



emissa

Fostering Community Resilience

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
FOR **YOUTH**
IN NORTHWESTERN **SYRIA**

Introduction

In the deteriorating economic conditions of northwestern Syria, youth suffer from a lack of job opportunities, driving them towards limited options such as militarization, migration, or reliance on humanitarian aid. This report, conducted by Emissa Organization, is based on a field survey of 1,600 displaced youth in Idlib and Aleppo countryside, 50% of whom are females.

General Economic Conditions

- **War and its Economic Impact:** After nine years of war that has exhausted the country's economy, many young people found themselves unemployed, especially after many government employees defected in areas controlled by armed opposition.
- **Scarcity of Job Opportunities:** With scarce job opportunities, brokerage, favoritism, and nepotism have flourished, particularly in the NGO sector.

Economic Impact on Women

- **Specific Challenges for Women:** Women suffer from difficulties in finding job opportunities due to societal constraints and traditional roles, facing significant challenges in engaging in jobs available to men.
- **Statistics:**
 - 55% of women felt frustrated after searching for job opportunities without success.
 - 25% of them are still looking for job opportunities.
 - The remaining work in unstable seasonal jobs.

Youth's Trend Towards Militarization

- **Reasons:** The difficult economic conditions have pushed many young people to consider volunteering in military factions as a last resort.
- **Statistics:**
 - 26% of youth decided they would volunteer in military factions.
 - 37% are considering volunteering but have not yet made the decision.
 - The remaining youth preferred not to answer this question.

Population and Displacement Reality

- **High Population Density and Displacement:** Idlib and the Aleppo countryside experience high population density due to extensive displacement to the region and the return of many young people from Turkey to northwestern Syria in recent months.
- **Job Opportunities:** With this displacement, job opportunities have become almost non-existent after many displaced people lost their livelihoods and lands to regime forces.

Administrative Corruption

- **Impact of Corruption:** There are no organizations implementing large projects to employ unemployed youth. Additionally, administrative corruption in civilian institutions affiliated with the Salvation Government, affiliated with Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (formerly Jabhat al-Nusra), has contributed to the increase in youth unemployment rates.

Environmental and Climatic Effects

- **Environmental Situation:** Northwestern Syria has become a prime example of severe vulnerabilities and suffering caused by wars, waves of displacement, and natural disasters.
- **Climatic Challenges:** Climatic threats exacerbate water and food insecurity, extreme poverty, and the public health crisis.
- **Statistics:** Today, 15.3 million people need humanitarian assistance in the country, including 4.1 million people in the northwest alone.

Proposed Actions to Mitigate Environmental Consequences

- **Immediate Relief:** Ensure the provision of urgent food and medical support to the affected.
- **Alleviating Structural Inequality:** Work to reduce economic and social gaps through sustainable development programs.
- **Addressing Politicization of Recovery Efforts:** Maintain neutrality and independence of humanitarian efforts and avoid exploiting them for political purposes.

Political Challenges

- **Current Policies:** The post-earthquake phase seems to pave the way for consolidating the regime and normalizing relations with it, instead of enhancing the ability of the neediest populations to endure and adapt.
- **Structural Inequalities:** These increase the severity of environmental risks and worsen the harsh conditions experienced by the border area populations.

With the ongoing escalation of unemployment and environmental challenges year after year, Syrian youth live in the hope of restoring stability to their country, finding safe investment climates, rebuilding state institutions, and providing jobs for degree holders away from favoritism, prioritizing those with competencies and expertise.

Recommendations

- **Support Sustainable Development Projects:** Provide job opportunities for youth, especially women.
- **Combat Administrative Corruption:** Enhance transparency in employment.
- **Training Programs:** Help youth acquire new skills that match local market needs.
- **Address Environmental and Climatic Consequences:** Implement policies and programs that comprehensively address climatic and environmental repercussions.
- **Enhance Neutrality and Independence of Humanitarian Efforts:** Ensure that aid reaches the neediest groups.