

Survey

on local community perceptions
regarding services and decision
making processes in **NW Syria**

About Indicators

Indicators is a limited liability company, specializing in statistical studies and field research, with specialists in field research methodologies, samples, questionnaire development and data analysis founded in 2017 in the Turkish city of Gaziantep, its field teams covering Syria and neighboring countries (Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq) as well as EU countries.

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About Nexus Action

Nexus action is an independent, non-government, not-for-profit organization working in the field of advocacy and humanitarian diplomacy to empower civil society and right-holders in conflict areas, to access international forums and decision-making platforms to achieve an impact towards peace and prosperity.

It does so through its three programmatic areas. Under humanitarian diplomacy program, it advocates for people's civil and humanitarian rights and works with local and international decision-makers. In civil society engagement program, Nexus Action works towards ensuring that the local civil society organizations are central to thinking and planning on conflict affected communities, through enhancing networking and linking with decision-makers. Finally, under the knowledge-sharing pillar, Nexus Action promotes knowledge-sharing and capacity building for grassroots organizations with the aim of maximizing their impact on the ground.

Currently, Nexus Action holds community roundtables, bringing a diverse set of participants around a common topic. These roundtable sessions provide us with unique perspectives of Syrians inside and outside Syria, and promotes a culture of dialogue and common understanding. It also organizes information sessions by bringing together subject-matter experts and influential figures, with local civil society organizations to facilitate transfer of knowledge and experience.

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Abbreviations

GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HTS	Hay'at Tahrir Al-Sham
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
KII	Key Informant Interview
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
SIG	Syrian Interim Government
SNA	Syrian National Army
SSG	Syrian Salvation Government

Executive Summary

Large territories in northern Syria have been controlled by various opposition and other forces and non-state actors, after these territories were liberated from the control of the Syrian regime. While these entities govern the liberated areas, and are in charge of the affairs of the Syrians residing there by providing public services, maintain security, and resolve disputes, it is important to note that there is no single administrative and military entity which has a monopoly of control across the different parts of the region.

The present study was conducted to find out the reality of the liberated Syrian north, through identifying the entities responsible for governing each of these pieces of land, the status of public service provision and the level of citizen satisfaction, as well as understanding the state of affairs in terms of security, criminality, access to justice, and rule of law. Finally, the study aims to shed light to the decision-making mechanisms for important issues within the region, the extent to which citizens can participate in these mechanisms, and external influence on the governance and decision-making processes of the region.

The research has been designed and executed during the first half of 2021 in Idlib, Olive Branch and Euphrates Shield areas. It is based on field research involving survey of Syrians both from host communities and internally displaced persons (IDP's) residing in the research area, and complemented with interviews with key informants (KIIs) from local government bodies or non-government organizations (NGOs).

The results of the study demonstrate a low level of knowledge of the residents of northern Syria of those responsible for governance and the provision of public services, mainly due to confusion between service providers and those responsible for managing the sector concerned. Another important result is in general, the residents of the region have low level of satisfaction for the services provided, which is being observed across all three regions.

With regard to the security situation, Idlib was the safest area according to the opinions of key informants and participants in the survey, where Hay'at Tahrir Al Sham was able to firmly control the security situation in the area and deal to a large extent with the security threats of bombings and kidnappings. Theft remains the main security concern in Idlib. In the areas of Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch, the level of safety was found to be very low, where both areas suffer from explosions targeting markets and residential areas as well as many cases of theft, kidnappings, killings and factional fighting. The people of Olive Branch area suffer especially from the seizing of their rights and property by military factions, and are being subject to arbitrarily arrest and kidnapping and have to pay funds get released.

On the other hand, it can be said based on the results of the study that the principle of the rule of law is not applied in any area covered in the study, as there are many individuals and entities that are not subject to the provisions of the law, such as civil and military leaders, members of the security forces, armed factions, powerful and wealthy individuals. Additionally, the dominant military factions in the various study area, especially in Olive Branch, infringe on the rights and freedoms of individuals, carry out arbitrary arrests and restrict the various freedoms of individuals. The majority of study participants in the areas of Olive Branch and Euphrates Shield said that those whose rights were violated could not file a complaint against the aggressor.

Finally, with regard to the participation of members of society in the decision-making process within their areas, it can be said that there is no significant role for citizens in that process, the decision is taken by the military and administrative forces controlling the region, while the Turkish authorities have significant influence in the decision-making process both in the Euphrates Shield and the Olive Branch areas. Accordingly, the opinions and aspirations of citizens are not taken into account by the individuals and entities involved in the course of the political solution, as the large majority of participants in the study believes that the communication between them and the citizens is very low.

Based on the above, the study recommends to improve the quality of public services provided to citizens in northern Syria. On the security and legal aspect, it is recommended to work on the rehabilitation of security personnel in all study areas and provide them with the necessary equipment and materials to perform their tasks in the most appropriate way, including stronger intelligence increase the level of security economic infrastructure etc. explosive devices and surveillance cameras. Priority should also be given to reduce the attacks of armed factions and security forces on the rights and freedoms of individuals, restore right violations, and hold perpetrators accountable, regardless of their status.

Finally, in order to enhance public participation in decision-making on important issues in their regions, the study recommends that opinion polls transparency and community engagement mechanisms such as public information efforts, feedback mechanisms such as polls and surveys should be conducted periodically on the affairs of those areas, and the results of polls be communicated to decision makers to be taken into account. Finally, pressure should be placed on giving community representatives a greater role in the decision-making process and involving them in various discussions dealing with important issues related to the region.

Main Findings

The reality of living conditions:

- 1- About three-quarters of the study participants said that the monthly income they receive is insufficient to cover their household expenses.
- 2- Study participants who said their monthly income was insufficient to cover their family's monthly expenses adopt several coping methods to cover the income gap, the most prominent of which is to give up on the purchase of certain supplies and to receive financial assistance from parents, friends, and humanitarian organizations. Other methods included borrowing, selling property, and applying child labor.

Public services:**Electricity service:**

- 1- The average number of hours of electricity available per day was 10 hours in Idlib, 17 hours in the Euphrates Shield area, and 19 hours in the area of Olive Branch.
- 2- The public electricity grid is the main source of electricity in Olive Branch, while in Idlib local networks (amps) remain the main source, and it is public electricity grid in Euphrates Shield. In rural areas, local networks and solar energy are relied upon.
- 3- Nearly three-quarters of respondents in Idlib said they were not satisfied or not at all satisfied with electricity service, due to the inability of citizens to operate several electrical appliances simultaneously, in addition to the low number of hours of daily electricity availability and high energy costs.
- 4- The majority of participants in the Euphrates Shield region expressed dissatisfaction with the electricity service due to the inability to operate all electrical appliances at home, irregular hours of electricity availability and high prices.
- 5- More than half of the participants in the Olive Branch area said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the electricity service.
- 6- Citizens in all areas demonstrated a low degree of knowledge about the entities responsible for managing the electricity sector.
- 7- In terms of complaint mechanism for electricity services, majority of the respondents are unaware of such mechanism in their respective areas.

Water service:

- 1- The average number of hours of water availability per week in Idlib is only 5 hours, while in Olive Branch it was 14 hours, and 47 hours in the Euphrates Shield area.
- 2- The public water system is the main source of water in Olive Branch, but in Idlib and Euphrates Shield, the main water source varies between major cities, rural areas and camps.
- 3- Participants in Idlib and Olive Branch are less familiar with the water sector management authorities, while respondents in the Euphrates Shield area have a higher degree of knowledge.
- 4- In general, the majority of participants in the various study areas said that they were not satisfied or not at all satisfied with water service, the most prominent reasons for dissatisfaction are the low number of hours of water availability, as well as the weakness of water pumped through the public water system, in addition to high water prices.
- 5- Participants in Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch areas are generally unaware of the existence of a water service complaint system, while in Idlib, more than half of the participants has knowledge on the system.

Education:

- 1- In general, there is a good degree of knowledge among participants in different study areas of the responsible entity for managing the education sector.
- 2- The vast majority of study participants said that they did not face any difficulties in access to education at various levels, including primary, middle school or secondary. Participants in Idlib had 99% access to education services, followed by 89% of in Euphrates Shield, and 85% of in Olive Branch.
- 3- The most prominent difficulties experienced by those who said that their family members faced challenges to attend school were the distance from schools from their places of residence, not giving importance to education, or that the child had to work to support family.
- 4- The vast majority of participants in different study areas said they did not have to pay any money for their education services.
- 5- Satisfaction of participants in different study areas with education services has generally been low, as less than one third of participants said they were satisfied or very satisfied with education services.
- 6- The problems and challenges faced in the education sector study areas included lack of recognition of certificates issued by educational institutions, high number of students within the classroom, and the poor competence of educational staff which is a result of lack of sufficient funding to support the education sector and the low salaries of teachers, leading to qualified teachers to seek other jobs at higher pay.

Health:

- 1- The absolute majority of respondents in Idlib and Olive Branch said that public health centers provide their services free of charge to citizens, while in the Euphrates Shield area, more than a quarter of respondents said that citizens pay money in exchange for access to health care services.
- 2- Almost no participant in Idlib expressed any difficulty in accessing health services, while in Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch areas, about a quarter of participants indicated that they had difficulties accessing health, mainly due to distance from their areas of residence and high transport costs.
- 3- Participants in different study areas are less familiar with the authorities responsible for managing the health sector.
- 4- The health sector faces many challenges, most notably the insufficient number of health centers, lack of medicines in high demand, lack of some medical specialties, and the lack of medical supplies and equipment. It was also stated that the medical personnel had poor experience and competence.
- 5- Less than half of participants in different study areas said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the health-care services provided within their regions.

Security:

- 1- There is good familiarity of citizens in different study areas with the authorities responsible for policing their areas.
- 2- Idlib is the safest area being covered, as experts confirm that HTS was able to manage the security file well and deal with the crimes and security threats facing the region, such as bombings and kidnappings.
- 3- Experts in Euphrates Shield area believe that the level of security in their area is low and that there is a marked failure by the security services to manage the security file, while it is even lower to non-existent in Olive Branch area due to the large number of explosions.
- 4- With regard to level of safety, the vast majority of participants in Idlib said that it is acceptable to high, while in the Euphrates Shield area, nearly half of the participants said that the level of safety is low, and more than a third said it was acceptable. Olive Branch residents overwhelmingly said that the level of safety in their area is low or very low.
- 5- Theft is the most widespread crime in Idlib, but experts stated that the HTS has been able to deal with them and has decreased dramatically for bombings, kidnappings and factional fighting.
- 6- There is a widespread number of thefts, killings and kidnappings in Euphrates Shield area. Other safety threats involved large number of bombings targeting public markets and residential areas, and infighting between military factions.
- 7- Bombings, theft, killings, kidnappings and inter-factional fighting are among the most serious security problems in Olive Branch. Moreover, citizens in this area suffer from infringement of their rights and property by the military factions, such as arbitrary arrest, kidnapping, asking for ransom, and seize of property without accountability or control.
- 8- With regard to the level of satisfaction, nearly half of the participants in Idlib said they were satisfied or very satisfied, falling to just over a third in Euphrates Shield, whereas only 16% in Olive Branch area.

The rule of law:

- 1- With the exception of one, all key informants believe that there are many individuals and entities that are not subject to the provisions of the law, such as civilian and military leaders, members of the security forces, armed factions, powerful and wealthy people, confirmed by the respondents of the survey.
- 2- There are many violations and infringements by the dominant forces in each study area of public rights and freedoms, such as arbitrary arrests, restrictions on the freedom of individuals to express their views and the seizure of citizens' property. These infringements are particularly acute in Olive Branch area.
- 3- Two-thirds of respondents in the Olive Branch area said that ordinary influential individuals were also infringing on the rights of the most vulnerable individuals in society, while in the Euphrates Shield area, that percentage was less than a third and about a quarter in Idlib.
- 4- The largest percentage of participants in both the Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch said that if the forces controlling the region or individuals with influence violate their rights, they will not be able to file a complaint against the aggressor, while the vast

majority of participants in Idlib say that the victims can file complaints about the attacks they have been subjected to.

- 5- In the area of Olive Branch, KIIs said that in the event of a dispute between them and another member of society, they apply to military factions to resolve the dispute in exchange for paying money, but the dispute between citizens and administrative and military agencies cannot be resolved as citizens do not dare to resort to anyone to claim their rights.
- 6- The vast majority of the study participants said there were courts working to resolve disputes between citizens or between them and those in control of the region.
- 7- KIIs in Olive Branch believe that the judiciary within the region does not enjoy independence, but in Idlib and Euphrates Shield area, one KII argued that the judiciary is independent and there is no interference by any parties in the work of the judicial system. This claim was disputed by other key informants.
- 8- Residents of Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch has low degree of knowledge regarding the legal rules applied by the courts when considering disputes before them.
- 9- The majority of study participants argue that the parties to the proceedings can appeal the sentences handed down in these cases, while the degree of knowledge in the Euphrates Shield area is reduced to two-thirds, and it was less than half in Olive Branch.
- 10- Experts in the various areas of the study believe that the sentences handed down in disputes between citizens, and armed or civilian administrative forces are often not implemented, as these forces do not comply with the provisions of the judiciary. One key informant opined that the sentences are to be implemented regardless of the parties to the conflict.
- 11- The level of satisfaction of study participants in Idlib and Euphrates Shield areas regarding the work of the courts is less than half, yet falls to one third in Olive Branch. commonly cited reasons for dissatisfaction with the work of the courts are the spread of bribes, corruption, nepotism, impartiality of judges, poor efficiency and slow litigation.

Decision-making process:

- 1- In general, KIIs state that there is no role for citizens in the decision-making process related to public affairs in their areas, with the exception of one informant who claimed the SSG involves citizens in the decision-making process by holding direct meetings with citizens and listening to their opinions on various issues. According to survey results however, participants across study areas said that citizens have no role in decision-making.
- 2- Similarly, informants noted that interventions by outside forces has significant influence in decision-making for the region, which was also shared by the majority of respondents.
- 3- There are many bodies and personalities who are considered representatives of the people as members of local councils, mayors, regional elders, dignitaries and clan leaders, but KIIs concur that representatives of society cannot influence decision-making and have no role in making them.
- 4- The majority of participants opined that the selection of community representatives is made by their appointment by the forces controlling the region.

- 5- Participants have markedly low degree of knowledge on the path of political solution, meetings and conferences that are held and the resulting outcomes and decisions.
- 6- The absolute majority of the study participants identified the degree of communication between citizens and actors participating in political solution process is very low.
- 7- With regard to the satisfaction of respondents with the work of the figures involved in political solution process, respondents and Idlib expressed a low level of satisfaction while most respondents of Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch areas remained neutral.
- 8- The majority of participants in the Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch areas said that the military and political forces operating in their areas were not involved in the political solution. In the case of Idlib, the most common answer was they did not know whether the forces controlling their area participate.

Recommendations

To humanitarian organizations:

- 1- Make reducing aid dependency as the overarching goal of all programming, and design all projects to serve to this goal
- 2- Engage with the affected population at every step of the program cycle, have their voices heard and concerns addressed
- 3- Where possible, utilize and build on existing local capacities and increase the effectiveness of local actors to expand coverage
- 4- Encourage partnerships with the private sector, expand the dialogue between private sector and public service providers
- 5- Design and implement livelihood interventions that will:
 - Support household enterprises and livelihoods that have room and opportunity to grow through new skills training and apprenticeships alongside providing access to finance including microfinance and links to employers, and markets
 - Stimulate livelihood opportunities in rural areas by providing farmers with agricultural inputs (including fuel and water) and improve access to quality seed

To donors/INGOs/UN agencies:

- 1- Commit to and accelerate the provision of sufficient, predictable, flexible and multi-annual humanitarian, development and peacebuilding funding, through dedicated funding mechanisms
- 2- Invest in local systems and local capacity, including technical support, for local service delivery
- 3- Systematically include local NGO and CSO actors in the design, planning, coordination, implementation and evaluation of programs
- 4- Encourage an enabling operational environment for NGOs and CSOs, including taking the necessary steps to ensure that regulatory environment do not inhibit their work in the region.
- 5- Adopt a conflict sensitive and do no harm approach throughout the programming cycle

- 6- Promote and incentivize the adoption of humanitarian-development-peace nexus by all relevant parties working in the region

To CSOs:

- 1- Strengthen access to justice for affected populations through establishment of legal aid mechanisms and support to local courts.
- 2- Ensure that women, girls and SGBV survivors have access to legal assistance and representation and empower and develop capacities of judicial institutions to address SGBV and combat impunity.
- 3- Train police officers, judges and prosecutors on codes of conduct and international standards on human rights.
- 4- Empower communities through community-based administration and customary mechanisms.
- 5- Promote confidence building measures through awareness raising and policy dialogue.
- 6- Support awareness raising and public outreach campaigns on transitional justice mechanisms
- 7- Increase efforts to inform the community on the political process at every level, consult public opinion on critical matters, and convey their messages to decision-makers.

To civilian administrative bodies:

- 1- Adopt a people-centric approach, and put people's needs and aspirations at the core of the administration's work
- 2- Systematically consult to people's opinions through polls, public surveys, townhall meetings, as well as online modalities
- 3- Support inclusion of women, youth and people with disabilities in decision-making process, and use conflict sensitivity, peace building and social cohesion approaches to build social capital.
- 4- Adopt a transparent, fair, and equitable pricing for electricity and water services, and introduce effective complaint mechanisms to deal with customer issues
- 5- Facilitate processes and platforms for dialogue between local governing and decision-making structures, institutions, NGOs and community members to encourage collective prioritization of issues.
- 6- Substantially invest in civilian control and oversight of armed factions, and gradually introduce accountability, oversight, and integrity mechanisms for law enforcement agencies

To the Government Bodies in the Region:

1. Substantially increase the role and effectiveness of civilian bodies in the region, promote their leadership roles, to increase their legitimacy and community buy-in
2. Support the application of Turkish public institutions' quality systems and standards in northern Syria to increase the performance of public services
3. Consider provision of limited and targeted subsidies for public services, mainly electricity, to reinvigorate economic growth

4. Assist in local administration bodies to increase civilian oversight of military factions
5. Establish mechanisms to prevent and prosecute human rights abuses in the regions under Turkish control, and to hold perpetrators accountable

Introduction

Study objectives:

The study aims to find out the extent to which Syrians living in the liberated areas of northern Syria are aware of the structures of governance and administration in their areas, and to reveal the reality of living conditions and provision of public services including electricity, water, health and education with a focus on the satisfaction of citizens. Additionally, the study explores the level of knowledge and understanding of Syrians in the targeted region with regard to the governing authorities, as well as identifies the most prominent security problems and widespread crimes. With a focus on the factors that contribute to the spread of crimes from a legal point of view, the study seeks to reveal the validity of the principle of the rule of law and to investigate whether there are entities, forces, bodies or individuals who infringe on the rights and freedoms of citizens and are not subject to the provisions of the law. The study also evaluates the methods and modalities used to resolve differences and disputes within ordinary citizens, as well as between citizens and authorities or entities controlling the region, including the effectiveness of settlement mechanism in question, such as the judiciary and court enforcement mechanisms. Finally, the study shed light on how decisions on important cases in the region are made and ways and means of community involvement in the making those decisions.

Scope of the study:

Time range: The data collection period of the study took place during the first half of 2021, between February and July.

Geographical scope: The study covered the liberated areas of northern Syria, which include Idlib, the Olive Branch area and the Euphrates Shield area. The study sought to cover as many towns, villages and districts as possible. In Idlib, the study included Idlib city, the border areas of Kaslin, Harem, Waldana, Sarmada and Atma, as well as the area of Maarrat Misrin, Jericho and the villages of Jabal Zawiya. In the area of Olive Branch, the study covered Afrin, Jenderes, Muthali, Sharran, Raju and Belbel. Finally, in Euphrates Shield, Azaz, Al-Bab and Jarabulus were covered.

Data sources:

- 1- Primary sources include:
 - a) Syrian citizens residing within the areas covered by the study.
 - b) Expert / key informant interviews (KIIs)
- 2- Secondary sources include research, studies and reports related to the subject of the study.

Study sample:

The sample of the study was to interview six key informants from local government agencies, administrative and service institutions and civil society organizations who were familiar with the security, administrative and service realities in the study areas. Two key informants were interviewed in each of the study areas. The experts were interviewed directly (physically)

using an interview guide with open questions, as the following table shows the characteristics of the experts interviewed in each of the study areas:

Idlib	Expert I	Service officer in Idlib city, formerly working for several humanitarian organizations
	Expert II	Member of the Syrian Salvation Government
Euphrates Shield	Expert I	Camp management officer
	Expert II	Water company employee, former public relations coordinator in the National Army
Olive branch	Expert I	Local council member
	Expert II	Judicial sector employee

Table 1 Characteristics of the experts participating in the study

Apart from KIIs, a field survey was conducted covering 300 male and female members of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host community members, with 100 respondents in each region. The study adopted the random stratified sample in the selection of participants, to take into account the coverage of various categories of Syrians within the liberated areas, especially displaced persons due to their high numbers and difficult living conditions. Interviews were conducted directly (physically) using a questionnaire containing closed and open questions. Data was collected by field researchers using Kobo Collect, and analyzed using SPSS and MS EXCEL programs. The characteristics of the participants demonstrated significant diversity in terms of several variables such as gender, age, residence status, housing conditions and educational level. Descriptive statistics of the participants by each of those variables are given below:

The sample members are distributed in terms of sex:

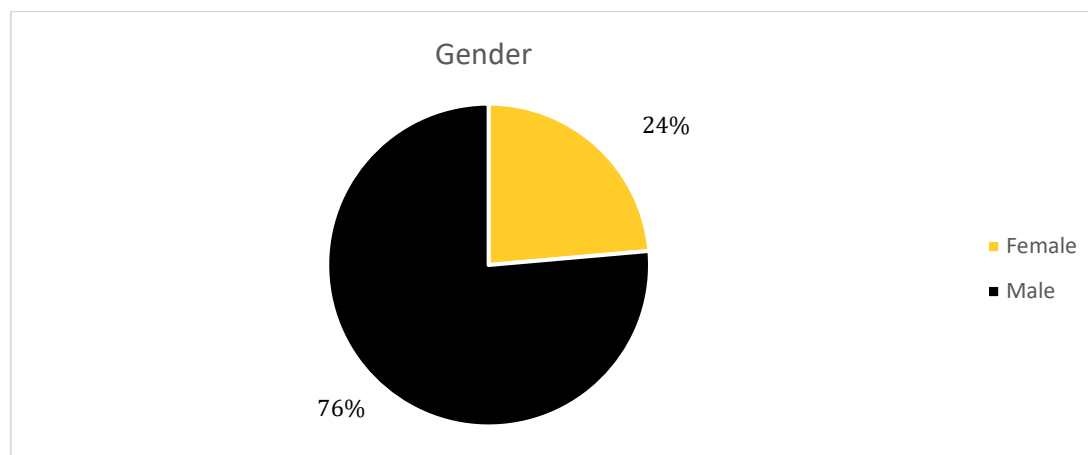


Chart 1 Gender distribution of respondents

The sample members are distributed in terms of age:

The average age of the study participants was 38 years, the youngest participants were 19 years old, while the oldest was 72 years old.

The sample members are distributed according to the status of the residence:

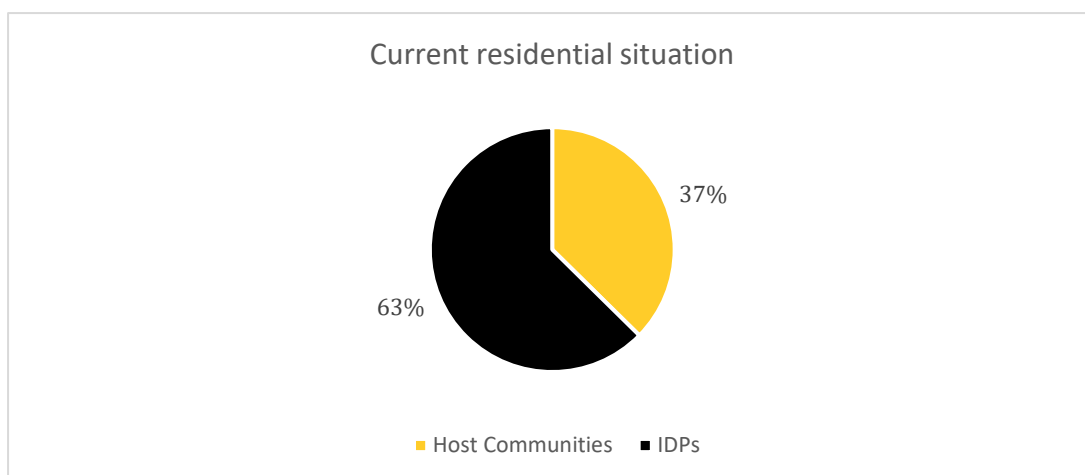


Chart 2 Distribution of sample members in terms of status of accommodation

The sample members are distributed according to housing conditions:

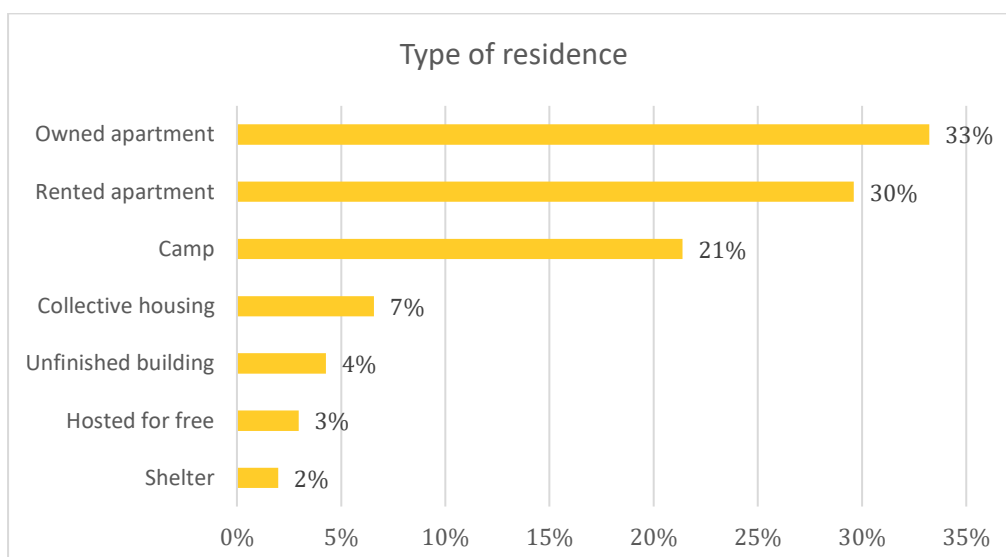


Chart 3 Distribution of sample members in terms of housing type

The sample members are distributed in terms of educational level:

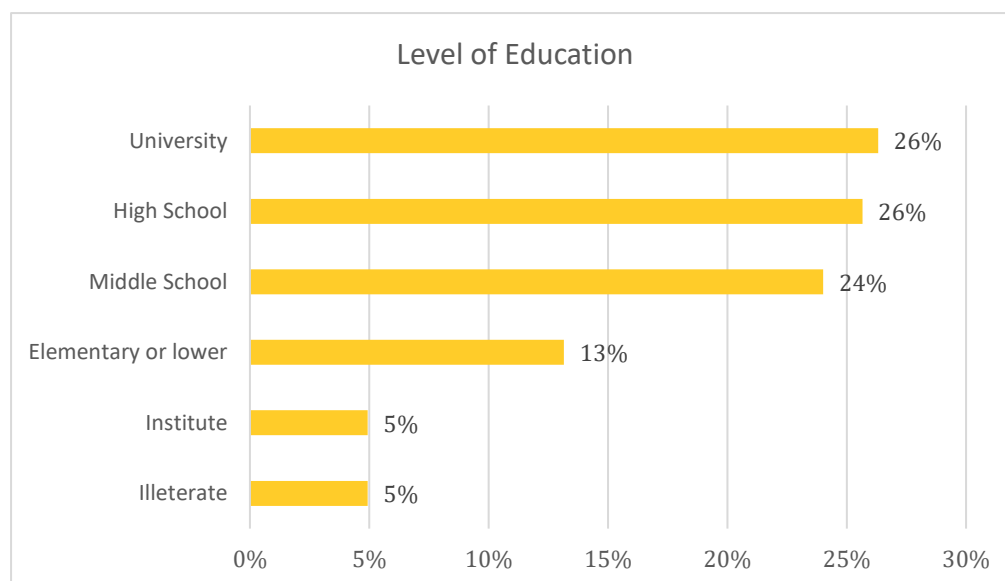


Chart 4 Distribution of sample members in terms of educational level

Difficulties and challenges

Field researchers faced some difficulties during the data collection process, due mainly to refusal of some citizens to participate in the study fearing that they would be persecuted if they talk about sensitive issues such as human rights abuses committed by military forces, the state of the judiciary and how court rulings are made, and decision-making process.

Although various liberated areas of northern Syria are under the control of opposition forces, they are not under the authority or supervision of a unified political or military body, but quite the contrary, each area is considered an independent entity in itself. As for the areas of the Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch, the Syrian Interim Government (SIG) is responsible for the administration of civil and public service affairs, whereas militarily the two areas are under the control of the Syrian National Army (SNA). It should be noted that although the SIG and the SNA are nominally responsible for the governance of Olive Branch and Euphrates Shield areas politically and militarily, in practice the two areas are administratively divided, where Olive Branch area is affiliated with the Governorate of Hatay, while the Euphrates Shield area is divided between the Governorate of Kilis (Azaz) and Governorate of Gaziantep (Al Bab and Jarablus).

The difference in administrative and local government bodies in each region of northern Syria, as well as the different military forces in it, leads to a difference in the living, service and security realities, which is highlighted in this report.

Section 1 - The Reality of Living Conditions

The number of Syrians living in opposition areas in northern Syria increased significantly during the years of civil war, as these areas were the last resort for millions of Syrians fleeing the scourge of war and military operations all over Syrian territory, as well as displaced persons who refused to make settlements in the provinces that were brought under the control of the regime. Although there are no official statistics on the number of Syrians residing within opposition areas in northern Syria, according to the latest statistics from the northern Syrian response coordinators team, the total number exceeds 4 million, with some 2.1 million are internally displaced. According to the same source, there are 1,293 camps in northern Syria, including 282 makeshift camps, in which more than 1 million people live.¹

The conditions and challenges of living in northern Syrian regions are well known to its residents, particularly those living in the camps. Among the most prominent difficulties are unemployment and finding jobs, the low income of individuals, and the inadequacy of that income to provide for the requirements of their families to meet basic necessities, as confirmed by the study participants, where overall about three quarters indicated that the monthly income they receive to cover their family expenses is insufficient. The rate is well above three quarters for IDPs, while about two-thirds of respondent from host communities cannot meet their living expenses. Region-wise, Idlib residents has the highest rate that cannot meet their expenses.

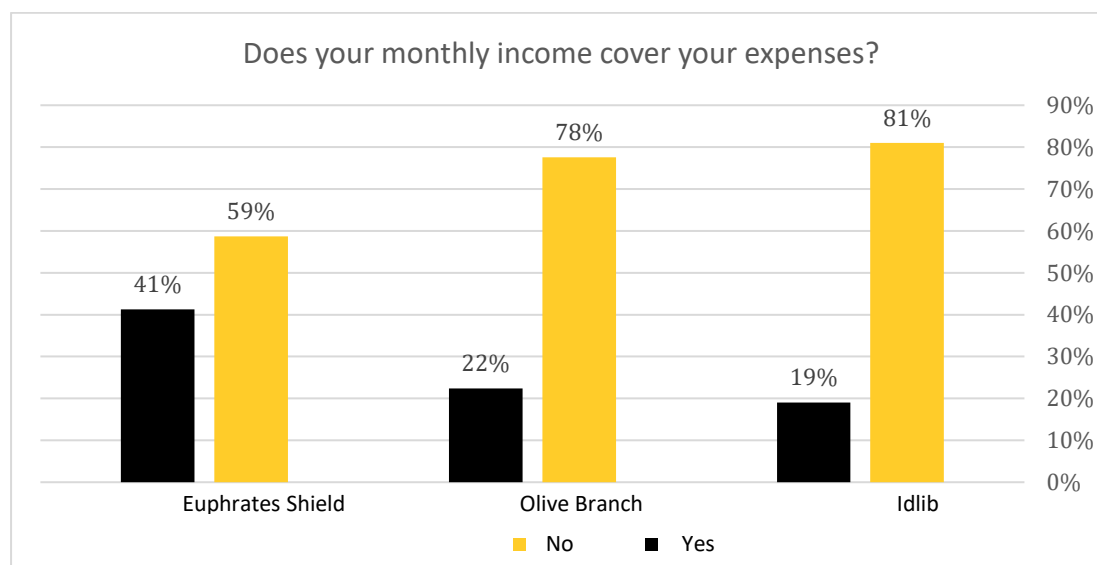


Chart 5 monthly income adequacy to cover living expenses

It should be noted here that the average monthly income of the families of the study participants was about 1550 TL, and the sources of that income are diverse. First and foremost, self-employed individuals in many sectors such as trade and handicrafts or opening their own projects, followed by the work of public servants within government institutions and departments, in addition to those working within humanitarian organizations or employees of private sector companies and daily laborers. When asked where their source of

¹ Displaced Syrians 2021. Catastrophic figures reveal the scale of the tragedy.

<https://cutt.ly/cQngU1u>

income came from, 8.3% of respondents chose the “other” option, saying that they had to do several jobs in order to secure the needs of their families as they worked in both the public and private sectors, with one respondent indicating he is a member of an armed group receiving salary from his faction. It is worth noting here that 13.3% of the participants said that they did not have any source of income.²

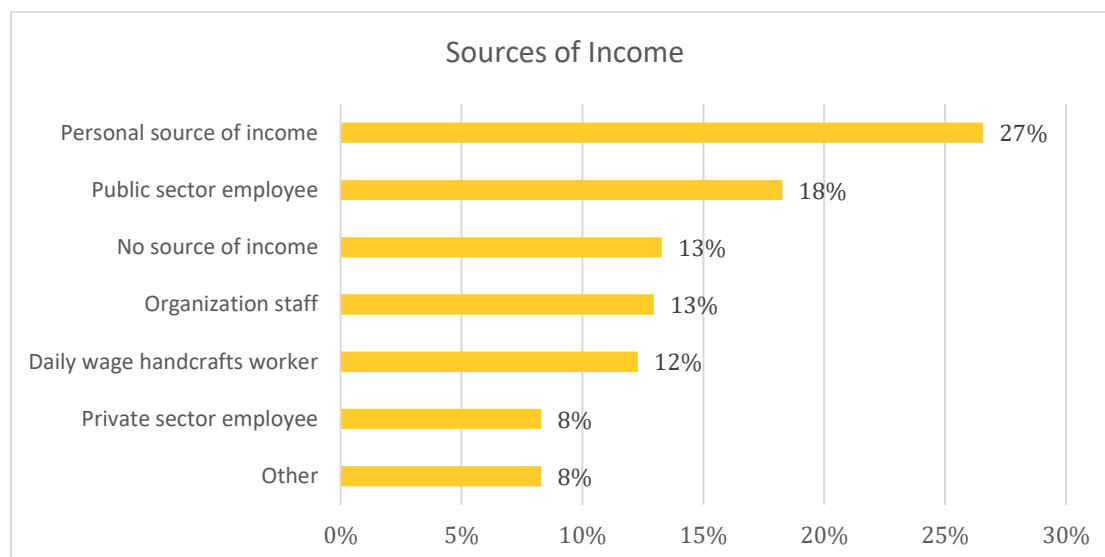


Chart 6 sources of monthly income

In general, more than half of the study participants who responded that they had no source of income or those whose income was not sufficient to provide for their household supplies said that they had to refrain from purchasing certain items or supplies needed by the family, even if they are basic necessities. Additionally, assistance they received from relatives or friends or those provided to them by humanitarian organizations contributed to the purchasing part of the family's needs. Coping strategies to cover the difference between the value of their income and the size of their monthly expenses included borrowing, child labor, or selling their assets and saving. Additionally, IDPs may be forced to sell their property left in areas controlled by the Syrian regime at a much lower price than their actual value, and some participants explained that they are spending their financial savings.

² The average monthly household income is about \$180 per month, and given that the average number of family members in Syria according to the United Nations is 5, per capita family income is about \$36 per month, i.e. residents of northern Syria as a whole live below the poverty line.

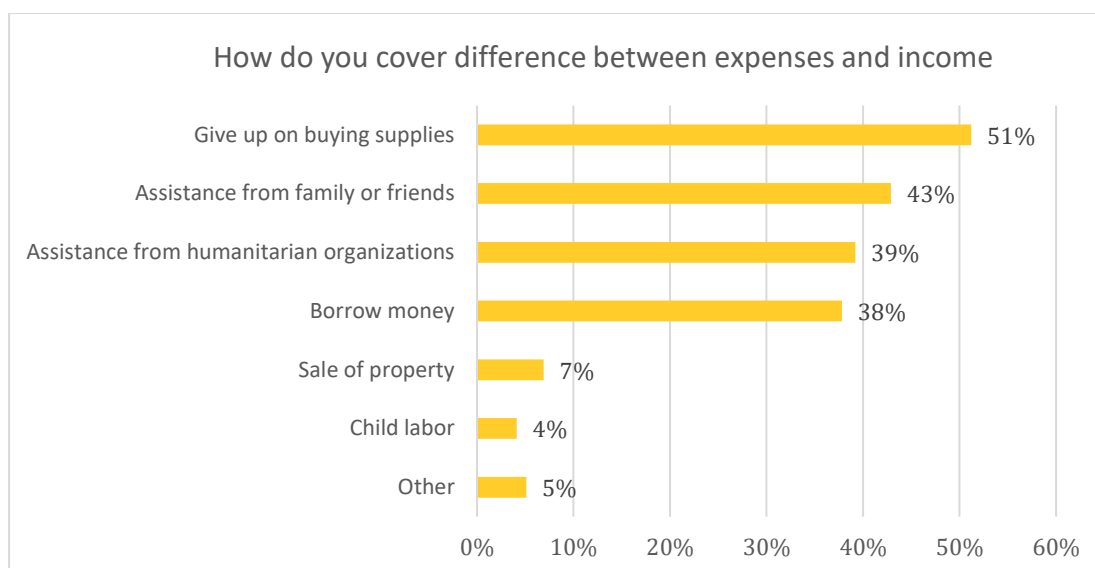


Chart 7 methods to cover the difference between income and expenditure

Section 2 - Public Services

Electricity service:

Looking at the reality of the electricity sector in the liberated areas over the past years, it can be said that this sector has improved markedly. At the beginning of liberation, there was no electricity at all, where the Syrian regime cut off electricity with no alternative source, in addition to the massive destruction of power plants and public grid lines in many areas as a result of military operations. In the face of the lack of electricity, the people resorted to the use of private generators or solar panels, as well as some special projects to provide electricity to the population through the purchase of large generators and the extension of power lines for houses, which is known as amps. Later and with the relative stability witnessed in northern Syria and the development of the administrative institutions, efforts were launched to provide electricity without interruption. Some private companies are currently working in both Idlib and the areas of Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch to draw electricity from Turkey and deliver it to homes through public network lines, but this has not yet been done in all regions, as a large number of villages, small towns and camps have not been electrified through public grid lines and continue to rely on local generators (amps) or solar energy as their main source of electricity.

Returning to the results of the study, KIIs in Idlib confirmed that the main source of electricity varies between cities and rural areas. In cities, a private Turkish company called GREEN ENERGY supplies electricity to generator owners to be distributed through amps networks to civilian homes. The number of hours of electricity available daily has become 10 hours after it was not more than two hours previously. One key informant explains that the supply of electricity to citizens is currently being provided through amps networks pending the processing and maintenance of the public electricity grid for rural areas. The camps consider olfactory power panels to be the main source of electricity.

Omar Shakrouk, General Manager of GREEN ENERGY, explained during an interview with the Anab Baladi Network that the company is seeking to reach all areas of Idlib, but this will be done gradually, where the company will start supplying electricity in areas with larger population density and close to conversion stations, namely Idlib, Salqin, Dada and Sarmada,

and after the completion of feeding these cities, it will move to other towns and cities until it reaches all towns including Jabal Zawiya, Jisr al-Shughour, areas and Sarmada. On the lines of contact with areas of control of the Syrian regime, the delivery of electricity through amps subscriptions is a temporary phase pending the processing of public grid lines.³

In the Euphrates Shield area, one key informant also confirms that there are a large number of villages and rural areas whose inhabitants rely mainly on solar panels for electricity, and the other informant, who works within the management of one of the camps, stressed that the camp residents also rely on solar panels because electricity is not accessed through public grid lines except for only a very limited number of camps.

In the Olive Branch area, both experts noted that electricity provided through public grid lines was the main source of electricity in various areas of Afrin.

The above-mentioned expert answers are consistent with those of the study participants. In Idlib, the majority of respondents confirmed that ampere generators are still the main source of electricity in their areas. In the Area of The Olive Branch, the vast majority of respondents indicated that the public electricity grid is the main source of electricity in the region, and half of the respondents in the Euphrates Shield region also indicated that the public electricity grid is the main source of electricity within their areas, and here it should be noted that a high percentage of respondents in the Euphrates Shield region More than a quarter of participants in the Euphrates Shield areas and up to 14% in Idlib said that their areas do not have electricity, knowing that the majority of them are residents of the camps, so the people of these areas also resort mainly to the use of solar panels.

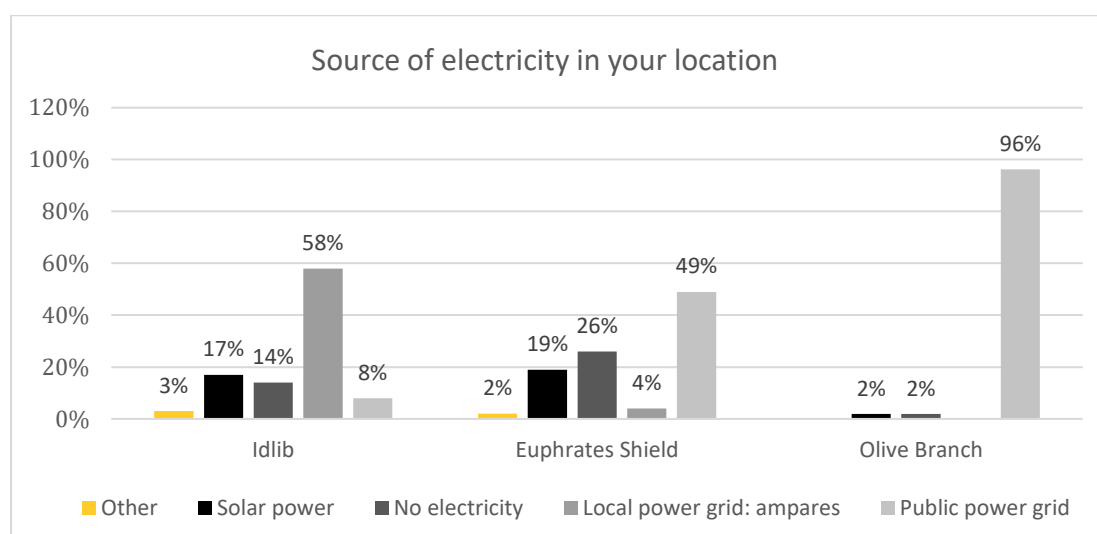


Chart 8 main source of electricity

When asked whether electricity was available in their homes, 4 participants in Idlib answered no, while in the Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch areas, there were 8 participants in each region without electricity. Respondents cited reasons such as lack of money to buy electricity or the public electricity grid does not reach the areas where they live. Regarding the respondents who said that electricity is available in their homes, there is a disparity in the

³ A company GREEN ENERGY Electricity reaches Idlib city, my grapes.

<https://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/481198>

average number of hours of electricity availability per day depending on the current place of residence. On the source of electricity, in Idlib both solar panels and amps are mainly relied upon, while in the Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch areas, the reliance is mainly on the public electricity grid as well as solar panels as shown in the following chart:

Note: “other” option includes relying on batteries and laser lights (leds) to illuminate the dwelling.

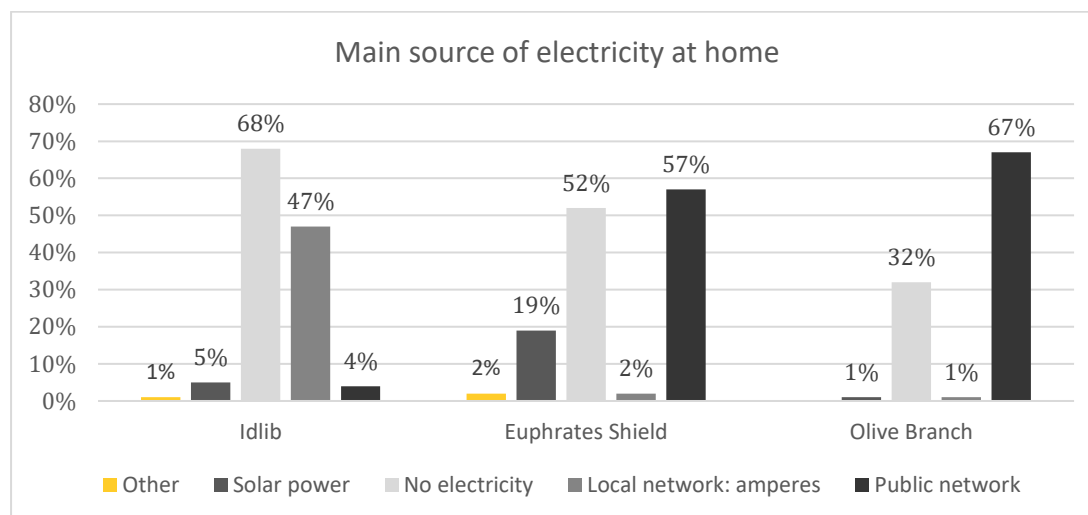


Chart 9 main source of electricity in respondents' homes

Generally speaking, the results of the study indicated a low degree of satisfaction with electricity service in different areas of the study with different reasons of dissatisfaction from one region to another. In Idlib, about three quarters of respondents indicated that they were not satisfied or not satisfied at all with electricity service (56% were not satisfied and 18% were not satisfied at all), while 11% of respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with electricity service, amounted to 10% and 1% respectively, while 15% of respondents remained neutral. In terms of the reasons for the low degree of satisfaction with electricity service in Idlib, the foremost is the inability of citizens to operate several electrical devices at the same time, in addition to the decrease in the number of hours of availability of electricity per day and the high prices of electricity. As mentioned earlier, the average number of hours of availability of electricity in Idlib is 10 hours per day, knowing that the average amount of monthly payment for electricity is 67 TL. It should be noted here that some respondents cited several reasons for their dissatisfaction with the electricity service, namely the high cost of maintaining solar energy sets in their homes (panels and batteries) as well as the risk of batteries exploding inside the house, which are considered a time bomb, and those responses are grouped under the “other” option in the chart below:

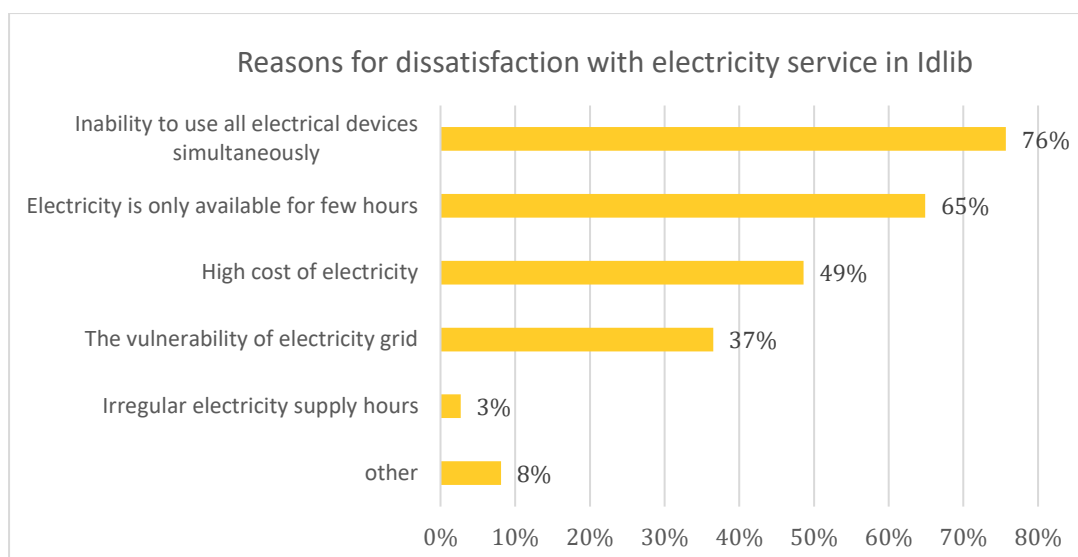


Chart 10 reasons for dissatisfaction with electricity service in Idlib

In Euphrates Shield area, although the majority of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the electricity service, the satisfaction rate is significantly higher than in Idlib, as the rate of satisfied or very satisfied was 20% and 16%, while 37% was unsatisfied and 22% was unsatisfied at all. Reasons given for the dissatisfaction with the electricity service are primarily the inability to operate all electrical appliances in the house, irregular hours of availability of electricity, and high prices, as average electricity cost per month stood at 79 TL. Among the reasons collected under “other” option which constituted the 24% of respondents, were there unavailability of electricity service in their areas of residence or high prices for the maintenance of solar energy sets and the danger that batteries pose to children.

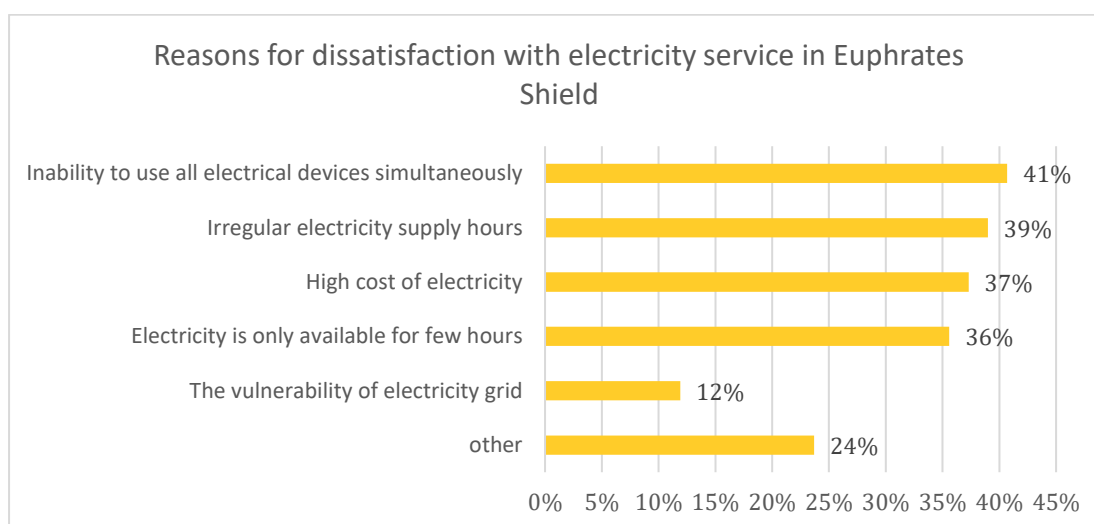


Chart 11 reasons for dissatisfaction with electricity service in Euphrates Shield

The highest level of satisfaction with electricity service was in the area of Olive Branch, as more than half of the respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the service, while the just over a third were either dissatisfied or completely dissatisfied, and 11% remained neutral. The reasons given for dissatisfaction with the electricity were mainly two: high electricity prices, which leads to the reluctance of citizens to operate all electrical appliances in their homes, and high cost of electricity services which amounted to TL 67 per month on average.

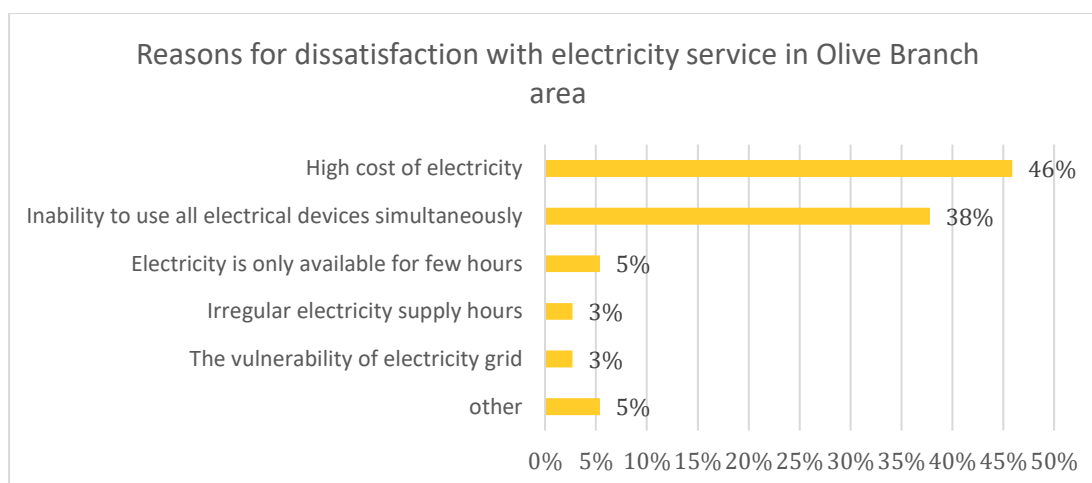


Chart 12 reasons for dissatisfaction with electricity service in Olive Branch

For their part, KIs in various areas of the study confirmed that the authorities who manage the electricity sector face many difficulties and challenges, the most prominent of which is in Idlib because the public electricity network is old and the various high-tension lines, electricity towers, cables and conversion stations are affected by military operations and shelling that continues to affect many areas of Idlib. One of the key informants pointed out that work is under way to extend a new public network but it is delayed due to the lack of staff and equipment.

In the Euphrates Shield area, one key informant expressed that the most pressing challenge facing the relevant authorities is the cases of theft of electricity or cables of the public grid, in addition to the high costs of importing electricity from Turkey, which leads to the high value of electricity on citizens. Another key informant who had experience in camp management stressed that authorities do not really face significant challenges but some areas are being neglected and marginalized, especially camps, to which no efforts were made to extend or deliver electricity grid.

In the Olive Branch area, KIs also agree that the most prominent difficulties and challenges facing the electricity sector in the region are theft of cables, and illegal ingestion of electricity from the public grid, which is done by military factions to feed their headquarters with electricity. Another identified challenge was cutting of wooden electricity poles for use in heating during winter.

With regard to the bodies and entities that manage the electricity sector, each study area deserves a separate analysis. In Idlib, KIs explain that the Directorate of Electricity of the Ministry of Services within the Salvation Government (SSG) manages the electricity sector, which has recently concluded a contract with Green Energy company to invest in electricity infrastructure in the region, equipping the public electricity network. The Directorate also purchased electricity from Turkey to in exchange for collecting fees from the beneficiaries. The study notes that the degree of knowledge among Idlib residents was somewhat low in identifying the exact authority responsible for the management of the electricity sector. Some Idlib respondents referred to several entities as being collectively responsible for the management of the electricity sector, and generally the largest percentage of respondents pointed out to the SSG as responsible for managing the electricity sector, yet the majority did not identify which administrative body within the SSG is specifically responsible for the sector. On the other hand, 14% of respondents said that private companies are responsible, and the

majority of them included green energy, an electricity investor, as well as those who pointed out generator entrepreneurs (amps). Additionally, some attributed responsibility to Turkey, and 15% of the answers were collected under “other” option, which included the HTS, and those who had no idea.

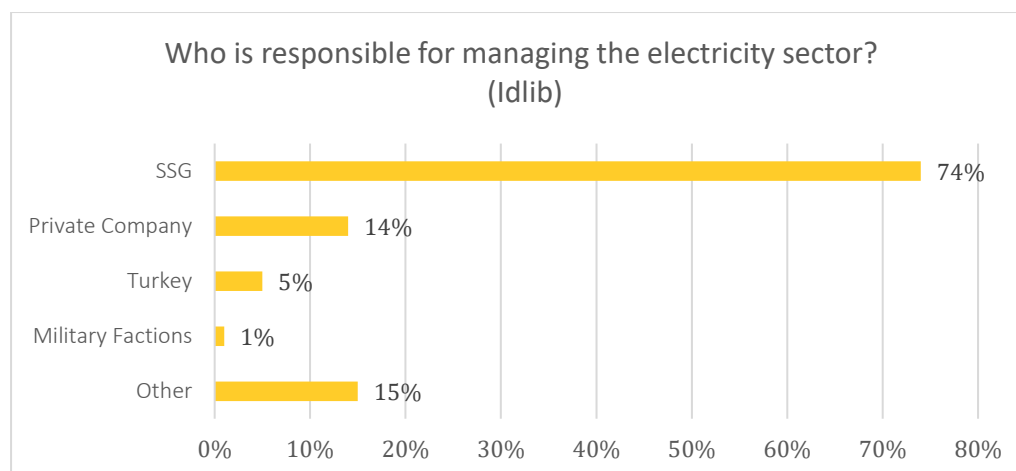


Chart 13 responsible for managing the electricity sector in Idlib

In the Euphrates Shield area, KIIs reveal that local councils are the administrative authorities responsible for managing the electricity sector, yet respondents have differed in their answers, with the vast majority considering that Turkish private companies that draw electricity from Turkey and feed the region are responsible for managing the electricity sector. Nearly half of respondents indicated that the task is carried out by local councils, while 15% of respondents believe that the Turkish state is directly responsible for managing the sector, and the rest of the responses varied among SIG, SSG, and other entities, including none because of the lack of electricity.

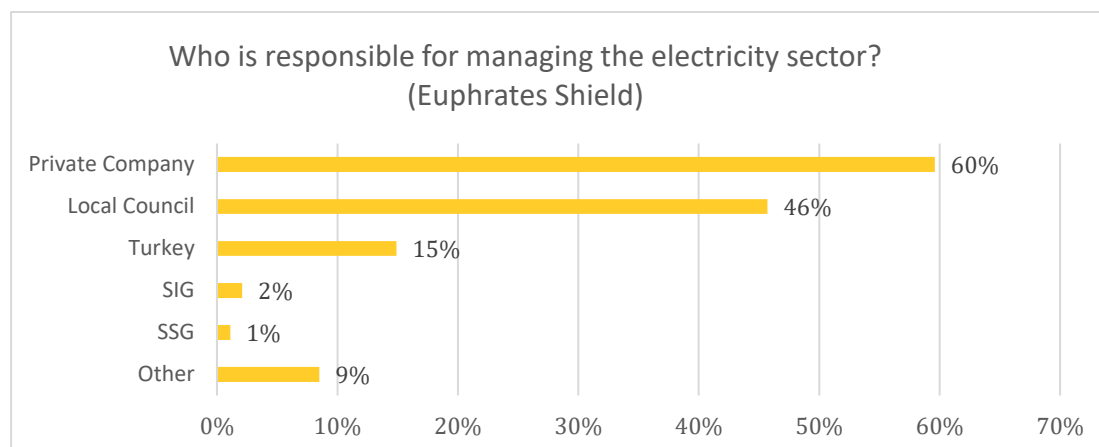


Chart 14 responsible for managing the electricity sector in the Euphrates Shield area

KIIs in the Olive Branch area also confirmed that local councils are responsible for managing the electricity sector by supervising, cooperating and coordinating with the Turkish authorities, while the study participants primarily see Turkey as responsible for managing the electricity sector, followed by private companies investing in the electricity sector in the region, and local councils.

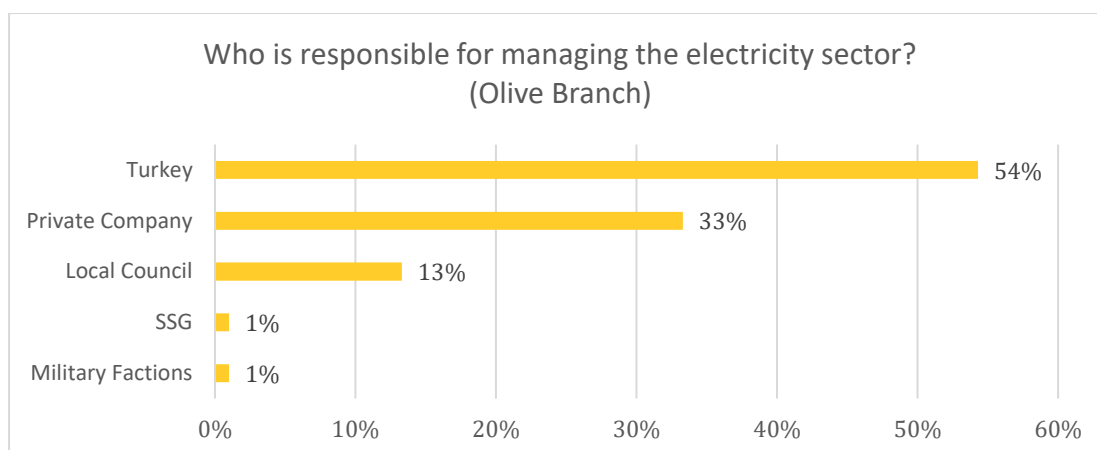


Chart 15 responsible for managing the electricity sector in Olive Branch

In view of the above, it can be said that residents of the research area has low degree of knowledge in terms of which administrative bodies are exactly responsible for managing the electricity sector in their areas, and it also confirms that the majority of participants do not know whether there is a system of complaints in their areas, notwithstanding that key informants have confirmed that citizens can file their complaints about electricity services with relevant administrative bodies through dedicated WhatsApp numbers, social media accounts, or personal review, in addition to direct complaints that can be filed with electricity companies.

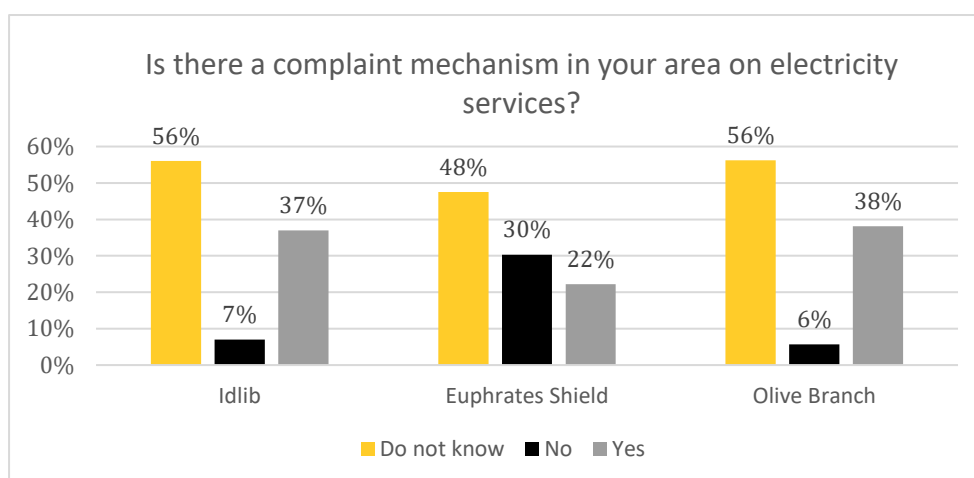


Chart 16 existence of complaint system about electricity services

It should be noted here that one respondent in Idlib explained that he had already filed a complaint and he received a response regarding the complaint. In regard to Euphrates Shield area, 4 respondents said that they had filed electricity-related complaints, where 2 complaints were addressed and the other two were neglected, while in the area of the Olive Branch, 3 respondents filed complaints and only one was responded.

Water service:

The results of the study showed low number of hours of water availability in both Idlib and the Olive Branch. In Idlib, the average number of hours of availability of water per week was only 5 hours, while in the area of Olive Branch, the average number of hours of availability of water per week was 14 hours, and 47 hours Euphrates Shield area.

The main source of water availability in each of the study areas varies across cities, rural areas and camps. In Idlib, about three quarters of the study participants indicated that water pumped through the public water system is the main source of water in their areas, followed by tank water according to 13% of participants. KIIs said that the public water system is the main source of water in city centers, while in rural areas citizens mainly dwell on wells, whereas camp residents receive water through tanks supplied by humanitarian organizations.

In the Euphrates Shield area, the largest number of participants in the study replied that water tanks are the main source of water in their areas, while the percentage of those who referred to the public water system as the main source of water decreased to one third, and 14% said that citizens in their areas depend mainly on well water. As in Idlib, informants also said in the Euphrates Shield area that the public water system is the main source of water for citizens residing in city centers, and well water is the main source for rural residents, while in camps water tanks are mainly relied upon.

In Olive Branch, experts and study participants confirm that water pumped through the public grid lines of the Maidanki Dam is the main source of water for residents of various towns, villages and towns within the area.

Note: “other” option in the chart below includes participants who say there is more than one major water source in their areas.

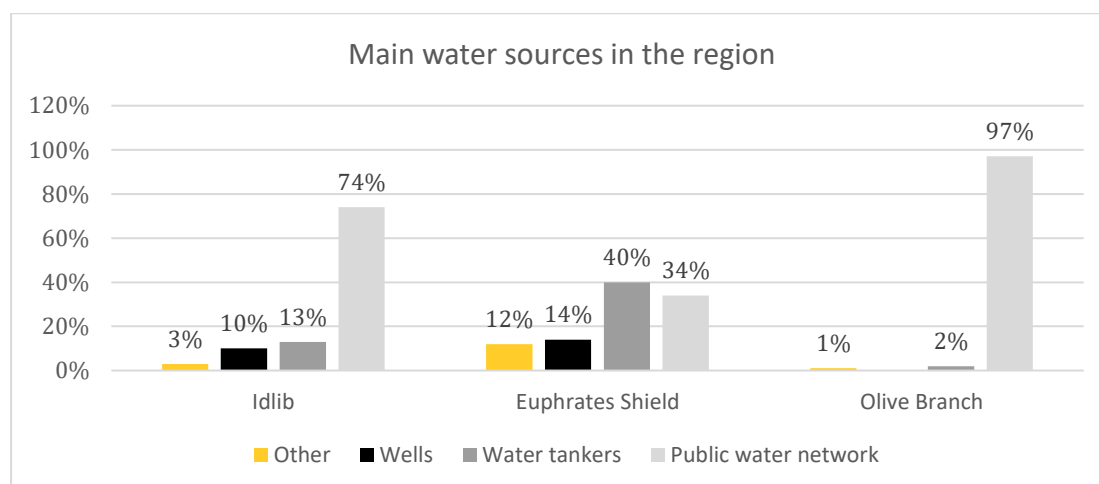


Chart 17 main water sources in the region

According to experts, the Water and Water Resources Directorate of the Ministry of Services within the SSG manages the water sector in Idlib, but experts pointed out that citizens in Idlib view humanitarian organizations as responsible for managing that sector, due to the key role played by humanitarian organizations, particularly GOAL, in supporting the pumping of water through the public water system by providing operational costs as salaries for employees. Diesel fuel for pumps and maintenance costs of the public network, in addition to many other organizations taking over the task of providing water to camps through tanks. Indeed, when asked the study participants in Idlib who they believe is managing the water sector, about a third of them said that humanitarian organizations, while the percentage of those who said that SSG is responsible for managing the water sector reached 57% knowing that many of them do not know who is the exact body responsible within the government for managing this sector. 11% of respondents in Idlib answered “other” and varied between those who said that they do not know who runs the water sector or who said that the HTS is doing so, as one

of them said that the responsible entity is the owners of water tanks. It can be generally said that there is a weakness in the knowledge of the citizens of Idlib about the administrative authority responsible for managing the water sector.

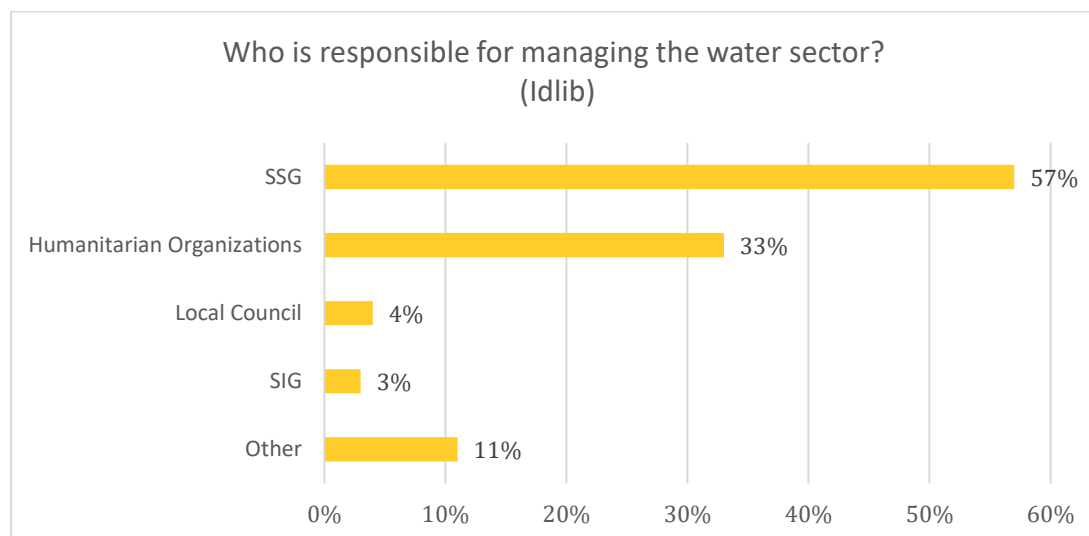


Chart 18 responsible for managing the water sector in Idlib

In the Euphrates Shield area, KIIs say that the management of the water sector is done through the Water Directorate of the local councils, and one key informant confirms that the management of each camp also plays a role in working to provide water to the camp through communication and coordination with humanitarian organizations. In general, the respondents in the Euphrates Shield area were well aware of the authorities responsible for managing the water sector, as the majority of them see the local councils as the responsible body. Among the 22% who replied other, the majority of them were residents of the camps, saying that the management of the camp is responsible for managing the water sector.

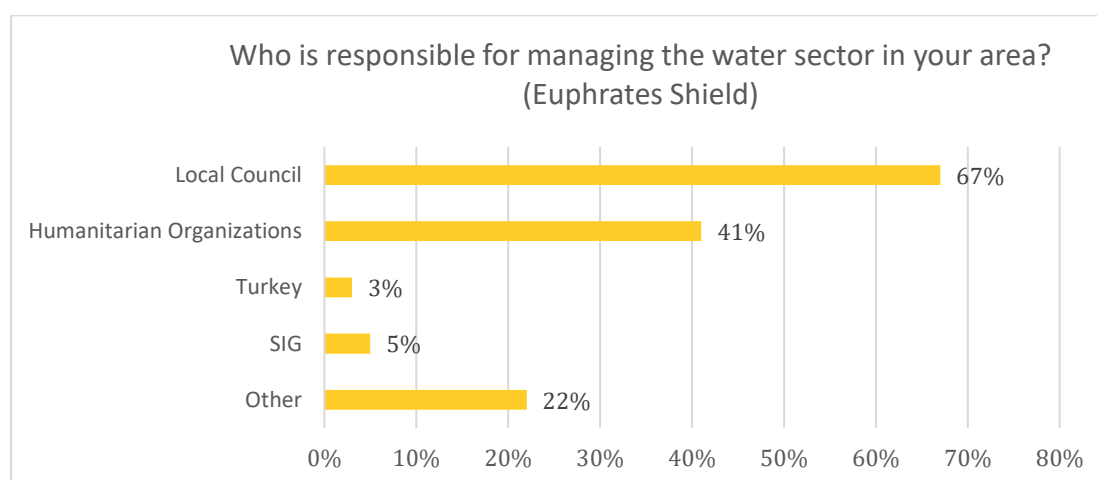


Chart 19 responsible for managing the water sector in Euphrates Shield

In the area of Olive Branch, experts also pointed out that local councils are responsible for managing the water sector, and said that citizens see local councils as the responsible for managing the sector, but given the answers of participants in the area, less than half of the respondents referred to local councils as the responsible for managing the water sector, and

the proportion of those who see the responsibility of the Turkish state or humanitarian organizations to manage that sector is high.

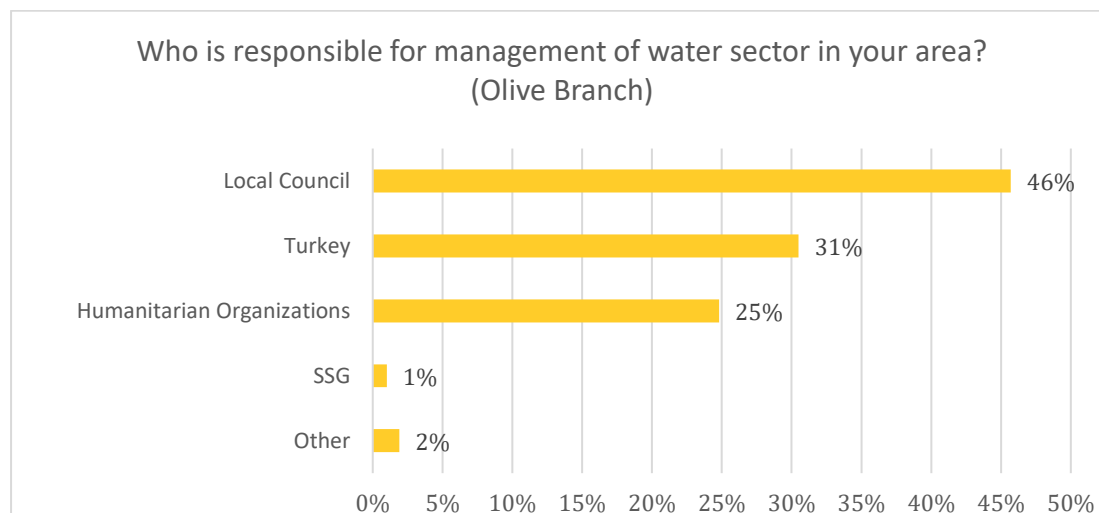


Chart 20 responsible for managing the water sector in the olive branch area

According to experts, the public bodies responsible for managing the water sector in the various areas of the study face a number of difficulties and challenges that weaken their ability to pump and provide water to civilians living within those areas. In Idlib, one expert says that the most prominent difficulties faced by the Water Directorate during its work on pumping water through public grid lines is the lack of operational costs. GOAL (the organization that supplies water directorate with pumping costs) adopts an old census of the population dating back to 2018, and the amount of water allocated to each individual is 15 liters per day, which is less than one third of the individual's needs, so the support provided is only enough to meet a small part of the total need for residents within Idlib. The public water system also needs maintenance, as there is a leak of water during the pumping process from several points, which leads to water waste and weakness in the public network, the second key informant confirms. Key informants also said that in Idlib, there is a lack of financial resources to provide water and public maintenance network, and add that there is also a need to drill more wells, which are the main source of water in rural areas, especially since many of the existing wells have dried up.

In the Euphrates Shield area, the lack of fuel and the lack of water pumping generators are the most prominent difficulties and challenges faced by the Water Directorate in the region, followed by low water level. According to KIIs, the difficulties faced by the bodies based on the management of the water sector are the difficulty of providing enough fuel to pump water due to high fuel prices and insufficient support provided by humanitarian organizations, and increased financial difficulties under the need of the public network for maintenance. The surveys also revealed that in Olive Branch and Euphrates Shield areas there were disputes concerning the reluctance of military factions to pay water collection.

Generally speaking, the satisfaction of citizens with water services in different areas of study is low. In Idlib, 54% were dissatisfied and 14% said they were utterly dissatisfied with water services, while 14% expressed neutrality. Main reasons were low number of hours of water availability, as well as the weakness of water pumped through the public water system, and 13% said they are dissatisfied with the high water prices, as the average amount of money citizens have to pay in exchange for water is 24 TL per month.

Note: “Other” option includes dissatisfaction with water services due to the lack of water across public grid lines, as well as those who say that the amount of water reaching their homes is insufficient to cover their water consumption.

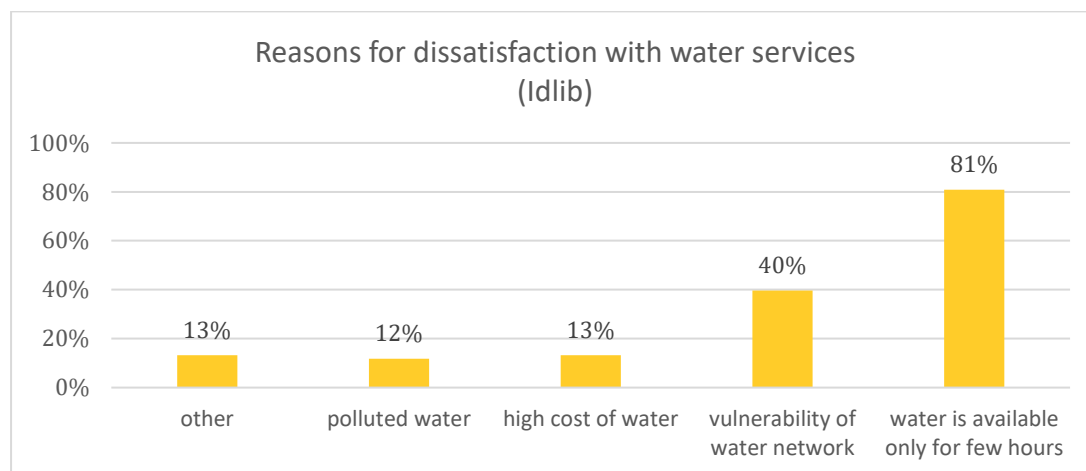


Chart 21 reasons for dissatisfaction with water service in Idlib

In the Euphrates Shield region, satisfaction was also low, but it was higher than Idlib, with about one third of respondents saying they were satisfied with water services and 5% saying they were very satisfied, while the proportion of those who said they were not satisfied or not at all was 26% and 32%, respectively. As in Idlib, the main reason for the low level of satisfaction with water service in the Euphrates Shield area was the few hours of water availability. Pumping water through the public water system, water contamination, and high water prices were other reasons for the low degree of satisfaction with water service, yet the average amount that citizens pay monthly is 46 TL.

Under the “other” option was there lack of water at all as cited by respondents who live in remote areas , or because they live in camps and have to move water to their homes using bidons from reservoirs within the camp.

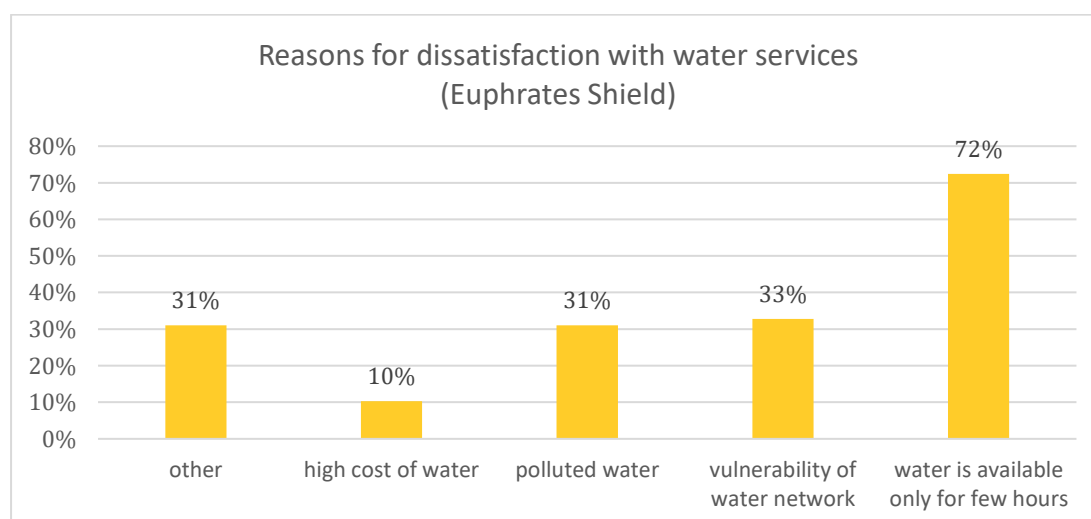


Chart 22 reasons for dissatisfaction with water service in the Euphrates Shield area

The least satisfied with water service was in the Olive Branch area, with 89% of respondents saying they were not satisfied or not satisfied at all with the service, while only 3% said they

were satisfied with it and 8% of respondents expressed neutrality towards the water services provided. It was noted that those who said that dissatisfaction is due to the high water prices were higher compared to both Idlib and Euphrates Shield regions, albeit average monthly fee for water in Olive Branch area is 21 TL, which is lower than the fees in Idlib and the Euphrates Shield regions.

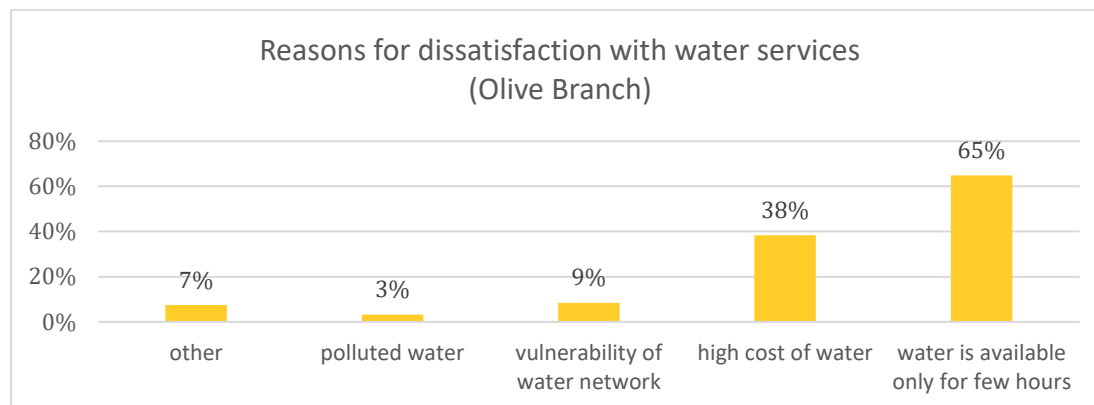


Chart 23 reasons for dissatisfaction with water service in the olive branch area

It should be noted that among those with low level of satisfaction, some respondents had no water at all in their area of residence. When asked by respondents whether water is available in their homes, three respondents in Idlib answered negative and said that the lack of water in their home is due to the fact that the public water system does not reach the areas where they live. In the area of Olive Branch, the number of people who said that there is no water in their home increased to 9. Respondents said there is no water is because the public water system does not reach their areas, while one respondent said that he could not afford access to water, and another respondent attributed to the fact that he lives in an unequipped dwelling and therefore there are no extensions of water in that dwelling. In the Euphrates Shield area, the number of respondents who said that there was no water in their home increased to 14, 11 of whom said the public water system does not reach their areas, while two said that water network lines reach their areas but are disabled and the administrative authorities in the area neglect to maintain them, while another respondent said that he lives in an unequipped dwelling and therefore does not have water in his home.

Although the satisfaction of citizens in various areas of the study for water services is low, the percentage of those who filed complaints about water services is also low, especially in Idlib where this percentage remained at 6% of the total number of respondents. In Euphrates Shield area 12% and in Olive Branch area 24% of respondents said they filed complaints. Many respondents may not file complaints about water services due mainly to their lack of knowledge of the existence of a complaint system for water services in the area of Olive Branch, where lack of knowledge on the complaint system is particularly high.

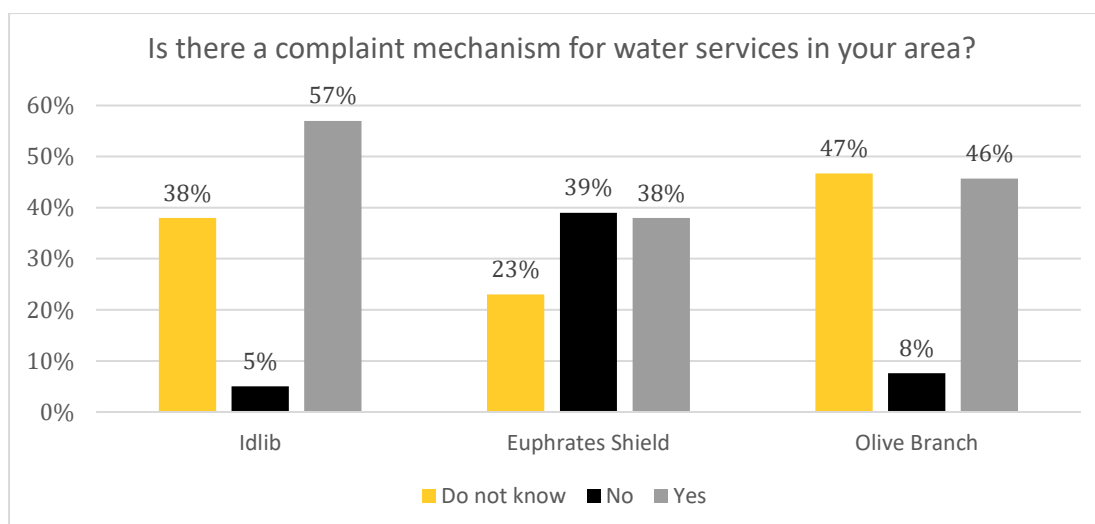
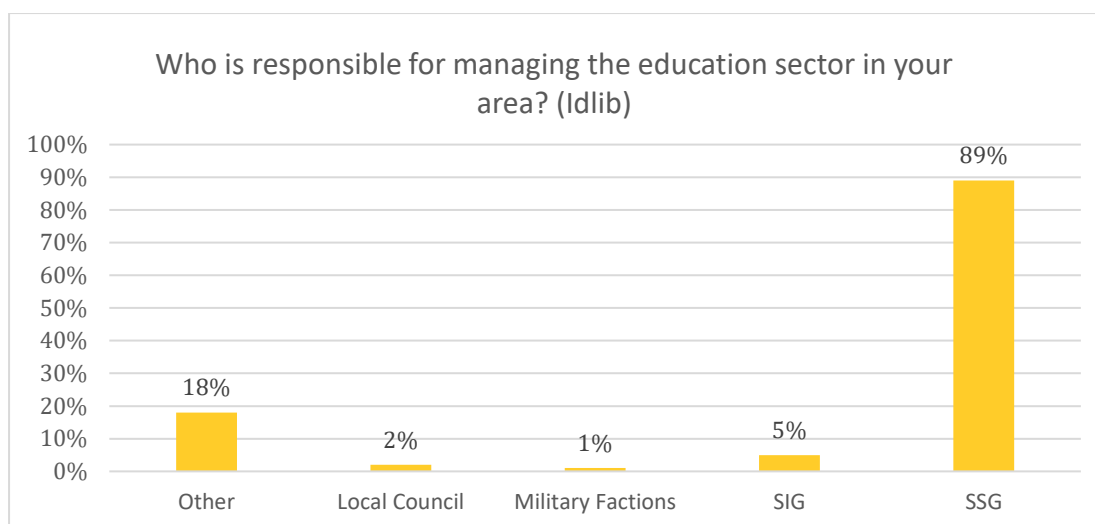


Chart 24 participants' knowledge of the existence of a water service complaint system

Education: 11:10

There are many contributors to the provision of basic education services to citizens in different areas of study, government agencies provide education services through public schools, humanitarian organizations support many schools, in addition to the presence of private schools. Although schools are dependent on different entities, KIIs reveal that they are all subject in principle to the supervision and management of government agencies, to a certain degree.

In Idlib, key informants confirmed that the Directorate of Education of the Ministry of Education of SSG manages the education sector. According to one expert though, there are two directorates of education in Idlib, namely the Directorate of Education of the SSG and the Directorate of Education of the SIG, but at the same time confirmed that the Directorate of Education of the interim government does not do any work on the ground and is only a front and legal cover for the continuation of the work of the NGOs, as the organizations avoid and refrain from dealing Directly with the Directorate of Education of the SSG, although the latter is actually managing the education sector in Idlib. In terms of the awareness of citizens about the authority responsible for the management of the education sector, one expert pointed out that there is a great awareness among the citizens in this regard, they generally see the Directorate of Education of the SSG as responsible for the management of the education sector, and the other expert confirmed the existence of public awareness in the region about the administration of the Education Directorate of the Salvation Government, but at the same time pointed out the presence of some citizens who view humanitarian organizations as responsible for the administration, and stressed that citizens in general do not know the existence of a directorate of education belonging to the interim government. The results of the study show that there is high degree of knowledge of citizens about who is responsible for the management of the education sector whereas there is some confusion between the managing and supportive agencies, which is clear from their reference to more than one side when asked. Generally speaking, the vast majority of participants in Idlib said that the SSG is responsible for overseeing and managing the education sector, and many respondents chose a choice otherwise, which included answers from those who said that the management process was carried out by the SSG and humanitarian organizations jointly.



Draw 25 responsible for managing the education sector in Idlib

In the Euphrates Shield area, one expert says that the department of the education sector is coordinated between the Directorate of Education of the interim government and the Directorate of Education of Turkey, and said that citizens see the Turkish state as responsible for managing the education sector as it is the one supporting that sector, while the second expert said that Turkey is responsible for the management of the education sector through a directorate of education directly affiliated with it, but citizens see the educational office in the local council as the main responsible party for the management process because they communicate with that entity directly on any issue related to education matters. The survey results confirm what the second key informant pointed out, the majority of participants in the Euphrates Shield region see the local councils as the responsible for managing the education sector, and almost half see Turkey as the one in charge of the management process, and it should be noted here that more than a quarter of the respondents said that the Directorate of Education is supervising the sector has to manage it but they don't know who to follow and their answers are collected under the “other” brandin the chart below.

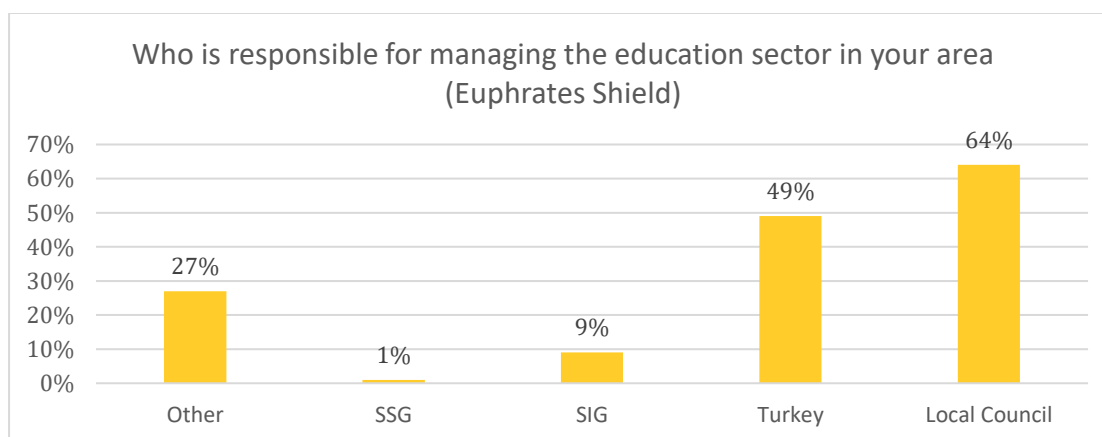


Chart 26 responsible for managing the education sector in the Euphrates Shield

In the Olive Branch region, there was a consensus in KIIs that citizens view humanitarian organizations as responsible for managing the education sector as adopting the restoration of schools and paying teachers' salaries, but Turkey is in fact managing the education sector, supervising the work of humanitarian organizations and granting them the necessary licenses

to start their work. Admittedly more than half of the participants in the Olive Branch area said that they see Turkey as the responsible for managing the sector followed by those who believe that the local councils are doing the job. Responses collected under “other” included humanitarian organizations are responsible for managing the education sector and those who replied that they did not know.

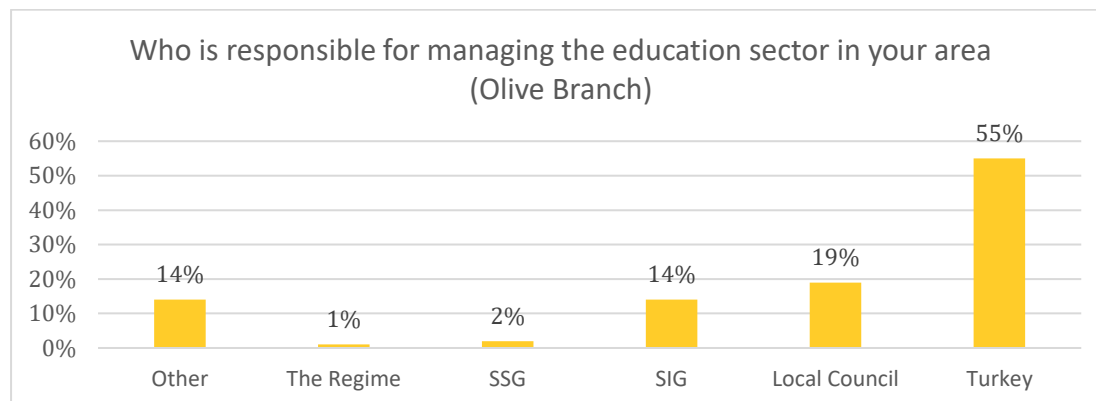


Chart 27 responsible for managing the education sector in the Olive Branch area

On the ability of citizens to access education services, the vast majority of study participants said that they do not face any difficulties hindering the ability of their family members to attend schools at various levels, whether primary, preparatory or secondary. Participants in Idlib were the most accessible to education services by 99%. It should be noted that the difficulty of accessing education services increases among displaced persons compared to members of the host community, as 13% of IDPs said they had difficulty accessing education, while the percentage among members of the host community was 4%. On the other hand, the difficulty of accessing education services increases for people living in the camps, standing at 26%, as one key informant expressed that schools in the majority of the camps are primary schools only, so those wishing to continue their education must attend schools in villages and cities adjacent to the camps.

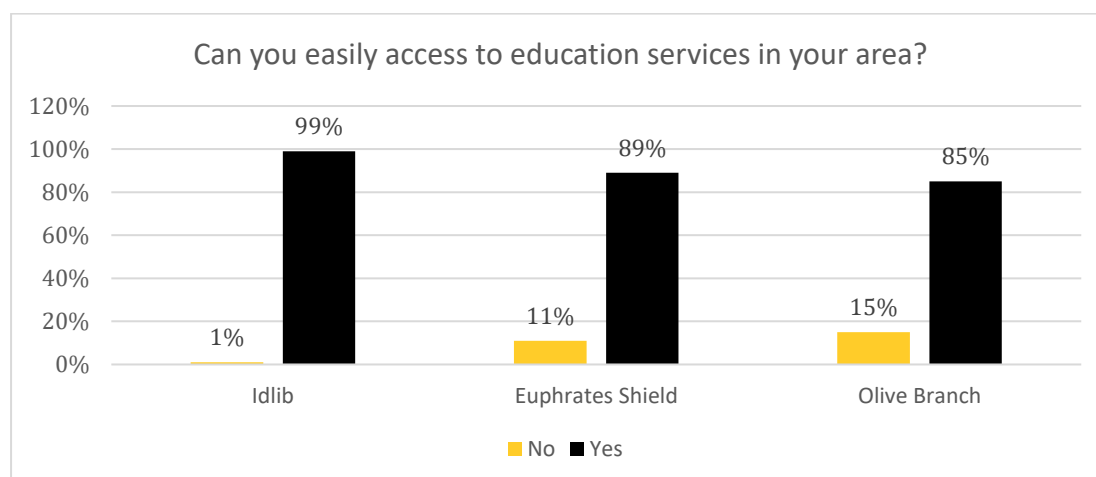


Chart 28 access to education services

When asked about the barriers or challenges limiting their ability to access education services, about two thirds of respondents attributed this to the distance of schools from their areas of residence. Some small villages and camps do not have schools for all levels of education, so students need to attend schools in neighboring villages, which weighs heavily on students and

their families, leading for some to drop out of education. The main reasons for students' drop-outs are that many children have to work to help support their families.

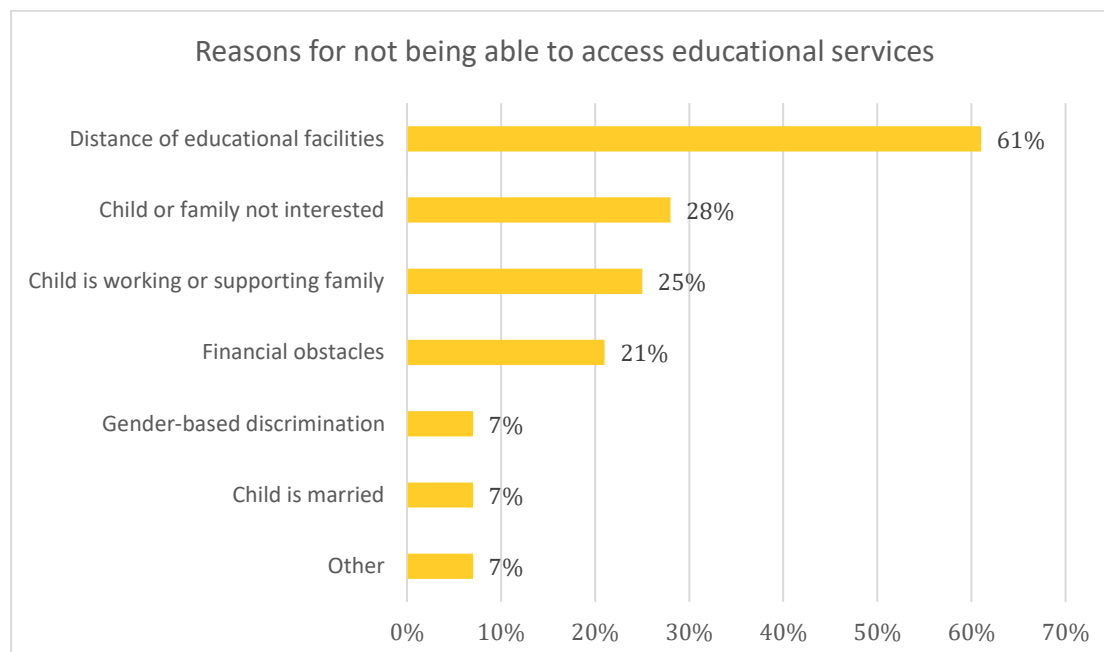


Chart 29 reasons for not being able to access education services

Speaking of material difficulties as one of the barriers to students dropping out of their education, it must be stressed that the vast majority of participants in different study areas said that they did not have to pay any money for their education services, and those who said they were paying money for access to education indicated that these amounts were symbolic or that they were additional expenses as transportation expenses to reach schools.

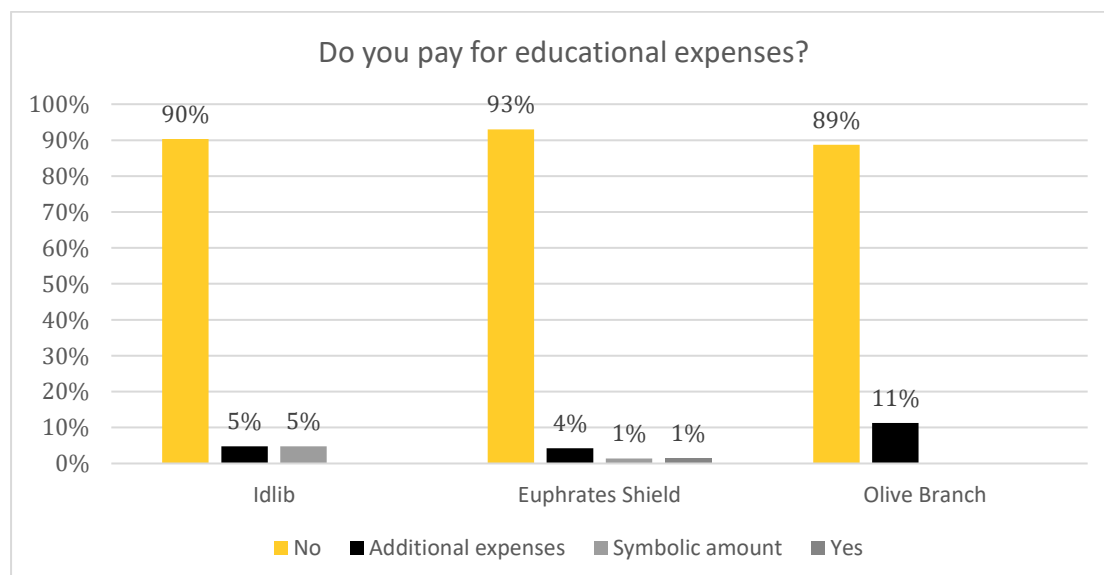


Chart 30 Education fees

In general, citizens in different areas of study are less satisfied with the education services provided in their areas. In Idlib, only one third of those who said they were satisfied or very satisfied with these services, while 37% and 11% said they were not satisfied or not at all satisfied, while 20% expressed their neutrality.

As for the Olive Branch area, the proportion of those who said they were satisfied or very satisfied with education services was under one third, and the proportion of those who said they were not satisfied or not at all satisfied with these services stood at 16% and 8%, respectively, while the largest number of respondents expressed neutrality by 45%.

The lowest levels of satisfaction with education services were in the Euphrates Shield region, where the percentage of those who said they were not satisfied or not satisfied at all were 36% and 27%, respectively, while the percentage of those who said they were very satisfied did not exceed 2% and the quarter said they were satisfied, while 9% of respondents expressed their neutrality.

In fact, regardless of the degree of satisfaction of citizens with education services, both experts and study participants agree that there are many problems experienced by the education sector in their areas. From the lack of modern means of education to the overcrowding of students within schools and the need to build new schools to accommodate the huge numbers of students residing in the region, experts revealed that widespread corruption and nepotism in the recruitment of teachers, which leads to the recruitment of incompetent people, are also important problems. Curriculum development, lack of funding which entails several other problems such as the inability of the Directorate of Education to provide sufficient numbers of textbooks for all students in the region, and poor salaries of teachers, which leads to the search of qualified teachers for other employment opportunities and leaving the field of education or attending private schools are problems that both experts and survey respondents agree on. A high percentage of participants believe that the numbers of students in the classrooms are very high, that there is a shortage of educational staff, that there is no international recognition of certificates issued by educational institutions in the region, and that IDPs in particular suffer discrimination within schools.

Note: Other option in the chart below includes both the need for schools to renovate and the inadequate school curriculum for Islamic law, as well as some participants who said there were no problems related to the education sector in the region.

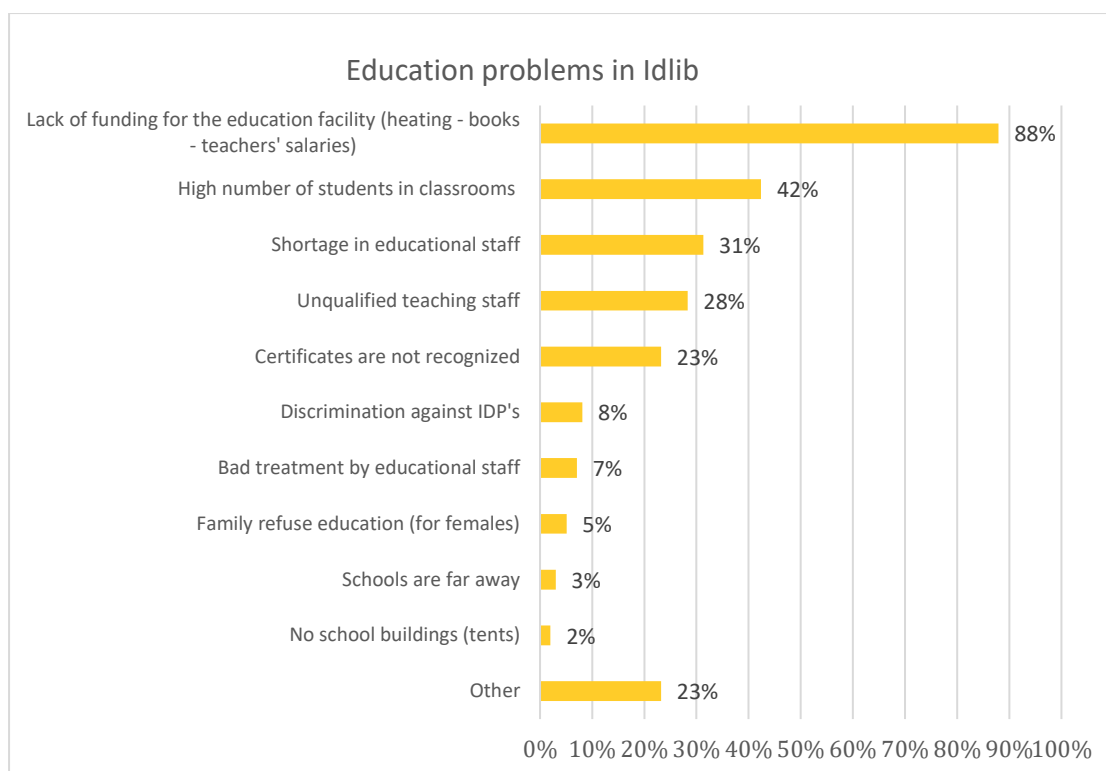


Chart 31 education problems in Idlib

In the Euphrates Shield area, experts believe that there are several problems suffered by the education sector in the region, the most important of which is the lack of enough schools to accommodate students, the presence of a large number of villages and camps with no schools or schools only at the primary level, in addition to a lack of qualified educational staff and the search of qualified teachers for other jobs due to the low value of salaries, and the lack of equipment and means of modern education within school. For their part, the study participants in the Euphrates Shield region believe that the education sector suffers from many difficulties and challenges, primarily the lack of competence of educational staff, the need of the education sector for more financial support and the high numbers of students in the classroom, as well as the lack of international recognition of certificates issued by educational bodies working in the region.

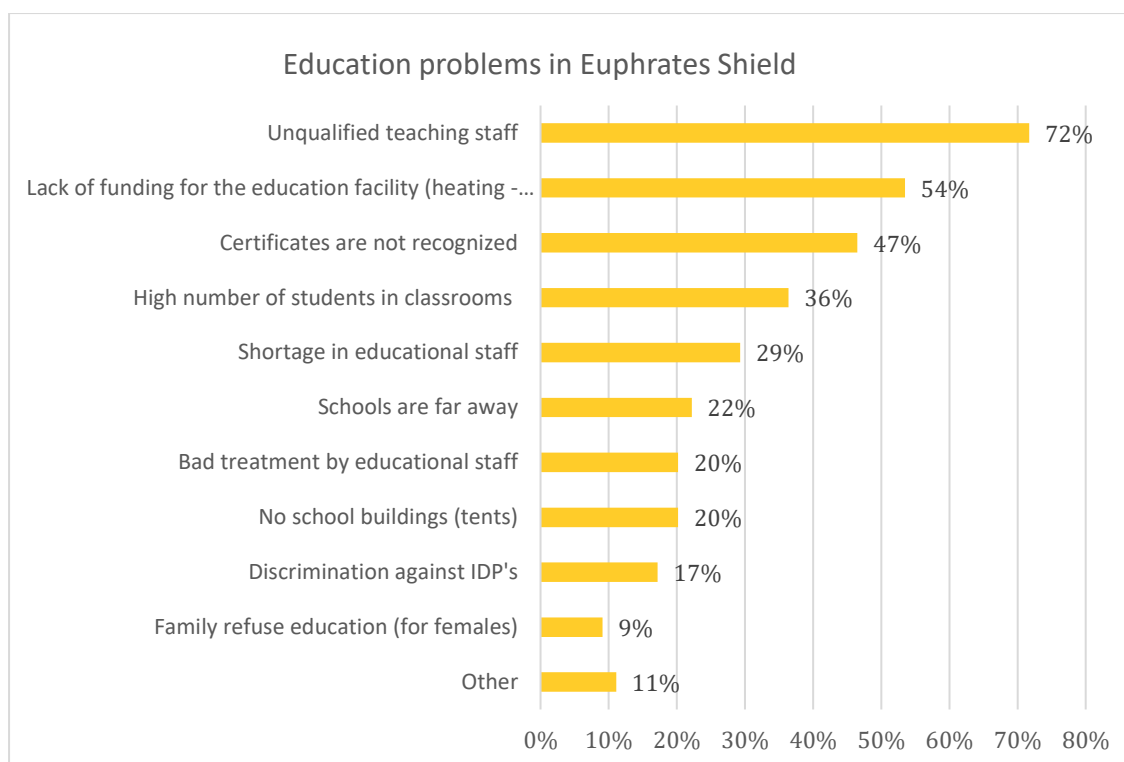


Chart 32 education problems in the Euphrates Shield area

In the Olive Branch area, the most prominent difficulties faced by the education sector, according to experts, are the need to develop the curriculum, use modern teaching methods, restore school buildings, select well-qualified cadres and increase the value of teachers' salaries, while study participants believe that these difficulties are mainly due to the high numbers of students in the classroom, the lack of international recognition of certificates issued by educational bodies working in the region and the lack of competence of educational staff.

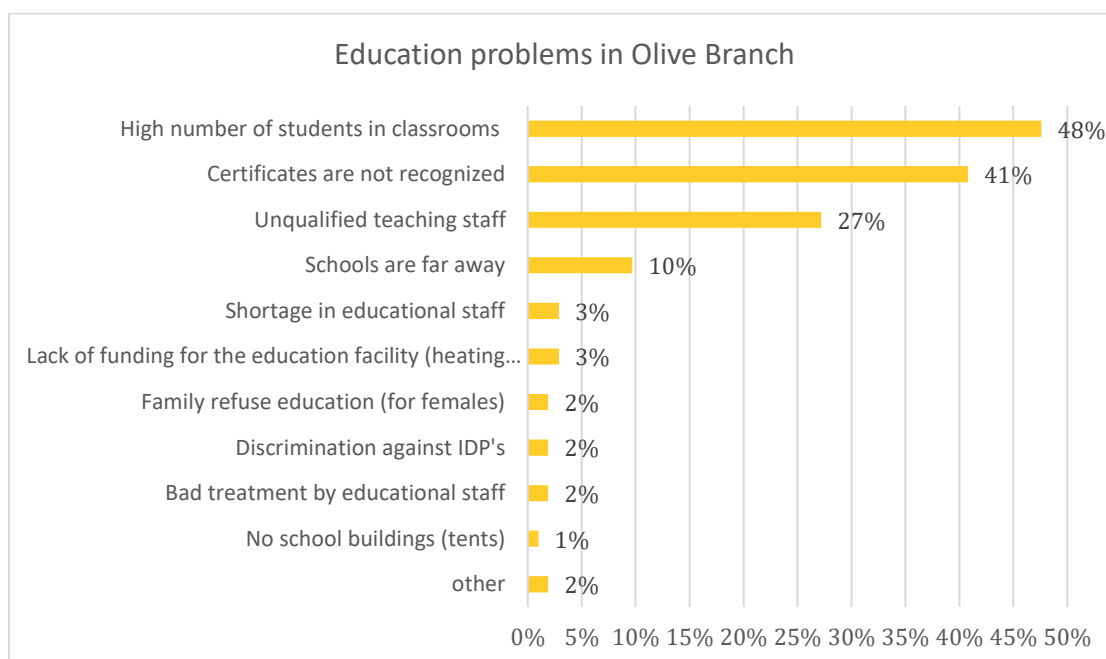
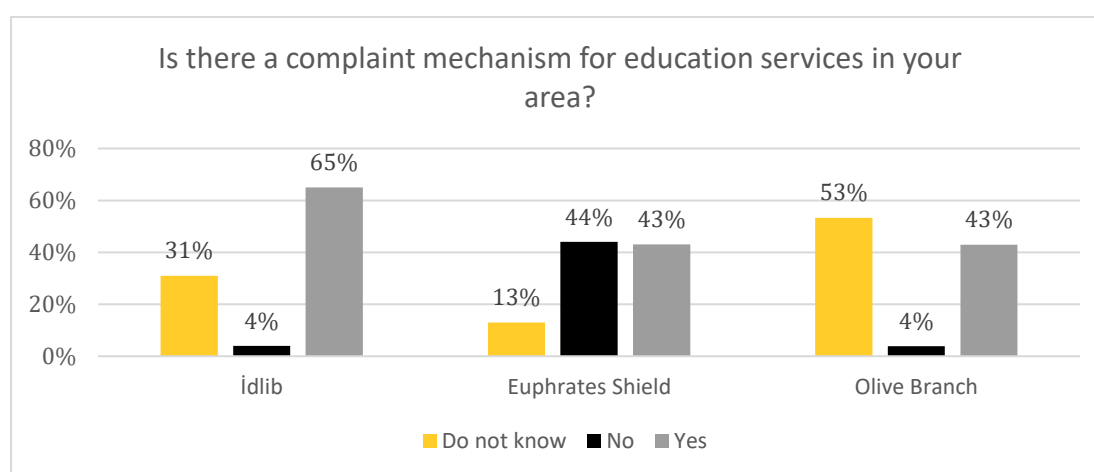


Chart 33 education problems in the olive branch area

The results of the study showed a low degree of knowledge among the study participants, especially in the areas of Olive Branch and Euphrates Shield, that there is a system of complaints for education in their areas. It is noted that although the degree of satisfaction with education services in the various study areas and the many problems suffered by that sector according to the opinions of the participants, the number of people who filed complaints about education services is somewhat low. In Idlib only 6 people have said they filed a complaint about education services and 5 of them said that their complaints were responded to and dealt with. In the area of Euphrates Shield, one out of seven filed complaints were responded to, while in Olive Branch five out of 11 complaints were dealt with. Generally when the study participants were asked if he has any complaints about education, the largest percentage of respondents in Idlib and Olive Branch said they would prefer to turn to the Directorate of Education operating in their area, while in the Euphrates Shield area, the largest number of respondents prefer to file their complaints with local councils.



34existence of a complaints system for education services

Finally, it should be noted that university education opportunities are also available in different areas of study, but there are many weaknesses that they have, and in fact these weaknesses are similar in all regions and, according to experts, are the high annual premiums for enrolment in universities compared to the income of individuals, with those wishing to complete their university education afraid of not recognizing the certificates they will receive, in addition to overcrowding of student classrooms, poor curricula and teaching staff and the lack of all availability of all branches. Also noted was colleges are concentrated in major city centers and transportation costs are high.

Health:

Humanitarian organizations play the greatest role in providing free health care services to citizens residing in various areas of northern Syria, according to key informants. In both Idlib and Olive Branch regions, the vast majority of hospitals, centers and medical points that provide services to citizens belong to humanitarian organizations, but in the Euphrates Shield area, experts confirmed that both humanitarian organizations and the Turkish state play a key role in providing health services to citizens. According to the absolute majority of respondents in both Idlib and In the Euphrates Shield area, more than a quarter of respondents said that citizens pay money in exchange for health care services.

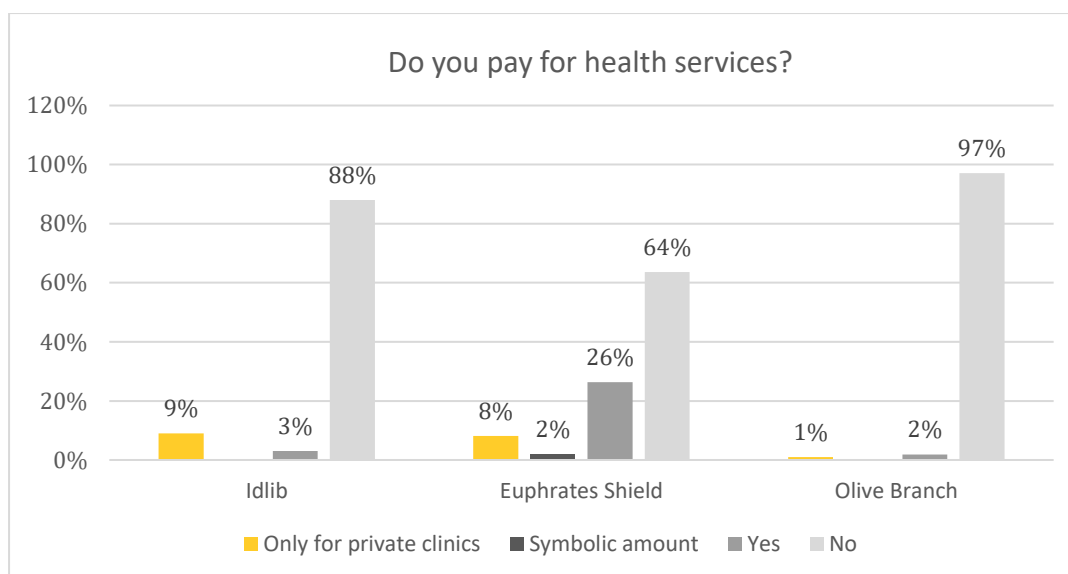


Chart 35 health services fees

On the ability of citizens to access health centers (such as hospitals and clinics) and receive health care, the results of the study showed that participants in Idlib have the best access, as only one displaced respondent living in a camp in the city of Salqin said that he had difficulty accessing health centers due to the lack of transportation. In the areas of Olive Branch and Euphrates Shield, a proportion of those who said they had difficulties in reaching the centers Health is within a quarter, although there is no difference between the displaced and members of the host community. The most prominent difficulties faced by participants are the distance of health centers from their areas of residence and the high transport costs, and some respondents in Olive Branch said that the hospital appointments needs to be booked in advance, which makes it more difficult to obtain medical care in a timely manner.

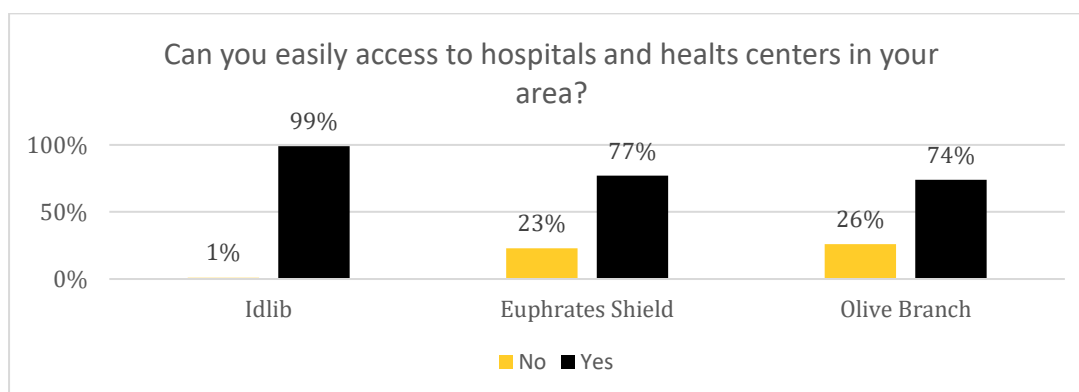


Chart 36 access to hospitals and health centers

As for the authorities responsible for managing the health sector in each of the study areas, experts in Idlib pointed out that humanitarian organizations are widely involved in the work of the department, as one expert said that there are two health directorates, one of which belongs to the interim government and the other belongs to the Salvation government, but stressed that humanitarian organizations are the ones who run their own health centers, and that they are not subject to the supervision of anybody except donors, while the work of the Directorate of Health of the interim government it is simple and limited to providing legal cover for the continuation of the work of the organizations. Through the signing of

memorandums of understanding by organizations wishing to work in Idlib areas with the Health Directorate of the SIG being the internationally recognized body, while the Health Directorate of the SSG focuses its work mainly on the control of pharmacies, hospitals, private clinics and pharmaceutical companies. Experts believe that citizens residing within the Idlib region do not have knowledge of those responsible for the administration of the health sector. One key informant said citizens see the directorate of health of the SSG as the only body responsible for managing that sector, while the second one said that they see humanitarian organizations as responsible for managing the sector but are not familiar with any other details and do not know the existence of several health directorates in Idlib. Survey results confirm the statements of experts; the majority of respondents in Idlib said that the SSG is responsible for managing the health sector in the region, and that about half said that the sector was managed by humanitarian organizations without knowing the role of the SIG.

Note: Other options include answers from those who say they do not know who is responsible for managing the health sector or who say that it is administered by the organizations under Turkish supervision, as well as those who say that the Health Directorate manages that sector without knowing who follows it.

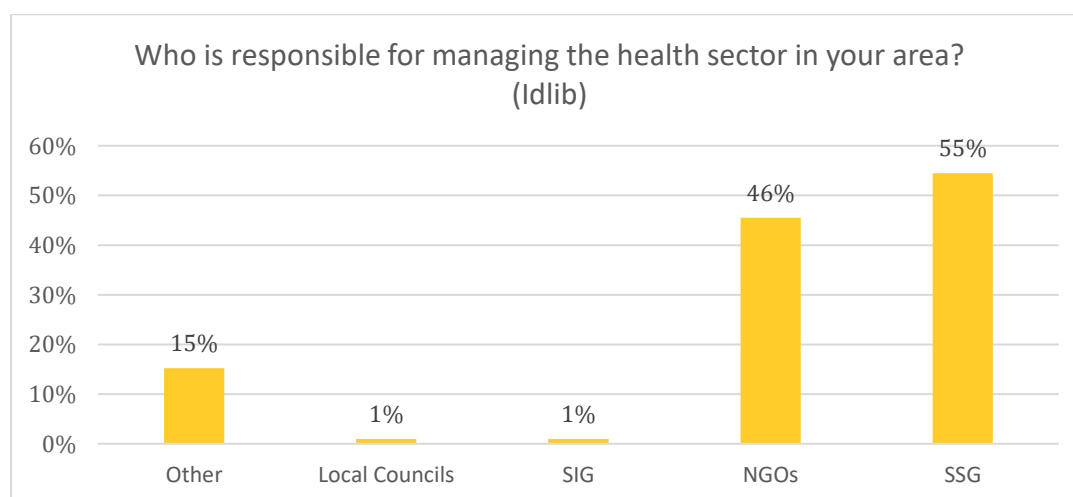


Chart 37 responsible for managing the health sector in Idlib

In the Euphrates Shield region, Turkey oversees the work of health centers such as hospitals, clinics and the health sector department in cooperation and coordination with the Health Directorate of the interim government, but citizens view humanitarian organizations as primarily responsible for managing the health sector, while the proportion of those who believe that the SIG plays a role in the management of that sector is significantly low.

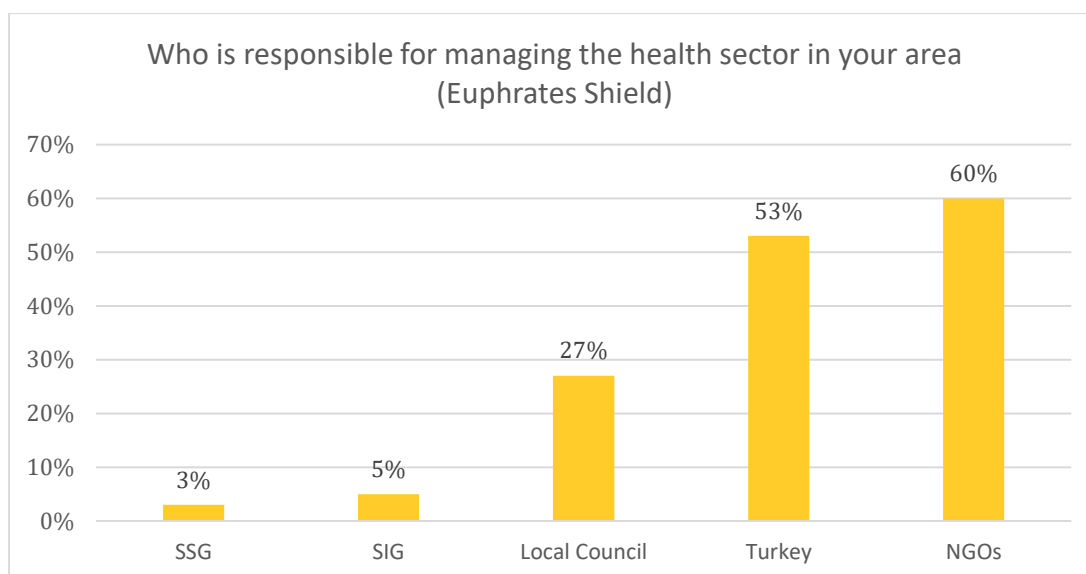


Chart 38 responsible for managing the health sector in Euphrates Shield

In Olive Branch, experts say that humanitarian organizations provide health care services, but this is done under the supervision of Turkey, as there is also a directorate of health, but one expert said that the work of that directorate is limited to following the work of doctors in their own clinics. The largest percentage of respondents in the area of Olive Branch view humanitarian organizations as the responsible for managing the health sector, which involves mixing between service providers of health and those responsible for managing the health sector.

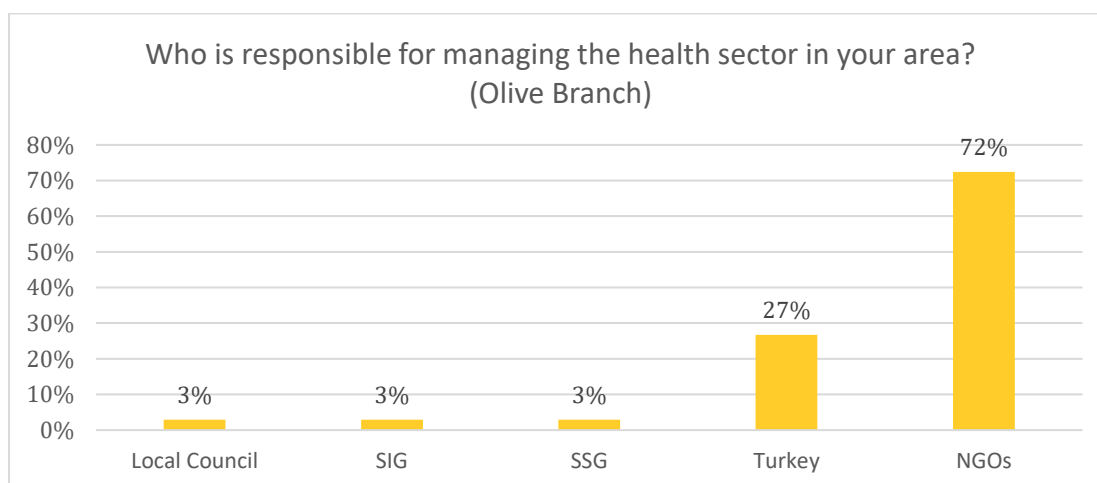


Chart 39 responsible for managing the health sector in the olive branch area

As for the difficulties and challenges faced by the health sector, they are diverse, according to experts, because there is no coordination among health sector workers and humanitarian organizations seek to meet donor requirements, which limits the ability of implemented projects to meet the needs of the people of the region. For example, one organization opened a primary care center in the Salqin area without coordination with the Directorate of Health or an assessment of the needs of the people of the area, which limited the ability of the projects implemented to meet the needs of the people of the region. Also the health sector suffers from a significant lack of funding to cover the needs of the population of the region, a shortage of medical personnel, medical equipment and medicines, the lack of certain

specialties, and the spread of corruption, in addition to the targeting of hospitals and medical centers by the Syrian regime and Russia. Similar to the aforementioned difficulties with what the respondents said and also confirmed the lack of some types of medicines, lack of medical specialties and inadequate medical supplies in hospitals and health centers.

Note: Other options include the shortage of medical personnel, the remoteness of hospitals and health centers from some villages and camps, the abuse of some workers in the health centers and the small number of health centers compared to the numbers of residents within the region.

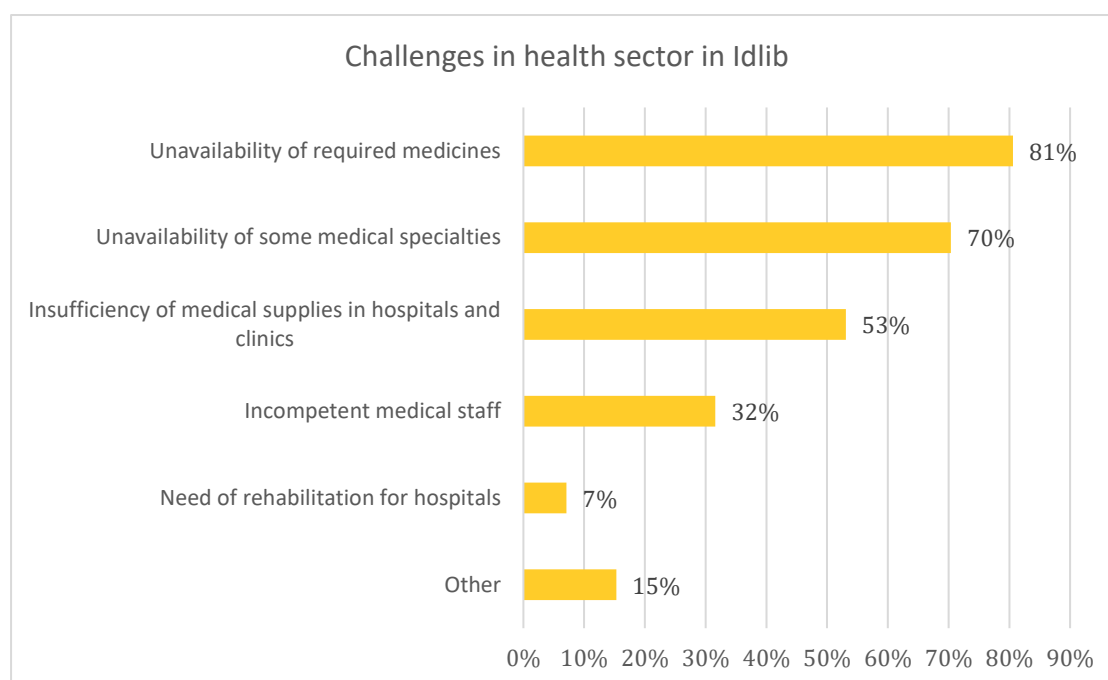


Chart 40 problems in the health sector in Idlib

In the Euphrates Shield area also experts said that the region suffers from a shortage of medical specialties and medicines, in addition to the shortage of hospitals and medical centers, which leads to a large congestion in hospitals and medical centers operating in the region as some doctors examining as many as 60 patients on a given day, which makes the examination completely inaccurate. In addition to the poor efficiency of medical staff and the spread of corruption, participants in the Euphrates Shield region also cited lack of medicines needed by citizens, the poor competence of medical personnel and the lack of some medical specialties as important challenges.

Note: Other options include mismanagement of health centers, cases of neglect by some doctors of patients, widespread nepotism and lack of health centers or hospitals in some areas.

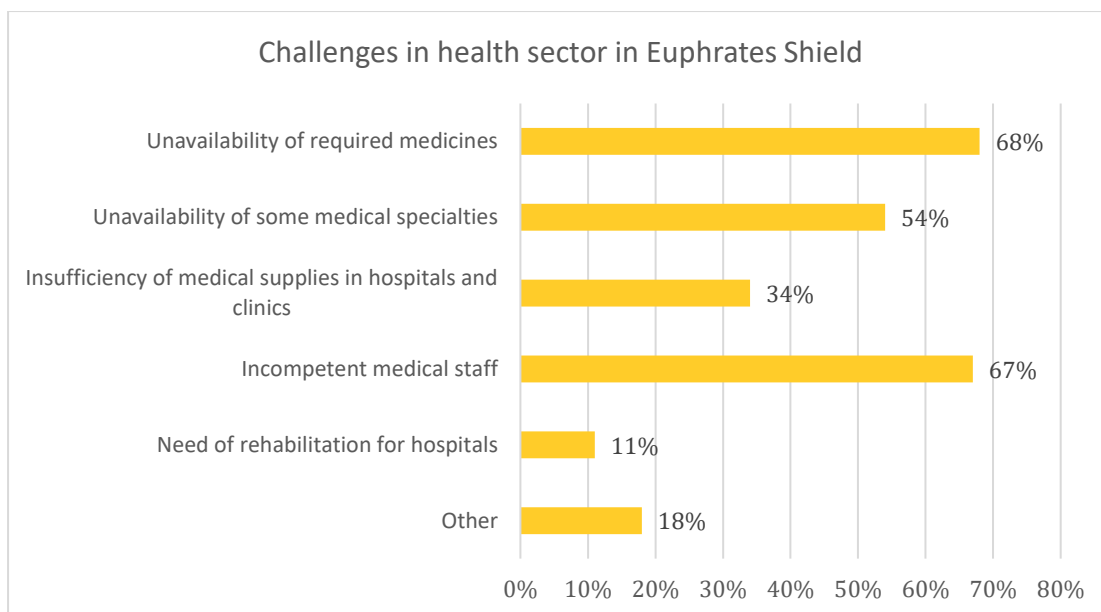


Chart 41 problems in health sector in Euphrates Shield

Similarly, the most prominent difficulties and challenges suffered by the health sector in Olive Branch according to experts are the incompetence of doctors working within health centers, most of them non-graduates who were displaced from the areas before completing their studies, in addition to the lack of doctors in some branches such as skin and neurological diseases, the lack of many types of expensive medicines, as well as the poor interest of medical staff in the reviewers and therefore citizens are forced to visit doctors in their personal clinics. Experts believe that these problems are due to the weakness of control and evaluation work on the work of health facilities. The study participants in the area of Olive Branch believe that the poor competence of medical personnel and the lack of medicines and some specialties are the most important problems suffered by the health sector in the region.

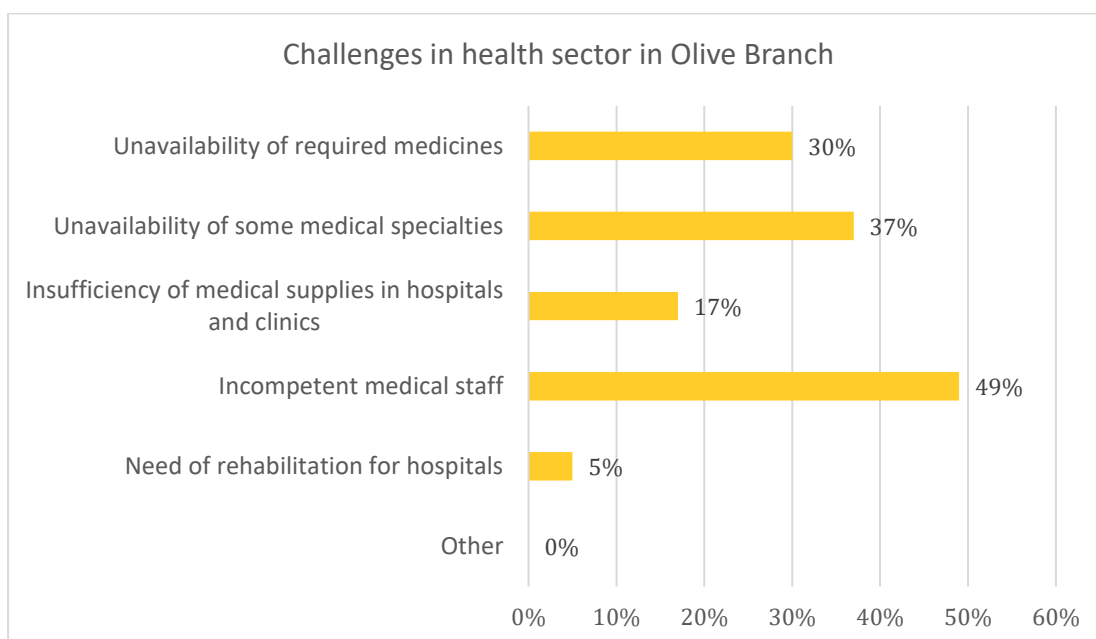


Chart 42 health sector problems in Olive Branch

On the satisfaction of citizens with the health services available in their areas, there is a good degree of satisfaction with health services compared to other services that have already been mentioned, but overall, satisfaction remains low, as less than half of the participants in the various study areas said that they are satisfied or very satisfied with health care services.

On the other hand, the degree of knowledge of participants, especially in Idlib and Olive Branch is also somewhat higher in complaint mechanisms. 11 participants in Idlib indicated that they had previously filed complaints concerning health care services, 6 of whom said that their complaints had been responded to, while 5 said that they had not been answered. In Euphrates Shield area, 11 people had previously filed complaints, eight of which were responded. In Olive Branch area, the response to complaints decreased, with 19 participants previously filing a complaint about health services, but 17 saying that their complaints had not been responded to.

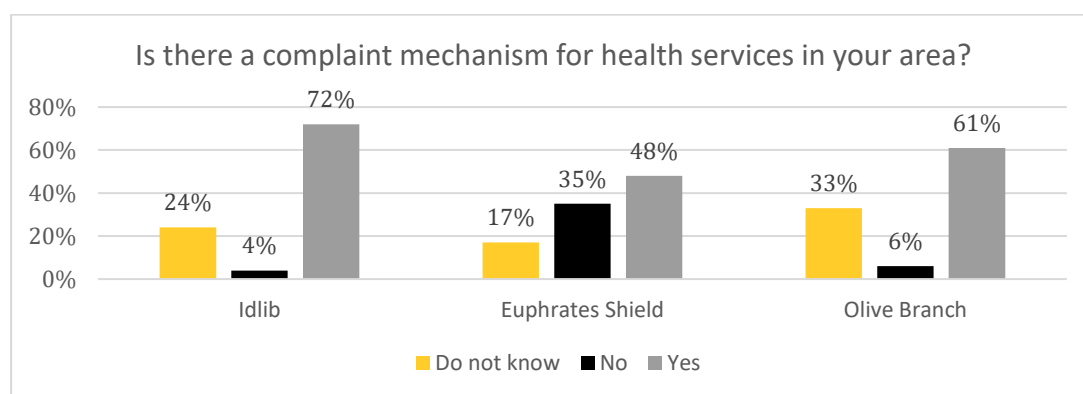


Chart 43existence of a complaints system for health care services

Section 3 - Security

The security and military forces responsible for controlling the security situation in each of the study areas differ. In Idlib, one expert says that the Ministry of Interior in the SSG is responsible for policing, while the second expert says that the HTS in all its formations and security and military units is responsible for providing security in the area as it is the only body fully in control of the area, as the SSG in all its ministries is only a front for the HTS. In the Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch areas, the situation is similar, with experts saying that the security officers are the civilian police forces, which belong to local councils as well as the military police, with military factions intervening in some serious security problems that are difficult to deal with by police forces (civilian and military), while Turkey also plays a secondary role in policing by training security personnel and providing them with the necessary equipment to operate. In view of expert statements and comparing them to the answers of survey participants there is a rise in the degree of knowledge of citizens about the authorities responsible for managing the security file within their areas. In Idlib, the vast majority of respondents said that the SSG is responsible for policing while 26% chose “other” option and said that the responsible authority is the HTS, but in the area of Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch, the vast majority of respondents said that military factions are responsible. A high percentage of them argued that the body was represented by local councils, which is true if we know that the civilian police forces belong to local council.

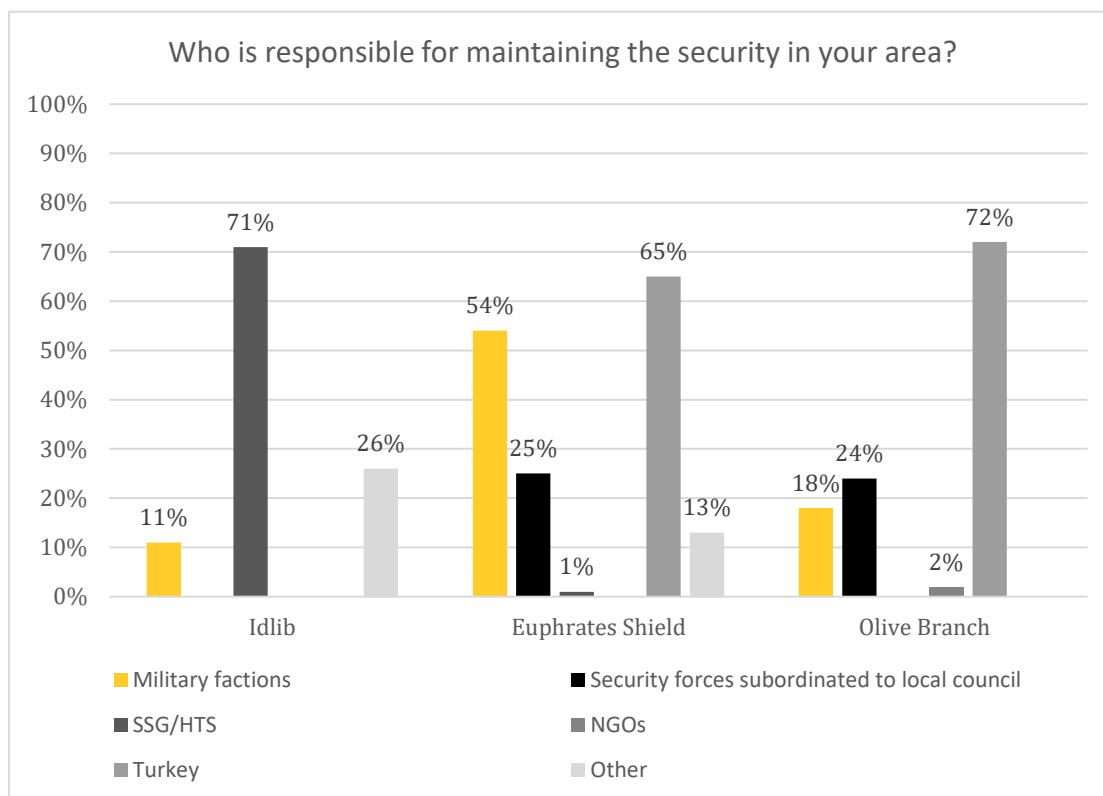


Chart 44 security authorities

Key informants in each of the study areas differ in their assessment of security situation and the extent to which the security services are able to control security, stabilize and deal with security threats and combat crime. As opposed to the areas of Olive Branch and Euphrates Shield, in Idlib region, where the HTS was able to deal well with the more serious threats of bombings and kidnappings, as the biggest security problem remains the exposure of areas close to contact points with the Syrian regime.

In the Euphrates Shield area, experts believe that the level of security is somewhat low and that there is a marked failure in the efforts of the security services to stabilize, as there is no control or checkpoints for inspections on secondary roads or remote areas, and even in the main roads, the number of checkpoints is considered low. Finally, in the area of the Olive Branch, KIs believe that it is possible to say that the level of security is very low if not non-existent, as evidenced by the large number of explosions that occur frequently.

In fact, the experts' answers correspond to what the study participants said. In Idlib, the vast majority of participants believe that the level of safety in the region is acceptable to high, while in the Euphrates Shield area, nearly half of the participants said that the level of safety is low, while more than a third said it was acceptable. The vast majority of participants in the Olive Branch area said that the level of safety in their area was low or very low.

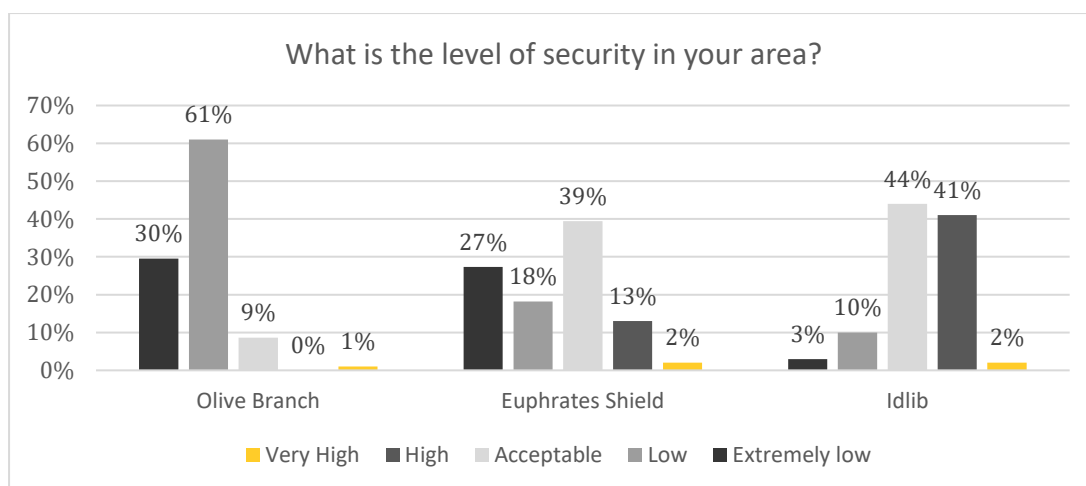


Chart 45 levels of security in your area

On the most prominent crimes and security problems spread in each of the study areas, experts in Idlib pointed out that the region suffers primarily from the spread of thefts, especially the theft of motorcycles, as well as the areas close to contact points with the Syrian regime to bomb continuously. As for bombings, kidnappings and fighting among factions, the HTS was able to deal with it and decreased very significantly compared to the previous situation, and there are some crimes that It is also widespread according to one expert: the spread of narcotics (hashish) and prostitution, and the most widespread crimes in the region from the point of view of the study participants are also primarily theft, as the participants in the Jabal Zawiya area of military operations point out as one of the most prominent security problems and challenges faced by their regions, while the prevalence of murders, bombings, kidnappings and other crimes in all areas of Idlib as described in the following chart:

Note: Other options include security forces raiding homes, seizing citizens' property and conflicts between host community members and displaced persons

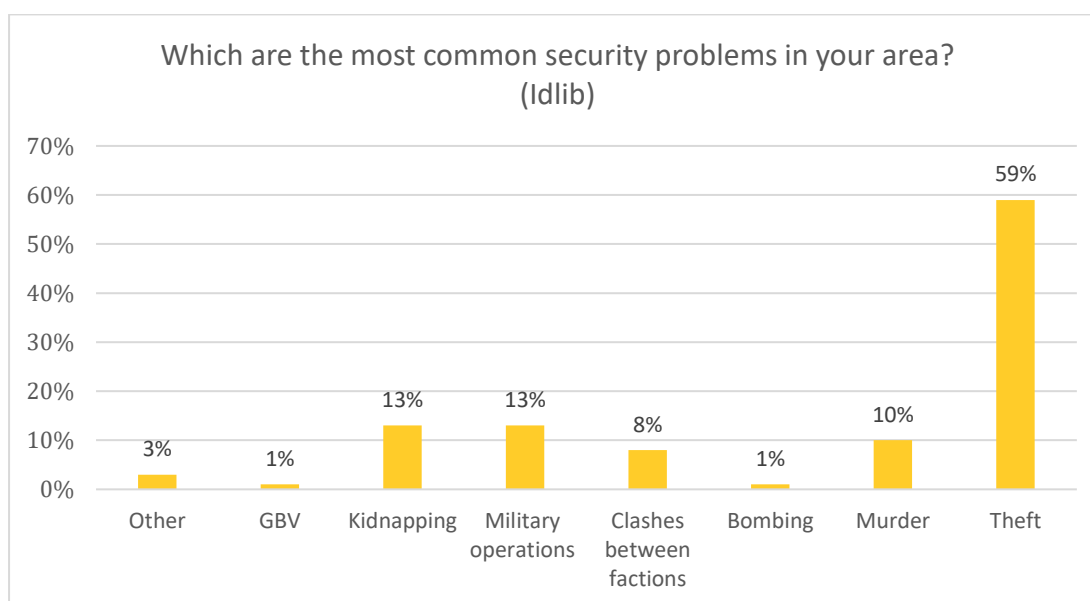


Chart 46 Most common security problems in Idlib

In the Euphrates Shield area, the security situation seems to be worse than in Idlib, according to experts. There is high number of thefts, killings and kidnappings, in addition to the large number of bombings targeting public markets and residential areas, and the presence of cases of infighting between military factions, which are the same security problems and crimes referred to by the study participants.

Note: Other options include clan disputes and disputes between citizens in which weapons are used.

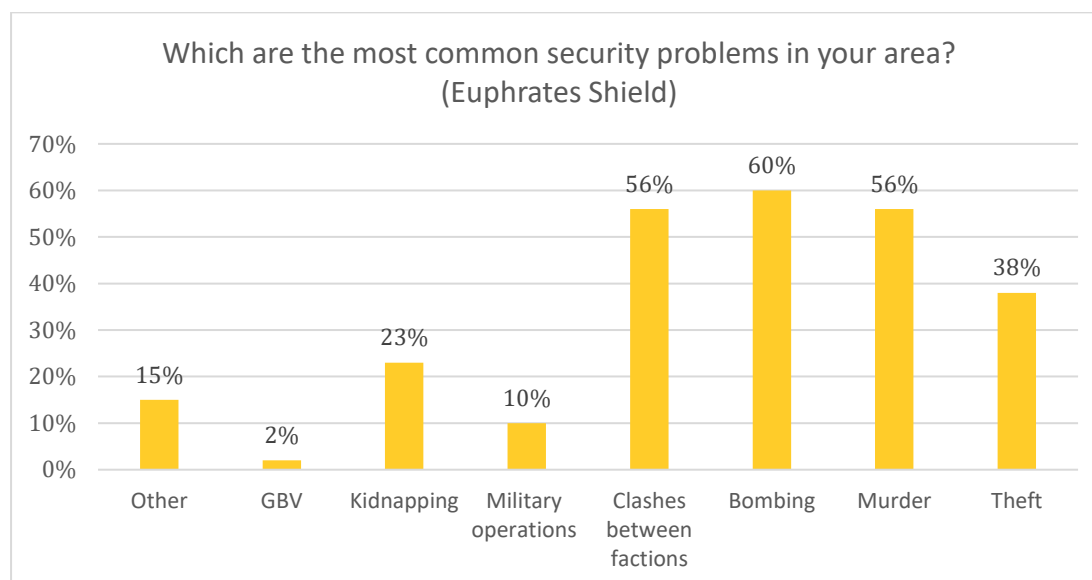


Chart 47 most widespread security problems in Euphrates Shield

Finally, in the area of Olive Branch, in addition to bombings, theft and infighting between factions, residents suffer from the violation of their rights and property by military factions, where experts say that there are many cases of arbitrary detention sought against the people under flimsy pretexts and arguments, the aim of which is only to obtain funds in exchange for the release of detainees. Military factions also seize the property of citizens without any control.

Note: Other options include clan conflicts and the disruption of citizens by military factions.

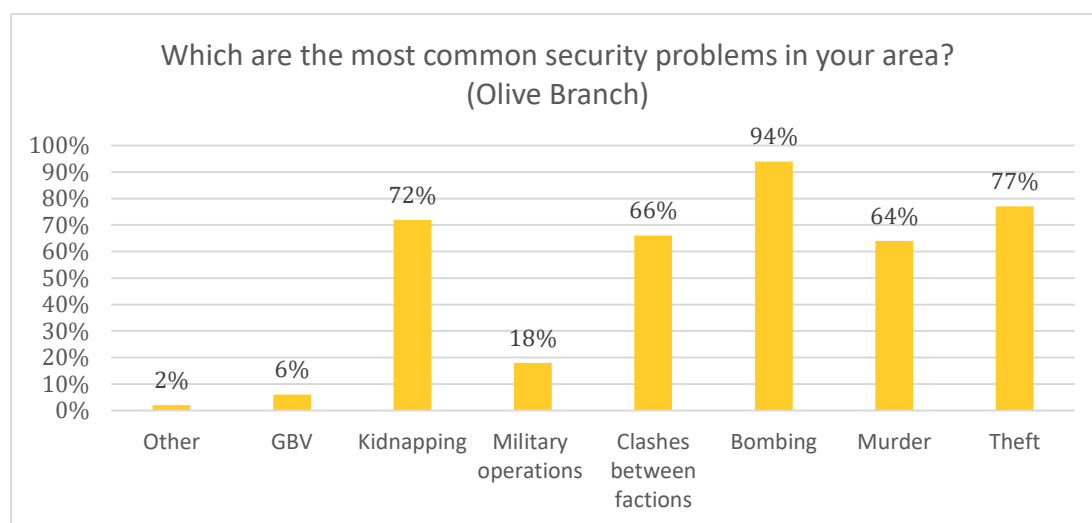


Chart 48 most widespread security problems in Olive Branch

The security forces operating in each of the study areas face many challenges that prevent their ability to fully control security, as well as some of the weaknesses suffered by those forces. The most prominent challenges mentioned in KIIs involved poor qualification of security personnel and cadres, lack of modern equipment and devices, especially those used in the detection of explosive materials and surveillance cameras, in addition to the inability of the security services to deploy checkpoints covering all areas, main and secondary roads due to the shortage of elements. Additionally, there is a negative view among citizens towards the security services and their low confidence in them, as a result of the infringement of the rights of citizens and dealing with them with some kind of impunity, and the result of these factors is the reluctance of a large proportion of citizens to cooperate with the security forces.

As for the most obvious reasons for the spread of crimes from the point of view of the study participants, they are the spread of poverty within the liberated areas and the inability of citizens to secure the funds needed to cover their household expenses, proliferation of weapons among civilians, and the presence of some cells belonging to the Islamic State or separatist parties seeking to destabilize the liberated areas. It should be noted here that there is a marked increase in the proportion of participants in the area of Olive Branch who said that the security units overlook crime networks as shown in the following chart:

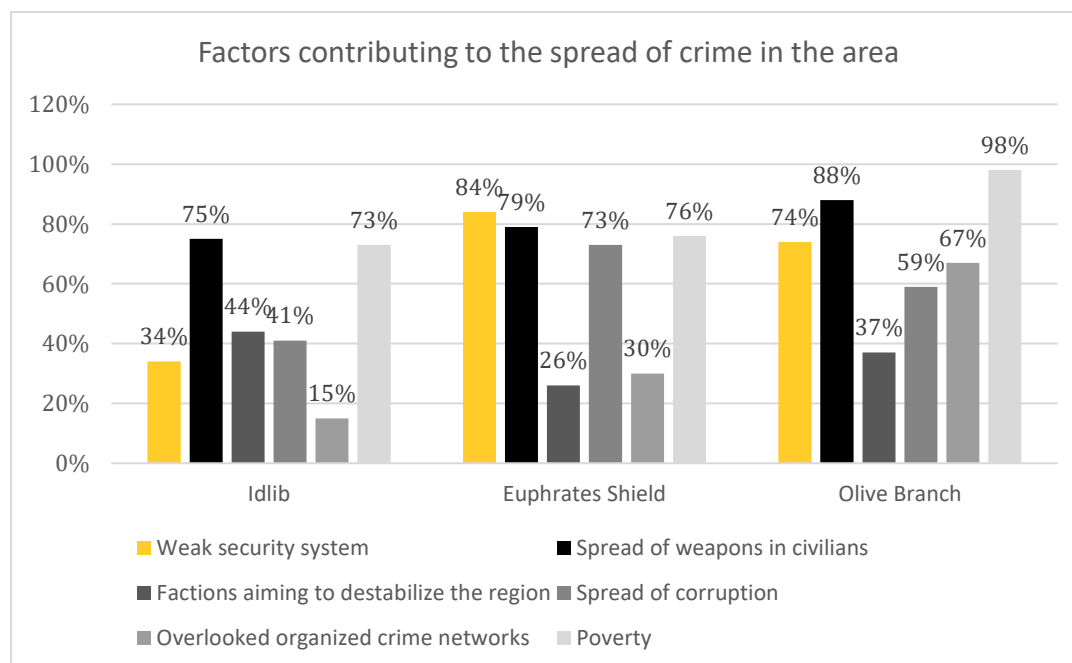


Chart 49 causes of widespread crime

On the degree of satisfaction of citizens with the security situation in their areas and the work of the agencies and forces responsible for maintaining security, the degree of satisfaction among citizens in the area of Olive Branch was the lowest, as more than half of the study participants from that area said that they were not satisfied or not at all satisfied about the security situation in their area. The satisfaction of participants in the Euphrates Shield area was also low, where the proportion of those who said they were not satisfied or not at all satisfied with the security situation in their area was But in Idlib, citizens are more satisfied with the work of the security services as shown in the chart below:

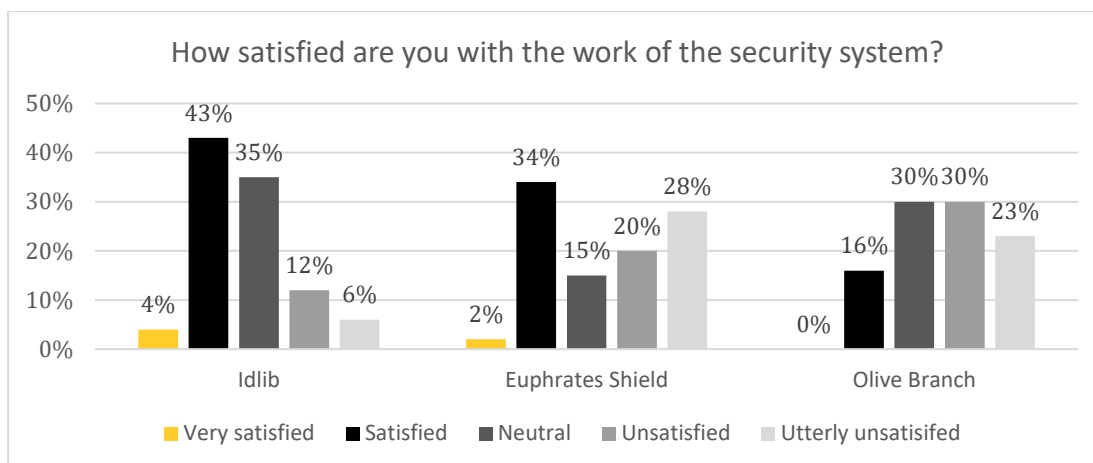


Chart 50 for the security system

Finally, when asked by the study participants whether they had any information about the existence of programs or efforts by the security forces in their areas to enhance security and stability, more than one third of the participants in Idlib answered positively, while this percentage decreased below a quarter in the Euphrates Shield area, while in Olive Branch it was only 3%.

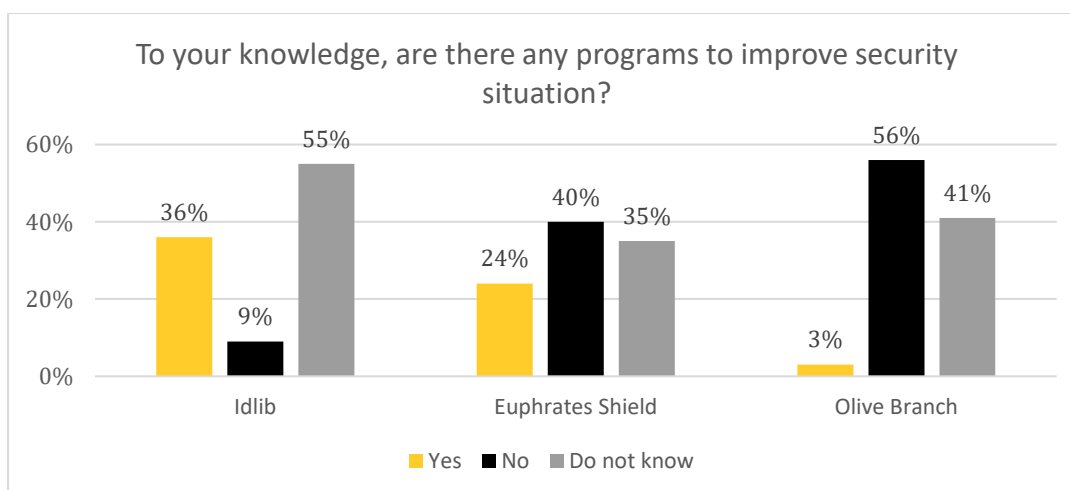


Chart 51 knowledge of programs to improve the security situation

Section 4 - Rule of Law

The principle of the rule of law is one of the most important principles that guarantees the rights and freedoms of individuals and prevents the abuse of its powers by state authorities. The United Nations Secretary-General has described the rule of law as: "A principle of governance in which all persons, institutions and entities, public and private, including the State itself, are accountable to publicly passed laws, applied equally to all and subjected to an independent judiciary, in accordance with international human rights norms and standards. This principle also requires measures to ensure compliance with the principles of the rule of law, equality before the law, accountability before the law, justice in the application of the

law, separation of powers, participation in decision-making, legal certainty, avoidance of arbitrariness and procedural and legal transparency."⁴

Through the previous definition, it can be said that the most important elements underlying the principle of the rule of law are that various individuals and entities within the State, including state organs and authorities, are equally subject to the provisions of the law, that there is an impartial and independent judicial body that enforces legal rules, adjudicates disputes between individuals or between them and state organs, guarantees the rights and freedoms of individuals and prevents state authorities from abusing power.

Given the above-mentioned elements and comparing them to the reality of the situation in liberated areas, it can be said that there is a serious weakness in the application of the principle of the rule of law in the various areas of the study. Experts in general (with the exception of one expert in the Idlib region) have said that there are many individuals or entities that are not subject to the provisions of the law, such as civilian and military leaders, members of the security forces, armed factions, powerful and wealthy people, and tribal elders. In fact, the views of the experts are consistent with the views of the majority of respondents in different regions. The study also revealed that military factions, security agencies and their affiliates and civilian leaders such as mayors, local councilors, judges and venture capitalists are not equally subject to the provisions of the law.

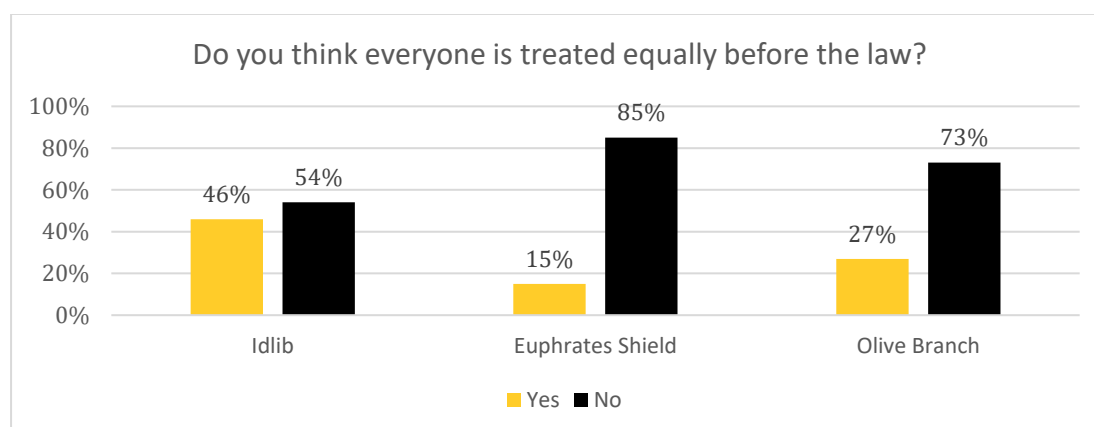


Chart 52 equality before the law

On the other hand, KIIs stressed the existence of many infringements by the forces controlling areas on the rights and freedoms of individuals, the most prominent of which is the restriction of the right of citizens to express their opinions, the practice of arbitrary arrests, seizure of property, while the size of rights violations is particularly high against the indigenous population of Olive Branch area, where experts there said that the military forces operating in the area are usurping the property of the indigenous people and their real estates, livestock and harvests under flimsy arguments and pretexts. The indigenous inhabitants of the region also face arbitrary arrest under flimsy arguments and pretexts, mainly due to cooperating with the Autonomous Administration which was ruling the area previously. The area also witnesses kidnapping citizens and blackmailing their families to pay large sums of money in exchange for their release. Survey responses in the area confirm what the KIIs reveal, as nearly two

4 Secretary-General's Report No.S/2004/616 On the rule of law and transitional justice in conflict and post-conflict societies issued on The 24th of November 2004.

<https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/ar/what-is-the-rule-of-law/>

thirds of Olive Branch residents said that the dominant authorities in their area practice arbitrary arrests against citizens.

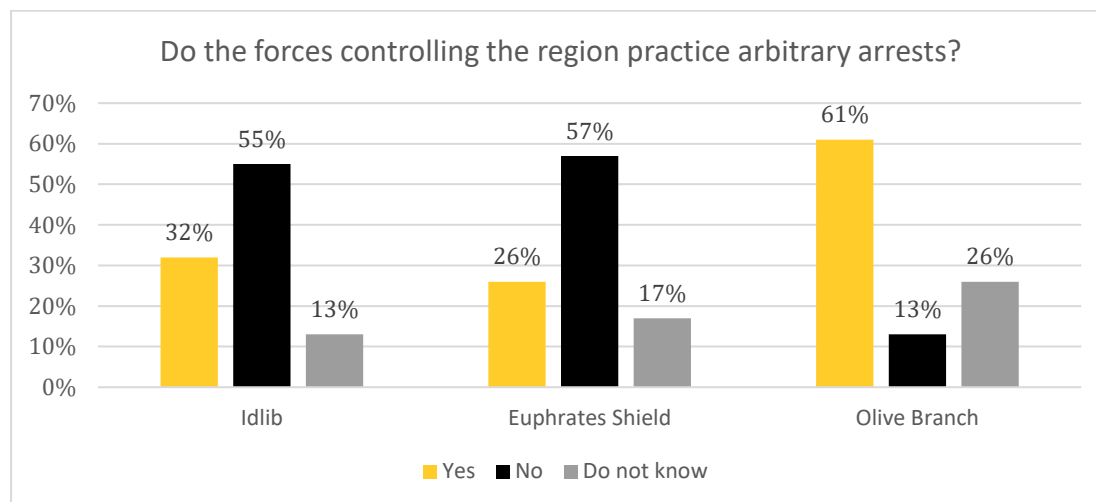


Chart 53 arbitrary detentions outside the law

In fact, the infringements on the rights of citizens and individuals are not only carried out by the authorities in control of the region and the military and security forces, but a high percentage of participants in both the Olive Branch and Euphrates Shield areas (the percentage in the Olive Branch area reached 67%, while in the Euphrates Shield area it was 60%, while it decreased in Idlib to 26%) who said that ordinary individuals with influence (such as owners of capital or people who have kinship or friendship with the leaders of military factions) also attack the most vulnerable members of society.

Notably, the largest percentage of participants in both the Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch areas said that in the event that the forces controlling the region or individuals with influence violate the rights of the least vulnerable individuals within the community, these individuals will not be able to file a complaint against the aggressor.

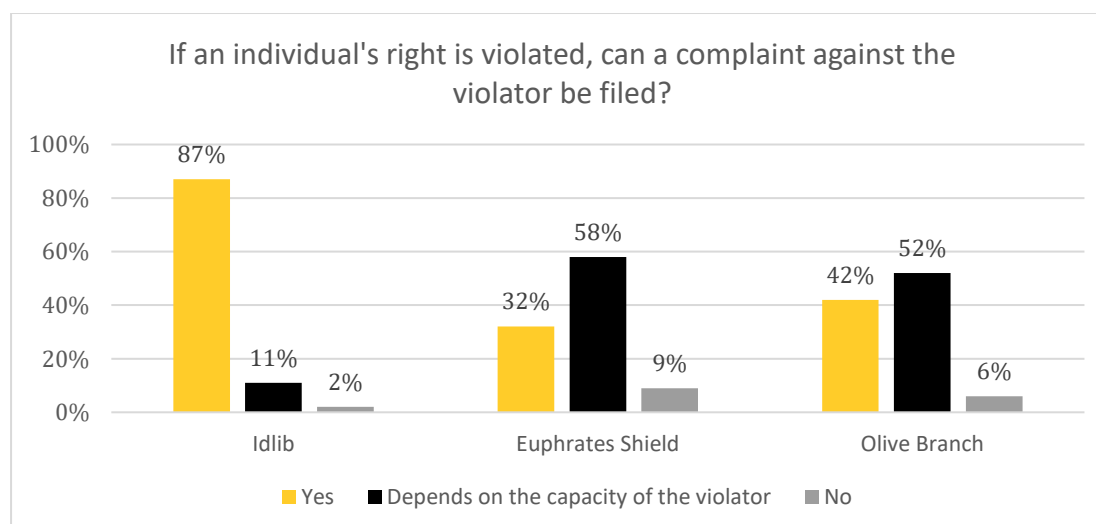


Chart 54 ability to file lawsuits

There are many ways and methods used to resolve disputes that arise within each of the study areas, and these methods differ according to the characteristics of the parties to the dispute. In Idlib, an expert says that all disputes that arise among citizens, or between the citizens and the administrative or military authorities are settled by the courts which is the competent authority (civilian and military), unless it is resolved by mutual consent or agreement between parties. This is agreed by the other key informant, except he says that there is favoritism for the administrative bodies at the expense of the citizens in the event that those parties are one of the parties to the dispute.

In the Euphrates Shield area, key informants say that the disputes that arise between citizens are resolved through the courts or through the intervention of the notables of the region, and an expert among them said that there are some individuals who resort to the use of force, but in the event that the administrative or military authorities are a party to the dispute, a difference is noted. One expert said that the dispute is resolved by submitting a complaint to the civil or military judicial authorities, according to the capacity of the party to the dispute, while the other expert said that there are no ways to resolve such disputes and that citizens should remain silent.

In the Olive Branch area, experts said that the disputes that arise between individuals are resolved by resorting to the courts, but some individuals, instead of resorting to the courts, seek the help of the military factions to resolve the dispute for their own benefit, in exchange for paying a sum of money to those factions. As for the dispute between citizens and administrative and military bodies, they cannot be resolved as citizens do not dare to resort to any party to claim their rights.

The answers of the study participants on the means and methods of resolving disputes are similar to what the experts said. In Idlib, the vast majority of participants said that the resolution of differences is done through the competent courts, while 14% said that this is done by resolving the dispute by mutual consent or by resorting to police stations, which is part of “other” option in the chart below.

In the Euphrates Shield area, the largest percentage of participants said that the resolution of disputes is done through the courts, and a quarter of the participants said that this is done through the use of force or through the use of military factions, in addition to resorting to reconciliation or arbitration centers, while some respondents chose “other” option, which includes offering disagreement to the camp management for camp residents, arbitration of regional elders or complaints to police stations.

In Olive Branch area, about half of the respondents indicated that the disputes were resolved through the use of the competent courts, where the other half said that this was done through the use of force or the use of military factions.

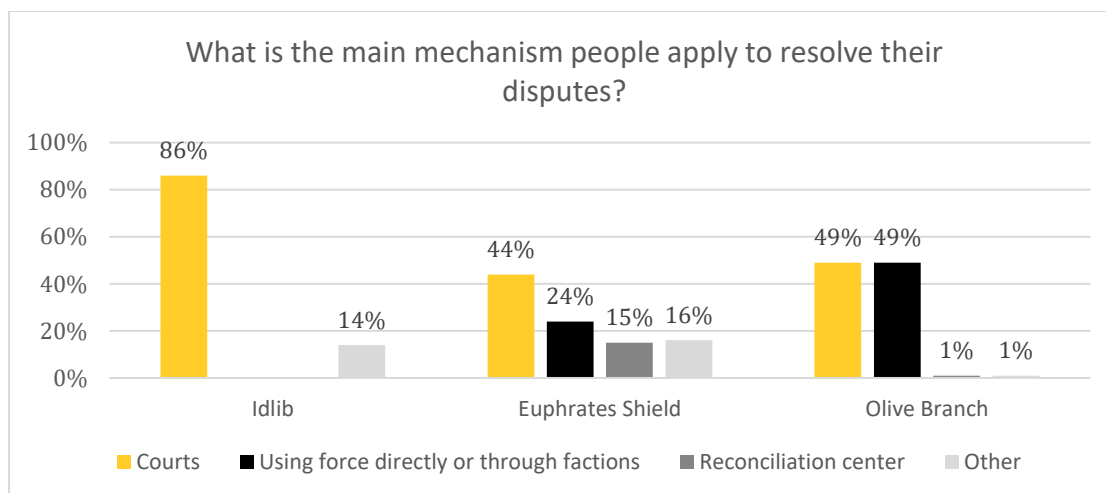


Chart 55 dispute resolution methods

Finally, considering that the principle of the rule of law requires an independent and impartial judiciary to adjudicate disputes in isolation from any external pressures, the judicial system in each area of study, the functioning of the courts and the independence of the judiciary must be examined. Accordingly, the vast majority of the participants in the study said that actually courts exist working to resolve disputes among citizens or between citizens and controlling forces. The number of respondents who said that such courts do not exist was 3 both in Olive Branch and in Idlib, while in the Euphrates Shield area, that number had risen to 14, 12 of whom lived in the Jarablus area, while one person was residing in the Bab area and another in Zugara camp.

As for the independence of the judiciary, experts in the various areas of the study stressed that the judiciary within their areas lacks independence. In Idlib, experts said that the judiciary is practically subordinate to the HTS, which intervenes in the work of judges, especially in cases where the Authority is a party, but in cases and disputes between civilians, the rulings or work of judges are not interfered with. Similarly, experts in both the Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch areas said that the judiciary in their areas does not enjoy any degree of independence, as the military factions can pressure the judges and influence their decisions and rulings.

On the administrative body to which the courts follow according to the opinions of the study participants, more than three quarters of the participants in Idlib said that they belong to the SSG, while some said that they belong to the HTS, which is part of the “other” option in the chart below. As for the areas of Olive Branch and Euphrates Shield, there exists a difference in the views of respondents on that side, as some believe that the courts belong to local councils, while others see SIG or Turkey where they belong to.

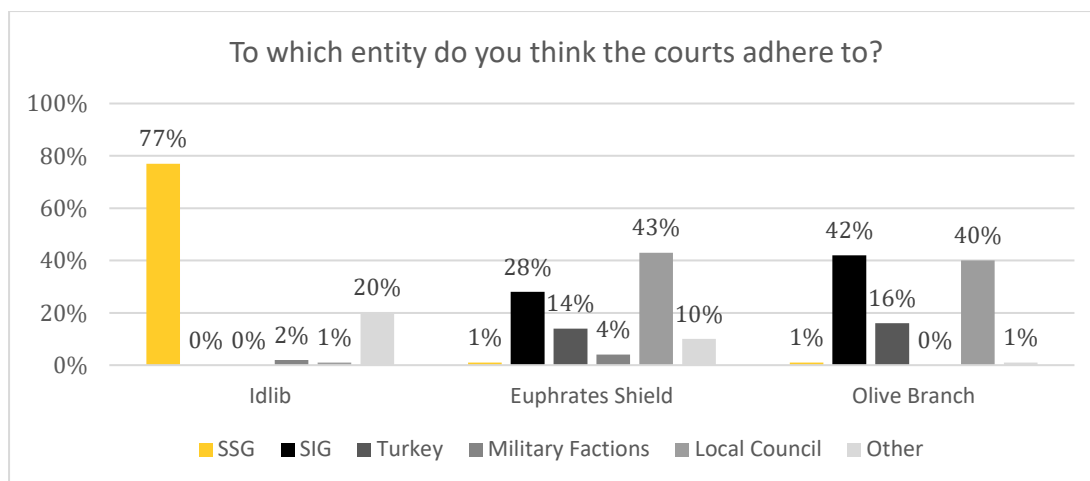


Chart 56 court entities

As for the laws applied by the courts when adjudicating disputes, key informants in Idlib pointed out that the provisions and rules of Islamic law are adopted by the courts and are generally applied in the resolution of disputes, but in the areas of Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch, experts said that the rules of Syrian law are adopted. Yet the respondents have low degree of knowledge in both Olive Branch and Euphrates Shield by the legal rules applied in the resolution of disputes. The percentage of those who know that Syrian law applies in the Euphrates Shield area is slightly more than a third, while it has fallen below one third in the area of The Olive Branch, while in Idlib the proportion of those who knew that the provisions of Islamic law applied remained at three quarters.

Note: Participants in the Euphrates Shield area who responded otherwise said that the rules and provisions of Turkish law apply, but in Idlib their answers were that both civil law and Islamic law are applicable in resolving disputes.

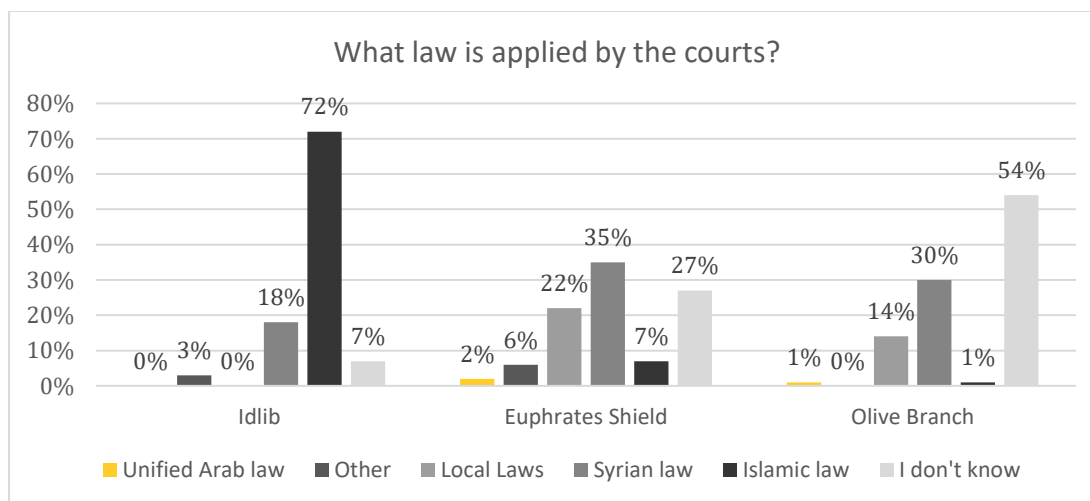


Chart 57 laws applied by the courts

As for the litigation proceedings, the results of the study showed a rise in the degree of knowledge of participants in the ability of the parties to the proceedings to have a lawyer to represent them before the judiciary. The percentage of those who said that a lawyer could be hired in both Idlib and the Euphrates Shield region 99% and 98%, respectively, while in the area of Olive Branch it decreases to 78%.

Also, in Idlib, participants are aware of the possibility of appealing court rulings before higher courts (two-degree litigation), while in the Euphrates Shield area it is reduced to two-thirds, whereas in Olive Branch it was less than half.

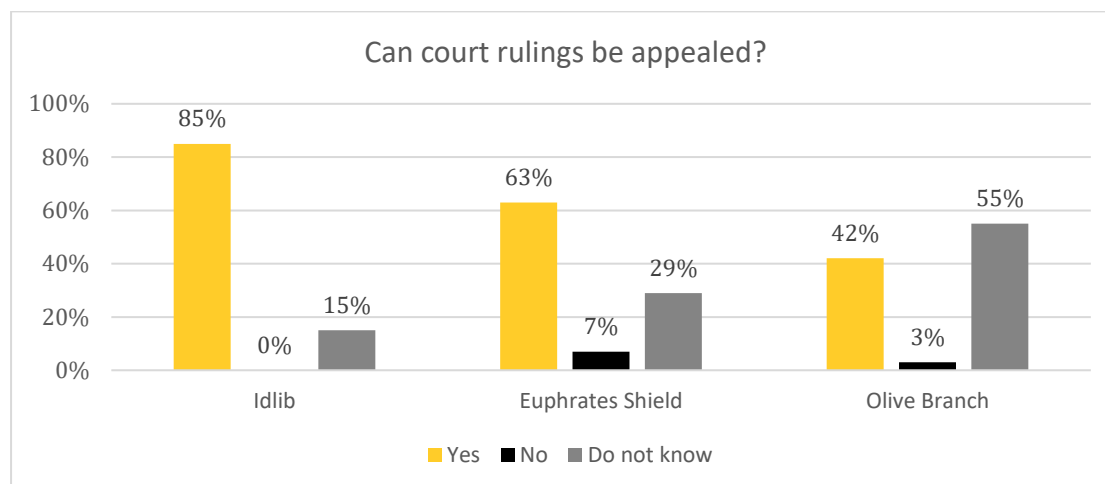


Chart 58 possibility of appeal of court rulings

On the implementation of judicial rulings and decisions, experts in various areas of the study say that the implementation of sentences issued in disputes between citizens is carried out through the executive force, which consists of the civilian police and military police in the Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch areas, and the security offices of the Ministry of Interior in the SSG in Idlib. As for the sentences handed down in disputes between citizens and military or security forces or administrative bodies are often not implemented, as these forces do not comply with the rulings of the judiciary, except for the opinion of one expert in Idlib who said that the sentences are to be implemented whatever the parties to the conflict. For their part, the majority of the study participants in the Idlib region said that the rulings of the courts in general are implemented, while this percentage amounted to 68% and 52% in the areas of Olive Branch and Euphrates Shield, respectively.

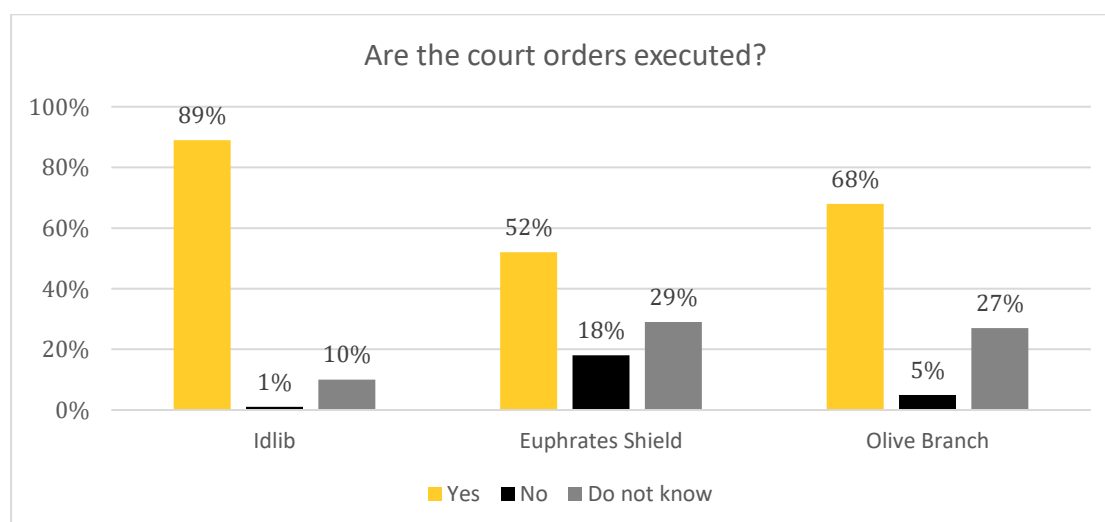


Chart 59 executions of court rulings

With regard to the participants' satisfaction with the work of the courts in their areas, the degree of satisfaction was close to or less than half in the various areas of the study, with it dropping to just over a third in the Olive Branch area. They are absolutely dissatisfied with the

spread of bribery, corruption, nepotism, the judges' lack of impartiality and their bias towards the administrative and military forces in the event that they are a party to the conflict, or their refusal to implement the rulings issued if they are not in their favor, and the lack of force to compel them to implement, in addition to the slow litigation procedures.

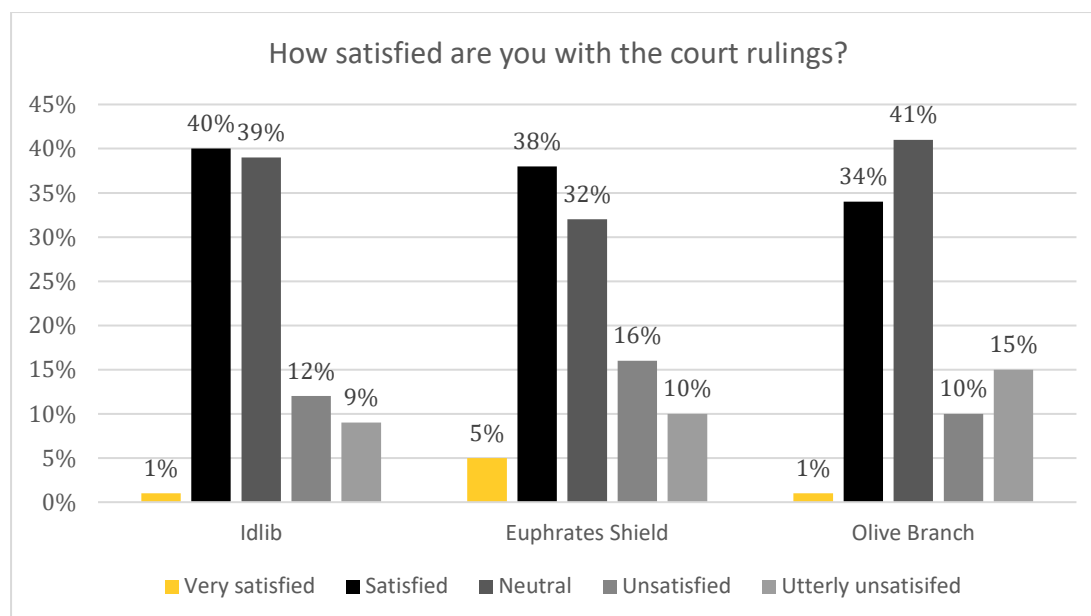


Chart 60 degree of satisfaction with court rulings

For their part, KIs confirmed the existence of many defects in the work of the judiciary and courts, and these weaknesses are similar to what the participants mentioned above, in terms of cases of corruption, the spread of bribery and nepotism, and favoritism by some judges to the stronger party in the case, and due to threats and pressures. In addition to this, the inefficiency of some judges and the slow pace of litigation procedures are also mentioned. An expert in Idlib elaborated when asked about the problems facing the judiciary, by saying that citizens in general suffer from ill-treatment when reviewing judicial departments and the superiority of judges and court officials over them. Also, many citizens of rightsholders fear resorting to the judiciary because of their lack of confidence in judges and the work of the courts. 84% of the respondents in Idlib said that judges use nicknames and do not reveal their names, while that percentage was 22% and 33% in the Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch regions. In a row, the expert also said that many judges do not have sufficient academic qualifications to occupy their positions. They are graduates of Sharia courses, while law graduates are few. The largest percentage of respondents saying that they do not know what the judges' academic qualifications are were in Idlib, whereas the largest percentage of

respondents in the Euphrates Shield and the Olive Branch said that judges are holders of degrees in law.

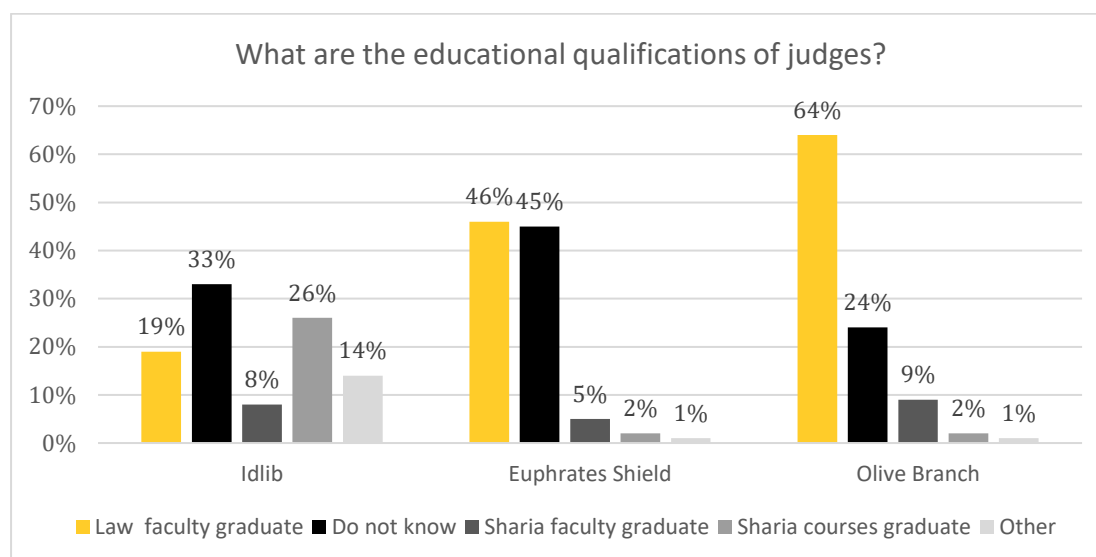


Chart 61 qualifications of judges

Section 5 - Participation in decision-making

The regions of northern Syria, like other Syrian regions, are subject to understandings and agreements concluded between countries and regional and international powers to chart the future of the region, which is what happened, for example, with regard to the Turkish-Russian agreement on the Idlib region. In fact, any decision or understanding that is agreed upon will necessarily have its effects. Likewise, any results that may be reached, for example, within the course of a political solution, will also have repercussions on the Syrians in general and on those residing in the northern Syrian regions in particular. Based on that and considering that the residents of the liberated areas are mainly concerned with what may be issued by decisions about their areas, it is assumed that they are involved in the decision-making process, or at least their opinions are consulted to and taken them into consideration. But in reality, experts in the various study areas said that there is absolutely no role for citizens in the decision-making process related to their areas, with the exception of one expert in Idlib who said that the Salvation Government is involving citizens in decision-making by holding direct meetings with citizens and listening to their views on various issues, either related to

the region or through the notables of the regions. As for the participants in the various study regions, the majority of them said that citizens have no role in making decisions.

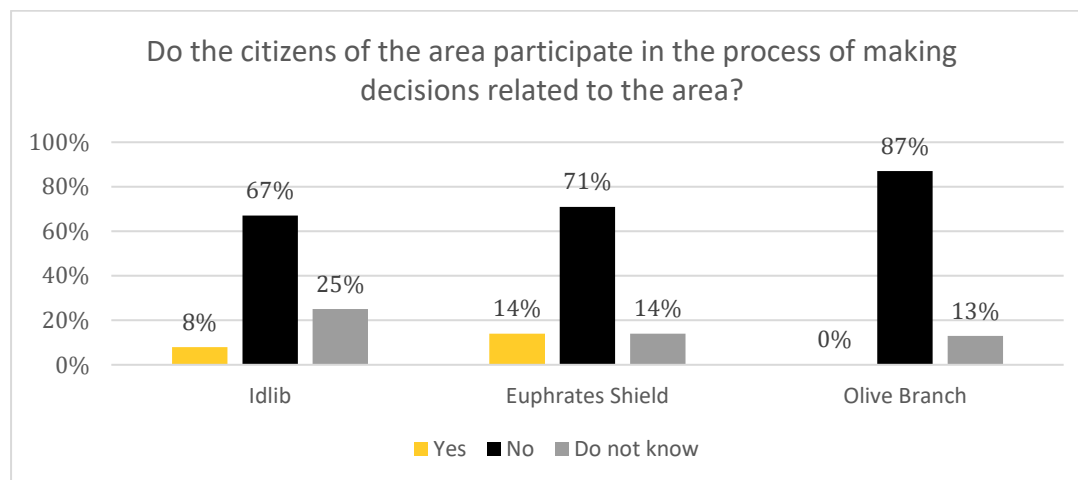


Chart 62 citizens' involvement in the decision-making process

Regarding the mechanism by which decisions related to public affairs are taken in each of the study areas, one of the experts in Idlib explained that he does not have any information on how decisions are taken. As for the second expert, he said that those actually owns the affairs in the region and issues the relevant decisions are a small group of unidentified people affiliated with Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham and working behind the scenes. As for the Salvation Government, it is nothing more than a front that works only to implement the decisions that are taken, as the expert indicated that there are external interventions by some international forces and the Qatar and Turkey lead the decision-making process, as these forces issue orders and instructions to decision-makers on some issues. Similarly, more than two-thirds of the participants in the study in the Idlib region said that the decision-making process in the region is under the control and supervision of external powers.

In the Euphrates Shield area, experts say that important decisions related to public affairs in the region are taken through consultation and a meeting of officials in the region, including members of local councils, police commanders, and military factions. The experts said that decisions taken during these meetings are submitted to the relevant governor in Turkey for consideration. The governor can also take decisions regarding the affairs of the region and they are implemented without referring to the administrative authorities in the region or those responsible for managing its affairs. More than three-quarters of the participants in the Euphrates Shield region see the interference of some external forces with the decisions issued within the region.

As for the decision-making mechanism in the Olive Branch area, one of the experts said that decisions are taken through a meeting of members of local councils in the area with delegates from the Turkish side, during which issues related to the area are discussed, but the final decisions are taken by Turkish authorities, which was also confirmed by the second expert, who said that all decisions related to the region are issued by the Turkish side, and despite what the experts said, we note the low percentage of participants in the study in the Olive

Branch region who see that the region's decisions are under the control of external parties as it is shown in the chart below.

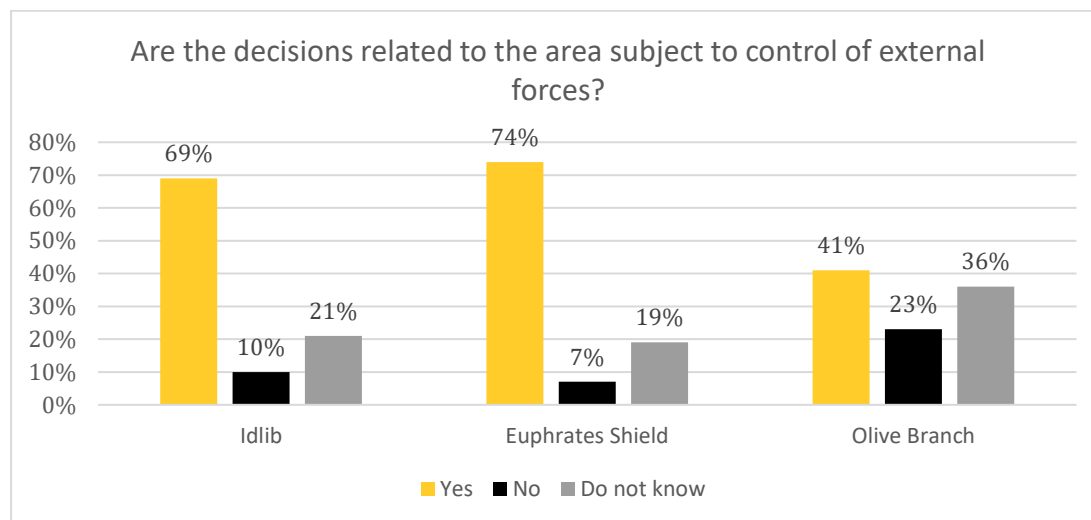


Chart 63 foreign forces' intervention with the decisions of the region

Regarding the presence of representatives of community members in the study areas working to communicate their views and desires to the authorities responsible for managing the area, experts in Idlib said that there are many bodies that are responsible for representing citizens, such as members of local councils, the Council of Notables and Dignitaries, the Shura Council, the General Peace Council and some tribal bodies such as a council of tribes and clans, and despite the multiplicity of bodies and councils, one of the experts in Idlib said that all of them are formal and fictitious bodies, and that Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham is the one who appoints its members who follow it and adopt its ideas. The majority of respondents in Idlib also said that the selection of representatives of the population of the region is through appointment.

In the Euphrates Shield area, one of the experts said that the elders and dignitaries of the region are the ones who represent the members of the community along with a council called the Tribal Council. As for the second expert, he said that the heads and members of the local councils are the ones who are supposed to represent the members of the community, but in reality, they do not work in order to serve the people and that all their concern is to please the Turkish authorities in order to remain in their positions. As for how to select representatives of the region's population, about half of the participants said that this is done through appointment.

In the Olive Branch area, the experts said that members of local councils and mayors are the ones who are responsible for representing the members of the community, but they do not have anything to do with representation, and their role is limited to executing the decisions and orders without being able to discuss or object to them. Representatives of the residents

of the area are appointed according to the answers of more than half of the participants in the Olive Branch area.

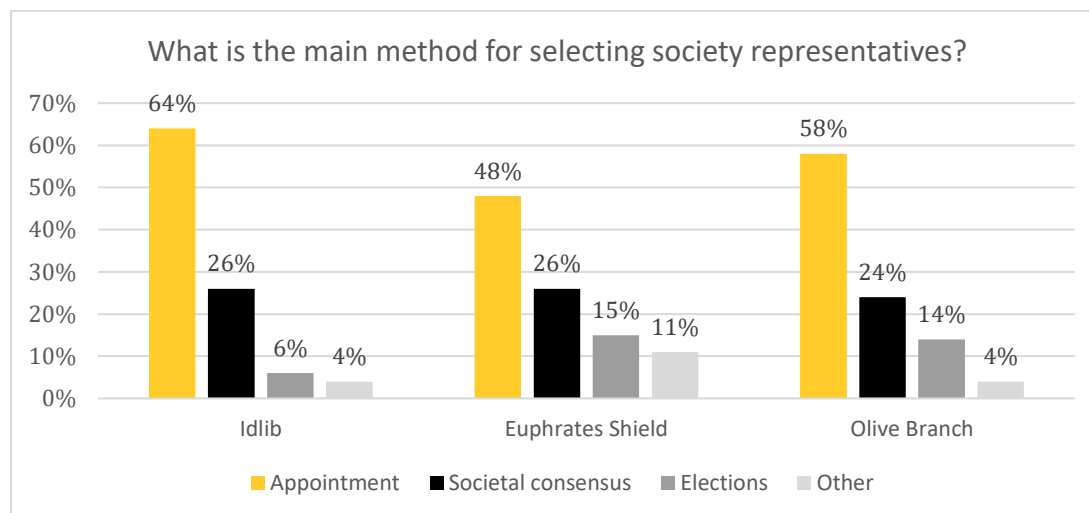


Chart 64 selecting representatives from the community

At the international level, and with regard to the path of the political solution in Syria, the results of the study showed a significantly low level in the awareness of citizens in northern Syrian regions in general about the path of the political solution and the meetings and conferences that are held and its results. The degree of communication of persons participating in the path of communication with local communities is also extremely low. The political solution is with the citizens inside Syria, as 99% of the participants in the Olive Branch area said that the officials involved in the path of the political solution communicate with the citizens at a very low or very low level, and that percentage in Idlib stood at 96%, while in the Euphrates Shield area it was 90%.

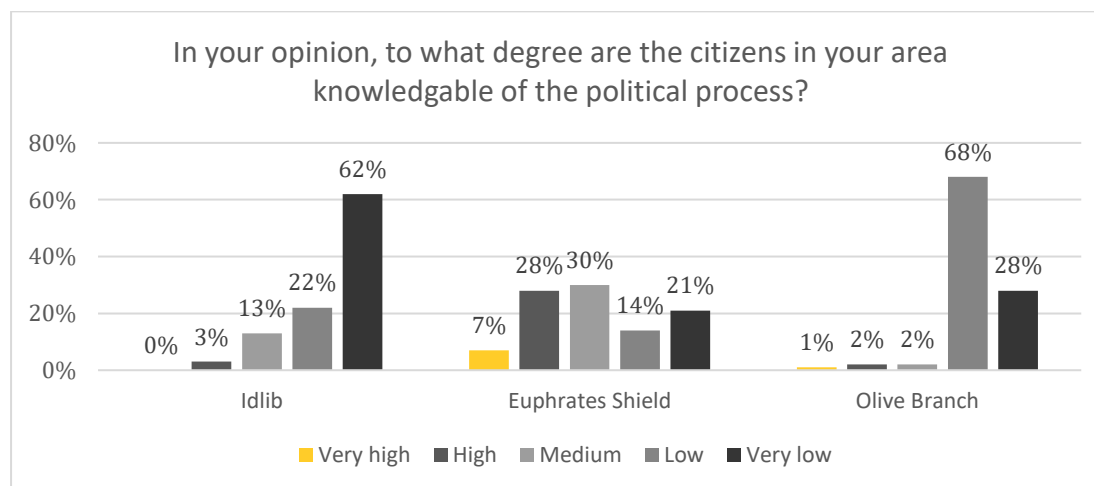


Chart 65 citizens' knowledge of the path of a political solution

When the study participants were asked whether they had knowledge of the names of some of the personalities involved in the political solution process who communicated with the residents of the region, the vast majority of them said that they did not have any information about that, while only 14 of the participants in the various study areas said that there are some personalities among the participants in the path of the political solution who have already communicated with the residents of the area, and they are members of the Syrian

Negotiating Committee, such as Ahmed Tohme, Nasr Hariri, Jamal Abu Al-Ward, Riad Hijab and Ahmed Zidan.

As for the extent of citizens' satisfaction in general with the participants' work in the path of a political solution, the degree of satisfaction of the respondents was extremely low in Idlib. As for the Euphrates Shield and the Olive Branch regions, the largest percentage of the participants expressed their neutrality. As for the reasons for this low degree of satisfaction, they are multiple. The most prominent of them from the respondents' point of view is that the participants in the political solution path work according to an external agenda without regard for the interests of the Syrian people, and that they seek through their work only to collect funds and achieve their personal interests, in addition to their distance from the citizens and their failure to listen to the demands of the Syrians residing within the liberated areas. In Idlib, the degree of citizens' satisfaction with the path of the political solution is particularly low significantly, due to the conviction of a large number of citizens that the advance of the Syrian regime forces and their control over the Idlib areas is only a result of the negotiations and discussions that are being conducted between the political forces.

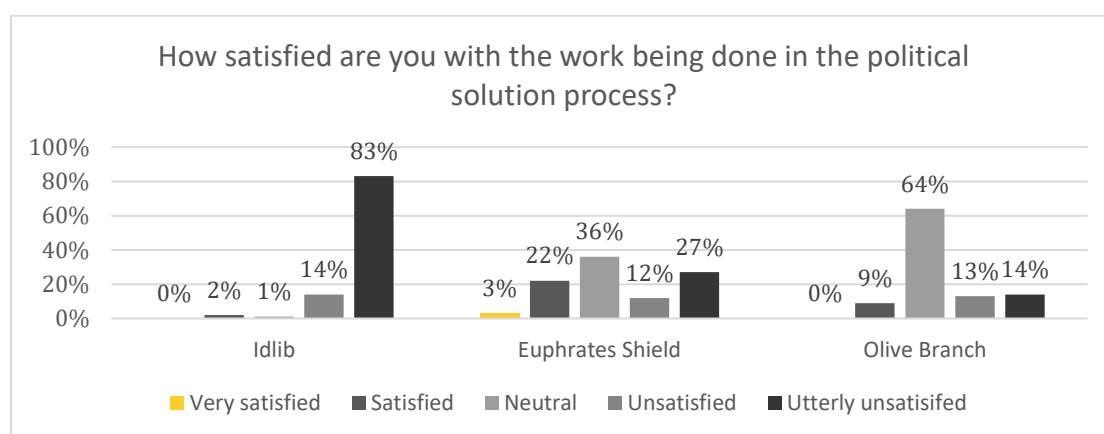


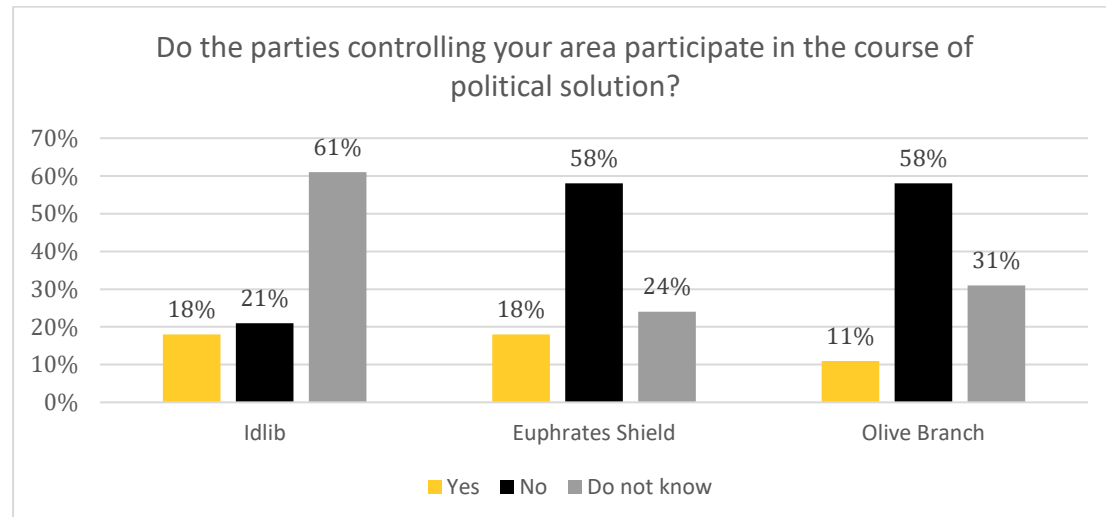
Chart 66 satisfaction with the work of participants in the path of a political solution

Finally, with regard to the participation of the political and military forces operating in the study areas in the path of a political solution, the experts in Idlib said that these forces have never participated in any meeting, conference, negotiations or discussions related to the path of a political solution, and the reason for this is the lack of international acceptance for the participation of HTS and SSG in the path of a political solution, as they are included in the lists of terrorism. As for the answers of the participants in Idlib, 61% of them said that they do not know whether the forces controlling the region are participating in the path of a political solution or not, while 21% of them said that it does not participate because it does not believe in the seriousness of the Syrian regime in reaching a political solution to end the conflict in Syria and therefore does not believe in the benefit of engaging in the political process, in addition to the refusal of the countries sponsoring the political process to participate with these forces.

In the Euphrates Shield area, one of the experts said that there is participation by the SIG in the path of the political solution, but its participation is formality, while the second expert said that the forces controlling the region do not participate at all in the path of the political solution, as participation is limited to representatives of the coalition outside Syria. As for the participants in the study, more than half of them said that these forces do not participate in

the political process, and the main reason for this, from their point of view, is that the countries sponsoring the political process refuse to participate.

As for the Olive Branch area, both experts said that the dominant forces on the ground do not have an actual participation in the negotiations that are being held, or in the course of the political solution in general, which was also answered by more than half of the participants, as they attributed the reason for the non-participation of the dominant forces of the region in the path of a political solution is primarily due to the refusal of the countries sponsoring the political process to participate in it, in addition to the lack of belief of those forces in the seriousness of the Syrian regime in the solution.



67 participation of the controlling forces in political solution

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