Research Terms of Reference – Secondary Data Review

Socio-Economic Situation in Northwest Syria SYR2206 Syria

February 2024 Version 1



1. Executive Summary

Country of	Syr	ia					
intervention							
Type of Emergency		Natural disaster	Χ	Conflict		Other (specify)	
Type of Crisis		Sudden onset		Slow onset	Χ	Protracted	
Mandating Body/	REA	ACH					
Agency							
IMPACT Project	16	AWN and 16BAN					
Code							
Overall Research							
Timeframe (from	12/	/11/2023 to 30/04/2024					
research design to							
final outputs / M&E)							
Research Timeframe	1. 9	Start data consolidation:		4. Outputs sent for validation:			
	11/02/2024			15/04/2024			
	2. Preliminary source list (inc.			5. Outputs pub	lish	ned: 30/04/2024	
	reli	ability scale) sent for					
	val	idation: 18/02/2024					
	3. F	Preliminary presentation: N	Α	6. Final present	tati	on: May 2023	
Number of	Χ	Single assessment (one c	ycle)				
assessments		Multi assessment (more t	han	one cycle)			
Humanitarian	Milestone Deadline (can be tentative)					tentative)	
milestones		Donor plan/strategy					
	Χ	Cluster plan/strategy		N/A			
		NGO platform plan/strate	egy				
		Other (Specify):					
	Audience type			Dissemination			

Audience Type & Dissemination	□ Programmatic □ Operational □ C X n X V	X General Product Mailing X Cluster Mailing (ERL) and presentation of findings at next cluster meeting X Presentation of findings (Cluster meeting, donors) X Website Dissemination (Relief Web & REACH Resource Centre)				
Stakeholder mapping	Yes	No				
General Objective	· ·	of Greater Idleb and Northern Aleppo of 2023 to 2024. This will aid the Early dother strategic decision makers in ong crisis, beyond the February 2023 and impacting the humanitarian ing humanitarian interventions				
Specific Objective(s)	2023 and February 2024.2. Provide a deeper understand situation, focusing on how it	ing of the current socio-economic impacts access to goods and nitarian sectors and how this differs				
Research Questions	economic situation of housel 2. What is the current socio-economic situation of housel Northwest Syria, and to what to basic goods and services?	enomic situation of households in extent is it impacting their access				
Geographic	Northwest Syria (NWS) including two Aleppo and Greater Idleb.	o Areas of Influence, being Northern				
Secondary data sources	 Multi-Sectoral Needs Assess REACH & OCHA 2023 Humanitarian Situation Oven monthly Joint Market Monitoring Initial REACH & Cash Working Group 	ment (MSNA) in Northern Syria by view in Syria (HSOS) by REACH ative (JMMI) in Northern Syria by up monthly Expenditure Assessment by REACH				

		Others, see section 3.3						
Disaggregation by	Ge	nder		Α	Age			
gender and age	_	Yes		П	Yes			
	X	No	_	X	No			
Expected ouput	X	Situation overview #: 1			Report #: _		Profile #:	
type(s)					_			
		Presentation	X	Pre	sentation		Factsheet #:	
		(Preliminary findings) #:		(Fi	nal) #:5			
		Interactive dashboard #:_		,	Webmap #:		Map #:	
Access	X	Public (available on REA	CH	res	ource center	raı	nd other	
		humanitarian platforms	humanitarian platforms)					
		Restricted (bilateral disse	mina	itio	n only upon a	agr	eed dissemination	
		list, no publication on REACH or other platforms)						
Visibility Specify	RE	ACH						
which logos should	Do	Donor: BHA, SDC						
be on outputs	Co	Coordination Framework: ERL Cluster						
	Pai	Partners: NA						

2. Rationale

2.1 Background

Northwest Syria (NWS) incorporates two areas of influence, Greater Idleb and Northern Aleppo. Both areas have seen extensive damage to productive infrastructure, high levels of displacement, and persistent insecurity since the onset of the Syrian conflict in 2011, all of which have been exacerbated by the 2023 Türkiye/ Syria earthquakes.¹ Correspondingly, the local population is facing high levels of poverty, limiting their access to essential goods and services.^{2,3} This has become particularly central due to the decrease in humanitarian funding at the global level,⁴ which is having tangible impacts on the Syrian population⁵ and has made access to livelihoods essential to maintaining households' access to essential services.

In this context, the Early Recovery and Livelihoods (ERL) cluster in NWS requested REACH to conduct an assessment on the socio-economic situation in the area. This follows a similar structure as a previous report issued by REACH in 2022, which focused on economic developments in Greater Idleb in the first half of 2022.⁶ The aim here is three-fold. The first is to highlight developments over the past year (February 2023 – February 2024) in the socio-economic situation of households, which might impact the work not only of the ERL cluster, but of the response more generally. The second is to provide an assessment specific to NWS and highlight the difference between the two areas of influence,. The third aim is to provide a complete picture of the data landscape as it pertains to the socio-economic situation.

These aims are not met by available reports. They tend to lack distinctions between the various Areas of Influence in Syria, which operate under different institutional and economic environments.^{7,8} And have in the past year focused on the earthquake impacts while excluding other crisis drivers.^{8,9,2} Furthermore, there is relevant data, including the Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment, the Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria, and the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative, which could provide valuable insights into the socio-economic situation but have not been extensively used in this context.

2.2 Intended Impact

The concept of this assessment was developed in collaboration with the ERL cluster. The key aim is to provide an in-depth understanding of the current socio-economic situation and events leading up to the current situation. This has a strategic relevance for the response in terms of identifying crisis drivers and key socio-economic vulnerabilities, which in turn inform decisions over which humanitarian programmes may be most effective in mitigating the situation. It also serves as an advocacy tool, highlighting the economic vulnerabilities of the area and thus allowing the ERL cluster to advocate for improved livelihoods programming. Given how central the economic situation is to all sectors, this research will be disseminated and presented to the wider humanitarian response.

3. Methodology

3.1 Methodology overview

This research is a focused on identifying, analysing, and contextualising existing data relevant to the socio-economic situation in Northwest Syria. In the first step, relevant data sources and reports have been identified (see section 3.3). In the second step, findings will be organised by themes in order to identify consensus, discrepancies, and information gaps. This will be done by identifying key hypothesis¹ and identifying sources that agree, disagree, or provide mixed information relevant to these hypotheses. Consensus is reached when several sources with strong methodologies come to the same conclusions. Discrepancies exist when sources come to contradictory conclusions. Information gaps are identified when there is a lack of sources with strong methodologies that are relevant to the hypotheses. The findings from this step will be discussed both internally and with the relevant clusters

¹ Preliminary hypotheses are:

H1) Following the earthquakes in Feb-23, economic activity shifted towards construction and informal labour, with losses in formal employment.

H2) Conflict, such as the October 2023 escalations, have a substantial negative impact on livelihoods.

H3) Reductions in humanitarian assistance, in particular in the second half of 2023, have reduced access to basic goods and services.

H4) The economic situation in Syria has been substantially deteriorating over the previous years, such that the economy is significantly worse off in late 2023 and early 2024 than in previous years.

H5) IDPs are significantly worse off than host community populations in terms of access to livelihoods and basic goods and services.

H6) Female-headed households experience lower access to livelihoods and basic goods and services than male-headed households.

H7) Rural areas experience higher levels of poverty and lower access to basic goods and services than urban areas.

H8) Populations in NWS benefit from humanitarian livelihoods programming.

in NWS in order to sense-check, contextualise, and identify further research needs. The final step is report drafting; the situation overview will be reviewed by relevant cluster as well as by IMPACT HQ.

3.2 Population of interest

The geographic focus of this research is NWS. This covers the Türkiye Cross-border Response Hub, which spans two areas of influence, Greater Idleb and Northern Aleppo. Approximately 5 million people live in NWS, of which 3.5 million are internally displaced – 2 million in camps, 1.5 million in host communities.

This research covers all population groups. However, due to lack of access and data, the Ras Al Ain and Tel Abiad (RAATA) area, which belong to the NWS response hub, is not included.

3.3 Secondary data review

This research relies heavily on primary data from a number of REACH assessment cycles. This includes the Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA), which is an annual household-level assessment. ¹⁰ It was last run in September 2023, covering 5,600 households across Northeast and Northwest Syria. This data is complemented by the monthly Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria (HSOS), which is a community-level key informant assessment run in 680 locations in NWS. Additionally the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI), which is a monthly key informant assessment of market functionality and prices. ¹¹

In order to contextualise this data and cover information gaps, a wide range of secondary sources will be used. This includes humanitarian reporting, news reports, academic journals, and conversations with response actors.

- Humanitarian reporting will be included in cases where information sources and methodologies are clearly stated, and where the output is an information piece; advocacy outputs are excluded. This will focus on reports from 2023 onwards.
- News reports will be included if they stem from reputable sources, which can include international news outlets (commonly Reuters, Al Jazeera, Al Monitor, amongst others) and local outlets (commonly Enab Baladi). This will focus on reports from 2023 onwards.
- Academic papers will be included if they are printed in peer-reviewed journals.
- Response actors primarily include cluster coordinators or information management officers
 who can help to contextualise findings and provide further inputs. Information provided by
 response actors will be cited as such, and actors will be given the opportunity to review the
 situation overview prior to publication in order to provide or withdraw consent for the use of
 the information they provided.

Note that all findings will be triangulated such that inconsistencies between data sources can be identified. Findings will only be included in the final situation overview in case multiple reliable

resources indicate the same findings. In some cases where data is insufficient to draw conclusive evidence from, this will be stated in the final situation overview.

3.4Limitations

Key limitations included:

- Lack of coverage in RAATA areas, meaning that one region that is covered by the NWS humanitarian response will not be represented in the situation overview.
- Dependence on existing data sources, which may not provide a complete picture. Given the use of multiple data sources, the impact should be limited. Where data gaps are identified, this will be highlighted in the text.
- Use of indicative data, such as key informant level information and news reports, which may include errors.

The risk of reporting false information is limited due to the triangulation of independent data sources. Wherever evidence is not conclusive, this will be clearly stated.

References

- Daoudy M, Dureid M, Mayer-Rich E. Northwestern Syria in the Time of Cholera, Earthquakes, and Environmental Degradation. Carnegie Middle East Center. Published online July 2023. Accessed February 4, 2024. https://carnegie-mec.org/2023/07/26/northwestern-syria-in-time-of-cholera-earthquakes-and-environmental-degradation-pub-90268
- 2. World Bank. Syria Economic Monitor, Summer 2023: The Economic Aftershocks of Large Earthquakes. Washington, DC: World Bank; 2023. Accessed February 1, 2024. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/40311
- 3. REACH Syria. Northwest Syria Income and Expenditure Assessment NWS October 2023.; 2024. Accessed February 1, 2024. https://repository.impact-initiatives.org/document/reach/f3166bbc/REACH-Syria-Northwest-Syria-Income-and-Expenditure-Assessment-NWS-October-2023.pdf
- 4. OCHA. Foreword by the Emergency Relief Coordinator | Humanitarian Action. Humanitarian Action. Published December 7, 2023. Accessed February 4, 2024. https://humanitarianaction.info/document/global-humanitarian-overview-2024/article/foreword-emergency-relief-coordinator-1
- 5. Danon N. Syrians lose WFP lifeline as US slashes funding. *Syria Direct*. https://syriadirect.org/syrians-lose-wfp-lifeline-as-us-slashes-funding/. Published January 16, 2024. Accessed February 4, 2024.
- 6. REACH Syria. *Current Economic Trends in Greater Idleb.*; 2022. Accessed February 4, 2024. https://repository.impact-initiatives.org/document/reach/ffe8f282/REACH_SYR_Current-Economic-Trends-in-Greater-Idleb_June-2022.pdf
- 7. World Bank. *Syria Economic Monitor: Syria's Economy in Ruins After a Decade-Long War*. Accessed January 31, 2024. https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/099720503172334463/IDU08b76f71b0bfa8045db09e8007c3df330e5fe

- 8. Haq T, Jaafar A, Eid G. *Impact of the February 2023 Earthquakes on Employment and the Labour Market in Syria Technical Note.* International Labour Organisation; 2023. Accessed January 30, 2024. https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/impact-february-2023-earthquakes-employment-and-labour-market-syria-technical-note
- 9. Nasser R, Wahbi W, Kiki M, Al-Asadi M, Ismail R, Marzouk N. *The Impact of the Earthquake in Syria.*; 2023. Accessed January 31, 2024. https://scpr-syria.org/the-impact-of-the-earthquake-in-syria/
- 10.OCHA. Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment in Northern Syria. Published online October 2023.
- 11.REACH Syria, Cash Working Group. Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI). https://www.reachresourcecentre.info/country/syria/cycle/729?toip-group=data&toip=dataset-database#cycle-729

4. Key ethical considerations and related risks

The proposed research design meets / does not meet the following criteria:

The proposed research design	Yes/ No	Details if no (including mitigation)
Has been coordinated with relevant stakeholders to avoid unnecessary duplication of data collection efforts?	Yes	
Does not expose researchers and / or data subjects to any risks as a direct result of this research and analysis exercise?	Yes	
Does not involve analysing information on specific topics which may be stressful and/ or retraumatising for researchers and/or data subjects?	Yes	
Follows IMPACT SOPs for management of personally identifiable information?	Yes	

5. Roles and responsibilities

Task Description	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
Research design	SAO	RM	IMPACT HQ	Cluster IM
Data processing and analysis	SAO	RM		Cluster IM
Output production	SAO	RM	IMPACT HQ	Cluster IM

Dissemination	SAO	RM	Cluster IM
Monitoring & Evaluation	PD	PD	
Lessons learned	SAO	RM	

Responsible: the person(s) who executes the task

Accountable: the person who validates the completion of the task and is accountable of the final output or

milestone

Consulted: the person(s) who must be consulted when the task is implemented **Informed:** the person(s) who need to be informed when the task is completed

6. Data Analysis Plan

Research Question	Indicator/topic	Secondary source
Which developments in the past 12 months impacted the socio-economic situation of households in Northwest Syria?	Earthquakes	World Bank. 'Syria Economic Monitor, Summer 2023: The Economic Aftershocks of Large Earthquakes'. Washington, DC: World Bank, 1 September 2023. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/40311. Daoudy, Marwa, Muzna Dureid, and Ethan Mayer-Rich. 'Northwestern Syria in the Time of Cholera, Earthquakes, and Environmental Degradation'. Carnegie Middle East Center, July 2023. https://carnegiemec.org/2023/07/26/northwestern-syria-in-time-of-cholera-earthquakes-and-environmental-degradation-pub-90268.
Which developments in the past 12 months impacted the socio-economic situation of households in Northwest Syria?	Conflict	REACH Syria. 'Rapid Needs Assessment in Response to Conflict Escalation in Greater Idleb', October 2023. https://repository.impact-initiatives.org/document/reach/53629fa6/RNA NWS Escalation Brief V3-2.pdf?utm_source=brevo&utm_campaign=REACH%20Syria%20%20Greater%20Idleb%20Conflict%20Escalation%20%20Rapid%20Needs%20Assessment&utm_medium=email. REACH Syria, and Cash Working Group. 'Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI)', n.d. https://www.reachresourcecentre.info/country/syria/cycle/729?toip-group=data&toip=dataset-database#cycle-729.
Which developments in the past 12 months impacted the socio-economic situation of households in Northwest Syria?	Currency depreciation	World Bank. 'Syria Economic Monitor, Summer 2023: The Economic Aftershocks of Large Earthquakes'. Washington, DC: World Bank, 1 September 2023. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/40311. Crisis Analysis - Syria. 'Northwest Syria Series Vol 6. Contiguous Crisis'. Accessed 1 February 2024. https://ca-syr.org/report/contiguous-crisis.
Which developments in the past 12 months impacted the socio-economic situation of households in Northwest Syria?	Environmental crises	Daoudy, Marwa, Muzna Dureid, and Ethan Mayer-Rich. 'Northwestern Syria in the Time of Cholera, Earthquakes, and Environmental Degradation'. Carnegie Middle East Center, July 2023. https://carnegie-mec.org/2023/07/26/northwestern-syria-in-time-of-cholera-earthquakes-and-environmental-degradation-pub-90268 . iMMAP. 'Crop Monitoring and Food Security Situation Report - Wheat and Barley', November 2023. https://immap.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Crop-Monitoring-and-Food-Security-Situation-Report_Northwest-Syria_november2023.pdf .

\A(I \cdot I \	F I'	OCHA. 'Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment in Northern Syria', October 2023.
Which developments in the	Funding	OCCUPA. Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment in Northern Syrid, October 2023.
past 12 months impacted the	reductions	REACH Syria. 'Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria (HSOS)', n.d. https://www.reachresourcecentre.info/country/syria/cycle/727?toip-
socio-economic situation of		group=data&toip=dataset-database#cycle-727.
households in Northwest		
Syria?		
What is the current socio-	Poverty	OCHA. 'Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment in Northern Syria', October 2023.
economic situation of		REACH Syria. 'Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria (HSOS)', n.d.
households in Northwest Syria,		https://www.reachresourcecentre.info/country/syria/cycle/727?toip- group=data&toip=dataset-database#cycle-727.
and to what extent is it		group-uataxtoip-uataset-uatabase#cycle=121.
impacting their access to basic		
goods and services?		
What is the current socio-	Food Security and	OCHA. 'Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment in Northern Syria', October 2023.
economic situation of	Nutrition	REACH Syria. 'Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria (HSOS)', n.d.
households in Northwest Syria,		https://www.reachresourcecentre.info/country/syria/cycle/727?toip- group=data&toip=dataset-database#cycle-727.
and to what extent is it		Nutrition Cluster, Physicians Across Continents - Turkey, and UNICEF. 'NW
impacting their access to basic		Syria Nutrition Cluster: Aleppo and Idleb Governorates Smart Survey Report
goods and services?		- Syrian Arab Republic ReliefWeb', 31 January 2024.
		https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/nw-syria-nutrition-cluster-aleppo-and-idleb-governorates-smart-survey-report.
What is the current socio-	Education	OCHA. 'Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment in Northern Syria', October 2023.
	Education	·
economic situation of		REACH Syria. 'Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria (HSOS)', n.d. https://www.reachresourcecentre.info/country/syria/cycle/727?toip-
households in Northwest Syria,		group=data&toip=dataset-database#cycle-727.
and to what extent is it		Education Cluster. 'North West Syria Joint Education and Child Protection
impacting their access to basic		Needs Assessment, June 2023', September 2023.
goods and services?		https://www.cpaor.net/sites/default/files/2023- 09/Full%20Report_NWS_Joint%20EiE-CP_Assessment.pdf.
NA/Is at its the annual as air	1114-	OCHA. 'Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment in Northern Syria', October 2023.
What is the current socio-	Health	·
economic situation of		REACH Syria. 'Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria (HSOS)', n.d. https://www.reachresourcecentre.info/country/syria/cycle/727?toip-
households in Northwest Syria,		group=data&toip=dataset-database#cycle-727.
and to what extent is it		Mehad. 'Assessment of MHPSS Needs For Adults in Idlib - Rebuilding Lives
impacting their access to basic		in NW Syria', 6 February 2024. https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-
goods and services?		republic/assessment-mhpss-needs-adults-idlib-rebuilding-lives-nw-syria.
		Mehad. 'Assessment of MHPSS Needs For Adults in Idlib - Rebuilding Lives in NW Syria', 6 February 2024. https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-
		republic/assessment-mhpss-needs-adults-idlib-rebuilding-lives-nw-syria.
What is the current socio-	Shelter & Non-	OCHA. 'Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment in Northern Syria', October 2023.
economic situation of	Food Items	REACH Syria. 'Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria (HSOS)', n.d.
households in Northwest Syria,		https://www.reachresourcecentre.info/country/syria/cycle/727?toip-
and to what extent is it		group=data&toip=dataset-database#cycle-727.
impacting their access to basic		
goods and services?		
g. c.a. aa seess.		

What is the current socio-	WASH	OCHA. 'Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment in Northern Syria', October 2023.
economic situation of households in Northwest Syria, and to what extent is it impacting their access to basic goods and services?		REACH Syria. 'Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria (HSOS)', n.d. https://www.reachresourcecentre.info/country/syria/cycle/727?toip-group=data&toip=dataset-database#cycle-727. (forthcoming April 2024) REACH Syria. 'Water Trucking in Northwest Syria'.

7. Monitoring & Evaluation Plan

IMPACT Objective	External M&E Indicator	Internal M&E Indicator	Focal point	Tool	Will indicator be tracked?
	services/products MPACT	# of downloads of x product from Resource Center	Country request to HQ		X Yes
U		# of downloads of x product from Relief Web	Country request to HQ		□ Yes
stakeholders are		# of downloads of x product from Country level platforms	Country team	User_log	□ Yes
IMPACT products		# of page clicks on x product from REACH global newsletter	Country request to HQ		□ Yes
		# of page clicks on x product from country newsletter, sendingBlue, bit.ly	Country team		X Yes
		# of visits to x webmap/x dashboard	Country request to HQ		□ Yes
IMPACT activities contribute to better program implementation	Number of humanitarian organisations utilizing IMPACT	# references in HPC documents (HNO, SRP, Flash appeals, Cluster/sector strategies)	Country team	Reference_ log	[List here relevant HPC-documents to be monitored: E.g. Iraq HNO 2018, Iraq Flash Appeal Mosul, Shelter Cluster strategy]
and coordination of	services/products	# references in single agency documents			[List here relevant agency-documents to be monitored:

the					E.g. UNHCR Country
humanitarian					Strategy, UNICEF WASH
response					Response Strategy]
	Humanitarian actors use IMPACT evidence/products as a basis for decision making, aid planning	Perceived relevance of IMPACT country-programs Perceived usefulness and influence of IMPACT outputs		Usage_Fee dback <i>and</i> Usage_Sur vey template	[Outline here the usage survey to be implemented for this research cycle E.g. Usage survey to be conducted in November
Humanitarian stakeholders are using IMPACT	and delivery Number of	Recommendations to strengthen IMPACT programs	Country		2017, following the release of x outputs, targeting at least 10 partners
products	humanitarian	Perceived capacity of IMPACT staff			E.g. Usage survey to be
	documents (HNO,	Perceived quality of outputs/programs		template	conducted at the end of the
	HRP, cluster/agency strategic plans, etc.) directly informed by IMPACT products	Recommendations to strengthen IMPACT programs			research cycle related to all outputs, targeting at least 20 partners]
Humanitarian	Number and/or percentage of	# of organisations providing resources (i.e.staff, vehicles, meeting space, budget,			□ Yes
stakeholders are	humanitarian	etc.) for activity implementation			
engaged in IMPACT	organizations directly contributing to	# of organisations/clusters inputting in research design and joint analysis	Country team	Engageme nt_log	X Yes
programs	IMPACT programs	research design and joint analysis			
throughout the research cycle	(providing resources, participating to presentations, etc.)	# of organisations/clusters attending briefings on findings;			X Yes

ANNEX 1: METHODOLOGY NOTES (IF RELEVANT)

ANNEX 2: [OTHER SPECIFY]