

# DISABILITY

IN NORTHERN SYRIA

## Impact and Prevalence

October  
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# Disability in Northern Syria Prevalence and Impact 2023

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## ACRONYMS

- **IDP:** Internally displaced person
- **ACU:** Assistance Coordination Unit
- **IMU:** Information Management Unit
  
- **UNCRPD:** United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- **UN:** United Nations
- **HH:** Household
- **AoC:** area of control
- **RAATA:** the northern Ar-Raqqa and Al-Hasakeh governorates, including the sub-districts of Ras Al Ain and Tell Abiad.
- **SDF:** Syrian democratic forces

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## OVERVIEW OF DATA COLLECTION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Over 12 years of conflict, infrastructure degradation, and ongoing displacement in Syria have exposed millions to injury and trauma; on February 6, 2023, at dawn, a devastating 7.8 magnitude on the Richter scale hit southern Turkey and northern Syria, resulting in thousands of casualties and thousands of injured in Turkey and North-West Syria. The number of casualties in North-West Syria was 4,540, and the number of injured was 8,786, with many injured losing their limbs or becoming disabled. All these factors compounding risk for persons with disabilities, undermining their access to essential services and support, Assistance Coordination Unit (ACU) has employed the Washington Group on Disability Statistics [Questions](#) -the most widely used and tested tool in humanitarian environments- with technical support from humanitarian partners specialized in supporting disabilities (Hope Revival Organization & MIDAD Organization), to determine the prevalence of individuals with disabilities appropriate approach pivoting from traditional investigations on physical ailments or function alone. The assessment expands to define difficulties and disabilities as an interaction between a person's impairment and the experience of attitudinal institutional and physical barriers limiting individuals' ability to

engage in their communities and access to services as per the [description](#) provided in the UN Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

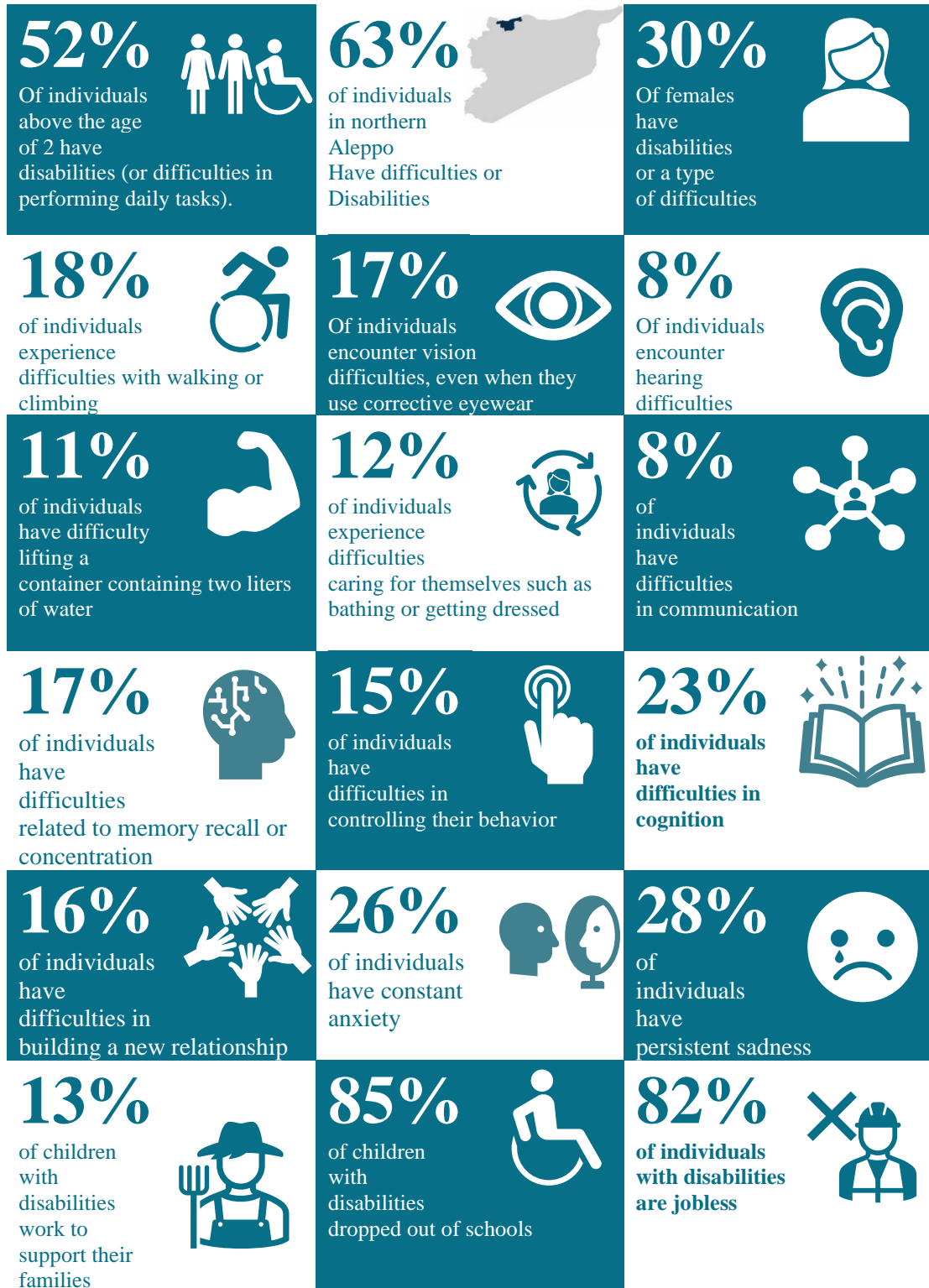
ACU has prioritized including data on persons with disabilities for all relevant household surveys. This has significantly improved the availability and quality of data on persons with disabilities inside Syria. The analysis further assesses key socio-economic indicators to determine to what extent the persons with disabilities limit individuals or households with members with disabilities, ability to withstand social and economic barriers. Children with difficulties and disabilities who participated in this study were asked about the common obstacles they faced in formal education. This questionnaire focused on their school enrollment and reasons for discontinuing their education.

Findings related to individuals (aged two and older), as well as households with members with disabilities, are presented in this report at the regional levels. Prevalence figures are further compared against key socio-economic indicators to show the extent to which the presence of disabilities may add to or compound preexisting vulnerabilities.



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KEY FINDINGS





## METHODOLOGY

In August 2023, the ACU conducted a household (HH) survey in non-governmental areas in northern Syria. Fieldwork was carried out through face-to-face interviews by experienced ACU field teams who were trained on surveys by data collection experts. Using ONA, the survey collected data on key demographic and socio-economic indicators representative of areas of control level.

The sample frame was sourced from the list of (p-coded) locations, updated by OCHA in January 2023, while the population figures were obtained for ACU' Population Movements Interactive Map, updated in June 2023. Households were estimated considering an average size of 5.3 members throughout the non-governmental areas in northern Syria. In total, 8,513,640 individuals and 1,606,347 households living in 3,059 communities and 1,527 IDP camps were considered for the sample of 950 households selected to be interviewed, and 1,011 households were interviewed, representative of the Syrian population in northern Syria at the district level, with a 95% confidence interval and a 3% margin of error.

Note: To better inform humanitarian partners based on their regions of operation, ACU refers to the following regions of Syria:

- **Idleb:** which included Idleb governorate and the surrounding

countryside of Aleppo, Hama, and Latakia, controlled by opposition groups.

- **Aleppo:** Northern Aleppo governorate, including A'zzaz, Al-Bab, and Jarablus districts, controlled by Turkish-backed groups.

- **Afrin:** district of Afrin in northern Aleppo governorate, controlled by Turkish-backed groups.

**RAATA:** the northern Ar-Raqqa and Al-Hasakeh governorates, including the sub-districts of Ras Al Ain and Tell Abiad, controlled by Turkish-backed groups.

- **North-east Syria (NES):** including Al-Hasakeh governorate, northern Ar-Raqqa governorate, and eastern Deir-ez-Zor governorate, controlled by Syrian democratic forces (SDF).

Note: Any boundaries, areas, and names shown, and the designations used in this report, do not imply any form of official endorsement or acceptance. Reference is made to these designations as ACU revised area of control (AoC) frontlines to better account for the comparative similarity of conditions and access to services within designated boundaries, as well as the sampling methodology employed during data collection.

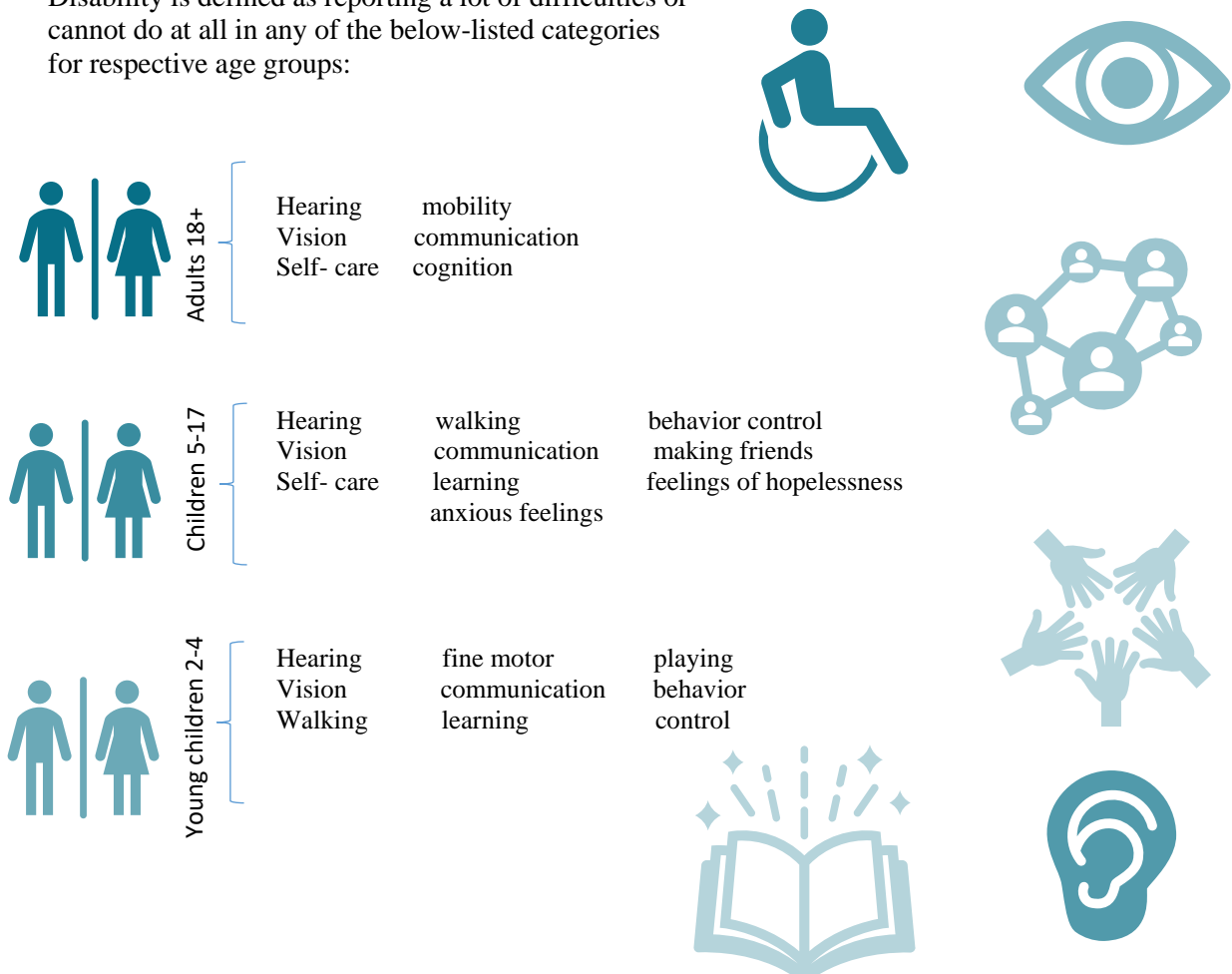
## DISABILITY DATA IN SYRIA

According to UNCRPD Guidelines, the evolving concept of disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal, institutional, and physical environmental barriers, which hinder an individual from fully and effectively participating in society on an equal basis with others. Crucially, an individual is not defined as “experiencing disability” based on impairment or function alone but on how individuals with functional difficulties experience barriers to participation in their environment. Therefore, disability in Syria is described in this report as a ‘percentage of people experiencing one or more functional difficulties in one or more functional domains.’ This subsequently increases the risk of exclusion, deprivation, or disability.

Disability was assessed through a spectrum of functional difficulties utilizing both the Washington Group on Disability short set questionnaire for those 18 and above, while the UNICEF Child Functioning Module was employed for those 2-17. ‘Difficulty’ is operationalized through various descriptors from “no difficulty at all” to “completely unable to carry out the action.” Only those individuals who reported severe functional difficulty (‘significant difficulty’ or ‘cannot do at all’) in at least one domain were classified as ‘individuals with disabilities.’

## DISABILITY DOMAINS

Disability is defined as reporting a lot of difficulties or cannot do at all in any of the below-listed categories for respective age groups:



**DISABILITY AND TYPES OF DIFFICULTIES**

**52%**

Of individuals above the age of two have disabilities (or difficulties in performing daily tasks).

In northern Syria, 52% of individuals aged two and above have difficulties in performing daily tasks or disability. The presence of disabilities can impede access to basic services, like water, education, or marketplaces, while households with members with disabilities may be far more likely to face economic deprivation due to hindered access to economic inputs or increased health spending. Across northern Syria, disabilities both contribute to and compound the existing vulnerabilities of millions of individuals and their households.

The highest prevalence of individuals with disabilities is located in Northern Aleppo district, where 63% of the total population (aged two and above) have difficulties in performing daily tasks or have type of disabilities. In addition, 59% of individuals in northern Aleppo have difficulties performing daily tasks or disabilities, followed by 58% in Idleb.

**Evidently, across all regions encompassed by this study, females experience a higher prevalence of disabilities than their male counterparts.**

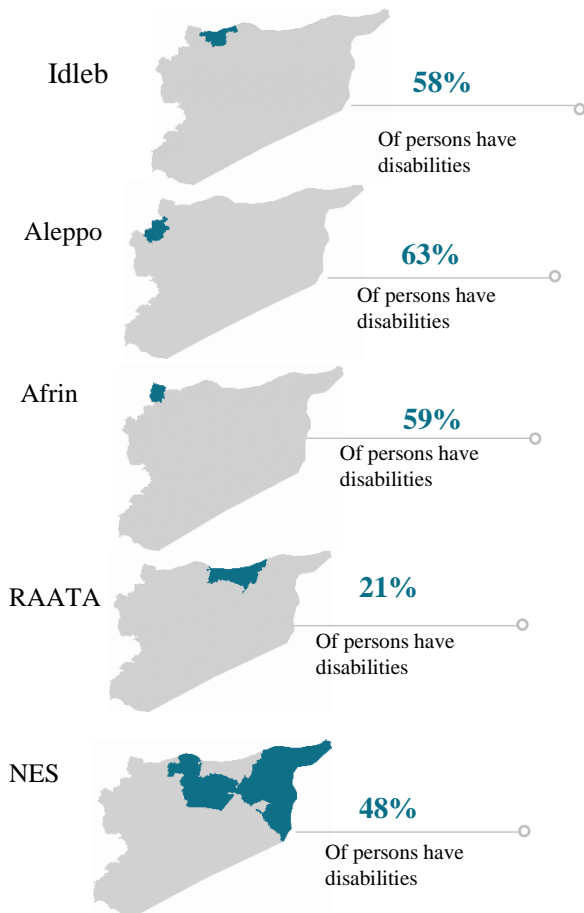


Figure 1 Breakdown of PWD by region

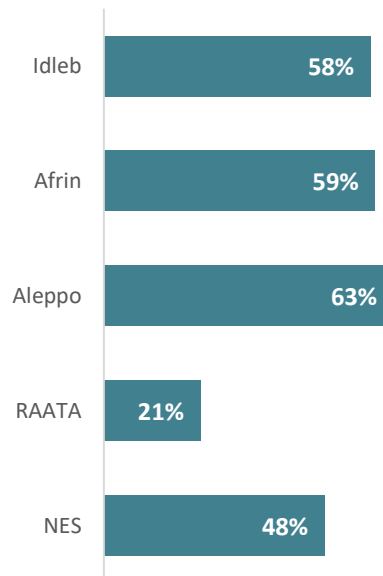
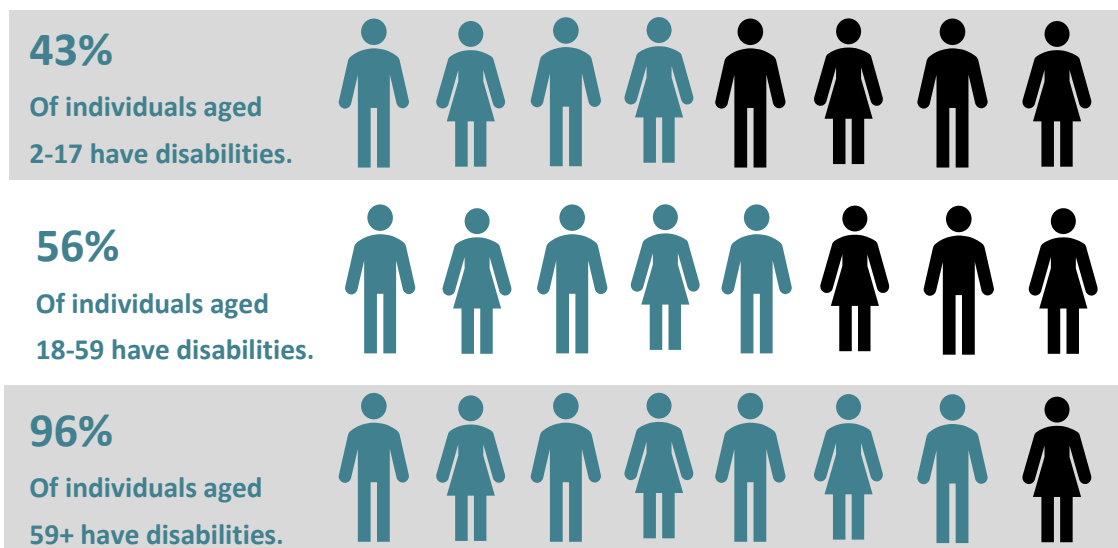


Figure 2 Percentages of people with difficulty or disabilities by the age group



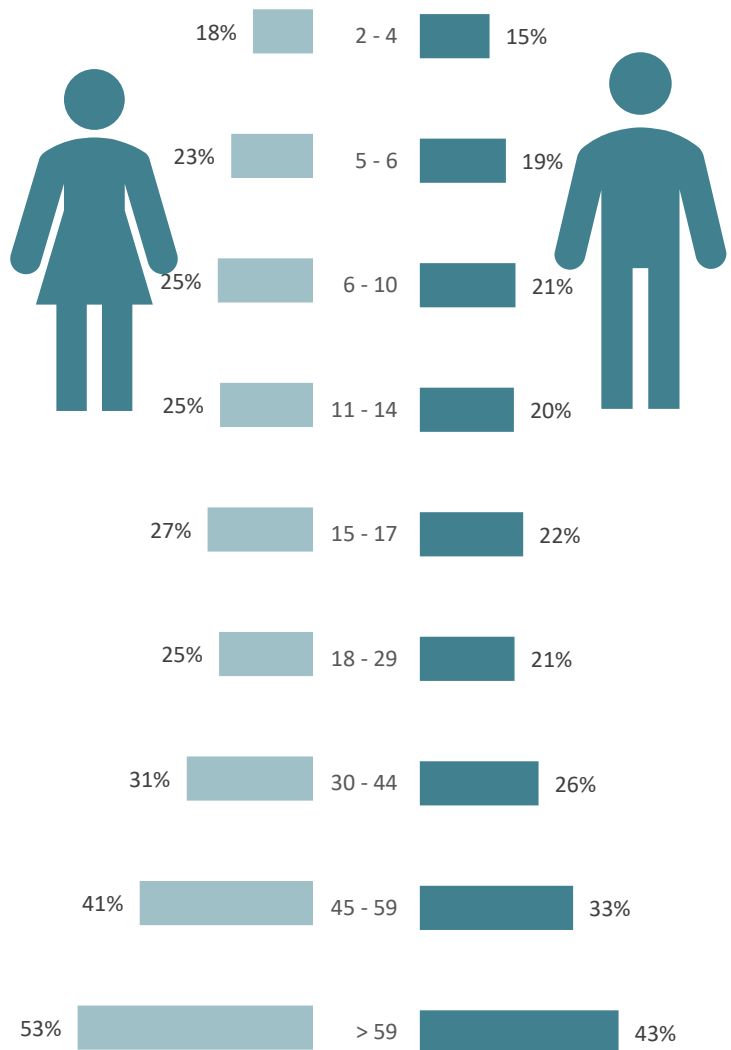
© UNOCHA/Ali Haji Suleiman A girl helps her sister on their way home from school in Idlib, North-west Syria.

### AGE AND SEX OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The rate of disabilities is likely to be higher amongst older individuals, regardless of gender. Findings are concerning as individuals, especially those with disabilities, are less likely to access sufficient employment and more likely to increase their dependency on family members. Likewise, households with a member with disabilities are half as likely to report having sufficient income to meet their needs. The capacity to survive a humanitarian crisis is correlated with both health, including mental health and financial security, both of which become increasingly less likely as an individual ages.

Chronically high rates of children with disabilities are also concerning. Children with disabilities are some of the most marginalized in times of conflict, in part because of the lack of reliable data regarding their needs but also due to the significant disruptions in their education. Such developmental disruption may contribute to, or compound, additional health complications that cannot be reversed due to the lack of access to health services that support child development. Indeed, children with disabilities are significantly less likely than their peers to be engaged in education. The detrimental effects of this education gap are further evidenced in adult education and employment rates.

Figure 3 Age and gender of persons with disabilities



**30%**






Of females have disabilities or type of difficulties

**20%**

Of males have disabilities or type of difficulties

## TYPES OF REPORTED PHYSICAL DIFFICULTY (%OF INDIVIDUALS)

Table 1 Type of reported physical difficulty.

Age group	Mobility 	Vision 	Self-Care 	Hearing 	Upper part of the body 
2-4	21%	6%	-	6%	-
5-17	5%	11%	12%	5%	9%
+18	27%	26%	12%	11%	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>11%</b>

# 18%

of individuals in northern Syria experience challenges with walking or climbing, and these difficulties can be further categorized as follows:

Out of the 18%,

10% face minor difficulties,

7% encounter significant difficulties, and

2% cannot perform essential daily activities that require walking or climbing.

- Individuals grappling with minor and significant mobility difficulties were interviewed regarding their reliance on aids or assistance for their mobility needs. The outcomes show that:

A minority, comprised of 33%, depend on aid or assistance for walking and climbing.

Among those who utilize aid or receive assistance for walking and climbing, 41% use walking sticks, 23% rely on crutches, 13% utilize wheelchairs, 9% use prosthetic limbs (legs and feet), and 4% use walkers.

Additionally, 11% seek assistance from other individuals to help with mobility.

- Individuals who manage their mobility without any aid or external assistance were inquired about their ability to walk a 100-meter distance on a flat surface, akin to that of a football field or a residential complex, without relying on mobility aids.

The findings showed that 48% of them reported experiencing only minor difficulty. While 9% encountered significant challenges in this endeavor, and 1% were unable at all to complete this task.

- Individuals capable of walking 100 meters on a flat surface were asked regarding their ability to walk for 500 meters on a similar terrain without the assistance of mobility aid. The findings showed that 54% reported facing only minor difficulty in this extended endeavor. A noteworthy 30% encountered significant challenges while attempting this task. Furthermore, 3% were unable to complete this task at all.
- Individuals who independently manage their mobility without needing aid or external assistance were asked about their capability to ascend or descend 12 steps of stairs without relying on mobility aid. The results showed that a significant majority, comprising 61%, expressed experiencing only minor difficulties when tackling this task. However, 25% faced significant difficulties in navigating the stairs, and 2% were not able at all to complete this task.
- Individuals who use means or receive assistance for mobility were asked about their ability to walk a 100-meter distance on a flat surface while relying on their mobility aids. The findings showed that 53% reported experiencing only minor difficulty,

33% encountered significant challenges, and 1% were unable to complete this task at all.

- Individuals who rely on mobility aids or receive assistance for their mobility and are capable of walking a 100-meter distance on a flat surface were asked about their ability to walk 500 meters on a flat surface while using their mobility aids. The results show that a significant majority, amounting to 63%, conveyed experiencing significant challenges when undertaking this task. Additionally, 29% encountered only minor obstacles, and 6% were unable to complete this task at all.

## 17%

**Of individuals in northern Syria encounter vision difficulties, even when they use corrective eyewear,** and these challenges can be further classified as follows:

Out of the 17%,

14% experience minor difficulties,

3% grapple with significant difficulties,

18 individuals were found to be completely blind and cannot complete daily tasks that depend on vision.

- Individuals were asked about their use of glasses for distance vision. The findings indicate that most, 59%, wear glasses for distance vision. Among those wearing glasses for distance vision, 14% experience significant difficulty perceiving another person's face clearly in the room, even with their glasses on. Additionally, 53% encounter minor difficulties regarding this aspect of their vision despite wearing glasses.
- Individuals confronting minor and significant vision difficulties were

surveyed regarding their use of glasses for reading or near vision. The results reveal that 58% rely on glasses for reading or near vision. Among those who use glasses for reading or near vision, 14% face significant challenges when seeing the image on a coin, even with their glasses. Furthermore, 49% contend with minor difficulties in this aspect of their vision, even while wearing glasses.

## 8%

**Of individuals in northern Syria encounter hearing challenges, even when they use hearing aids,** and these challenges can be further classified as follows:

Out of the 8%,

6% experience minor difficulties,

2% grapple with significant difficulties,

- Individuals were asked about their use of hearing aids, and the findings unveiled that only 23% of the respondents indicated that they utilize hearing aids.

Among those who use hearing aids, a significant 76% are aged 18+, while 24% fall within the age range of 5 to 17.

Regarding the frequency of hearing aid usage, 51% reported using them consistently or "all the time."

Survey respondents were inquired about their ability to hear and comprehend conversations with another person, both in a quiet room and a noisy room, even when using hearing aids. The results are as follows:

**In a quiet room:**

51% of respondents reported encountering minor difficulties.

31% reported experiencing significant challenges.

#### **In a noisy room:**

36% of respondents expressed having minor difficulties.

59% faced significant difficulties in understanding conversations.

## 11%

**of individuals in northern Syria have trouble lifting a container containing two liters of water from waist to the eye level, and these difficulties can be further categorized as follows:**

Out of the 11%,

8% face minor difficulties,

2% encounter significant difficulties,

while 1% are unable at all to lift the container.

- Survey respondents were asked about their ability to use their hands or fingers to manipulate small objects such as

buttons, pencils, or open-closed containers like cans or bottles. The findings are as follows:

A total of 7% of respondents reported experiencing minor difficulties.

2% encountered significant challenges in these tasks.

Furthermore, 1% were entirely unable to perform these actions.

## 12%

**of individuals in northern Syria experience challenges caring for themselves, including bathing or getting dressed, and these difficulties can be further categorized as follows:**

Out of the 12%,

9% face minor difficulties,








2% encounter significant difficulties,

while 1% are unable to care for themselves at all.

### TYPE OF REPORTED LEARNING AND BEHAVIOR DIFFICULTIES (%OF INDIVIDUALS)



Table 2 Type of reported learning and behavior difficulties

Age group	Communi- cation 	Memory recall or concentration 	Cognition 	Controlling behaviors 	building relationship 	Constant anxiety 	Persistent sadness 
5-17	10%	13%	23%	14%	17%	20%	22%
+18	7%	20%	22%	16%	14%	14%	34%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>28%</b>

## 8%

of individuals in northern Syria have difficulty communicating, for example, understanding or being understood in everyday language (slang), and these difficulties can be further categorized as follows:

Out of the 8%,

6% face minor difficulties,

1% face significant difficulties,

While 1% are unable to communicate at all.

- Survey participants who encountered communication difficulties were inquired about the challenges others faced in understanding their speech. The findings are as follows:

40% indicated that others have difficulty comprehending what they say.

Within this group, 53% were individuals aged 5-17, and 47% were individuals aged 18 and above who experienced communication challenges.

Additionally, 22% of this group reported using sign language as a means of communication.

## 17%

of individuals in northern Syria have difficulties in memory recall or concentration, and these difficulties can be further categorized as follows:

Out of the 17%,

13% face minor difficulties,

3% face significant difficulties,

while 1% are unable to recall memory or concentrate at all.

- When the respondents were asked about their experiences with memory recall and concentration, the responses revealed the following:

44% of individuals reported facing challenges in both memory recall and concentration.

A significant 29% indicated that they encountered difficulties only in memory recall.

Furthermore, 27% mentioned facing difficulties only in concentration.

- Concerning the frequency of memory recall difficulties, 37% of respondents revealed that they often grapple with this challenge, including 27% within the age group of 5-17. Regarding the types of things, they have trouble recalling, 29% of individuals noted that they experience difficulty remembering many things, and an additional 6% face the significant

challenge of recalling almost everything.

- Regarding concentration, the respondents were asked about the degree of difficulty they encountered when attempting to focus for ten minutes. The responses indicated the following:

A significant majority, comprising 53%, reported experiencing minor difficulty. 24% encountered moderate challenges in maintaining their concentration. Additionally, 23% faced significant difficulty sustaining their focus for the specified duration.

## 23%

**of individuals in northern Syria have difficulties in cognition,** and these difficulties can be further categorized as follows:

Out of the 23%,

15% face minor difficulties,

6% encounter significant difficulties,

While 1% are unable to learn at all.

- Among the respondents, children falling within the age range of 5-17 accounted for:

30% of those who expressed an inability to learn at all.

54% of those mentioned they faced only minor difficulties in their learning process.

Additionally, 42% of respondents within this age group reported encountering significant challenges regarding their ability to learn.

## 15%

**of individuals in northern Syria have difficulty controlling their behavior,** and these difficulties can be further categorized as follows:

Out of the 15%,

13% face minor difficulties,

2% encounter significant difficulties,

while 1% are unable to control their behavior at all.

## 16%

**of individuals in northern Syria have difficulties in building a new relationship,** and these difficulties can be further categorized as follows:

Out of the 16%,

12% face minor difficulties,

3% encounter significant difficulties,

while 1% are unable to build a new relationship at all.

## 26%

**of individuals in northern Syria have constant anxiety,** and these difficulties can be further categorized as follows:

Out of the 26%,

21% face minor difficulties,

5% encounter significant difficulties,

# 28%

of individuals in northern Syria have **persistent sadness**, and these difficulties can be further categorized as follows:

Out of the 28%,

22% face minor difficulties,

5% encounter significant difficulties,

## AGE OF ONSET AND CAUSES OF DIFFICULTIES

The study findings highlight the age at which difficulties or disabilities started:













33% were linked to the natural process of aging.

27% had their roots in early childhood.

22% were congenital, present from birth.

18% manifested during the working-age years.

**Table 3 Age of onset and cause of difficulties**

Type of difficulty		At birth 	During childhood 	At working age 	As I get older 
Vision 		15%	27%	22%	35%
Hearing 		25%	18%	15%	42%
Mobility 		18%	18%	21%	43%
Upper part of the body 		22%	26%	17%	36%
Self-care 		25%	30%	17%	28%
Memory recall or concentration 		18%	26%	21%	34%
Communication 		38%	35%	8%	20%
Cognition 		16%	34%	26%	24%
<b>Total</b>		<b>22%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>33%</b>

### The CAUSE OF THE DIFFICULTIES

The study findings shed light on the causes of difficulties or disabilities:

22% were congenital, present from birth.

25% were attributed to the natural aging process.

18% resulted from diseases.

13% resulted from war or terrorist activities.

8% occurred during obstetric situations.









4% were caused by traffic accidents.

3% were caused by ill-treatment (physical and psychological).

1% were caused by work-related injuries.

1% resulted from natural disasters, with earthquakes being the most prevalent.

Table 4 The cause of the difficulties

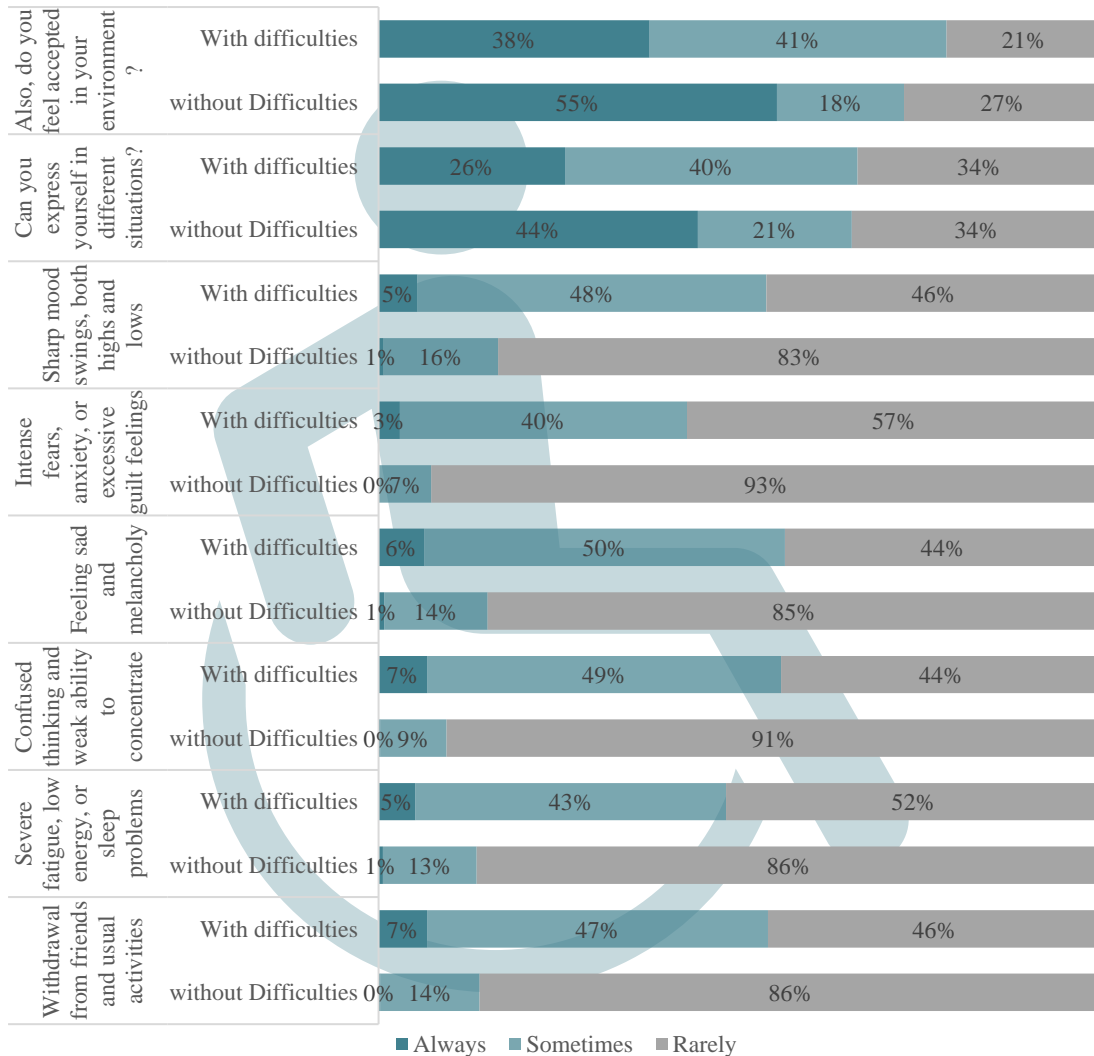
Type of difficulty	Congenital	Obstetric	Disease	Growing old	Ill-treatment (physical and psychological)	Traffic accident	Work Injury	War/ act of terrorism	Natural disaster	Fire
Vision 	24%	4%	27%	35%	1%	2%	1%	4%	3%	1%
Hearing 	28%	7%	22%	28%			1%	13%	1%	
Mobility 	19%	10%	14%	30%		11%	1%	14%	1%	
Upper part of the body 	22%	6%	15%	27%	2%	5%	3%	17%	3%	2%
Self-care 	31%	9%	15%	20%	1%	5%	1%	16%	1%	1%
Memory recall or concentration 	28%	9%	20%	26%	2%	3%		7%	4%	
Communication 	47%	12%	16%	9%		1%	1%	11%	3%	
Cognition 	20%	6%	14%	25%	7%	2%	1%	21%	4%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>

**PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING INFORMATION**

**Children aged 5-17**

- Among children without any difficulties, 55% always feel accepted, while only 38% of those with difficulties or disabilities experience the same level of acceptance.
- While 44% of children without difficulties can always express themselves in diverse situations, only 26% of those with difficulties or disabilities share this ability.
- For children with difficulties or disabilities, 53% experience sharp mood swings, both highs and lows, either always or sometimes, in contrast to only 17% of those without any difficulties who share a similar range of moods.
- Among children with difficulties or disabilities, 43% always or sometimes grapple with intense fears, anxiety, or excessive guilt, whereas only 7% of those without any difficulties report similar emotional challenges.

*Figure 4 Psychological wellbeing information- Children aged 5-17*

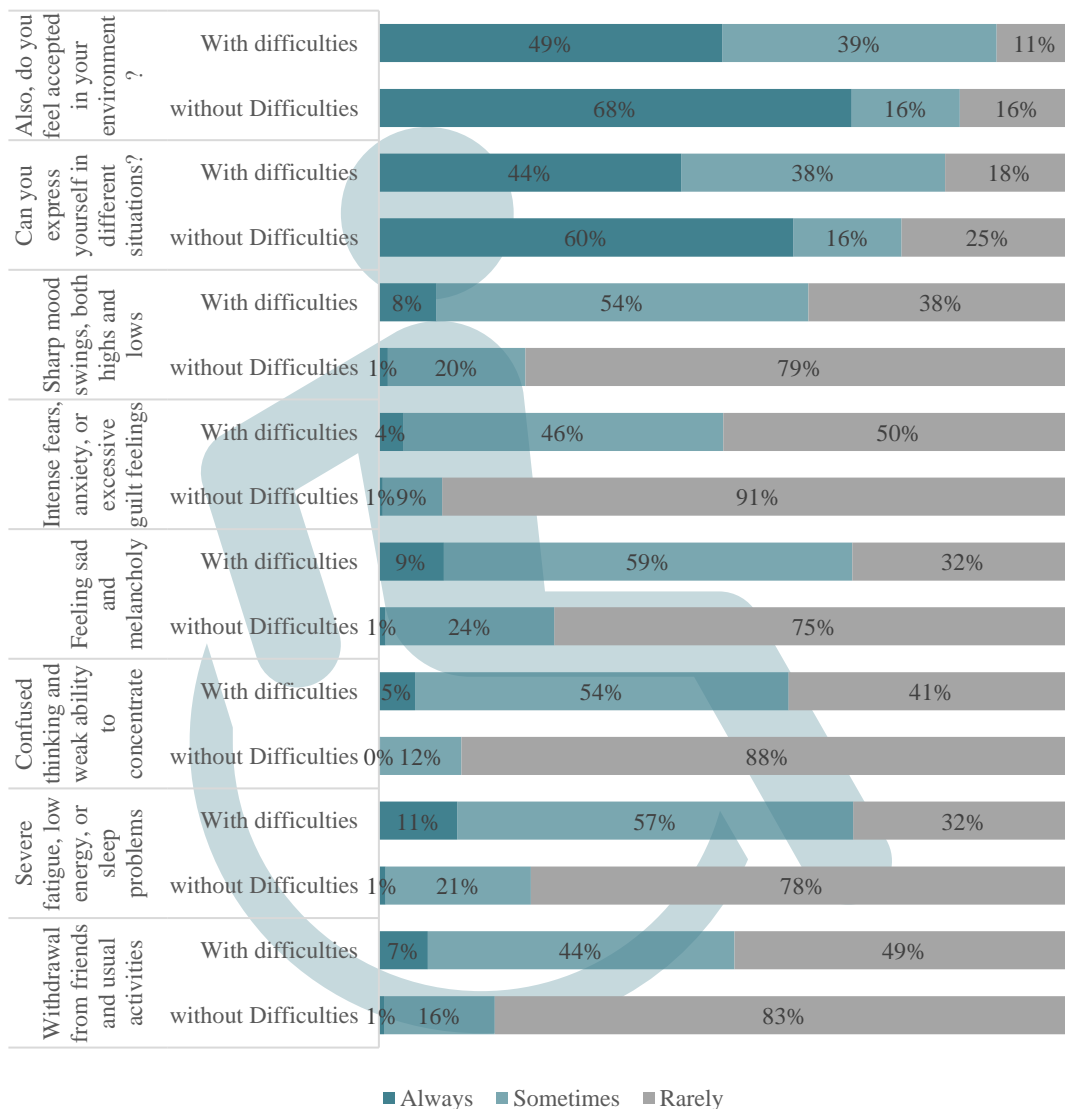


**PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING INFORMATION**

**Persons aged 18+**

- While 62% of individuals with difficulties or disabilities experience severe mood swings, both highs and lows either always or sometimes, only 21% of those without any difficulties share a similar range of emotions.
- Additionally, 50% of individuals with difficulties or disabilities grapple with intense fears, anxiety, or excessive guilt, either always or sometimes, in contrast to only 10% of those without any difficulties who encounter similar emotions.
- Moreover, 68% of individuals with difficulties or disabilities experience feelings of sadness and melancholy either always or sometimes, while only 25% of those without any difficulties encounter similar emotions.
- Lastly, 68% of individuals with difficulties or disabilities struggle with severe fatigue, low energy, or sleep issues, either always or sometimes, in contrast to only 22% of those without any difficulties who face comparable challenges.

*Figure 5 Psychological Wellbeing information- aged 18+*

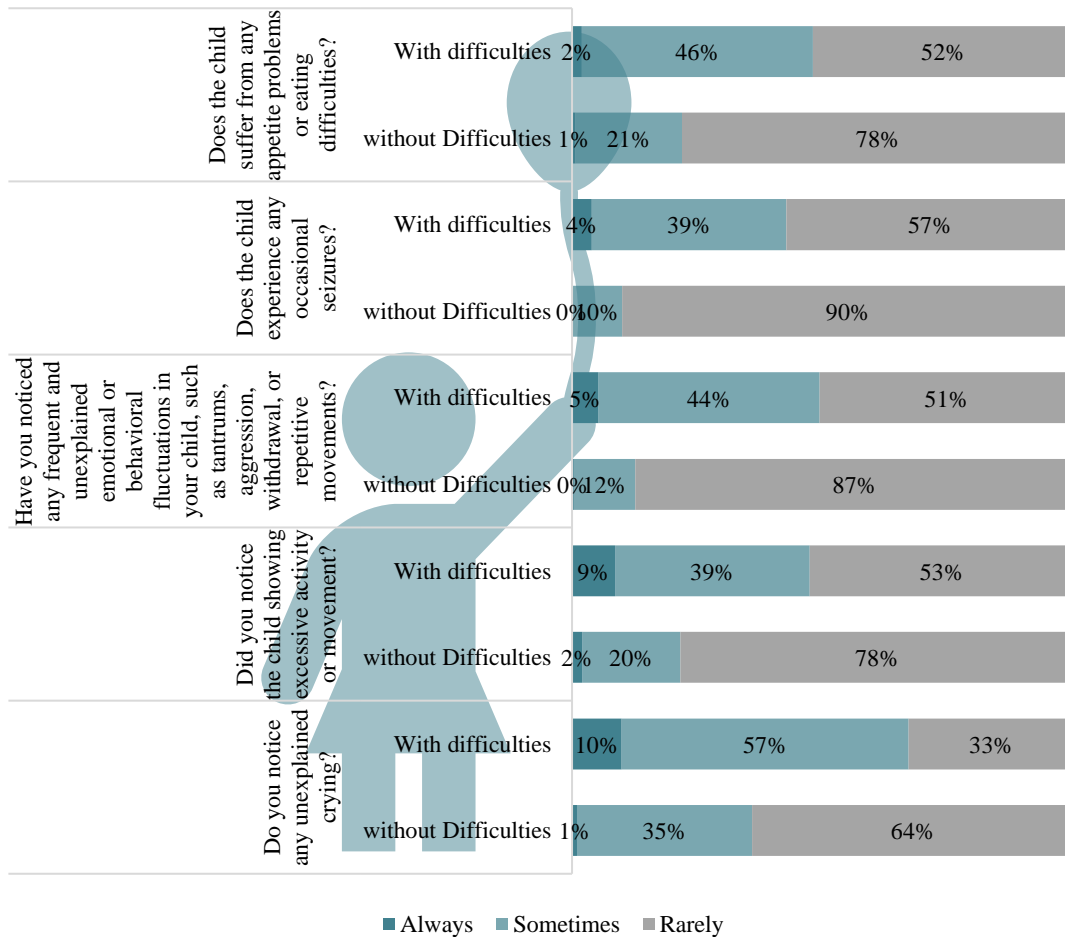


### DIFFICULTIES ASSOCIATED WITH CHILDREN AGED 2-4

Among children aged 2-4, caregivers noticed distinct differences between those with difficulties or disabilities and their counterparts without difficulties:

- Unexplained crying was observed in 67% of children with difficulties, compared to 36% without difficulties.
- Unexplained emotional or behavioral issues, encompassing tantrums, aggression, withdrawal, or repetitive movements, were noted in 49% of children with difficulties or disabilities, in contrast to just 12% of those without difficulties.
- Occasional seizures were witnessed in 41% of children with difficulties or disabilities, as opposed to 10% of their counterparts without any difficulties.

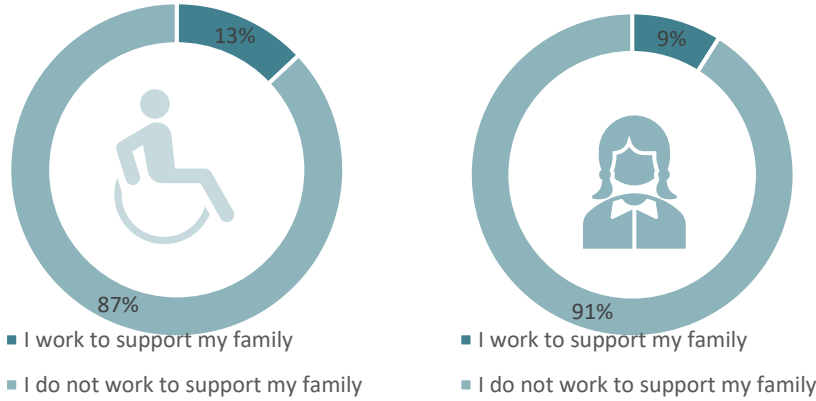
Figure 6 Difficulties associated with children aged 2-4



### EDUCATION AND CHILD LABOUR FOR CHILDREN AGED 5-17

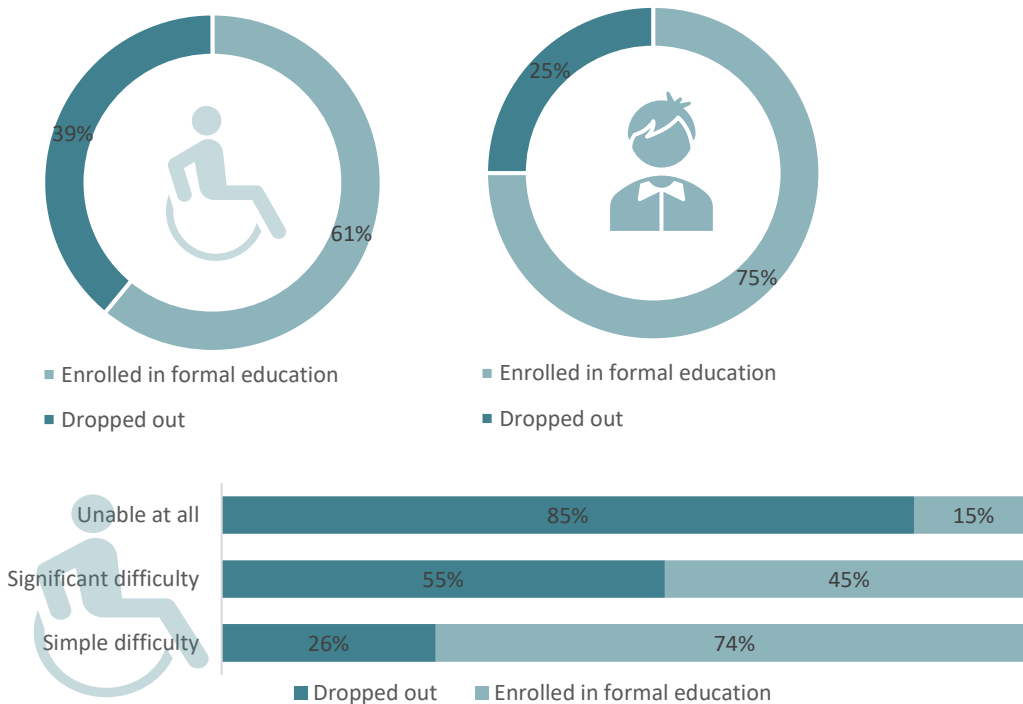
The study's findings strongly indicate that children with disabilities face a heightened risk of engaging in child labor compared to their peers without disabilities. Specifically, 13% of children with disabilities work to support their families, in contrast to 9% of those without disabilities, thus underscoring an elevated risk for children with disabilities when it comes to potential exposure to violence, bullying, and other hazards within their work environments.

**Figure 7 Child labor involving children with disabilities.**



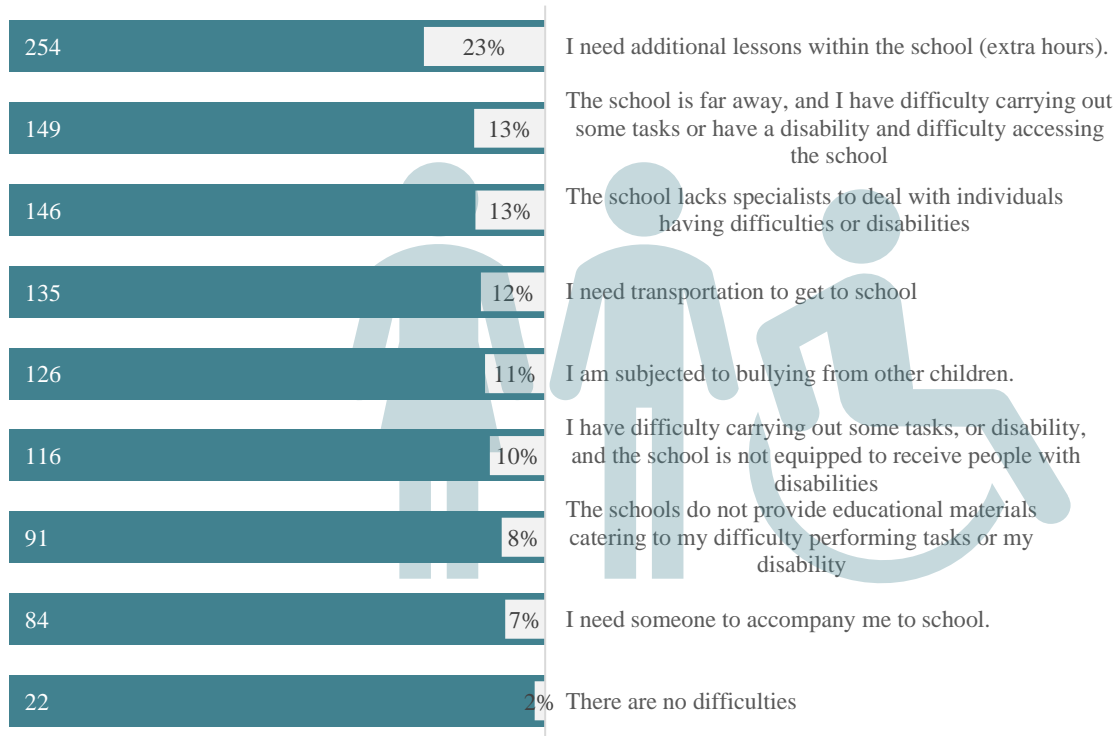
Children facing difficulties or disabilities are more at risk of dropping out of formal education when compared to their counterparts without these challenges. Specifically, 13% of children with difficulties or disabilities have left school, in contrast to 9% of those without such difficulties. Notably, the dropout rates increase with the severity of disabilities: 26% of children with minor difficulties have dropped out, 45% of those with significant difficulties discontinued their education, and 85% of children with severe disabilities dropped out.

**Figure 8 Participation of children with disabilities in formal education**

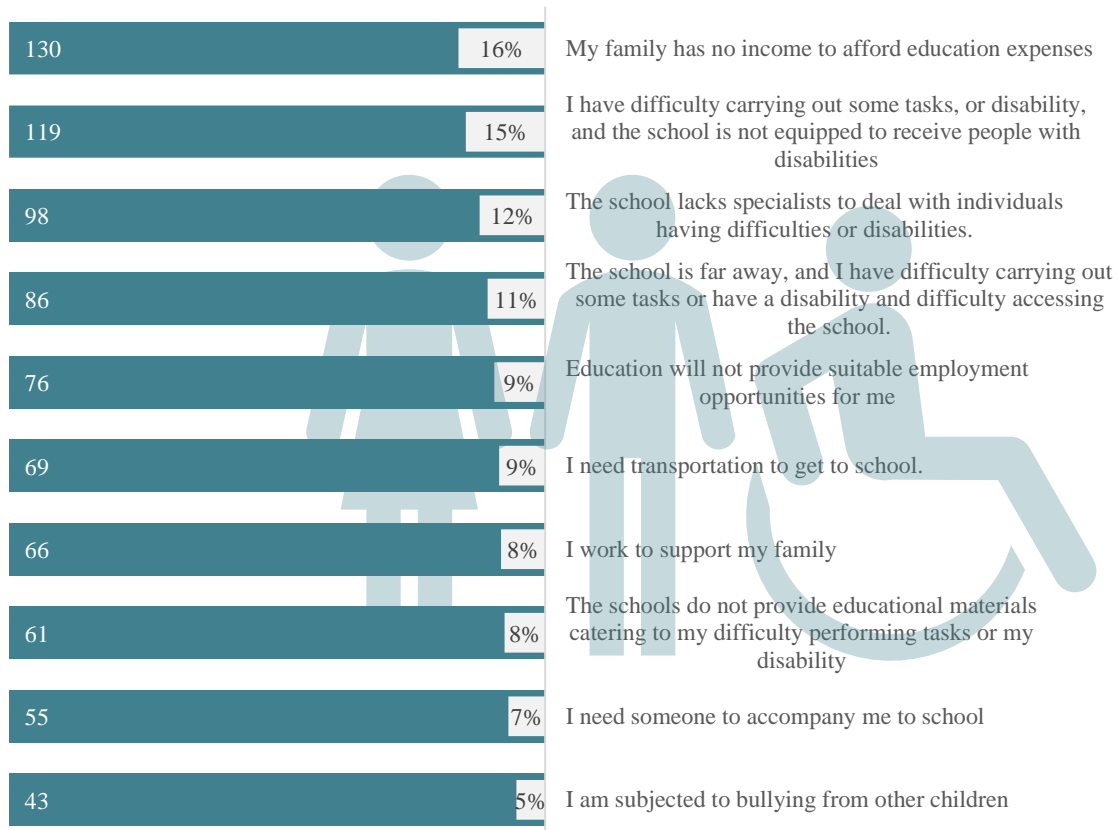




**Figure 9 Obstacles encountered by children with disabilities in the school environment.**



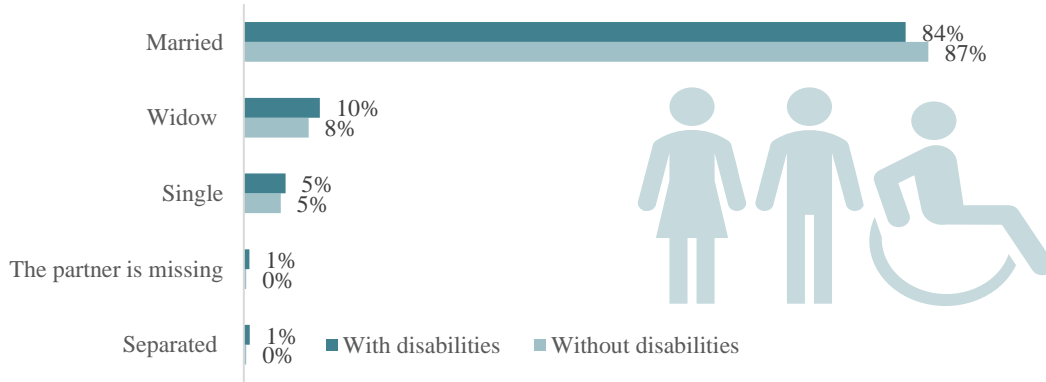
**Figure 10 The factors contributing to the dropout of children with disabilities.**



### MARITAL STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND INCOME

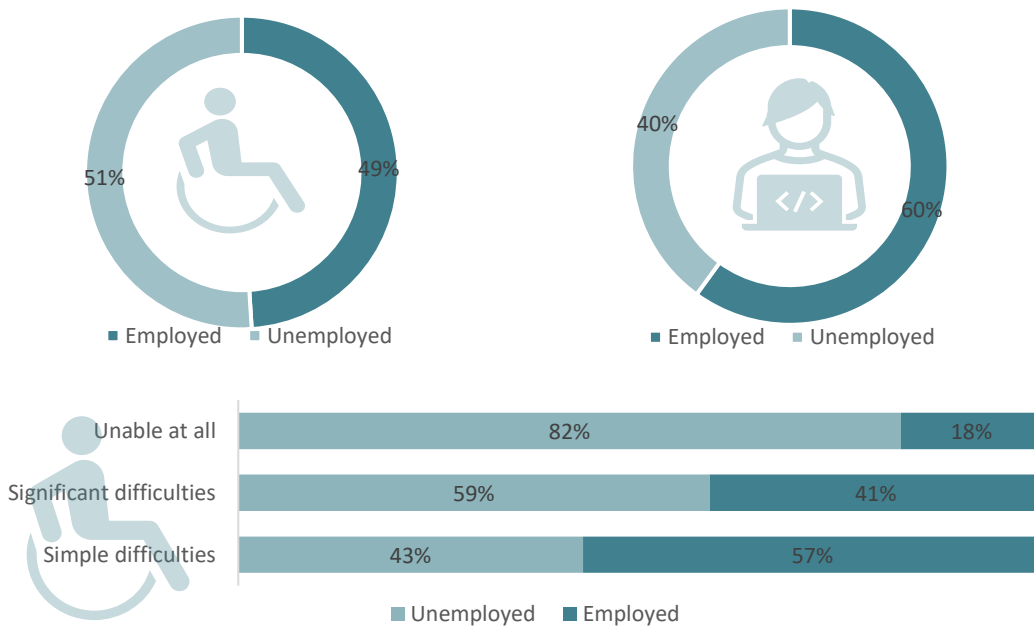
16% of individuals aged 18 and above with difficulties or disabilities find themselves without a partner, thereby missing out on crucial social support networks. This absence of support can compound the challenges of daily life. Establishing centers that provide social support networks for individuals with disabilities may enhance social connections and alleviate this issue.

Figure 11 Marital status of persons with disabilities



Individuals with difficulties or disabilities are more vulnerable to unemployment compared to their counterparts without these difficulties. Precisely, 51% of individuals with difficulties or disabilities are jobless, in contrast to 40% of those without such difficulties. Notably, unemployment rates rise with the severity of disabilities: 34% of individuals with minor difficulties are unemployed, 59% of those with significant difficulties find themselves unemployed, and a striking 82% of individuals with severe disabilities are unemployed. These figures underscore the need to create job opportunities that align with the individuals' unique difficulties and provide necessary humanitarian support.

Figure 12 Job opportunities for persons with disabilities



**DEFINITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES**

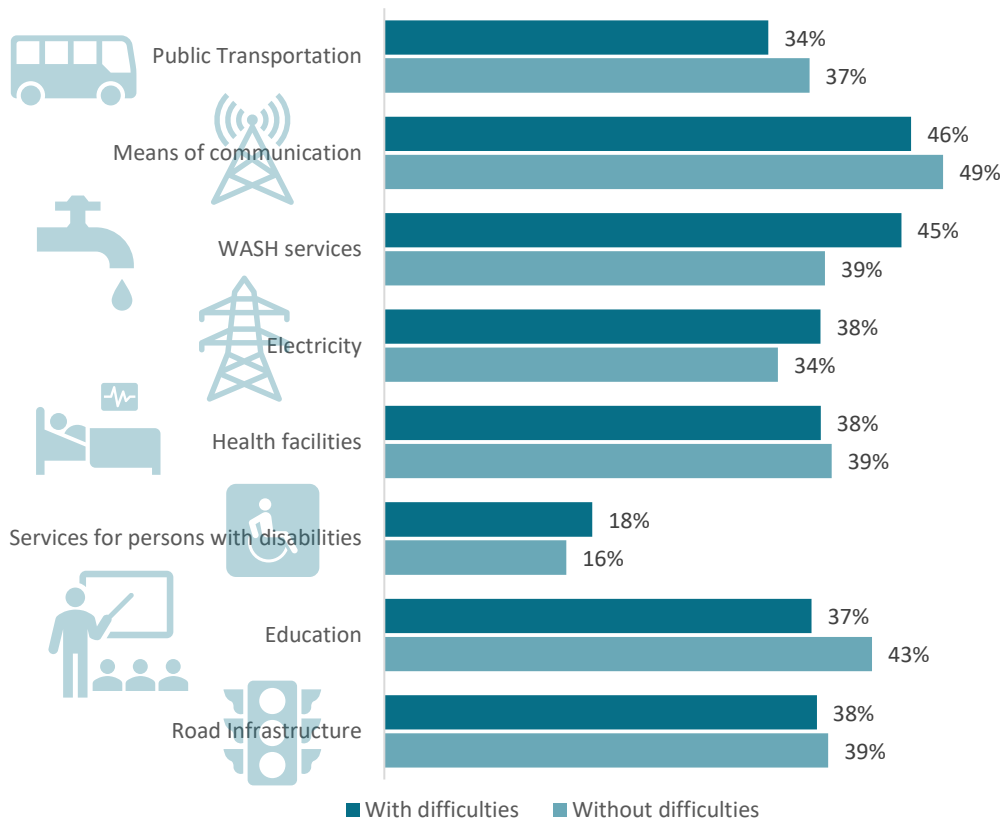
**Employed** individuals are those aged between 18 and 64 who have maintained regular work over the three months preceding the assessment date.

**Unemployed** individuals are those aged between 18 and 64 who have not maintained regular work over the three months preceding the assessment date but who are seeking employment opportunities.

**ACCESS TO THE BASIC SERVICES**

Meaningful access is defined as a household reporting that a basic service is available in the surrounding area, the household needs or uses that service, and that they can access that service to the extent they need to meet their needs. Households with members with disabilities face increased barriers to accessing several key infrastructure entities: education services (only 37% of households with members with disabilities have meaningful access, compared to 43% of households without disabilities); public transportation (only 34% of households with members with disabilities have access, compared to 37% of their counterparts); and means of communication (46% of households with members with disabilities have access, compared to 49% of those without members with disabilities).

*Figure 13 Access to the basic services*

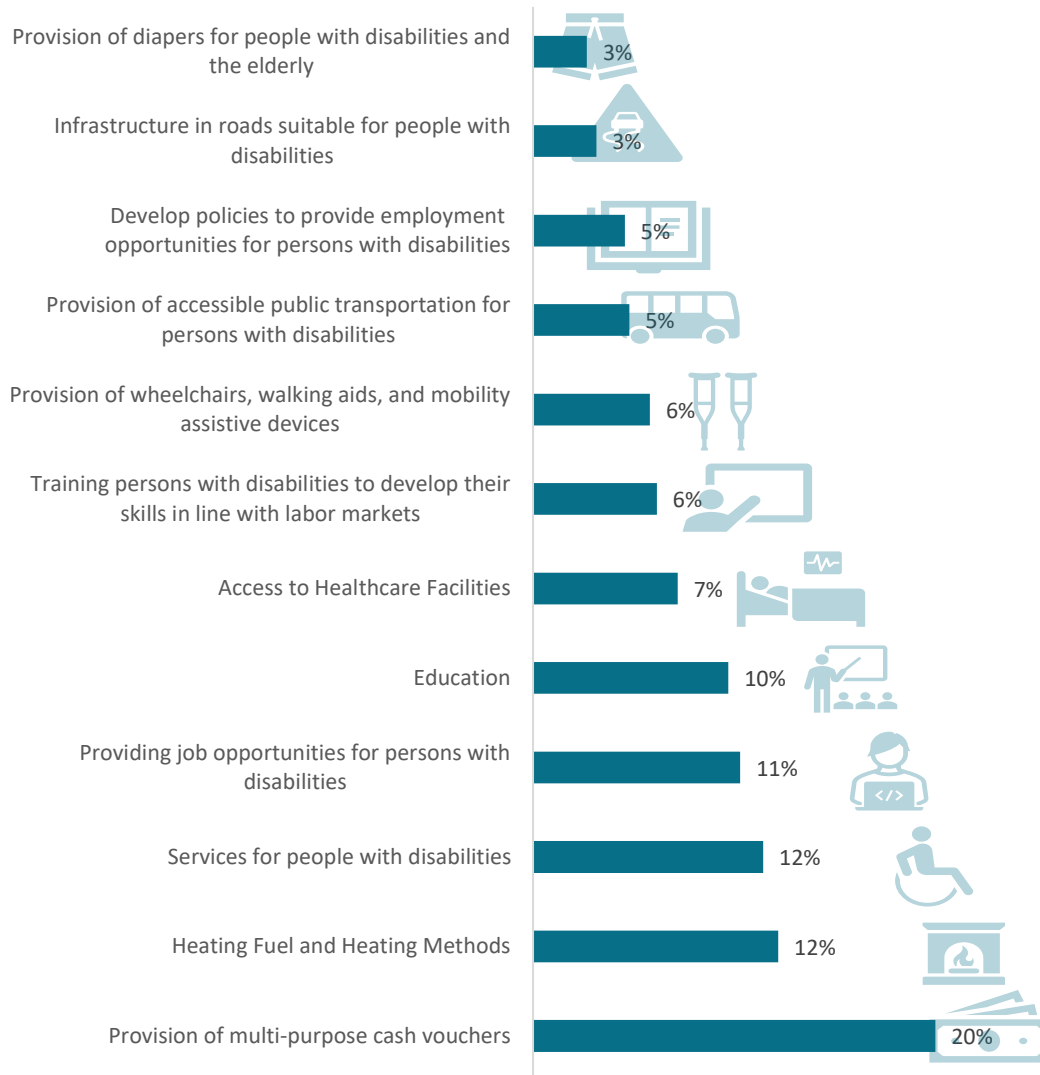


**PRIORITY NEEDS**

Having persons with disabilities significantly influences the priority needs of households across northern Syria. Households with disabled members demonstrate a pronounced demand for multi-purpose cash vouchers, constituting 20% of their essential requirements. This heightened need is attributed to the additional expenses associated with caring for family members with disabilities, including healthcare costs, medication, and transportation. Moreover, 12% of their priority needs are allocated to heating fuel and methods, as individuals with disabilities, particularly those living in IDP camps, are at a heightened risk of cold-weather-related illnesses.

Incorporating individuals with disabilities into the workforce can be a pivotal strategy to integrate them into their communities, enhance their skill sets, and secure sources of income. Accordingly, the allocation of priorities is as follows: 11% for providing job opportunities for persons with disabilities, 6% for training individuals with disabilities to align their skills with labor market demands, and 5% for developing policies that promote employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

**Figure 14 Priority needs**



## REFERENCES

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) (2006); accessible via:

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/document/definition-disability-and-disability-related-data-collection-and-analyses>

- Field Earthquake Updates in Syria, ACU reports accessible via:

[https://acu-sy.org/periodic\\_imu\\_reports/syria-earthquake-situation-update/](https://acu-sy.org/periodic_imu_reports/syria-earthquake-situation-update/)

- The Washington Group on Disability Statistics was established in 2001 under the UN Statistical Commission to support improved identification of persons with disabilities. The Washington Group Questions were developed to generate reliable and comparable data on persons with disabilities during national-level data collection exercises. For the Short Set of Questions, see:

<https://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/question-sets/wg-short-set-on-functioning-wg-ss/>



**DISABILITY**  
IN NORTHERN SYRIA  
Impact and Prevalence

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