

# Damascus Governorate, April 2018

## Humanitarian Situation Overview in Syria (HSOS)

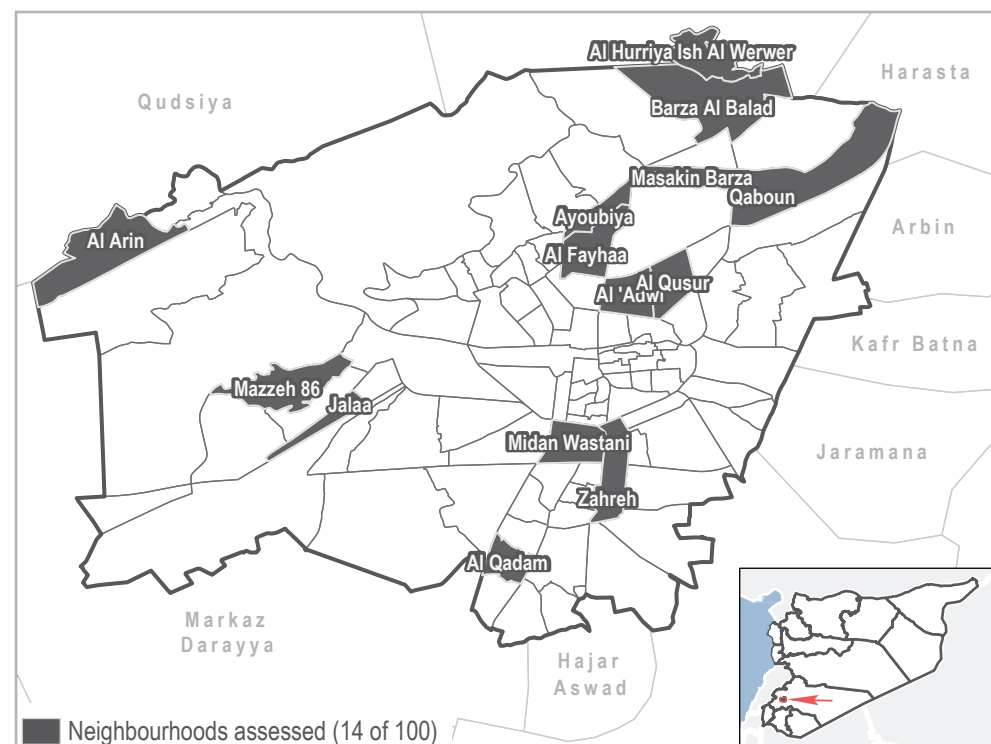
### OVERALL FINDINGS<sup>1</sup>

Syria's capital, Damascus city, is located in the southwest of the country, close to the border with Lebanon. Stability throughout the governorate has been impacted by ongoing conflict in Rural Damascus and the presence of opposing forces in near proximity to each other. On March 13th 2018, an evacuation of opposition groups in Al Qadam neighbourhood was conducted, while government forces simultaneously increased pressure to expel the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) out of southern Damascus city. Despite this, besides Qaboun, which has remained largely empty since conflict subsided in May 2017, all of the assessed neighbourhoods reported **over 50%** of pre-conflict population remained in April. However, Key Informants (KIs) reported that Qaboun neighbourhood saw approximately **125** spontaneous IDP returns from Arbin sub-district (Rural Damascus), in April<sup>2</sup>. The most commonly cited reason for return was a perceived cessation of hostilities in the communities of origin. As the conflict in Qaboun largely subsided almost a year ago, these returns were most likely attributable to the increase in conflict in and around the host communities located in Arbin sub-district.

KIs reported that an estimated **79,300 IDPs** were residing in the assessed neighbourhoods. The most commonly reported reason for IDPs to remain in these neighbourhoods was access to employment, income and shelter. In all of the assessed neighbourhoods, pre-conflict populations and IDPs were reportedly most commonly living in independent apartments or houses. While pre-conflict and returnee populations most commonly owned the property that they lived in, the majority of IDPs in the assessed neighbourhoods, were reportedly renting property. However, rent prices throughout the assessed neighbourhoods remained significantly higher than in areas outside of the capital. For example, rent prices in all but two neighbourhoods, Al Arin and Al Qadam, were above the Syrian average of **6,108 SYP** per room and were over **20,000 SYP** per room in **6**.

KIs reported that there was a sufficient amount of fuel and water to cover household needs in all of the assessed neighbourhoods. Additionally, **11** of the assessed neighbourhoods reported that residents experienced no difficulties in accessing healthcare. In the remaining **3** neighbourhoods, Qaboun, Al Hurriya, and Al Arin, the most commonly reported barriers were old age and disabilities, injuries, or illness preventing travel. Furthermore, Al Hurriya and Al Arin neighbourhoods also reported difficulties in accessing sufficient amounts of food. In these neighbourhoods, the most commonly reported barrier was some food items being too expensive as well as a lack of resources to buy available food. Additionally, **13** of the assessed neighbourhoods reported that the majority of household incomes in their neighbourhood were insufficient in April. However, KIs reported that stable salaried employment as well as unstable daily employment were the most common sources of income for residents in all of assessed neighbourhoods. This suggests that while residents in the majority of assessed neighbourhoods utilized daily employment (stable/unstable) as a means of obtaining income, the income generated by these activities may not suffice in covering essential needs.

### 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**

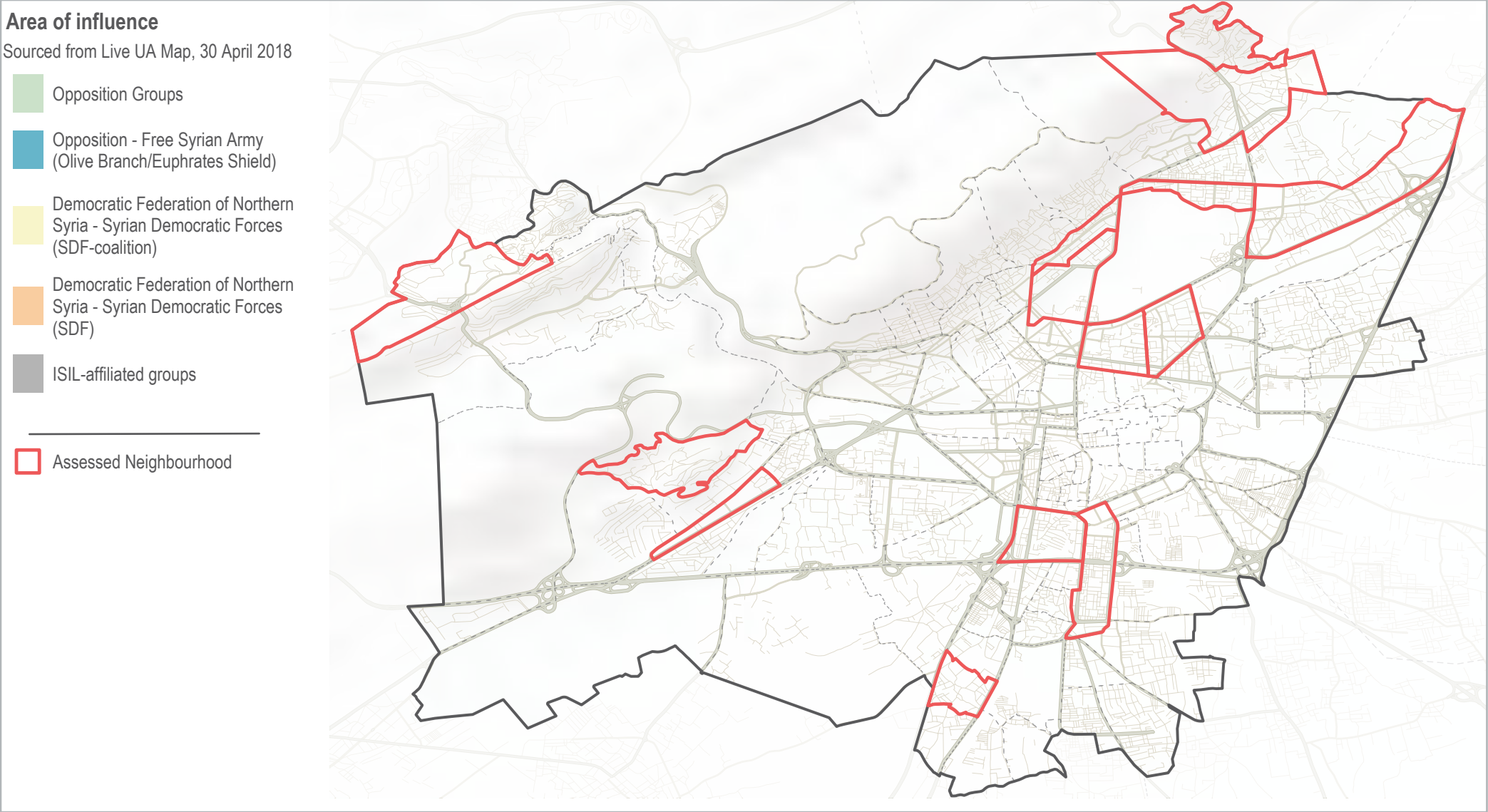
\* Figures based on HNO 2018 population data for the entire governorate.

### KEY EVENTS

Evacuations from the besieged districts of Burza and Qaboun towards Idlib begin <sup>3</sup> .	First inter-agency aid convoy enters Qaboun since it was classified as besieged in April <sup>4</sup> .	Violent clashes in Yarmuk despite ceasefire agreement between rival Armed Opposition Groups (AOGs) <sup>5</sup> .	Babila checkpoint reopens, allowing commercial goods to enter Babila, Yalda, Beit Sahem and Yarmuk <sup>6</sup> .	Evacuation of opposition groups out of Al Qadam neighbourhood <sup>7</sup> .	Government forces pressure ISIL in southern Damascus <sup>8</sup> .
May 2017	October 2017	Late October 2017	23 November 2017	13 March 2018	April 2018

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## Governorate areas of influence:



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## DISPLACEMENT

**0** Estimated number of IDP arrivals in assessed neighbourhoods in April.

**100 - 150** Estimated number of spontaneous returns in assessed neighbourhoods in April<sup>3</sup>.

### Neighbourhoods with the largest estimated number of IDP arrivals:

No IDP arrivals reported

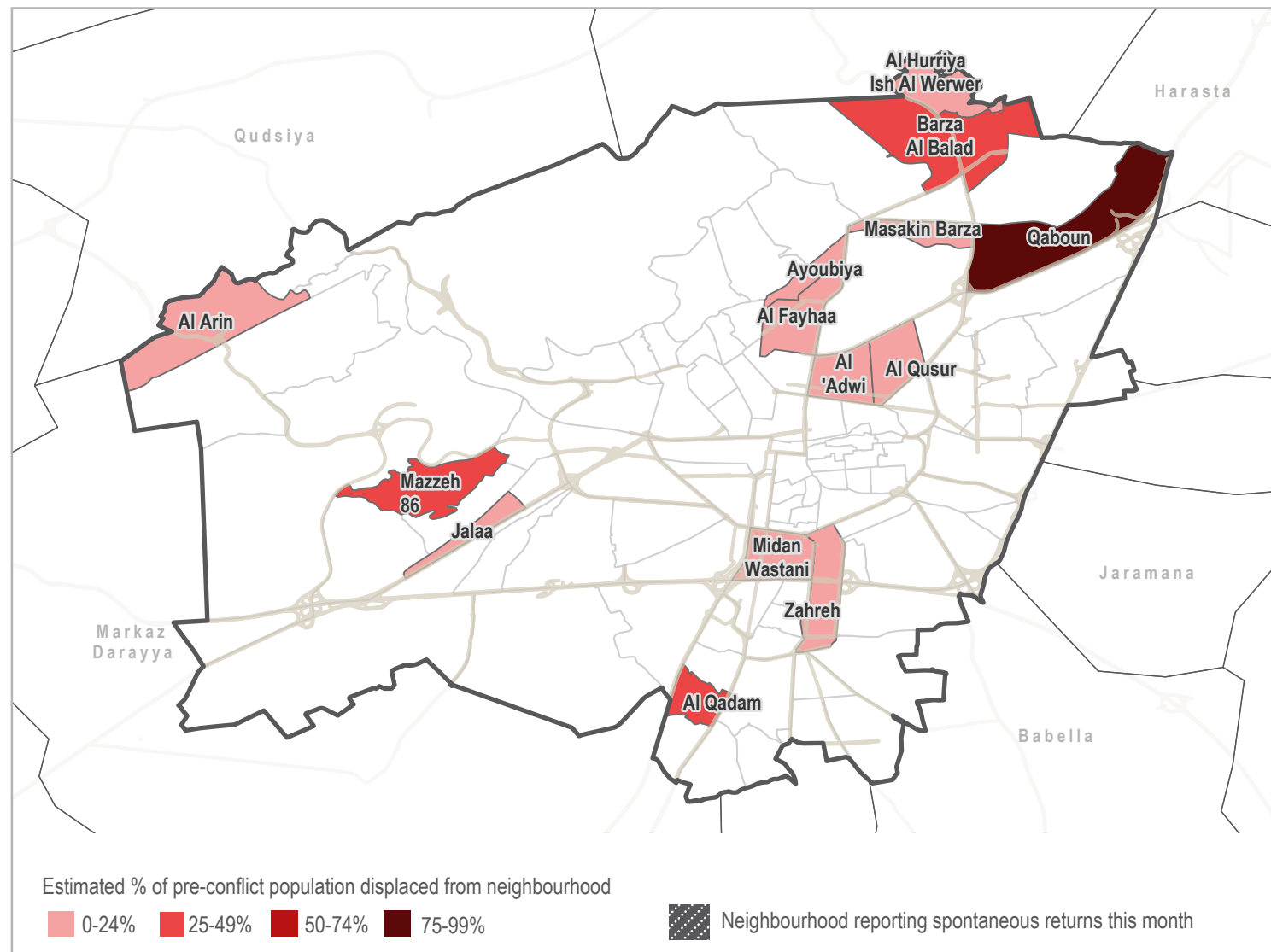
### Top 3 sub-districts of origin of most IDPs arrivals:

No reported IDP arrivals

### 14 neighbourhoods reported no PCP departures.

No reported PCP departures

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



<sup>3</sup> Multiple choices allowed.

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## SHELTER AND NFI

Primary source of electricity reported:<sup>4</sup>



14 neighbourhoods reported no lack of fuel.

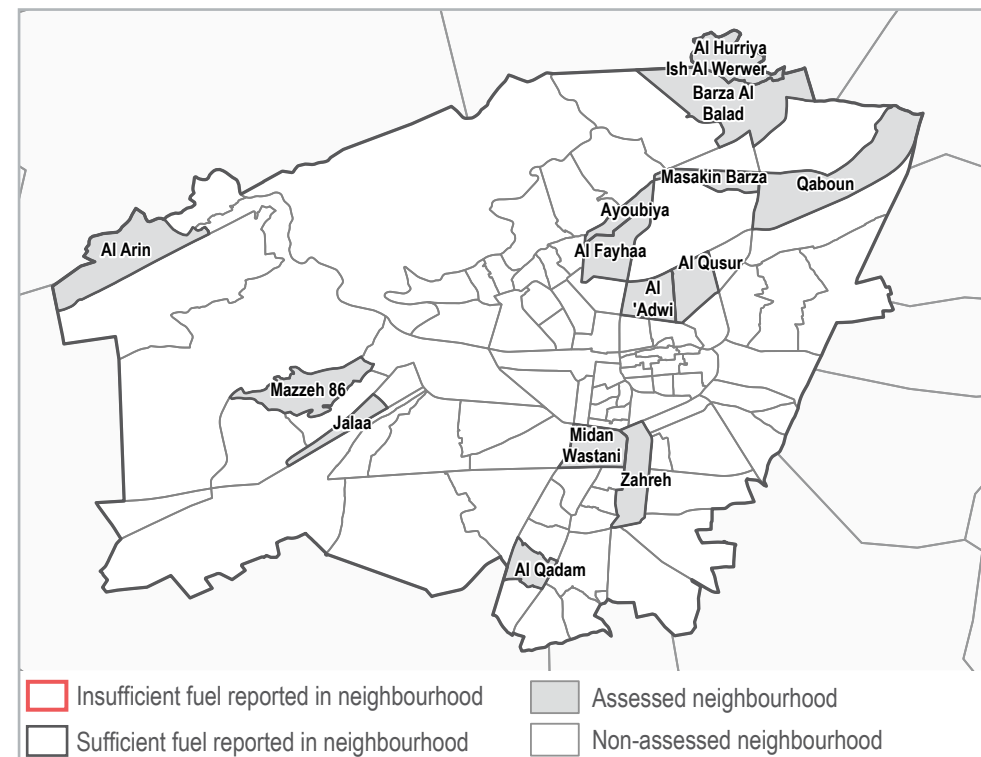
**18,904 SYP** Governorate average reported rent price in Syrian Pounds (SYP) across assessed neighbourhoods.<sup>5</sup>

**6,108 SYP** Syrian average reported rent price in SYP across assessed neighbourhoods.<sup>5</sup>

Most commonly reported shelter type for PCP (in red) and IDP (in grey) households<sup>4</sup>:



Fuel sufficiency:



Reported fuel prices (in SYP)<sup>5</sup>:

Fuel type:	Governorate average price in April:	Governorate average price in March:	Syrian average price in April:
Coal (1 kilogram)	357	355	280
Diesel (1 litre)	181	202	227
Butane (1 canister)	2,750	2,997	5,940
Firewood (1 tonne)	29,857	41,875	53,131

<sup>3</sup> Multiple choices allowed.

<sup>4</sup> By percent of neighbourhoods reporting.

<sup>5</sup> 1 USD = 434 SYP (UN operational rates of exchange as of 1 April 2018)

## HEALTH

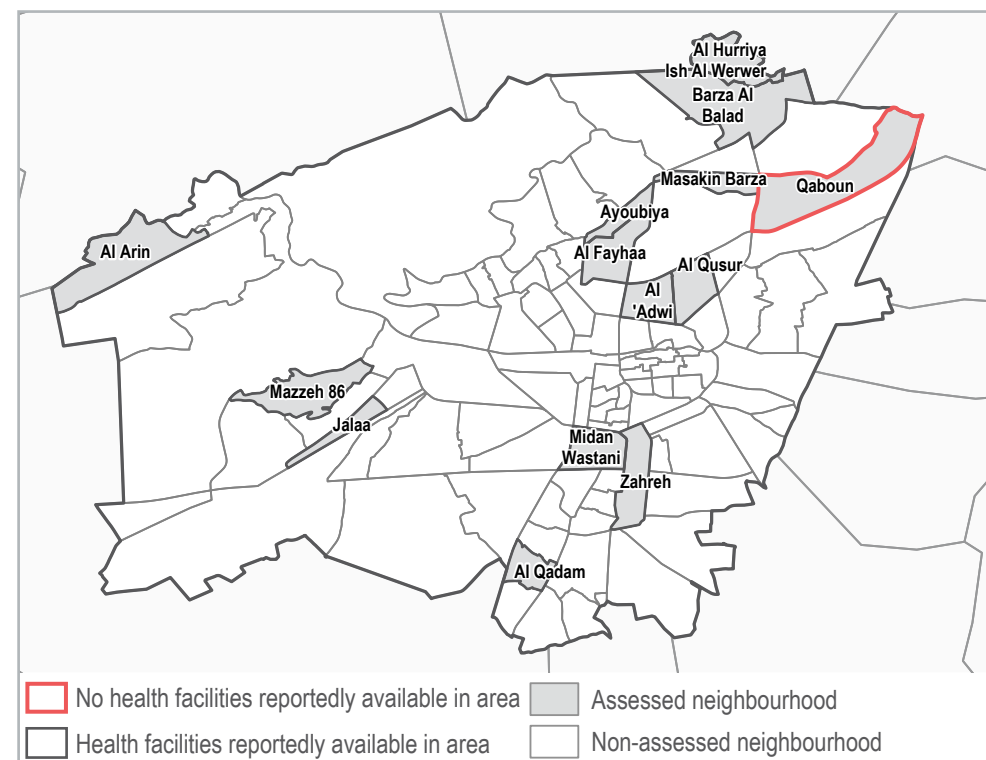
- 1 Neighbourhood reported that no medical items were available in their neighbourhood.
- 0 Neighbourhoods reported that the majority of women did not have access to formal health facilities to give birth.

**11** neighbourhoods reported that residents experienced no barriers to accessing healthcare services. The barriers in the remaining **3** neighbourhoods were<sup>3,4</sup>:

Disability/injuries/illness preventing travel	<div style="width: 67%; background-color: red; height: 10px;"></div>	67%
Old age	<div style="width: 67%; background-color: red; height: 10px;"></div>	67%
High cost of transportation to facilities	<div style="width: 33%; background-color: red; height: 10px;"></div>	33%
Healthcare services too expensive	<div style="width: 33%; background-color: red; height: 10px;"></div>	33%
No health facilities available in the area	<div style="width: 33%; background-color: red; height: 10px;"></div>	33%
Security concerns when traveling to facilities	<div style="width: 33%; background-color: red; height: 10px;"></div>	33%

**14** neighbourhoods reported that residents were not using coping strategies to deal with a lack of medical supplies.

### Presence of health facilities in assessed communities:



### Top 3 most needed healthcare services reported<sup>3,4</sup>:

Psychosocial support	86%
Psychiatric care	21%
Prosthetics and orthotics	21%

### Top 3 most common health problems reported<sup>3,4</sup>:

Acute respiratory infections	93%
Pregnancy related conditions	43%
Fever	36%

<sup>3</sup> Multiple choices allowed.

<sup>4</sup> By percent of neighbourhoods reporting.

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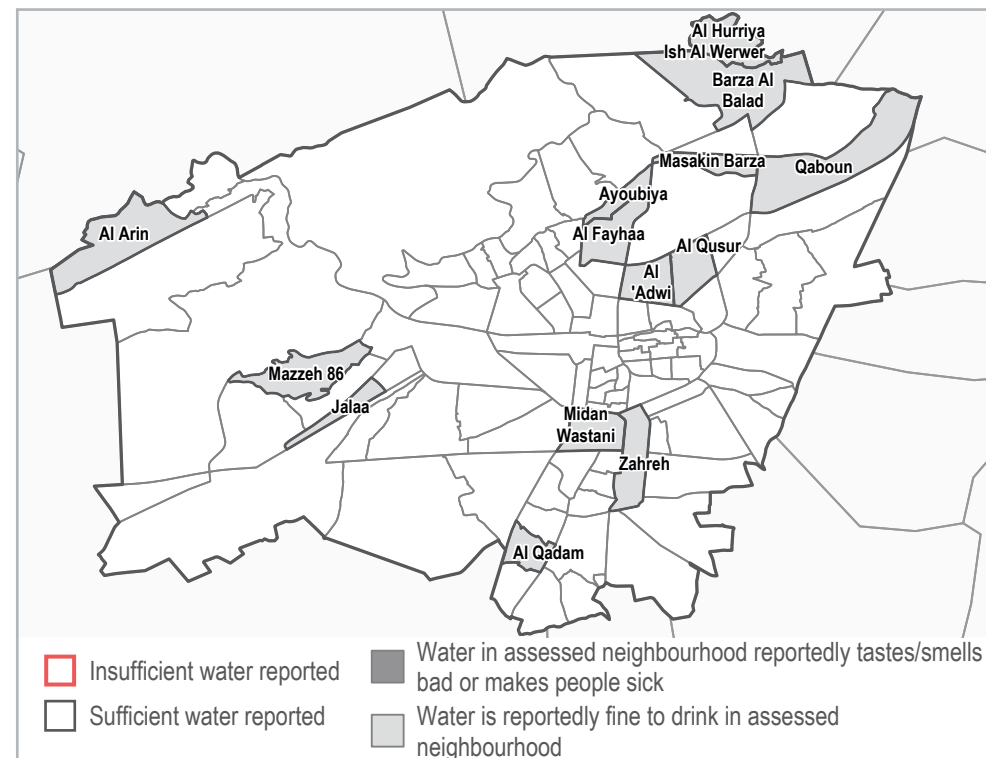
0 Neighbourhoods reported that water from their primary source tasted and/or smelled bad.

0 Neighbourhoods reported that drinking water from their primary source made people sick.

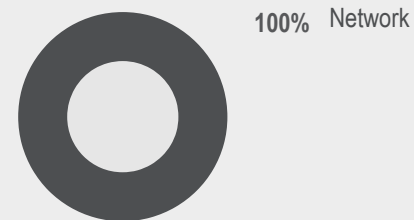
**14** neighbourhoods reported that residents had no problems with latrines.

**14** neighbourhoods reported that they had sufficient amounts of water to meet household needs.

## Water sufficiency for household needs:



## Primary drinking water source reported<sup>4</sup>:



## Top 3 reported methods of garbage disposal<sup>3,4</sup>:

Disposed at designated site	79%
Public free collection	21%

<sup>3</sup> Multiple choices allowed.

<sup>4</sup> By percent of neighbourhoods reporting.

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## FOOD SECURITY

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

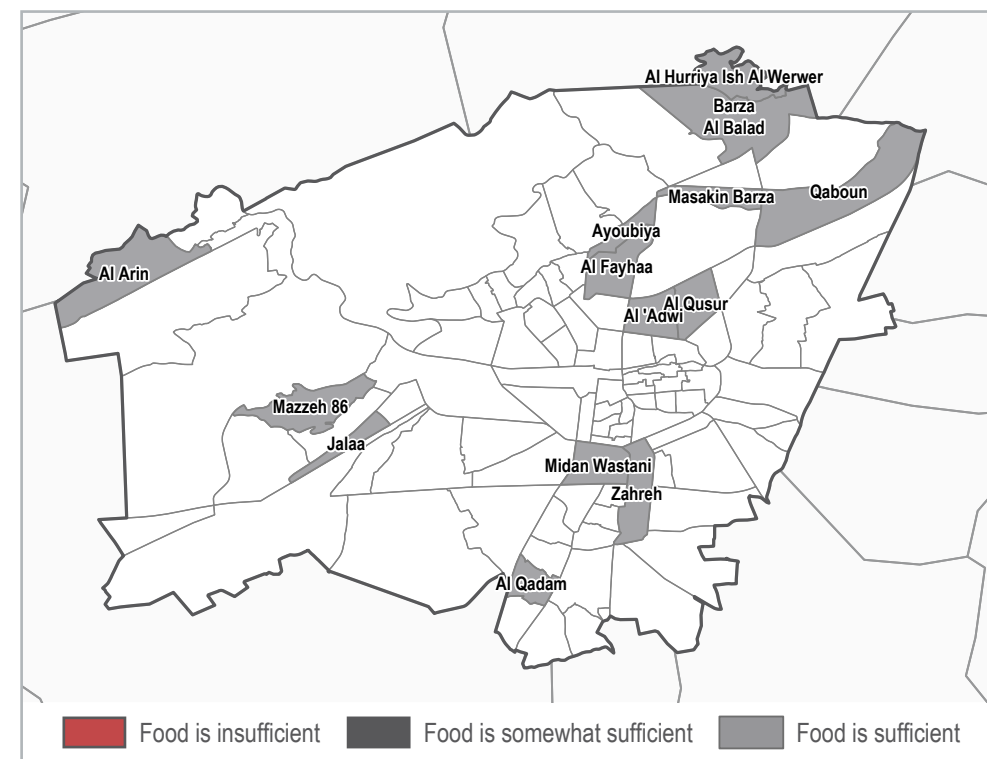
**11** neighbourhoods reported that residents experienced no challenges in accessing food. The most common difficulties experienced in the remaining **3** assessed neighbourhoods were<sup>3,4</sup>:



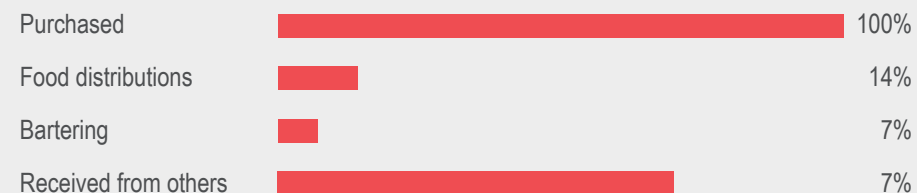
### Core food item prices reported (in SYP)<sup>5</sup>:

Food item:	Governorate average price in April:	Governorate average price in March:	Syrian average price in April:
Bread public bakery (1 loaf)	50	50	115
Rice (1 kilogram)	415	396	430
Lentils (1 kilogram)	400	427	330
Sugar (1 kilogram)	319	310	308
Cooking oil (1 litre)	609	625	546

### Food sufficiency:



### Most common ways of obtaining food reported<sup>3,4</sup>:



<sup>3</sup> Multiple choices allowed.

<sup>4</sup> By percent of neighbourhoods reporting.

<sup>5</sup> 1 USD = 434 SYP (UN operational rates of exchange as of 1 April 2018)

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## LIVELIHOODS

**50,000 - 100,000 SYP** Most commonly reported household income range<sup>5</sup>.

**23,357 SYP** Governorate average food basket price<sup>5,6</sup>.

**0** Neighbourhoods reported that residents used extreme food-based coping strategies to deal with insufficient income<sup>7</sup>.

**1** neighbourhood 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 **13** assessed neighbourhoods were<sup>3,4</sup>:



**Most commonly reported main sources of income<sup>3,4</sup>:**



<sup>3</sup> Multiple choices allowed.

<sup>4</sup> By percent of neighbourhoods reporting.

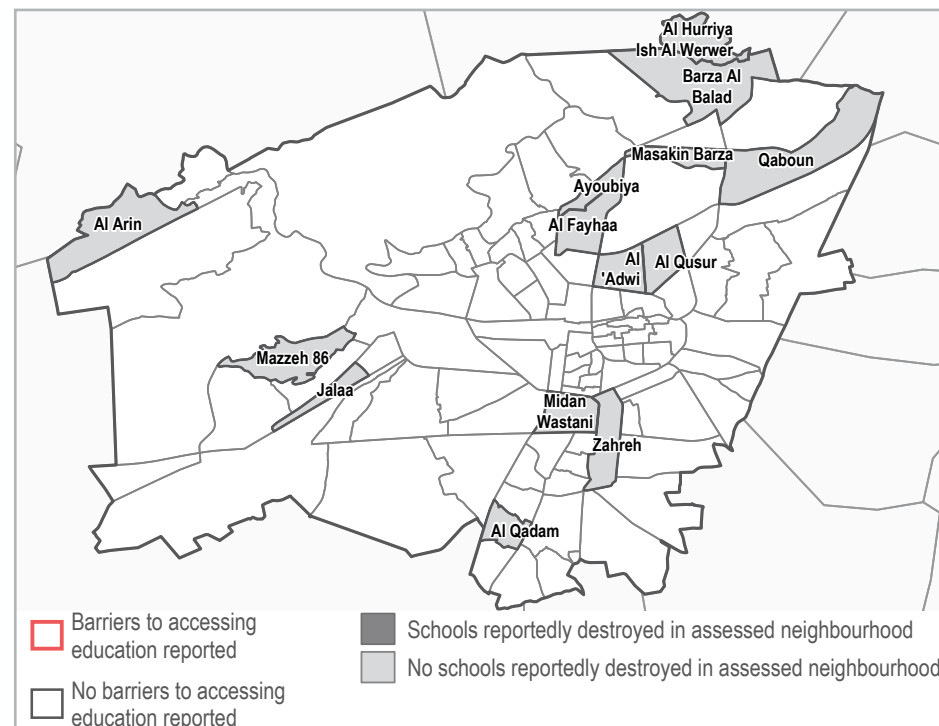
<sup>5</sup> 1 USD = 434 SYP (UN operational rates of exchange as of 1 April 2018)

<sup>6</sup> 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.

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

## EDUCATION

Barriers to accessing education services:



**14** neighbourhoods reported that most children were able to access education.

## 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 14 neighbourhoods in May 2018, referring to the situation in Damascus Governorate in April 2018. It presents key indicators, rather than the entire range of indicators gathered in the HSOS questionnaire. For community-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 about which they are reporting. Where access and security constraints rendered direct data collection unfeasible, KI interviews were conducted remotely 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

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

<sup>2</sup>Returns are not necessarily voluntary, safe, or sustainable.

<sup>3</sup>Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. (9 May 2017). Syrian rebels quit suburb of Damascus as Assad tightens grip. Retrieved from <http://www.syriahr.com>; Al-Khalidi. (14 May 2017). Over 2,000 rebels, families evacuate Damascus district: state media. Reuters. Retrieved from <https://www.reuters.com>.

<sup>4</sup>UNHCR. (18 October 2017). Syria: Flash update on recent events - 18 October 2017. Reliefweb. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int>.

<sup>5</sup>A-Noufal et al. (23 October 2017). De-escalation falls flat in south Damascus as Islamic State, FSA exchange fire. Retrieved from <http://syriadirect.org>.

<sup>6</sup>Baric. (23 November 2017). Syrian War Daily – 23rd of November 2017. Retrieved from <https://syrianwardaily.wordpress.com>.

<sup>7</sup>Reuters (13 March 2018). Syrian army evacuates militants from small rebel pocket near capital. Retrieved from <http://reuters.com>.

<sup>8</sup>Aljazeera (19 April 2018). Assad forces target ISIL in southern Damascus. Retrieved from <http://aljazeera.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](http://www.reach-initiative.org). You can contact us directly at: [geneva@reach-initiative.org](mailto:geneva@reach-initiative.org) and follow us on Twitter: [@REACH\\_info](https://twitter.com/REACH_info).