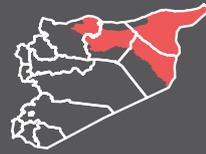




# Movement Intentions of IDPs in NES: An Analysis of Push Factors in Al-Hasakeh City May 2022



## Background

**Internally displaced persons (IDPs) represented almost one quarter of the population in Northeast Syria (NES) as of May 2022** (nearly 630,000 individuals over a population of 2.7 million).<sup>1</sup> **Protracted displacement continues to characterize the Syrian crisis**, with 89% of IDPs in NES having been displaced for at least 3 years according to the Humanitarian Needs Assessment Programme (HNAP)'s most recent survey of IDP households.<sup>2</sup> The average length of displacement is set to keep increasing as **only 4% of IDPs in NES wish to return** to their place of origin within 12 months (while 71% intend to stay in their location, 9% wish to move to a third location, and 16% remain undecided).<sup>3</sup> While nearly 300,000 IDPs are estimated to live in last-resort sites in NES, including 129,600 IDPs in camp settings, the remaining half of IDPs resides within host communities.<sup>4</sup> Importantly, **the different settings in which IDPs reside can have an impact on their stability in their area of displacement** and the specific threats and vulnerabilities that they may face, which in turn may affect movement intentions. Understanding these nuances is important to guide policies and decisions on durable solutions.<sup>5</sup> With the aim of contributing to the understanding of IDP movement intentions, **this brief provides an overview of IDP movement intentions in different location in NES and focuses on household-level push factors influencing movement intentions of IDPs in Al-Hasakeh City, the urban area with the highest number of IDPs in NES.**<sup>6</sup> The analysis presented in this brief is based on several data sources from HNAP and REACH, with data collected between March 2021 and May 2022. For more details on data sources, see page 6.

## Key Findings

**The majority of IDPs in NES are concentrated in Sub-districts with major urban centres.** In particular, Al-Hasakeh is the Sub-district with the highest number of IDPs (147,068, of which 112,210 reside in Al-Hasakeh City). **Movement intentions vary by Sub-district.** Hole is the Sub-district with the highest percentage of IDP households who plan on returning to their place of origin (33%), while Deir-ez-Zor Sub-district displayed the highest prevalence of IDP households who plan on moving to a third location (54%). Possibly due to higher instability, Abu Qalqal, Thiban, Khasham and Menbij Sub-districts showed the highest levels of uncertainty about movement intentions.

**IDPs residing in camps reported higher intention to stay compared to IDPs residing out of camps** (82% compared to 68%). The difference was mainly driven by **higher levels of uncertainty among IDPs outside of camps** (rather than a difference in concrete plans to move). In formal and informal camps assessed by REACH, almost no households reported intentions to move within one year, with the only exceptions of Roj camp (6%) and Areesha camp (4%). Moreover, in half of the assessed camps, some IDP households (between 2% and 8%) indicated the intention to move in more than one year, and predominantly expressed the wish to return to their community of origin.

Among the IDP households interviewed in May 2022 in Al-Hasakeh City, all those who indicated an intention to leave within one year wished to reach a community or camp in Syria different from their place of origin, while all those who indicated the intention to move in more than one year wished to return to their community of origin. This suggests that **short-term movement intentions of IDP households in Al-Hasakeh city do not reflect their intention to return, but rather their intention (or arguably, their need) to be displaced again.**

Corroborating this finding, the analysis of factors that may influence movement intentions shows that **the intention to move within one year was significantly associated with having received threats of eviction and with low reported security of tenure.** Moreover, households whose expenses were higher than their income displayed lower propensity to intend to move within one year, thus suggesting that **dire economic conditions pose a barrier to moving.** Both factors influencing IDP short-term movement intentions are particularly relevant in the context of Al-Hasakeh City, where **IDP and host community households were found to experience significant differences in shelter and livelihoods.**<sup>7</sup> In particular, IDPs are considerably more likely to rent and to experience low security of tenure and rental problems, including the threat of eviction due to inability to pay rent. IDP households are also more likely than host community households to borrow money as a coping strategy, to be in debt and to report a poor ability to meet basic needs.

Findings from the analysis of factors that may influence the intention to move in more than one year suggest that **better off households are more likely to make long-term movement plans.** At the same time, having faced safety or security concerns and having experienced several shelter inadequacies were significantly associated with a higher propensity to move in more than one year, indicating that **shelter issues and lack of safety are important push factors.** Given the limited return possibilities, the expressed **intentions to return in a time-frame longer than one year might be more correctly interpreted as a wish than as a concrete plan.**

Lastly, **demographic and displacement characteristics of the households did not show any significant association with movement intentions** as expressed by IDP households in Al-Hasakeh City.

1. Humanitarian Needs Assessment Programme (HNAP) Syria, Syria Population Assessment, May 2022.

2. Humanitarian Needs Assessment Programme (HNAP) Syria, Future Intentions of Syrian IDPs: 2021 IDPs Report Series #1, November 2021.

3. Humanitarian Needs Assessment Programme (HNAP) Syria, Future Intentions of Syrian IDPs: 2021 IDPs Report Series #1, November 2021.

4. UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), [2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview: Syrian Arab Republic](#), February 2022.

5. Local integration, return and resettlement represent three durable solutions for displaced populations. A durable solution to internal displacement is reached when IDPs no longer have any specific assistance and protection needs that are linked to their displacement and can enjoy their human rights without discrimination on account of their displacement. The needs, rights and legitimate interests of IDPs should guide policies and decisions on durable solutions. (Inter-Agency Standing Committee, [IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons](#), April 2010).

6. Humanitarian Needs Assessment Programme (HNAP) Syria, Syria Population Assessment, May 2022.

7. REACH, [Al-Hasakeh City Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria \(HSOS\) Urban Household Assessment](#), May 2022.



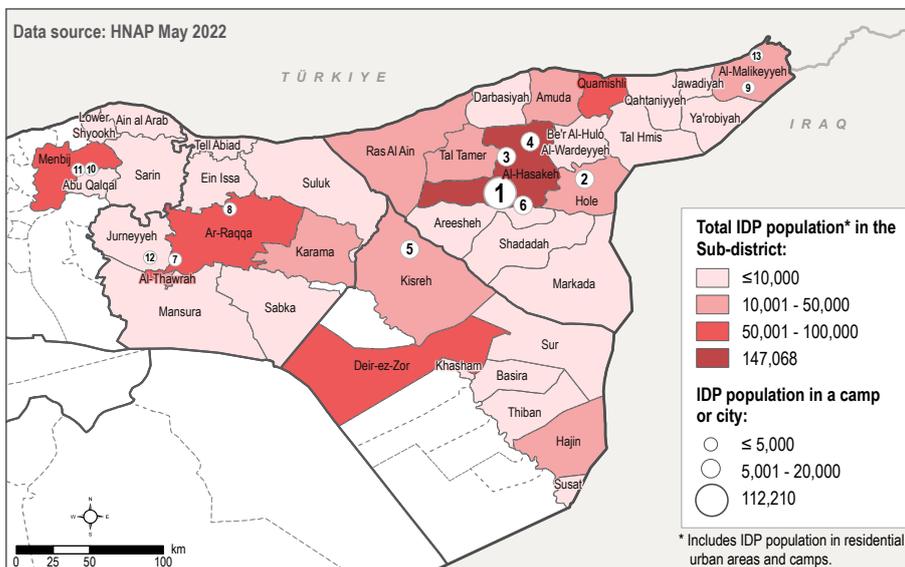
# Movement Intentions of IDPs in NES: An Analysis of Push Factors in Al-Hasakeh City



## Methodology and Limitations

In order to frame movement intention information within the wider context of internal displacement in NES, an overview of IDPs geographical distribution in NES is provided, using data from HNAP's May 2022 Population Baseline Assessment. Data from the latest survey of internally displaced households (HNAP), the latest [Humanitarian Situation Overview of Syria \(HSOS\) Urban Household Assessment](#) (REACH) and the latest [NES Formal and Informal Camp Profiling Assessments](#) (REACH) is used to give an overview of IDP movement intentions in NES. Data from all the consulted household surveys is representative of the Syrian IDP population with 95% confidence level and 10% margin of error, for the respective areas of coverage. While the information presented is the most up-to-date available for each location, data collection dates span from March 2021 to May 2022 (see Data Sources for IDP Movement Intentions, page 6). Therefore, **interpretation and comparisons of the data on IDP movement intentions in different locations should keep into account the time at which data was collected for each location.** Next, household-level data on IDPs in Hasakeh City (REACH – [Spring 2022 Al-Hasakeh City HSOS Urban Household Assessment](#)) was analysed in order to provide a zoom-in into factors that may influence movement intentions. In particular, hypotheses stemming from secondary literature review<sup>8</sup> point at a list of possible push factors belonging to the following domains: shelter, ability to meet basic needs, access to basic goods and services, safety and security, demographics, and displacement characteristics. Movement intentions were therefore analysed by the possible explanatory variables that were captured in the Al-Hasakeh City Urban Household Assessment. To allow a correct interpretation of findings, hypotheses were tested statistically using Fisher's exact test. Significant associations between the intention to move and the explanatory factors (i.e. when the p-value is less than or equal to .05) are highlighted in the text. **Findings from this analysis describe the situation of Syrian IDP households residing in the assessed neighbourhoods of Al-Hasakeh city in May 2022 and are not generalizable.**

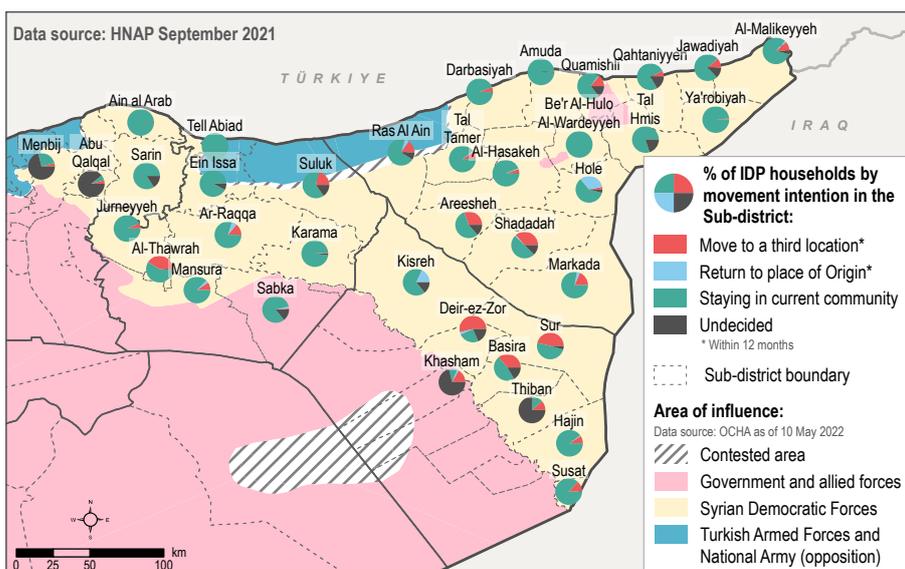
## Overview of IDPs in NES



Location	Map Icon	Syrian IDP Population
Al-Hasakeh City	1	112,210
Hole camp	2	16,848
Washokani camp	3	14,861
Serekaniye camp	4	10,200
Abu Khashab camp	5	9,090
Areeshah camp	6	8,540
Mahmoudli camp	7	8,500
Tel Samen camp	8	4,950
Roj camp	9	3,593
Menbij East New camp	10	3,250
Menbij East Old camp	11	2,270
Twahina camp	12	1,460
Newroz camp	13	1,136

Data source: HNAP May 2022

## Overview of IDP Movement Intentions in NES



Location	IDP Movement Intentions <sup>9</sup>			
	Stay	Unsure	Move now	Move later
NES - In Camp	82%	4%	15%	-
NES - Out of Camp	68%	19%	13%	-
Al-Hasakeh City	65%	19%	8%	8%
Hole camp <sup>10</sup>	NA	NA	NA	NA
Washokani camp	92%	-	0%	8%
Serekaniye camp	98%	-	0%	2%
Abu Khashab camp	99%	-	1%	0%
Areeshah camp	90%	-	4%	6%
Mahmoudli camp	100%	-	0%	0%
Tel Samen camp	100%	-	0%	0%
Roj camp	87%	-	6%	7%
Menbij East New camp	100%	-	0%	0%
Menbij East Old camp	99%	-	1%	0%
Twahina camp	100%	-	0%	0%
Newroz camp	96%	-	0%	4%

Data source: see Data Sources for IDP Movement Intentions, page 6.

8. Further details on the scope and purpose of the secondary literature review and on hypotheses can be found in the [Terms of Reference](#).

9. "Move now" indicates the intention to move within one year, while "move later" indicates the intention to move in more than one year. HNAP data does not capture the intention to move in more than one year. The answer option "Unsure" was not available for respondents of the NES Formal and Informal Camp Profiling Assessments.

10. No representative household-level information from Hole camp is collected through REACH's NES Formal and Informal Camp Profiling Assessments.



## Overview of IDP Movement Intentions in Al-Hasakeh City

In May 2022, REACH conducted the HSOS Urban Household Assessment in accessible areas of Al-Hasakeh City. In particular, 14 neighbourhoods in the northern part of the city were covered<sup>11</sup> (see the [Spring 2022 Al-Hasakeh City HSOS Urban Household Assessment](#)). The data collected is representative of the Syrian IDP population (excluding those in collective centres), with 95% confidence level and 10% margin of error. Findings indicate that 65% of IDP households intended to stay in Al-Hasakeh City, 19% were not sure about their movement intentions, **8% intended to move in more than one year and 8% intended to move within one year** (of which 5% within a month, 2% within six months, and 1% within a year). **All IDP households that indicated an intention to leave within one year declared that they intended to move to a community in Syria different from their community of origin, or to a camp in Syria. On the contrary, all IDP households that indicated the intention to move in more than one year declared that they would like to return to their community of origin.**

## Analysis of Factors Influencing IDP Movement Intentions in Al-Hasakeh City

### How to read findings:

Title = Possible explanatory variable

28 9 8 2 Subtitle 1 = Explanatory variable option/group 1

38 10 6 Subtitle 2 = Explanatory variable option/group 2

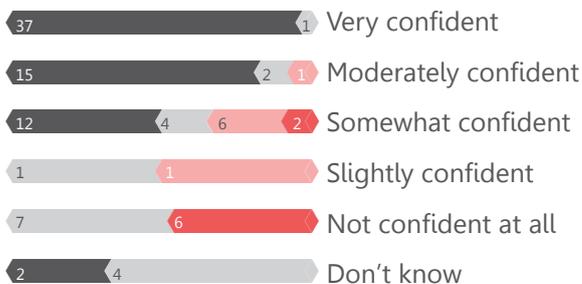
n = Number of households belonging to the explanatory variable group who reported a given movement intention

Legend = Movement intention:<sup>12</sup> Stay Not sure Move in more than one year Move within one year

### SHelter

IDP households that were not confident at all about their security of tenure were significantly more likely to indicate the intention to move within one year. Moreover, all the households that indicated the intention to move within one year also reportedly faced some HLP concern. These findings suggest that **short-term movement intentions as indicated by IDPs in Al-Hasakeh city were arguably the outcome of a forced decision to move, since they were prevalent among households who had faced eviction threats and among household with low security of tenure.** Regarding long-term movement intentions (or the wish to return to the community of origin), a significant association was found with the presence of shelter inadequacies: **all IDP households that indicated the intention to move in more than one year also experienced more than three shelter inadequacies.**<sup>13</sup>

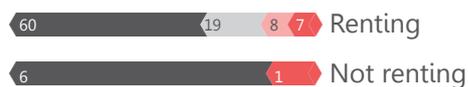
#### Security of tenure



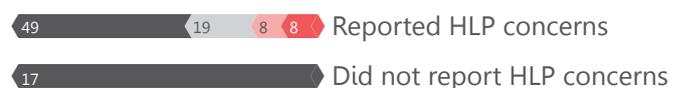
#### Share of expenses over rent



#### Occupancy type



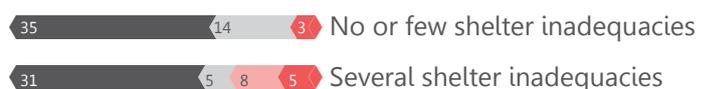
#### Housing, Land and Property (HLP) concerns



#### Threat of eviction



#### Number of shelter inadequacies



Movement intention: Stay Not sure Move in more than one year Move within one year

11. The total Syrian IDP population of the assessed neighbourhoods is 56,556 out of 112,210 Syrian IDPs in Al-Hasakeh City.

12. Answer options to the question "Do you or any of your household members intend to leave this location?" were re-coded in the following way: Move within one year for "Yes, within one week", "Yes, within one month", "Yes, within six months" and "Yes, within a year"; Move in more than one year for "Yes, within a longer time frame"; Stay for "No plans to leave"; Not sure for "Don't know" and "Prefer not to answer".

13. The following shelter inadequacies were mentioned: the inability to lock homes securely, leakage from the ceiling or roof during rain, windows and doors not sealed, shelter being prone to flooding, poor sanitation, lack of water connection, lack of electricity connection, lack of lighting inside or around the shelter, high temperatures inside the shelter, lack of ventilation, lack of privacy and lack of space or overcrowding.



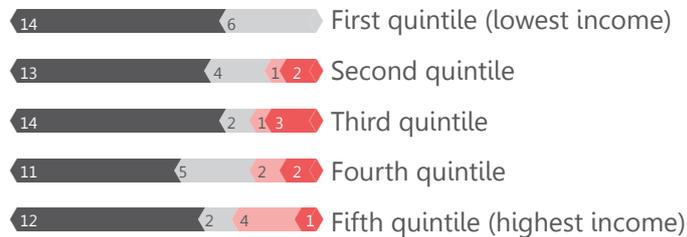
## ABILITY TO MEET BASIC NEEDS

The intention to move within one year was significantly associated with having a reported monthly income equal or higher than the reported monthly expenses. That is to say, households who experienced a deficit displayed lower propensity to intend to move within one year. This finding is in line with hypotheses pointing at the fact that **households with insufficient economic means cannot sustain the expenses for moving**. The finding is corroborated by the fact that none of the households with the lowest income per person (first quintile) expressed the intention to move. Lastly, a poor or very poor self-reported ability to meet basic needs was significantly associated with lower propensity to move in more than one year. This finding suggests that **households with better economic conditions are more likely to make long-term movement plans**, and in this case specifically planning to return to their community of origin.

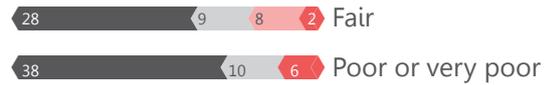
### Income-expenses gap



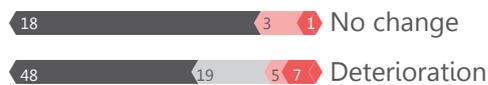
### Income per person



### Self-reported ability to meet basic needs



### Change in self-reported ability to meet basic needs



### Reported first priority need



Movement intention: ■ Stay ■ Not sure ■ Move in more than one year ■ Move within one year

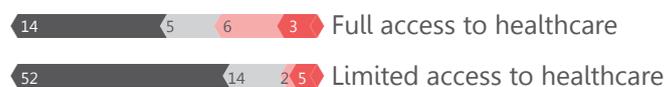
## ACCESS TO BASIC GOODS AND SERVICES

The secondary literature review suggests that households that do not have access to basic goods and services should be more likely to express an intention to move. By analysing variables related to access to basic goods and services as captured in the Al-Hasakeh City Urban Household Assessment, no evidence was found to support this hypothesis. In fact, while all households that expressed an intention to move also experienced unmet water needs, the number of households whose water needs could be fully met is so small that no significant association between access to water and movement intention can be drawn. On the contrary, the **intention to move in more than one year was significantly associated with having full access to healthcare and high access to electricity** (11 hours or more), thus going against the previously stated hypothesis, and once again suggesting that households in better conditions are more likely to make long-term movement plans. When looking at the intention to move within one year, no significant association emerges with indicators on access to water, access to healthcare and access to electricity. While a **lack of conclusive findings on a relationship between access to basic goods and services and short-term movement intentions** could be due to the scarcity and lack of granularity of the indicators analysed, it is worth stressing that previous analyses on national data of IDP movement intentions (in a 12 months horizon) also highlighted the absence of a significant relationship between the two variables.<sup>14</sup>

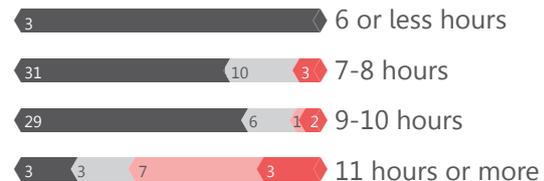
### Access to water



### Access to healthcare



### Access to electricity



Movement intention: ■ Stay ■ Not sure ■ Move in more than one year ■ Move within one year

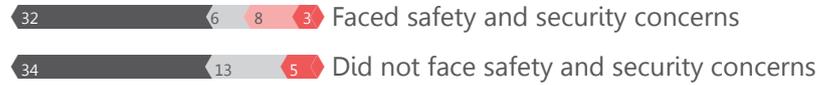
14. Humanitarian Needs Assessment Programme (HNAP) Syria, Future Intentions of Syrian IDPs: 2021 IDPs Report Series #1, November 2021.



## SAFETY AND SECURITY CONCERNS

No significant association was found between short-term movement intentions and safety and security concerns. However, **safety and security were significantly associated with the long-term movement intentions**. In fact, all the households that indicated the intention to move in more than one year also had a member who had faced a safety or security concern in the three months prior to data collection.

### Safety and security concerns

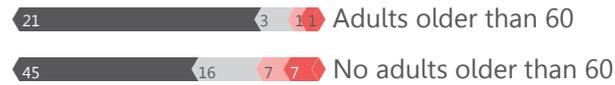


Movement intention: ■ Stay ■ Not sure ■ Move in more than one year ■ Move within one year

## DEMOGRAPHICS

**No significant association was found between demographic characteristics of the household and their reported movement intentions.** The literature suggests that households with older members could be less likely to move. While the findings somewhat confirm this hypothesis (households with adults older than 60 reporting lower intention to move) the association was not found to be significant. All households without a male adult indicated the intention to stay. Nonetheless, given the small number of households with these demographics characteristics, no association is found between the presence of male adults and the intention to move. Lastly, the presence of all children regularly attending school did not show a significant association with lower movement intention, as the literature suggests.

### Presence of older adults in the household



### Presence of male adults in the household



Movement intention: ■ Stay ■ Not sure ■ Move in more than one year ■ Move within one year

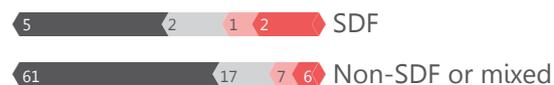
### Presence of children attending school



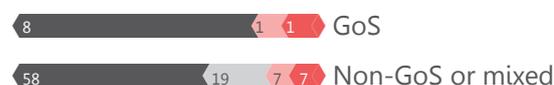
## DISPLACEMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Households coming from communities currently under control of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) could be more likely to express an intention to return to their community of origin compared to households that come from communities currently under a different area of control. Information about the household origin was only collected at Sub-district level, thus not allowing a clear-cut classification of household origins by area of control. Consequently, while households coming from Sub-districts uniquely under SDF control showed a somewhat higher propensity for movement intentions, results are not conclusive and no significant association was found. At the same time, while households that have been displaced multiple times are believed to be more likely to displace again, the data does not confirm a strong association between having been displaced more than twice and the intention to move within one year. Overall, **displacement characteristics of the households did not show any significant association with movement intentions**.

### Origin area under SDF control

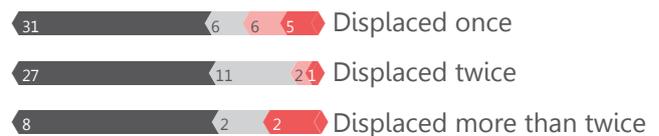


### Origin area under Government of Syria (GoS) control



Movement intention: ■ Stay ■ Not sure ■ Move in more than one year ■ Move within one year

### Times of displacement





## Data Sources for IDP Movement Intentions

Agency	Assessment	Geographical Coverage	Data Collection Time
H NAP	Survey of Internally Displaced Households	National (representative up to the Sub-district level, and for In Camp and Out of Camp IDPs separately at regional level)	September 2021
REACH	HSOS Urban Household Assessment	Al-Hasakeh City (14 out of 30 residential neighbourhoods)	May 2022
REACH	NES Formal and Informal Camp Profiling Assessments	Washokani camp	February 2022
REACH	NES Formal and Informal Camp Profiling Assessments	Serekaniye camp	May 2022
REACH	NES Formal and Informal Camp Profiling Assessments	Abu Khashab camp	January 2022
REACH	NES Formal and Informal Camp Profiling Assessments	Areasha camp	February 2022
REACH	NES Formal and Informal Camp Profiling Assessments	Mahmoudli camp	January 2022
REACH	NES Formal and Informal Camp Profiling Assessments	Tel Samen camp	September 2021
REACH	NES Formal and Informal Camp Profiling Assessments	Roj camp	May 2022
REACH	NES Formal and Informal Camp Profiling Assessments	Menbij East New camp	May 2022
REACH	NES Formal and Informal Camp Profiling Assessments	Menbij East Old camp	May 2022
REACH	NES Formal and Informal Camp Profiling Assessments	Twahina camp	March 2021
REACH	NES Formal and Informal Camp Profiling Assessments	Newroz camp	May 2022

### About REACH Initiative

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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