SCHOOLS IN NORTHERN SYRIA CAMPS

Edition 08 2025





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Executive Summary

The eighth edition of the thematic report "Schools in Northwestern Syria Camps" assesses the education sector in displacement camps in Northwestern Syria (NWS) during the 2024-2025 academic year. Conducted by the Information Management Unit (IMU) of the Assistance Coordination Unit (ACU), the study evaluates the impact of prolonged conflict and displacement on education, infrastructure, resources, and student well-being. The report encompasses ten sections as follows:

Section 1: Methodology

Key questionnaires were conducted in functional school, along with surveys conducted with students, caregivers, teachers, and principals.

Section 2: General Information

Among 1,523 assessed camps, only 318 had schools, while 1,301 lacked formal education facilities. Some rely on civil initiatives, while others send children to nearby towns.

Section 3: School Buildings

Among 358 camp-school buildings, 32% are regular buildings, 27% prefabricated, 14% tents, and 13% concrete rooms. Many lack proper insulation, with 8% having zinc roofs prone to extreme weather. 78% of windows and 79% of doors are in good condition, but significant repairs are needed.

Section 4: Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene at Schools

79% of schools rely on water trucks, which are often inaccessible in bad weather, while 49% have limited drinking water. 80% of toilets are functional, 15% need minor repairs, and 5% require full rehabilitation. 71% of schools have gender-segregated toilets, and 63% have separate staff facilities. 36% use irregular septic tanks, raising health concerns.

Section 5: School Furniture and Educational Equipment

83% of desks are functional, but 13% need repairs and 4% need replacement. 68% of schools need whiteboards, 78% require heaters, and is 67,508 textbooks are needed. Only 1% of schools have sufficient heating fuel.

Section 6: Educational Stages and Curriculum

Most schools offer only basic education, forcing secondary-age students to seek schools outside camps. 62% completed the full curriculum, and 37% covered 76–99%.

92% of students advanced by passing exams, while others relied on first-time registration or exhausted failure limits.

Section 7: Students

Camp schools serve 110,881 students (49% male, 51% female). The 6-10 age group (grades 1-4) dominates (67%), but dropout rates rise in higher grades. Barriers include child labor, parental negligence, financial constraints, overcrowding, lack of materials, and long distances to schools.

Section 8: Psychological Support and Students with Disabilities





Among students, 2,101 are students with disabilities (SWDs), mostly visual (42%) and mobility impairments (21%). 89% of schools lack psychological counselors. Emotional distress is common, with 15% of students avoiding traumalinked places and 13% frequently upset by past events. Schools host 9,541 orphaned students, many at risk of dropping out.

Section 9: Teachers

Camp schools employ 4,547 teachers, of whom 87% are certified and 13% are non-regular teachers filling gaps. 96% receive salaries, but wages remain low, averaging \$148. 95% of teachers consider their salaries insufficient.

Section 10: Priorities and Recommendations

- Facilitate returns by reconstructing housing and restoring services.
- Expand education as 1,301 camps lack schools, with 14% relying on tents.
- Improve WASH as 79% depend on water trucks, and 49% have limited drinking water.
- Address shortages in whiteboards (68%), heaters (78%), and textbooks (67,508 needed).
- Reduce barriers by tackling overcrowding, supply gaps, and financial constraints.
- Stabilize teacher salaries as 4% are unpaid, and 95% find \$148 average wage insufficient.



SECTION 1: METHODOLOGY



Section 1: Methodology

1. Data Collection & Tools

- The assessment was conducted through an essential question naire gathering insights on school buildings.
- Along with four perception surveys targeted students, caregivers, teachers, and principals to provide a holistic view of education challenges.
- Governorate-level analysis divided camps into ten clusters (six in Idleb, four in Aleppo), many aligned with CCCM classifications.
- Data collection ran from January 1 to February 12, 2024, with final reporting in June 2024.

2. Challenges

- Access difficulties in random camps lacking formal administration.
- Long distances and high transportation costs hindered data collection.
- Military operations caused delays in data collection timelines.
- Security risks limited photo documentation of schools.

3. Reached Camps

Table 1: Key Figures at a Glance

Governorate	Districts	Sub-Districts	Camps Visited	Camps with Schools	Schools in Camps		
Aleppo	5	12	425	76	88		
Idleb	Idleb 3		1098	146	230		
Total	8	23	1523	222	318		



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SECTION 2: GENERAL INFORMATION

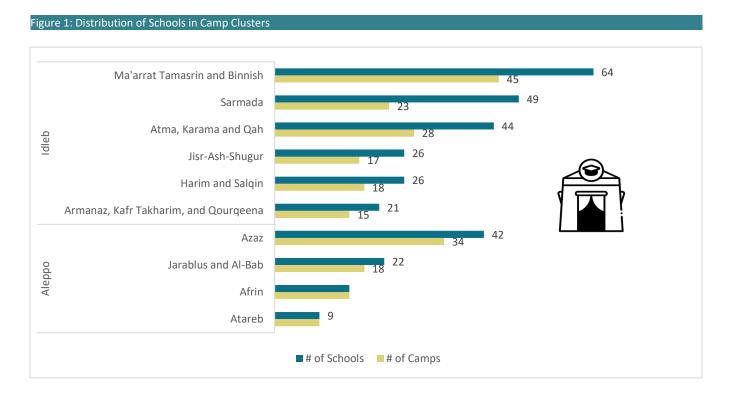


Section 2: General Information

1. Schools in Camps

The IMU assessed schools in 1,523 camps across NWS, finding 318 schools in 222 camps. While 1,301 camps lacked schools, some relied on civil initiatives or nearby town access.

Among the assessed camps, A'zaz in Aleppo had the highest number of schools (42), while Ma'arrat Tamasrin & Binnish in Idleb led with 64 schools.







SECTION 3: SCHOOL BUILDINGS

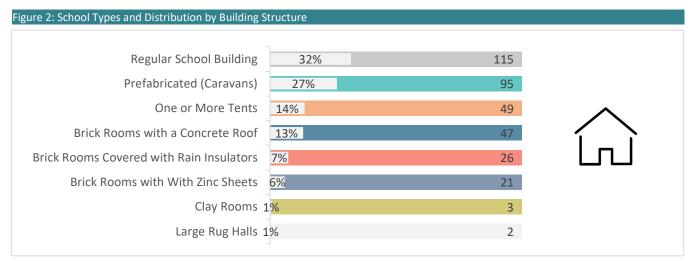
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Section 3: School Buildings

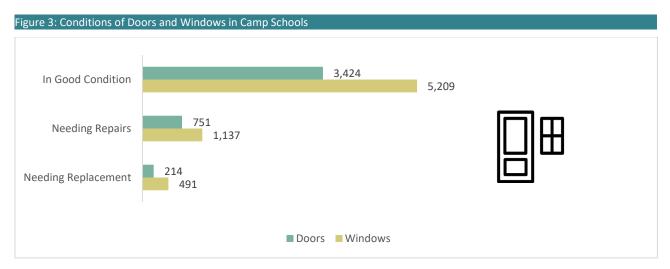
1. School Building Types

Among 358 camp-school buildings, 32% are regular buildings, 27% prefabricated caravans, 14% tents, and 13% concrete rooms with concrete roofs. Many others have poor insulation, with temporary roofing prone to weather damage, underscoring the need for concrete roofs where possible.



2. Condition of Windows and Doors in Camp Schools

Among the assessed camp schools, 78% of windows (5,209) and 79% of doors (3,424) are in good condition. However, 17% of windows (1,137) and 17% of doors (751) need repairs, while 5% of windows (491) and 4% of doors (214) require replacement. The study did not assess tent structures. Most classroom doors in concrete buildings are metal, offering poor insulation and rusting due to humidity, requiring yearly maintenance. Caravan doors, made of PVC, also need regular upkeep.





SECTION 4: WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE AT SCHOOLS

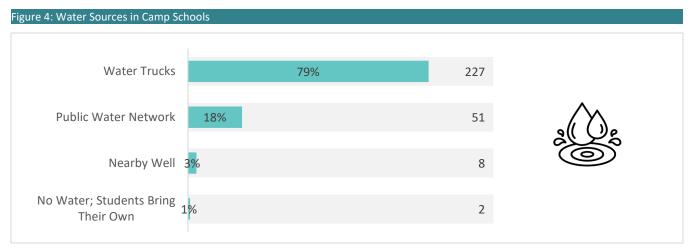
SCHOOLS IN NORTHERN SYRIA CAMPS



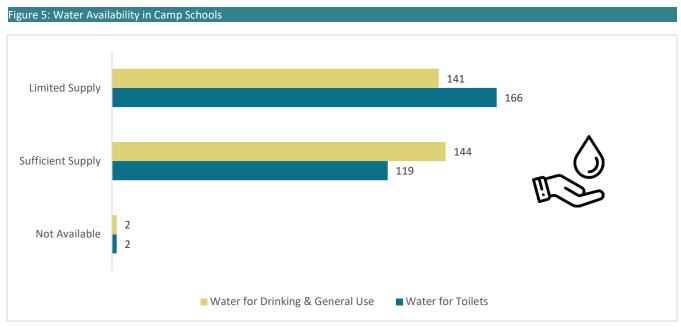
Section 4: Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene at Schools

1. Water Sources in Camp Schools

The majority of camp schools (79%, 227 schools) rely on water trucks, while 18% (51 schools) are connected to the public network. Only 3% (8 schools) use nearby wells.



Sphere standards¹ require 3L per student for drinking and 20–40L for toilets. Among assessed schools, 50% (144) met the drinking standard, while 49% (141) fell short. For toilets, 41% (119) met the standard, while 58% (166) had limited water.

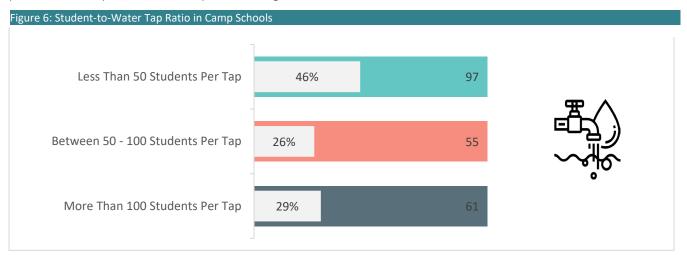


¹ ¹ <u>https://handbook.spherestandards.org/sphere/#ch006_003</u>



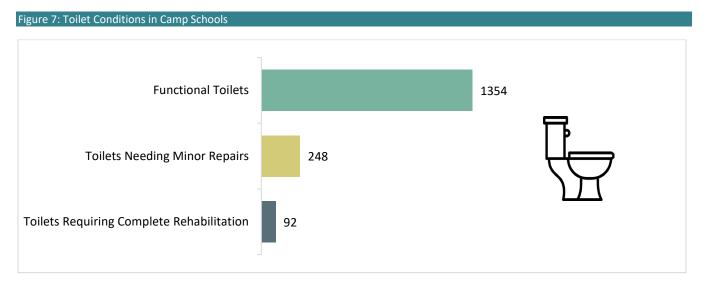
2. Access to Water Taps and Tap Replacements

Among assessed schools, 46% (97) had one tap per 50 students or fewer, 26% (55) had one tap for 50–100 students, and 29% (61) had over 100 students per tap. Overcrowding increases wait times, limiting student access to water during breaks. A total of 431 taps require replacement, affecting drinking, sanitation, and cleaning. Strategic placement of taps is essential to prevent congestion.



3. School Toilet Availability and Condition

Among assessed toilets, 80% (1,354) are functional, 15% (248) need minor repairs, and 5% (92) require full rehabilitation. Sphere standards recommend one toilet per 30 girls and per 60 boys.

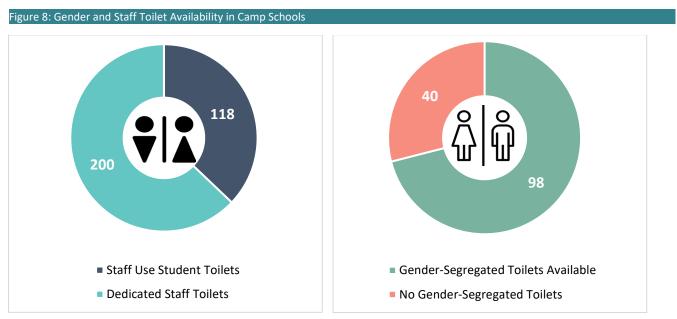






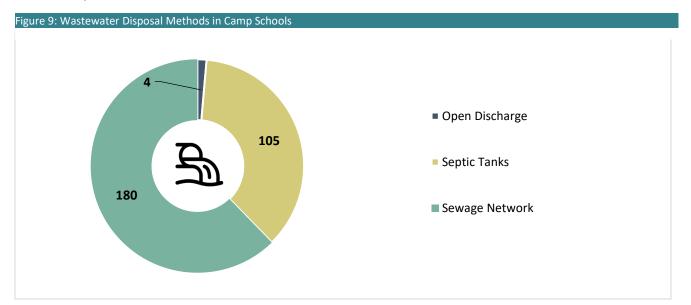
4. Gender-Segregated Toilets and Staff Facilities

Among 138 assessed schools, 71% (98) have gender-segregated toilets, while 29% (40) do not, raising privacy concerns. For staff, 37% (118) share student toilets, while 63% (200) have designated facilities. Ensuring separate, secure toilets is essential for hygiene and safety.



5. Wastewater Disposal in Camp Schools

Among assessed schools, 62% (180) connect to a sewage network, 36% (105) use irregular septic tanks, and 1% (4) discharge wastewater openly, posing health risks. Poorly maintained septic tanks risk groundwater contamination and overflow, especially in winter, increasing disease spread. Proper wastewater management is critical for hygiene and disease prevention.







6. Availability of Soap and Cleaning Supplies in Camp Schools

Only 41% (129) of schools have sufficient soap and cleaning materials, while 59% (189) face shortages, increasing the risk of water-borne disease outbreaks.





SECTION 5: SCHOOL FURNITURE AND EDUCATIONAL EQUIPMENT

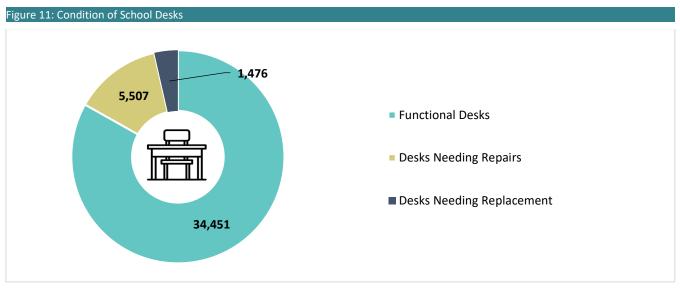
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Section 5: School Furniture and Educational Equipment

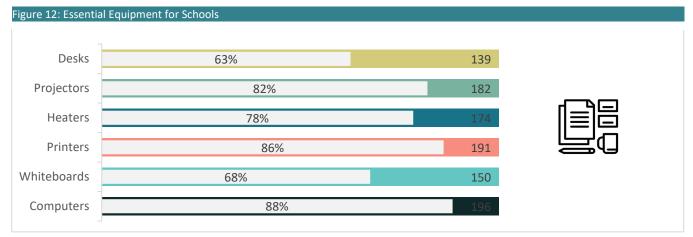
1. Condition of School Desks

Among assessed camp schools, 83% (34,451 desks) are functional, 13% (5,507) need repairs, and 4% (1,476) require replacement. Most desks have metal frames with wooden surfaces, which wear over time and require periodic maintenance.



2. Essential Equipment for Camp Schools

Among assessed schools, 88% (196) need computers, 86% (191) printers, 82% (182) projectors, 78% (174) heaters, 68% (150) whiteboards, and 63% (139) require additional desks, totaling 4,651.

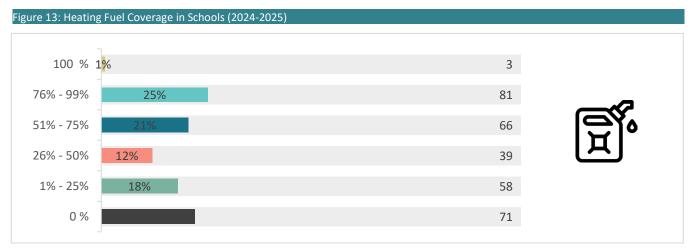






3. Heating Fuel Availability

For 2024-2025, only 1% (3 schools) had full heating fuel, while 25% (81) had 76–99%, 21% (66) had 51–75%, 12% (39) had 26–50%, and 18% (58) had less than 25%. Notably, 22% (71) had none.





SECTION 6: EDUCATIONAL STAGES AND CURRICULUM

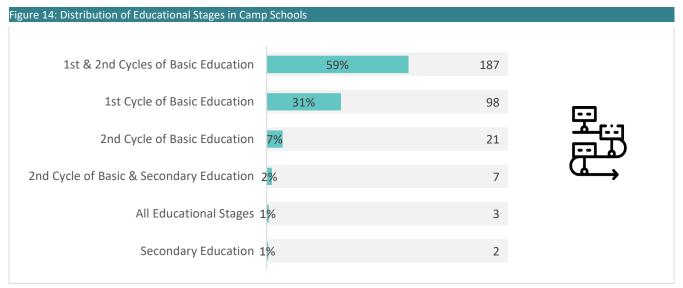




Section 6: Educational Stages and Curriculum

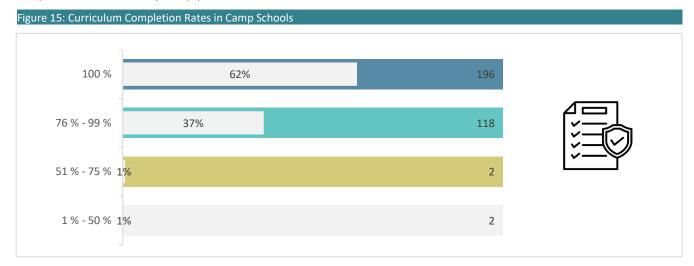
1. Educational Stages

Among assessed camp schools, 59% (187) offer both cycles of basic education, while 31% (98) provide only the 1st cycle. The 2nd cycle alone is taught in 7% (21) of schools, and 2% (7) cover both the 2nd cycle and secondary education.



2. Curriculum Completion in Camp Schools

Among assessed schools, 62% (196) completed the full curriculum, 37% (118) covered 76–99%, and 1% (2) completed 51–75%. Only 1% (2) covered less than 50%.



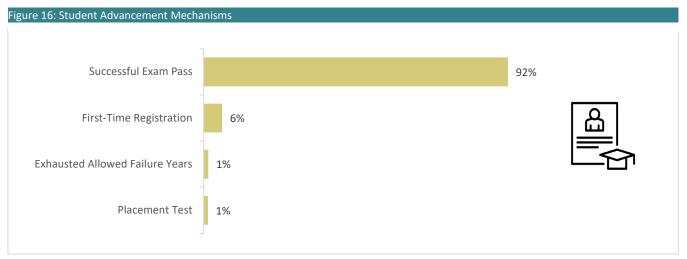




3. Student Advancement Mechanisms

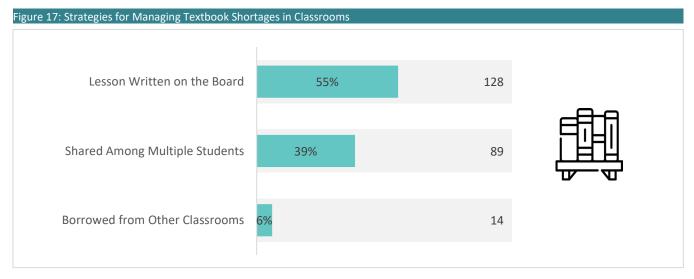
Before the war, students advanced through grade repetition, completing required years, or transferring due to failure. The conflict introduced placement tests and first-time registration (excluding first grade).

Among assessed students, 92% progressed by passing final exams, 6% enrolled through first-time registration, 1% advanced via placement tests, and 1% moved up after exhausting failure limits.



4. Teacher Survey: Strategies for Managing Textbook Shortages

Among surveyed teachers, 55% (128) wrote the entire lesson on the board, 39% (89) had students share available copies, and 6% (14) borrowed textbooks from other classrooms. The total textbook need is 67,508 copies.





SECTION 7: STUDENTS



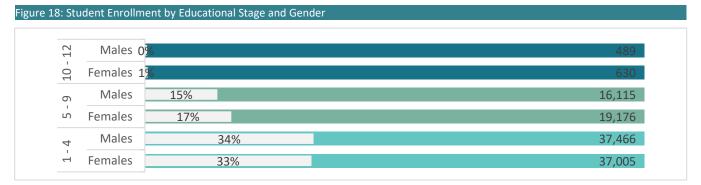


Section 7: Students

1. Student Enrollment by Educational Stage in Camp Schools

Camp schools enroll 110,881 students (54,070 males, 56,811 females). The 1st cycle of basic education (grades 1-4) comprises 67% (74,471 students), followed by the 2nd cycle (grades 5-9) at 32% (35,291). Only 1% (1,119) are in secondary education.

Enrollment drops sharply in higher stages, with many students seeking education outside camps, often facing up to 2 km of travel.

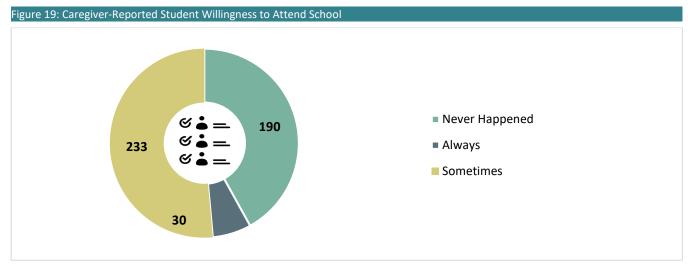


2. Insights on School Attendance

Among surveyed caregivers, 42% (190) reported their children never showed reluctance to attend school, 51% (233) said their children were occasionally reluctant, and 7% (30) stated their children were always unwilling.

Despite this, 87% (395) confirmed all their children attend school.

According to student surveys, student absences were evenly divided among work or family duties, illness, extreme classroom temperatures, and waking up late.

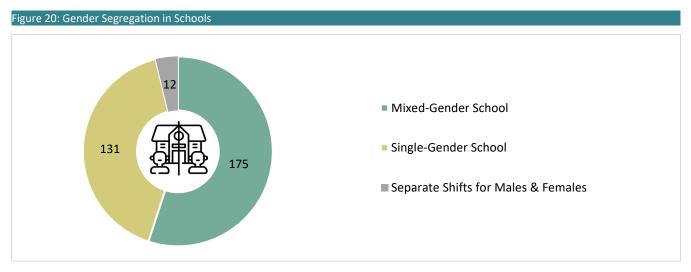






3. Gender Segregation in Schools

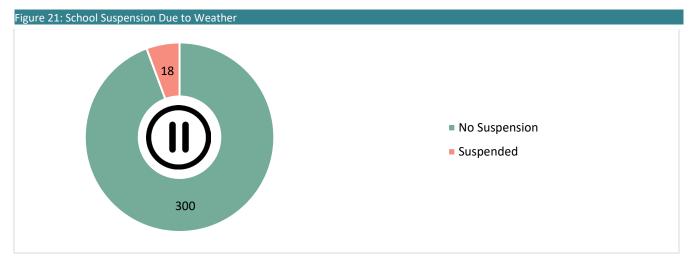
Among assessed camp schools, 61% (175) are mixed-gender, 5% (12) separate genders through shifts, and 34% (131) are single-gender schools.



Before the conflict, gender segregation began at the preparatory stage, with primary schools typically mixed. In villages with limited schools, mixed-gender institutions existed, but classroom-level separation was enforced where possible.

4. School Attendance Weather-Related Suspension

In the 2024-2025 academic year, 89% (300 schools) operated without interruption, while 11% (18) suspended classes due to severe weather. Border-area schools are safer but often close due to flooding, impassable roads, and harsh winter conditions, especially for students in tented classrooms.







5. Challenges Faced by Students

Key home-related challenges for students include child labor, parental negligence, financial constraints, household work, displacement, and cultural factors.

Table 2: Home-related Challenges Faced by Students

Governorate	Child Labor Outside the Home	Parental Negligence	Lack of Value for Education	Household or Farm Work	Financial Constraints	Unawareness of Education Opportunities	Frequent Displacement	Cultural Beliefs	Conflict-Related Displacement	Children With Psychological Disorders
Aleppo										
Idleb										
Total										

The main school-related challenges include overcrowding, shortage of supplies, poor school conditions (lack of toilets, electricity, furniture), and limited alternative education facilities.

Table 3: School-related Challenges Faced by Students

Governorate	Overcrowded Schools	Shortage of Supplies and Textbooks	Inadequate Infrastructure for SWDs	School Fees and Cost of Essentials	Insufficient WASH Facilities	Poor School Conditions (Lack of Toilets, Electricity, Furniture)	Limited Availability of Schools	Long Distance to Public Schools	Security Concerns Affecting Attendance	Age Gaps Among Students
Aleppo										
Idleb										
Total										



SECTION 8: **PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

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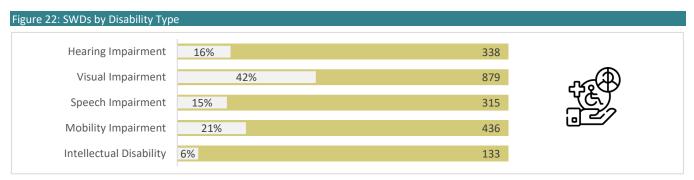


Section 8: Psychological Support and Students with Disabilities

1. Students with Disabilities (SWDs) Distribution

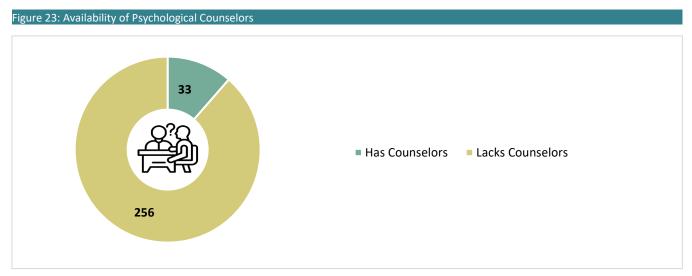
Camp schools accommodate 2,101 SWDs, with 42% (879) having visual impairments, 21% (436) mobility impairments, 16% (338) hearing impairments, 15% (315) speech impairments, and 6% (133) intellectual disabilities.

Most schools lack accessible infrastructure, as they are mainly tents or caravans without proper mobility support. Limited specialist availability further hampers diagnosis and intervention, particularly for speech and intellectual disabilities.



2. Availability of Psychological Counselors in Camp Schools

89% (256) of camp schools lack specialized psychological counselors, while only 11% (33) have access to one. Before the crisis, schools had dedicated counselors providing support, but this role is now largely absent.







3. Student Survey: Emotional Symptoms Among Students

Surveys show widespread emotional distress among students, with 15% avoiding trauma-related places, 13% upset by painful memories, and 9% dwelling on the past. 38% enjoy things less, while fatigue, low energy, sleep issues, and headaches are common.

Camp schools report 9,541 orphaned students, many at risk of dropping out due to financial hardship and the need to support their families.

Difficulty Falling Asleep	<mark>%6%</mark>	37%	42%	14%	
Dwells on the Past	%8%	34%	37%	20%	
Sudden Mood Swings	. <mark>%5%</mark>	33%	41%	19%	
Prefers Solitude	<mark>.3%</mark>	25%	44%	26%	
Nightmares and Bad Dreams	3%	30%	45%	22%	
Low Energy	<mark>3%</mark>	32%	42%	23%	
Difficulty Memorizing	%6%	43%	35%	15%	
Frequent Headaches	1%	30%	47%	21%	A
Quickly Fatigued	<mark>4%</mark>	27%	46%	24%	\checkmark
Easily Distracted	6%	42%	36%	16%	
Upset by Painful Memories	4% <mark>9%</mark>	36%	32%	19%	
Frequent Abdominal Pain	<mark>4%</mark>	35%	40%	21%	
Enjoys Things Less	7%	31%	35%	21% 6%	
oids Reminders of Bad Incidents	5% 10%	30%	34%	21%	



SECTION 9: TEACHERS

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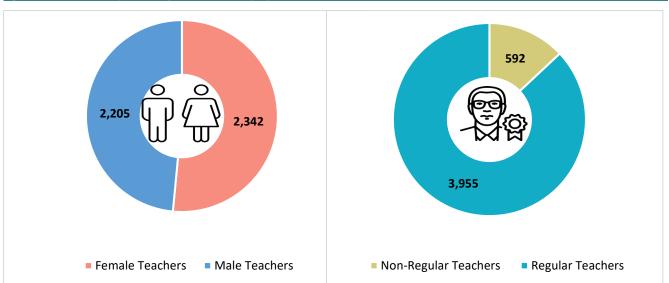


Section 9: Teachers

1. Teaching Staff Composition

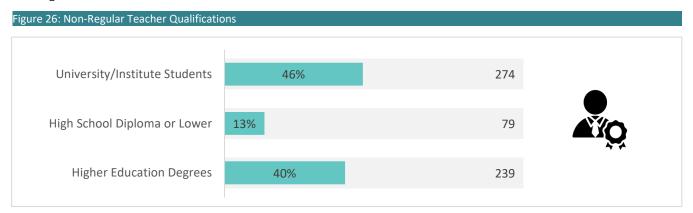
Camp schools have 4,547 teachers, with 52% (2,342) female and 48% (2,205) male. Among 592 non-regular teachers, 40% (239) hold non-education degrees, 46% (274) are university students, and 13% (79) have a high school diploma or lower.

Figure 25: Teacher Composition by Gender and Employment Status



2. Qualifications of Non-Regular Teachers

Among 4,547 teachers, 87% (3,955) are certified, while 13% (592) are non-regular teachers filling gaps due to staff shortages.

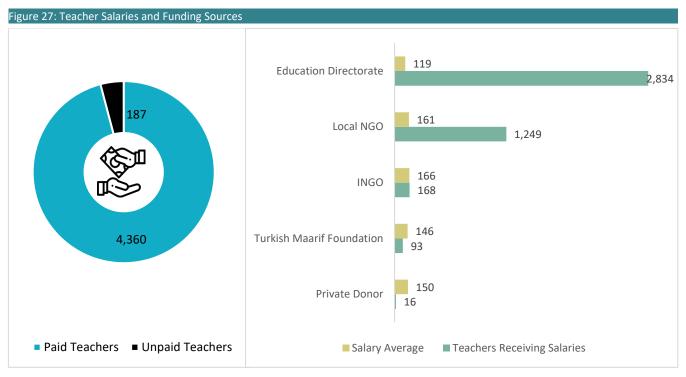






3. Teacher Salaries and Funding Sources in Camp Schools

Among 4,547 teachers, 96% (4,360) receive salaries, while 4% (187) remain unpaid. Funding sources include the Education Directorate of the opposition (65%, average salary: \$119), local NGOs (29%, \$161), INGOs (4%, \$166), the Turkish Maarif Foundation (2%, \$146), and private donors (0%, \$150).



Among surveyed teachers, 95% (200) found their salaries insufficient to meet living costs, while 5% (10) considered them adequate. 92% (292) of teachers receive no additional support for their work, while 8% (26) do.





SECTION 10: PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SCHOOLS IN NORTHERN SYRIA CAMPS



Section 10: Priorities and Recommendations

1. Key Priorities in Camp Schools

Camp schools' top priorities include heating fuel, notebooks, stationery, and schoolbooks. Other urgent needs include staff salaries, repairs, school supplies, renovation, student meals, furniture, and toilet rehabilitation.

Table 4: Key Priorities in Camp Schools

Governorate	Books	Fuel (Heating & Electricity)	Notebooks & Stationery	Staff Salaries	School Supplies (Whiteboards, Markers)	Repairs & Maintenance	School Renovation	Student Meals	Furniture Provision	Toilet Rehabilitation
Aleppo										
Idleb										
Total										

2. Recommendations

- Encourage returns to original communities: Support reconstruction of residential buildings and improve essential services to facilitate the return of displaced populations.
- Expand access to education: 1,301 camps lack schools, and 14% of existing schools are in tents. Establish formal schools, improve tent-based facilities, and ensure regular maintenance.
- Enhance WASH services: 79% of schools rely on water trucks, often inaccessible in bad weather, while 49% have limited drinking water. Improve water access, sanitation, and hygiene facilities to prevent disease outbreaks.
- Address resource shortages: 68% of schools need whiteboards, 78% require heaters, and 67,508 textbooks are needed. Provide materials, train teachers in alternative methods, and develop supplemental learning resources.
- Reduce barriers to education: Overcrowding, lack of materials, school shortages, and financial constraints hinder attendance. Expand classrooms, improve material distribution, raise community awareness, and provide financial support to families.
- Stabilize teacher salaries: 4% teachers remain unpaid, and salaries average \$148, which 95% find inadequate. Establish a stable funding system, advocate for higher wages, and create secondary income opportunities through stipends or professional development.



SCHOOLS IN NORTHERN SYRIA CAMPS

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