



RAPID NEED ASSESSMENT

DECEMBER 2024



**Intentions of Internally Displaced Persons
in Northwest Syria to Return
to Their Hometowns**

Rapid Need Assessment

Intentions of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Northwest Syria to Return to Their Hometowns

Highlights

- **38% of the community has no immediate intention of return, 59% would wait for the stability of certain conditions. Only 3% expect to return immediately.**
- **44% anticipate the return to happen within six months to one year, only 6% expect the return to happen within three months.**
- **Main needs related to return include:**



Infrastructure
Rehabilitation



Housing Support



Access to Basic Services



Security Measures



Income-Generation
Opportunities

Context and Purpose

In light of significant recent developments in Syria, this assessment, conducted by Dünya Doktorları, seeks to explore the intentions of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Northwest Syria regarding their potential return to their hometowns.

It examines the anticipated timeframe for their return, the challenges they may face, and the types of support required to facilitate a successful and sustainable reintegration. Accordingly, the assessment aims to advocate to concerned stakeholders for addressing the humanitarian needs of displaced communities, emerging with the contextual changes.

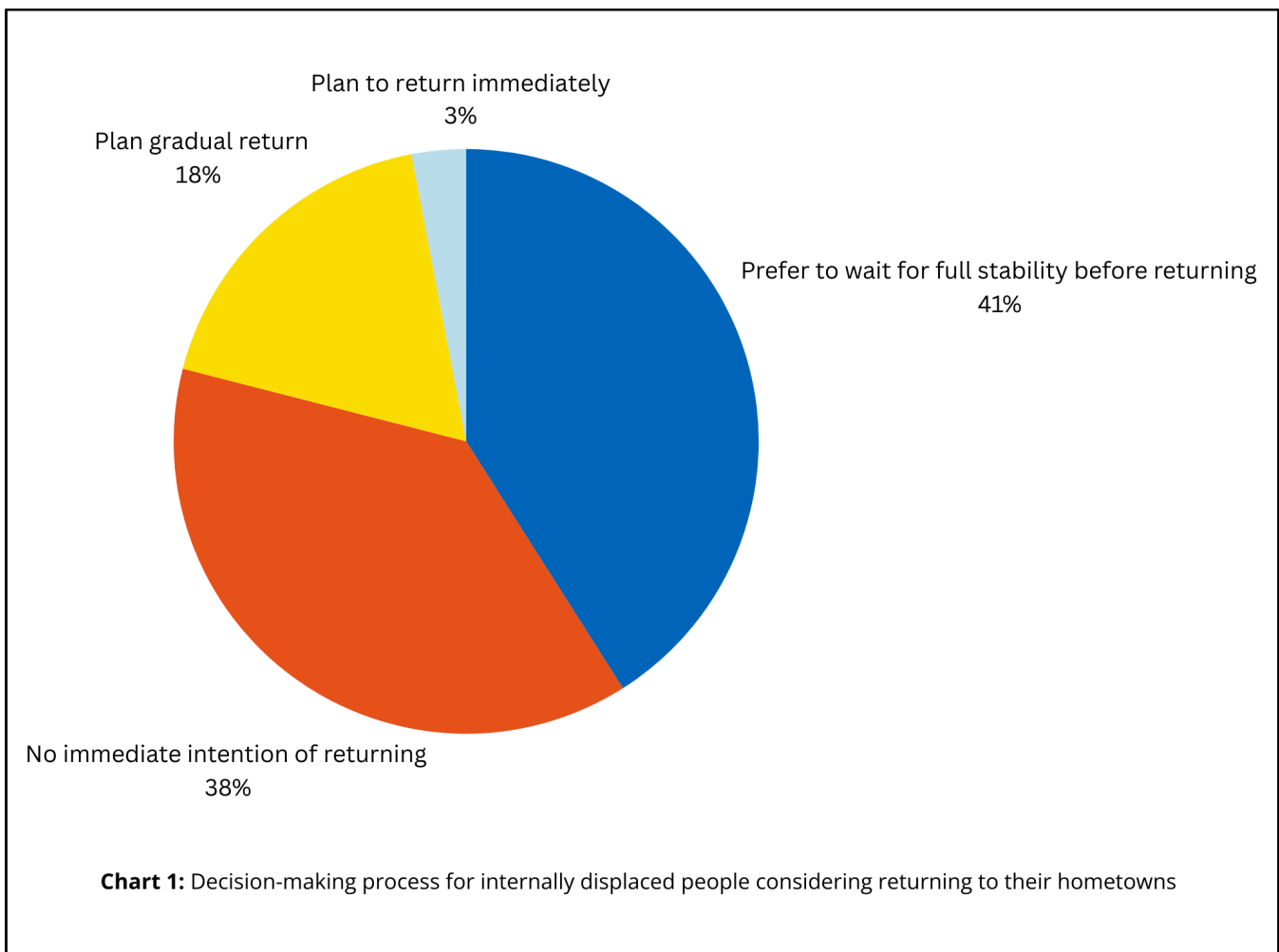
Conducted from December 12 to 16, 2024, the assessment relied on key informant interviews with local authorities and camp management staff members in eight locations across the Aleppo and Idlib governorates.



Findings

The findings shed light on the complexities of the communities' return plans, including the motivating factors, the barriers that could potentially prevent or postpone their return, and the types of support required to facilitate the process. They emphasize the urgent need for targeted interventions to address these barriers and offer actionable recommendations.

The findings highlight that the decision-making process for internally displaced people considering returning to their hometowns is cautious and multifaceted. **Nearly half (41%) of the community prefers to wait for full stability before returning, while 38% have no immediate intention of returning,** reflecting significant uncertainty. A gradual return is anticipated by 18%, but only 3% plan to return immediately (Chart 1).



Timeframes for return

Timeframes for return also vary: 44% expect to return within 6 months to a year, 30% foresee returning within 3 to 6 months, and 20% anticipate it will take longer than a year. The share of those who would return within the next three months is only 6% (Chart 2).

Key motivators and barriers

Primary motivations for return include the desire to restore property, a strong sense

of nostalgia of their homeland, reunification with community members, and practical factors such as employment opportunities, improved security, education for children, and access to healthcare.

However, significant barriers impede these plans. These include the lack of basic services, destroyed homes and infrastructure, financial constraints, health related concerns, and security threats like landmines.

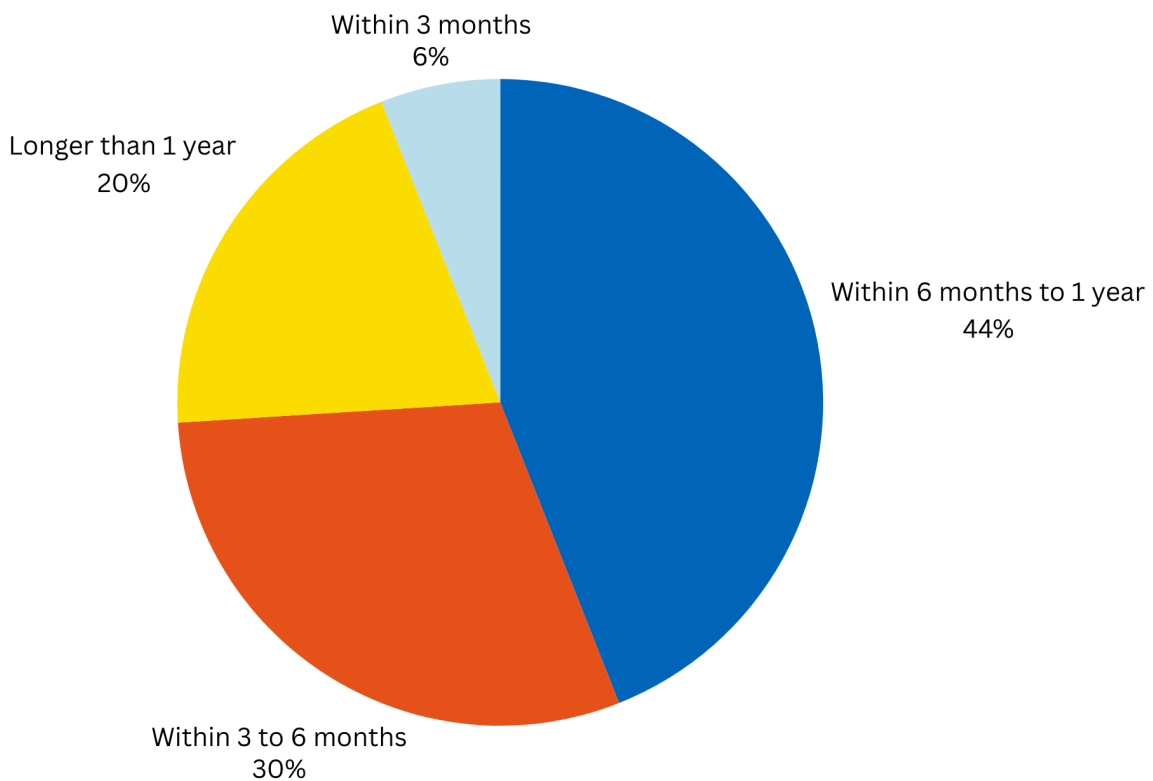


Chart 2: Timeframes for return



Preparations and support needs

Preparations and support needs: Preparations for return primarily focus on rebuilding homes, restoring essential services—particularly healthcare—ensuring security, collaborating and coordinating with humanitarian organizations. Many respondents emphasize the need for mine clearance and unexploded ordnance removal to ensure safe returns.

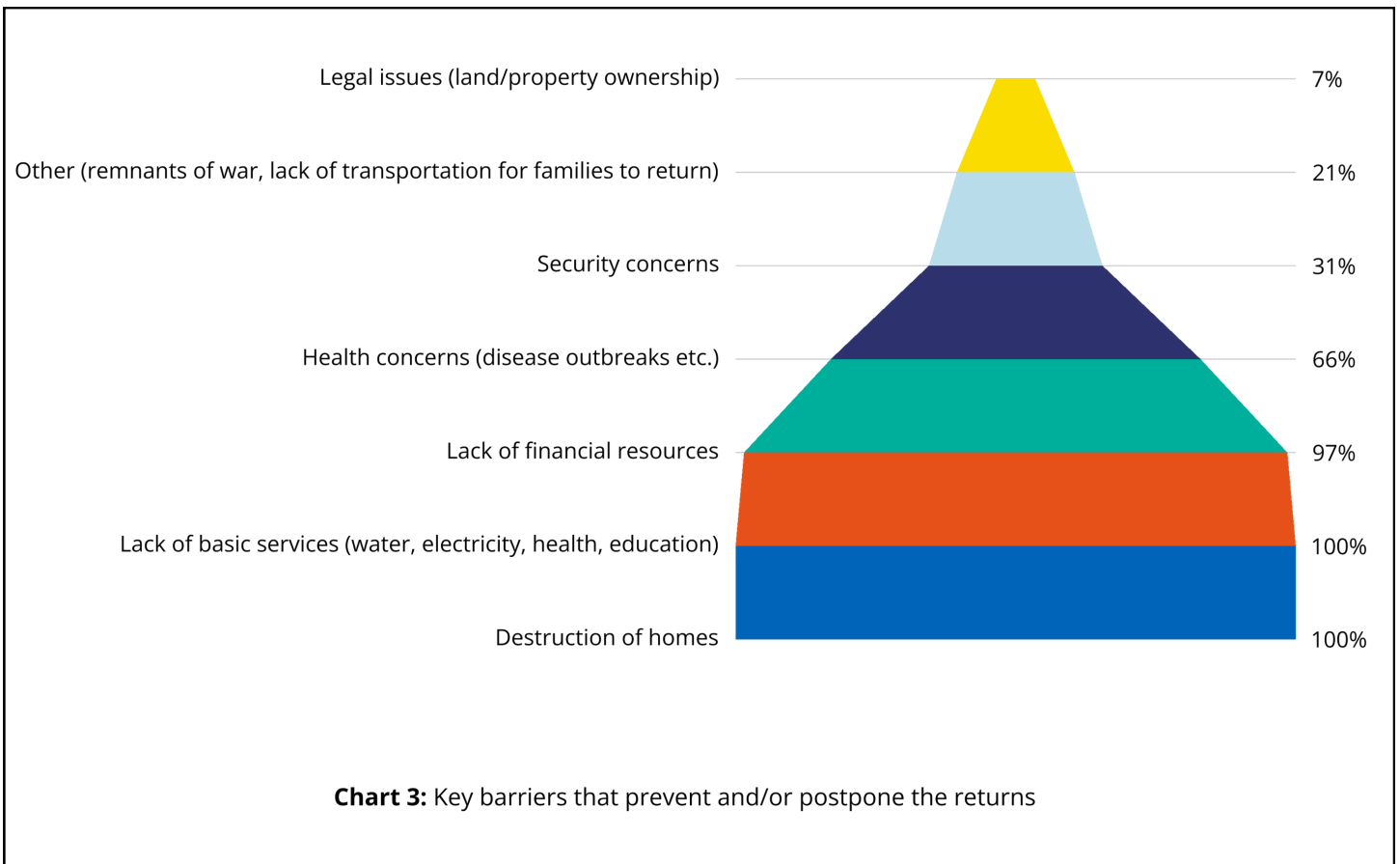
The community identifies critical support measures, including infrastructure rehabilitation, access to building materials, financial assistance, and enhanced healthcare services.

After returning, their priorities center on securing employment, accessing healthcare, and actively contributing to the reconstruction of their communities.

Ongoing concerns

Concerns persist about the lack of government support, healthcare services, security risks, and limited access to education.

The findings underscore the complexity of return plans, which are heavily influenced by security conditions, service availability, and external support (Chart 3).



Recommendations

The findings of this needs assessment emphasize the urgent need for coordinated and targeted actions to support displaced populations in their efforts to return and rebuild their lives. Achieving this requires a collaborative effort from donors, policymakers, and concerned authorities.

The following recommendations aim to advocate for the humanitarian needs of displaced communities, urging donors and policymakers to effectively support their plans for returning to their hometowns.

To Donors:

•**Prioritize multi-sectoral funding:** Donors are encouraged to prioritize multi-sectoral funding by allocating resources for the rehabilitation of infrastructure, healthcare, and education, alongside livelihood programs that foster economic resilience.

•**Support sustainable returns:** It is equally important to support sustainable returns by developing funding mechanisms tied to long-term development goals, ensuring that displaced populations can successfully reintegrate into their communities.



·Invest in security and de-mining efforts:

It is also crucial that donors invest in security and de-mining efforts by increasing funding for organizations specializing in de-mining activities and building local capacity to address security concerns, thus creating safer environments for returnees.

To The Concerned Authorities:

·Coordinate with humanitarian partners:

Collaboration with humanitarian partners is essential to ensure a cohesive and efficient response to the needs of displaced populations.

·Ensure participatory approaches

Authorities must also adopt participatory approaches, actively involving displaced communities in decision-making processes to ensure interventions are aligned with their priorities.

·Monitor returns

Establishing robust monitoring mechanisms is vital to track the progress of returnees and address emerging challenges promptly, supporting their reintegration and long-term stability.

·Ensuring safe living conditions throughout the country

Strengthening local law enforcement and organizing communication and reporting channels will contribute to creating a safe environment in cities of return.



About Dünya Doktorlari

Dünya Doktorlari (DDD) began its work in Syria in 2018, providing primary healthcare, sexual and reproductive health, mental health and psychosocial support, and social protection services to internally displaced people affected by the war that erupted in 2011.

Since then, during the 15 years of conflict in Syria, DDD has carried out numerous medical and humanitarian activities to provide access to health care and humanitarian assistance to the war-torn population. The complexity of the war, as a result of multiple actors fighting in the region, limited access to resources, direct attacks on medical personnel and health facilities, and great needs, has led to a humanitarian response that has been conducted under equally complex and challenging conditions.

DDD continues to provide humanitarian assistance directly or through partnerships with nine health centers in Aleppo and five in Idlib to ensure access to healthcare for people affected by the war in Syria.



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