December 2019

IMU

Joint Education Needs Assessment for Out of School Children (JENA)

Issued by the Information Management Unit (IMU) of the ACU in cooperation with Save the Children International and Education Cluster in Turkey and with the participation of 13 Syrian NGOs specialized in Education.

Funded by ECHO

European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid

وحدة تنسيق الدعم ASSISTANCE COORDINATION UNIT

Save the Children

Syria Response (Southern Turkey) Education Cluster

JOINT EDUCATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

For Out of School Children (OOSC)

(JENA)

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We highly appreciate the Syrian NGOs who participated in the accomplishment of JENA assessment and all the efforts done by the field teams inside Syria during the data collection process.

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List of Acronyms

ACU – Assistance Coordination Unit
CCCM –Camp Coordination and Camp Management
ECHO – European Commissions' Humanitarian Aid Office
ED – Education Directorate
FGD – Focus Group Discussion
IDP – Internally Displaced Person
IMU – Information Management Unit
JENA – Joint Education Need Assessment
KI – Key Informant
KII – Key Informant Interview
MoU – Memorandum of Understanding
NW – North West
OOSC –Out Of School Children
SCI – Save the Children International
SNGO –Syrian Non-Governmental Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Joint Education Need Assessment (JENA) is a comprehensive participatory education assessment for Out Of School Children (OOSC) in the non-governmental areas of the Northwest of Syria. JENA is conducted under the supervision of the Education Cluster the Turkey hub and Save the Children International (SCI), implemented and coordinated by the Information Management Unit (IMU) of the Assistance Coordination Unit (ACU) with the cooperation of thirteen members of the Education Cluster all of them are Syrian Non-Governmental Organizations (SNGOs) namely, **Ataa, Bahar, Banafsaj, Binaa, Bonyan, Education Without Borders (MIDAD), IhsanRD, Matar, Qudra, Sadad, Shafaq, Syria Relief and Takaful Al-Sham.**

- Section 1: Methodology

ACU's IMU has developed the methodology used for this report in collaboration with the Education Cluster in Turkey and SCI; where quantitative and qualitative approaches have been used to process and present OOSC data; JENA includes the results of 7,208 surveys conducted with OOSC and their caregivers; 115 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs); and four Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). JENA covers 112 communities, including 26 regular and random camps, in addition to 86 cities and towns of varying sizes, provided services and different geographical distribution.

- Section 2: Assessed Communities Information

This study has been conducted in 112 communities, of which 77% cities and towns (86 cities); 23% (26 camps) regular and random camps; 7 camps in Aleppo governorate and 19 camps in Idleb governorate; a set of criteria has been developed to be applied on any chosen community, taking into account the geographical distribution of the communities. The number of schools covered within the communities reached 528, of which 20% (105 schools) non-functional schools and 423 functional schools.

The number of school-age children in the NW of Syria (within the assessed districts) reached 1,712,468; and according to JENA 34% (582,239 children) of those school-age children are out of school. Among the JENA findings, the percentage of OOSC increases in higher educational levels (the higher the educational level, the higher the percentage of OOSC). Furthermore, the percentage of female OOSC is always higher than that of male OOSC.

- Section 3: Perception Surveys' Findings

The number of children the enumerators interviewed reached 3,670 OOSC; with female children forming 38% (1,407 girls) of the total number of the interviewed children, and male children constituting 62% (2,263 children). 9% (345 children) of surveyed children living with disability. The enumerators surveyed 3,538 caregivers raising OOSC, with 36% female caregivers (1,273 female caregivers) of the total number of caregivers, and 64% male caregivers (2,265 male caregivers). According to JENA, it is found that among the surveyed OOSC, 8% (190 children) who were over 12 years old are married, and 51% (1,858 children) are involved in labor to provide for their families. The report also monitors the type of child labor in which OOSC are involved.

- Section 4: Children who Attended and Dropped out of School

JENA found that 25% (909 children) of OOSC attended school before dropping out, and the majority of children confirmed that they attended school before their displacement. The report includes information related to the persons who made the decision for children to drop out of school. On top of the reasons related to the educational environment leading to children dropping out of school comes the frequent displacement, in addition to having no nearby schools in places of displacement. The first reason associated with the educational process is having no acknowledged certificates issued by the schools. According to OOSC, the main reason related to the living conditions which drive children to drop out of school is the uselessness of education which doesn't secure job opportunities by their perspective. On top of the reasons related to customs and traditions which force children to drop out of school comes the fact that schools are gender-mixed, and parents do not allow their children to study there. The first personal reason for children that drives them to drop out of school is having no one in their family to help them do their homework and follow up on their educational level.

- Section 5: Children who Never Attended School

JENA reveals that 75% (2,761 children) of surveyed OOSC never attended school at all. On top of the reasons related to the educational environment leading to children dropping out of school comes the frequent displacement, in addition to having no nearby schools in places of displacement. The first reason associated with the educational process is having no acknowledged certificates issued by the schools. According to OOSC, the main reason related to the living conditions which drive children to drop out of school is the uselessness of education which doesn't secure job opportunities. On top of the reasons related to customs and traditions which force children to drop out of school comes the fact that schools are gender-mixed, and parents do not allow their children to study at, as 107 females and 38 males stated that they did not attend schools due to that schools are gender-mixed. Moreover, some parents refused to teach their children in mixed schools at all educational levels. The first personal reason for children that drives them to drop out of school is having no one in their family to help them do their homework and follow up on their educational level.

- Section 6: Factors Contributing to Children's Return to School

This section presents a range of factors and demands raised by OOSC and their caregivers that could contribute to children's return to school. According to the children, the main factor, in relation with the educational process, is the provision of suitable educational environment (suitable schools equipped with all educational supplies), in addition to the provision of safe schools. While the first factor, in terms of the educational process, is to provide a mechanism for recognizing the certificates issued by the schools or link them to universities at which students can further their higher education. On top of the factors related to the living conditions comes the distribution of humanitarian assistance at schools to prevent children from dropping out of school to support their families. The first of the factors related to customs and traditions is found to be having single-sex schools (separate schools for female students and other schools for male students). On top of children's personal factors comes the provision of special classes for students lagging behind to provide accelerated learning for them so they can catch up with their peers in the grades commensurate with the ages of OOSC.

- Section 7: Out-of-School Educational Programmes

JENA shows that only 8% (277 children) of surveyed OOSC joined out-of-school educational programmes. In contrast, 92% (3,393 children) did not join these programs. Furthermore, 32% (88 children) of children who attended the out-of-school educational programmes continued attending these programs, whereas others didn't continue attending the programs for several reasons covered in this assessment. It is noteworthy that among the most important out-of-school education programs implemented in the NW of Syria are e-learning[1], remote learning, self-learning program, and basic literacy and numeracy program. There are also a number of OOSC who attend Sharia or Quran memorization courses.

[1] Electronic learning includes internet-based training, online education and computer-based training.

Section One: Methodology

1. Assessment Sample

JENA covers the Out Of School Children (OOSC) in the NW of Syria; within non-governmental areas in the governorates of Idleb, Aleppo and Hama; the sample included 112 communities; 86 cities and towns; 26 regular or random camps. The data was collected through KIIs within each community; surveys with OOSC and caregivers. The information sources interviewed by the enumerators are persons of high knowledge of the education sector and dropout children within the community, and most of them are local leaders or employees in the education sector of the community.

JENA includes 115 KIIs, for each assessed community; and perception surveys conducted with the OOSC based on gender, social status (married - single), displacement status (IDP - host community) and physical status (healthy-disabled) and according to age groups. The number of perception surveys conducted by the IMU enumerators and partners' field teams with children is 3,760 surveys; and perception surveys were conducted with the caregivers of the OOSC irrespective of their kinship with these children who maybe parents, siblings, relatives of different stages. A total of four FGDs were conducted within the cities of Afrin, A'zaz, Idleb and Atareb in the offices of JENA partners who have contributed to facilitating the FGDs along with IMU enumerators.

Table 1 Assessment Sample

Governorate	District	# of Communities	# of Camps	# of interviewed caregivers	# of interviewed children	# of KIIs
Idleb	Ariha	9	-	292	291	9
Idleb	Jisr-Ash-Shugur	8	1	283	290	10
Idleb	Harim	9	17	837	843	26
Idleb	Idleb	9	1	324	332	10
Idleb	Ma'arrat An Nu'man	9	-	275	289	9
Aleppo	Azaz	9	5	446	461	14
Aleppo	Al Bab	5	-	160	165	6
Aleppo	Jebel Saman	9	-	257	306	9
Aleppo	Jarablus	8	1	291	295	9
Aleppo	Afrin	9	1	309	332	11
Hama	As-Suqaylabiyah	2	-	64	66	2
Total		**86**	**26**	**3,538**	**3,670**	**115**

2. Assessment Tools

Four tools were developed for JENA based on a set of indicators developed by the Education Cluster in Turkey and SCI; these indicators include:

- High density OOSC locations and the causes and obstacles that lead to children dropping out.
- The impact of displacement on children dropout from school (based on IDPs' residences, either in cities, small towns or in both regular and random camps)
- Education motives.
- Barriers facing children in accessing education.
- The main barriers facing children to attend school regularly.
- Reflect the barriers faced by children who drop out of school from different perspectives; children and their caregivers; males and females of different ages; host community and IDPs; and different educational levels.

Phase 1: IMU produced an initial draft of the questionnaire covering a broad range of issues related to the drop-out children indicators, including four types of similar questionnaires; a questionnaire for Key Informants; a questionnaire for dropouts children; a questionnaire for caregivers of dropouts children; and tool for Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).

Phase 2: The IMU sent the initial draft questionnaires to SCI, which added the comments and suggestions on the tools. IMU applied all the feedback. Subsequently, IMU shared the tools with the Education Cluster coordinators and the participating partners in JENA for their feedback; the IMU applied the modifications and produced the final versions of data collection tools.

Phase 3: The JENA tools were piloted by the IMU network team and the IMU enumerators were tasked on filling the tools electronically in order to explore any technical issues. The IMU Information Management Officers (IMOs) received the samples from the enumerators and added some additional validation rules to the forms. The IMOs made a comprehensive revision and test to the final versions of the electronic tools.

The OOSC and caregivers' questionnaires included a range of questions with multiple-choice answers, in addition to "other" option in case the interviewed person provided new answers; The choices were not read to the interviewed person, but only the question. On the other hand, during the KIIs, the answers to the information source are read and the enumerators asked to determine the severity of chosen option.

3. Field Data Collection Training

IMU conducted a full-day TOT for the JENA partners on the 3rd of October 2019. One person from each NGO attended the TOT, and each organization provided the same training to its field teams in Syria to use the tools remotely. On the 7th of October 2019, IMU conducted online training via Skype for Business for its enumerators. The enumerators' training lasted for one-day and the training sessions were recorded and sent to IMU enumerators and partners as a reference if they needed to recall any of the information presented during the training.

4. Data Management and Analysis

Enumerators filled the questionnaires electronically using KoBo toolbox, while FGDs were sent as Microsoft Word files. The IMU network team received the questionnaires, and the data was exported to an Excel database. IMU IMOs proceeded with data cleaning and validation to find

and correct any odd or missing values or completed them in conjunction with the data collection. After data cleaning, the IMU IMOs and GIS officer proceeded with data visualization, generating tables, and graphs. Tools such as Dax, Query Editor, Arc GIS and Adobe Illustrator were used to generate a visual interpretation of the collected data. The first draft of the report was written in Arabic and simultaneously translated into English. Both editions of the report (Arabic - English) have been subjected to quality assurance standards in the preparation and content internally by ACU and externally by SCI.

5. Time Schedule

The work on JENA began in September 2019 and lasted for three months. The IMU designed the questionnaires and sent it to SCI, which added the comments and suggestions on the tools; IMU applied all the feedback. After sharing the tools with all members through the education cluster, and applying their feedback, training for the partners in the education cluster was conducted on 3 October 2019 for a full day by the IMU within the training course of trainers TOT. ACU signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Education Directorate (ED) of Idleb to facilitate data collection. The MoU included the names of all organizations involved in data collection. The data collection period began on 9 October 2019 and ended on 31 October 2019. The partners collected the data from 33 communities, including 2,112 surveys conducted with drop out children and caregivers, in addition to a questionnaire with a source of information from each community. The IMU collected the data from 79 communities, including 5,075 surveys conducted with drop out children and caregivers, in addition to a questionnaire with a source of information from each community. The IMU enumerators conducted four FGDs. The IMU IMOs started the data cleaning and validation by reviewing the missing and odd values, after which the data analysis started. The analysis process coincided with mapping the JENA report by the IMU GIS officer. The report was written in Arabic and simultaneously translated into English. The SCI reviewed the JENA in English and sent their feedback to ACU. The last step was applying the feedback and producing JENA final layout; the final version was released in December 2019.

6. Difficulties and Challenges

The IMU Enumerators and the partners' field teams faced a range of challenges during data collection, where the enumerators tried to find solutions to overcome these challenges by communicating with the coordinators based in Turkey. The most important difficulties include the following:

- Some of the targeted communities were small towns with no LCs or schools, which required enumerators to make an extra effort to find reliable sources of information.
- Some children and caregivers refused to conduct surveys, so the enumerators looked for people who agreed to conduct a perception survey. It should be mentioned that enumerators have been instructed not to insist on the participation of any child or caregiver if he/she refuses to participate in order to avoid misleading information.
- The control forces prevented the enumerators from collecting data in some areas. However, the enumerators coordinated with the LCs to find a solution.
- There was a difficulty to access to dropouts' female, especially in the advanced age stages. Therefore, the enumerators relied on personal relationships and females' enumerators to be able to conduct interviews with dropout girls.
- Caregivers were not present in the homes, as they go to work outside the village, so the enumerators visited the village more than once or conducted interviews in the workplaces where available.

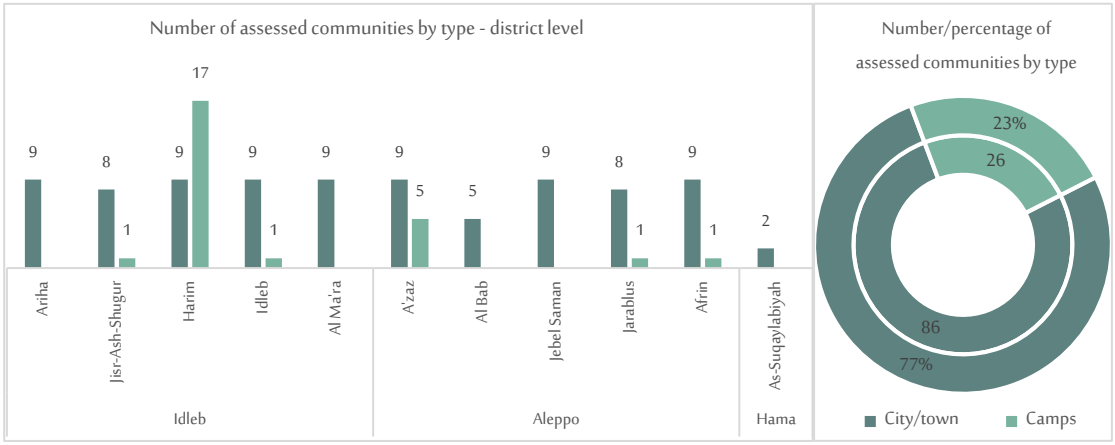
- In the southern countryside of Idleb, the escalation of military actions and the ongoing bombing made it difficult to conduct interviews.

Section Two: Assessed Communities Information

1. Assessed Communities

This study was conducted within 112 communities; 77% (86 cities) of which were cities and towns and 23% (26 camps) were regular or random camps; 7 camps in Aleppo governorate and 19 others in Idleb governorate, whereas there were no camps to assess in Hama governorate.

Figure 1 Assessed Communities



The methodology of selecting the assessed communities adopted a set of criteria related to rates of OOSC by age groups and gender and availability of schools, while taking into consideration the geographical distribution so that the study covers the communities from various aspects and reflects the full picture of dropping out of schools and its causes. The data of students registered in schools from the "Schools in Syria 2019" report was used and the population statistics from various entities to determine the estimated percentages of OOSC (the number of school registered students was subtracted from the number of children in the communities whose ages range between 6-18 years).

- In terms of cities and towns: a plan was developed for selecting nine communities from each district within the three governorates (Idleb, Aleppo and Hama), in addition to a set of criteria applicable to any selected community, while taking into consideration the communities' geographical distribution. The below table displays the criteria adopted in selecting cities and towns:

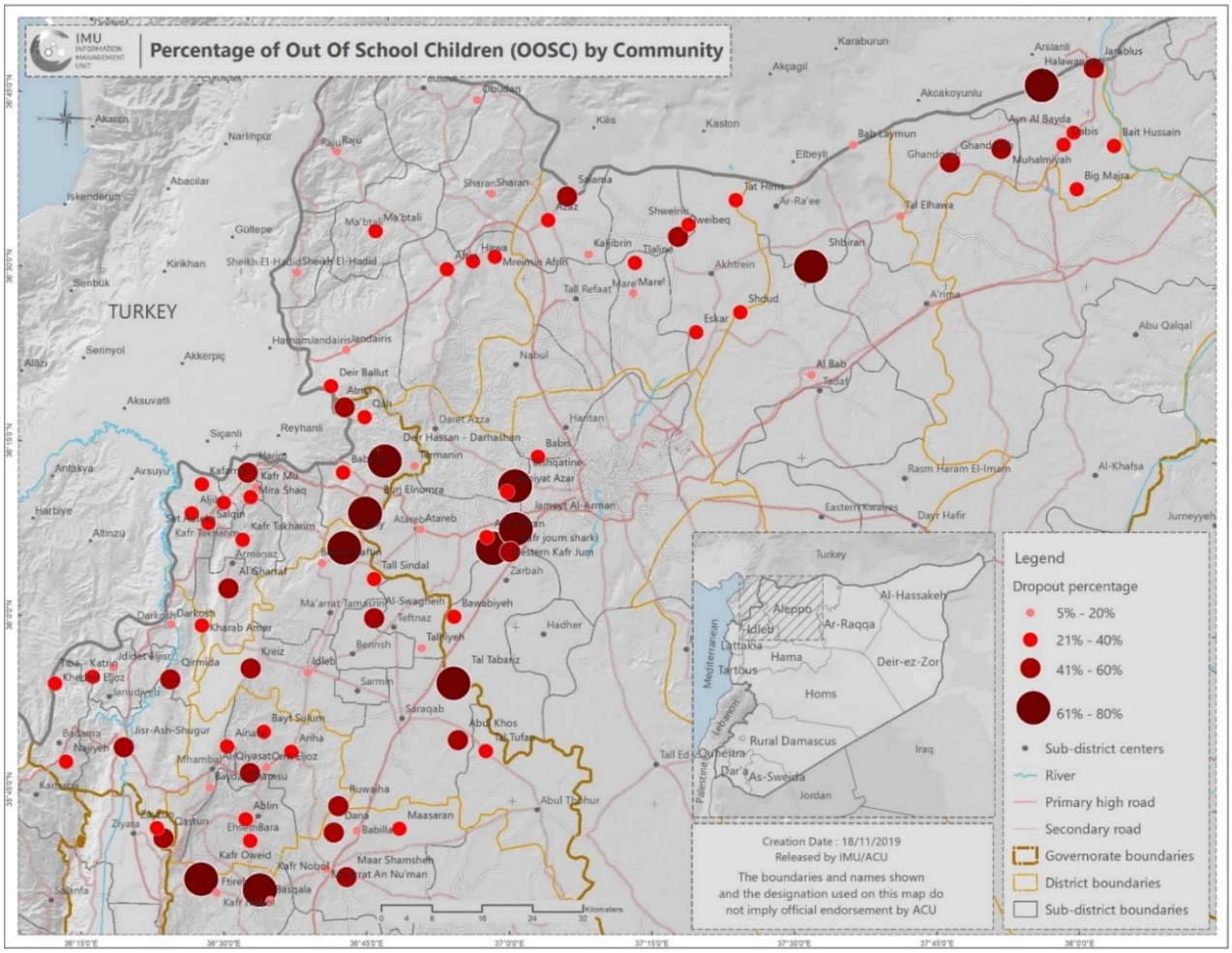
Table 2 The Criteria Used in Selection of Communities

Governorate	District	Sub-district	Village	Sub-district center (city)	With schools				Without schools			
					High rates of OOSC in all stages		High rates of OOSC in upper-		High rates of OOSC in all stages		High rates of OOSC in upper-	
					Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Idleb	Harim	Salqin	Salqin	✓								
Idleb	Harim	Salqin	Aljib		✓							
Idleb	Harim	Harim	Kafr Mu			✓						
Idleb	Harim	Dana	Termanin				✓					
Idleb	Harim	Kafr Takharim	Kafr Takharim					✓				
Idleb	Harim	Salqin	Set Aateka						✓			
Idleb	Harim	Dana	Babisqa							✓		
Idleb	Harim	Harim	Mira Shaq								✓	
Idleb	Harim	Armanaz	Al Gharraf									✓

1. Sub-district center (city): one sub-district center from each district was assessed, on the grounds that the sub-district center is from the largest and most serviced cities in the communities. The objective was to explore the causes of dropping out of school within such cities.
2. Villages with schools: the study was conducted in villages containing schools and high rates of OOSC, aiming at identifying the causes of dropping out in areas containing schools. Such communities were divided into two: the first includes high rates of OOSC in **all schooling stages** and the other includes high rates of OOSC in **later schooling stages**. Further, cities and towns were selected as per the rates of OOSC by gender.
3. Villages without schools: the study was conducted in villages without schools and containing high rates of OOSC, in purpose of exploring the causes of dropping out in areas without schools. Such communities were divided into two: the first includes high rates of OOSC in **all schooling stages** and the other includes high rates of OOSC in **later schooling stages**. Further, cities and towns were selected as per the rates of OOSC by gender.

- In terms of camps: the assessment covered 26 camps; 4 random and 22 regular camps. The standards adopted by the CCCM were used here. Registered camps in the CCCM were considered regular, while non-registered camps in the CCCM were considered random. The CCCM considers a camp to be regular if this camp has a clear management; the camp is serviced (supported by humanitarian organizations); the IDPs are settled in this camp. It is reported that there are 499 camps in NW Syria; 400 camps in Idleb governorate and 99 others in Aleppo governorate, with a population estimated at 538,679 IDPs.

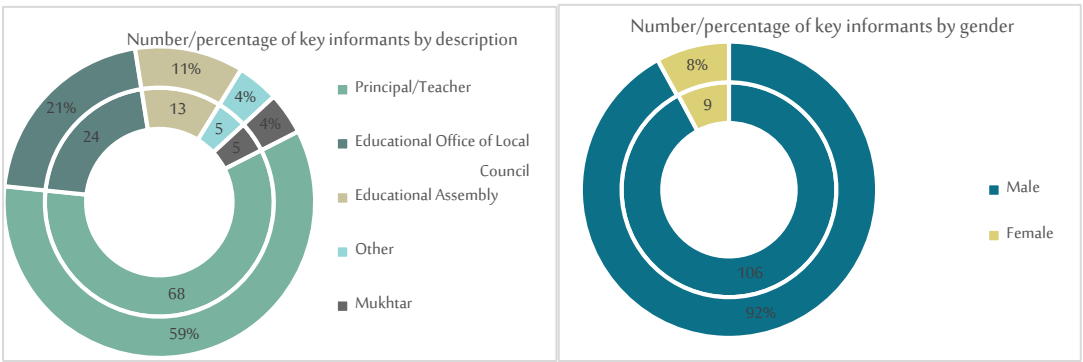
Map 1: Percentage of OOSC on Community Level



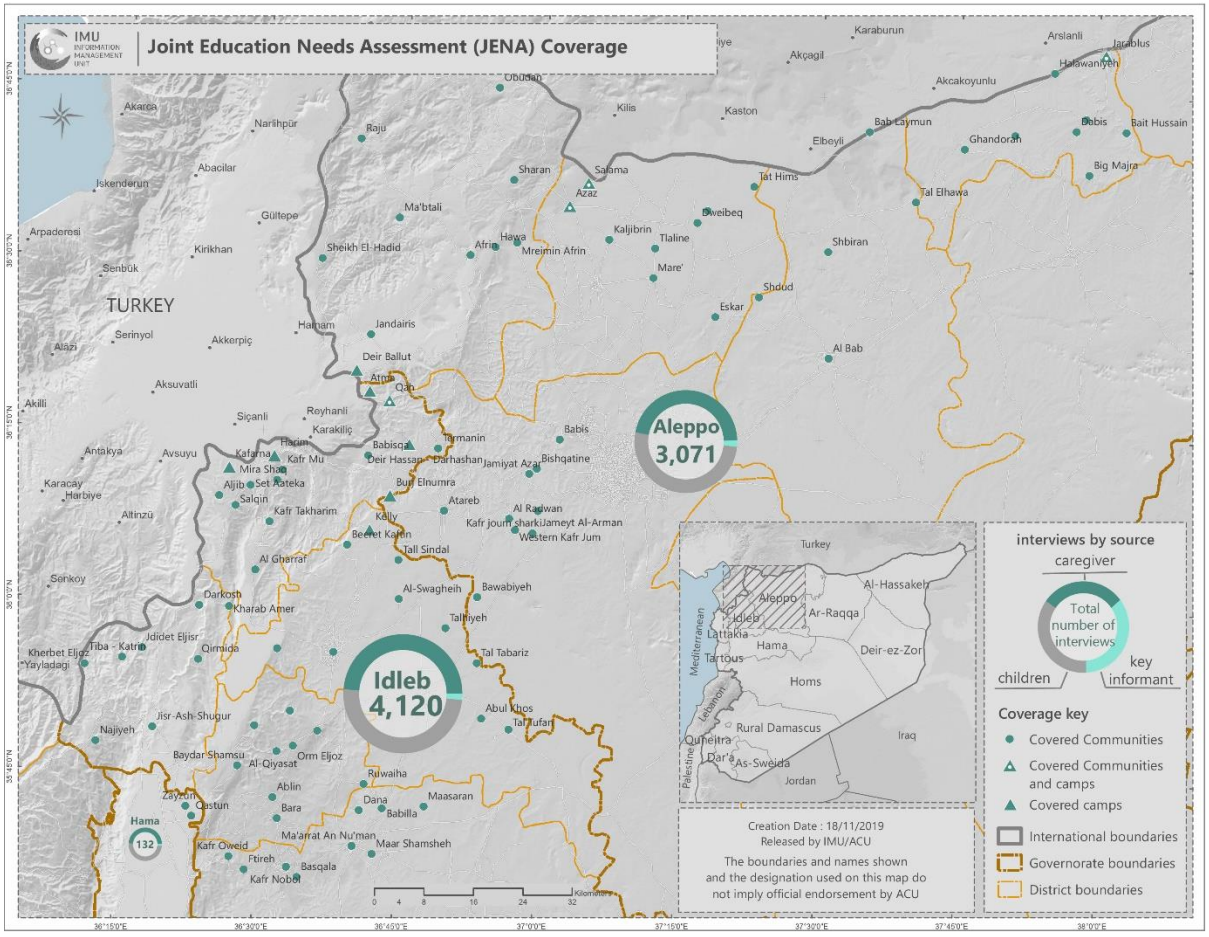
2. Key Informants Interviewed by the Enumerators

The enumerators interviewed one key informant from each assessed community; 8% (9 females) of them are females and 92% (106 males) are males. The enumerators were directed to interview KIs who are familiar with the education condition in the town and have information on OOSC, as per availability of those informants within the assessed communities. 59% (68 teachers) of interviewed KIs are teachers and school principals, 21% (24 persons) work in the Educational Office of the Local Council and are experienced in education, 11% (13 persons) work in the Educational Assembly and 4% (5 persons) are Mukhtars.

Figure 2 Key Informants



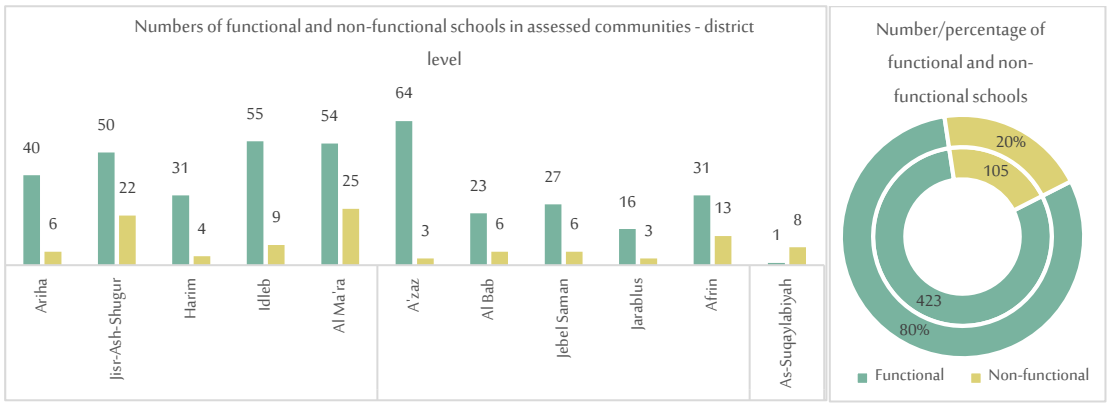
Map 2: JENA Covered Communities and IDP Camps and Number of Conducted Interviews and Surveys



3. Schools in Assessed Communities

There are 528 schools in the covered communities; 20% (105 schools) of which are non-functional and 423 are functional. The bulk of non-functional schools is found in Al Ma'ra and Jisr-Ash-Shugur districts.

Figure 3 Schools in Assessed Communities

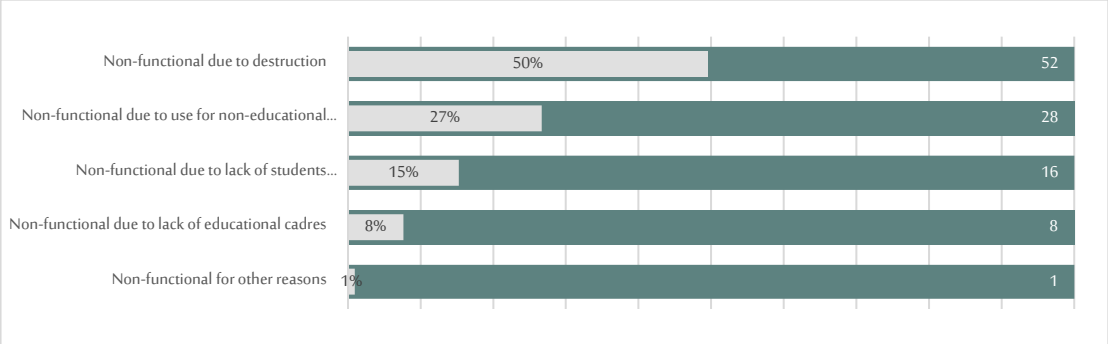


The study demonstrated that 50% (52 schools) of the schools are not functioning due to their destruction, 27% (28 schools) are used for non-educational purposes, 15% (16 schools) are not

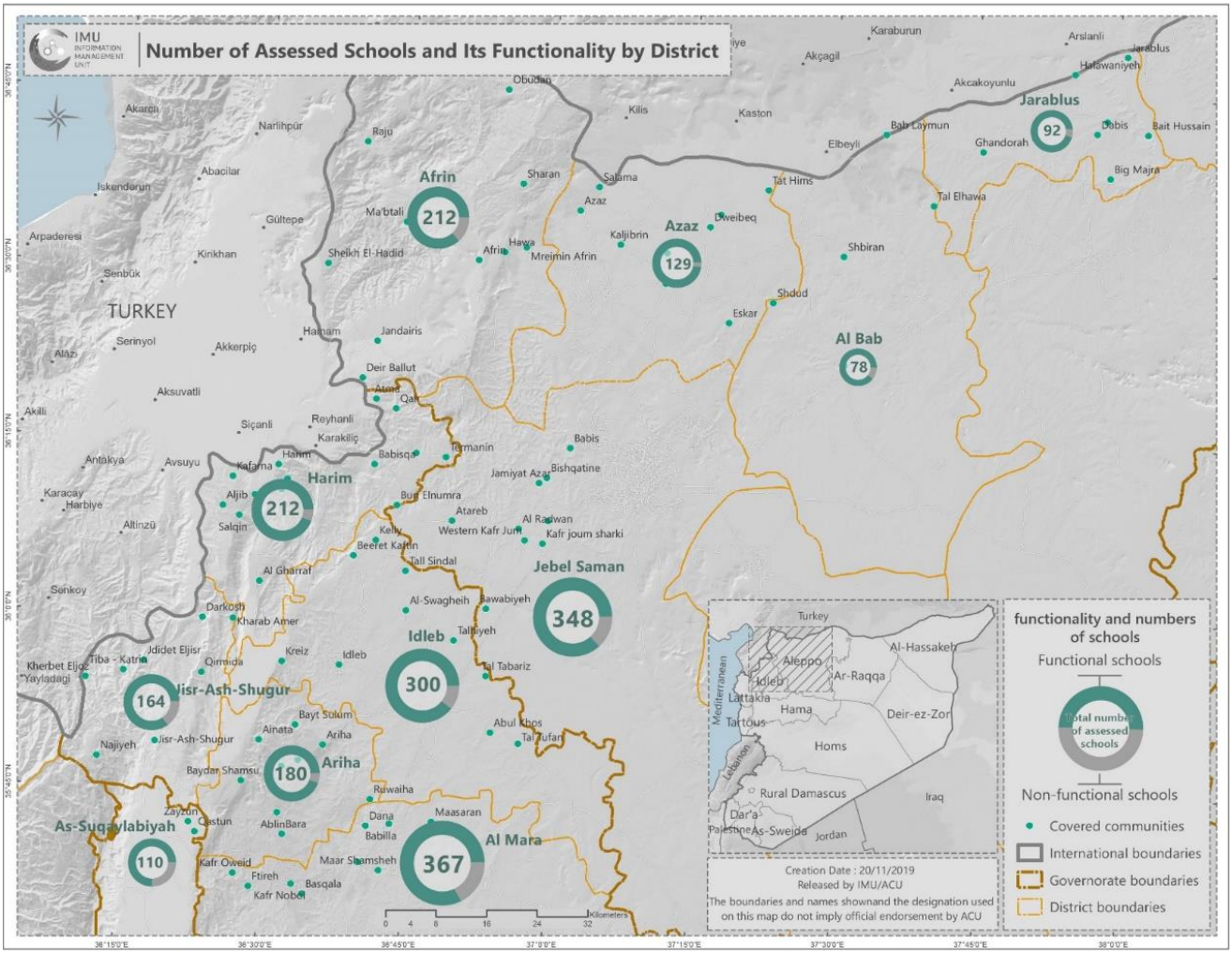
functioning due to the students' repeated displacement (the students are displaced during shelling times then return back when shelling stops), whereas 8% (8 schools) are not functioning due to lack of educational cadres.

In As-Suqaylabiyah district, which is affiliated with Hama governorate and considered as a military hot-zone witnessing daily military actions, the study covered Qastun and New Zayzun towns where 9 schools are found; 1 functional and 8 non-functional schools.

Figure 4 Number/percentages of Schools in the Communities by Causes of Suspensions



Map 3: Number of Schools by District

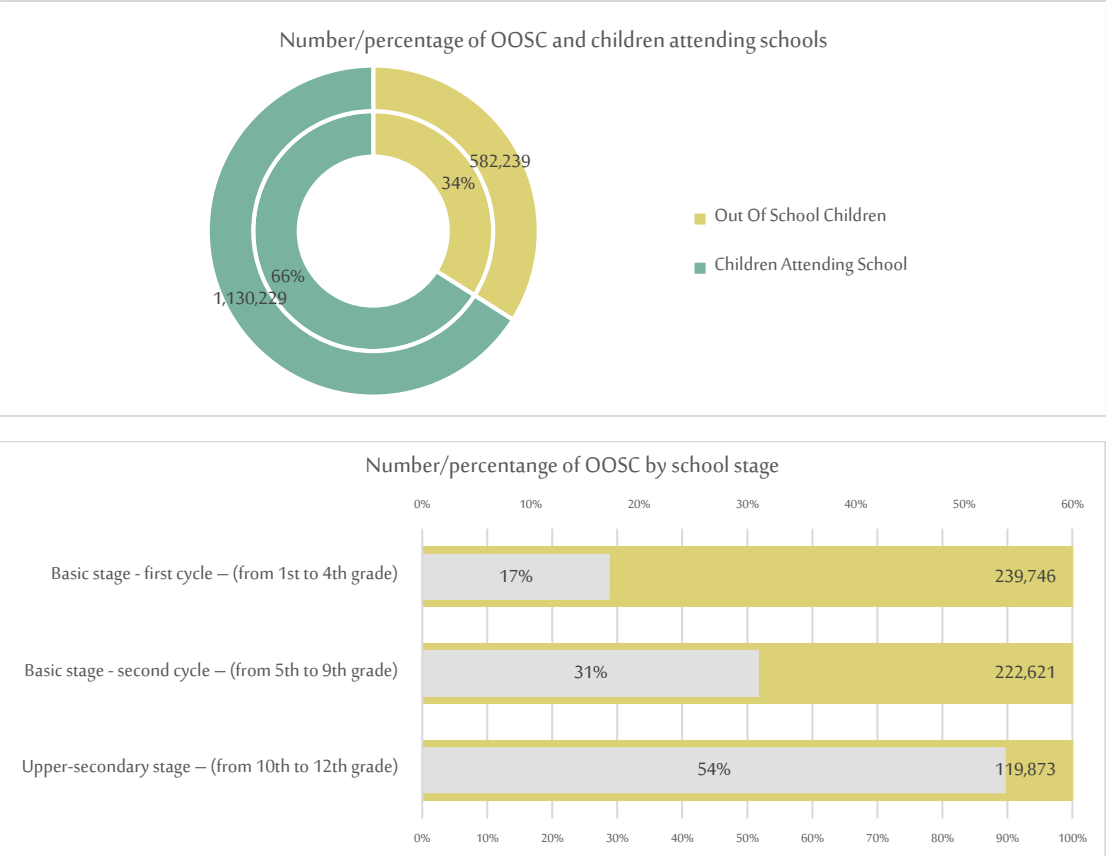


4. Out Of School Children (OOSC)

According to the statistics of the IMU of ACU, the number of children between 6 – 18 years in NW of Syria within the assessed areas reached 1,712,468 children; and according to JENA 66% (1,130,229 children) are attending schools and 34% (582,239 children) are out of school.

According to Manahel report[2] on dropout children, 20% of children are not enrolled in school, or they are out of school.
Children were asked whether they were currently enrolled in school; more than 80% of children reported that they were currently enrolled. It should be mentioned that some children are enrolled in school at the beginning of the school year, but they do not attend.

Figure 5 Approximate Numbers and Percentages of OOSC by School Stage



The number of OOSC in the first cycle (grades 1-4) of basic educational stage within the assessed areas of NW of Syria reached 239,746 children; accounting for 17% of children aged 6 – 10 years.

The number of OOSC in the second cycle (grades 5-9) of basic educational stage within the assessed areas of NW of Syria reached 222,621 children; accounting for 31% of children aged 11 – 15 years.

[2] Chemonics International and School-to-School International conducted a report *"Manahel Out-of-School Children Report"*on Out of School Children within 24 sub-districts out of 26 sub-districts in Idleb governorate, through the Manahel Program.

The number of OOSC in the upper-secondary stage (grades 10-12) within the assessed areas of NW of Syria reached 19,873 children; accounting for 54% of children aged 16 – 18 years.

5. Gender and Age of the Out Of School Children (OOSC)

The study revealed that the rates of OOSC are rising in later schooling stages and always higher among females.

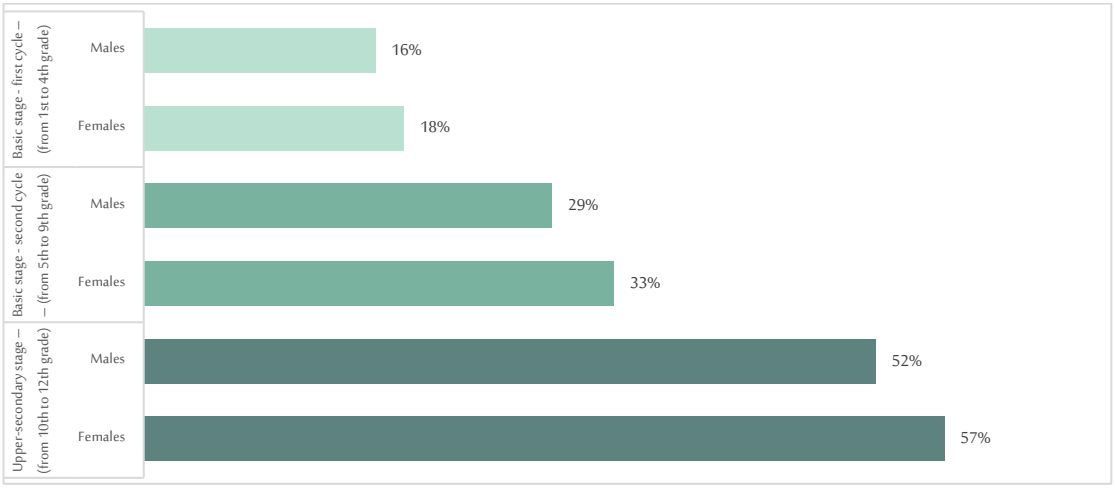
Manahel report[3] confirms that dropout rates increase in higher educational levels. However, it contradicts the information of this study by reflecting higher enrollment ratios for females than males, especially in advanced grades. *Enrolment rates tended to decrease with age, as rates were highest for children of primary-school age (95.63% overall) and lowest for children of secondary-school age (41.03% overall). Enrolment was statistically significantly higher for females than for males overall due to the large gap in enrolment between secondary-school age females (51.71%) and males (33.82%). This finding suggests that boys are particularly at risk of dropping out as they become older.*

According to JENA, male OOSC between 6-10 years of age – representing the basic stage (first cycle: from 1st to 4th grade) - constitute 16% of total male children, whereas female OOSC from the same age group constitute 18%.

Male OOSC between 11-14 years of age – representing the basic stage (second cycle: from 5th to 9th grade) constitute 29% of total male children, whereas female OOSC from the same age group constitute 33%.

Male OOSC between 15-18 years of age – upper-secondary school (from 10th to 12th grade) constitute 52% of total male children, whereas female OOSC from the same age group constitute 57%.

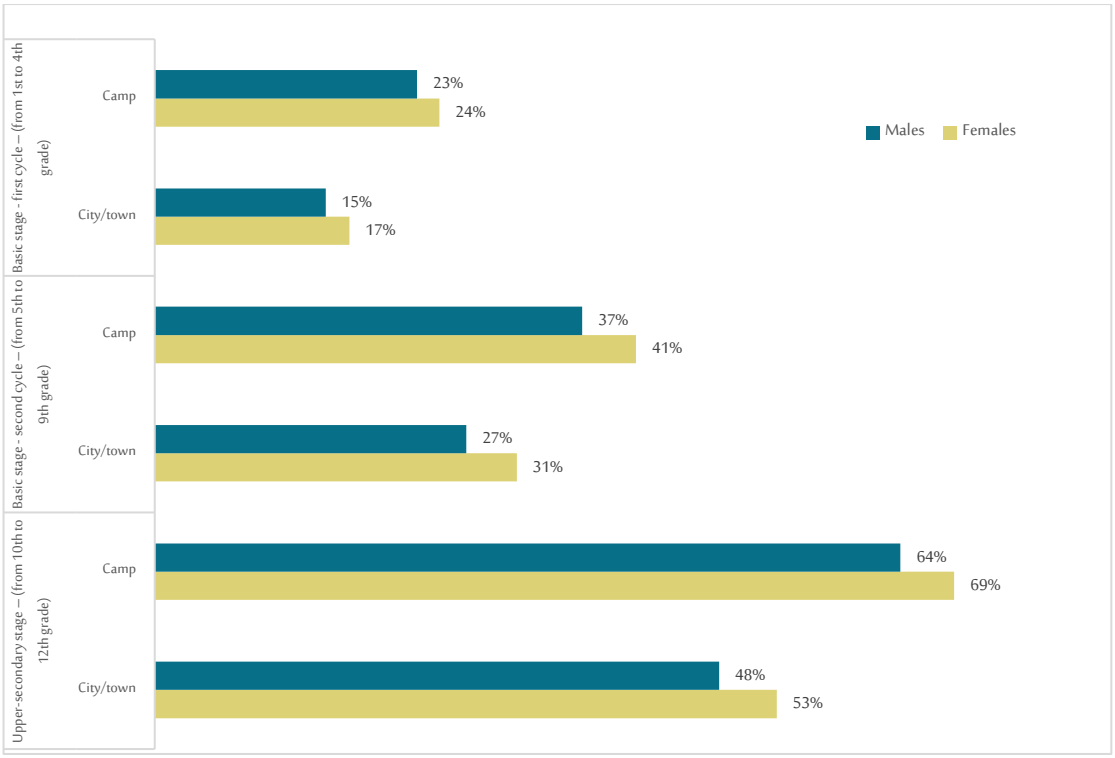
Figure 6 Percentage of OOSC by Gender and Age



The study also revealed that the OOSC rates – from all educational stages and both genders - within the camps are always higher than those within cities and towns.

[3]Chemonics International and School-to-School International conducted a report *"Manahel Out-of-School Children Report"*on Out of School Children within 24 sub-districts out of 26 sub-districts in Idleb governorate, through the Manahel Program.

Figure 7 Percentage of OOSC by Gender, Age and Locations of Residence

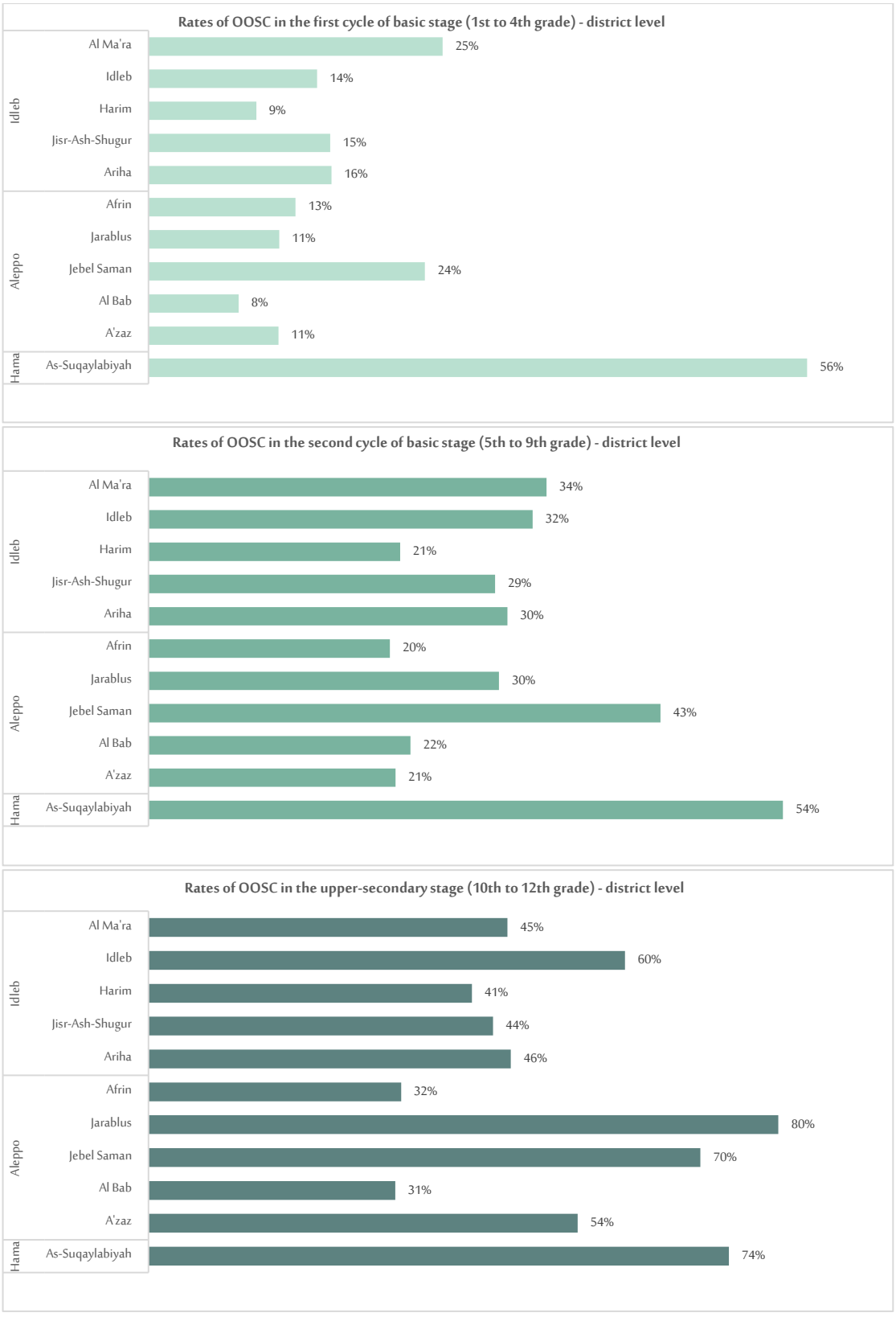


In the northwestern countryside of Hama, the rates of OOSC in all educational stages are high when compared to other governorates. It is reported that As-Suqaylabiyah district witnesses daily military actions, its residents flee to farms at times of shelling and its schools are suspended for long periods.

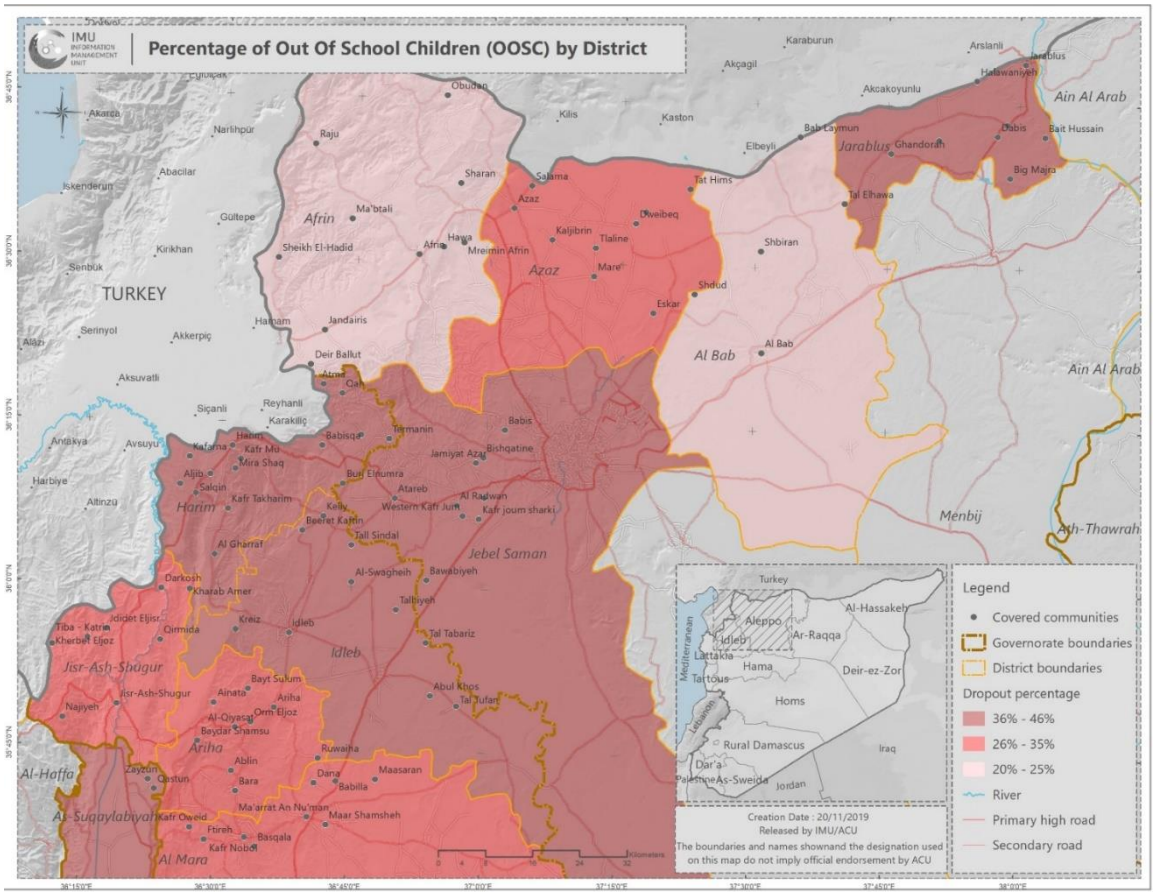
In Idleb governorate, the rates of OOSC are amounting everywhere, except in Harim district when compared to the other districts in Idleb. It is reported that the rates of OOSC decline in Harim district as the bulk of organizations working in the education cluster are more active there, in addition to other reasons such as the mitigating military actions there when compared to other districts in Idleb governorate. Furthermore, the residents in south Idleb and Al Ma'ra district have been repeatedly displaced during the last academic year due to the escalating military actions, and then returned home.

In Aleppo governorate, the highest rates of OOSC are found in Jebel Saman district, commonly termed as “Aleppo western countryside”, which is close to the military escalation zones. Additionally, the rates of OOSC increase in the later schooling stages within Jarablus district.

Figure 8 Percentage of OOSC in Assessed Districts by Educational Stages



Map 4: Percentage of OOSC by District

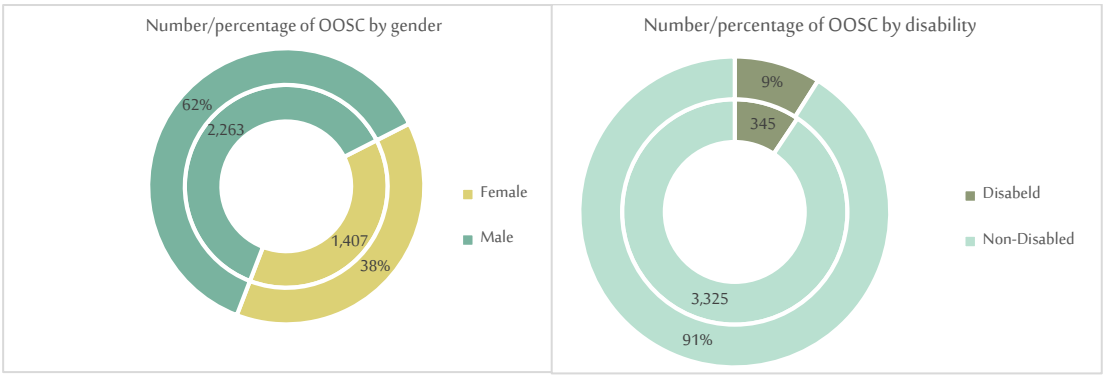


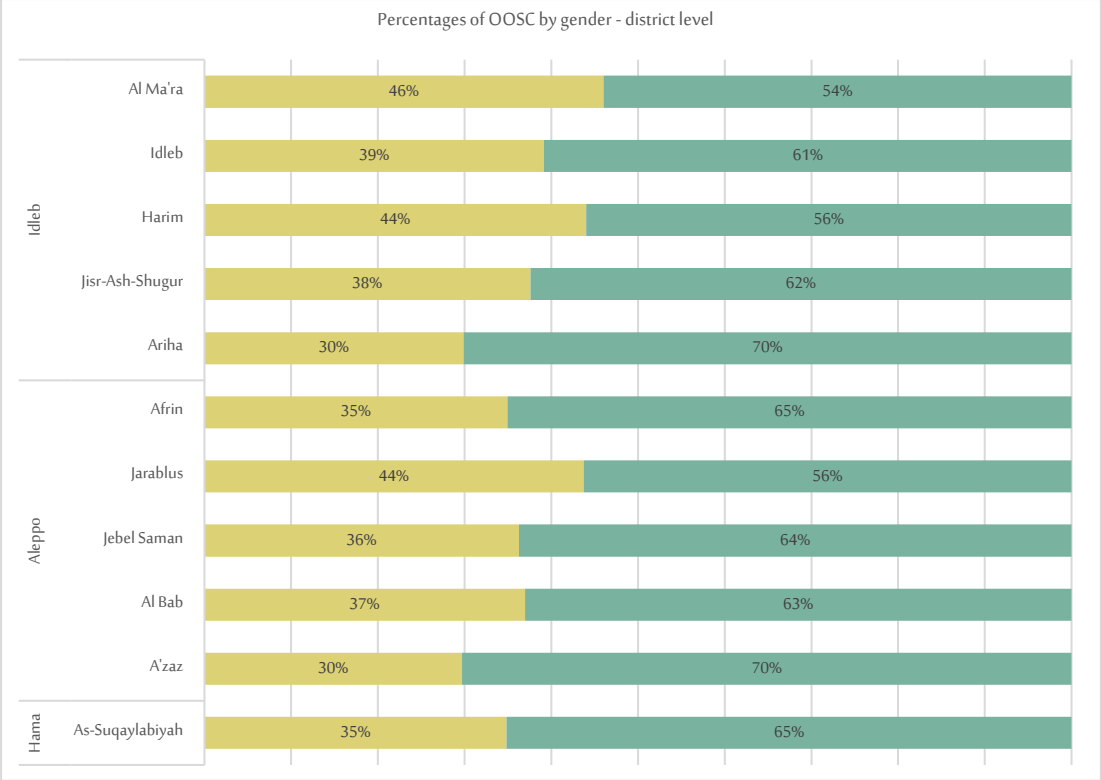
Section Three: Information Derived from Perception Surveys

1. Gender and Disability of OOSC

The enumerators interviewed 3,670 OOSC; of which females form 38% (1,407 children), and males form 62% (2,263 children), whereas children with disabilities constitute 9% (345 children) of OOSC.

Figure 9 Number/Percentage of Interviewed OOSC by Gender and Disability





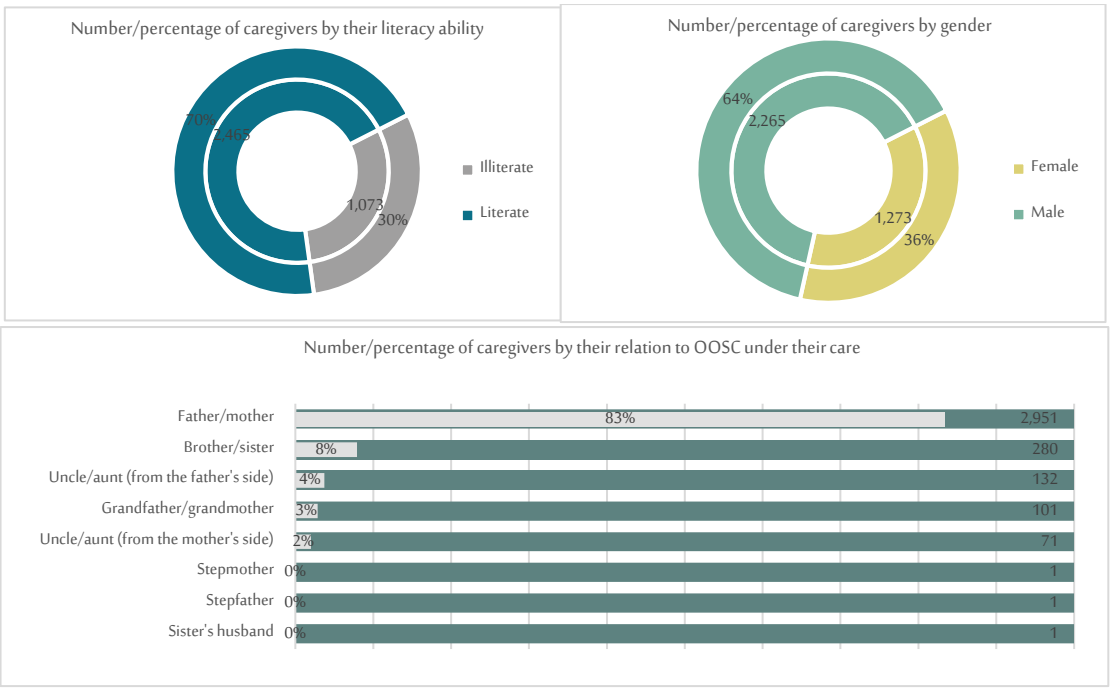
Through the used methodology, 280 interviews were conducted with OOSC in each district, hence the margin of error in selecting the random sample is less than 5.8% (by calculating the size of the sample based on the level of trust and margin of error); the numbers of interviews were allocated as per the population density in the communities (number of interviews is higher among larger populations); the number of interviews with IDPs and host communities was determined according to the percentage of IDPs in each targeted community; further, the enumerators sought to conduct half of the interviews with male OOSC and the other half with female OOSC; however, difficult access to interview female OOSC posed an obstacle for the enumerators, who reported that access to female OOSC from higher age groups (over 15 years of age) gets increasingly difficult.

No data are available on numbers of disabled OOSC in Syria; therefore, it was hard to set a prior plan for numbers of disabled OOSC to be interviewed. Accordingly, the primary plan was to interview disabled children wherever found, and the enumerators asked the KIs wherever visited whether there were any disabled OOSC and interviewed them.

2. Gender and Literacy Ability of Caregivers

The enumerators interviewed 3,538 caregivers with OOSC. Females form 36% (1,273 females) of total caregivers, whereas the rest (64%; 2,265 males) are males. Moreover, the study revealed that only 30% (1,073 persons) of the caregivers are literate. 83% (2,951 persons) of the caregivers are parents of their OOSC, whereas the other caregivers are related to OOSC - under their care - in varying degrees.

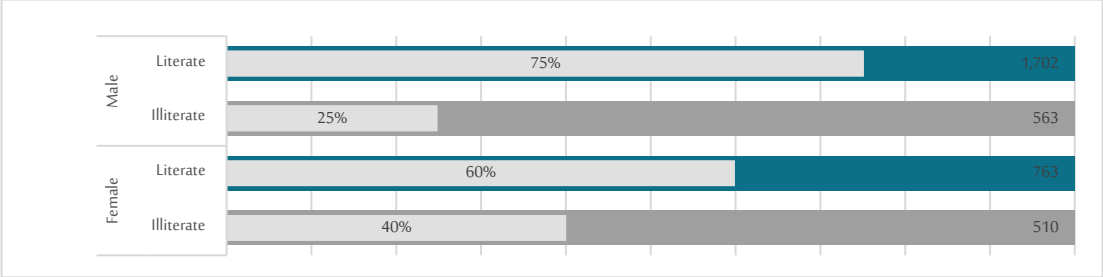
Figure 10 Number/Percentage of Interviewed Caregivers by Gender and Literacy Ability



The data collection plan included interviewing 32 caregivers from each assessed community; 16 males and 16 females. Nevertheless, access to enough female caregivers was difficult and mostly necessitated visiting their houses. The enumerators interviewed the caregivers regardless of their relation to the OOSC under their care. It was demonstrated that 83% (2,951 persons) of the caregivers are parents of the OOSC, 8% (280 persons) of them are siblings of the OOSC, 4% (132 persons) are uncles/aunts - from the father's side - of the OOSC, whereas 3% (101 persons) of them are grandparents of the OOSC.

Those results suggest a link between dropping out of school and separation from parents; however, this link does not strongly impact dropping out of school as the bulk of the caregivers are parents/a parent of OOSC.

Figure 11 Literacy Ability of Caregivers by Gender

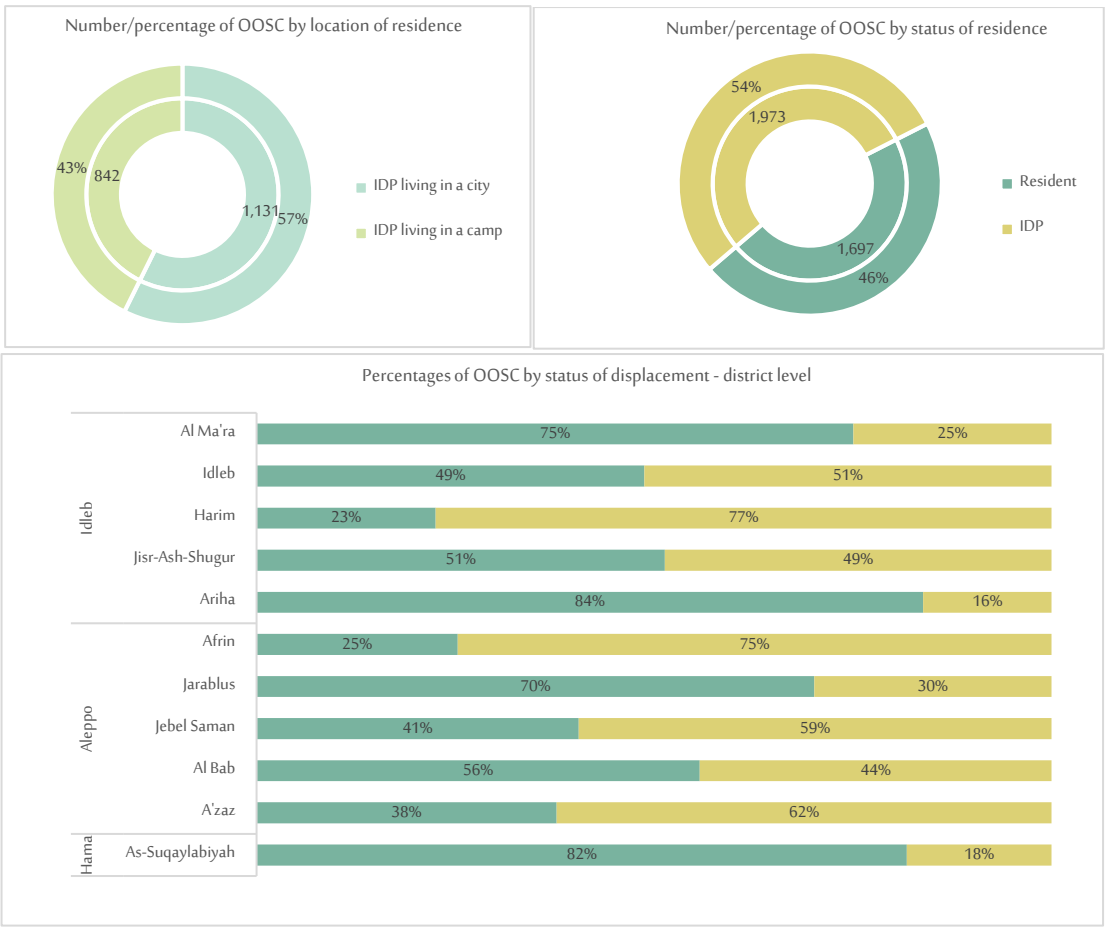


It was illustrated that 75% (1,702 males) of total male caregivers are literate, which exceeds the percentage of literate female caregivers who constitute 60% (763 females) of total female caregivers.

3. Age Groups and Residence Status of OOSC

OOSC in the host community constitute 46% (1,697 children) of total interviewed OOSC, whereas displaced OOSC form 54% (1,973 children). Among the 1,973 displaced OOSC, 43% (842 children) live in camps, whereas the rest (57%; 1,131 children) live in cities and towns.

Figure 12 Number/Percentage of Interviewed OOSC by Status of Residence and Age Group



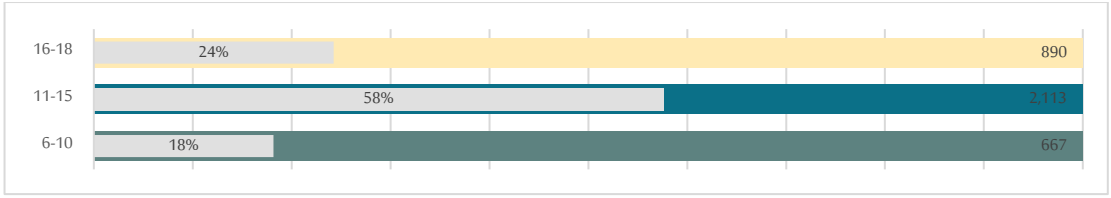
The data collection plan aimed at targeting specific numbers of OOSC among IDPs and residents. The percentage of sampled displaced OOSC is proportionate with that of OOSC in the host community based on the IDPs distribution. The percentage of OOSC exceeded 50% of children in areas containing large numbers of IDPs, such as Harim, Afrin, A'zaz and Jebel Saman, unlike other areas containing more host community members than IDPs. Interviews with IDPs and host community members were set in advance in every community visited by the enumerators.

Children between 6-10 years of age constitute 18% (667 children) of total interviewed OOSC. This age group represents the first cycle of basic stage (from 1st to 4th grade) and the percentage of its dropouts is low when compared to other age groups.

Children between 11-15 years of age constitute 58% (2,113 children) of total interviewed OOSC. This age group represents the second cycle of basic stage (from 5th to 9th grade) and the percentage of its dropouts is high and access and interviews with them was easier when compared to higher age groups.

Children between 16-18 years of age constitute 24% (890 children) of total interviewed OOSC. This age group represents the upper-secondary stage (from 10th to 12th grade) and the percentage of its dropouts is the highest when compared to other groups. Further, access and interviews with children of this group was difficult, hence the low rate of interviews.

Figure 13 Number/Percentage of Interviewed OOSC by Age Group

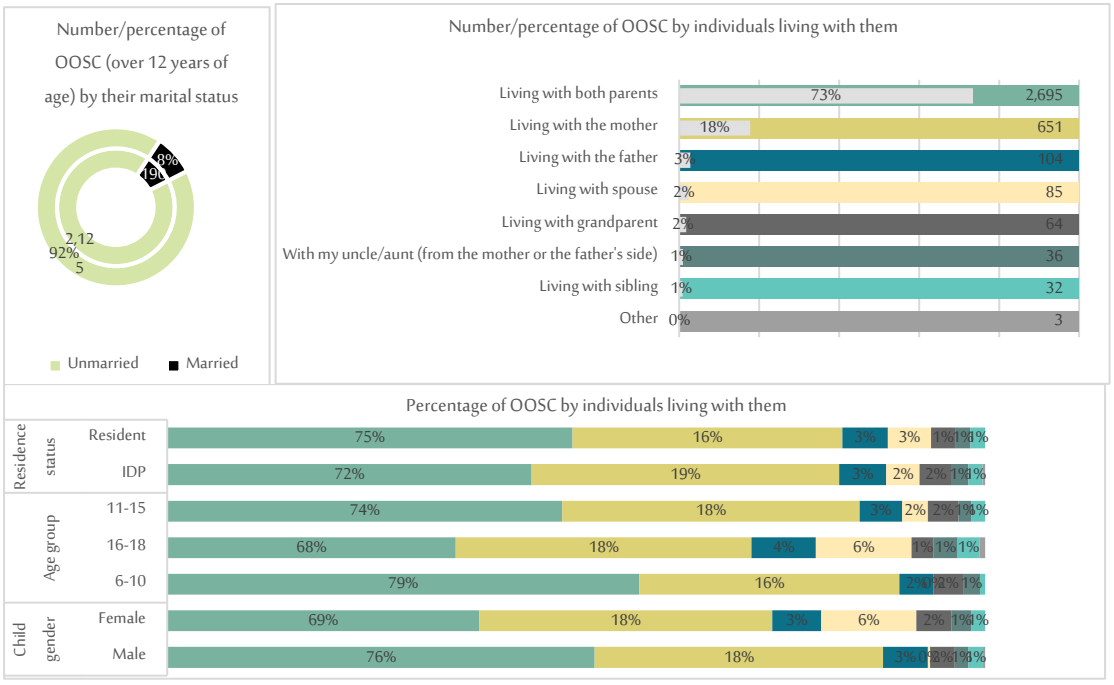


4. Marital Status of OOSC and Individuals Living with them

When asked about their marital status, 8% (190 children) of OOSC over the age of 12 said they are married, whereas 92% (2,125 children) said they are not married

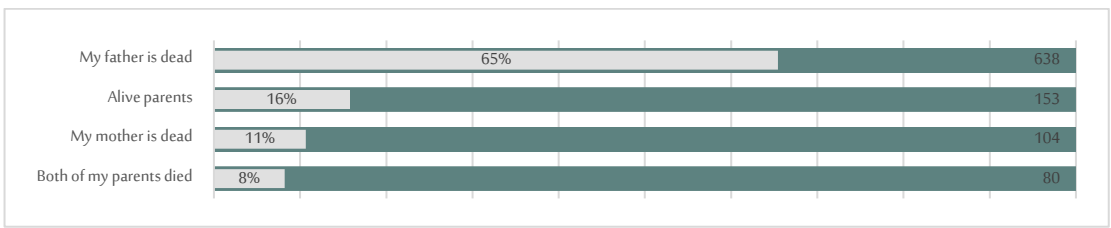
73% (2,695 children) of OOSC live with both parents, 18% (651 children) live with their mothers, 3% (104 children) live with their fathers, whereas 2% (85 children) live with their spouses.

Figure 14 Number/Percentage of OOSC by Marital Status and Individuals Living with them



975 OOSC are separated from both or one of their parents; both parents of 16% (153 children) of those children are alive yet separated from them, whilst 85 OOSC live with their spouses.

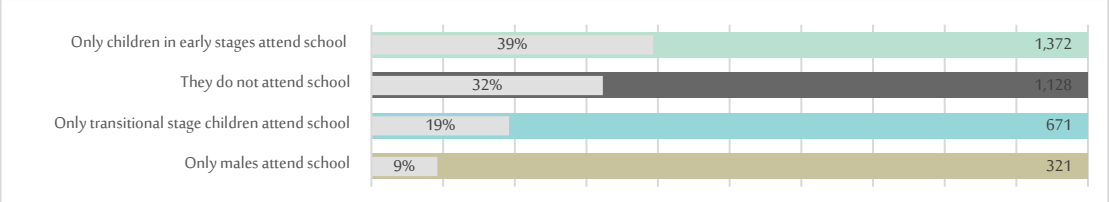
Figure 15 Number/Percentage of OOSC Separated from their Parents by the Status of Parents



5. Educational Stages of OOSC

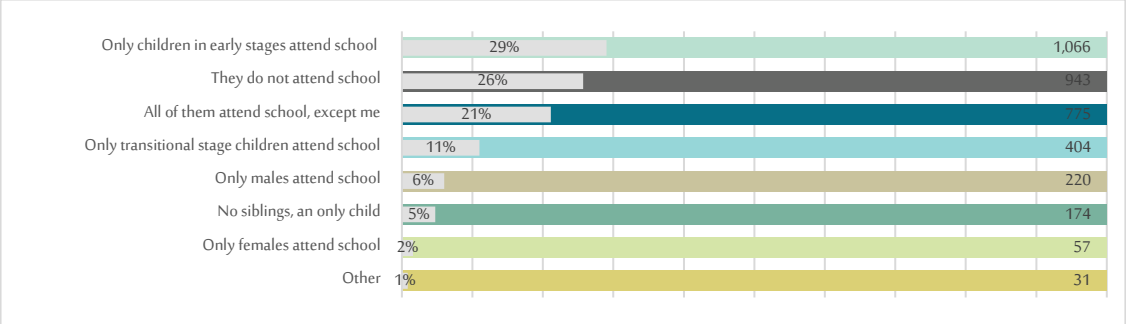
When asked about the schooling grades of which their children dropped out, 39% (1,372 persons) of the caregivers stated that only children in early schooling grades go to school and drop out of later schooling stages, 32% (1,128 persons) of the caregivers said none of their children attends school, 19% (671 persons) of the caregivers stated that only children in transitional grades go to school while children in lower and upper-secondary stages (9th and 12th grades) do not go to school.

Figure 16 Number/Percentage of Caregivers by the Educational Stages of their OOSC



Through the questionnaires, the enumerators asked the OOSC about the schooling stages of which their siblings dropped out. 29% (1,372 children) of the OOSC reported that only siblings in early schooling stages attend school, whereas those in later schooling stages drop out. 26% (943 children) stated that none of their siblings attends school. 21% (775 children) said that all their siblings attend school except themselves. Finally, 11% (404 children) reported that only siblings in transitional stages attend school.

Figure 17 Number/Percentage of OOSC by Category of Siblings who do not Attend School



6. Child Labor and its Types

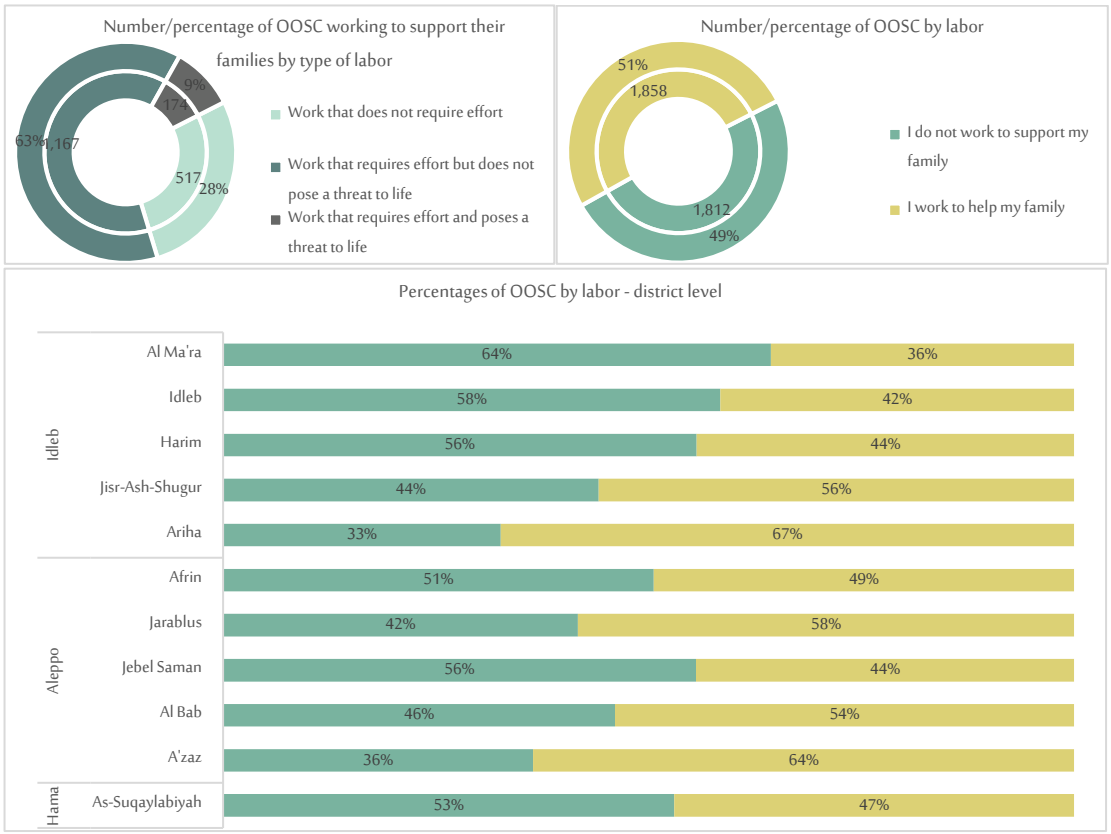
When asked whether they work to support their families or not, 51% (1,858 children) of the interviewed OOSC stated that they work to support their families. According to the Manahel report[4] on dropout children *"Approximately 38% of out-of-school children overall were engaged in some form of paid work"*

The work of 9% (174 children) of them requires physical effort and poses a threat to their lives, the work of 63% (1,167 children) of them requires physical effort but does not pose a threat to

[4] Chemonics International and School-to-School International conducted a report *"Manahel Out-of-School Children Report"*on Out of School Children within 24 sub-districts out of 26 sub-districts in Idleb governorate, through the Manahel Program.

their lives, whereas the work of 28% (517 children) of them neither requires physical effort nor poses a threat to their lives.

Figure 18 Number/Percentage of Interviewed OOSC by Labor

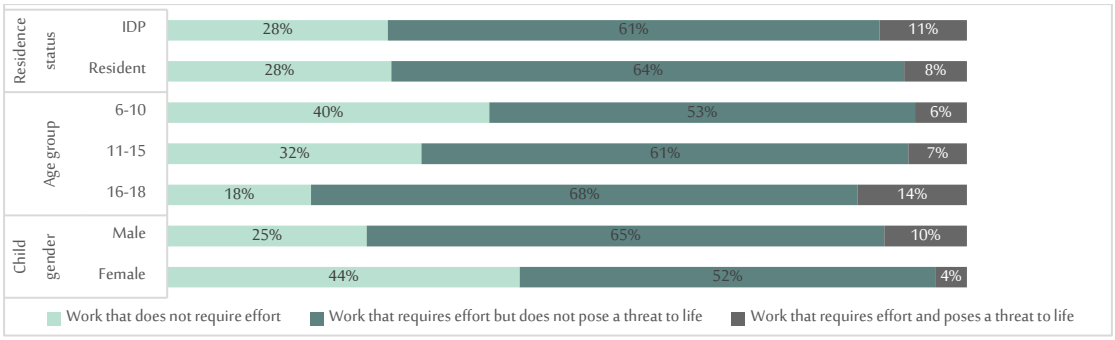


The study demonstrated that the percentage of displaced OOSC whose work requires a physical effort and poses a threat to their lives constitutes 11% (101 children), which is higher than it is in the host community, where they form 8% (73 children) of OOSC.

Even though the percentage of OOSC from higher age groups and whose work requires a physical effort and poses a threat to their lives exceeds their percentage among younger ones, the study showed that there are children between 6-10 years of age whose work requires a physical effort and poses a threat to their lives, constituting 6% (9 children) of total OOSC within the same age group.

The percentage of male OOSC whose work requires a physical effort and poses a threat to their lives was higher than females'; nevertheless, the study demonstrated that the work of 4% (11 female children) of total interviewed female OOSC requires a physical effort and poses a threat to their lives.

Figure 19 Rates of Interviewed OOSC Working to Support their Families by Type of Labor

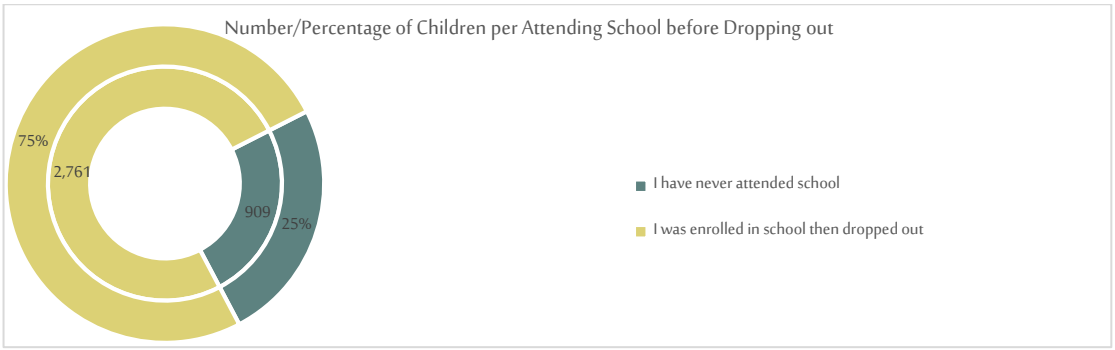


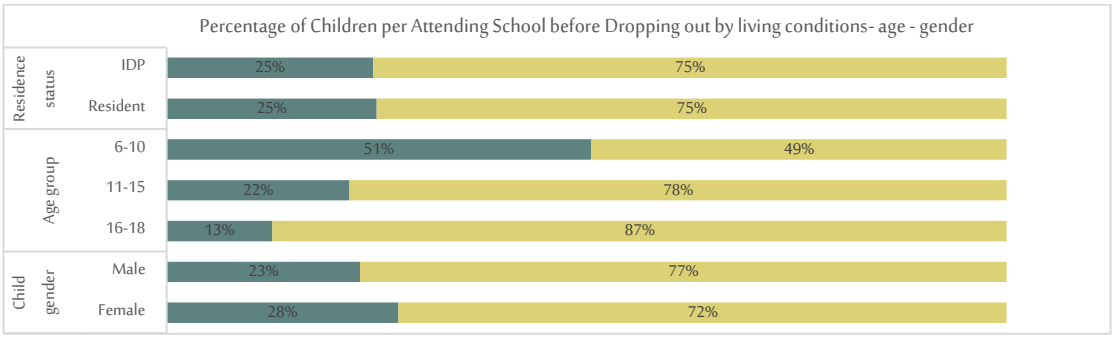
Section Four: Children who Attended and Dropped out of School

1. Children Attending School before Dropping out

Through the surveys the enumerators conducted with the OOSC, theey were asked if they had attended school and dropped out later, or if they had never attended school before. In this regard, 25% (909 children) of the OOSC said that they attended school and then dropped out, whereas 75% (2,761 children) of the children stated that they never attended school before.

Figure 20 Number/Percentage of Interviewed Children per Attending School before Dropping out





According to the report on Monitoring Education Participation[5] issued by UNICEF

A child or youth is considered to be a dropout if he or she is in the age of compulsory education between age (6-15 years old)
1. Was enrolled in school at some time in the past.
2. Did not attend school at all between the start of the current school year and
date for school reporting of enrolment/dropout and has no excusable reason for this absence.
3. Does not meet any of the exclusionary conditions.

[5] http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/monitoring-education-participation.pdf

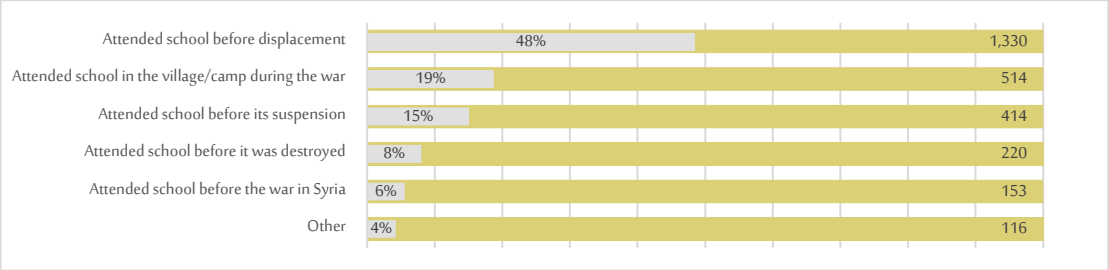
It should be mentioned that this assessment adopted the previous definition, but it targeted children between 6-18 years old.

The study found that the proportion of children within the first age group (ages are compatible with the first cycle of basic education) who never attended school was higher than in other age groups; the percentage of children whose ages are compatible with the first cycle of basic education (6-10 years) who never attended school reached 51% (337 children) of all the interviewed OOSC. The high percentage of children never attending school in the early stages of schooling indicates a possible increase in school dropout rates in the coming years; in that children usually go to school and drop out due to several factors. However, the fact that children do not attend school indicates that children, or their parents, are not willing to learn.

2. The Period and Level of School in which Children Dropped out of School

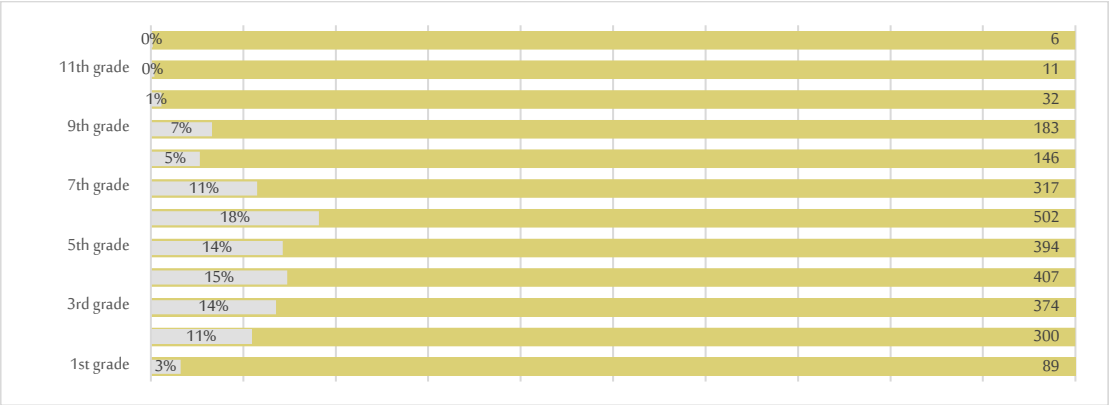
The percentage of children who attended school and then dropped out reached 75% (2,761 children) of all OOSC; the enumerators asked them about the period for which they attended school before dropping out; the majority of OOSC, accounting for 48% (1,330 children) of all children, reported that they attended school before displacement; whereas 19% (514 children) attended school during the war before dropping out; 15% (414 children) attended school before schools stopped operating; schools may have returned to operate again, but this group of children did not attend school due to other reasons.

Figure 21 Number/Percentage of Children according to the Period for which they Attended school before Dropping out



The enumerators asked the children who attended school and dropped out later about the educational level in which they dropped out; according to the answers of the OOSC, it is found that %43 (1,170 children) dropped out in the first cycle of basic education (grades 1-4); while 55% (1,542 children) dropped out in the second cycle of basic education (grades 5-9); it is worth mentioning that the majority of students dropped out of school in the sixth grade; in the old education system, which is still followed in the majority of schools in areas outside the control of the Syrian regime, this grade is considered to be the end of the primary school level. Additionally, only 2% (49 children) of children dropped out in the secondary level (grades 10-12).

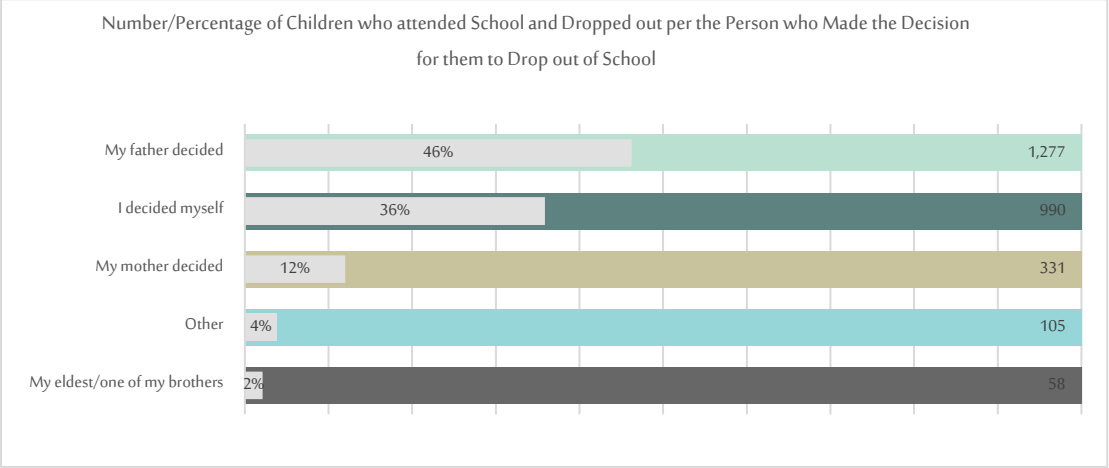
Figure 22 Number/Percentage of Children who Attended School and Dropped out per the school level in which they dropped out

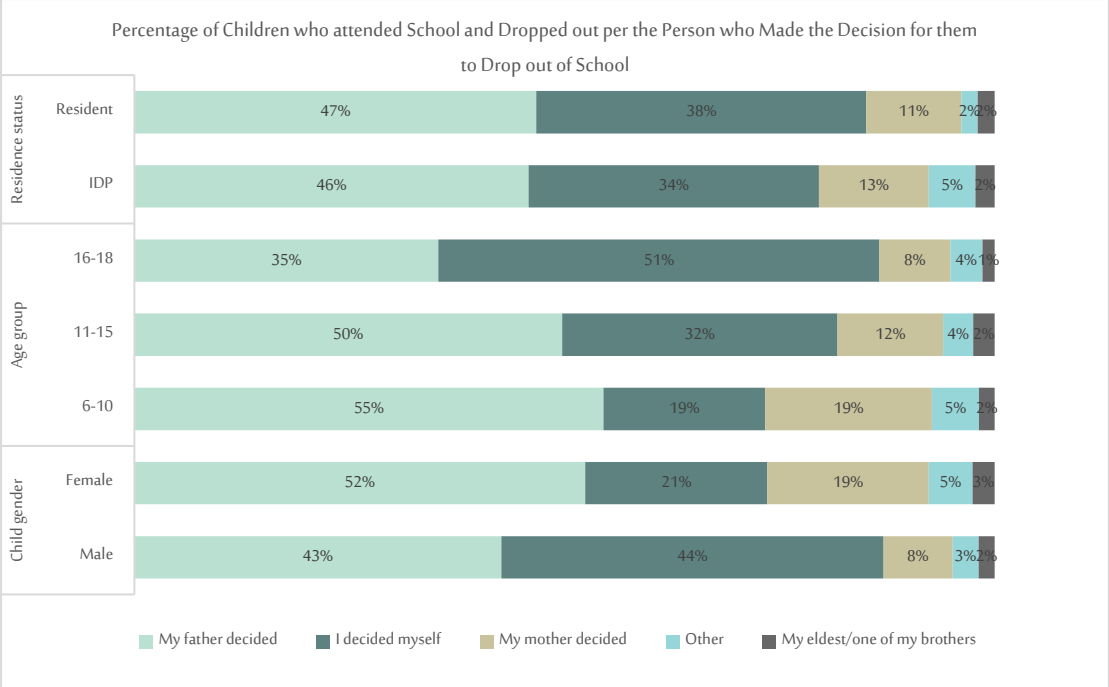


3. Persons who Made the Decision for Children to Drop out of School

The enumerators asked the children who attended and dropped out of school about the people who made the decision for them to drop out of school; accordingly, 46% (1,277 children) reported that their fathers made the decision to drop out of school; whereas 36% (990 children) made the decision themselves; 2% (58 children) reported that one of their siblings (often elder brother) decided for them to drop out of school. In contrast, 105 students reported that no one made the decision for them to drop out of school, but the consequences of the war forced them to leave school.

Figure 23 Persons who made the Decision for Children to Drop out after Attending School

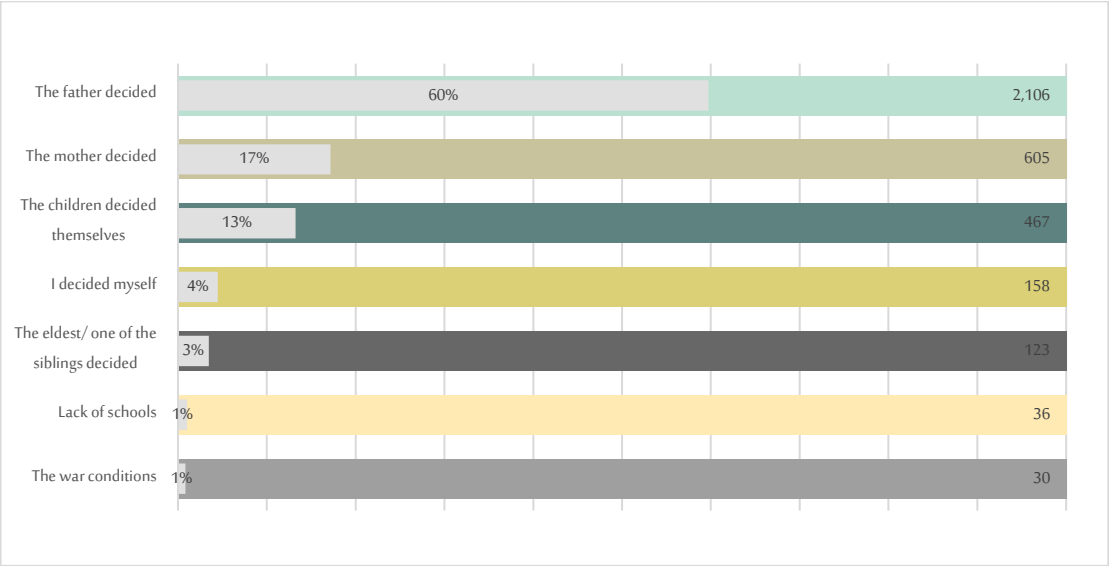




The results of the study show that the proportion of children who make the decision to drop out of school themselves increases with age, where the percentage of children within the first cycle of basic education (age 6-10 years) who made the decision to drop out of school themselves formed 19% (62 children) of the total children of the same age group, 32% (529 children) in the second cycle of basic education level (age 11-15 years), and 51% (399 children) in the secondary level.

The results of the study show that parents made the decision for their female children to drop out of school more than they did for their male children; in this context, 52% (534 girls) of female children reported that their fathers made the decision for them to drop out of school; 19% (191 girls) reported that their mothers made the decision for them to drop out of school; 5%(26 girls) of female children reported that one of their siblings (often elder brother) made the decision for them to drop out of school.

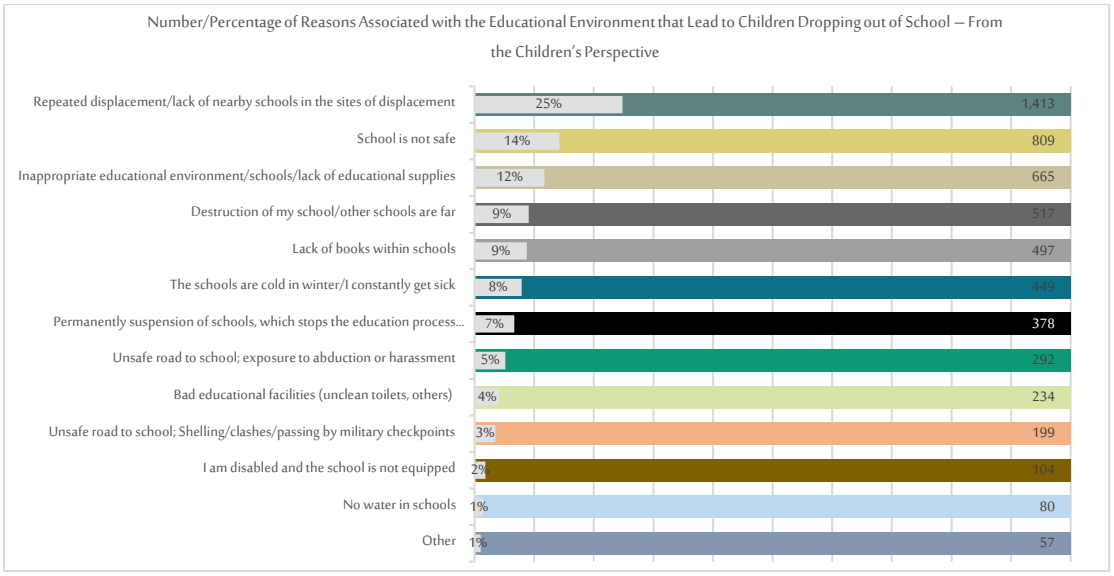
Figure 24 Number/Percentage of Caregivers whose Children Attended and Dropped out of School per the Person who Made the Decision for them to Drop out

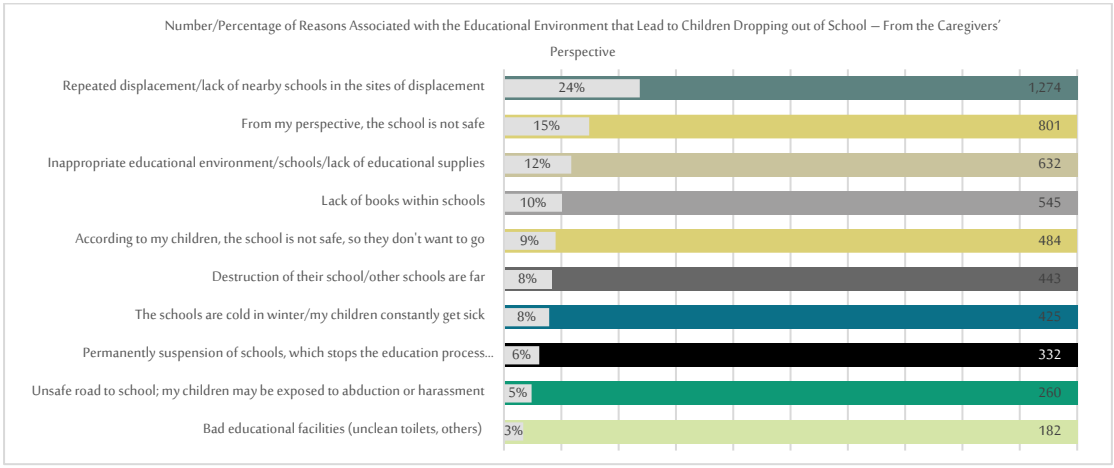


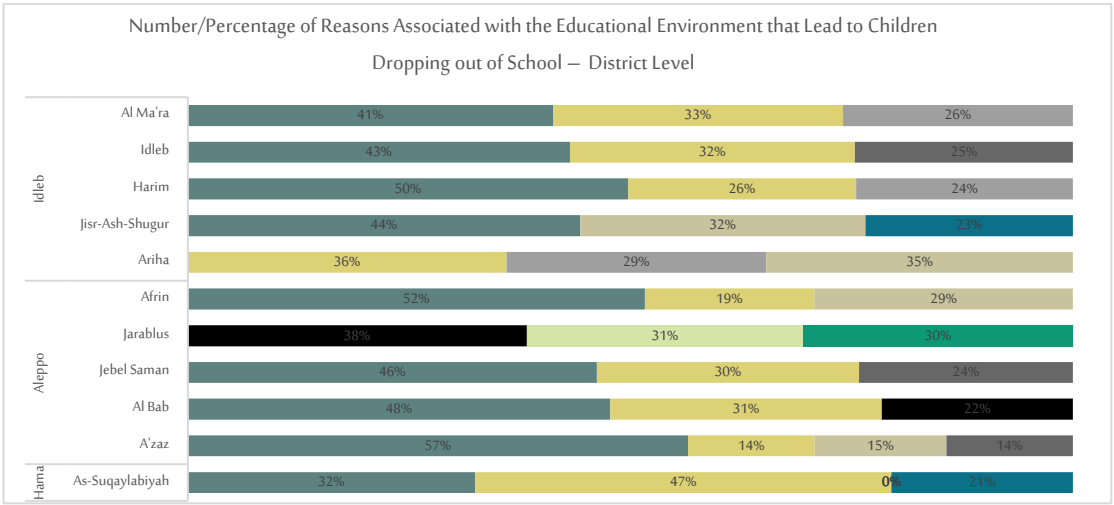
4. Reasons Associated with the Learning Environment that Lead to Children Dropping out of School

Throughout the surveys the enumerators conducted with both the children who attended and dropped out of school, and their caregivers, the enumerators asked them about the reasons associated with the educational environment that led to having the children dropping out of school; the first reason behind children dropping out of school is found to be the frequent displacement and the lack of having nearby schools in the places of displacement, where 25% (1,413 children) of the children reported that the main reason for dropping out of school is the frequent displacement, the thing which is confirmed by 24% (1,274 persons) of the OOSC's caregivers; Moreover, 14% (809 children) of students drop out because schools are not safe, which is also confirmed by 14% (801 persons) of the caregivers; 12% (665 children) dropped out because the educational environment or schools are not suitable, in addition to the lack of educational supplies within schools, as confirmed by 12% (632 persons) of caregivers; 9% (517 children) dropped out of school due to the destruction of their schools and the lack of having schools nearby, the thing which is confirmed by 8% (443 persons) of caregivers, and 9% (497 children) dropped out due to the lack of textbooks within schools, as confirmed by 10% (545 persons) of caregivers.

Figure 25 Reasons Associated with the Educational Environment that Lead to Children Dropping out of School





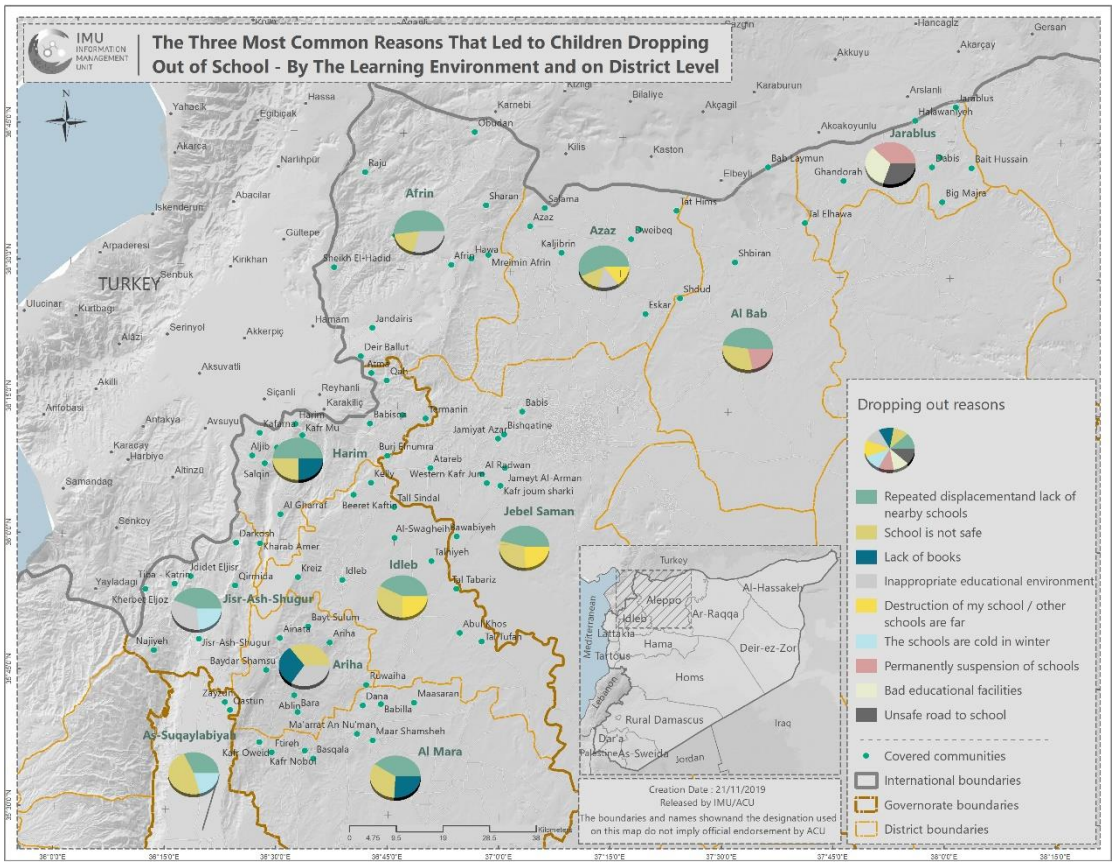


Through FGDs[6] conducted in the assessed communities, participants stressed that the proliferation of armed factions and weapons contributes to increasing child dropout rates.

[6] For the JENA assessment, four FGDs were conducted within the cities of Afrin, A'zaz and Atareb in Aleppo governorate and within Idleb City.

"One of the most common reasons that lead to children dropping out of school are the security reasons, especially after the deployment of military headquarters in the city; the proliferation of armed elements, the apparent weapon in society, and the military checkpoints deployed in neighborhoods; the phenomenon of indiscriminate shooting on all occasions such as weddings and funeral; in addition to the clashes which take place between armed factions permanently. All these reasons prevent some parents from sending their children to school, especially after the spread of several cases of abductions for children on their way to school".

Map 5: The Three Most Common Reasons That Led to Children Dropping out of School by the Educational Environment

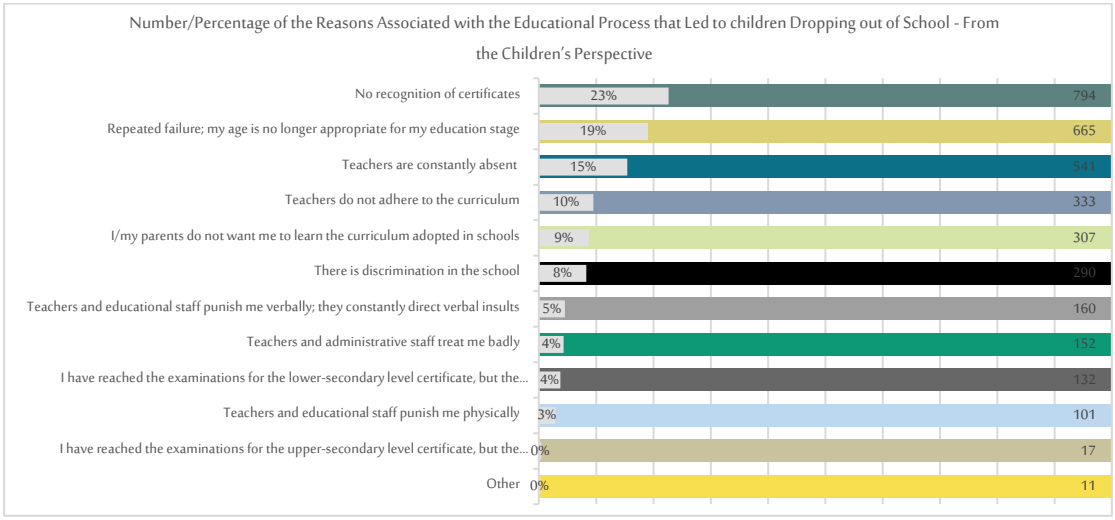


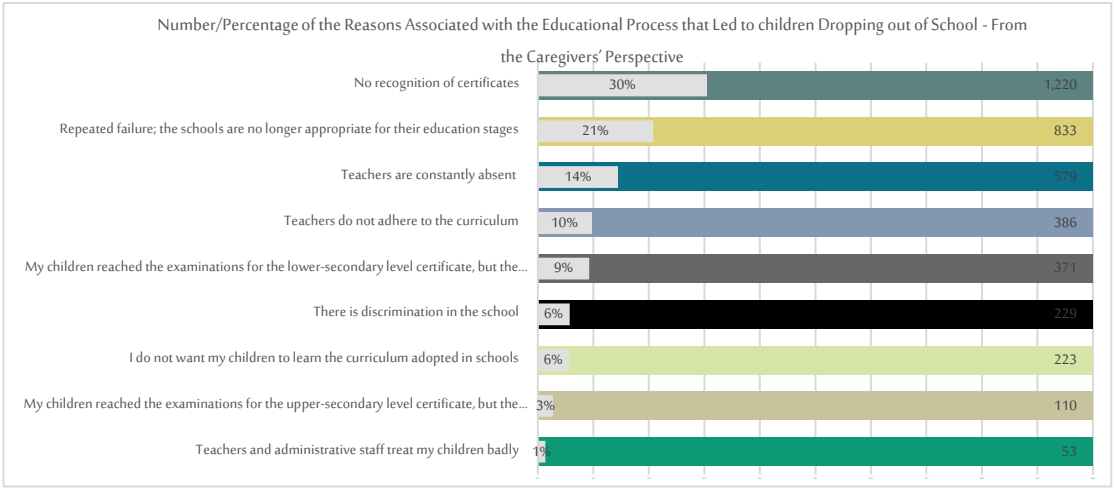
5. Reasons Associated with the Educational Process that Lead to Children Dropping out of School

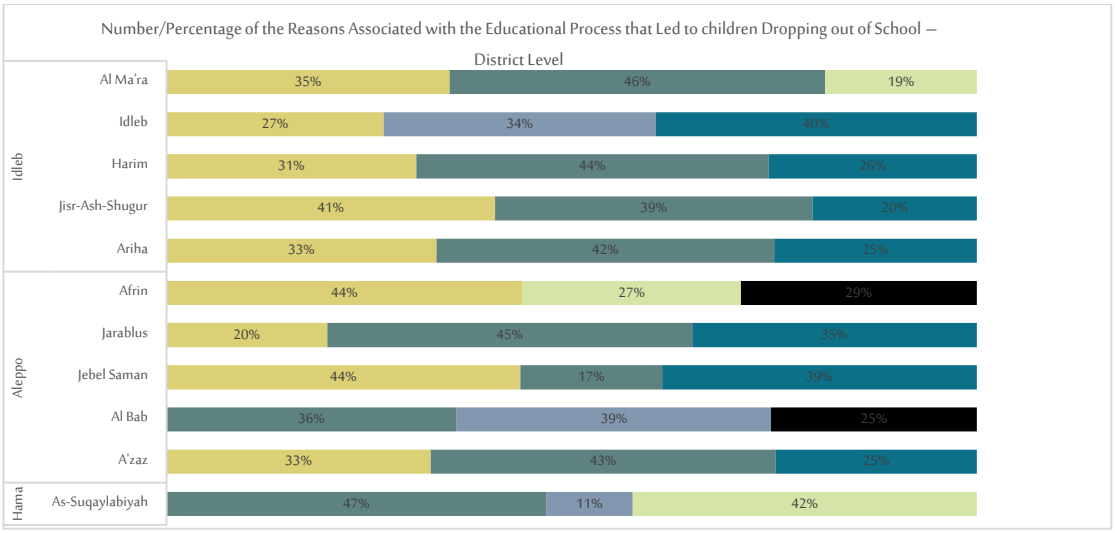
Through the surveys, the enumerators conducted with children who attended and dropped out of school, and their caregivers; the enumerators asked them about the reasons associated with the educational process that led children to drop out of school; the educational process here means the ways the teaching staff deal with students, examinations, certificates, curricula, commitment to school attendance, and annual plan for the curricula, in addition to other reasons that could be raised by OOSC along with their caregivers; on top of the reasons associated with the educational process which led children to drop out of school, comes the non-recognized school certificates provided by the schools, where 23%(794 children) reported that the main reason for dropping out of school is the lack of recognized certificates that enable them to further continue higher levels of education after finishing school, the thing which is confirmed by 30% (1,220 persons) of the caregivers of OOSC. 19% (665 children)

stated that they dropped out of school because of their repeated failures where their ages are no longer compatible with their school levels, which is confirmed by 21% (833 persons) of the caregivers. 15% (541 children) reported that they dropped out of school due to their teacher's frequent absence, which is also confirmed by 14% of the caregivers (579 persons) of caregivers. 10% (333 children) reported that they dropped out of school because their teachers do not adhere to the school curriculum or annual plan, as confirmed by 10% (386 persons) of the caregivers. 9% (307 children) of the children said that they dropped out of school because either they, or their parents did not prefer studying the curricula used, which is confirmed by 6% (223 persons) of the caregivers. 8% (290 children) stated that they dropped out of school due to discrimination between them and other students, as confirmed by 6% (229 persons) of the caregivers.

Figure 26 Reasons Associated with the Educational Process that Led to children Dropping out of School



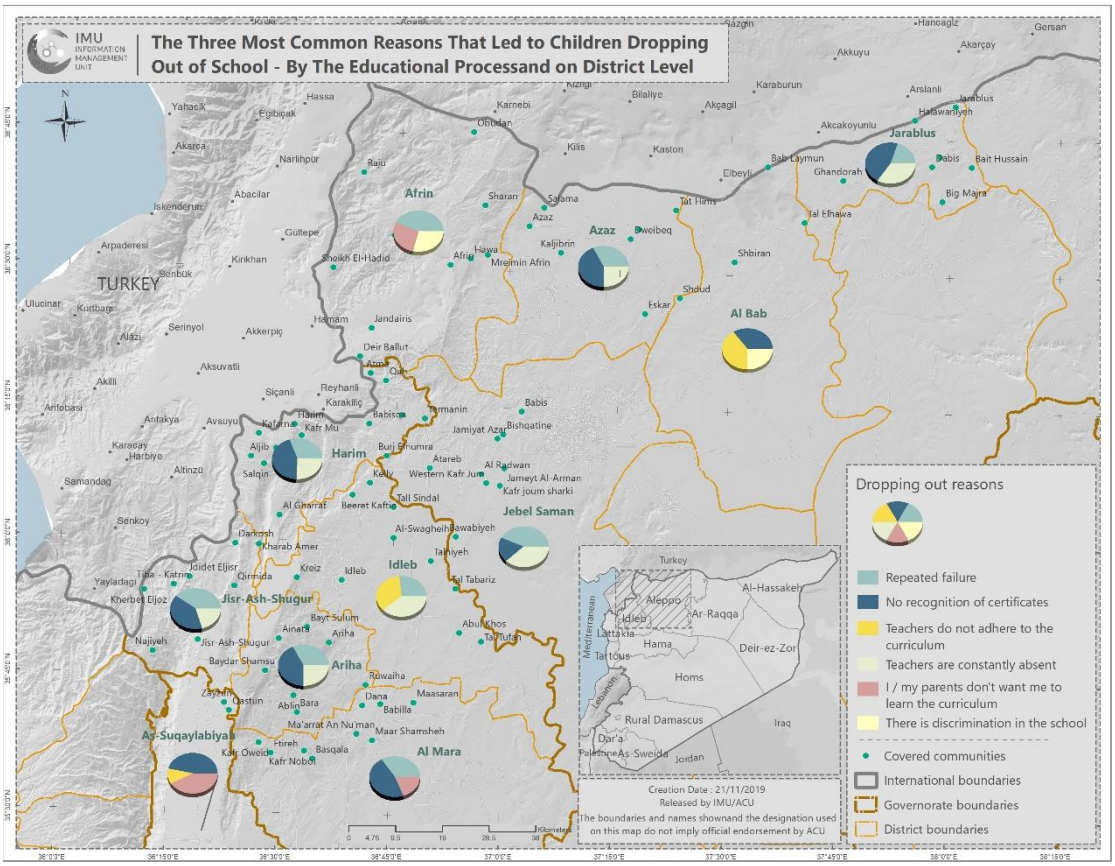




Through FGDs[7] conducted in the assessed communities, participants emphasized a range of reasons related to the educational process contributing to increasing the school dropout rates. *"The lack of motivating methods for teachers like using illustrative methods during class contributes to increasing child dropout rates. Furthermore, the length of the school year is one of the reasons for dropout; the school days extend for four seasons, where the winter is considered the roughest season for what it carries of cold, disease and cut off roads. Additionally, the use of intimidation methods of students by teachers during the class, and the complex procedures that the school take to enroll students, especially IDPs students, contribute significantly to increasing student dropout rates."*

[7] For the JENA assessment, four FGDs were conducted within the cities of Afrin, A'zaz and Atareb in Aleppo governorate and within Idleb City.

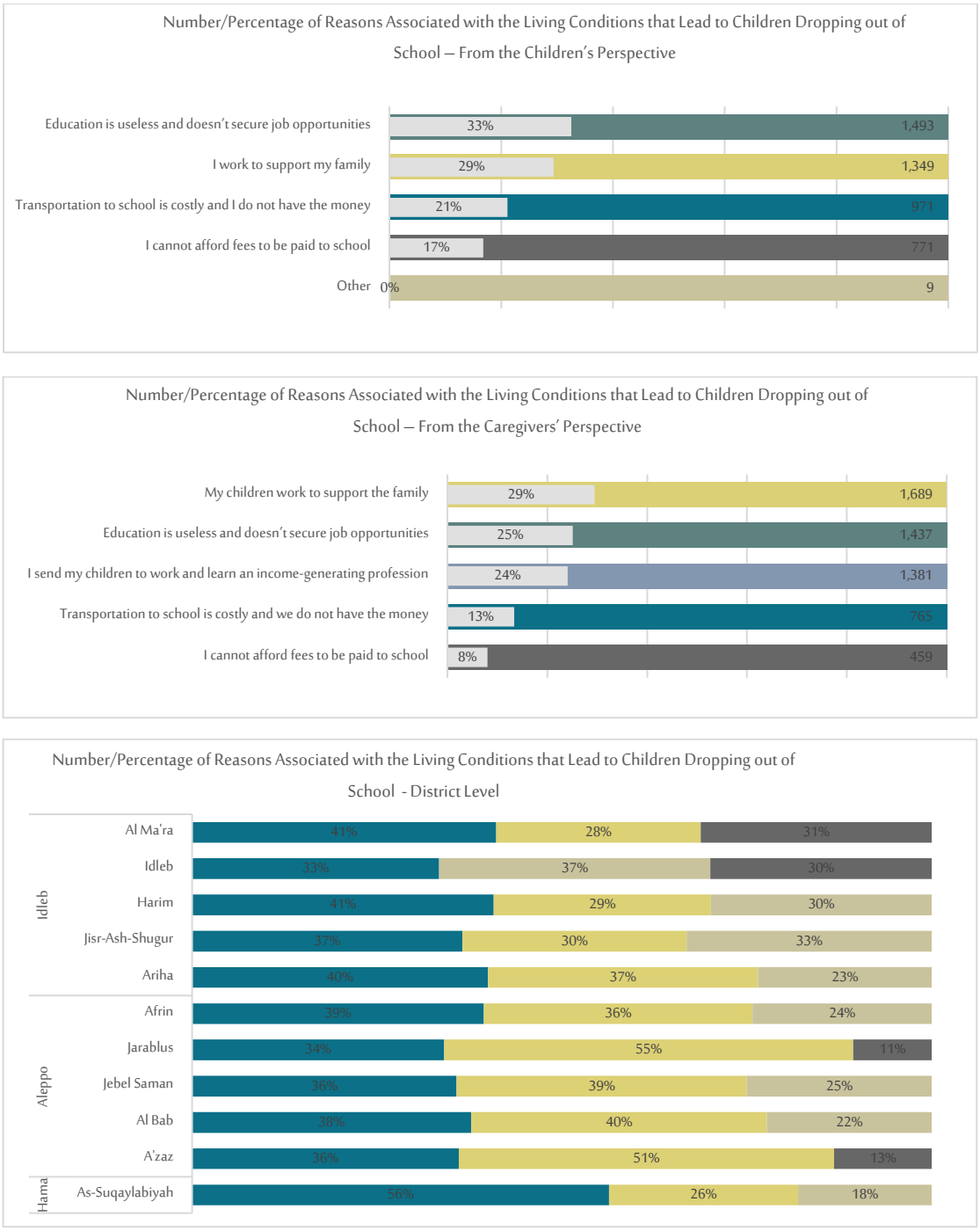
Map 6: The Three Most Common Reasons that Led to Children Dropping out of School by the Educational Process



6. Reasons Associated with the Living Conditions that Lead to Children Dropping out of School

Through the surveys the enumerators conducted with the children who attended and dropped out of school and their caregivers, the enumerators asked them about the reasons related to the living conditions and income level of the children and their parents which forced children to drop out of school. On top of the list of the reasons comes the uselessness of education and that it does not secure job opportunities. As for the caregivers of OOSC, the first reason was that children work to provide for their families, in that 33% (1,493 children) of the children said that the main reason linked with the living conditions and income level leading them to drop out of school, is that education has become useless and doesn't secure job opportunities, as confirmed by 25% (1,437 persons) of the caregivers of OOSC. 29% (1,349 children) said that they dropped out of school to work to support their families, the thing which is confirmed by 29% (1,689 persons) of caregivers. Moreover, it is reported that 21% (971 children) dropped out of school because transportation to school is expensive and they cannot afford it, which is confirmed by 13% (765 persons) of caregivers. Similarly, 17% (771 children) reported that they dropped out of school because of the financial fees required to be paid for the school where students cannot afford these fees, as confirmed by 8% (459 persons) of the caregivers. It is noted that 24% (1,381 persons) of caregivers reported that their children dropped out of school because their caregivers sent them to places where they can learn any occupation that makes money instead of studying. That's what I

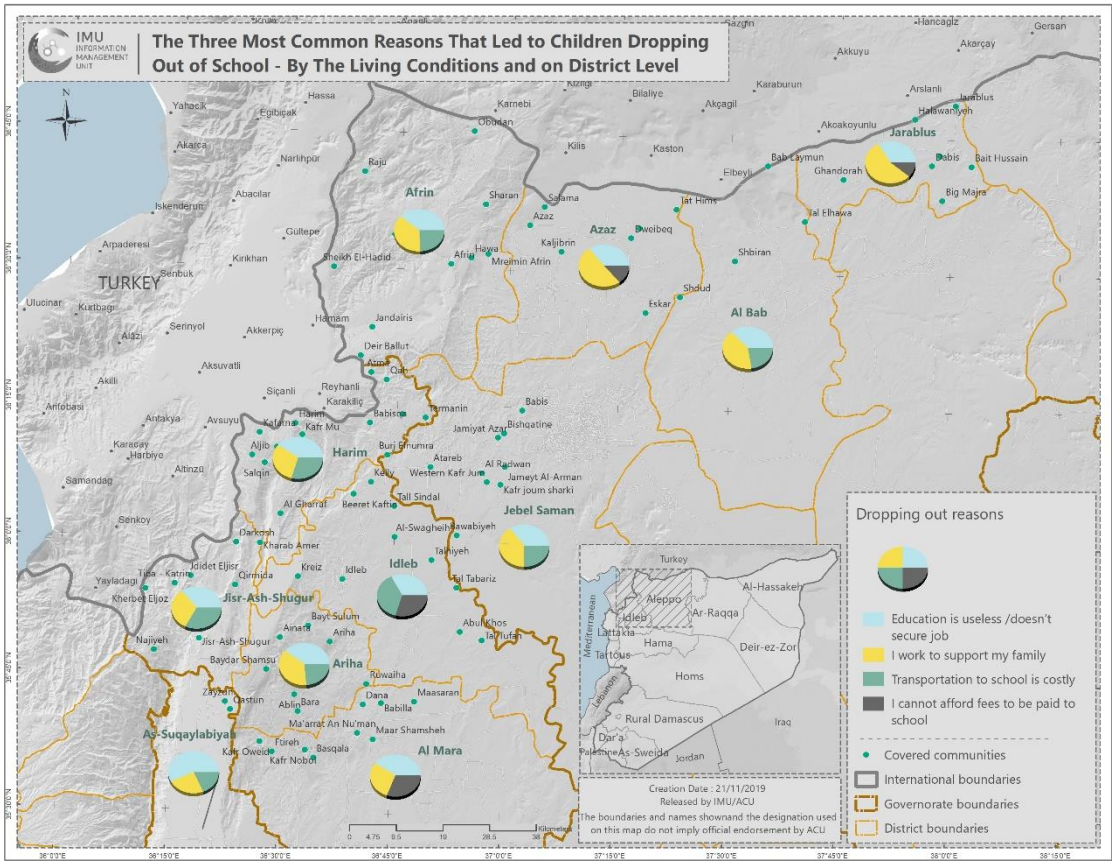
Figure 27 Reasons Associated with the Living Conditions that Lead to Children Dropping out of School



Through FGDs[8] conducted in the assessed communities, participants emphasized a range of reasons related to the living conditions contributing to increasing dropout rates for a specific category of children.'' *The children of farmers and professionals (handicrafts) are the most vulnerable to be out of school because of their commitment to support their parents. Moreover, early marriage is a major cause of females dropout; as well as, many families, especially rural ones, rely on females to work in the fields to save labor recruitment costs."*

[8] For the JENA assessment, four FGDs were conducted within the cities of Afrin, A'zaz and Atareb in Aleppo governorate and within Idleb City.

Map 7: The Three Most Common Reasons that Led to Children Dropping out of School by the Living Conditions

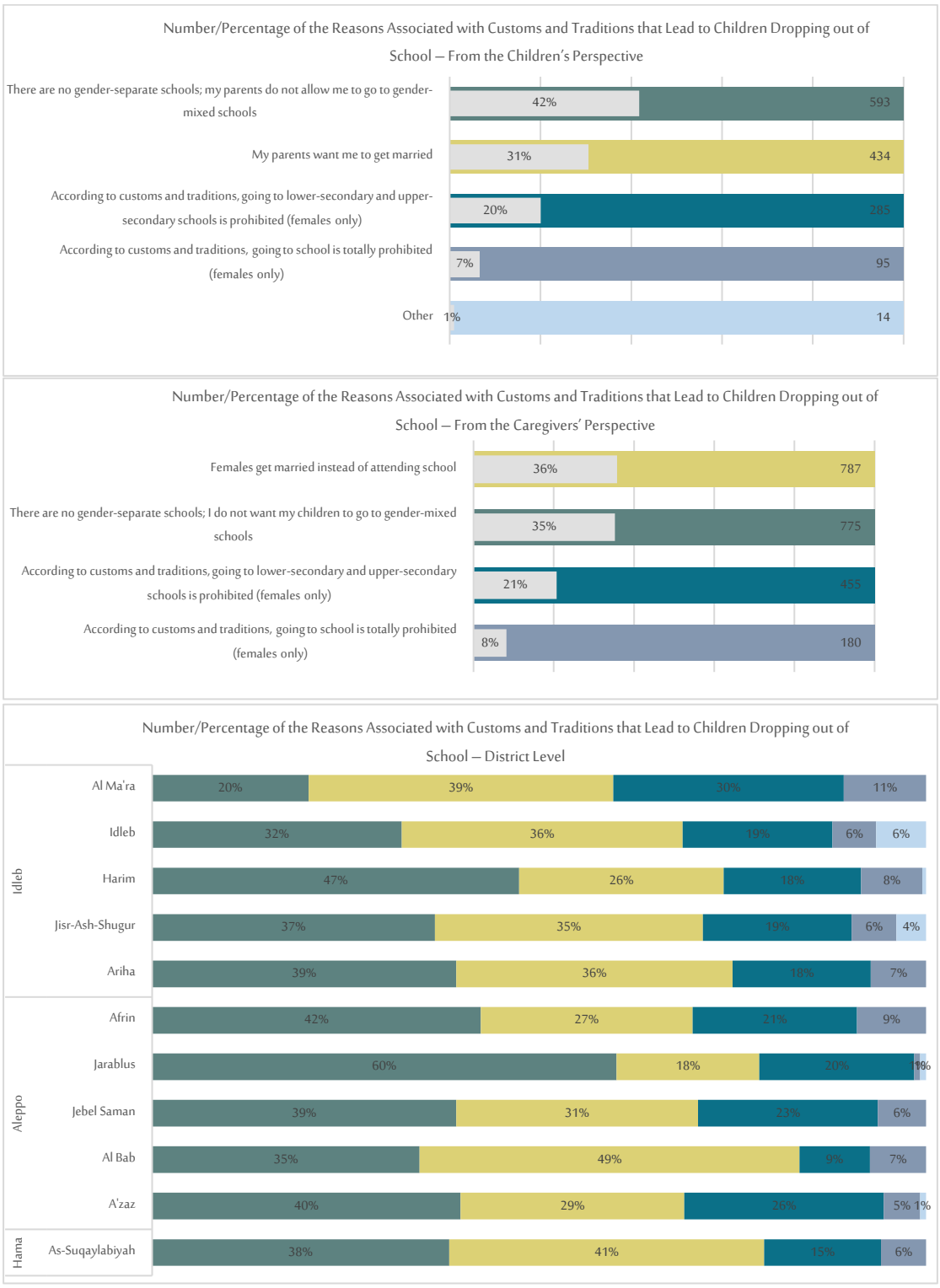


7. Reasons Associated with Customs and Traditions that Lead to children Dropping out of school

Through the surveys the enumerators conducted with the children who attended and dropped out of school and their caregivers, the enumerators asked them about the reasons linked with the customs and traditions leading to children dropping out of school. On top of all the reasons comes the fact that the schools are mixed-gender schools and parents do not allow their children to study at these schools; from the perspective of the caregivers the top reason is that they get their female children married instead of sending them to school to learn; in this context, 42% (593 children) of children reported that the main reason for dropping out of school, in relation with customs and traditions, is that the schools are mixed-gender schools and their parents do not allow them to study there, as confirmed by 35% (775 persons) of caregivers who do not want their children to be taught in mixed schools. Furthermore, 31% (434 children) of children reported that they dropped out of school because their parents wanted them to get married, as confirmed by 36% (787 persons) of caregivers who said they get the female children married instead of sending them to school to learn. 20% (285 children) of female children reported that they dropped out of school because customs and traditions prohibit teaching females in the advanced school levels (lower and higher secondary) as confirmed by 21% (455) of caregivers. Additionally, 7% (95 children) of female children reported dropping out of school because customs and traditions prohibit teaching the females

at all, as confirmed by 8% (180 persons) of caregivers. Two children dropped out of school because they got married.

Figure 28 Reasons Associated with Customs and Traditions that Lead to Children Dropping out of School



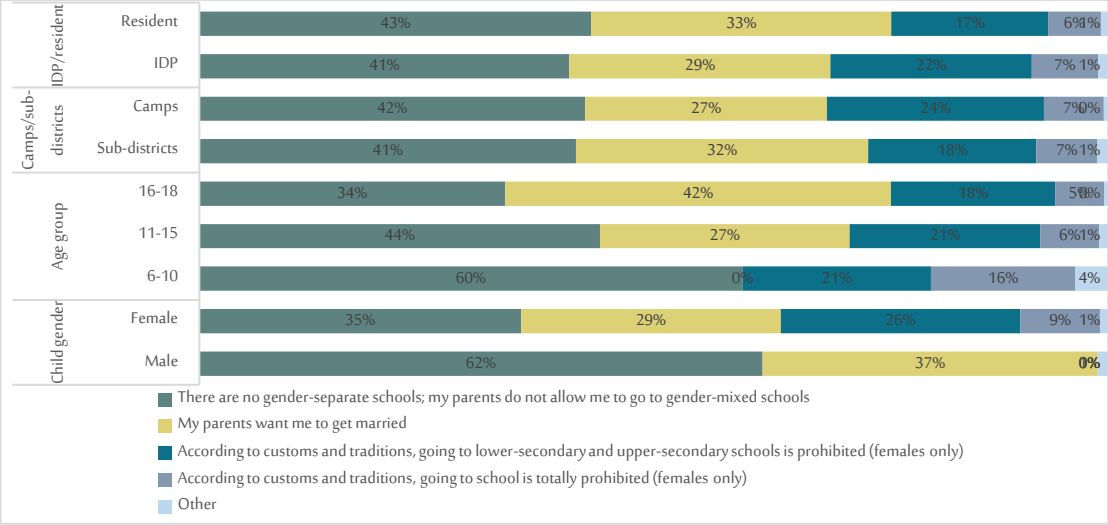
In view of the categories of the interviewed OOSC, it is noted that customs and traditions prevent teaching the females, in addition to having the preference for getting the children

married prevalent more among IDPs than the host community, which is attributed by some to reducing the burden placed on the parents/caregivers through getting the children married, or the constant concerns among IDP groups of having their female children mixed with male children.

According to the study it is found that the customs and traditions that require getting the children married rather than getting them educated can be seen clearly in the advanced school stages; in the lower secondary level (children aged 11-15 years), the percentage of children who dropped out of school because their parents preferred to get them married reached 27%, whereas in the secondary school level (children aged 18-16 years) the percentage formed 42%.

Although the proportion of male children who dropped out of school because of their parents' preference to get them married is higher than that of the female children, yet this proportion does not reflect the reality, since the number of female children who dropped out of school for reasons related to customs and traditions (1,082 female children) is higher than that of the male children (339 male children); 125 male children said that they dropped out of school because of their parents' preference to get them married. In contrast, 309 female children dropped out of school due to their parents' preference to get them married.

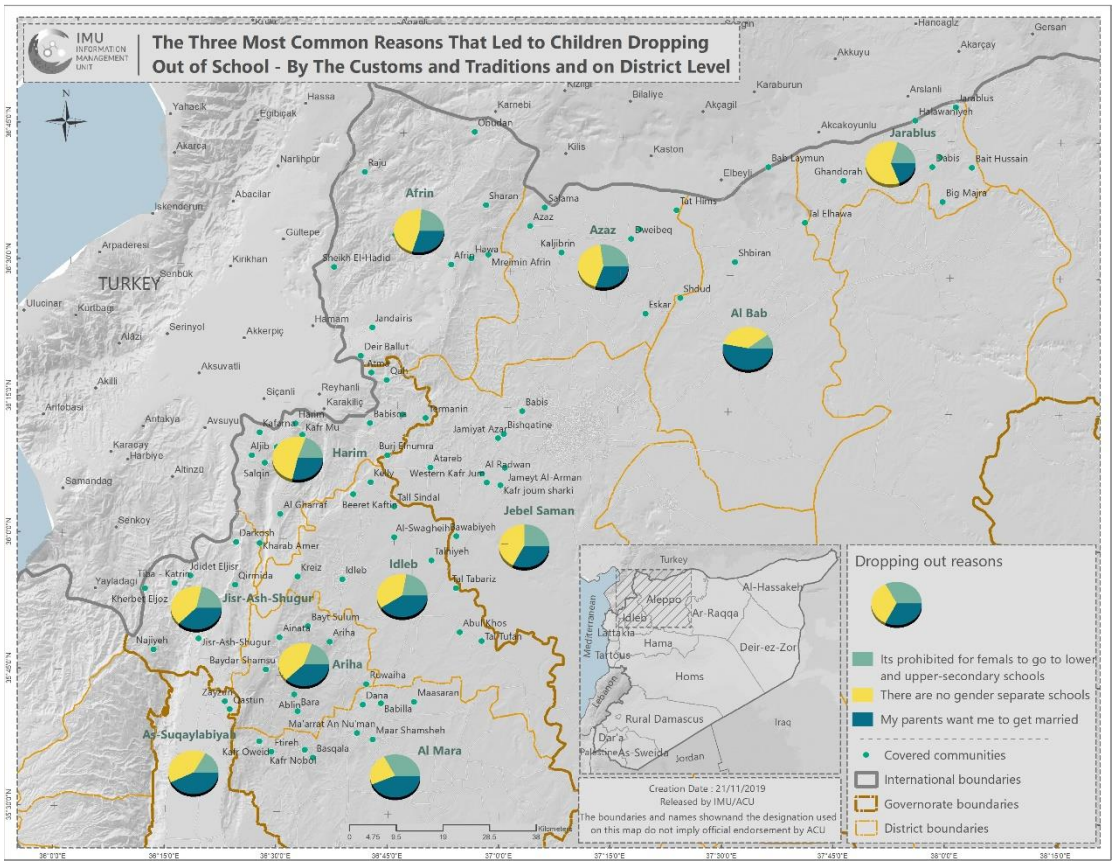
Figure 29 Reasons Associated with Customs and Traditions that Lead to Children Dropping out of School - by category



Through FGDs[9] conducted in the assessed communities, participants emphasized a range of reasons related to the customs and traditions contributes to increasing child dropout rates. *"There are a range of social causes associated with the customs and traditions that restrict society, in terms of not allowing the female to learn after the age of 15; the fear of mixing between male and female students; or not allowing the child to choose his/her friend by themselves because of the parents' limited thinking, such as preventing the child from mixing with peers because of the different social classes that resulted by displacement and the negative effects of the ongoing war. Moreover, the ongoing war and military actions led to children dropping out of school, especially girls, as so many parents adopt the idea of early marriage for females, this causes them to marry their daughters to a fighter in order to protect themselves or their families from arrest or enforced disappearance."*

[9] For the JENA assessment, four FGDs were conducted within the cities of Afrin, A'zaz and Atareb in Aleppo governorate and within Idleb City.

Map 8: The Three Most Common Reasons that Led to Children Dropping out of School by the Customs and Traditions

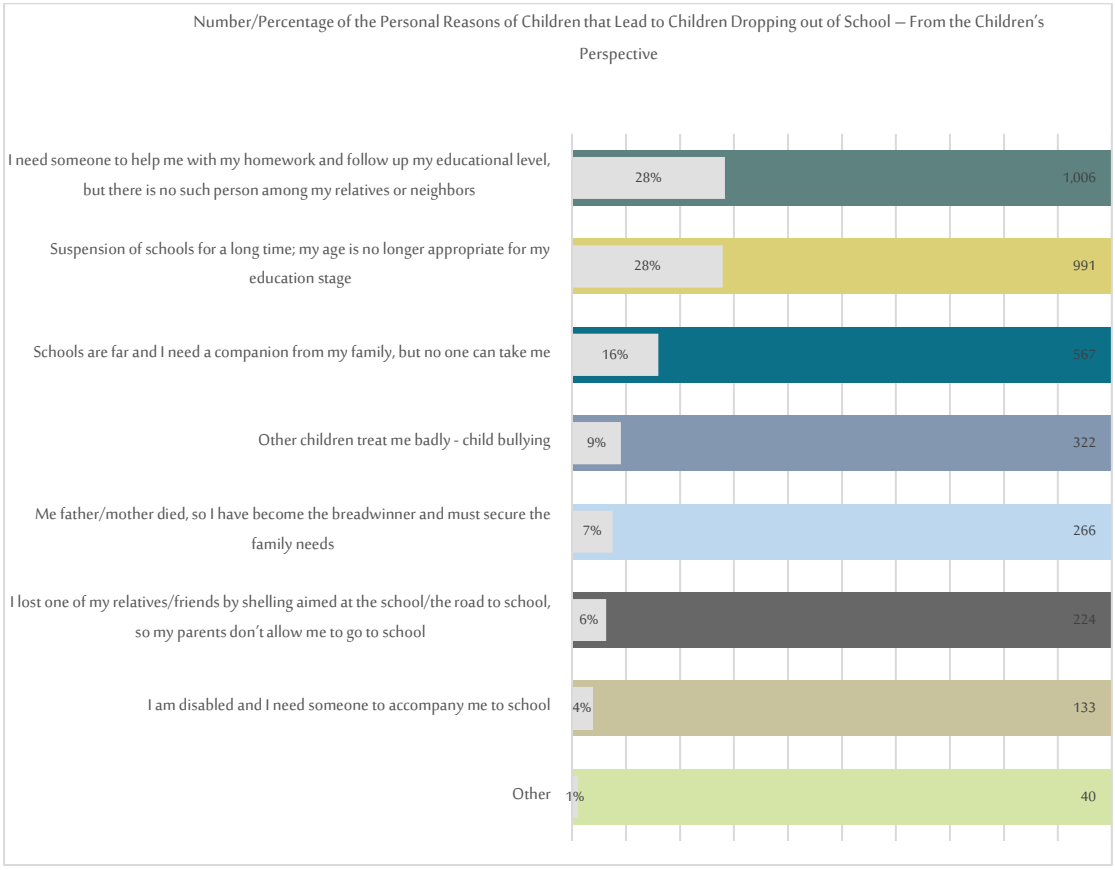


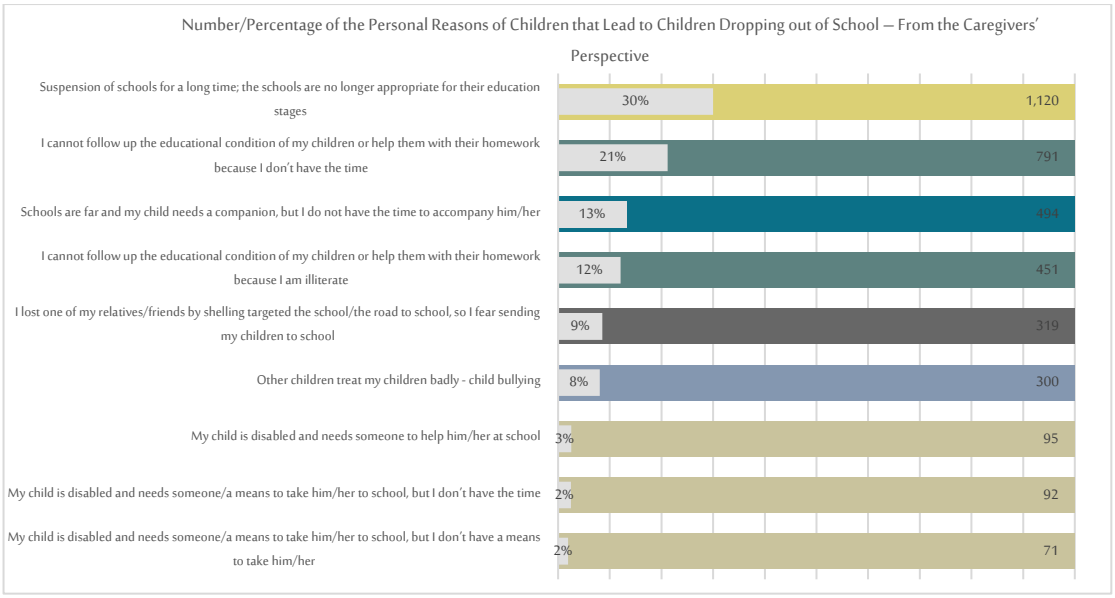
8. Personal Reasons for Children that Lead to Children Dropping out of School

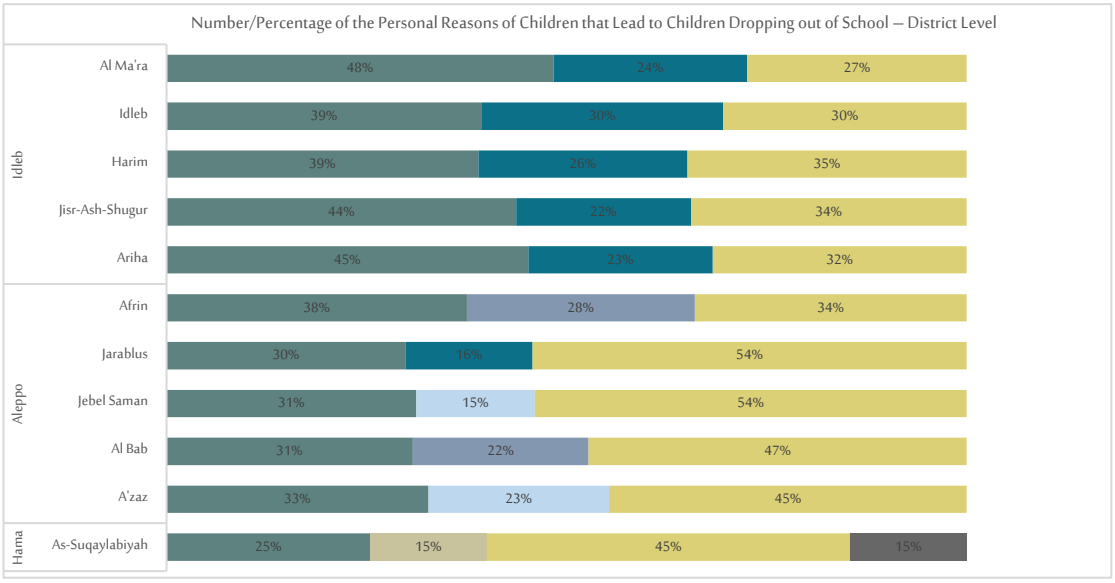
Through the surveys the enumerators conducted with the children who attended and dropped out of school and their caregivers, they asked them about the personal reasons of the children that drove them to drop out of school. The first personal reason which led children to drop out of school was that they need someone to help them do their homework and follow up on their educational level, and this person is not available in their family; in this regard, 28% (1,006 children) of the children said that the main reason for dropping out of school is having no one in their families to help them to do their homework and follow up on their educational level, as confirmed by 33% (1,242 persons) of caregivers; 791 caregivers attributed this to having no time to help their children study. Furthermore, 451 caregivers stated that the fact that they are illiterate hinders them from helping their children study and do their homework. 28% (991 children) said that schools have been suspended for a long time and their ages are no longer compatible with their schooling levels, the thing which urged them to drop out of school, as confirmed by 30% (1,120 persons) of caregivers. Adding to this, 16% (567 children) reported that their schools are very distant from where they reside and they need someone to accompany them, which is confirmed by 13% (494) of caregivers who added that they do not have time to take their children to their distant schools. 9% (322 children) reported that their colleagues treat them badly – suffer from bullying - which led them to drop out of school, as confirmed by 30% (300 persons) of caregivers who stated that their children suffer from bullying at school, the thing which drove them to drop out of school. 7% (266 children) of children reported that their fathers died, hence they became the breadwinners for their

families, which forced them to drop out of school. Likewise, 6% (224 children) said that they lost a relative as a result of a bombing that targeted the school or the road to it, which prompted their parents to prevent them from going to school, as confirmed by 9% (319 persons) of caregivers. Furthermore, 4% (133 persons) of children reported having a disability that caused the need to take some transportation means or need someone to accompany them to school, as confirmed by 7% (258) of caregivers.

Figure 30 Personal Reasons of Children that Lead to Children Dropping out of School



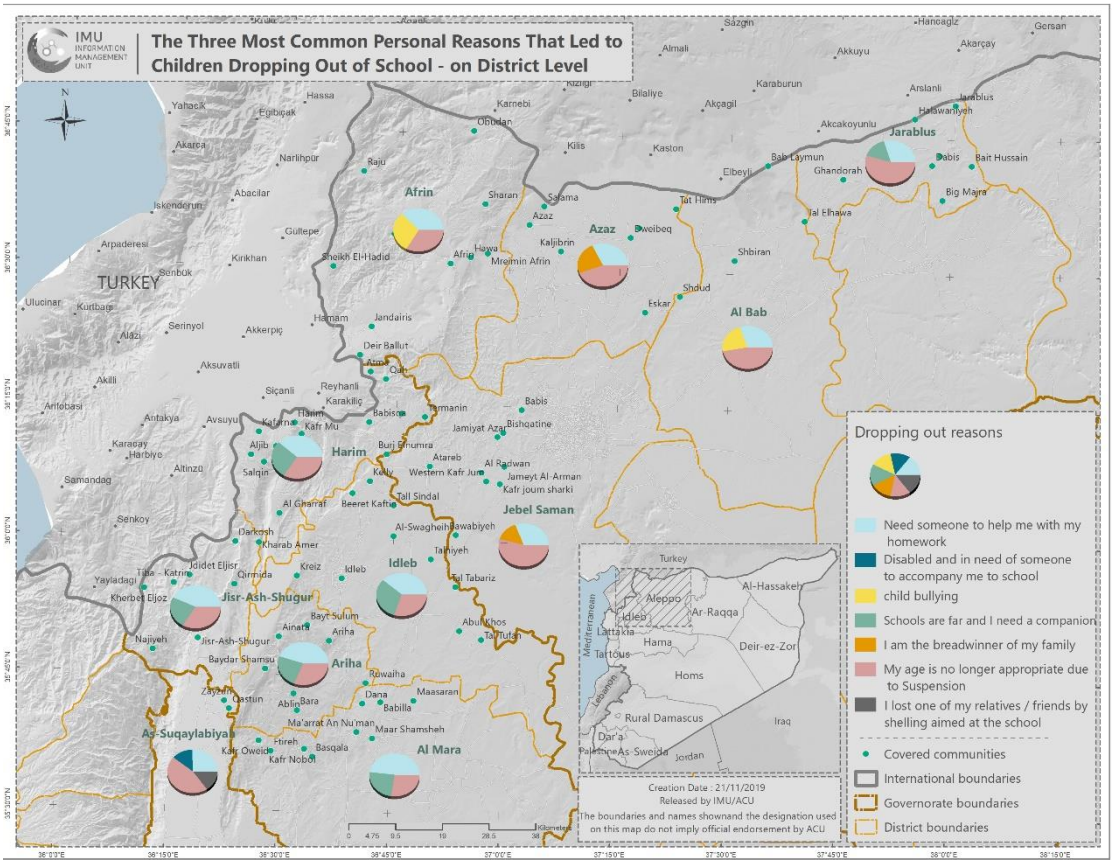




Through FGDs[10] conducted in the assessed communities, participants emphasized a range of reasons related to the personal reasons of children contributes to increasing child dropout rates. *"The lack of the child social culture and incomplete personality leads to the absence of desire to achieve his goals; as well as, the disorder of the child's personality and the absence of a good caregiver at home and school leads to drop out from school. Furthermore, the block stone on which many children are raised at home also plays a significant role in fostering a positive attitude and understanding of school commitment. For example, the parents motivate the child to study in order to achieve their dreams and to have an active role in society, instead of telling him/her that looking for a profession to earn money is better than studying."*

[10] For the preparation of this report, four focus group discussions were held within the cities of Afrin, Azaz and Atareb in Aleppo governorate, along with Idleb city.

Map 9: The Three Most Personal Reasons that led to Children Dropping out of School



Section Five: Children who Never Attended School

75% (2,761 children) of interviewed OOSC reported that they had never attended school.

According to the report on Monitoring Education Participation[11] issued by UNICEF

"A child or youth is considered to be a dropout if he or she is in the age of compulsory education between age (6-15 years old)
1. Dropped out, or
2. By the date for school reporting of enrolment/dropout has not enrolled in school and has not been enrolled in school at any time in the past.

It should be mentioned that JENA assessment adopted the previous definition, but it targeted children aged 6-18 years.

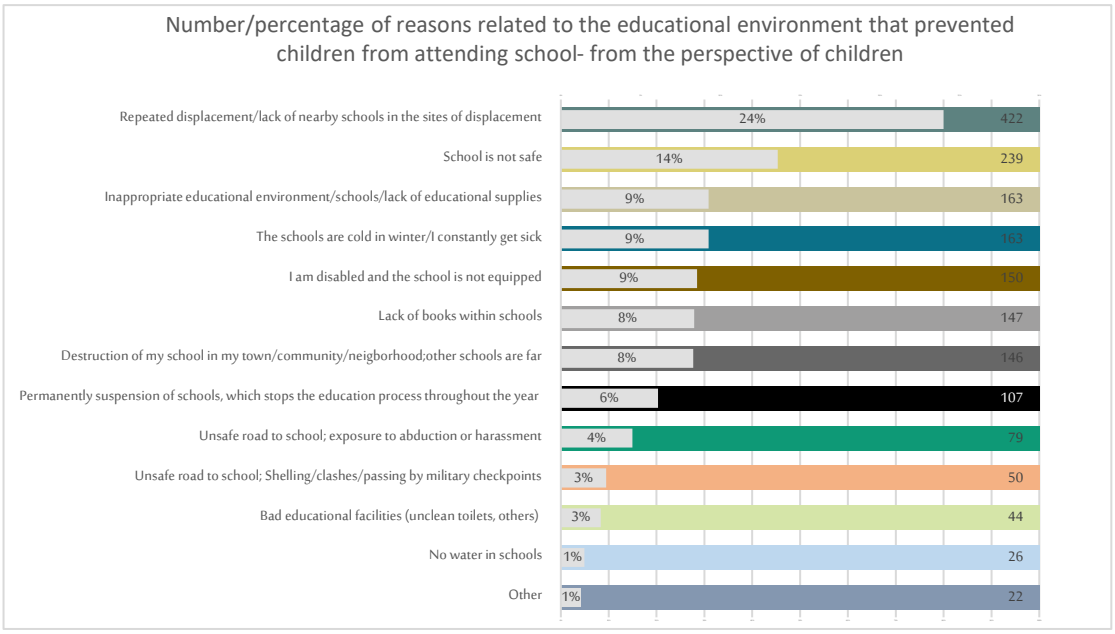
1. Reasons Related To The Educational Environment That Led To Children Not Attending School

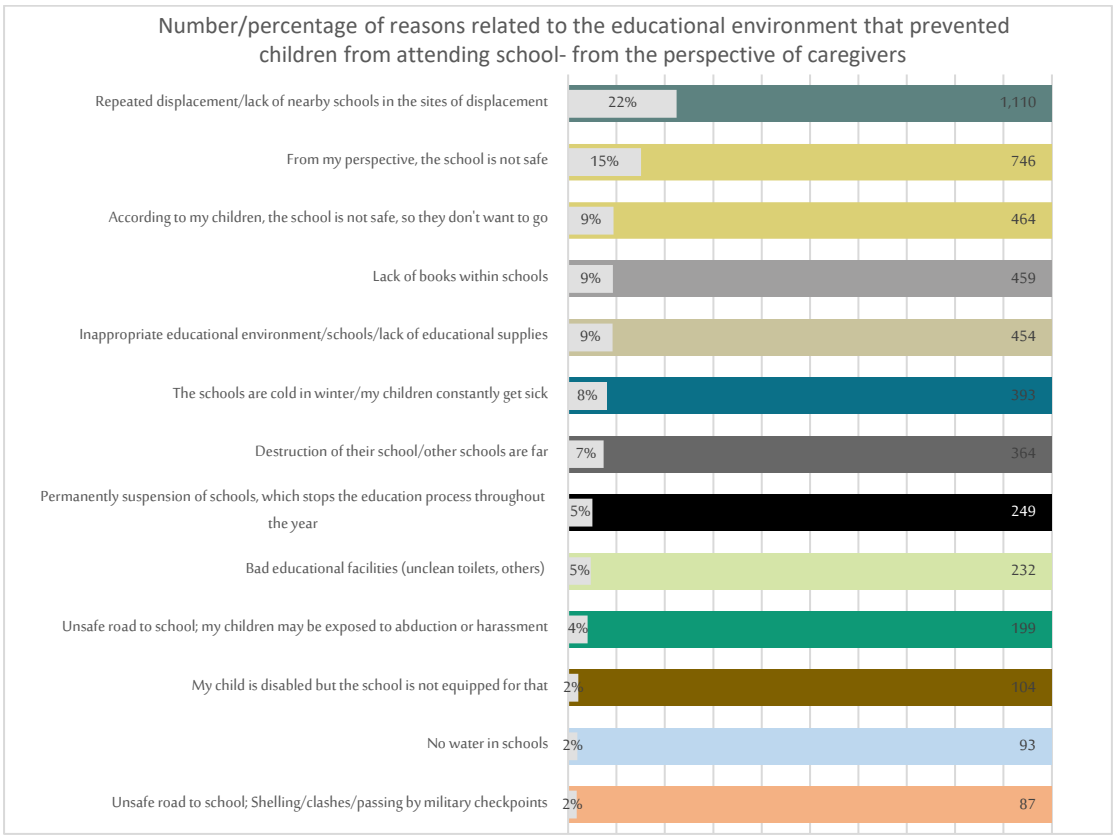
The enumerators conducted surveys with children who have never attended school and the caregivers of these children, where they asked them about the reasons related to the educational environment that prevented them from attending school. The repeated displacement and the absence of nearby schools in the displacement places toped the reasons that prevented children from attending school. 24% (422 children) stated that the main reason for not attending school is repeated displacement, which is confirmed by 22% (1,110 persons) of caregivers of children who dropped out of school. On the other hand, 14% (239 children) of interviewed OOSC did not attend because the school is not safe, which is confirmed by 24% (1,210 persons) of caregivers who reported that schools were unsafe from their own or their children's perspective. Moreover, 9% (163 children) did not attend because the educational environment or schools are not suitable and educational supplies within it are not available, which is confirmed by 9% (454 persons) of caregivers.

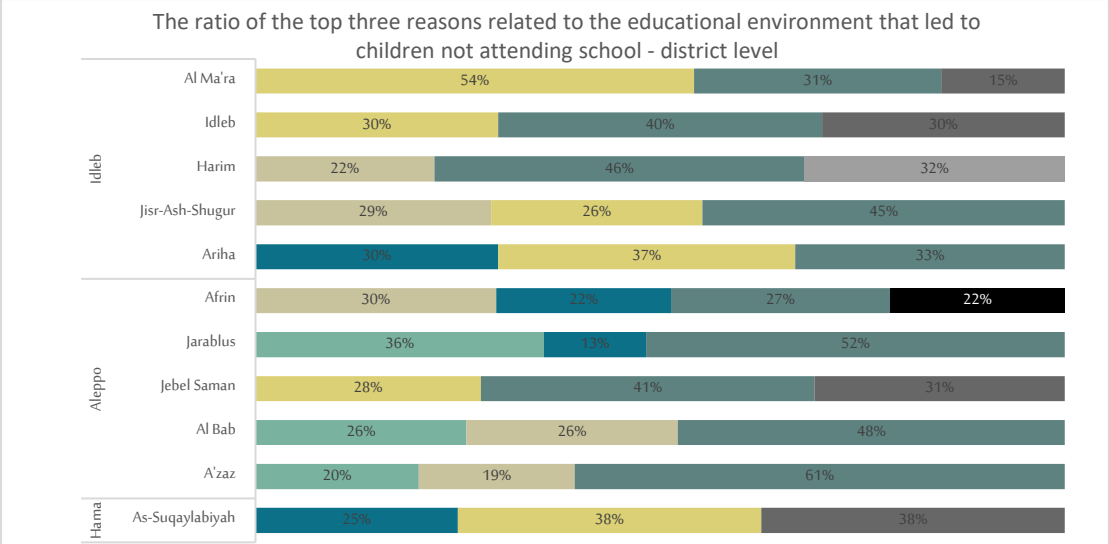
Similarly, 9% (163 children) did not attend because schools are cold in the winter, so they were constantly getting sick; this is confirmed by 8% (393 persons) of caregivers. Additionally, 9% (150 children) did not attend because they have a disability; schools are not equipped to receive them, which is confirmed by 2% (104 persons) of caregivers. 8% (147 children) did not attend because school textbooks are not available, which is confirmed by 9% (459 persons) of caregivers, while 8% (517 children) did not attend due to the destruction of their schools and the other schools are far away; this is confirmed by 7% (364 persons) of caregivers. Furthermore, 6% (107 children) did not attend the school due to permanent suspension in schools, which stops the educational process throughout the year; this is confirmed by 5% (249 persons) of caregivers.

[11] http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/monitoring-education-participation.pdf

Figure 31 Reasons Related To The Educational Environment That Led To Children Not Attending School







By interviewing KIs within the assessed communities, the enumerators asked these sources about the impact of a group of factors related to the educational environment on children drop out. All sources of information confirmed that the lack of heating materials and the cold classrooms in the winter, which cause the children sickness significantly contributed to increasing the proportion of children who drop out of school. On the other hand, schools are not equipped to accommodate children with disabilities which led to dropping out the majority of them.

The shortage of school textbooks was one of the main causes of dropping out among children in all areas of Idleb governorate, in addition to the districts of As-Suqaylabiyah sub-district of Hama governorate, and Jebel Saman in the western countryside of Aleppo. In the northern countryside of Aleppo represented by Al Bab, A'zaz, Jarablus and Afrin, the shortage in school textbooks had a moderate impact on the dropout rates of children. Additionally, the security situation (shelling and clashes) at the population centers within Ariha, Ma'arrat An Nu'man, and As-Suqaylabiyah districts had a great impact on children drop out. The security situation (kidnapping and harassment) at the population centers within Afrin district also had a great impact on children dropout.

Table 3 The Impact Level Of Factors Related To The Educational Environment On Children Dropout - KI

Governorate	District	Lack of heating materials The schools are cold in winter	Schools are not equipped to accommodate children with disabilities	The lack of books at schools	The facilities within the school are bad	The lack of facilities appropriate for their age group (toilets)	The security situation at the population centers (bombing - clashes)	Destruction of schools	The security situation in schools	The security situation within the community (Abduction - Harassment)
Idleb	Ariha									
	Jisr-Ash-Shugur									
	Harim									
	Idleb									
	Ma'arrat An Nu'man									
Aleppo	Azaz									
	Al Bab									
	Jebel Saman									
	Jarablus									
	Afrin									
Hama	As-Suqaylabiyah									
Total										

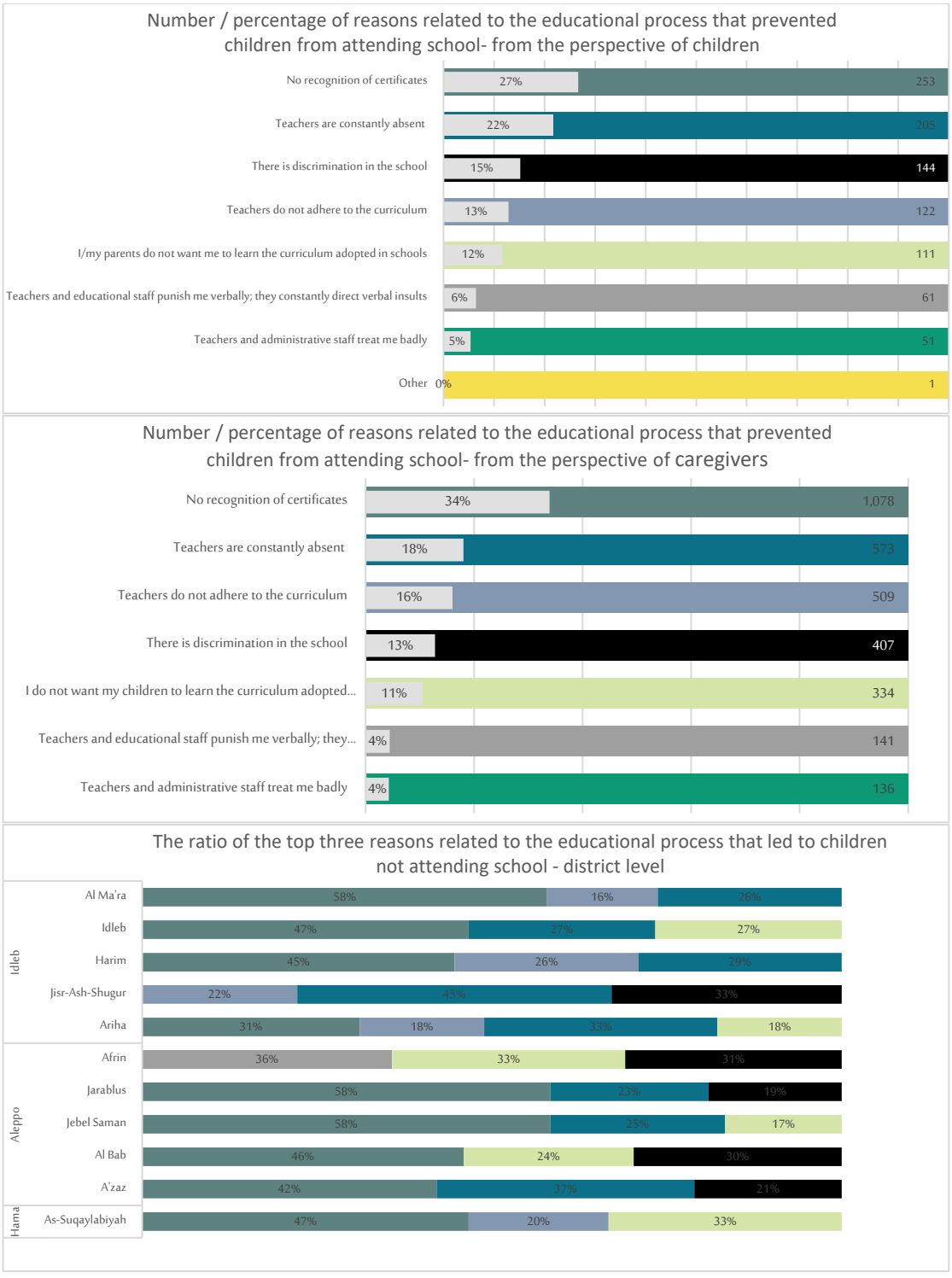
Major problem - Minor problem

2. Reasons Related To The Educational Process That Led To Children Not Attending School

The enumerators conducted surveys with children who have never attended school and the caregivers of these children, where they asked them about the reasons related to the educational environment that prevented them from attending school, in addition to other reasons that drop-out children and their caregivers may add. The educational process here refers to the mechanisms of teaching staff dealing with students, exams, certificates, curricula, commitment to attendance and the annual curriculum plan. 27% (253 children) stated that the main reason for not attending school is the certificates are not acknowledged or accredited to qualify them to continue their stages of education after school, which is confirmed by 34% (1,078 persons) of caregivers of children who dropped out of school. On the other hand, 22% (205 children) of interviewed OOSC did not attend because teachers are constantly absent, which is confirmed by 18% (573 persons) of caregivers. Moreover, 15% (144 children) did not attend because there is discrimination in the school, which is confirmed by 13% (407 persons) of caregivers. It is noteworthy that these children mostly attended the school for a short time and dropped out as a result of their feelings of discrimination by their classmates or teachers.

13% (122 children) reported that they did not attend school because their teachers did not adhere to the school curriculum and its annual plan; this is confirmed by 16% (509 persons) of caregivers. Additionally, 12% (111 children) stated that they did not attend school because of their or their family unwillingness to learn the curriculum used in schools; which was confirmed by 11% (334 persons) of caregivers. Furthermore, 11% (112 children) reported that they did not attend school because teachers treated them badly (verbally insulting them), which is confirmed by 8% (277 persons) of caregivers; mostly these children attended the school for a short time and dropped out as a result of being abused by educational staff

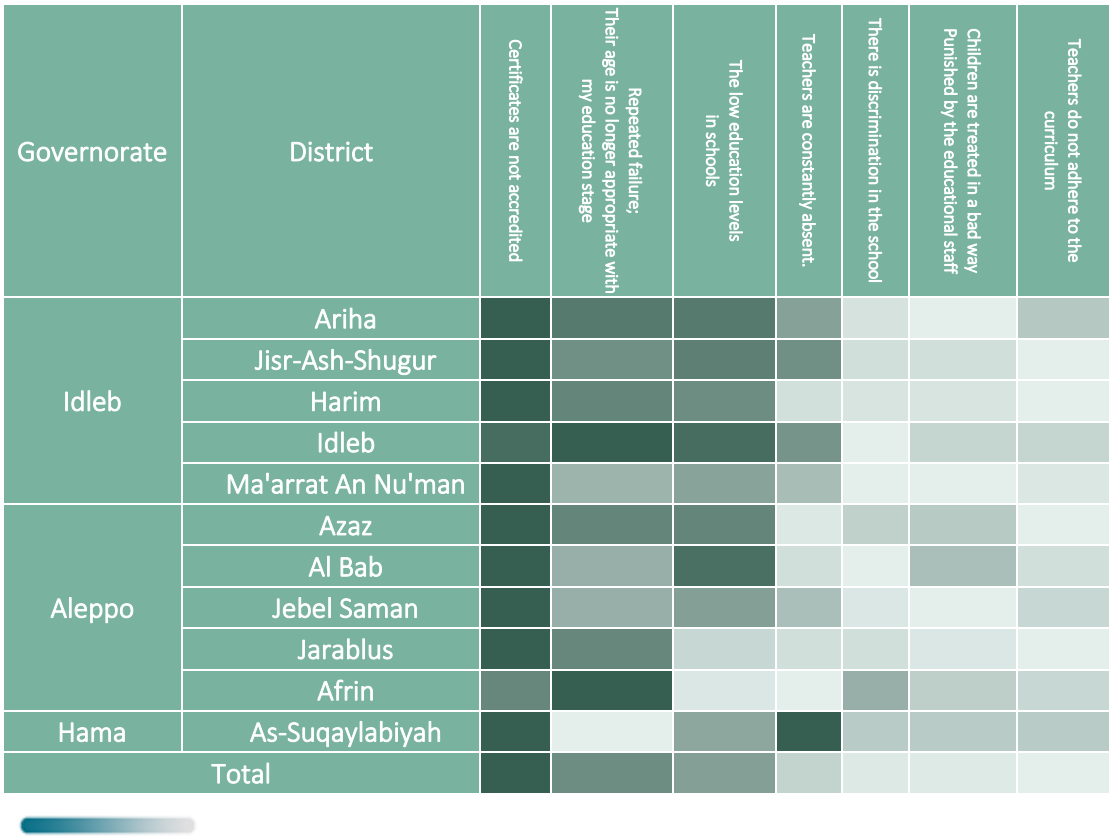
Figure 32 Reasons Related To The Educational Process That Led To Children Not Attending School



By interviewing KIs within the assessed communities, the enumerators asked these sources about the impact of a group of factors related to the educational process on children drop out. All information sources confirmed that unrecognized certificates awarded by schools, along with repeated school failure, as their ages are no longer appropriate for their education stages significantly impacted on increasing the proportion of children who drop out of school in all

areas. In contrast, the continued absence of teachers significantly affected the rates of children drop out in As-Suqaylabiyah sub-district.

Figure 33 The Impact Level Of Factors Related To The Educational Process On Children Drop Out - KI



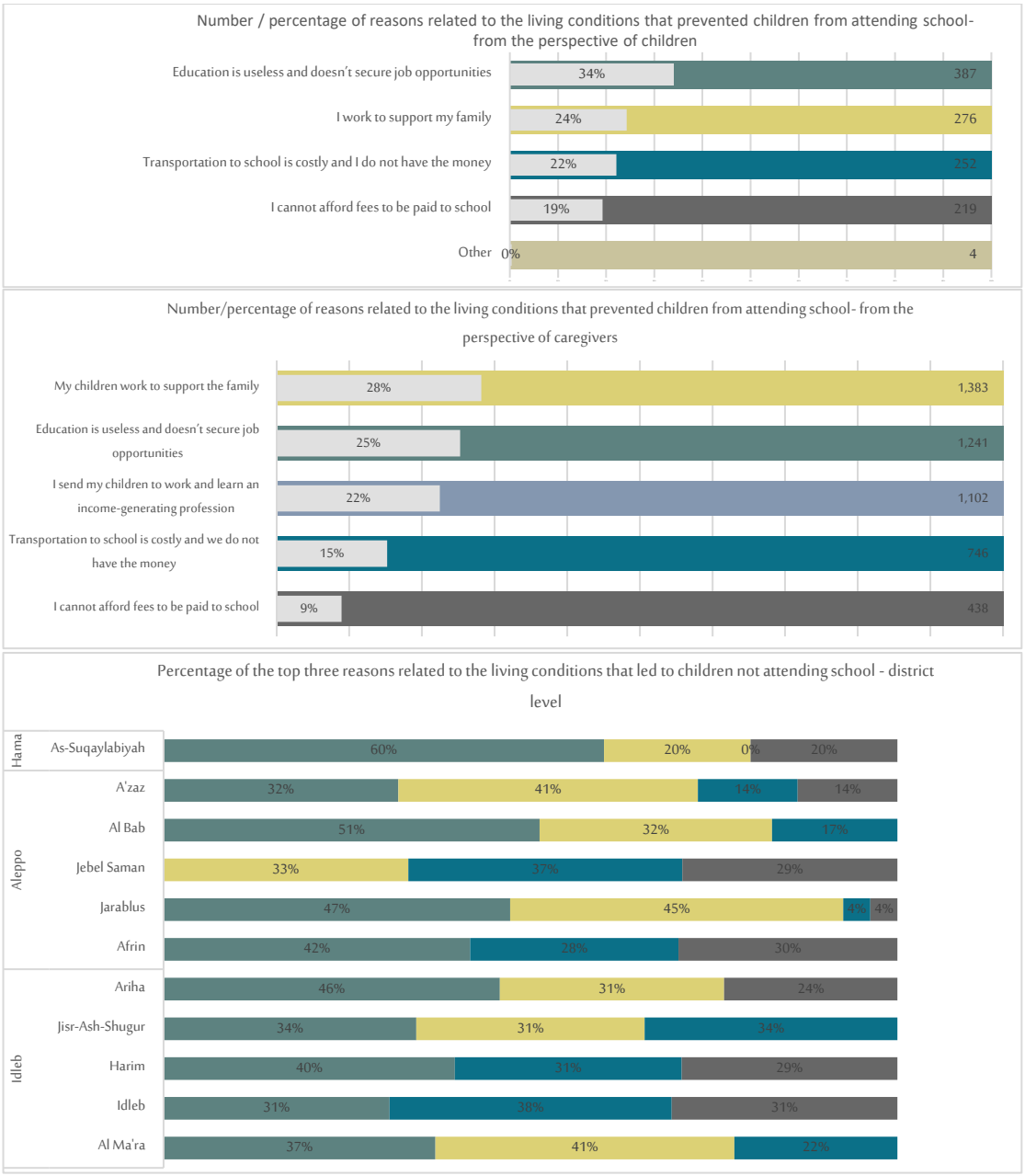
Major problem - Minor problem

3. Reasons Related To The Living Conditions That Led To Children Not Attending School

The enumerators conducted surveys with children who have never attended school and the caregivers of these children, where they asked them about the reasons related to the living conditions and income level of children and their families that prevented them from attending school. The dropped-out children stated that the main reason for not attending school is that education is useless and doesn't secure job opportunities. On the other hand, the caregivers stated that the main reason for not attending school is their children work to support their families. 34% (387 children) reported that the main reason related to the living conditions and income level that prevented them from attending school is education became useless and did not provide job opportunities; this is confirmed by 25% (1,241 persons) of caregivers.

Moreover, 24% (276 children) said that they did not attend school because they work to support their families; this is confirmed by 28% (1,383 persons) of caregivers. Additionally, 22% (971 children) reported that they did not attend school because access to school is costly and their parents cannot afford it; this is confirmed by 15% (746 people) of caregivers. 19% (219 children) reported that they did not attend school because there were financial fees which need to be paid to the school, and the students cannot afford them, which is confirmed by 9% (438 persons) of caregivers. It should be mentioned that 22% (1,102 persons) of caregivers stated that their children did not attend school because they send them to acquire professions instead of having them taught.

Figure 34 Reasons Related To The Living Conditions That Led To Children Not Attending School



By interviewing KIs within the assessed communities, the enumerators asked these sources about the impact of a group of factors related to the living conditions on children drop out. All information sources confirmed that the poor living conditions of families, child labor and the desire to teach children money-generating professions significantly impacted on increasing the proportion of children who drop out of school in all areas. While frequent displacement led to children dropping out of schools in the districts of Harim, Jebel Saman and As-Suqaylabiyah.

Table 4 The Impact Level Of Factors Related To The Living Conditions On Children Drop Out - KI

Governorate	District	Poor living condition of the family	Child Labor	The preference of having the children learning to acquire professions instead of having them taught	Frequent Displacement	Education is useless, Doesn't secure job opportunities according to the parents perspective	Education is useless, Doesn't secure job opportunities according to the children	Parents cannot afford school supplies	Transportation fares to school are costly and parents cannot afford them	Security situation	There are additional financial fees which need to be paid to the school, but the parents cannot afford them
Idleb	Ariha										
	Jisr-Ash-Shugur										
	Harim										
	Idleb										
	Ma'arrat An Nu'man										
Aleppo	Azaz										
	Al Bab										
	Jebel Saman										
	Jarablus										
	Afrin										
Hama	As-Suqaylabiyah										
Total											

Major problem - Minor problem

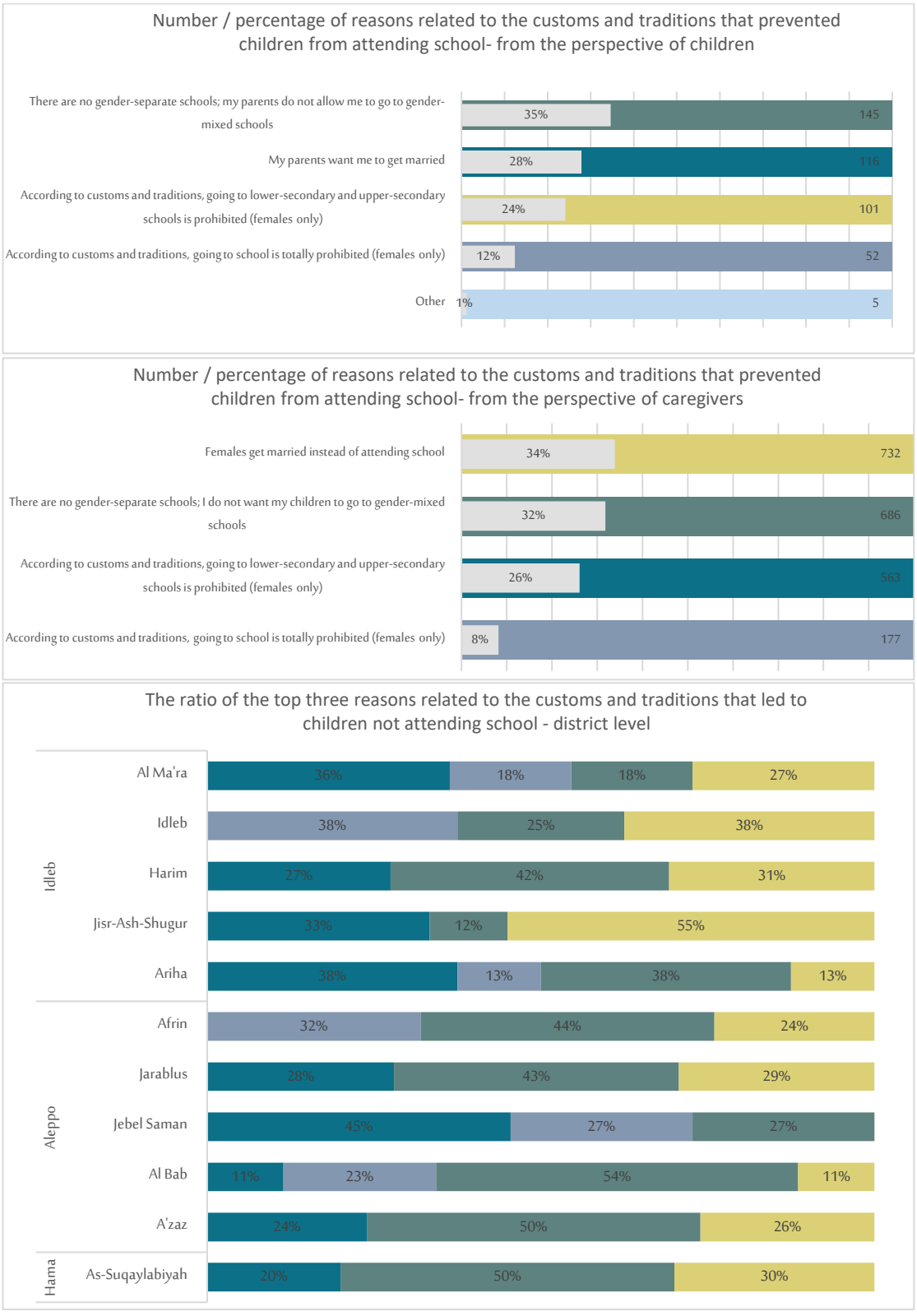
4. Reasons Related To Customs And Traditions That Led To Children Not Attending School

The enumerators conducted surveys with children who have never attended school and with the caregivers of these children, where they asked them about the reasons related to the customs and traditions that prevented them from attending school. The OOSC stated that the main reason for not attending school is that the schools are gender-mixed, and their parents do not allow them to attend this type of schools. On the other hand, the caregivers stated that the main reason for their children not attending school is they get their girls married instead of teaching them. 35% (145 children) reported that the main reason related to customs and traditions that prevented them from attending school is that the school is gender-mixed, and their parents do not allow them to attend gender-mixed schools, as 107 females and 38 males stated that they did not attend schools due to the fact that the schools are gender-mixed; 32% (686 persons) of caregivers confirmed that they do not want their children to attend gender-mixed school. It should be mentioned that some parents refused to teach their children in mixed schools at all educational levels.

28% (116 children) reported that they did not attend school because their parents wanted to get them married, which is confirmed by 34% (732 persons) of caregivers who said they get their girls married instead of teaching them. 24% (101 girls) of interviewed girls reported that they did not attend school because the customs and traditions prevent females from attending lower- secondary and upper-secondary schools; this is confirmed by 26% (563

persons) of caregivers. Besides that, 12% (52 girls) of interviewed girls reported that they did not attend school because customs and traditions prevent females from learning at all; this is confirmed by 8% (177 persons) of caregivers.

Figure 35 Reasons Related To The Customs And Traditions That Led To Children Not Attending School



By interviewing KIs within the assessed communities, the enumerators asked these sources about the impact of a group of factors related to the customs and traditions on children drop out. All information sources confirmed that early marriage is the main reason related to the customs and traditions, which significantly impacted on increasing the proportion of drop out children. It should be mentioned that the phenomenon of early marriage emerged in all districts of Idleb governorate, in addition to A'zaz, AlBab and Afrin districts in Aleppo countryside. More to the point, the customs and traditions that prevented females from attending lower-secondary and upper-secondary schools are significantly impacted on increasing the proportion of drop out children in the districts of Harim, Jebel Saman, Jarablus and As-Suqaylabiyah, while it is moderately affected the other assessed areas.

Table 5 The Impact Level Of Factors Related To The Customs And Traditions On Children Drop Out - KI

Governorate	District	Early Marriage	Customs and traditions prevent females from attending lower-secondary and upper-secondary schools (for females only)	The schools are gender-mixed; there is no gender-separate school; people do not allow their children to attend gender-mixed schools	Customs and traditions prevent females from learning (for females only)
Idleb	Ariha				
	Jisr-Ash-Shugur				
	Harim				
	Idleb				
	Ma'arrat An Nu'man				
Aleppo	Azaz				
	Al Bab				
	Jebel Saman				
	Jarablus				
	Afrin				
Hama	As-Suqaylabiyah				
Total					

Major problem - Minor problem

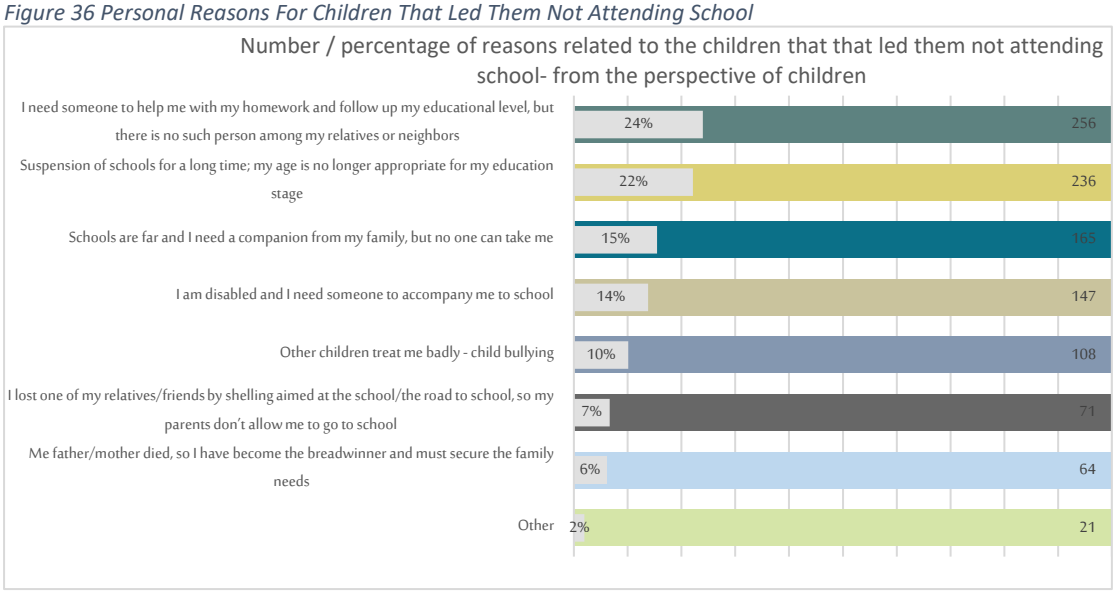
5. Personal Reasons For Children That Led Them Not Attending School

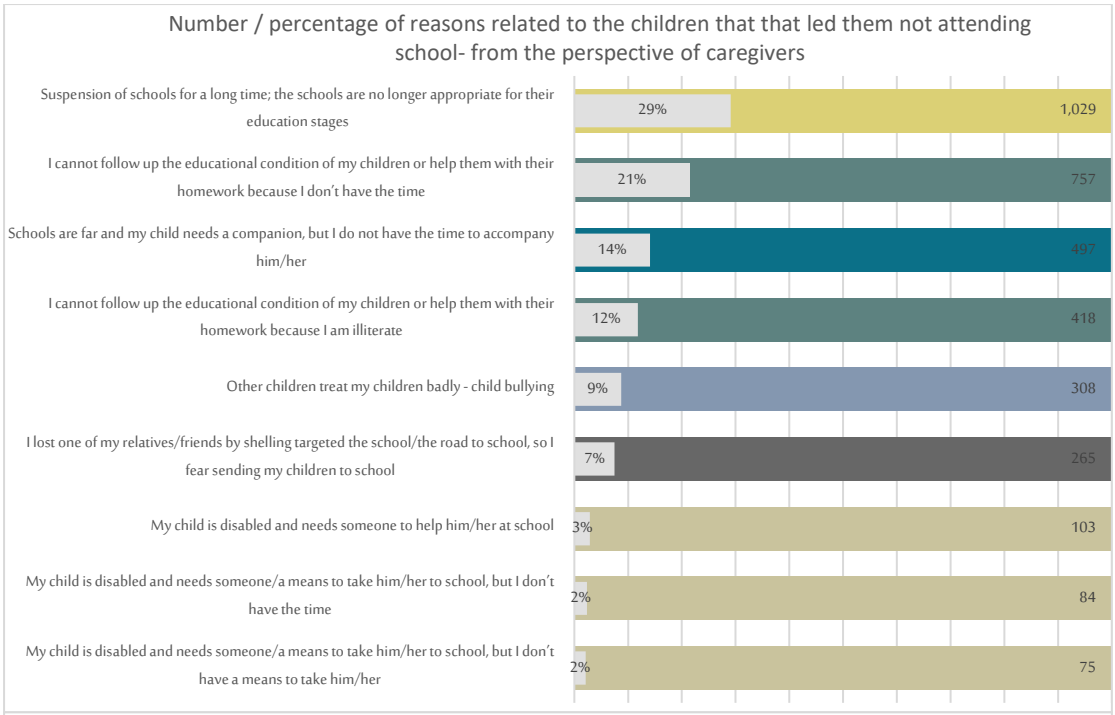
The enumerators conducted surveys with children who have never attended school and the caregivers of these children, where they were asked about the personal reasons that prevented them from attending school. Among the top of personal reasons that prevented children from attending school is that they need someone to help them in their homework and follow up their educational level, where this person is not available in their family. 24% (256 children) said that the main reason that prevented from attending school is their need of someone to help them with their homework and follow up their educational level; this is confirmed by 33% (1,175 persons) of caregivers, where 757 caregivers reported that they did not have time to follow up their children study, and 418 caregivers reported that they cannot read and write, which prevented them from following up their children and assisting them in their homework.

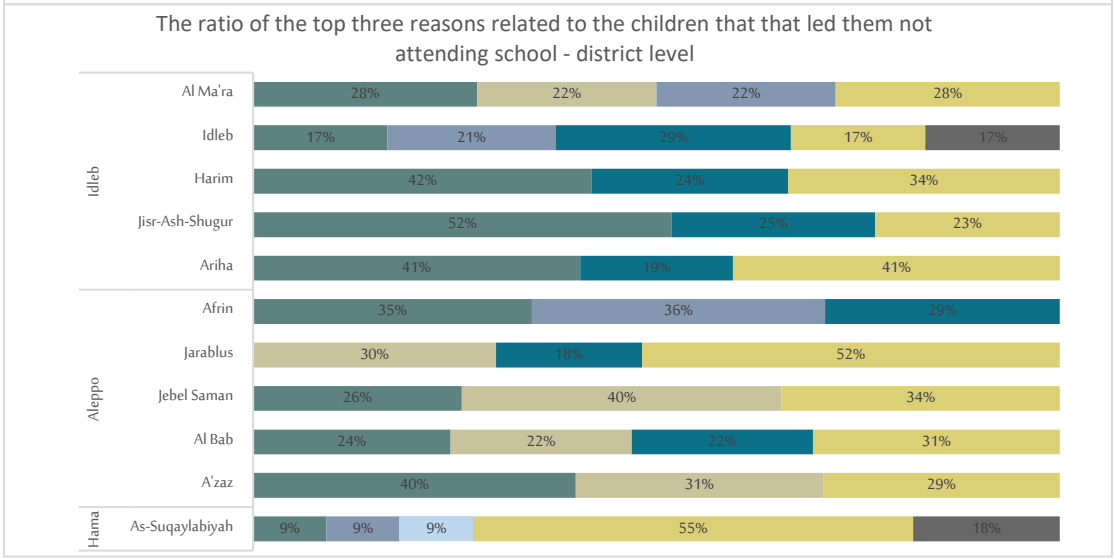
22% (236 children) reported that they did not attend school because the schools are suspended for a long time and their age is no longer appropriate with their education stage; which is confirmed by 29% (1,029 persons) of caregivers.

Moreover, 15% (165 children) reported that their schools were far away, and they needed to accompany a family member, and no one can take them; 14% (497 persons) of caregivers confirmed that they had no time to take their children to their distant schools. 14% (147 persons) stated that they did not attend school because they had a disability and they needed a person or means to take them to school; this is confirmed by 7% (262 persons) of caregivers. Furthermore, 10% (108 children) did not attend school because their peers treated them badly - child bullying; 9% (308 persons) of caregivers confirmed that their children were being treated badly by their colleagues; mostly these children attended school for a while, then they left it as a result of bullying by their colleagues. 7% (71 children) reported that they lost a relative in a shelling targeted the school/school road, so their parents prevent them from going to school; this is confirmed by 7% (265 persons) of caregivers. Furthermore, 6% (64 children) of interviewed OOSC stated that their father died, and they became breadwinners for their families which prevented them from attending school.

Figure 36 Personal Reasons For Children That Led Them Not Attending School




Number / percentage of reasons related to the children that that led them not attending school- from the perspective of caregivers
Suspension of schools for a long time; the schools are no longer appropriate for their education stages
29%
1,029
I cannot follow up the educational condition of my children or help them with their homework because I don't have the time
21%
757
Schools are far and my child needs a companion, but I do not have the time to accompany him/her
14%
497
I cannot follow up the educational condition of my children or help them with their homework because I am illiterate
12%
418
Other children treat my children badly - child bullying
9%
308
I lost one of my relatives/friends by shelling targeted the school/the road to school, so I fear sending my children to school
7%
265
My child is disabled and needs someone to help him/her at school
3%
103
My child is disabled and needs someone/a means to take him/her to school, but I don't have the time
2%
84
My child is disabled and needs someone/a means to take him/her to school, but I don't have a means to take him/her
2%
75

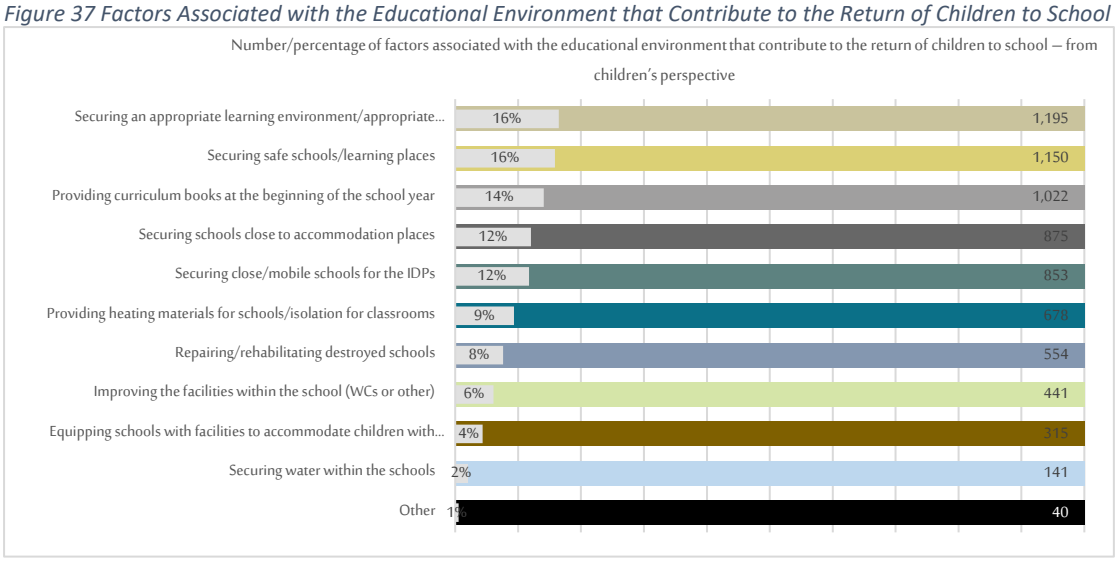

The ratio of the top three reasons related to the children that that led them not attending school - district level
Idleb
Al Ma'ra
28%
22%
22%
28%
Idleb
17%
21%
29%
17%
17%
Harim
42%
24%
34%
Jisr-Ash-Shugur
52%
25%
23%
Ariha
41%
19%
41%
Aleppo
Afrin
35%
36%
29%
Jarablus
30%
18%
52%
Jebel Saman
26%
40%
34%
Al Bab
24%
22%
22%
31%
A'zaz
40%
31%
29%
Hama
As-Suqaylabiyah
9%
9%
9%
55%
18%

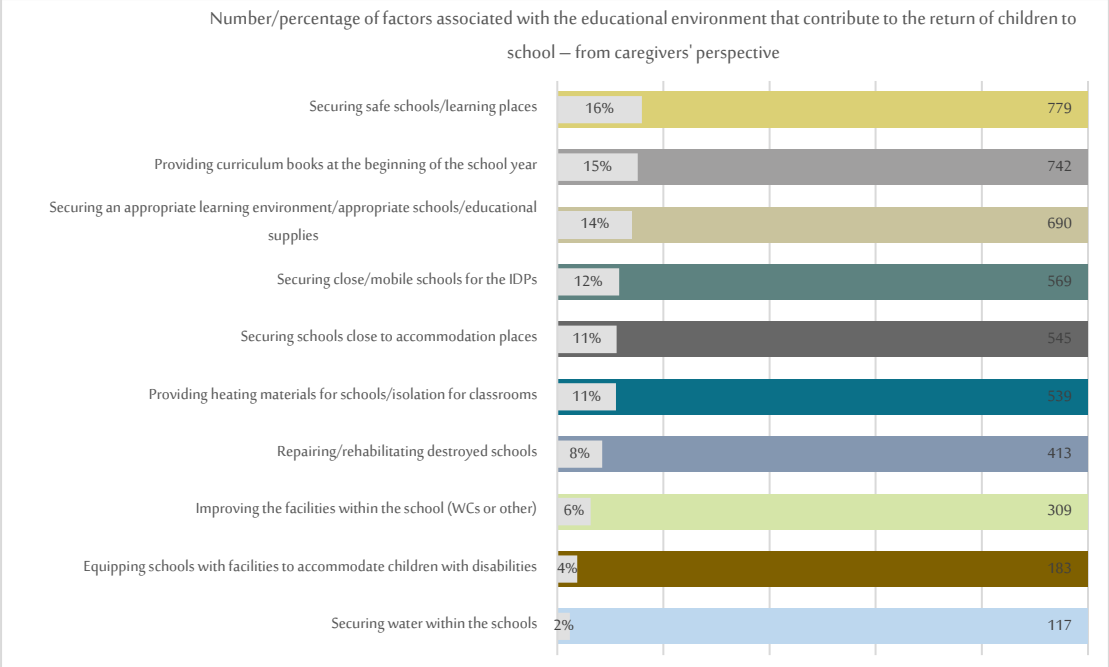
Section Six: Factors Contributing to Children's Return to School

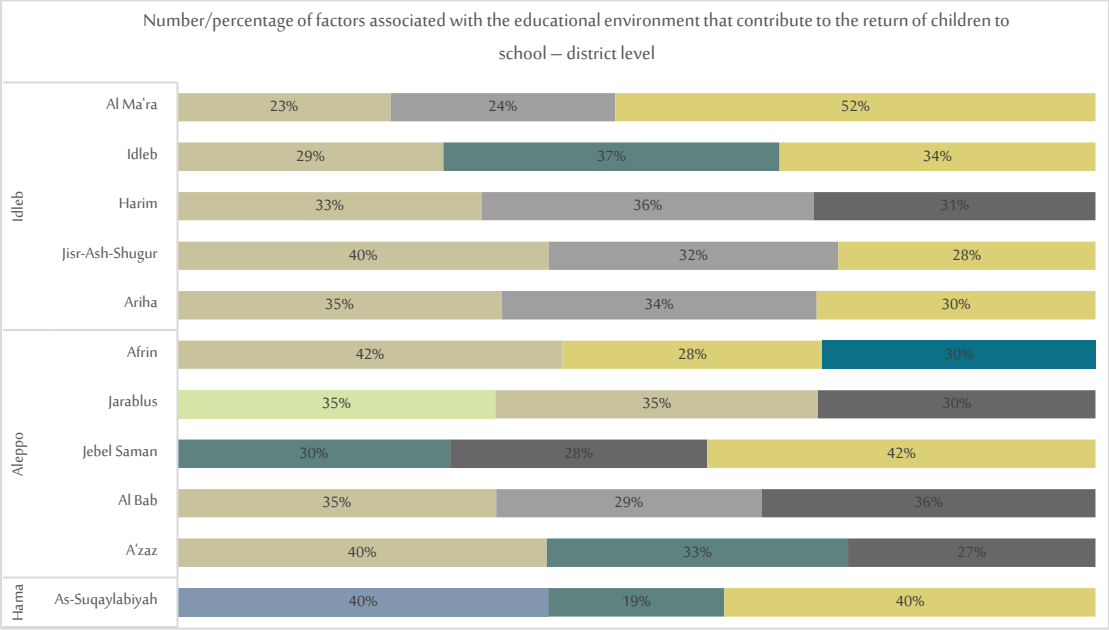
1. Factors Associated with the Educational Environment that Contribute to the Return of Children to School

Through the surveys the enumerators conducted with OOSC, and their caregivers, the enumerators asked them about the factors associated with the educational environment that could contribute to the return of children to school. According to the children, the foremost of which is the provision of suitable educational environment (suitable schools equipped with all educational supplies), whereas from the point of view of the caregivers the first of these factors is having safe schools, in that 16% (1,195 children) of the children who dropped out of school stated that having well equipped safe schools contributes to their return to school, as confirmed by 14% (690) of caregivers. Additionally, 16% (1,150 children) of OOSC reported that having safe schools (not exposed to any bombing) could contribute to their return to school, which is confirmed by 16% (779 people) of caregivers. Additionally, 14% (1,022 children) of OOSC said that providing textbooks at the beginning of the academic year could contribute to their return to school, which is also confirmed by 15% (742 persons) of caregivers. 12% (875 children) of OOSC reported that having schools close to their places of residence could contribute to their return to school, as confirmed by 11% (545 persons) of caregivers. 12% (875) of OOSC said that having schools that are close to the IDP places of residence or mobile schools could contribute to their return to school, the thing which is confirmed by 12% (569 persons) of caregivers. Moreover 9% (678 children) of OOSC reported that providing heating materials for their schools can also contribute to their return to school, the thing which is confirmed by 11% (539 persons) of caregivers. Furthermore 8% (554 children) of OOSC who dropped out of school said that repairing and rehabilitating their destroyed schools could also contribute to their return to school, as confirmed by 8% (413 persons) of caregivers. 6% (441 children) of OOSC reported that improving facilities within schools (toilets and others) may contribute to their return to school, as confirmed by 6% (309 persons) of caregivers. Moreover 4% (315 children) of OOSC with disabilities reported that equipping schools with facilities for the disabled may contribute to their return to school, as confirmed by 4% (183 persons) of caregivers. 2% (141 children) of OOSC reported that the provision of drinking water, as well as water for daily use within schools, could contribute to their return to school, which is confirmed by 2% (117) of caregivers.

Figure 37 Factors Associated with the Educational Environment that Contribute to the Return of Children to School





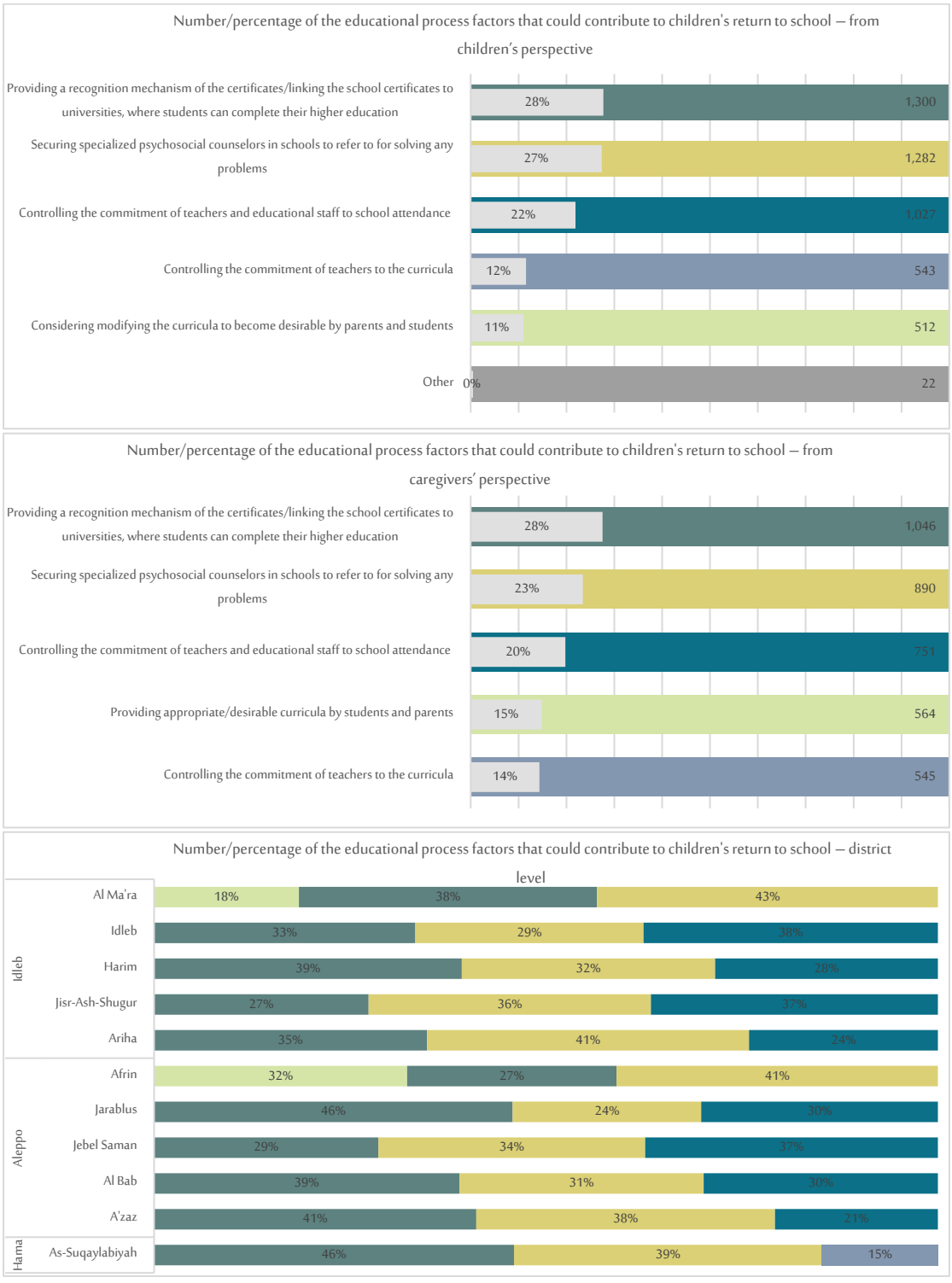


2. Factors Associated with the Educational Process that Contribute to Children's Return to School

Through the surveys the enumerators conducted with OOSC, and their caregivers, the enumerators asked them about the factors associated with the educational process that may contribute to the return of children to school. It is found that the first factor is to provide a mechanism for recognizing the certificates issued by the schools or link them to universities at which students can further their higher education as 28% (1,300 children) of OOSC reported as well as 28% (1,046 persons) of caregivers. 27% (1,282 children) of OOSC reported that the provision of specialized counsellors at schools to resort to and help solve the problems could contribute to the children's return to school; as confirmed by 23% (890 persons) of caregivers. 22% (1,022 children) of children reported that teachers' commitment to school attendance could contribute to their return to school, as confirmed by 20% (751) of caregivers. According to 12% (543 children) of OOSC, teachers' adherence to the school curriculum and annual

curriculum plan could also contribute to children's return to school, which is confirmed by 14% (545 persons) of caregivers. Moreover, 11% (512 children) of OOSC reported that modifying the curriculum in a way that it becomes more accepted and preferred by the students and their parents could also contribute to the children's return to school, as confirmed by 15% (564 persons) of caregivers.

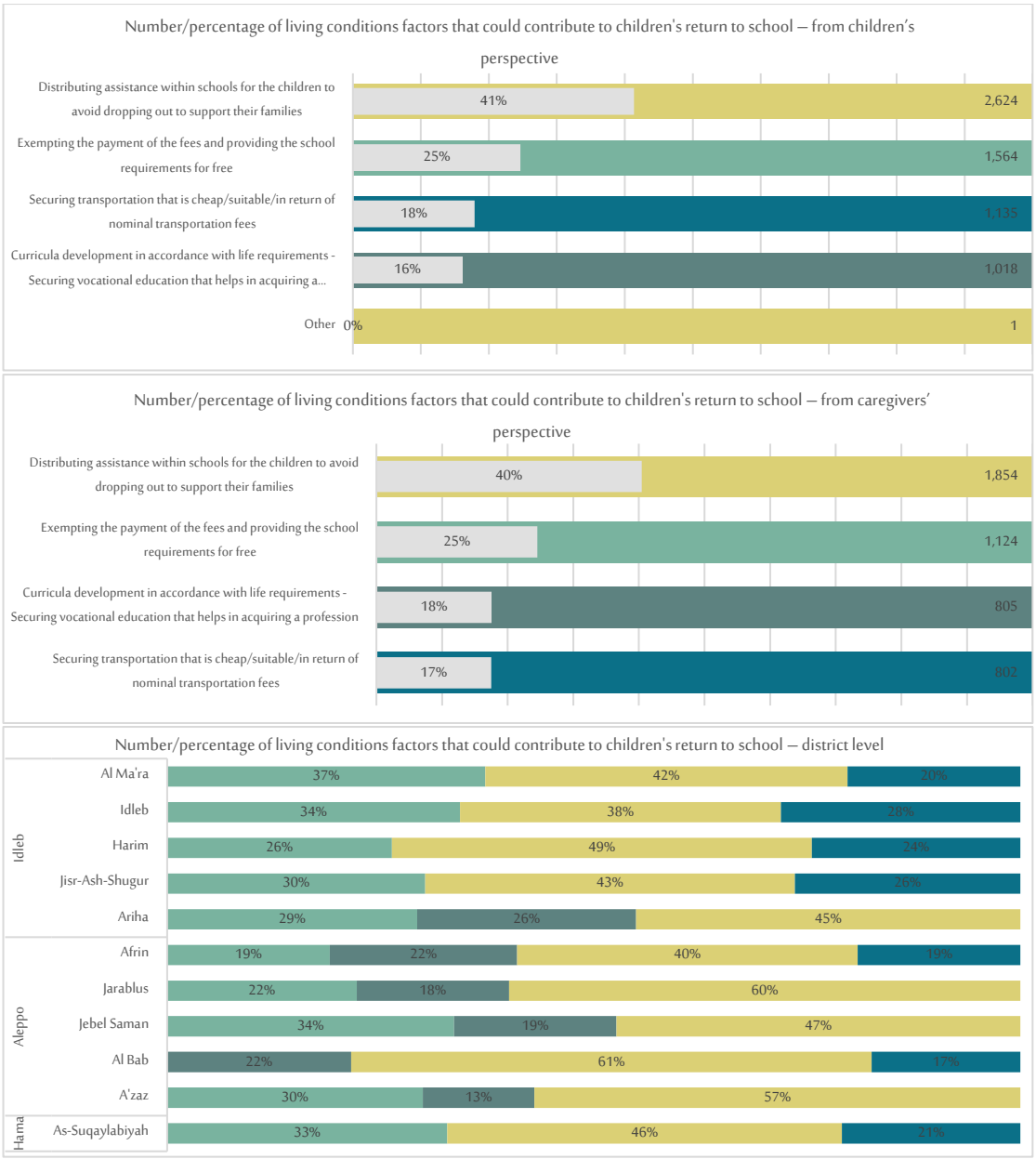
Figure 38 Educational Process Factors that Could Contribute to Children's Return to School



3. Factors Associated with the Living Conditions that Contribute to Children's Return to School

Through the surveys the enumerators conducted with OOSC, and their caregivers, they asked them about the factors associated with the living conditions that could contribute to the return of children to school; according to the results, on top of the list comes the distribution of humanitarian assistance at schools to prevent children from dropping out of school to support their families, as stated by 41% (2,624 children) of OOSC and 40% (1,854 persons) of caregivers. Additionally, 25% (1,564 children) of OOSC reported that the abolition of school fees and the provision of school supplies such as textbooks, stationery and uniforms could also contribute to their return to school, which is confirmed by 25% (1,124 persons) of caregivers. Moreover, 18% (1,135 children) of OOSC said that providing suitable transportation means for which students pay fares of small amounts of money could also contribute to their return to school, as also confirmed by 17% (802) caregivers. 16% (1,018 children) of OOSC reported that developing the curriculum (to include subjects related to handicrafts) in a way that is appropriate for, and goes in line with, the requirements of current life; or the provision of vocational education at schools could contribute to the return of children to school, as confirmed by 18% (805 persons) of caregivers.

Figure 39 Living Conditions Factors that could Contribute to Children's Return to School



4. Factors Associated with Customs and Traditions that Contribute to Children's Return to School

Through the surveys the enumerators conducted with OOSC, and their caregivers, they asked them about the factors associated with customs and traditions of their communities that could contribute to the return of children to school; the first of these factors is found to be having single-sex schools (separate schools for female students and other schools for male students) as 28% (1,139 children) of OOSC, and 53% (940 persons) of caregivers reported. Moreover, 26% (1,048 children) of OOSC said that raising community awareness of the dangers of having the children involved in labour, could also contribute to their return to school. Similarly, 24% (962 children) of OOSC reported that raising community awareness of the dangers of early marriage could also contribute to their return to school, as confirmed by 46% (830 persons) of caregivers. Furthermore, 22% (910 children) of OOSC reported that raising community

awareness of the need to get the male children educated instead of getting them involved in labour could also contribute to their return to school.

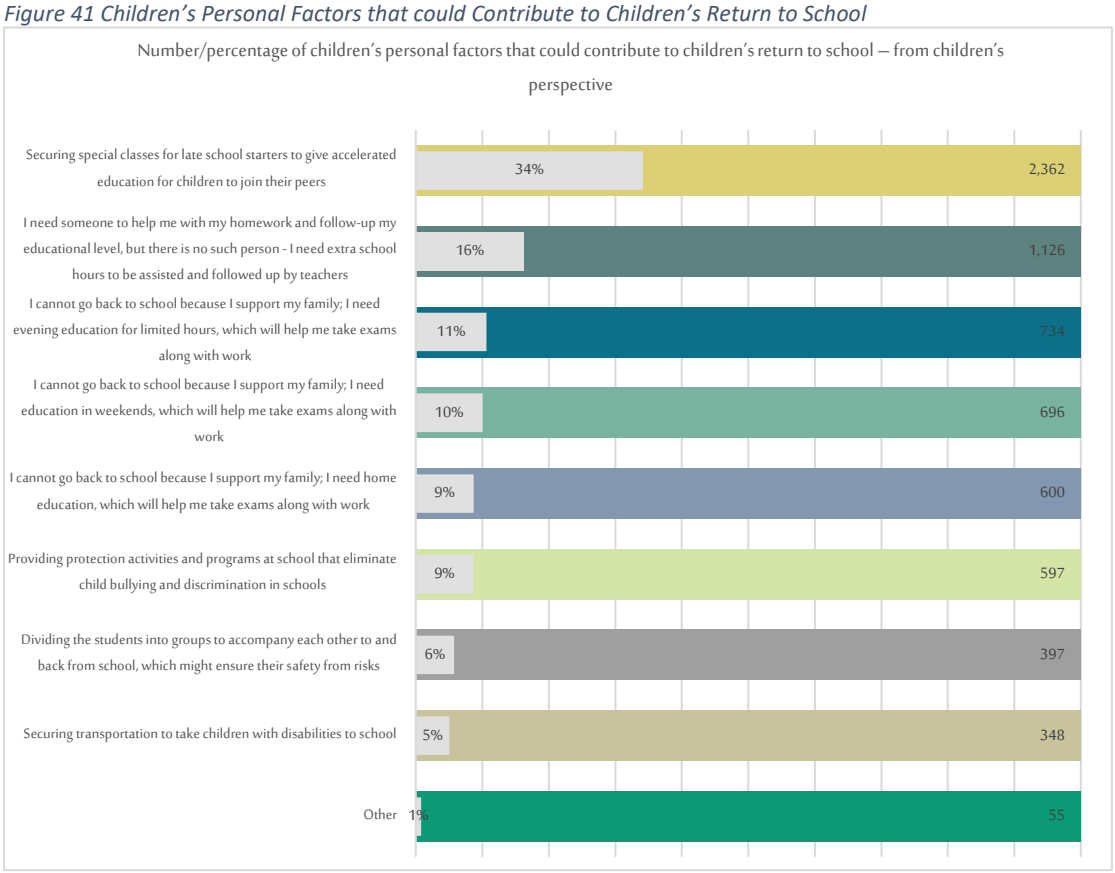
Figure 40 Factors Associated with Customs and Traditions that could Contribute to Children's Return to School

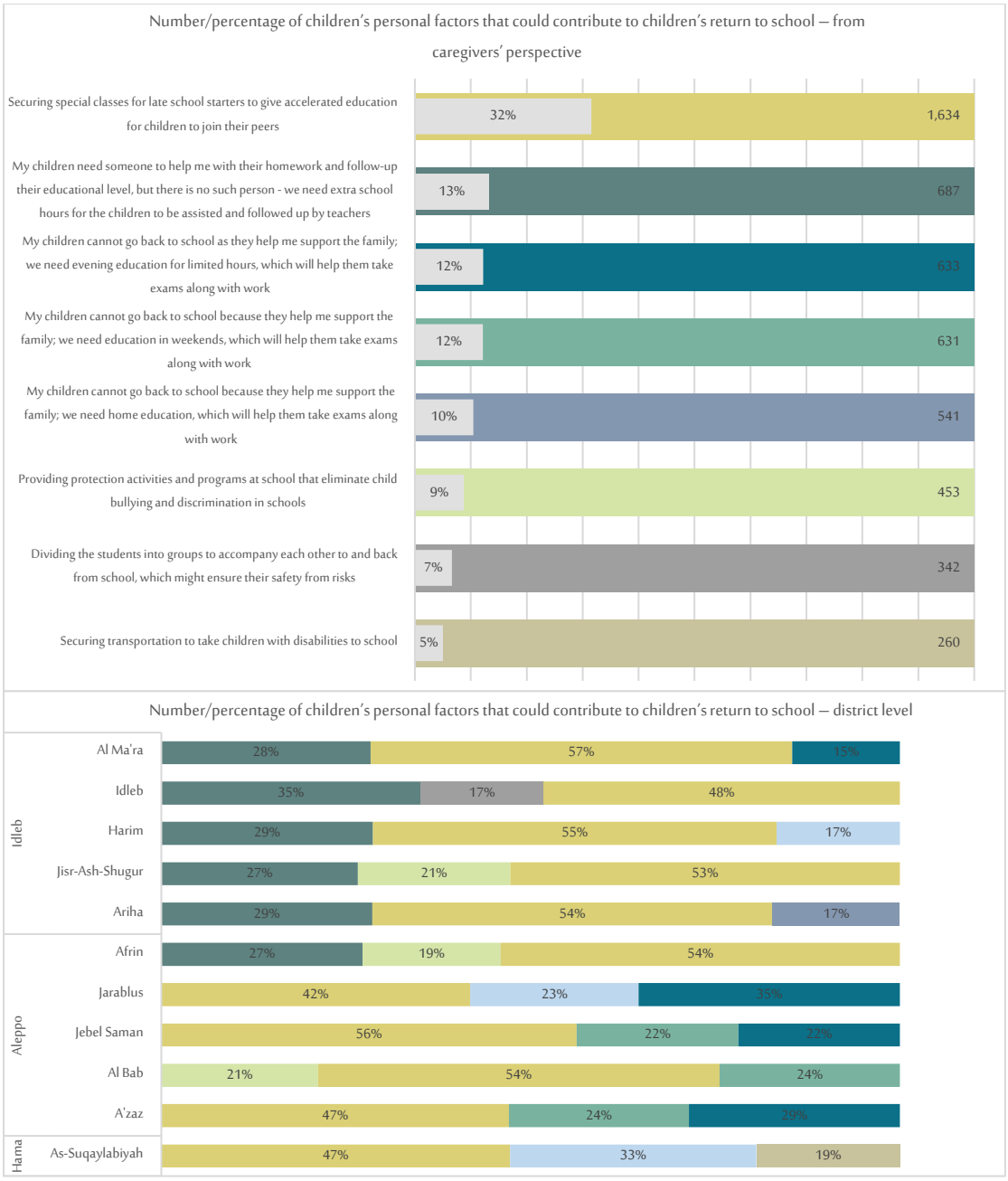
5. Children's Personal Factors that Contribute to their Return to School

Through the surveys the enumerators conducted with OOSC and their caregivers, they asked them about the personal factors of OOSC that could contribute to children's return to school. It is found that providing special classes for students lagging behind to provide accelerated learning for them so they can catch up with their peers in the grades commensurate with the ages of OOSC, as 32% (2,362 children) of OOSC and 32% (1,634 persons) of caregivers. 13% (1,126 children) of OOSC asked for having extra hours at school during which teachers at school can help them do their homework since they do not have anyone in their families to help them

study or follow up on their educational level. They added, these extra hours could contribute to children's return to school, as also confirmed by 13% (687 persons) of caregivers. Furthermore, 10% (734 children) of OOSC said they cannot return to school because they need to work to support their families, and they asked for providing evening classes at school for limited, yet intensive hours which will help them take the examinations besides their work, the thing which is confirmed by 12% (633 persons) of caregivers. 9% (696 children) of OOSC said they cannot return to school because they work to support their families and asked for extra classes during holidays at school, as confirmed by 12% (631 persons) of caregivers. 8% (600 children) of OOSC said that they cannot return to school since they work to provide for their families, and asked for self-learning training programs and specialized centres to enable them to study at home and take the examinations besides their work, the thing which is confirmed by 10% (541 persons) of caregivers. Moreover, 8% (597 children) of OOSC reported that the provision of school activities which address bullying and discrimination among children could contribute to children's return to school, as confirmed by 9% (453 persons) of caregivers. Furthermore, 5% (397 children) of OOSC who dropped out of school due to being exposed to dangers on the way to school said that having their peers accompanying them could reduce the risks they are exposed to. Accordingly, having groups of students going to school together could contribute to their return to school, as confirmed by 7% (342 people) of caregivers. Additionally, 5% (348 children with disabilities) of disabled OOSC reported that providing transportation to school could contribute to their return to school, as also confirmed by 5% (260 persons) of caregivers.

Figure 41 Children's Personal Factors that could Contribute to Children's Return to School





Section Seven: Out-of-School Learning

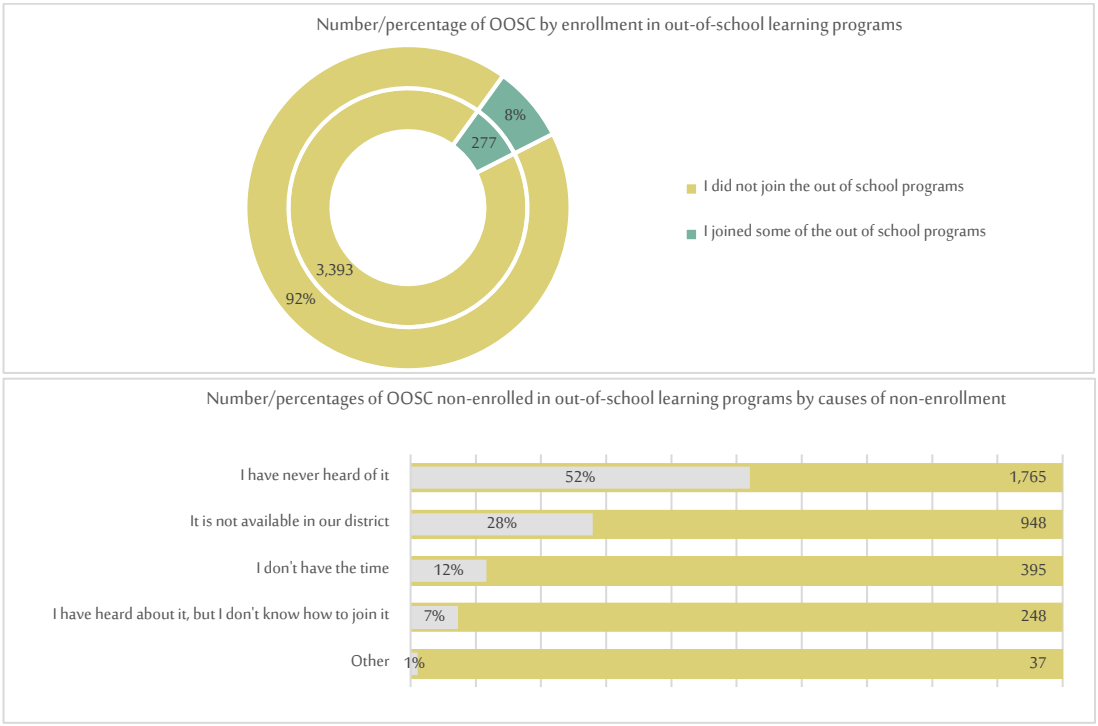
In some areas where there are barriers preventing children from going to school, some education partners implement several programs that help children to learn outside of school. These programs are a temporary solution for out-of-school children, but do not substitute for school. The purpose of applying these programs is helping children and local communities to overcome all obstacles and to reintegrate children into the proper educational environment, which is regular schools.

OOSC Enrollment in Out-of-School Learning Programs

When asked whether they joined any out-of-school learning programs, only 8% (277 children) of the interviewed OOSC stated that they have joined out-of-school learning programs,

whereas 92% (3,393 children) have not. According to Manahel report[12] on OOSC, *8.33% of out-of-school children indicated that they were enrolled in a nonformal education program.*

Figure 42 OOSC Enrollment in Out-of-School Learning Programs



The education cluster partners are implementing various learning programs targeting OOSC; most importantly e-learning, remote learning, self-learning and basic literacy and numeracy programs, in addition to a number of OOSC attending Sharia or Quranic courses.

The study revealed that 92% (3,393 children) of OOSC did not join any out-of-school learning programs; 52% (1,765 children) of this group have never heard of such programs, 28% (948 children) have heard of those programs which are not implemented in their areas, 7% (248 children) have heard of those programs but don't know how to join them, whereas 12% (395 children) have heard of those programs but no time to join.

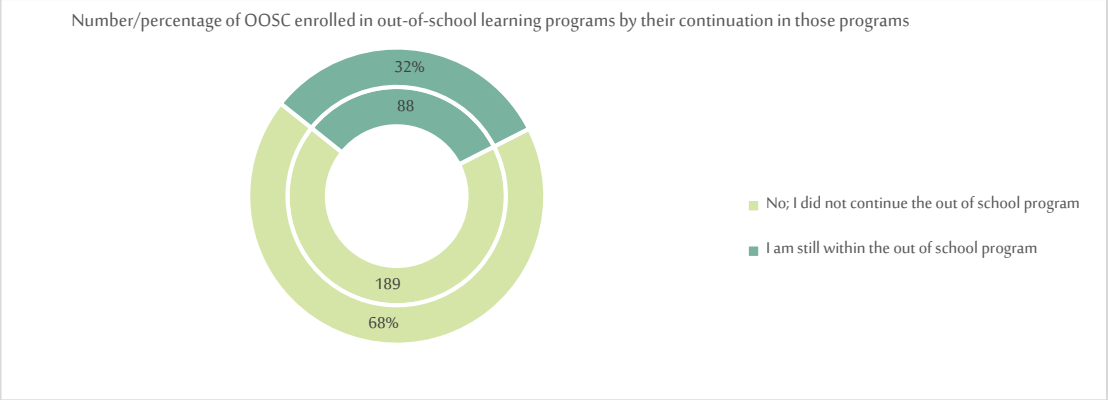
Moreover, the remaining 1% (37 children) of those OOSC did not join any out-of-school learning programs for multiple reasons: 8 OOSC are disabled and cannot register in such programs, 8 others lack the desire for education "I do not like education", a number of married OOSC stated that marriage have prevented them from joining such programs, whereas some OOSC reported that such programs target dropouts of early schooling stages and do not address those in later stages "lack of programs addressing OOSC from higher age groups".

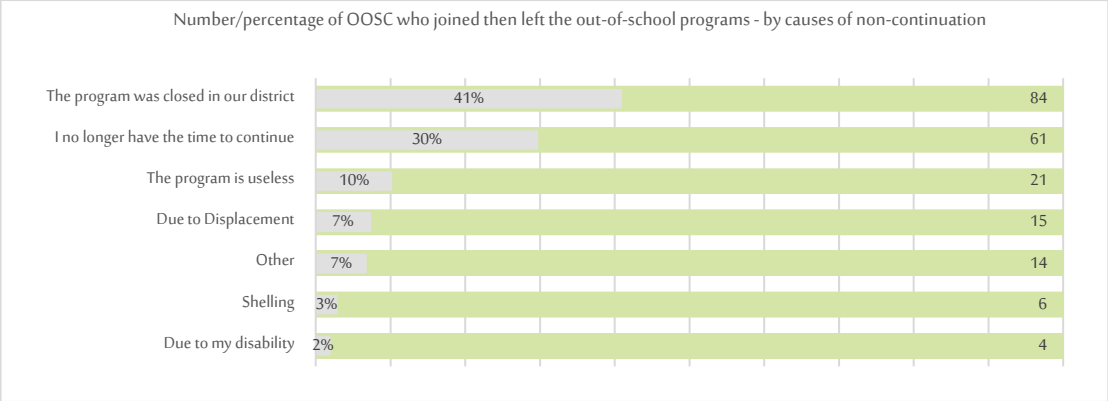
1. OOSC Continuation in Out-of-School Learning Programs

When asked if they continued or left their out-of-school learning programs, only 32% (88 children) of this group of OOSC continued in their out-of-school learning programs, whereas 68% (189 children) did not.

[12] Chemonics International and School-to-School International conducted a report *"Manahel Out-of-School Children Report"*on Out of School Children within 24 sub-districts out of 26 sub-districts in Idleb governorate, through the Manahel Program.

Figure 43 OOSC Continuation in Out-of-School Learning Programs





41% (84 children) of OOSC who joined out-of-school learning programs did not continue because the program was closed in their areas, 30% (61 children) no longer have time to continue, 10% (21 children) thought those programs are useless, 7% (15 children) are repeatedly displaced, 3% (6 children) left the programs due to the deteriorated security conditions and constant shelling on their districts, whereas 2% (4 children) are disabled.

The remaining 7% of OOSC left their out-of-school learning programs for multiple reasons, and most importantly because their peers (neighbors or relatives) left the programs or because their parents prevented them from continuing the program.

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European Union Civil Protection
and Humanitarian Aid

Joint Education Needs Assessment for Out of School Children (JENA)

Issued by the Information Management Unit (IMU) of the ACU in cooperation with Save the Children International and Education Cluster in Turkey and with the participation of 13 Syrian NGOs specialized in Education.

Funded by ECHO