

Northeast Syria Needs Update

Executive Summary

August 2026 | Syria

KEY FINDINGS SNAPSHOT

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, drawing on the October 2025 Syria Needs Profile¹ 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. This snapshot provides a high-level summary of the [Key Findings Factsheet](#), which covers the assessment in depth.

75% of households reported being **unable or only partially able to meet their essential needs**

63% of households **reported the ability to move freely without protection concerns**, up from 26% in October 2025

26% of households **experienced water insecurity**, driven by high levels in Al-Hasakeh (34%)

19% of households in **Deir-ez-Zor reported UXO contamination** in their community (compared to 9% for the region)

Displacement & Returns

60% of IDPs planned to remain in their current location during the three months following data collection, **while 25% planned to return to their area of origin**. Return intentions were higher in Ar-Raqqa, rising from 5% in October 2025 to 46%, while remaining much lower among IDPs in Deir-ez-Zor and Al-Hasakeh, where the majority originated from within their current governorate. Limited employment opportunities (52%) and lack of housing (41%) and shelter (41%) in areas of origin were the main barriers to return. In Al-Hasakeh, IDPs reported insecurity (40%) and tensions with the community (27%) in their areas of origin at higher rates than in the other governorates, while 20% reported that their house in their area of origin was occupied without their consent.

Livelihoods

Despite a decline in emergency coping (LCSI-EN),² reliance on loans increased and purchasing power weakened. The share of households employing emergency livelihood coping strategies declined from 35% to 21%, yet **75% remained unable or only partially able to meet their basic needs**. Emergency coping remained highest in Deir-ez-Zor (34%) and among female-headed households (30%). Rising prices were cited by 95% of households as the main barrier to meeting basic needs, while loans as a primary income source nearly tripled from 10% to 27%. Reliance on loans was highest among IDPs (43%) and female-headed households (34%), for whom borrowing was nearly as common as salaried employment (37%). Meanwhile, median monthly income fell by 5.3% as the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket³ increased by 14.6%, reducing the income-SMEB gap by 68%.

WASH & Electricity

Water access improved in Ar-Raqqa, while water insecurity⁴ remained highest in Al-Hasakeh. Reliance on piped water in Ar-Raqqa increased from 67% to 88%, with 18% of households water insecure. In Al-Hasakeh, 34% of households were water insecure and 41% relied primarily on water trucking, as water prices increased by around 40% since February. In Deir-ez-Zor, water insecurity was concentrated in rural eastern sub-districts. Across Northeast Syria, water insecurity was higher among female-headed households (42%), lowest-income households (33%) and IDPs (31%).

Reliance on the main electricity grid reached 90% in Ar-Raqqa, up from 62% in October 2025, compared with 58% in Deir-ez-Zor and 22% in Al-Hasakeh. Median electricity availability was 13 hours/day in Ar-Raqqa, 8 hours in Al-Hasakeh, and 6 hours in Deir-ez-Zor.

Education

Overall school enrolment remained at similar levels, at 71% compared with 75% in October 2025. Acceptable learning conditions improved from 53% to 73% in Deir-ez-Zor and from 12% to 36% in Al-Hasakeh, where conditions remained the poorest in the region, while remaining broadly unchanged in Ar-Raqqa (65% to 64%). Enrolment was 64% among IDPs, 65% among returnees and 66% among female-headed households, compared with 74% among residents and refugee returnees.

1. The 2025 Syria Needs Profile was an unpublished, nationwide multi-sectoral household assessment with representative findings at the sub-district level.
2. The Livelihood Coping Strategies Index - Essential Needs measures households' use of livelihood-based coping strategies to meet essential needs.
3. The SMEB is designed as an indicator of the cost of the set of minimum, culturally-appropriate items that a family of 6 needs to survive for one month.

4. The Household Water Insecurity Experiences Scale (HWISE-4) measures household water insecurity based on experiences during the previous four weeks.

Shelter

Shelter damage was reported by 60% of households in Al-Hasakeh, where most damage was minor and much of it resulted from the heavy rains and flooding of March 2026, and by 55% of households in Deir-ez-Zor, where 11% of affected households reported severe damage or complete destruction. **Among IDPs, 80% reported damage to their shelter in their area of origin, including 27% reporting major damage or total collapse.**

Health & Nutrition

Healthcare access remained stable, while reliance on private providers increased in Al-Hasakeh. 87% of households reported being able to access healthcare when needed. Treatment costs remained the most commonly reported barrier (63%), while reported service unavailability declined from 34% to 11%. Public facility use fell from 51% to 34% in Al-Hasakeh, where private facility use increased to 87%, while public facility use increased in Ar-Raqqa (56% to 70%) and Deir-ez-Zor (45% to 57%). Access to nutrition services among households requiring them increased from 9% to 34%, though access declined in Deir-ez-Zor (48% to 39%). Overall, female-headed households (16%) and refugee returnees (10%) were less likely to report accessing nutrition services when needed.

Food Security

Food consumption was largely acceptable, despite food-related coping remained widespread. 88% of households had an acceptable Food Consumption Score,⁵ while 62% reported medium or high rCSI,⁶ including 70% in Al-Hasakeh and 63% in Deir-ez-Zor. High rCSI was more common among female-headed households, returnees and lowest-income households. Among households engaged in crop production, 65% reported larger harvests than the previous year, while 84% of households primarily purchased food, leaving them exposed to food prices, which increased by around 5% since February.

Protection & UXO Contamination

Protection conditions declined in Al-Hasakeh while improving in Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor. In Al-Hasakeh, households reporting threats affecting their ability to access resources or livelihoods increased from 9% to 68%, driven by gender-based violence, discrimination, and arbitrary detention. Households reporting that women and girls avoided areas of their community due to security concerns increased from 13% to 39% in Al-Hasakeh, while decreasing from 40% to 3% in Ar-Raqqa and from 22% to 12% in Deir-ez-Zor. Freedom of movement improved in all three governorates, though movement restrictions continued to affect IDPs (57%) and refugee returnees (56%). **Reported UXO contamination⁷ was highest in Deir-ez-Zor (19%),** compared with 4% in Ar-Raqqa and 1% in Al-Hasakeh, with 64% of affected households reporting impacts on agricultural land. UXO contamination was reported by 15% of returnees and 17% of refugee returnees.

AAP

Livelihoods (65%) was the most frequently reported priority need in May 2026, while health had been the most frequently reported priority in October 2025 (51%). Debt repayment was reported as a priority by one in four households. Households considered humanitarian organisations (47%) best placed to address their priority needs, compared with central government (25%) and local authorities (15%). Preferred assistance modalities were cash (92%), in-kind food assistance (67%) and vouchers (38%).

Conclusion

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.

Assessment Overview

The Northeast Syria Needs Update is a multi-sectoral assessment developed in consultation with humanitarian sectors, which surveyed 3,235 households across 763 communities in 39 subdistricts 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. Findings are representative at the sub-district level and covered key population groups (residents, IDPs, returnees, and refugee returnees) at the governorate level, with a 90% confidence level and a 10% margin of error. Please see the [Key Findings Factsheet](#) and [Dataset and Analysis](#) for the comprehensive analysis and additional details.

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 an initiative of IMPACT Initiatives.

5. 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.

6. Reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI) measures the behaviors households use when they do not have enough food over the previous seven days.

7. UXO contamination refers to the percentage of households that reported areas in or near their community that are suspected of containing UXOs at the time of data collection.