

## Findings of the Household Assessment of Syrian Households in Host Communities

### Anbar Province, Iraq

16<sup>th</sup> of July 2013

#### BACKGROUND

The ongoing crisis in Syria has caused a large influx of Syrian into Iraq, amounting to more than 161,014 refugees (UNHCR, 16.07.2013). Information management systems available to humanitarian actors have struggles to keep pace with the rapidly changing refugee context. With this in mind, the REACH Initiative, a partnership between ACTED, IMPACT Initiatives and UNOSAT, was deployed to Iraq in December 2012 in order to complement information management efforts undertaken by other humanitarian actors, notably by UN agencies, and to contribute towards addressing information gaps on Syrian refugees located in camps and host communities. By establishing a baseline dataset that includes key information on the geographical distribution, conditions and priority needs of Syrian refugees, REACH aims to ensure better planning, coordination and traceability of humanitarian aid.

The data presented in this factsheet represent the findings of household level interviews that were conducted in Anbar Governorate from March 18<sup>th</sup> to April 30<sup>th</sup> 2013. During this step of the project, 678 displaced Syrian households, representing 3,026 individuals, were assessed. The household assessments focused on collecting five key sets of information from each households: 1. Household demographic data; 2. Registration card numbers; 3. Displacement profile; 4. Accommodation context; 5. Services and Needs. Additionally, assessment team leaders collected GPS data for each building housing Syrian refugee households in order to allow for the mapping of key data trends discovered through the analysis of collected data.

#### ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

REACH's assessment methodology is based on a three step approach to data collection that gradually sharpens the understanding of the context both in terms of geographical focus as well as depth of data. The objective of this process is to provide humanitarian actors with information that allows them to make informed decisions with regards to their targeting specific areas or locations based on their program planning need. As such the REACH methodology focuses primarily on the geographic identification of refugees living in host communities and collects a core baseline of household specific information that enables the preparation of situational analyses.

During Step I of this project, REACH assessment teams established the neighborhoods and/or boundaries of Basic Service Units (BSUs) through focus group discussions with community leaders, in almost all cases *Mukthars*. Importantly, BSUs have boundaries that are defined by a similar understanding of community individuals/groups, based on their own perception and not necessarily corresponding with official geographical boundaries. In practice, in many cases, BSUs will mirror an established neighborhood (or *Hey* in Iraq), however, in some instances, a neighborhood will be governed by numerous leaders, in which case BSUs are used to divide the neighborhood into smaller geographical boundaries. In addition, the focus group discussions were conducted to help establish the concentration of Syrian refugees and their location within each community. For this particular assessment, the neighborhood level analysis provided to be the most appropriate target area division.

Once all neighborhoods hosting displaced Syrians were identified and geographically referenced, Step II of this project was implemented whereby REACH and Al Massarah (implementing partner) assessment teams, in coordination with local authorities and Syrian refugee representatives, conducted a multi-sector household assessment that was constructed and tested in cooperation with UNHCR. When possible, the head of a household<sup>1</sup> was interviewed. The findings of the household assessment are presented in this fact sheet, additionally this assessment is accompanied by various reference and thematic maps produced by REACH.

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this assessment, a household covers the same household/family unit that is registered with UNHCR.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

A total of **678** household assessments were conducted in the Anbar Province through which **3,026** individuals were identified in the districts Al-Qa'im (**84%** of Syrians), Ana (**8%**), and Ra'ua (**8%**) in a total of **64** neighborhoods.

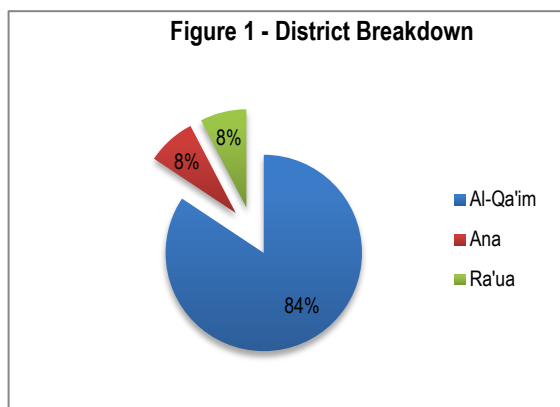


Table 1 indicates the neighborhoods in Anbar that contain the highest proportion of Syrian refugees.

**Table 1 –Neighborhoods in Anbar with the Largest Number of Syrian Refugees**

Neighborhood	Refugee Population (Individuals)	Percentage of Total Assessed Individuals
Al-Andalus	281	9%
Rabee Al-Awal	280	9%
Al-Karabla	213	7%
Al-Salam	187	6%
Al-Yarmuk	184	6%
Albo-Obeid	152	5%
Al-Rummana	134	4%
Al-Risalah	130	4%
Al-Rummana	110	4%
Al-Sham	107	4%
Al-Amin	104	3%

An almost equal gender division among households can be noted, with females representing **52%** of the total assessed individuals and males **48%**.

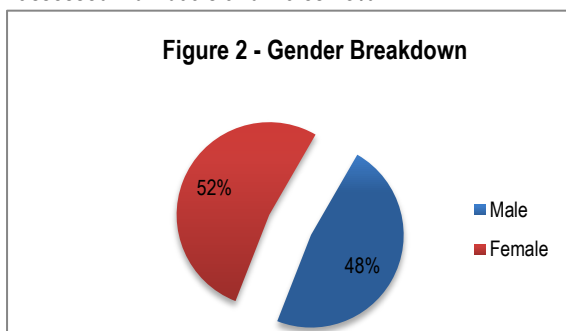
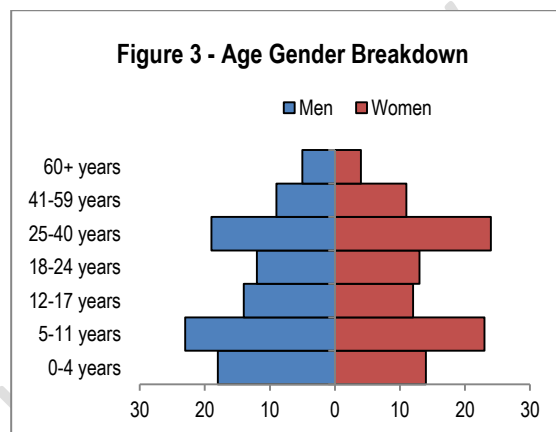
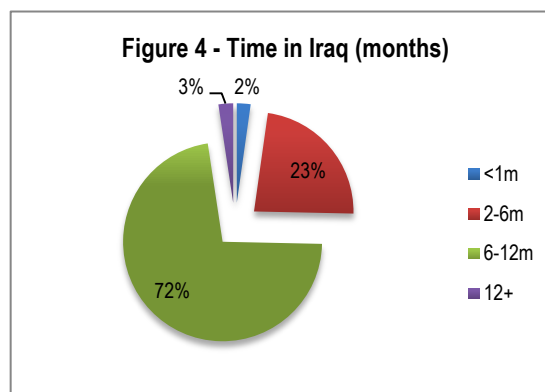


Figure 3 presents the gender and age breakdown of the represented assessed individuals. Crucially, children aged 0-11 years, represent a large percentage of the assessed demographic, **37%** among females and **41%** among males, indicating a high dependency rate. In addition, given the restrictions at the border between Syrian and Iraq, it was not surprising to find only **14** single men during the assessment, while **63** single women were identified.

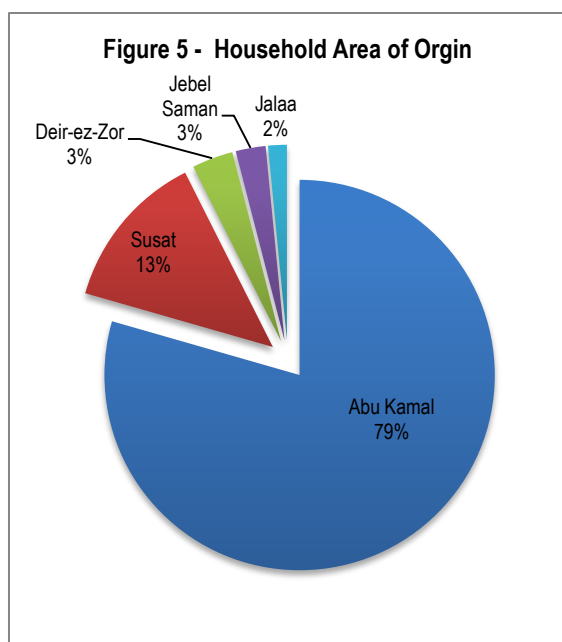


## DISPLACEMENT PROFILE

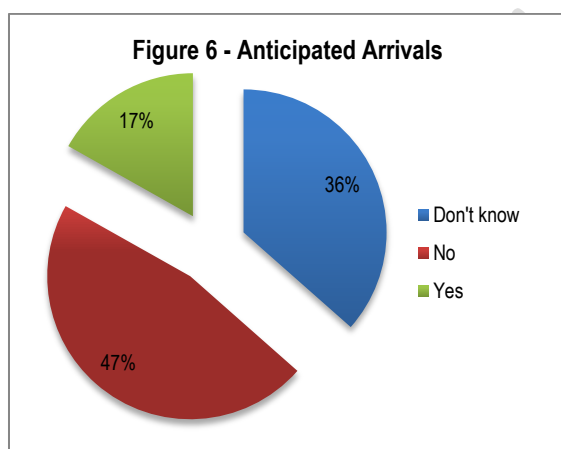
As indicated in Figure 4, the majority (**72%**) of respondents have been in Iraq between 6-12 months at the time of assessment, followed by **23%** that have spent 2-6 months in Iraq. A low number of households reported to have been in Iraq less than one month (**2%**) or more than one year (**3%**).



By far, the main area of origin of assessed respondents is Abu Kamel (**79%**), followed by Susat (**13%**).



Almost half of responsive households, **47%**, indicated they did not anticipate receiving Syrians joining their household in the next two months, whereas **36%** of households reported they did not know if Syrians would be joining them. **17%** of households did expect to receive arrivals.

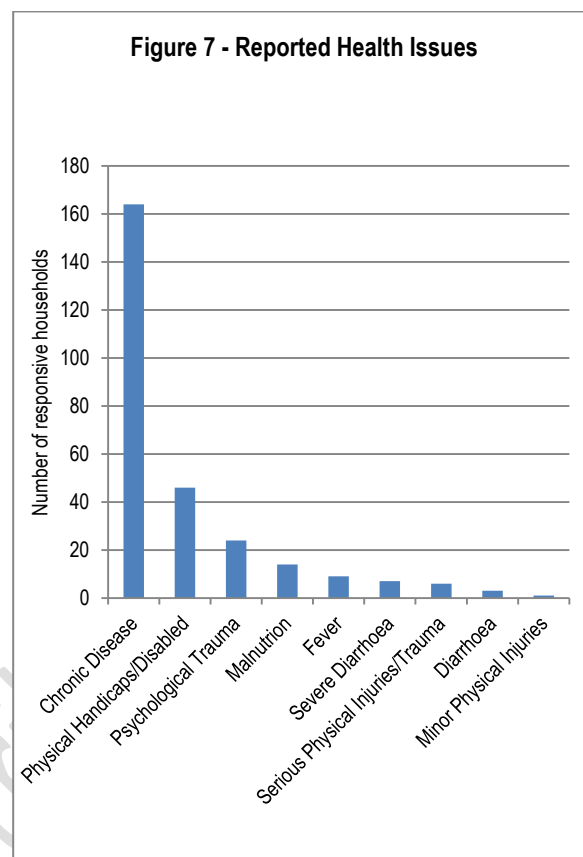


## HEALTH

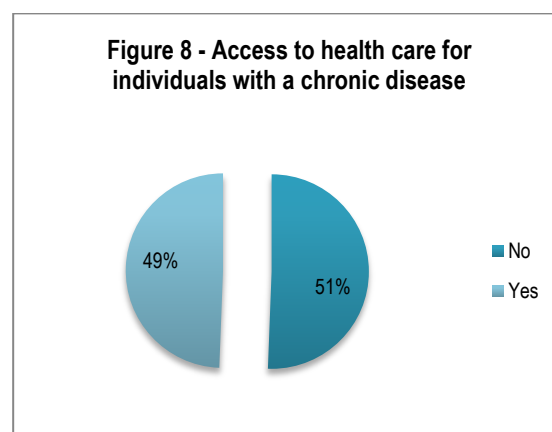
As health care is always an important issue during a complex emergency, REACH and UNHCR felt it vital to gain a basic overview on the health care issues Syrian refugees are facing in Anbar's host communities. As Figure 7 demonstrates, the main reported health issues for family members is chronic disease (reported by **164** households<sup>2</sup>). In addition, **46** households were identified as having a family member with a disability, **24** suffering

<sup>2</sup> As the percentage of these will be low, the numbers are still important, as this data, coupled with contact information, can serve as a valuable targeting tool.

from psychological trauma, **14** with malnutrition/poor diet, and **6** with serious physical injuries / trauma.

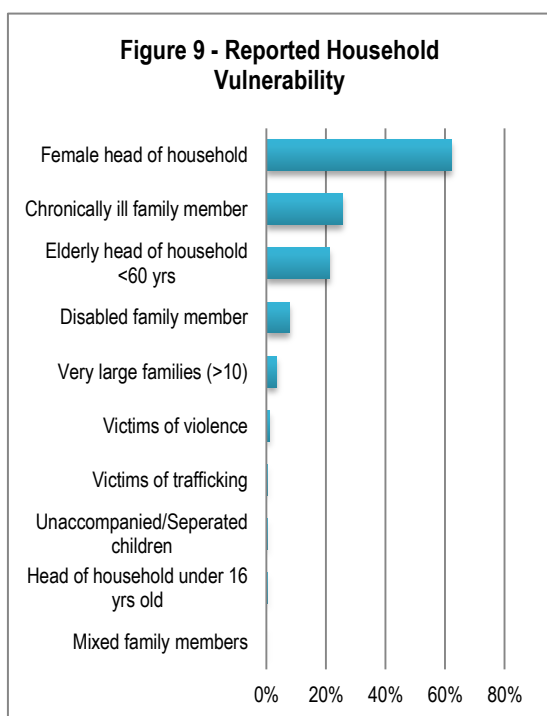


**56%** of households indicated they have access to health care, while the remaining **44%** reported they did not have access. Interestingly, when doing further analysis on households with family members with a chronic disease concerning access to health care, findings revealed that of those individuals with a family member with a chronic disease a high proportion reportedly did not have access to health care, namely **51%**. It would be beneficial following up with these households to determine why this high proportion of Syrians reported to not have health care access.



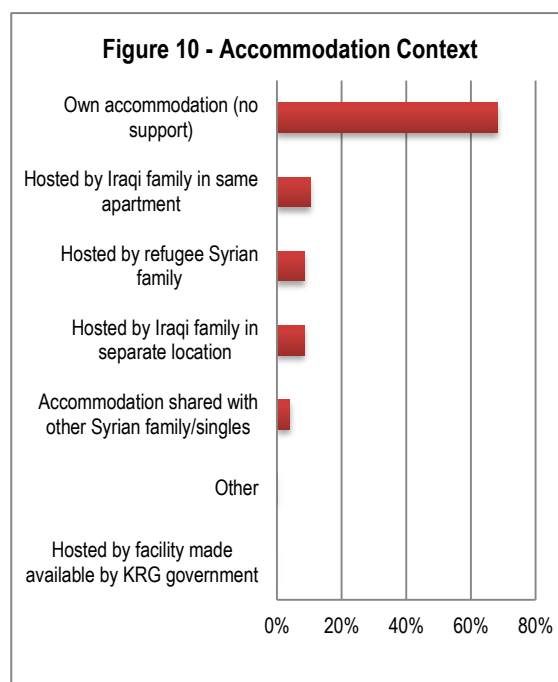
## HOUSEHOLD VULNERABILITY

One of the major features of the household assessment has been the inclusion of UNHCR's Vulnerability Indicators, which can assist in program targeting of the most vulnerable households. **47%** of households reported to have a vulnerable household member. As illustrated in Figure 9, a large proportion of households with a reported vulnerability consist of female-headed household (**62%** of households), followed by households with a chronically ill-family member and elderly-headed households, respectively **25%** and **21%**.



## ACCOMMODATION CONTEXT

Shelter is a primary concern to the majority of refugees in Anbar (see the section *Primary Needs*). The vast majority of responsive households, **68%**, reported to reside in their own accommodation with no support. Furthermore, **10%** of responsive households indicated they were hosted by an Iraqi family and residing in the same apartment, whereas **9%** of households reported to be hosted by a Syrian family and an equal proportion of household were hosted by an Iraqi family and residing in a separate location. No households reported they were living in an accommodation facility made available by the KRG government. Moreover, **69%** of assessed households reported to pay rent.



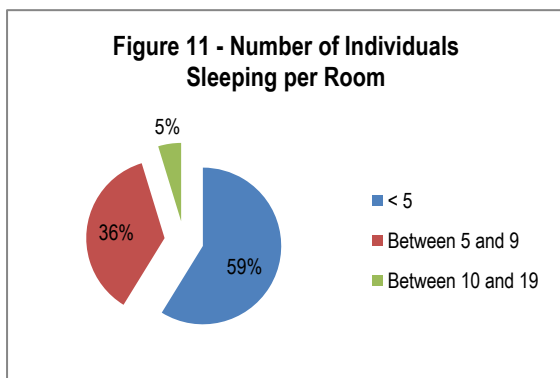
The assessment further reveals that the overwhelming majority of Syrian households, **96%**, live in an apartment or house. However, **19** households reported to be resident in an unfinished / empty building. It is therefore recommended that further review and follow-up of all respondents that indicate living in poor shelter conditions takes place.

When assessing the shelter conditions, **42%** of households reported to have minor damage, followed by **30%** indicating to reside in a good/undamaged shelter location and **22%** reporting to reside in a moderately damaged shelter location. A lower proportion of households reported their shelter location to be severely damaged, namely **5%**. NB these figures reflect the reported shelter condition of Syrian households and is based on their self-perception.

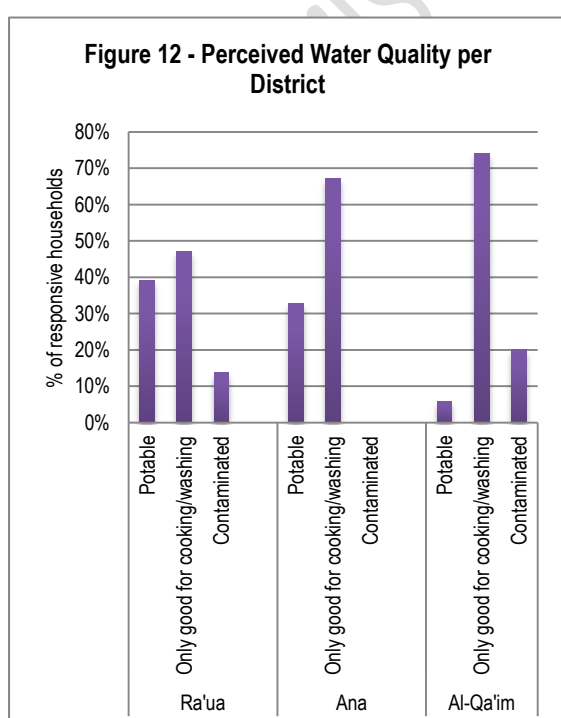
**Table 2 – Reported Shelter Condition**

Reported Shelter Conditions	# of Families/Singles
Severely Damaged	5%
Moderate Damage	22%
Good/Undamaged	30%
Minor Damage	42%

A very high proportion, **92%**, of households reported their shelter protected them from *the elements* (i.e. weather). The majority of households, **59%**, sleep with less than five individuals in one room, whereas **36%** of households reside with five to nine individuals and **5%** reside with between 10 and 19 individuals.



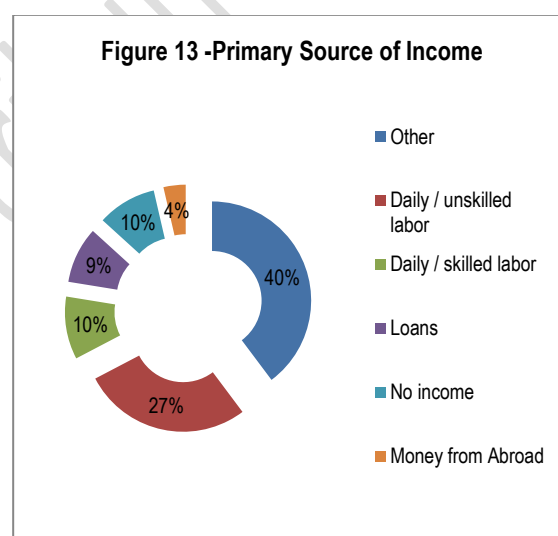
In addition to shelter contextual questions, the household assessment touched upon the quality of water perceived by each of the interviewees. In terms of perceived water quality, throughout the three assessed districts **71%** of responsive households deemed their water as only suitable for cooking/washing, followed by **18%** of households who ranked their water as contaminated and only **11%** of households deemed the water to be potable. However, when viewing the findings per district, as illustrated in Figure 12, wide discrepancies can be found. For example, in Ana none of the responsive households assessed their water to be contaminated. Importantly, in Al-Qa'im water was deemed as potable by only **6%** of households, compared to **39%** in Ra'ua and **33%** in Ana.



## LIVELIHOODS

When reviewing previous household assessments completed by REACH and UNHCR in the KRG region, livelihoods is clearly a key issue refugees in host communities face. When assessing whether a family member is currently working, a distressing **84%** of households responded negatively.

In addition, a large percentage of respondents stated that their primary income came from daily unskilled labor (**27%** of households), followed by daily skilled labor (**10%**), while **10%** of respondents reported not to have income. However, as shown in Figure 13, the majority of answers indicated their primary sources as 'Other' (**40%** of households), which according to field staff and a review of the forms, usually indicates support coming from family members in the area or local charities. For example, Al Jame Alkabeer mosque in Al Qa'im has been distributing cash and NFIs to Syrian families.



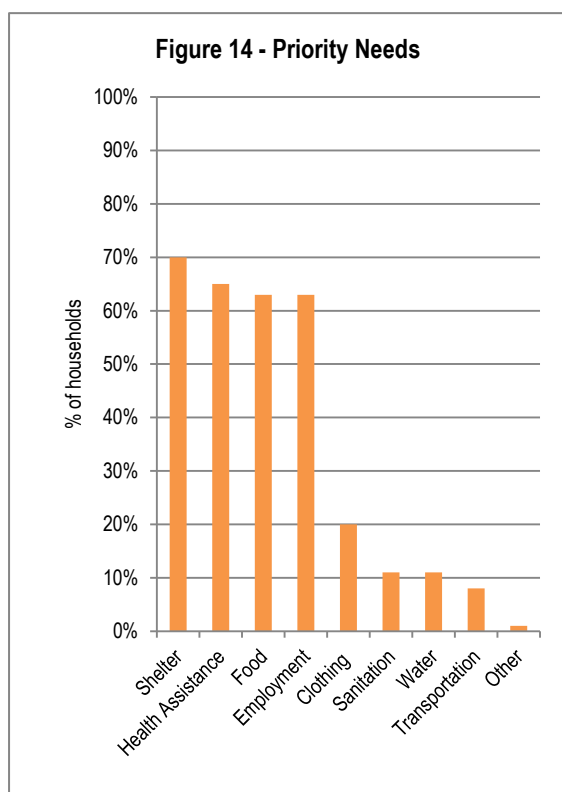
The lack of income generation among Syrians residing in host communities in the Anbar province is concerning. According to field reports and informal key informant interviews, permission to work is only given to displaced Syrians who have a sponsor. That sponsor must be a direct family member and fill out a form provided by local authorities.

## PRIMARY NEEDS

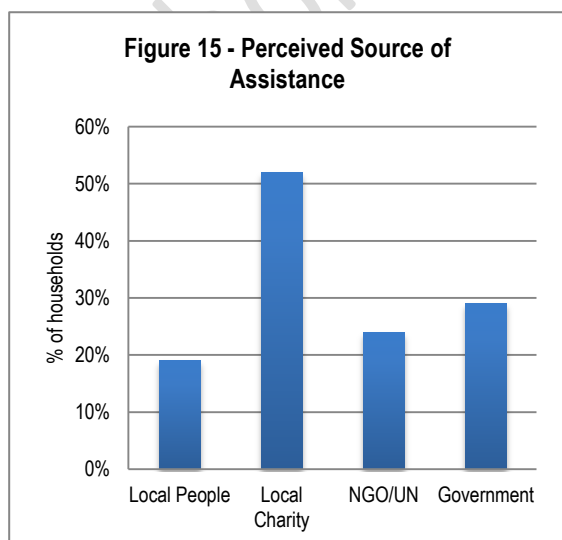
In order to determine the priorities of Syrian refugees in Anbar, the household assessment surveyed the top three most immediate needs of families at the time of the assessment. As Figure 14 highlights, shelter was selected by the vast majority of households identified through the assessment as the highest priority need,



**70%.** In addition, health assistance as well as food and employment were selected by identified households as prominent secondary and tertiary needs, respectively **65%** and **63%**.



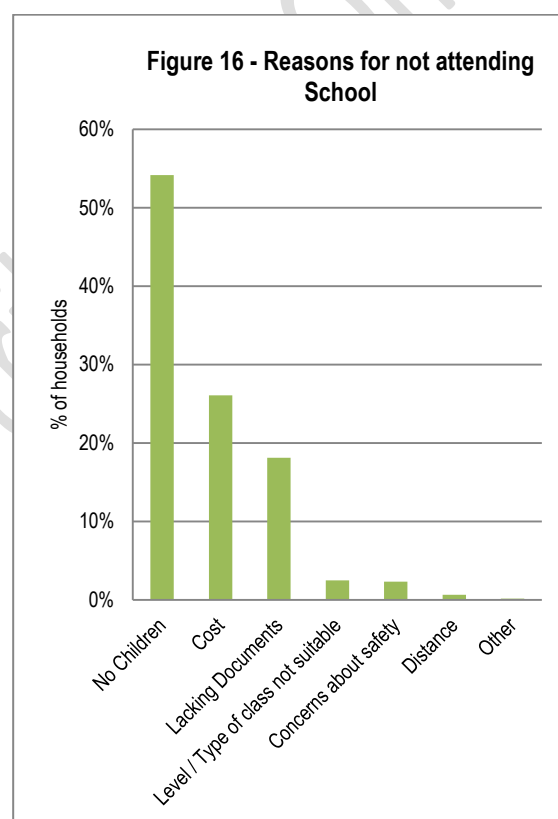
**71%** of all households reported that they had received some kind of assistance since arriving in Iraq. The majority of households that reported receipt of assistance perceived that assistance was provided primarily by locally based charities, **52%**. Additionally, **29%** of households reported to have received assistance by the Iraqi government, followed by NGOs/UN (**24%**) and local people (**19%**).



**91%** of respondents indicated that the local markets were able to meet their needs; however, **51%** of households did not feel that they had enough money to buy sufficient food for their family.

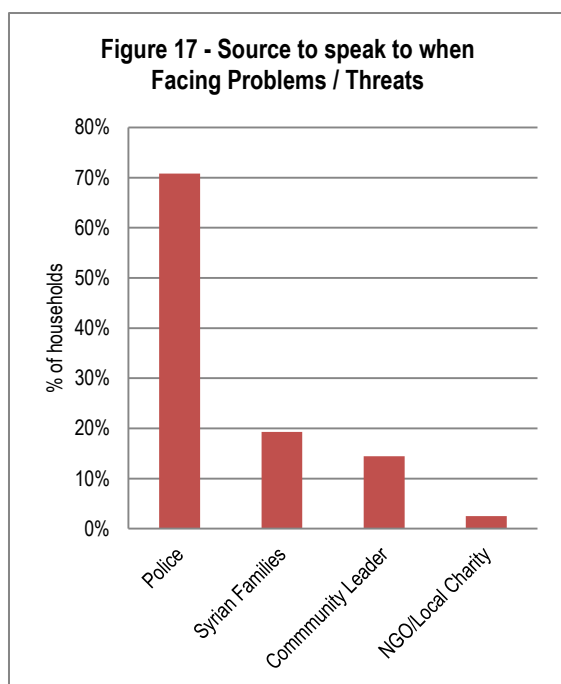
## EDUCATION

Around **69%** of Syrian refugee children 6-17 are not attending school. This is an approximation as the total figures include children at the age of 5. The main reason children were not going to school is the cost of the school and school supplies (**26%**), and the next stating that the children lacked the necessary documents to attend school (**18%**).



## COMMUNICATION

Interviewees were asked to whom they would go to when they faced threats of violence or other problems. A large majority (**71%**) indicated they would go to the local police while **20%** indicated that they would go to other Syrian families for assistance. A smaller percentage (**14%**), reported they would go to their local community leader, in many cases a *Mukhtar*. It is important to note that each interviewee could choose multiple answers.



#### KEY CONCERNS AND NOTES FROM THE FIELD

According to key informants and field staff, the restrictions on movement, working visas and employment opportunities are just some of the aspects making the overall situation of Syrian refugees located in Anbar very difficult. The path to obtaining residency is not straightforward, and in many cases impossible, leaving many refugees with little hope to a stable life in the near future.

According to the assessment, only 73 respondents were not registered with UNHCR. However, in many instances (45%), households indicated that they needed registration assistance. Field staff and key informants confirmed that many would require clarification and support regarding the process of gaining residency and/or a working visa/certificate.

In spite of field staff and key informants stating that many of the refugees are being supported by host community residents, particularly due to tribal and family relations, there are still some concerning figures highlighted in this report. For example, a high proportion of respondents (51%) indicated that in the last seven days (from time of interview) they have not had enough money to buy sufficient food for their family. However, according to REACH's analysis many communities contain local working local markets. Given these realities, the possibility of a food voucher program should be explored.

With regards to health care issues, many interviewees stated that their families had no access to health care (44% of households). Field staff provided further detail on this issue, observing that many refugees have access to basic health services, however, for serious health issues services are insufficient and not affordable. To target people with chronic illness or other serious health care issues it is recommendable utilizing the REACH database, in parallel to collaborating with DoH (or other agencies) and UNHCR in providing treatment.

REACH's database can also be employed as a highly effective targeting tool to contact and further assess all families living in a damaged or unfinished shelter. Hereby targeted respondents can be contacted via the phone number listed in the database and the conditions of the respondent's shelter can be verified by UNHCR field teams. As indicated in this report, a total of 27% of households reported to live in moderately or severely damaged housing and 19 households reported to live in unfinished/empty buildings.

Additional information concerning children or other highly vulnerable populations living in these shelters or expanded demographic data is available upon request.

#### REACH

REACH was formed in 2010 as a joint initiative of two INGOs (ACTED and IMPACT Initiatives) and a UN program (UNOSAT). The purpose of REACH is to promote and facilitate the development of information products that enhance the humanitarian community's capacity to make decisions and plan in emergency, reconstruction and development contexts.

At country level, REACH teams are deployed to countries experiencing emergencies or at-risk-of-crisis in order to facilitate interagency collection, organisation and dissemination of key humanitarian related information. Country-level deployments are conducted within the framework of partnerships with individual actors as well as aid coordination bodies, including UN agencies, clusters, inter-cluster initiatives, and other interagency initiatives.

## Annex 1

### Map Guide

#### Map 1 - Anbar Accommodation

This map identifies the percentage of respondents within each neighborhood that stated their families live in shelters that are moderately or severely damaged. In addition the circles indicate the number of respondents that indicated they live in unfinished or empty buildings.

#### Map 2 - Anbar Coverage

This map presents all areas that REACH staff conducted the Household Assessment and which of those neighborhoods contain Syrian Refugees.

#### Map 3 - Anbar Individuals

This map presents the total individual Syrian Refugee population for each neighborhood.

#### Map 4 - Anbar Rent

This map presents the average rent being paid by Syrian Refugees in each neighborhood.

#### Map 5 - Anbar Sufficient Markets

This map indicates the percentage of Syrian refugees per neighborhood that feel the local markets are insufficient in providing the necessary food for their family.