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Youth Empowerment in Northern Syria

Field Research



Local Development
Organization
منظمة التنمية المحلية



Analytics, Research, Consulting



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About LDO



**Local Development
Organization**
منظمة التنمية المحلية

LDO is a civil society non-governmental organization specialized in the support of local administrations, municipalities, and civil society organizations, in addition to, the provision of basic services and the issuance of studies and information. LDO was established at the beginning of 2015 and was registered in Turkey No. 270 - 19154 dated 14/14/2016 by a number of activists and specialists in the area of local administration and governance. The organization has strong relations with local communities and local councils in Syria and has a network of local and international experts in various fields such as administration, Law, economics, strategic planning, institutional development, reconstruction, and real estate rights.

LDO works to implement governance programs, provide basic services, develop institutional and human capacities, provide solutions, monitoring and evaluation systems, prepare specialized studies and research, organize awareness campaigns and local dialogue events for local institutions and cadres and their communities, The principles of good governance and the promotion of social responsibility to achieve the development and stability of society.

About Indicators



INDICATORS is a company specialized in analytics, research, and consulting, established in 2017, in Turkey, Gaziantep, provides services that related to data, which is data collection, development of data collection tools, data quality management, building data coding and archiving systems, as well as data analysis for different types of research studies...

INDICATORS provides services in business, humanitarian, and research sectors, seeks to contribute in the development of the capabilities of the different types organizations in the field of data and analytics, through the provision of consultancy, training and scientific guides, in a way to increase the degree of the use of data and gives a clear vision of organization's situation and estimation of future changes that may occur, which will be reflected as decisions based on a good knowledge of their results.

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Executive Summary

Because of the difficult economic and security situation in the Syrian liberated northern areas, and of our belief in the importance of the role of young people in building society, and their ability to contribute effectively and make the necessary changes to improve the situation of society if they have the proper circumstances, we conducted this study to reveal the capabilities and qualifications of Syrian youth of both genders in all fields, identify their main weaknesses and work to resolve them, identify the obstacles and difficulties that prevent them from being able to bear their responsibilities optimally and work to overcome these obstacles and to enable youth to start working and participate in all economic, political and social aspects of life.

The study was conducted in July 2019 in Aleppo and Idlib governorates, in

Aleppo governorate, it included Kafr Naha, Daret Azza, Azaz and Afrin, while in Idlib, it included Jericho, Orm al-Joz, Kafr takharim and Maaret al-Nu'man.

Study sample included interviewing 16 experts who are working with civil society organizations and bodies, using a guide with open-ended questions to obtain in-depth information about the situation and life conditions in the liberated areas, and about the challenges faced by young people in all fields, it also included conducting 8 discussion sessions in all study areas, and 400 closed-ended questionnaires were collected to obtain results that could be generalized on the study's community through interviews with young people of both genders and both host community and IDPs.

The study showed that there is a marked decrease in the employment opportunities for young people in the liberated areas, and these opportunities can only accept a limited percentage of young people which experts estimated between %20 to %40, in light of the limited efforts of humanitarian organizations or international supporters to enable young people to start working, as there is insufficient financial support to finance programs that support small projects, in addition to the

weakness of vocational training and capacity-building programs that are being implemented and their inability in their current form to develop the qualifications of young people to enable them to enter the labor market. As for people with disabilities, their needs and requirements are not taken into consideration in relation to the rehabilitation of the buildings where the training courses are conducted, such as corridors, stairs and providing appropriate equipment for them, and lack of bodies concerned with their affairs.

On the political regard, there is a somewhat low level of political awareness among young people, mainly due to the low level of education among young people due to their inability to afford the costs and tuition of university education, and some of them were influenced by extremist ideas and misconceptions about political action, which extremist forces and groups are currently working to spread, or the ideas that were spread during the period of PYD control over Afrin area in the absence of any political bodies and gatherings or media platforms that work to correct the political awareness of the youth and to fight ideas that are foreign to Syrian society.

With regard to social life, there is a decrease in the amount of activities aimed at raising the level of social awareness among young people, or those that seek to strengthen the integration of the IDPs within the local community and alleviate tensions between the two parties and harmonize their points of view, knowing that there are many problems and obstacles that prevent IDPs from being effectively integrated into the community, and people with disabilities are also not taken into consideration in terms of designing special activities for them, knowing that they are in desperate need for such activities, especially in the fields of protection and psychological support.

As for the fighters both former and current, the results of the study indicate that they suffer negative psychological effects resulting from their participation in the military operations, and many of them were influenced by the extremist ideology that extremist forces are working to spread during the lack of any bodies that work on rehabilitating fighters both current and former ones in order to integrate them back into society.

Based on the above, the study recommends the necessity of

working to enable young people to start their private businesses and provide employment opportunities for them through targeting them with capacity building and vocational training programs, provided that these programs shall be designed in a way that allows young people to implement the skills they learned practically through contracting with business owners and institutions, provided that humanitarian organizations should cover the costs of youth employment during the training period, provide financial support to young people through increasing funding for programs that support small projects and enable young people to start working online as a practical solution to the problem of limited employment opportunities inside Syria, through necessary training for such type of work such as dealing with online work platforms and e-marketing and providing the necessary equipment to start work, especially laptops.

The study also recommends the necessity of working to raise the political and societal awareness of young people, and to fight extremist ideas that extremist groups are working to spread, through targeting them with awareness sessions, and to support establishing legal bodies and institutions to spread modern

political concepts, and to provide courses on civil society organizations, political parties, elections and local administration, human rights and international humanitarian law, in addition to the need to support and establish bodies to rehabilitate former and current fighters in order to reintegrate them into society through psychological support and awareness-raising sessions to eliminate the negative effects and extremist ideas they have as a result of their participation in military operations, and to provide financial support for them to start their private businesses.

Findings



First: empowering young people economically



Availability of employment opportunities

- A- There is a general decrease in the available employment opportunities within the liberated areas, where %7 of the study participants indicate that there are no employment opportunities for young people at all, while %37 of them consider employment opportunities rare.
- B- Experts estimate that available employment opportunities can only accept between %20 and %40 of young people.
- C- The jobs provided by local and international humanitarian organizations are the most important employment opportunities available for young people of both genders with a preference for females, according to experts.
- D- Humanitarian organizations require a number of requirements for those who wish to apply for the announced jobs such as having educational qualification, practical experience, computer skills and foreign languages.
- E- Craft occupations are important field of work for young people of both genders. The most prominent craft occupations that are currently of high demand are repairing works for mobile phones, computers, cars' mechanics and electricity, wiring and maintenance of internet networks and solar energy systems for males. For females, the most prominent of these occupations are sewing, embroidery, hoard and cosmetology.
- F- More than a third of the study participants mentioned agriculture as a work opportunity for young people of both genders.
- G- There is a decrease in the percentage of employment opportunities provided by commercial and industrial establishments due to the low number of such establishments in the liberated areas.
- H- Working online is an important field of work for young people of both genders, and a practical solution for the problem of limited employment opportunities.
- I- The average income of a person working online is between 300 \$ and 500 \$ per month, which is enough to cover the monthly household expenses.
- J- Many Syrians have skills and experiences that can be exploited in the field

of online work such as data entry, online education, and essay writing.

- K- Young people who want to work online face many challenges, such as the low expected income at the start-up stage due to the large work market, intense competition, low e-marketing skills among Syrian youth, lack of experience in dealing with online platforms and the difficulties of remittances.
- L- Young people face the problem of lack of practical experience and previous work experience, which is required by most employers as a prerequisite to hire people for the available employment opportunities.
- M- Low educational level, especially university education, is a major obstacle for young people to get the announced jobs.
- N- The main reason for the reluctance of young people to complete their university education is due to the high tuition fees ranging from 200 USD to 400 USD per year.
- O- There are many young university graduates who are unable to obtain their educational certificates and documents from universities of the Syrian regime, which leads to depriving them from employment opportunities.
- P- %61 of study participants mentioned the prevalence of favoritism and mediation as basic elements of recruitment processes, especially for humanitarian organizations, and the absence of HR policies, procedures and transparency in the recruitment process.
- Q- Family responsibilities and women's obligations towards their husbands and children limit their ability to work, especially in the absence of nursing homes or kindergartens that women can use to care for their children, in addition to the security difficult situations such as insecurity on the roads and lack of public transport
- R- IDPs face additional difficulties when seeking employment, primarily because they do not have many social relations in their areas of residence.
- S- IDPs suffer from low wages because some employers exploit their poor economic conditions and their need for work.



The ability of young people to start their private businesses

- A- There is a significant scarcity in the number of private commercial projects and establishments within the liberated areas, as only about one third of the study participants indicated that such projects or establishments exist within their areas.
- B- the weakness of the financial situation and the lack of adequate funding

for young people is the main obstacle hindering them from starting their private businesses.

- C- %44 of the study participants said that there are no programs that support or finance small projects in their areas, while %48 of them said that these programs do exist but at a low extent.
- D- The security conditions in the liberated areas, such as bombardment, bombings, kidnapping of capital owners and theft, have an important role in the reluctance of young people to start their private businesses.
- E- Experts mentioned that young people have low experience regarding market strategies, economic feasibility study of projects, financial budgeting, management and marketing, knowing that there are no bodies or institutions that work on providing such services.
- F- Business owners suffer from high operating expenses of their projects, especially when it comes to providing energy sources, which leads to high prices of products of these projects and its inability to compete with foreign goods.



Employing people with disabilities

- A- The vast majority of the participants in the study (%96) indicate that there are no bodies or institutions concerned with employing people with disabilities in their areas.
- B- More than half of the study participants indicated that there are no employment opportunities for people with disabilities in their areas, and %30 said that employment opportunities for people with disabilities are rare.
- C- The main fields of work that people with disabilities can occupy are office work and jobs such as accounting, secretarial or craft occupations that do not require a large muscle effort such as sewing, computer and mobile phones maintenance.
- D- Online work is an important opportunity for people with disabilities as it does not require mobility and can be done from home.
- E- According to the opinion of nearly two-thirds of the study participants, people with disabilities suffer from employers' mistrust of their abilities and capabilities, which leads to their non-employment.
- F- According to %43 of the study participants, people with disabilities suffer negative psychological effects resulting from disability, which result in their lack of confidence and fear of community rejection.

- G- People with disabilities face great difficulty in moving to and from workplaces in the absence of means of transportation that take their needs into account.



Second: Regarding vocational training and capacity building programs

- A- A. There is a limited number of training centers and institutions that provide vocational training and capacity building programs.
- B- B. More than half of the study participants said that the training courses which are held can only accommodate a very limited number of young people.
- C- C. Most of the training courses that are held are of high financial costs, which hinder young people from attending it.
- D- D. Experts asserted that training programs, both vocational and academic ones are not effective enough to prepare and enable young people to enter labor market, because the periods of these courses are only few days, and these courses are of a theoretical nature, therefore, they do not give the participants a chance to practice what they learn.
- E- E. The most prominent academic training that young people need are training courses on project management, monitoring and evaluation, financial accounting, human resources management, computer skills and foreign languages.
- F- F. Study participants from Afrin and Azaz areas consider Turkish language courses are the most important ones because Turkish authorities established many service utilities that provide important employment opportunities for the residents of these areas.
- G- G. The most important vocational training that are useful within the labor market for males are computer and mobile phones maintenance, wiring and maintenance of internet and solar energy networks and maintenance of cars' mechanics and electricity, while for females, it includes training on sewing, hoard, household works, embroidery and cosmetology.
- H- H. The main focus of the humanitarian organizations' training is on vocational training, while there are fewer academic training and courses, therefore, humanitarian organizations' programs do not take the needs of people with university certificates and the employment opportunities they seek into their consideration.



Third: Empowering young people socially

- A- %43 of the study participants said that there are no societal activities that target young people in their areas, and %47 of them said that these activities exist but at low extent.
- B- Experts said that the societal activities that are implemented are temporary activities associated with projects implemented by humanitarian organizations, therefore, these activities are not carried out periodically, and can only accommodate very limited numbers of young people.
- C- Approximately two-thirds of the study participants indicated that they had not previously participated in any societal activities.
- D- The main reason for the reluctance of young people to attend societal activities is the difficult economic conditions experienced by Syrian families, and the preoccupation of young people in providing their living expenses.
- E- young people face many difficulties that hinder them from being able to work in leadership positions within the community institutions, the most prominent of which is lack of experience and lack of community's trust in their abilities.
- F- People with disabilities face many difficulties in attending societal activities, such as unequipped buildings which don't suit their needs, and the difficulty of reaching the centers where the activities are carried out.
- G- Humanitarian organizations have limited interest in including people with disabilities in programs and projects that are implemented in general, as the percentage of including them in protection programs is only %10, knowing that they need such projects and psychological support more than others.



Fourth: Integrating IDPs with local community

- A- There is a limited number of initiatives and activities that aim to integrate IDPs into the local community, as %58 of the study participants said there is no such initiatives in the areas where they live, while %37 of them said they do exist but at a low extent.
- B- The main concerns of the host community towards IDPs is the spread of unknown people and their unknown security backgrounds due to having many IDPs who do not have personal identification documents or have lost them during displacement.

- C- Some members of the host community consider that the majority of support and projects implemented by humanitarian organizations aim to meet the needs of IDPs, knowing that there are many families of the host community facing similar difficult economic conditions just like the IDPs.
- D- IDPs basically suffer feeling exploited by members of the host community through raising the rents of residential houses, shops and low labor wages.
- E- The displaced children's dropping out of schools due to displacement leads to their inability to continue their education.
- F- Participants of focused dialogue sessions point out that there is no discrimination between IDPs and members of the host community in terms of receiving public services except for IDPs living in camps and who are experiencing difficult humanitarian conditions.
- G- Tension between IDPs and members of the host community in Afrin area is increasing significantly due to violating and seizing locals' property and abuses of armed factions against them.



Fifth: Empowering young people politically

- A- Many experts and study participants pointed out a low level of political awareness among young people, in addition to limited knowledge of their rights and duties.
- B- The main reason behind low level of political awareness among young people is the widespread misconceptions about political action, which was spread due to the effects of extremist groups and PYD which was controlling Afrin area.
- C- The ability of extremist groups to spread their ideas and persuade young people is increased in the absence of any effective role of civil society organizations of all kinds and the severe shortage of bodies and gatherings that work on raising the level of political awareness among young people.
- D- The absence of governance among civil society organizations, lack of their diversity and especially scientific ineffectiveness of vocational trades unions contribute in increasing the weakness of political knowledge and practice.
- E- Nearly two thirds of the participants pointed out the lack of internet platforms that work on correcting political awareness among young people.

- F- Social networks and media are the main sources of political awareness among young people.
- G- There is a marked decrease in the ability of young people to hold political positions and access to decision-making positions as nearly half of the participants indicate that no young people were able to access such positions.
- H- Lack of experience in political action among young people and lack of community's trust in their capabilities and potentials cause depriving them from participating in political action.
- I- Participants from Afrin area said there is an increase in competition between IDPs and local people for holding political positions unlike other areas where only local people can participate in political action and IDPs are marginalized.



Sixth: Fighters' rehabilitation



Rehabilitating former fighters

- A- Former fighters suffer negative psychological effects resulting from their participation in military actions such as isolation, psychological and nervous stress, anxiety and constant tension.
- B- Former fighters, especially those who have joined extremist groups, face difficulty in participating in social and political life because of being influenced by extremist ideas that have been previously planted in their heads, and their inability to eliminate these ideas permanently.
- C- Many former fighters lack any experiences, educational qualifications or vocational trades experiences that enable them to enter labor market.
- D- Former fighters are of a low financial ability, which hinder them from starting their private businesses.
- E- There aren't any bodies or organizations that work on rehabilitating former fighters and integrating them into the society.
- F- Fighters with disabilities are experiencing hard economic conditions because there aren't any bodies or institutions that take care of them and provide their needs.
- G- Fighters with disabilities are facing difficulty in obtaining an employment opportunity because they lack any skills and experiences required for entering labor market, in addition to the employers' lack of trust in their capabilities.

- H- Fighters with disabilities suffer psychological effects because of their injuries.



Rehabilitating current fighters

- A- Young fighters, especially those who are enlisted with moderate factions, have a high level of acceptance for civil life.
- B- Young people who participate in military operations suffer many negative psychological effects such as isolation, psychological and nervous stress, which affects their relation with their community.
- C- Community have a high level of acceptance for young people who are enlisted with moderate factions and Free Army factions, while for extremist groups, the level is decreased.
- D- Community's acceptance for fighters who are enlisted with armed factions could be decreased because of the violations of these factions against citizens.
- E- Current fighters suffer inability to get an employment opportunity because of being busy with military action.
- F- Many fighters have educational and vocational trades experiences and qualifications that can be exploited in variable fields of work, but they lack practical experience.
- G- Current fighters are unable to attend societal activities and vocational training courses because they do not have enough time for it.
- H- There aren't any bodies or organizations that work on rehabilitating fighters and integrating them into the society.

Recommendations

First: Empowering young people economically

1. Availability of employment opportunities

- A- Necessity of working on enabling young people to continue their education, especially university education by providing financial scholarships to cover their university tuition, or by opening universities with nominal fees so all young people get the chance to continue their education.
- B- Young people must be qualified and offered a practical experience which is necessary to enter the labor market through targeting them with vocational training and capacity-building programs.
- C- Conducting comprehensive statistical surveys on young people who are unable to obtain their educational documents and certificates, and working to open channels of communication with the Syrian regime through international bodies and organizations in order to facilitate young people's access to their university certificates.
- D- The need for monitoring humanitarian organizations by international donors in relation to recruitment processes through external monitoring to ascertain recruitment criteria.
- E- Efforts must be made to raise community's awareness on the importance of online work, and to encourage young people to start it.
- F- Starting capacity building courses in the fields of e-marketing, dealing with online work platforms and English language, in addition to specialized training in the fields that are suitable for online work.
- G- Working to find solutions to the problems of remittances through opening branches of commercial banks such as PTT branch similar to the branches that were opened in Azaz and Al-Bab areas in the northern countryside of Aleppo.
- H- Working to provide necessary equipment to start working online and provide operating expenses in the first stages of work until young people can start working.
- I- Empowering women to work by providing kindergartens for free or at nominal prices, and providing means of transportation to and from workplaces.
- J- Working to reduce the

phenomenon of discrimination between the IDPs and the members of the host community in terms of the availability of employment opportunities by amending the bylaws and regulations of the local councils and local governance bodies in a

way that guarantees the rights of the IDPs and establishing offices within the local councils for them.

- K- Establishing specialized bodies for IDPs to follow up their matters and work to provide job opportunities for them.

2. Young people's ability to start their own businesses

- A- The need to provide the necessary funding for young people to start their private businesses, through increasing funding programs that support small projects.
- B- Building the capacity of young people through training courses in the field of small projects management, financial accounting, marketing and market strategies.
- C- Providing support, supervision and follow-up for young people during the initial stages of the project, and assisting them in preparing

the economic feasibility study and the general budget of the project.

- D- Working to provide the necessary energy sources for the operation of small projects at reasonable prices, this can be done by providing alternative energy sources (solar energy panels) for projects owners.
- E- Rehabilitating Free Police personnel and providing them with necessary equipment to protect commercial establishments and achieve security in the area.

3. Employing people with disabilities

- A- Necessity of working to provide employment opportunities suitable for people with disabilities, through amending the rules and regulations of the local councils and local government bodies to guarantee allocating a part of the jobs provided by humanitarian organizations and institutions, official and non-official institutions for people with disabilities.

- B- Enabling people with disabilities to start working online through providing necessary training, such as dealing with online work platforms, e-marketing, foreign languages, specialized training in the fields which are suitable for working online, and providing the necessary equipment for them to start working.

- C- Allocating a part of the financial support provided by international donors to design vocational training and capacity-building programs that are suitable for people with disabilities.
- D- Preparing training centers to meet the requirements of people with disabilities such as stairs and corridors, and providing special equipment for them (chairs and tables).
- E- Financing and supporting establishing specialized bodies concerned with rehabilitating people with disabilities, and providing suitable employment opportunities for them.
- F- Intensifying community awareness sessions that raise awareness among the community about the capabilities of people with disabilities and their ability to bear responsibilities and completing the tasks assigned to them.
- G- Working to raise the self-confidence of people with disabilities by targeting them with awareness sessions and psychological support sessions.

Second: In terms of vocational training and capacity-building programs

- A- The need to develop training centers and institutions in all study areas, and providing free training for young people of both genders periodically.
- B- Training courses must continue for a sufficient period of time so that the trainee is able to enter the labor market.
- C- Enabling young people to practically apply the skills they have been trained on through contracting with a number of institutions and craftsmen to employ young people, provided that humanitarian organizations cover the costs of their employment during the training period.
- D- Taking the needs of all trainee categories into account, especially university graduates, and work on increasing the number of academic training offered.

Third: Youth empowerment at the social level

- A- The need to increase the support and financing of carrying out activities and events aimed at raising the level of societal awareness among young people.
- B- Working on launching an internet platform through which activities that will be implemented are announced.

- C- Encourage young people to attend societal activities by offering participants financial compensation.
- D- Supporting and establishing bodies that implement societal activities, and raise the level of societal awareness among young people.
- E- Enabling people with disabilities to attend the activities carried out by preparing the buildings in which such activities are carried out to suit their needs.
- F- Providing means of transportation for people with disabilities to and from places where societal activities are carried out

Fourth: Integrating the IDPs into the local community

- A- Further work should be done through humanitarian organizations and in cooperation with local governance bodies to reduce tensions between IDPs and members of the host community and to eliminate the causes of disagreement.
- B- The need to work to increase the size of joint societal activities, dialogue forums and focused discussion sessions, which bring together both IDPs and members of the host community to harmonize their points of view and alleviate the problems arising between them.
- C- Conducting statistical surveys on people who do not have personal documents and registering their data in order to issue them alternative identification documents.
- D- Achieve equality among IDPs and members of the host community and setting transparent criteria when selecting beneficiaries of projects implemented by humanitarian organizations to target the most vulnerable families.
- E- Alleviate the suffering of IDPs by providing them housing and working on rehabilitation or construction of housing units within the areas where they reside.
- F- Assisting the children of IDPs who are dropped out school to continue their education by offering financial grants and providing compensatory lessons to compensate what they missed.

Fifth: Young people empowerment at political level

- A- The need to combat extremist ideas by supporting and financing establishing human rights bodies in Syria, which work on raising

the level of political awareness among youth through establishing awareness sessions and seminars on the concepts of citizenship, civil society, local administration, elections, human rights, international humanitarian law and general political concepts.

- B- Launching internet platforms that work on correcting political awareness among young people.
- C- C. Efforts must be made to pass laws that guarantee the safety of young people involved in political action, and guarantee that they will not be harmed.
- D- Amending the bylaws and internal regulations of local councils, and opening specialized offices for young people at these councils to enhance their role and participation in political life.
- E- Intensifying the mobilization

campaigns and advocacy and awareness sessions aimed at spreading political awareness among young people and increasing society's acceptance of them.

- F- Work on qualifying young people and building their capacities at the political level by targeting them with the training that are necessary for holding leadership and decision-making positions, such as leadership training, conflict management, legal courses on civil society organizations, elections, local administration, political parties, human rights, freedom of expression and women's rights.
- G- Providing financial support and encouraging young people to establish human rights gatherings that form the core for establishing political parties

Sixth: Rehabilitating fighters

1. Rehabilitating former fighters

- A- Establishing specialized bodies concerned with former fighters and work on rehabilitating them in preparation for integrating them into society.
- B- Assisting former fighters to eliminate the negative psychological effects they are experiencing by including them in protection and psychological

support programs.

- C- Helping former fighters to eliminate extremist ideas they hold by including them in awareness sessions.
- D- Enabling former fighters to enter the labor market by including them in vocational training and capacity building programs.

- E- Providing the necessary financial support for former fighters to enable them to start their private businesses and providing technical support during for them at the early stages of the project.
- F- Encourage former fighters who didn't finish their education to continue their education,

especially university education, by offering them financial grants.

- G- Establishing bodies that rehabilitate fighters with disabilities and provide them with all forms of financial and psychological support to integrate them into society

2. Rehabilitating current fighters

- A- Necessity of working to prepare the current fighters psychologically to participate in civilian life by including them in awareness campaigns and psychological support programs aimed at ridding them of the negative psychological effects they suffer and the extremist ideas they hold as a result of their participation in military action.
- B- Work to build their capacities and develop their skills by including them in vocational training and

capacity building programs.

- C- Creating job opportunities for the fighters and financing them so that they can start their private businesses.

Methodology of the study

Objectives of the study

The study aims at studying the situation of young Syrian males and females residing in the liberated areas at economic, political and social levels. In terms of economic life, the study seeks to reveal the extent of the ability of young people to find employment opportunities and the bodies that are working to provide these opportunities, in addition to the required experiences and qualifications for getting these opportunities. The study also aims at identifying the capabilities and qualifications of the Syrian youth and knowing their weaknesses and the courses and training they need to build their capacities and develop their skills, in addition to work to uncover the difficulties and obstacles that hinder young people from starting their private businesses and proposed solutions to overcome those obstacles.

At the level of social life, the study seeks to identify the most prominent societal activities available within the liberated areas, and the content of those activities and their ability to raise social awareness among young people, and identify the

bodies and committees that work on organizing these activities, and the extent of young people's ability to participate in these activities and difficulties they face, in addition to activities and initiatives aimed at improve integration of IDPs into local community.

At the political level, the study aims at demonstrating the degree of awareness among young people of public rights and freedoms, the extent of their ability to express their opinions freely, and to identify the most important sources that contribute in forming political awareness among young people, and the difficulties that prevent them from being able to participate in political life.

It should be noted that the study included young people who had previously joined various military factions and fighters who are still participating in military operations to know their living conditions and the situation of their families and the societal and security problems they have.

Data sources

- 1- Consultants who are working with civil society organizations and experienced members of local governance councils who have a good knowledge of the conditions and situation of life in the liberated areas to obtain accurate and in-depth information about the situation of economic, social and political life, and the extent of young people's participation in it, in addition to the obstacles and difficulties they face and suggestions and best solutions to overcome them Obstacles.
- 2- Syrian males and females who live within the study areas (both IDPs and members of the host community) to know their opinions and know their former experiences in various economic, social and political fields, and to identify their needs and requirements that can increase their ability to participate effectively in building the community.

Data collection process was done using two main tools:

- Focused discussion sessions to obtain detailed answers on the topics of the study.
 - A closed-ended questionnaire through which results that can be generalized to the study's community are obtained.
- 3- Secondary data: by reviewing the relevant studies and researches and using its information which are related to the subject of the current study.

Scope of study

The study was conducted in July 2019, and covered liberated areas in countryside of Aleppo and Idlib governorates, including Jericho, Maaret al-Nu'man, Orm al-Joz and Kafr takharim areas in Idlib, while in Aleppo governorate, it included Daret Azza and Kafr Naha, Afrin and Azaz.

Governorate	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4
Idlib	Maaret al-Nu'man	Orm al-Joz	Jericho	Kafr Takharim
Alepo	Daret Azza	Kafr Naha	Afrin	Azaz

Limitations

The study faced many difficulties and challenges during data collection phase as following:

- 1- The fierce military campaign launched by the Syrian regime on the areas and villages of Idlib governorate and bombarding it with various types of weapons, including air force, which caused a delay in the schedule of data collection process in order to ensure the safety of field teams and participants.
- 2- Displacement of the residents of some study areas, such as Their private businesses al-Nu'man and Jericho, therefore, field teams were unable to complete the data that are planned to be collected, whereas in Their private businesses al-Nu'man only 38 questionnaires were collected, while in Jericho 45 questionnaires were collected.
- 3- The study did not cover the city of Idlib because of security conditions, knowing that it is one of the largest cities in Idlib governorate and includes a large percentage of the population.

