

Damascus Governorate, November 2017

Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria (HSOS)

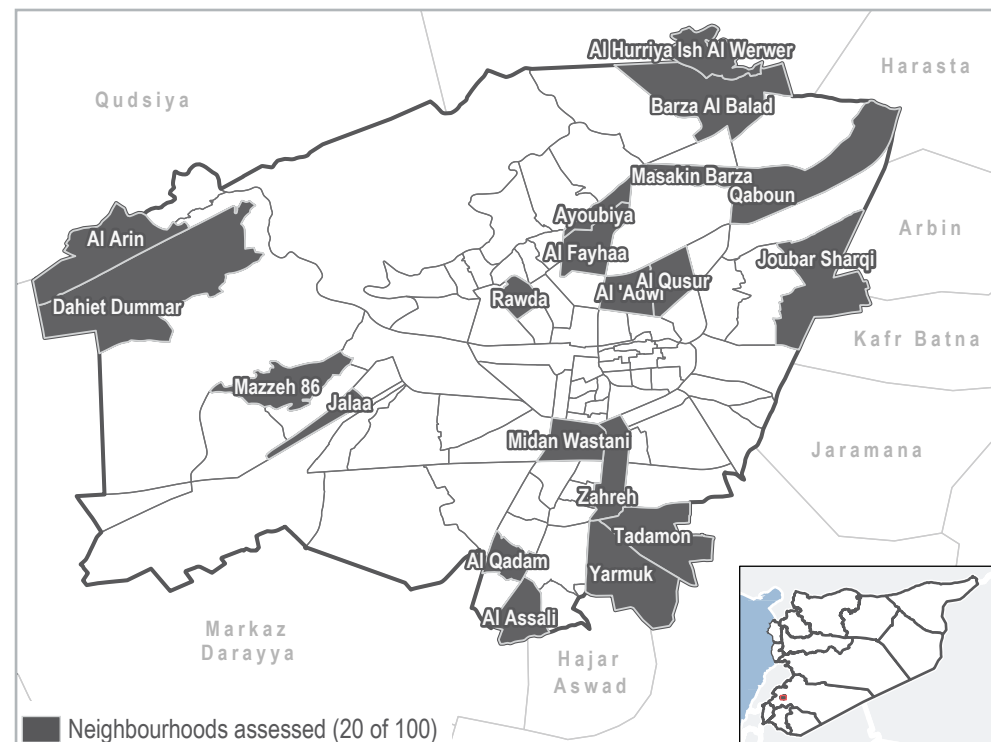
OVERALL FINDINGS¹

Syria's capital Damascus is located in the southwest of the country, close to the border with Lebanon. The situation in the governorate is relatively stable compared to other assessed governorates across Syria. In November 2017, none of the assessed neighbourhoods in Damascus reported departures of members of their pre-conflict population, while **two** neighbourhoods, Dahiet Dummar and Rawda, witnessed spontaneous refugee returns². Refugees reportedly returned from Lebanon and Turkey due to insufficient or reduced access to basic services in both host countries. IDPs were present in **80%** of the assessed neighbourhoods. Of these neighbourhoods, **45%** reported hosting over 1,000 IDPs while **two** neighbourhoods, Masakin Barza and Mazzeh 86, reported the presence of over 10,000 IDPs. Approximately 37,500 IDPs lived in Masakin Barza in November, out of a total estimated population of 162,500 individuals. In Mazzeh 86, KIs estimated that 10,050 IDPs were residing in the neighbourhood with an estimated population of 44,250. No IDPs reportedly left either neighbourhood in November. KIs in both neighbourhoods cited access to employment, income and shelter as one of the main reasons why IDPs chose to remain.

Formerly contested Qaboun, Tadamon and currently contested Joubar Sharqi, reported that **76-100%** of buildings in their neighbourhood were damaged. Tadamon also reported that no health facilities were available in the neighbourhood, while in Joubar Sharqi health facilities were available, but security concerns to enter and remain in facilities posed a barrier to accessing healthcare. Children in Tadamon and Joubar Sharqi were unable to access education in their neighbourhood due to the destruction of facilities in Joubar Sharqi, and unsafe routes to services in Tadamon³. However, children in Tadamon were able to attend school in nearby areas, while children in Joubar Sharqi were not able to attend school at all. For additional information on [Tadamon](#), please visit the REACH Resource Centre.

Of the assessed neighbourhoods, **40%** reported challenges in accessing sufficient amounts of food. The most commonly reported challenge was the high cost of some food items. Residents in communities reporting challenges accessing food predominantly relied on stable and unstable employment, business or trade, high risk illegal work and remittances from outside Syria, and **all but one** of these communities reported that residents were skipping meals to cope with insufficient income.

Coverage



Top 3 reported priority needs

1. Protection
2. Healthcare
3. Food security

Demographics*

1,925,387 people in need

1,028,157 897,230

* Figures based on HNO 2018 population data for the entire governorate.

KEY EVENTS

Qaboun and Burza classified as besieged by the UN.	Evacuations from the besieged district of Burza towards Idlib begin ⁴ .	Evacuations from the besieged district of Qaboun towards Idlib begin ⁵ .	Interagency convoy delivers humanitarian aid to residents of the besieged Yarmuk camp ⁶ .	First inter-agency aid convoy enters Qaboun since it was classified as besieged in April ⁷ .	Babila checkpoint reopens, allowing commercial goods to enter Babila, Yalda, Beit Sahem and Yarmuk ⁸ .
April	8 May	14 May	7 September	15 October	23 November

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DISPLACEMENT

15 - 18 Estimated number of IDP arrivals in assessed neighbourhoods in November.

18 - 27 Estimated number of spontaneous returnee arrivals in assessed neighbourhoods in November².

Neighbourhoods with the largest estimated number of IDP arrivals:

Dahiet Dummar **15 - 18**
No further arrivals reported

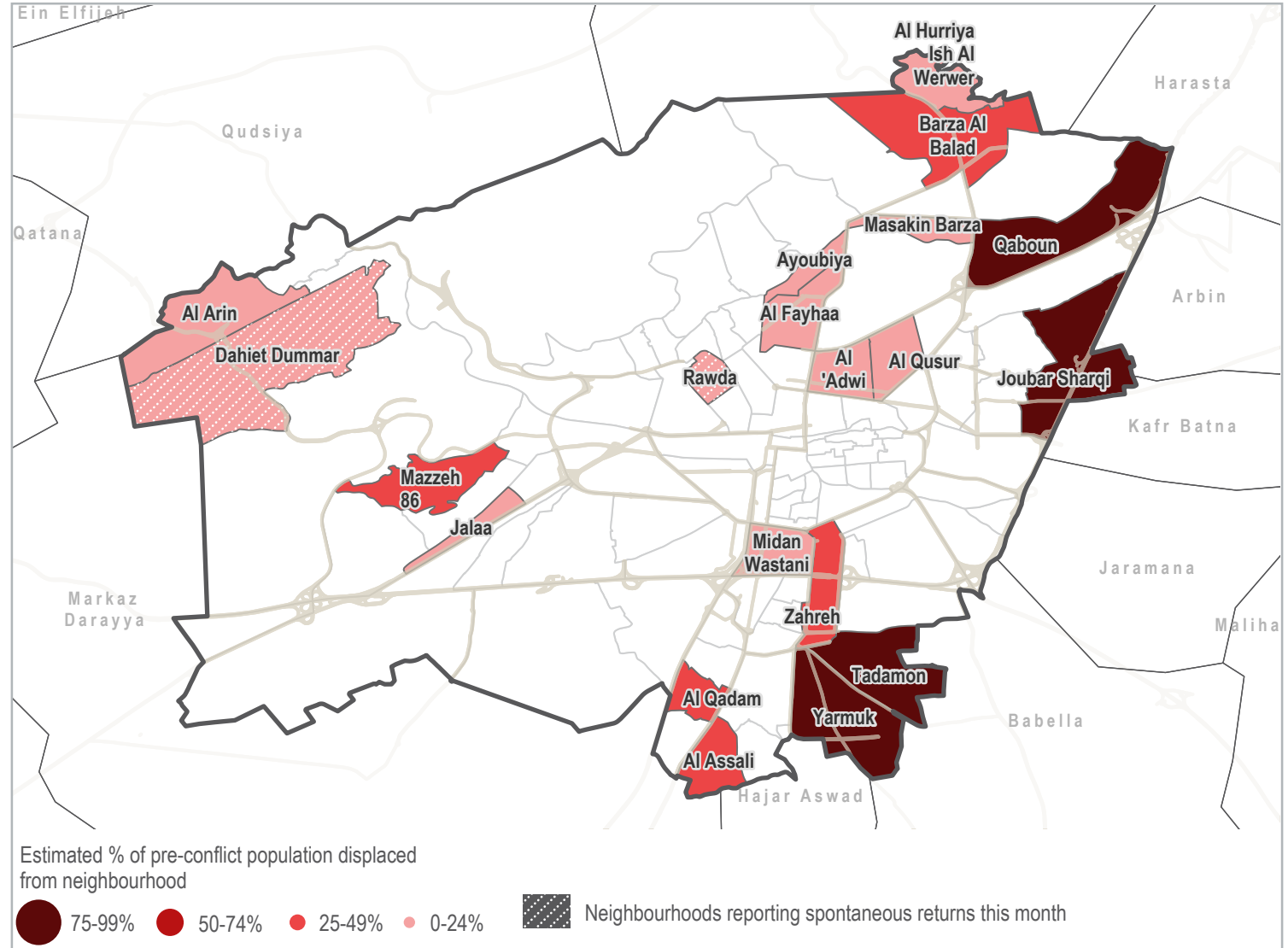
Top 3 sub-districts of origin of most IDPs arrivals^{3,4}:

Qudsiya (Rural Damascus) 100%

20 neighbourhoods reported no PCP departures. Top 3 reasons for PCP displacement in the remaining **0** assessed neighbourhoods^{3,4}:

No reported PCP departures

Estimated percent of pre-conflict population (PCP) displaced from neighbourhood:



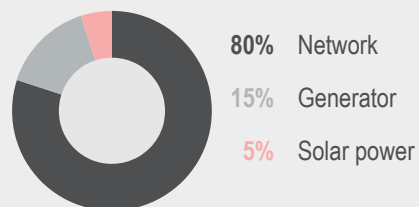
³ Multiple choices allowed.

⁴ By percent of communities reporting.

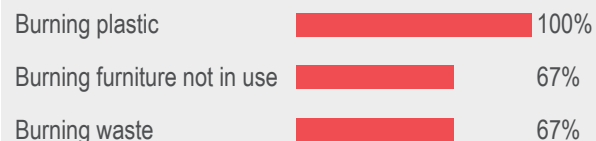
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SHELTER AND NFI

Primary source of electricity reported:⁴



17 neighbourhoods reported no lack of fuel. Most common strategies to cope with a lack of fuel in the remaining 3 assessed neighbourhoods^{3,4}:



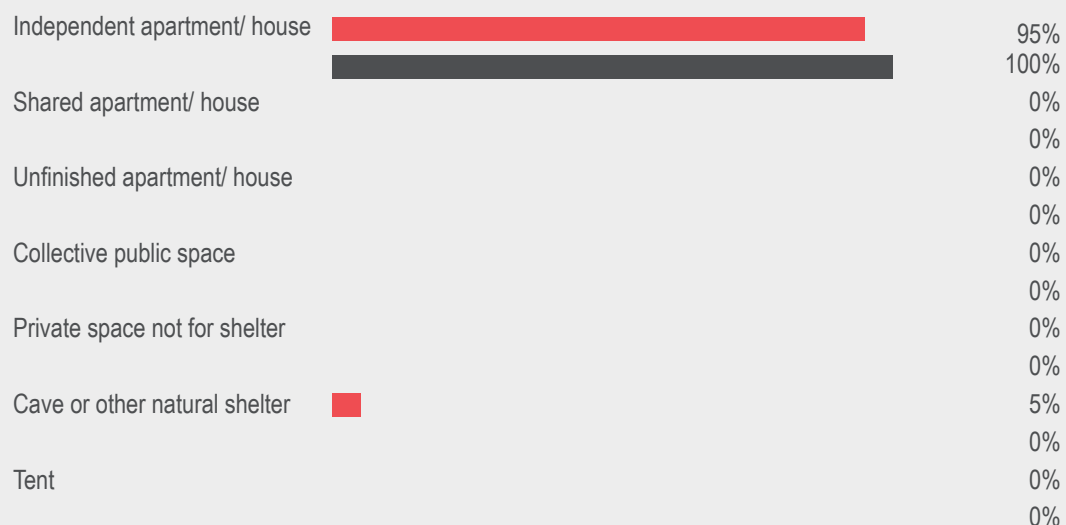
18,284 SYP

Governorate average reported rent price in Syrian Pounds (SYP) across assessed neighbourhoods.⁵

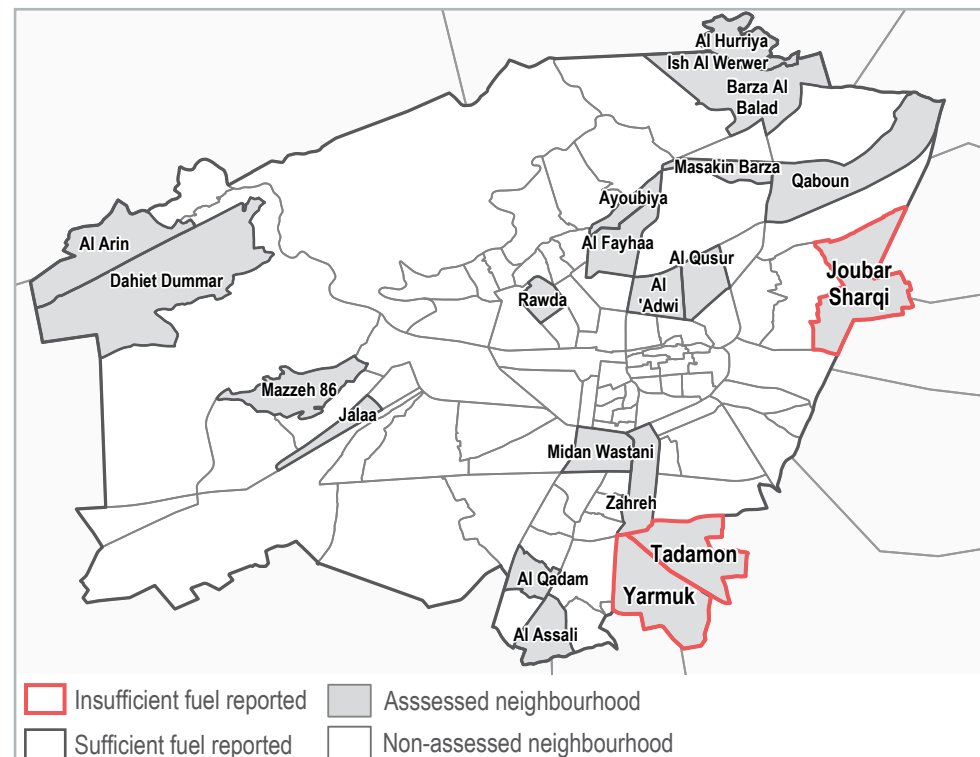
6,815 SYP

Syrian average reported rent price in SYP across assessed neighbourhoods.⁵

Most commonly reported shelter type for PCP (in red) and IDP (in grey) households⁴:



Fuel sufficiency:



Reported fuel prices (in SYP)⁵:

Fuel type:	Governorate average price in November:	Governorate average price in October:	Syrian average price in November:
Coal (1 kilogram)	396	395	332
Diesel (1 litre)	299	303	496
Butane (1 canister)	2,908	2,913	6,275
Firewood (1 tonne)	58,529	57,500	85,004

³ Multiple choices allowed.

⁴ By percent of neighbourhoods reporting.

⁵ 1 USD = 508 SYP (UN operational rates of exchange as of 1 November 2017)

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HEALTH

- 1 Neighbourhood reported that no medical items were available in their neighbourhood.
- 1 Neighbourhood reported that the majority of women did not have access to formal health facilities to give birth.

14 neighbourhoods reported that residents experienced no barriers to accessing healthcare services. The barriers in the remaining 6 neighbourhoods were^{3,4}:

Security concerns when traveling to facilities	<div style="width: 50%; height: 10px; background-color: red;"></div>	50%
No health facilities available in the area	<div style="width: 33%; height: 10px; background-color: red;"></div>	33%
Old age	<div style="width: 33%; height: 10px; background-color: red;"></div>	33%
Security concerns to enter/remain in facilities	<div style="width: 33%; height: 10px; background-color: red;"></div>	33%
Disability/injuries/illness preventing travel	<div style="width: 33%; height: 10px; background-color: red;"></div>	33%
Not permitted to enter facilities	<div style="width: 17%; height: 10px; background-color: red;"></div>	17%
High cost of transportation to facilities	<div style="width: 17%; height: 10px; background-color: red;"></div>	17%
Healthcare services too expensive	<div style="width: 17%; height: 10px; background-color: red;"></div>	17%

Communities reporting that residents used one of the following medical coping strategies:

Using non-medical items for treatment:

Recycling medical items:

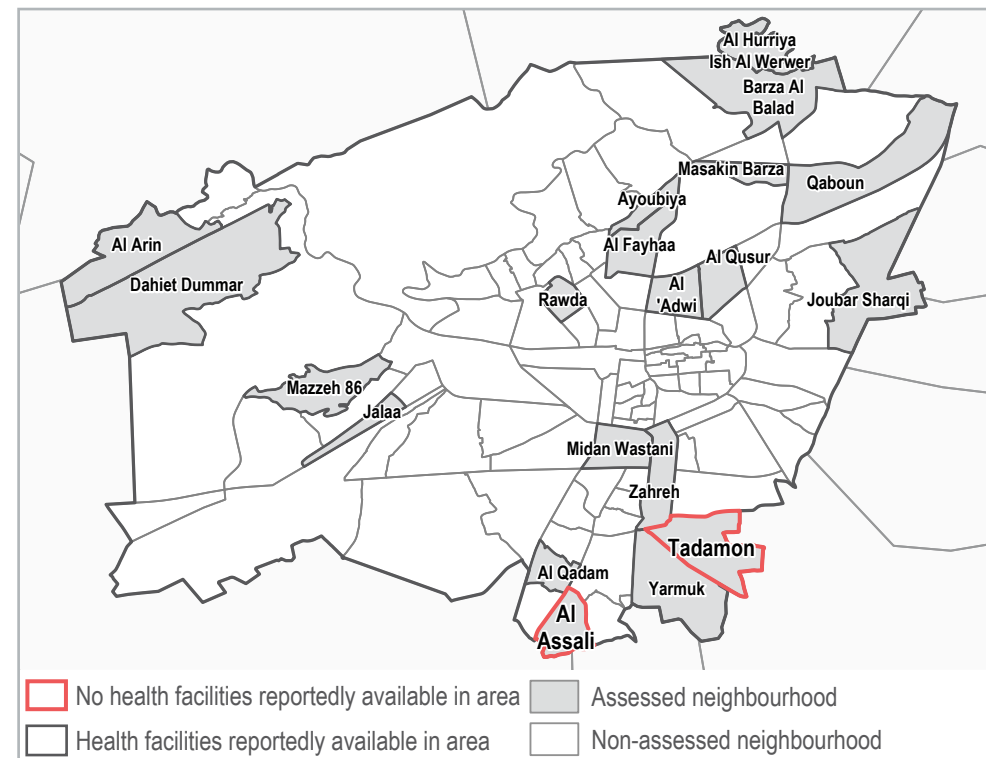
Carrying out operations without anaesthesia:

None

Yarmuk

None

Presence of health facilities in assessed communities:



Top 3 most needed healthcare services reported^{3,4}:

Psychosocial support	80%
Medicine	35%
Surgical care	25%

Top 3 most common health problems reported^{3,4}:

Acute respiratory infections	75%
Severe diseases affecting those younger than 5	65%
Fever	20%

³ Multiple choices allowed.

⁴ By percent of communities reporting.

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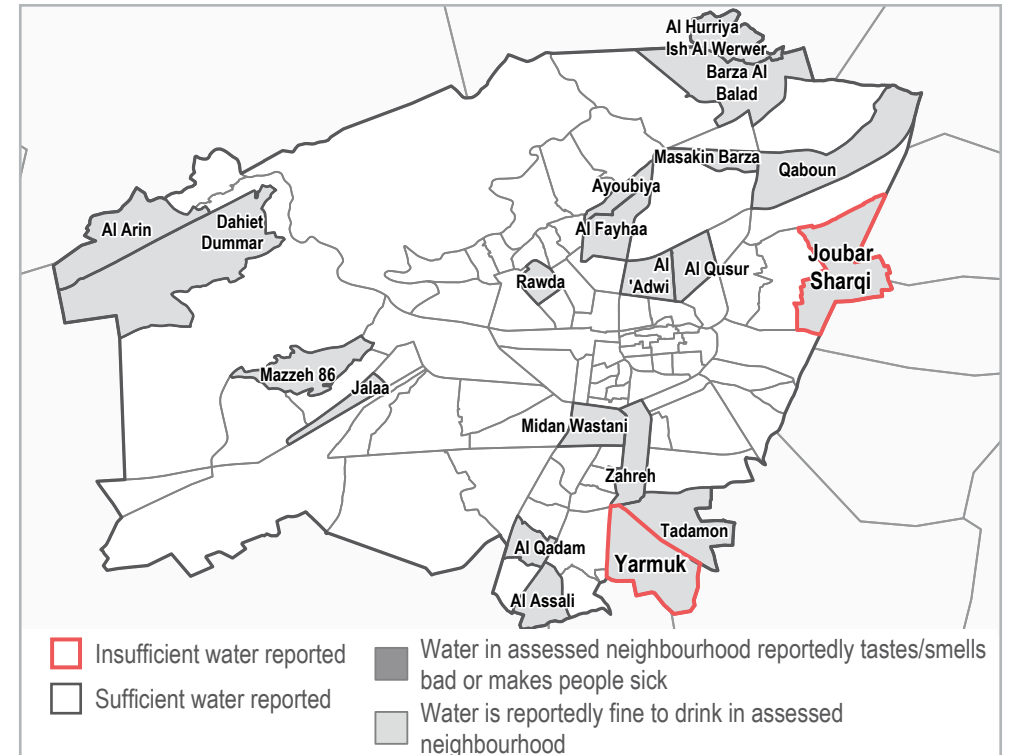
- 0** Neighbourhoods reported that water from their primary source tasted and/or smelled bad.
- 0** Neighbourhoods reported that drinking water from their primary source made people sick.

20 neighbourhoods reported that they had no problems with latrines^{3,4}.

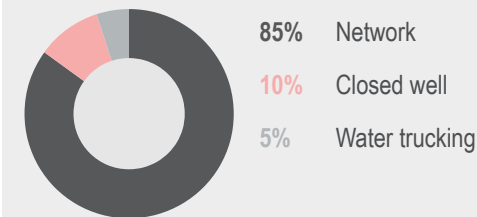
18 neighbourhoods reported that they had sufficient amounts of water to meet household needs. The most common coping strategies to deal with a lack of water in the remaining **2** assessed neighbourhoods were^{3,4}:

Spend money usually spent on other things to buy water	<div style="width: 50%; height: 10px; background-color: red;"></div>	50%
Modify hygiene practices	<div style="width: 50%; height: 10px; background-color: red;"></div>	50%

Water sufficiency for household needs:



Primary drinking water source reported⁴:



Top 3 reported methods of garbage disposal^{3,4}:

Disposed at designated site	60%
Buried or burned	15%
Public free collection	15%

³ Multiple choices allowed.

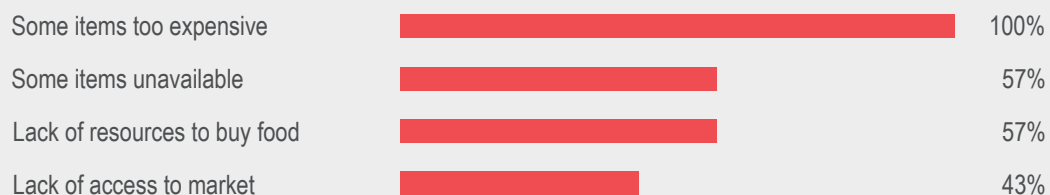
⁴ By percent of neighbourhoods reporting.

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FOOD SECURITY

- 5** Neighbourhoods reported not having received a food distribution in the last 12 months.
- 1** Neighbourhood reported that residents were unable to purchase food at shops and markets.

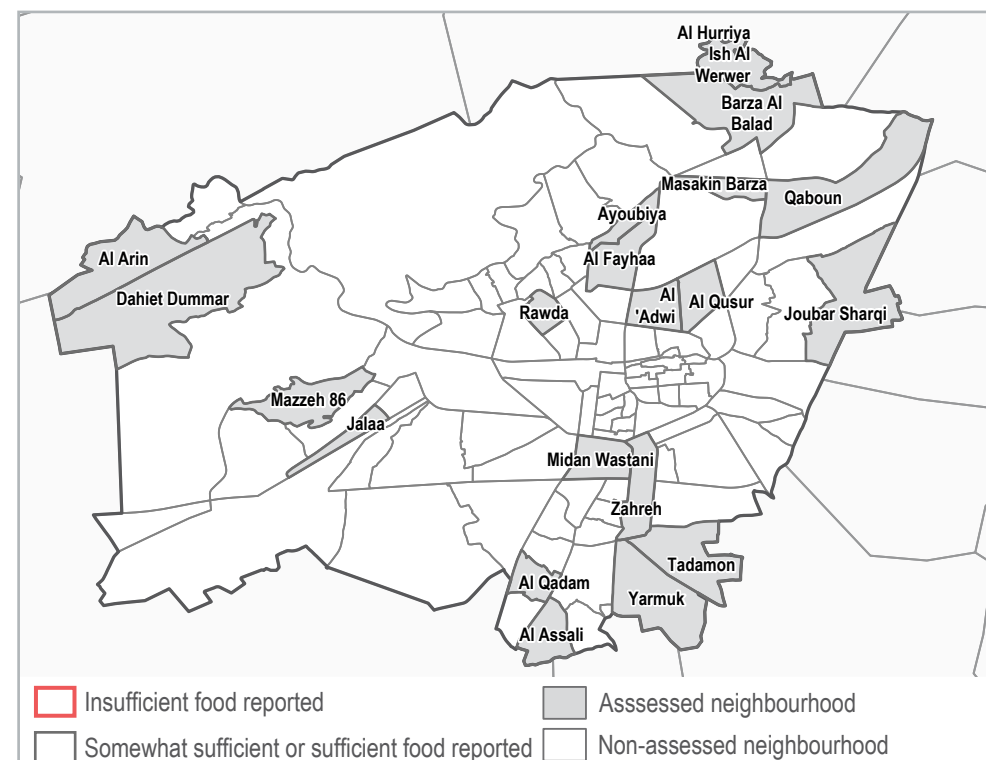
13 neighbourhoods reported that they had enough food to meet household needs. The most common difficulties experienced in the remaining **7** assessed neighbourhoods were^{3,4}:



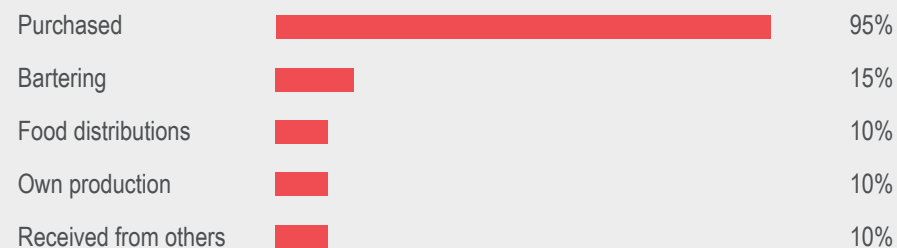
Core food item prices reported (in SYP)⁵:

Food item:	Governorate average price in November :	Governorate average price in October:	Syrian average price in November:
Bread public bakery (1 loaf)	54	50	115
Rice (1 kilogram)	469	504	641
Lentils (1 kilogram)	489	507	445
Sugar (1 kilogram)	331	317	895
Cooking oil (1 litre)	642	658	964

Food sufficiency:



Most common ways of obtaining food reported^{3,4}:



³ Multiple choices allowed.

⁵ 1 USD = 508 SYP (UN operational rates of exchange as of 1 November 2017)

⁴ By percent of communities reporting.

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LIVELIHOODS

50,000 - 100,000 SYP

Most commonly reported household income range⁵.

26,534 SYP

Governorate average food basket price^{5,6}.

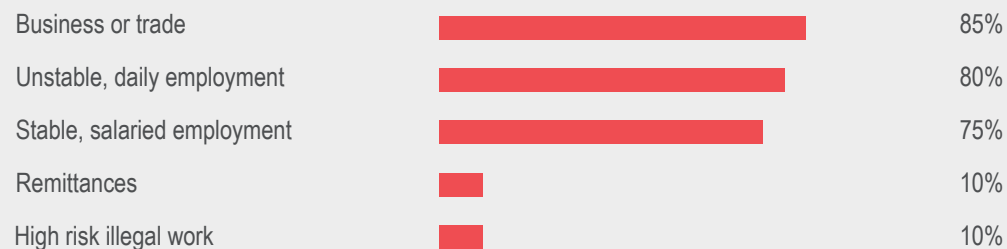
0

Neighbourhoods reporting that residents used extreme food-based coping strategies to deal with insufficient income⁷.

3 neighbourhoods reported that residents had enough income to cover household needs. The most commonly reported coping strategies to deal with a lack of income in the remaining **17** assessed neighbourhoods were^{3,4}:

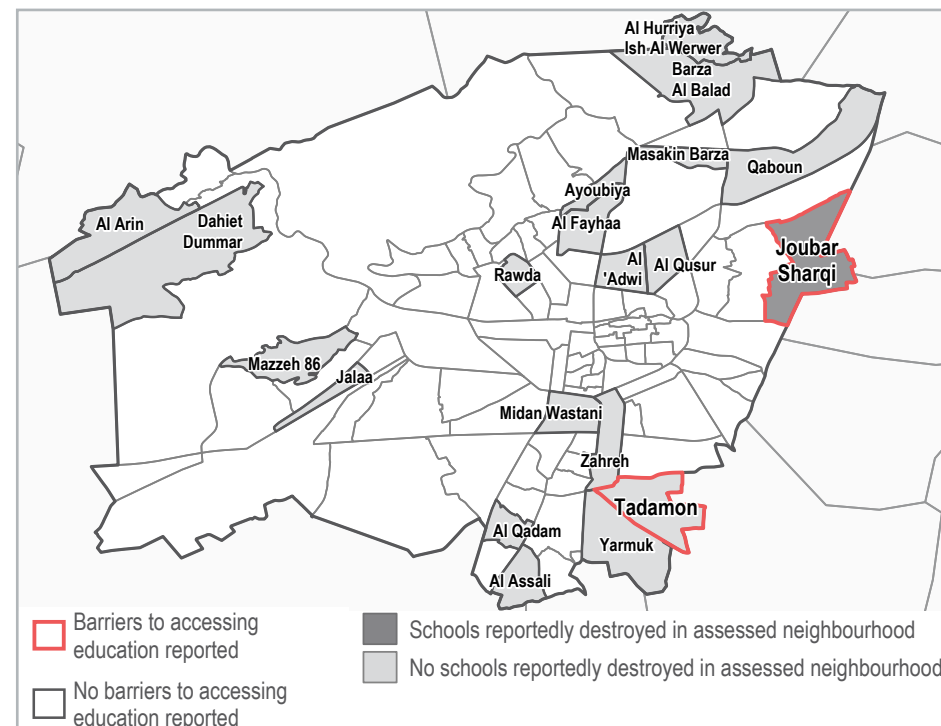


Most commonly reported main sources of income^{3,4}:



EDUCATION

Barriers to accessing education services:



17 neighbourhoods reported that most children were able to access education. The most commonly reported barriers to education in the remaining **3** assessed neighbourhoods were:^{3,4}:



³ Multiple choices allowed.

⁴ By percent of neighbourhoods reporting.

⁵ 1 USD = 508 SYP (UN operational rates of exchange as of 1 November 2017)

⁶ Calculation of the average price of a food basket is based on the World Food Programme's standard basket of dry goods. The food basket includes 37 kg of bread, 19 kg of rice, 19 kg of lentils, 5 kg of sugar, and 7 kg of vegetable oil, and provides 1,930 kcal a day for a family of five for a month.

⁷ Extreme food-based strategies: Eating food waste; eating non-edible plants and spending days without eating.

METHODOLOGY

The HSOS project, formerly known as the AoO (Area of Origin) project, is a monthly assessment that aims to provide comprehensive, multi-sectoral information about the humanitarian situation inside Syria. This factsheet presents information gathered in 20 neighbourhoods in December 2017, referring to the situation in Damascus Governorate in November 2017. It presents key indicators, rather than the entire range of indicators gathered in the HSOS questionnaire. For -level data on assessed sub-districts in Al Hasakeh, Dar'a, Idleb, Rural Damascus and Quneitra, please refer to the monthly sub-district factsheets, available on the REACH Resource Centre. The complete HSOS dataset is disseminated monthly via the REACH Syria mailing list.

Wherever possible, information was collected through an enumerator network. REACH enumerators are based inside Syria and interview Key Informants (KIs) directly in the community they report about. Where access and security constraints rendered direct data collection unfeasible, KI interviews were conducted indirectly through participants identified in camps and settlements in neighbouring countries by REACH field teams. Participants contact KIs in their community in Syria to collect information about their community. KIs were asked to report at the community level.

A minimum of three KIs were interviewed per community to enhance data accuracy. KIs generally included local council members, Syrian NGO workers, medical professionals, teachers, shop owners and farmers, among others, and were chosen based on their community-level or sector specific knowledge. In cases where KIs disagreed on a certain piece of information, enumerators triangulated the data with secondary sources or selected the response provided by the KI with the more relevant sector-specific background. For each question asked, confidence levels were assigned based on the KIs area of expertise and knowledge of the sector-specific situation. The confidence levels associated with each question are presented in the final dataset. The full confidence matrix used to assign confidence levels is available upon request.

Findings were triangulated through secondary sources, including news monitoring and humanitarian reports. Where necessary, follow-up was conducted with enumerators and participants. Findings are indicative rather than representative, and should not be generalised across the governorate.

ENDNOTES

¹ All information and figures reported in HSOS factsheets refer to the situation in assessed communities and cannot be generalised to other non-assessed communities of the governorate.

² Returns are not necessarily voluntary, safe, or sustainable.

³ 'Children' includes all persons below the age of 18.

⁴ Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. (9 May 2017). Syrian rebels quit suburb of Damascus as Assad tightens grip. Retrieved from <http://www.syriahr.com>.

⁵ Al-Khalidi. (14 May 2017). Over 2,000 rebels, families evacuate Damascus district: state media. Reuters. Retrieved from <https://www.reuters.com>.

⁶ UNHCR. (14 September 2017). Syria: Flash update on recent events - 14 September 2017. Reliefweb. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

⁷ UNHCR. (18 October 2017). Syria: Flash update on recent events - 18 October 2017. Reliefweb. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

⁸ Baric. (23 November 2017). Syrian War Daily – 23rd of November 2017. Retrieved from <https://syrianwardaily.wordpress.com>.

About REACH

REACH is a joint initiative of two international non-governmental organisations - ACTED and IMPACT Initiatives - and the UN Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT). REACH aims to strengthen evidence-based decision making by aid actors through efficient data collection, management and analysis before, during and after an emergency. By doing so, REACH contributes to ensuring that communities affected by emergencies receive the support they need. All REACH activities are conducted in support to, and within the framework of, inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. For more information, please visit our website: www.reach-initiative.org. You can contact us directly at: geneva@reach-initiative.org and follow us on Twitter: @REACH_info.