, the absence of structured community bodies, such as committees, in most assessed locations poses a significant barrier to organized and meaningful engagement.

EXISTING COMMUNITY STRUCTURES, SUCH AS COMMITTEES



KIIs emphasized the critical need for increased outreach and awareness campaigns to encourage broader participation and establish formal community structures. Such measures would not only enhance community involvement, but also provide platforms for organizing effective social activities and fostering stronger social ties. By empowering youth and women as active contributors and establishing sustainable mechanisms for engagement, these efforts could play a transformative role in rebuilding community cohesion and resilience across affected areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **SHELTER AND NFIs**

To address the critical shelter needs in the targeted areas, it is essential to prioritize comprehensive rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts. This includes repairing and rebuilding damaged housing and infrastructure in highly affected regions such as the southern sub-districts of Idleb, Homs, Telbise, Haritan and Aleppo, where destruction has left many areas uninhabitable. Support should also extend to less severely affected areas, such as Hama, Tal-Ed-Daman, Zurbah, Ar-rastan and As-Salamiyeh, to address minor damages and enhance resilience. Immediate interventions should focus on providing temporary shelter solutions for those living in unsafe or partially damaged homes, as well as in informal settlements lacking basic services in Hama.

Moreover, shelter support should target who returned or want to return to their home from camps and different locations as high proportion of population live in camps and displaced for too many years through cash for rehabilitation or rental flats. Concurrently, long-term initiatives should include restoring essential infrastructure, such as electricity and water systems, to facilitate sustainable living conditions and encourage the return of displaced populations. Collaborating with local authorities, humanitarian organizations, and community representatives will be key to implementing effective and inclusive solutions that meet the diverse needs of affected communities.

The provision of NFIs, particularly winterization supplies and fuel for heating, is crucial in the majority of sub-districts. KIs have indicated that cash assistance is the preferred method for addressing these needs. Integrating the distribution of NFIs with other ongoing programs can offer a complementary approach, enhancing PIN's overall support to the community and ensuring more holistic assistance. This combined strategy would not only meet immediate material needs but also contribute to the broader recovery and resilience-building efforts in the affected areas.

- **FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE**

The food security and agriculture sector in the targeted areas requires immediate and sustained attention to alleviate food insecurity and enhance local agricultural productivity. Given that 63% of the population relies on debts as their main food resource, it is crucial to provide direct food assistance to the most vulnerable HHs. Additionally, income support programs targeting the most affected populations, including the elderly, PwDs, women, returnees, and displaced families, should be prioritized to prevent the use of harmful coping strategies such as selling assets and sending children to work. Although cash is a wide preferred method, support for these HHs in the form of cash transfers, food vouchers, or other forms of aid will help reduce their reliance on borrowing and help them regain financial stability considering the vulnerabilities (e.g. PWD, elderly, HH headed by woman, etc.) and returnees to encourage them return their home.

In the agricultural sector, addressing the limitations on land access, high input costs, and irrigation challenges must be a priority. This can be achieved through the provision of affordable inputs, including seeds, fertilizers, and equipment, which will help local farmers overcome the barriers to production. Furthermore, water resource management must be enhanced, particularly in the face of declining groundwater levels and contamination. This includes investing in sustainable irrigation practices, promoting rainwater harvesting, and

supporting community-based water management systems. Local authorities should be empowered to improve the monitoring of irrigation systems and groundwater quality, with particular attention to the establishment of regular quality testing for groundwater.

Finally, promoting crop diversification is essential to build resilience in the agricultural sector. Farmers should be encouraged to grow a broader range of crops, including legumes, vegetables, and drought-resistant varieties, which can contribute to food security and reduce the overreliance on staple crops like wheat and barley. Supporting farmers with knowledge, training, and access to diverse seeds will help foster agricultural sustainability. Through these combined efforts, the food security and agriculture sector can be strengthened, ensuring a more resilient and food-secure future for the targeted communities.

- **EARLY RECOVERY AND LIVELIHOOD**

In the light of the high unemployment rates, poverty, and infrastructure challenges in the targeted sub-districts, there is a need for urgent interventions that can both stabilize the immediate situation and lay the foundation for early recovery and livelihood restoration. Given the extreme high unemployment rate in many sub-districts, e.g. Talbiseh and Salamiye, there is an urgent need to provide immediate as well as long-term solution to sustainable and resilient livelihood and employment opportunities as well as livelihood that is relevant to urban context. CFW programs can be scaled up, focusing on community priorities such as road and street cleaning, waste collection, and rehabilitating public spaces like schools, hospitals, and water stations.

These activities can provide immediate income for vulnerable populations while contributing to the recovery of essential infrastructure. Additionally, rehabilitating markets, particularly those with modifiable structural damage, should be a priority, as functional markets can create further employment opportunities and stimulate local economic recovery. By supporting local businesses, particularly shop owners struggling with low sales and debt, targeted grants or subsidies can help sustain microenterprises and prevent further market collapse.

The focus should also be on supporting the local workforce, especially women who make up a significant proportion of the labor force, often in agriculture and manual labor. Tailored programs that provide skills training and create employment opportunities in agriculture, such as support for the cultivation of high-demand crops or livestock, could increase household income and boost food security. This could be coupled with initiatives that facilitate women's participation in emerging sectors like education, healthcare, and administration, where their skills may be leveraged more effectively. Also, when it comes to returnees and displaced people who constitute a significant portion of the workforce, livelihood opportunities can be supported by integrating them into agriculture, industry, and market sector e.g. retail stores. By providing access to capital, seeds, tools, or vocational training in sectors such as trade or light industry, displaced individuals can gain meaningful employment while contributing to community recovery efforts. A special focus should be placed on industries with higher participation rates in agriculture and market sectors, e.g. retail stores, where there is an opportunity to introduce micro-grants or small-scale support to enhance productivity, as well as generate additional employment opportunities, or on-the-job skills trainings/apprenticeships especially with the lack of existing TVET opportunities where it is also recommended to provide skills trainings, practical experience, skills relevant for emerging markets/current market demand.

Comprehensive and tailored livelihood support is essential to address the precarious economic situation and inability of large proportion of population to meet their basic needs. Detailed market mapping of each area can further inform the most impactful and sustainable approach, and opportunities for integrated response. Tailored support, including inputs provision (e.g. loans, materials, grants) and market-driven technical capacity building can revitalize enterprises and strengthen overall markets and economy.

Sustainable access to finance is essential, this can be achieved by supporting establishment of functional financial institutions, including those serving the small producers and businesses through accessible microfinance schemes. Community-based lending schemes (e.g. saving groups) can also offer a long-term solution for access to finance.

In addition, improving and repairing basic and social infrastructure, especially in areas with heavily damaged or non-functional infrastructure, will be vital for the long-term recovery of livelihoods. Investments in public infrastructure should be prioritized.

- **EDUCATION**

Given the critical needs identified in the education sector, it is recommended to prioritize the repair and rehabilitation of schools to ensure safe and conducive learning environments. Immediate attention should be given to restoring heating systems and providing essential supplies, particularly in winter, to guarantee that students can attend classes comfortably. Alongside this, the recruitment and training of qualified teachers should be a top priority to improve the quality of education and address the existing shortages of skilled educators. Additionally, creating extra learning spaces is essential to accommodate the growing number of students and alleviate overcrowding in existing classrooms and integrating PSS sessions. By addressing these core needs, we can enhance the overall educational experience, ensuring that students have access to a safe, supportive, and effective learning environment.

In addition to addressing the critical needs within formal education, it is also essential to prioritize the inclusion of OOSC and those at risk of dropping out, as the dropout rate is notably high. Efforts should focus on creating flexible and alternative learning opportunities that can cater to the needs of these children, including accelerated learning programs, remedial classes, and after-school activities. Community-based initiatives, such as outreach campaigns and awareness programs, should be implemented to encourage families to enroll and retain their children in school. Moreover, providing incentives like transportation support, school materials, or conditional cash transfers could reduce the barriers to education and improve retention rates for girls and boys. By focusing on both school repairs and support for OOSC, the education system can become more inclusive especially with making sure a high standards consideration for integrating children with disability, ensuring that all children have access to quality education and opportunities for continued learning.

- **WASH**

It is essential to prioritize the maintenance and expansion of existing water networks for the underserved and needed areas. This includes drilling and equipping new wells in locations like Ar-Rastan, As-Salamiyeh, Hama, and Tall Ed-daman, coupled with the establishment of high and ground water tanks to stabilize supply in sub-districts such as Ar-Rastan, Haritan, Homs, and Zariah. Operational support for well infrastructure, including

the provision of generators, water pumps, and electrical panels, should be combined with the introduction of sustainable energy solutions like solar panels to reduce reliance on traditional power sources.

Efforts to ensure safe drinking water must prioritize water sterilization systems in Talbiseh, Zarbah, Tall Ed-daman, and Haritan. Community-based water provision mechanisms such as subsidized water trucking and relief-supported systems should also be expanded to alleviate the economic burden on vulnerable populations while long-term solutions are implemented.

When it comes to the sewage system improvements are critical across all sub-districts, focusing on regular maintenance of existing networks to prevent blockages and contamination. In areas like Ar-Rastan, Homs and damaged sub-districts in Idleb, where gaps are significant, new sewage networks must be developed to meet the needs of growing populations. Expansion of sewage infrastructure is needed in all assessed sub-districts to address service gaps in underserved areas. Efforts should also include public awareness campaigns to educate communities on safe sanitation practices, reducing risks associated with unmanaged sewage and contamination.

Investment in SWM infrastructure is vital to improve environmental health in the targeted sub-districts. This includes providing trash containers, garbage collection vehicles, and proper landfill sites, particularly in areas such as Ar-Rastan, Talbiseh, Tall Ed-daman, and Zarbah. Addressing pest infestations observed in Tall Ed-Daman and Zarbah requires immediate attention through targeted pest control measures and improved waste disposal practices. Moreover, workforce support is equally critical; ensuring regular salaries for SWM workers will promote consistent cleaning services. Additionally, sub-districts like Jebel Saman require financial support to transport waste to central landfills, while Ar-Rastan needs to relocate its landfill to minimize the impact on populated areas.

Community outreach and education programs on proper hygiene practices are needed to mitigate public health risks, including waterborne diseases and pest-related illnesses. Integration with water and sanitation efforts will create a holistic approach to addressing hygiene disparities.

- **NUTRITION**

Introduce targeted support for infants aged 0–6 months and focus on breastfeeding promotion, lactation support, and distribution of safe breast milk substitutes for non-breastfed infants. Also, implement training programs for caregivers on proper food preparation and hygiene practices to reduce infection risks.

Further, it is recommended to launch targeted cash assistance programs for PLW to improve their access to diverse, nutrient-rich diets and provide micronutrient supplementation and counseling on maternal nutrition to enhance breastfeeding capacity and overall maternal health. It's also important to assure behavioral change interventions engaging local community influencers, e.g. women's groups which includes regular community health campaigns with a focus on nutrition education, breastfeeding promotion, and the prevention of harmful feeding practices. This should be integrated with cooking demonstrations using locally available resources to highlight cost-effective, nutritious meal options.

Additionally, extend CMAM programs to sub-districts lacking services, e.g. Talbiseh, Haritan, Tall Ed-daman, Zarbah, Khan Sheykhon, Saraqib, and Marat Al Nouman. This should include the establishment of stabilization centers for severe acute malnutrition SAM and MAM. Last but not least, distribute nutrient-rich complementary foods for children over six months, ensuring dietary diversity and age-appropriate options. This should be integrated with cash programme as high rate of population struggle to buy cooking fuel.

- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

To strengthen community engagement and social cohesion in the assessed locations, it is essential to establish inclusive community structures and leadership mechanisms. This can be achieved by forming community committees with representation from women, youth, and marginalized groups, and by equipping them with training in leadership, conflict resolution, and project management. Empowering these committees will enable them to drive local initiatives and sustain social activities in addition to create a dialogue. Partnering with grassroots organizations can further enhance engagement efforts by leveraging their understanding of local dynamics and fostering collaboration with humanitarian actors to align with broader recovery objectives. Skill-building workshops should focus on project design, implementation, and resource mobilization, while mentorship programs can support youth and women in taking active leadership roles in addressing local challenges. Creating dedicated spaces for these groups to collaborate on community-focused projects can generate innovative solutions and promote inclusivity.

Also, regularly organized social events such as cultural festivals, sports tournaments, and collective clean-up campaigns can serve as platforms for bringing people together and strengthening social bonds. These activities should be complemented by awareness-raising sessions on topics like nutrition, hygiene, and civic responsibilities to maximize their impact. Developing or rehabilitating safe and accessible community spaces is equally important to ensure all members, including persons with disabilities, can participate. Providing essential resources for these spaces will enable communities to organize and sustain activities effectively.

To address barriers to engagement, financial constraints must be overcome by advocating for donor support and mobilizing local resources to fund long-term programs. Small grants and saving groups / loans can empower residents to take ownership of local initiatives, while safety concerns can be mitigated through proper security measures. Community-wide awareness campaigns should also be launched to emphasize the value of social cohesion and encourage broader participation.

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