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FACTSHEET



# Northeast Syria Needs Update Key Findings

August 2026 | Syria

## Key Messages

- **Recovery is progressing unevenly across Northeast Syria**. Ar-Raqqa shows the strongest signs of recovery, while Deir-ez-Zor is experiencing more gradual and geographically uneven progress. In Al-Hasakeh, the slow and fragmented government integration process continues to constrain service restoration and recovery.
- **Basic service provision is improving, but significant gaps remain**. Progress in water, electricity, and other services was strongest in Ar-Raqqa, with more modest improvements in Deir-ez-Zor, while substantial gaps persist in Al-Hasakeh.
- **Economic vulnerability remains a major constraint.** Relative stability and a favourable harvest reduced households' reliance on emergency livelihood coping strategies. However, rising prices, limited access to sustainable income sources, and increasing reliance on loans continued to erode households' ability to meet essential needs.
- **Protection and explosive ordnance risks continue to shape recovery prospects.** While freedom of movement and civil documentation access improved, insecurity and discrimination remain concerns in Al-Hasakeh amid the fragile ceasefire. Deir-ez-Zor reported the highest suspected UXO contamination, particularly affecting agricultural land and livelihoods.

**Map 1**: Assessment coverage

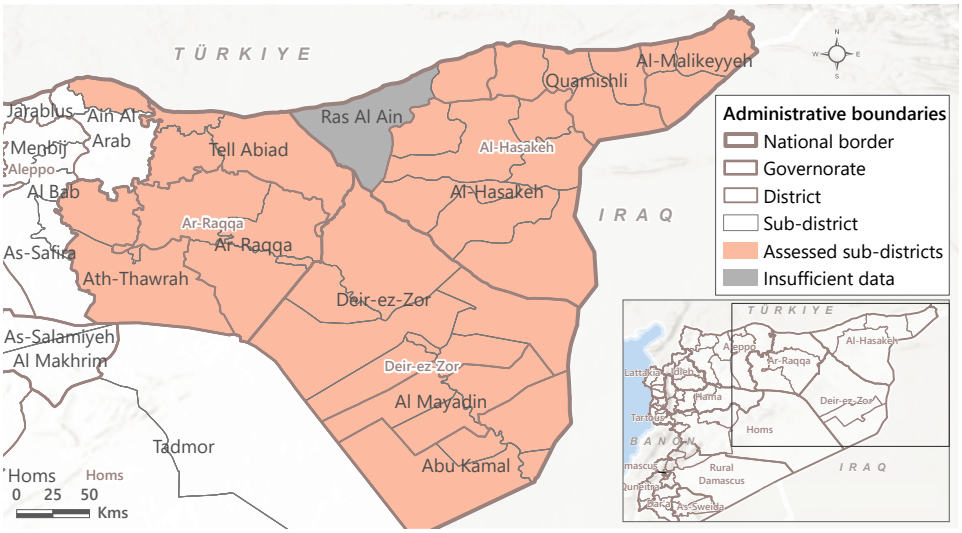



*Image: Al-Hasakeh, Syria, REACH 2026.*

## Context & Rationale

On 30 January 2026, the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (DAANES) and the Government of Syria entered into a ceasefire agreement and initiated the formalised integration of governance structures in the governorates of Al-Hasakeh, Deir-ez-Zor, and Ar-Raqqa, in addition to the Ain-al-Arab district of Aleppo.

The key objective of the Northeast Syria Needs Update was to identify any material changes in humanitarian needs and vulnerabilities following this major contextual shift in the region, using data from the October 2025 Syria Needs Profile[1] as a baseline. The analysis also delves into the differences in vulnerability profiles between population groups and sub-districts to support evidence-led targeting and area-based prioritisation.

## Assessment Overview

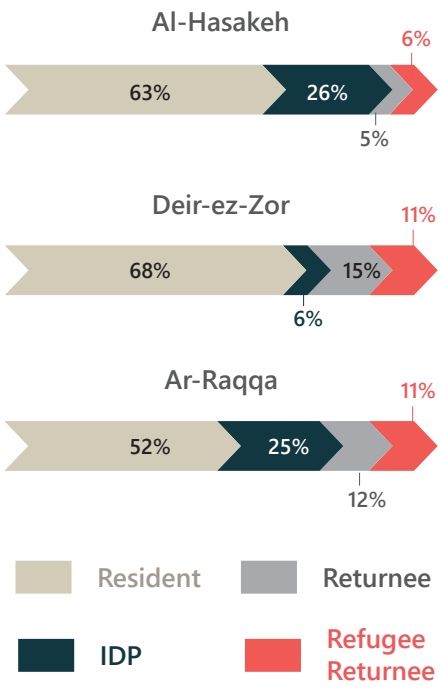
The Northeast Syria Needs Update is a comprehensive, multi-sectoral assessment developed in consultation with humanitarian sectors. The assessment surveyed 3,235 households across 763 communities in 39 sub-districts within the three governorates of Northeast Syria: Al-Hasakeh, Deir-ez-Zor, and Ar-Raqqa. Data was collected between 10 May and 3 June 2026 using a stratified two-stage sampling approach. The methodology generated representative estimates at the sub-district level and ensured representativeness of key population groups (residents[2], IDPs, returnees, and refugee returnees) at the governorate level, with a 90% confidence level and a 10% margin of error. Please see the Methodology Overview and Limitations section for more details.

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## Displacement & Returns

**Population group composition varied across the three northeastern governorates. Al-Hasakeh** had the lowest proportions of returnees (5%) and refugee returnees (6%), with residents comprising 63% of households. **One in four households were internally displaced**, over half of whom had been displaced from elsewhere within Al-Hasakeh governorate.[3] **Deir-ez-Zor had the highest proportion of resident households, while one in four households were returnees or refugee returnees, highlighting the growing importance of sustainable reintegration**. **Ar-Raqqa had the most diverse population profile**, with high proportions of IDPs (25%), returnees (12%), and refugee returnees (11%), underscoring the **need to support both durable solutions for displaced households and sustainable reintegration for returnees**. The highest proportions of IDPs were reported in the Al-Hasakeh sub-districts of Areesheh (47%) and Al-Hasakeh City (45%). The highest proportions of returnees were found in Suluk (68%) and Maadan (64%) in Ar-Raqqa, and Shadadah (51%) in Al-Hasakeh. Refugee returnees were most concentrated in Tel Abiad (38%) and Maadan (31%) in Ar-Raqqa, and Al Mayadin (24%) in Deir-ez-Zor.

**Population groups by governorate,** *by % of households*

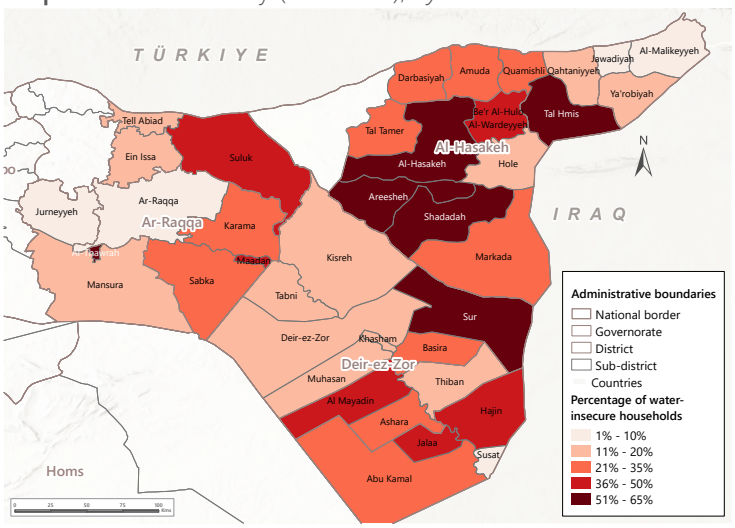



60% of IDPs overall planned on remaining in their current location for the 3 months following data collection, while 25% planned to return to their area of origin. **Return intentions were notably higher in Ar-Raqqa**, rising from 5% in October 2025 to 46%. This may partly reflect the profile of displacement in the governorate — 60% of IDPs currently residing in Ar-Raqqa originated from Aleppo, Homs, and Hama[2], which recorded the highest return rates, while respondents most commonly cited an emotional desire to return (52%) and political stability (45%) as key pull factors.

**Return intentions remained much lower among IDPs in Deir-ez-Zor and Al-Hasakeh, where the majority originated from within their current governorate**. Limited employment opportunities (52%), lack of housing (41%), and lack of shelter in area of origin (41%) were cited as the main barriers to return. IDPs in Al-Hasakeh, in particular, cited insecurity (40%) and tensions with community (27%) in their areas of origin at higher rates than the other governorates, in addition to 20% reporting that their house in their area of origin was currently occupied without their consent, reflecting the fragile status of the ceasefire and government integration in Al-Hasakeh.

## Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)

**Map 2**: Water insecurity (HWISE-4[6]), *by sub-district*




Access to water was uneven across the three governorates. **Ar-Raqqa recorded a marked increase in the proportion of households relying on piped water into the home as their primary drinking water source, increasing from 67% in October 2025 to 88% in May**. This coincided with the lowest reported levels of household water insecurity in Northeast Syria (18%).

**Conversely, Al-Hasakeh reported the highest levels of household water insecurity (34%)**, with rates exceeding 50% in Al-Hasakeh City, Areesheh, and Tal Hmis. Reliance on water trucking remained widespread, with 41% of households using it as their primary drinking water source. With water prices increasing by 40% since February[4], access to safe water has become increasingly unaffordable for the most vulnerable households. There are reasons for cautious optimism, however, as the imminent reopening of the Alouk water station is expected to restore piped water services to the worst-affected sub-districts.

**Deir-ez-Zor presented a more uneven picture.** Water insecurity was concentrated in predominantly rural eastern sub-districts, including Sur (60%) and Hajin (43%), while more urban western sub-districts such as Deir-ez-Zor City (11%) and Tabni (18%) reported substantially lower levels of water insecurity.

Across Northeast Syria, water insecurity disproportionately affected IDP households (31%), female-headed households (42%), and the lowest-income households (33%)[5], indicating that displacement, gender, and economic vulnerability remain important determinants of access to safe water.

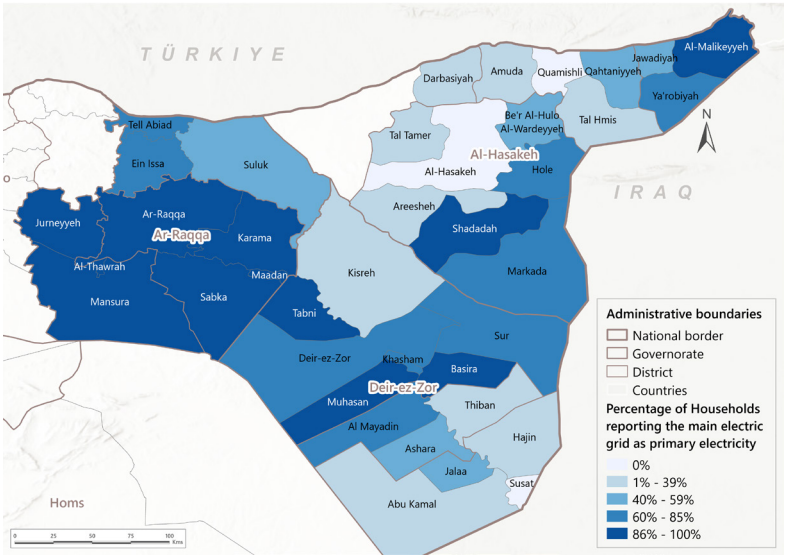
# Electricity

Electricity access followed a similar pattern to water, with progress varying considerably across the three governorates. **Ar-Raqqa recorded the greatest improvements, with 90% of households connected to the main electricity grid, up from 62% in October 2025.** This translated into a median of 13 hours of electricity per day, the highest across Northeast Syria.

Mirroring water access, **Al-Hasakeh remained the least connected governorate. Only 22% of households relied on the main electricity grid**, while two-thirds (67%) depended primarily on generators. No households in Qamishli or Al-Hasakeh City reported being connected to the main network, contributing to a governorate-wide median of just 8 hours of electricity per day.

**Electricity access in Deir-ez-Zor remained highly uneven.** While connectivity to the main network increased from 39% in October 2025 to 58% in May 2026, improvements in grid access did not translate into consistent electricity supply. Median daily electricity availability ranged from 24 hours in Thiban to just 4 hours in Muhasan and 5 hours in Khasham, resulting in the lowest governorate-wide median of only 6 hours per day.

**Map 3**: % of households reporting main electricity network as primary source, *by sub-district*




**Median electricity hours per day** reported at time of data collection




# Education

Education indicators presented a mixed picture across Northeast Syria. **Overall school enrolment remained at similar levels (75% in October 2025 to 71% in May 2026)**. Trends varied by governorate, with enrolment increasing modestly in Ar-Raqqa (68% to 73%), remaining broadly stable in Al-Hasakeh (68% to 66%), and declining in Deir-ez-Zor (79% to 73%). **In contrast, learning conditions improved in both Deir-ez-Zor and Al-Hasakeh**. The proportion of households reporting that children attended school in acceptable learning conditions increased from 53% to 73% in Deir-ez-Zor and from 12% to 36% in Al-Hasakeh, although conditions in the latter remained particularly poor. Learning conditions remained broadly unchanged in Ar-Raqqa (65% to 64%).

**% of school-aged children enrolled in school,** *by governorate*




School enrolment remained unequal across population groups: IDPs (64%), returnees (65%), and female-headed households (66%) reported the lowest enrolment rates compared to residents (74%) and refugee returnees (74%). Children engaging in income-generating activities was reported nearly twice as often as a barrier to enrolment by female-headed households compared with male-headed households (20% versus 12%), and **among returnee households, delayed return after the start of the 2025–2026 school year was reported as a barrier to enrolment by nearly one in five households**, particularly in Ar-Raqqa (31%) and Deir-ez-Zor (17%). Barriers to education also differed across governorates. **Cost remained the most commonly reported barrier across Northeast Syria**, however, child labour was reported more frequently as a barrier to school enrolment in Deir-ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa, while households in Al-Hasakeh were more likely to report that education was not a priority.

**The findings reflect the continued legacy of conflict and insecurity on the education system. Schools sustained extensive damage during the conflict, particularly in Deir-ez-Zor,** where many remained closed or lacked doors, windows, furniture, and other essential materials.[7] **In Al-Hasakeh, education continued to be disrupted by repeated school closures linked to insecurity, with 26% of households reporting conflict-related closures in early 2026**. Parallel education systems operating under the two separate administrations also continued to affect service delivery. At the same time, there are encouraging signs of recovery. Government measures, including teacher salary increases and plans to rehabilitate 57 schools (47 in Deir-ez-Zor and 10 in Ar-Raqqa), have supported the return of permanent teachers and the gradual restoration of education services. In addition, both Ministries of Education have announced plans to introduce a unified curriculum and integrate the education system before the start of the 2026–2027 school year, which could further improve access and learning conditions.[8]

## Shelter

Shelter damage remained widespread across the region, although the nature and severity of damage varied by governorate. Nearly half of households in Ar-Raqqa reported shelter damage, the vast majority of which was minor or negligible (93%). **In Deir-ez-Zor, 55% of households reported shelter damage, but damage was considerably more severe, with 11% reporting severe damage or complete destruction of their shelter.** The highest levels of severe damage were centred in the eastern border sub-districts of Hajin (34%) and Abu Kamal (21%), reflecting the lasting impacts of conflict on housing infrastructure. Al-Hasakeh reported the highest overall prevalence of shelter damage (60%), although most damage was minor or negligible (92%). **Much of the damage in Al-Hasakeh resulted from the heavy rains and flooding in March 2026 along the Jaghjagh and Khabur rivers.** Flooding affected 92% of households in Tal Hmis and primarily damaged roofs, windows, and walls, illustrating the growing importance of climate-related shocks. Damage also represented a major barrier to durable solutions for IDPs: 80% reported damage to their shelter in their area of origin, including 27% reporting major damage or total collapse, rising to 39% among IDPs currently residing in Al-Hasakeh.

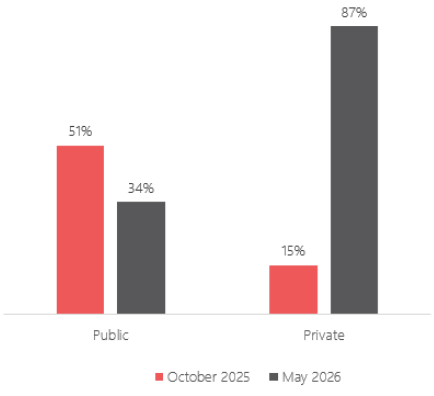
**11%** of affected households in **Deir-ez-Zor** reported **severe or complete destruction of shelter**

**29%** of IDP households in **Al-Hasakeh** reported **that their home in their area of origin was occupied without their consent**

Beyond physical damage, housing, land, and property (HLP) issues continue to present important barriers to durable solutions. While nearly seven in ten households owned their dwelling, **occupancy arrangements among IDPs remained highly precarious**: 30% were hosted free of charge and 24% occupied their accommodation under informal verbal agreements. Consequently, IDPs were nearly twice as likely to face the risk of eviction as the overall population (11% compared with 6%), primarily due to unaffordable rents and insecure tenure. Strengthening tenure security for IDPs will therefore be critical to reducing displacement-related vulnerabilities and supporting durable solutions. **HLP challenges were particularly acute in Al-Hasakeh, where one in four households were internally displaced. Among IDPs, 29% reported that their home in their area of origin was occupied without their consent.** These unresolved property disputes represent a significant obstacle to voluntary return, recovery, and longer-term social cohesion in Al-Hasakeh.

## Health

**Change in healthcare facility use in Al-Hasakeh (October 2025–May 2026),** *by % of households*




**Overall access to healthcare remained stable across Northeast Syria, with 87% of households reporting they could access healthcare when needed, unchanged from October 2025.** However, the types of services used shifted considerably. **In Al-Hasakeh, public facility use fell sharply from 51% in October 2025 to 34% in May 2026, likely reflecting disruptions associated with the government integration process, while private facility use increased from 15% to 87%**. This aligns with HeRAMS findings showing severely constrained public capacity: five of six public hospitals were only partially operational, one was not operational, and 49 of 100 primary healthcare centres were closed. Of those operating, just 31% had generators to ensure continuity of services, highlighting how limited electricity access can further constrain healthcare provision.[9]

**In contrast, public facility use increased in Ar-Raqqa (56% in October 2025 to 70% in May 2026) and rose modestly in Deir-ez-Zor (45% to 57%), although private providers remained the preferred source of care in both.** This occurred despite continued constraints identified by HeRAMS: 89% of public health centres in Ar-Raqqa were not operational, while two of seven public hospitals and 57% of public health centres in Deir-ez-Zor were closed, with communities north of the Euphrates particularly under-served.[8] The divergence between household-reported healthcare use and HeRAMS facility capacity may partly reflect differences in data collection timing. Use of NGO-supported facilities also declined substantially, from 28% in October 2025 to 6% in May 2026 in Ar-Raqqa, and from 15% to 6% in Deir-ez-Zor.

**Treatment costs (63%) remained the most commonly reported barrier to healthcare access across all three governorates**. Service unavailability declined substantially from 34% in October 2025 to 11% in May 2025, while transportation costs (11%) increasingly constrained access. Waiting times were also cited less frequently overall, declining from 33% to 24%, although trends differed geographically: they declined in Al-Hasakeh, potentially reflecting the shift towards private providers, but increased in Ar-Raqqa alongside greater reliance on public services.

Overall, the findings suggest that households continue to rely heavily on private healthcare providers as the restoration of public health services remains a work in progress. While service availability appears to be improving, affordability remains a key constraint. Rising treatment and transportation costs mirror the broader cost-of-living crisis affecting households across Northeast Syria, reinforcing that economic pressures continue to shape access to essential services as the region continues to recover.

## Nutrition

Nutrition findings point towards gradual improvement, although the majority of households requiring nutrition services were still unable to access them (66%). **The proportion of households reporting that a child under five had been ill in the two weeks preceding data collection declined substantially from 57% in October 2025 to 32% in May 2026**. Illness remained more common in Deir-ez-Zor (39%) and Al-Hasakeh (33%) than in Ar-Raqqa (17%), with fever, diarrhoea, and cough the most frequently reported symptoms. While this represents an encouraging trend, the reduction in child illness should not be attributed solely to improved nutrition service access, as illness is influenced by a range of factors, including seasonality, WASH, and living conditions. The October 2025 assessment coincided with the onset of colder weather, while WASH conditions also improved between rounds, particularly in Ar-Raqqa.

**Access to nutrition services for households requiring support** (i.e., malnutrition treatment, de-worming, and Vitamin A supplementation) **increased markedly, from 9% in October 2025 to 34% in May 2026**. This improvement was largely driven by better access in Al-Hasakeh (4% to 34%) and Ar-Raqqa (10% to 26%). However, Deir-ez-Zor moved in the opposite direction, with access declining from 48% to 39%. Nearly half (49%) of households unable to access nutrition services in Deir-ez-Zor cited the lack of available facilities as the primary barrier. Access to nutrition services also differed across population groups. Female-headed households were substantially less likely to report accessing nutrition services when needed (16%). IDP households reported the highest levels of access (44%) compared with refugee returnees (10%). This pattern may suggest that nutrition outreach and service delivery remain more concentrated in locations hosting displaced populations, such as camps and collective centres, while returnee households face greater barriers to accessing (or awareness of) available services as they integrate.

## Food Security

**rCSI,** *by % of households*

| Low | Medium | High |
|---|---|---|
| 39% | 55% | 7% |

**65%** of households engaged in crop production reported **larger harvests than the previous year**

**FCS,** *by % of households*

| Acceptable | Borderline | Poor |
|---|---|---|
| 88% | 10% | 2% |

*Al-Jazira*, or Upper Mesopotamia, which encompasses Al-Hasakeh, Deir-ez-Zor, and Ar-Raqqa between the Tigris, Euphrates, and Khabur rivers, is widely regarded as Syria's breadbasket due to its extensive wheat production. Following one of the driest rainy seasons in decades in 2024/2025,[10] which substantially reduced cereal production and pasture conditions, the 2025/2026 rainy season brought abundant rainfall across Northeast Syria. While the heavier rains caused localized flooding along the Khabur and Jaghjagh rivers in Al-Hasakeh in March, they also contributed to improved agricultural production.[11] More extensive flooding occurred along the Euphrates River in Deir-ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa in late May 2026;[12] however, as data collection had already concluded, the findings presented here do not reflect the impact of these floods. **Among the one in five households engaged in crop production, nearly two-thirds (65%) reported larger harvests than in previous years, with particularly strong improvements in Al-Hasakeh (91%).**

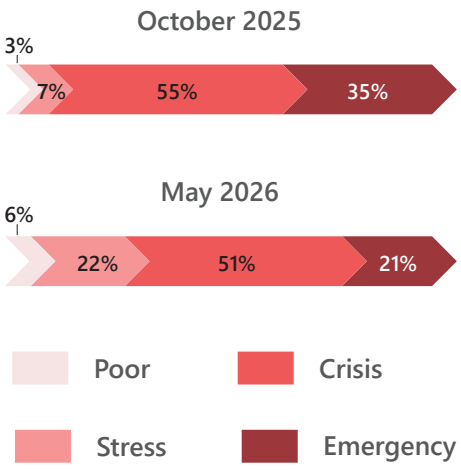
**Improved harvests did not translate directly into improved household food security, as agricultural production primarily supports income rather than self-consumption.** Despite the region's agricultural importance**,** only 17% of households relied on their own production as their primary source of food, while the vast majority (84%) primarily purchased food. **Consequently, rising food prices continued to undermine household food security**. Since February, food prices increased by around 5%, including a 25% increase in the price of bread[3], limiting the extent to which improved harvests translated into better food access and consumption. Overall, 88% of households reported an acceptable Food Consumption Score (FCS),[13] indicating generally adequate dietary diversity and food consumption. However, poorer food consumption outcomes persisted in several rural sub-districts, particularly Sur (17% of households reported poor FCS) and Hajin (15% of households reported poor FCS), both located along the Khabur River. A more concerning picture emerged when considering the Reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI),[14] which captures the behaviours households adopt when they do not have enough food. Overall, 62% of households reported medium or high rCSI, with the highest prevalence in Al-Hasakeh (70%) and Deir-ez-Zor (63%). Relying on less preferred foods was the most common strategy, which households used for a median of 2.5 days per week. High rCSI was also more common among the lowest-income households[4] (12%), returnees (12%), and female-headed households (13%).

Overall, the findings suggest that favourable climatic conditions improved agricultural production but were insufficient to substantially reduce food insecurity. The rainy season also demonstrated the dual nature of climate shocks in Northeast Syria, supporting agricultural production while simultaneously causing localized flooding and crop damage. As long as most households remain dependent on market purchases, rising food prices and constrained purchasing power will likely continue to shape food security outcomes, underscoring the importance of strengthening livelihoods, improving food affordability, and building resilience to increasingly variable climatic conditions.

# Livelihoods

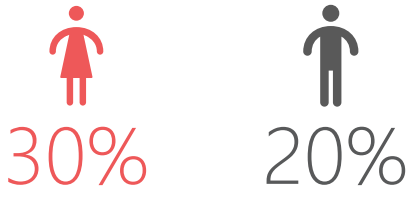
**The proportion of households employing emergency coping strategies to meet essential needs as measured by the Livelihood Coping Strategies Index (LCSI-EN)[15], fell from 35% in October 2025 to 21% in May 2026**, including declines in child labour (13% to 7%) and informal migration (26% to 11%). Despite this improvement, emergency coping remained widespread in Deir-ez-Zor (34%), particularly among returnees (31%), who reported the highest rates of engaging in socially degrading activities (11%) and child labour (10%) to meet essential needs. Female-headed households also continued to face greater pressure, with 30% reporting emergency coping measures compared with 20% of male-headed households. **Nevertheless, three in four households across Northeast Syria remained unable or only partially able to meet their basic needs**, despite an improvement from 91% in October 2025. **Rising prices were cited by 95% of households as the primary barrier**, making household income, debt, and purchasing power central to understanding overall economic vulnerability.

**LCSI-EN,** *by % of households*



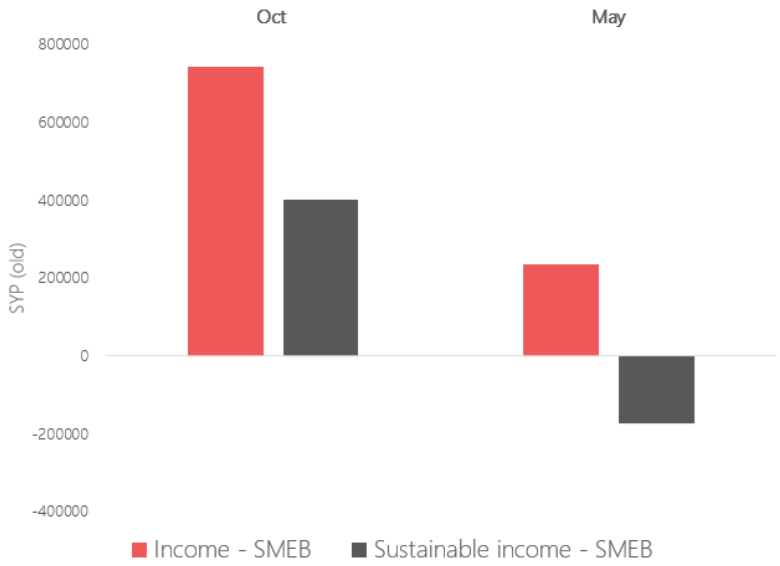

**Changes in household income sources suggest a decline in reliance on sustainable income sources[16] alongside increased dependence on borrowing.** Although salaried employment remained the primary income source for most households, the proportion reporting it declined by 10 percentage points, largely driven by a substantial decrease in Al-Hasakeh (65% to 44%). Income from own agricultural production also fell sharply (40% to 17%), although this is likely explained by data collection taking place at the end of the lean season, when agricultural income is typically at its lowest. Remittances also declined (30% to 18%), potentially reflecting increased returns from abroad. In contrast, the proportion of households reporting loans as their primary income source nearly tripled, increasing from 10% to 27%, with particularly large increases in Al-Hasakeh and Ar-Raqqa. Reliance on loans was highest among IDPs (43%) and female-headed households (34%), for whom borrowing was nearly as common as salaried employment (37%), their primary income source. The growing reliance on loans, coupled with declining income from sustainable sources, is reflected in the widening disconnect between household income and expenditure.

**Emergency LCSI,** *by HoH Gender*




**Median Monthly Income - SMEB,[3]** *October 2025 vs. May 2026*

| | Oct 2025 | May 2026 | Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Median Income | 2,640,000 SYP | 2,500,000 SYP | -5.3% ▼ |
| SMEB | 1,894,830 SYP | 2,171,139 SYP | +14.6% ▲ |




Reported median monthly incomes decreased by 5.3% between October 2025 and May 2026, while the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) increased by 14.6% over the same period, resulting in a 68% reduction in the gap between median income and the SMEB.[3]

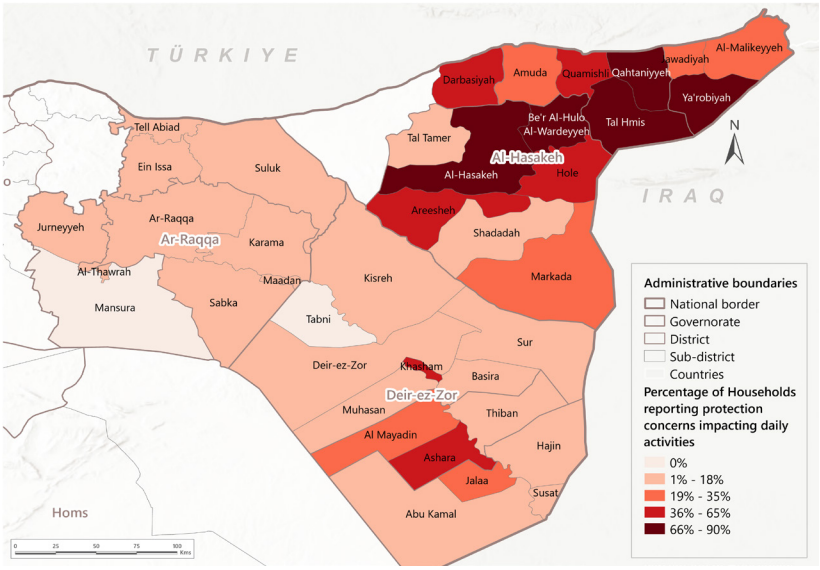
**The narrowing gap suggests that rising living costs are outpacing household incomes**, leaving households with less disposable income after meeting minimum expenditure requirements. When considering only sustainable income sources, the balance becomes negative, indicating that borrowing has become an increasingly important mechanism for covering minimum household expenditures. Taken together, these findings suggest that reduced reliance on emergency livelihood coping reflects an improvement in immediate pressures rather than stronger household economies.

Declining sustainable incomes, rising prices, and growing dependence on loans indicate that many households remain economically vulnerable, emphasising the importance of livelihoods support as a critical component of longer-term recovery.

# Protection

Protection conditions diverged markedly across Northeast Syria. **While households in Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor reported fewer threats affecting their ability to access resources or livelihoods to meet essential needs in the three months prior to data collection compared to October 2025, Al-Hasakeh experienced a sharp deterioration from 9% in October 2025 to 68% in May 2026.** The increase was primarily driven by heightened violence, including gender-based violence (GBV), discrimination, and arbitrary detention amid the ongoing and fragile government integration process.

**Map 4:** % of households reporting threats affecting their ability to access resources or livelihoods to meet essential needs, *by sub-district*



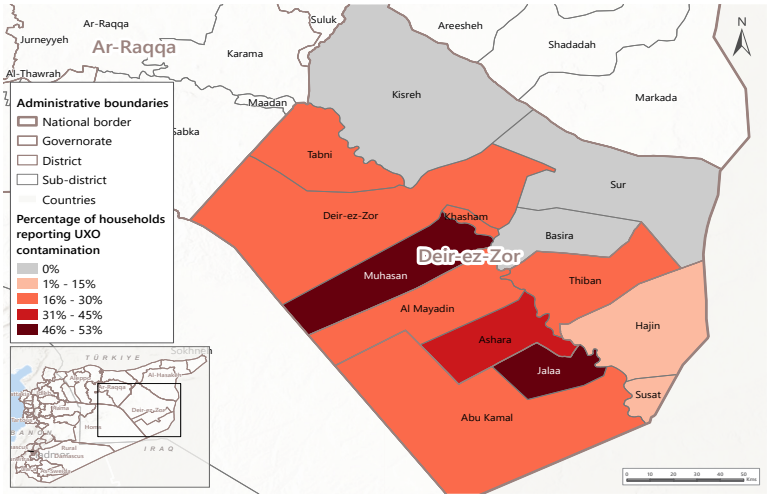

Gender-based protection concerns followed a similar pattern. **The proportion of households reporting that women and girls avoided areas of their community due to security concerns declined substantially in Ar-Raqqa (**40% in October 2025 to 3% in May 2026) **and Deir-ez-Zor (22% to 12%) but increased in Al-Hasakeh (13% to 39%)**. Markets were identified as the location where women and girls most frequently felt unsafe, with 88% of affected households reporting that female household members avoided markets because of protection concerns. This has important implications for women's access to markets, livelihoods, and other essential services.

While women and girls are still facing significant protection concerns, several protection indicators showed encouraging improvements across the region. **Freedom of movement increased in all three governorates**, with the most notable progress observed in Al-Hasakeh, where the proportion of households reporting they could move freely without protection concerns increased from just 2% in October 2025 to 52% in May 2026. Nevertheless, nearly half of households in the governorate continued to face movement restrictions, with IDPs (57%) and refugee returnees (56%) the most vulnerable. **Access to civil documentation also improved across all three governorates,** with field teams and implementing partners suggesting that **reduced movement restrictions may be facilitating access to administrative services.** However, they also cautioned that reported documentation coverage in Al-Hasakeh (82%) may overestimate actual access.

Overall, the findings suggest that while administrative barriers such as freedom of movement and access to civil documentation have begun to improve, the security environment remains fragile. Persistent violence, discrimination, and protection risks, particularly in Al-Hasakeh, continue to constrain households' access to livelihoods and essential services. Strengthening civilian protection alongside efforts to restore governance, security, and public services will therefore remain central to supporting a sustainable recovery.

# Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)

**Map 5**: Reported UXO contamination[18] in Deir-ez-Zor, *by sub-district*




**Deir-ez-Zor was overwhelmingly the governorate with the highest reported rate of UXO contamination (19%)**, compared to 4% in Ar-Raqqa and 1% in Al-Hasakeh.[17] Muhasan (48%) in Deir-ez-Zor and Ein Issa in Ar-Raqqa (46%) were the sub-districts with the highest rates, with **impacts most concentrated on agricultural land (64%) and associated livelihoods (15%)**, particularly concerning given the importance of agriculture to Deir-ez-Zor's economy. Returnees (15%) and refugee returnees (17%) were the most likely to report UXO contamination, emphasizing the importance of mine action in reintegration and recovery efforts.

## Accountability to Affected People (AAP)

**Households' reported priority needs remained broadly consistent between October 2025 and May 2026, with livelihoods, food, and health continuing to rank as the three most frequently reported priorities. However, the order shifted: while health (51%) was the most commonly reported need in October 2025, livelihoods (65%) emerged as the highest priority in May 2026, reflecting persistent economic pressures.** Drinking water declined considerably as a priority, particularly in Ar-Raqqa (from 42% in October 2025 to 4% in May 2026) and Deir-ez-Zor (22% to 12%), suggesting improvements in access. In contrast, debt repayment remained a prominent concern, cited by one in four households. Priority needs also varied across governorates. Households in Al-Hasakeh placed greater emphasis on debt relief (36%) and access to drinking water (30%), reflecting continued service gaps and economic vulnerability. In Deir-ez-Zor, electricity (26%) remained a comparatively higher priority, while households in Ar-Raqqa more frequently prioritised debt relief (34%) and non-food items (NFIs) (16%). Despite widespread reports of shelter damage, shelter remained a comparatively low priority across all three governorates, reported by only 12% of households. This may reflect households prioritising more immediate pressures, such as livelihoods and food, over shelter repairs rather than an absence of shelter needs.

**When asked which actor was best placed to address their priority needs, households preferred humanitarian organisations (47%)**, compared with the central government (25%) and local authorities (15%). Respondents most frequently cited **humanitarian organisations' resources and speed of response as the main reasons for this preference**. Cash assistance (92%), in-kind food assistance (67%), and vouchers (38%) were identified as the preferred modalities of support.[19] This preference may reflect the historical presence of humanitarian organizations in these areas, as many of these organizations maintained broad reach over the past decade and were able to rapidly respond to household priority needs when required.

Livelihood recovery priorities also reflected the distinct economic profiles of each governorate. Households in Al-Hasakeh prioritised investment in trade-based livelihoods (38%), while those in Deir-ez-Zor (32%) and Ar-Raqqa (37%) placed greater emphasis on support for agricultural activities. Across Northeast Syria, households consistently identified access to financing (93%), productive assets and equipment (68%), vocational training (47%), and infrastructure rehabilitation (33%) as the key enablers of livelihood recovery. Together, these findings suggest that revitalising locally relevant, job-creating sectors will be central to expanding sustainable employment opportunities, strengthening household incomes, and supporting longer-term economic recovery.

## Conclusion & Implications for the Response

Findings suggest that **Northeast Syria cannot be characterised by a single humanitarian or recovery narrative. Instead, the three governorates occupy different positions along the humanitarian–recovery continuum, reflecting varying levels of progress in restoring basic services, rebuilding livelihoods, improving security, and reducing humanitarian needs. Environmental hazards add another layer of vulnerability**, with recent flooding exacerbating existing needs, damaging infrastructure and livelihoods, and potentially reversing or slowing recovery gains. These differences are further reinforced by **distinct population profiles**, with varying concentrations of residents, IDPs, returnees, and refugee returnees shaping **different priorities for humanitarian assistance, durable solutions, and reintegration**.

### Al-Hasakeh

Although the government integration process represents an important step towards recovery, progress remains slow, uneven, and fragile. Widespread gaps in essential services, persistent economic pressures, and ongoing protection concerns reinforce that humanitarian needs remain acute, underscoring the continued need for humanitarian assistance alongside longer-term efforts to restore public services and strengthen civilian protection. With one in four households internally displaced, continued support for displaced populations alongside efforts to create the conditions for durable solutions will remain a central priority.

### Deir-ez-Zor

Findings suggest that Deir-ez-Zor is showing early signs of recovery, with improvements in basic service provision and agricultural production, although progress remains uneven across sectors and sub-districts. However, persistent food insecurity, widespread conflict-related shelter damage, UXO contamination, and livelihood challenges indicate that humanitarian assistance remains essential alongside early recovery and reconstruction efforts. With one in four households identified as returnees or refugee returnees, sustainable reintegration will be central to enabling returnees to become active participants in Deir-ez-Zor's recovery and reconstruction.

### Ar-Raqqa

Ar-Raqqa has made the strongest progress towards recovery in Northeast Syria, driven by significant improvements in basic service provision and security. While economic pressures persist, declining reliance on emergency livelihood coping strategies and higher IDP return intentions reflect growing confidence in recovery, supporting a gradual shift from humanitarian response towards longer-term recovery and livelihoods programming. At the same time, the governorate's diverse population profile—including large proportions of IDPs, returnees, and refugee returnees—highlights the need to simultaneously support durable solutions for displaced households and sustainable reintegration for those returning home.

## Methodology Overview & Limitations

The Northeast Syria Needs Update is a comprehensive, multi-sectoral household-level assessment developed in consultation with humanitarian sector partners to inform humanitarian response and early recovery programming across Northeast Syria. The assessment surveyed 3,235 households across 763 communities in 39 sub-districts within the three governorates of Al-Hasakeh, Deir-ez-Zor, and Ar-Raqqa.

The assessment employed a stratified two-stage sampling design to generate representative estimates at both the sub-district (Admin 3) level and, within each governorate, for the four principal population groups: residents, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, and refugee returnees. The sampling frame was developed using the October 2025 IOM-DTM Population Mobility and Baseline Assessment, with household estimates derived from sub-district-specific median household sizes.

The sampling methodology was designed to achieve two complementary objectives: (1) generate representative estimates at the sub-district level and (2) enable representative analysis of the four population groups at the governorate level. To achieve this, separate sample size requirements were calculated for geographic and population-group representativeness, with the final sample for each sub-district–population group combination set as the larger of the two. Communities were selected using probability proportional to population size, followed by random household selection within sampled communities. The assessment targeted a 90% confidence level and 10% margin of error. Data was collected through face-to-face household interviews using KoBoToolbox and structured questionnaires were developed in consultation with humanitarian sector partners.

The findings should be interpreted in light of the following limitations:

- **Comparability:** While the use of the same sampling methodology and population frame supports comparison with the October 2025 Syria Needs Profile, findings should be interpreted as indicative trends rather than statistically tested changes, as the assessment uses repeated cross-sectional sampling rather than following the same households over time.
- **Coverage**: Findings from Ain al Arab (Aleppo) are excluded from this factsheet because access constraints prevented the collection of a representative sample. Ras al Ain (Al-Hasakeh) was inaccessible during data collection and was therefore excluded from the assessment.
- **Timing**: Data collection concluded prior to the late May 2026 flooding along the Euphrates River affecting Deir-ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa. Consequently, the findings do not reflect the impacts of these floods.

Please refer to the Terms of Reference and the Dataset and Analysis for more details.

## Assessment Coverage

| Governorate | Assessed sub-districts | Assessed communities | Assessed HH | Female HoH | Male HoH |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Al-Hasakeh | 15 | 365 | 1,251 HH | 7% | 93% |
| Deir-ez-Zor | 14 | 152 | 1,122 HH | 14% | 86% |
| Ar-Raqqa | 10 | 246 | 862 HH | 8% | 92% |
| Total | 39 | 763 | 3,235 HH | 10% | 90% |

| Governorate | Urban | Peri-Urban | Rural |
|---|---|---|---|
| Al-Hasakeh | 71% | 7% | 23% |
| Deir-ez-Zor | 22% | 7% | 71% |
| Ar-Raqqa | 23% | 20% | 57% |
| Total | 39 | 763 | 3,235 HH |

## ABOUT REACH

REACH Initiative facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT).

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# Endnotes

1 The 2025 Syria Needs Profile was an unpublished, nationwide multi-sectoral household assessment designed to provide representative findings at the sub-district level and support inter-sectoral needs analysis and humanitarian planning.

2 The IDP Task Force defines "residents" as individuals or groups of people who currently reside in their communities of origin, or communities of permanent residence prior to the Syrian crisis. This includes populations that were never displaced as well as previously displaced populations that have returned to their communities in previous years. This population group generally constitutes individuals present in a community who are neither IDPs nor returnees.

3 CCCM Cluster, International Organization for Migration (IOM), IMPACT REACH, and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). 2025. IDP Movement Intentions Survey – Syria. November 2025.

4 IMPACT REACH. Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) - Syria. May 2026.

5 Households were divided into income quintiles based on the median reported monthly income. Lowest income households are those in the bottom quintile of median reported monthly income.

6 The Household Water Insecurity Experiences Scale (HWISE-4) is a validated four-item scale used to measure household water insecurity based on experiences during the previous four weeks.

7 TOTOL for Relief and Development. Multi-sectoral Humanitarian Needs Assessment - Deir Ezzor Governorate, Syria (2025). 2025.

8 Syrian Arab Republic. 2026. Presidential Decree Increasing Salaries of Workers in a Number of Sectors - Syria. March 2026.

9 Syrian Arab Republic Ministry of Health and World Health Organization (WHO). 2025 Health Resources and Services Availability Monitoring System (HeRAMS). 2021-2025.

10 Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET). 2026. Insecurity, drought, and economic contraints drive outcomes aligned with Crisis - Syria. February 2026.

11 Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET). 2026. Weather events and economic contraints continue to drive Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes - Syria. April 2026.

12 United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). 2026. Flash Update: Euphrates Floods in Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor, Syria. 25 May - 6 June 2026.

13 Food Consumption Score (FCS) measures the current quality and diversity of a household's diet, based on how often different food groups were consumed over the previous seven days.

14 Reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI) measures the behaviors households use when they do not have enough food, such as reducing meal sizes, eating less-preferred foods, or borrowing food, usually over the previous seven days. Coping strategies include: relying on less preferred or expensive food, borrowing food, reducing meal sizes, reducing consumption by adults in order for small children to eat, and reduce number of meals per day.

15 The Livelihood Coping Strategies Index - Essential Needs (LCSI-EN) is a standard food security indicator that measures households' use of livelihood-based coping strategies to meet essential needs, with strategies classified as stress, crisis, or emergency according to their severity. Common emergency strategies include migrating informally or engaging in socially degrading activities to meet essential needs. Common crisis strategies include selling productive assets or children (under 15) working to contribute to household income to meet essential needs.

16 All income sources excluding loans and humanitarian assistance

17 UXO contamination in Al-Hasakeh was likely under-reported due to the lack of data from Ras-al-Ain, which has been on the frontline of the conflict for years and still experiences ongoing tensions.

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18 UXO contamination refers to the percentage of households that reported areas in or near their community that are suspected of containing landmines of UXOs at the time of data collection. The presented map does not represent the actual extent or geographic distribution of UXO contamination, but rather the reported perceptions of assessed households.

19 Respondents could select multiple answer choices for this question.