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REGIONAL ANALYSIS SYRIA

07 February 2014

Part I – Syria

This Regional Analysis of the Syria conflict (RAS) is an update of the [December RAS](#) and seeks to bring together information from all sources in the region and provide holistic analysis of the overall Syria crisis. In addition, this report highlights the key humanitarian developments in 2013. While Part I focuses on the situation within Syria, Part II covers the impact of the crisis on neighbouring countries. More information on how to use this document can be found on page 2. Please note that place names which are underlined are hyperlinked to their location on Google Maps. The Syria Needs Analysis Project welcomes all information that could complement this report. For more information, comments or questions please email SNAP@ACAPS.org.

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Overview

 Flags indicate new information

Conflict and political developments: Opposition groups in Syria became increasingly fractured in late 2013, with intense fighting between the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and other opposition groups, particularly Jabhat al-Nusra and the Islamic Front breaking out in early January. While infighting has been on-going for some months in various towns bordering Turkey, in January the infighting spread further in Aleppo, Ar-Raqqqa, Idleb and Hama governorates. The infighting weakened the position of opposition forces in Aleppo governorate and allowed the Syrian Armed Forces (SAF) to make gains on the outskirts of Aleppo city, which remains fiercely contested.

The infighting among opposition groups and the GoS attacks on Aleppo further limited humanitarian access and the movement of goods. In some rural areas wheat is available but farmers cannot transport it to market whereas in others, Idleb for example, bakeries were reportedly running out of flour due to the blocked access routes.

The much anticipated Geneva II conference began on 22 January. The 8-day talks, during which an estimated 1,900 people were killed in Syria, reached no agreements. The UN proposed a follow up meeting on 10 February.

Humanitarian concerns: A November assessment in northern Syria identified 7.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance within 111 sub-districts while the most recent OCHA estimates indicates that 9.3 million people were in need across all 272 sub-districts in December. Over 3 million people are

currently estimated to be living in hard to reach or besieged areas, having received little or no humanitarian assistance in more than 10 months.

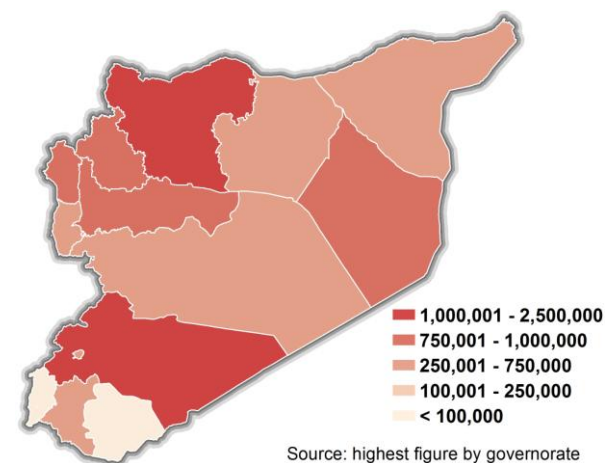
Humanitarian conditions in Yarmouk camp continued to worsen with 70 reported deaths in the last 4 months due to the shortage of food and medical supplies. Local negotiations succeeded in facilitating limited amounts of humanitarian assistance to besieged areas, including Yarmouk, Modamiyet Elsham and Barzeh neighbourhoods in Damascus although the aid provided was deeply inadequate.

The spread of polio remains a major concern. Since first confirmed in October 2013, a total of 93 polio cases have been reported; the most recent case in Al Hasakeh in January. In January 2014 1.2 million children across Aleppo, Al Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqqa, Deir-ez-Zor, Hama, Idleb and Lattakia were vaccinated achieving an estimated 88% coverage. The overall health situation is one of the main humanitarian concerns in Syria. The latest data available, from July, indicates that up to 60% of public hospitals had limited or no capacity. Basic medicine is often unavailable as is the medical equipment and staff to treat the many injured. While Syrians generally enjoy better access in the host countries, significant unmet health needs remain forcing some to return to Syria for affordable treatment.

The below average rainfall in the 2013/2014 winter season, coupled with the ongoing limitations on inputs (caused in part by the recent closures of border crossings with Turkey) and damaged infrastructure means that food production is likely to significantly decline in 2014 leading to further shortages of food and a lack of income opportunities. In December 2013, 9.9 million people were already identified as vulnerable to food insecurity.

Access: The lack of agreement at the Geneva II conference indicates that localised negotiations will increasingly be relied upon by humanitarian actors to access besieged areas and likely be manipulated by armed actors for political gain. In Modamiyet Elsham, the opposition agreed to fly the flag of the GoS in exchange for a 48 hour ceasefire to allow ready cooked meals into the area.

Number of people in need



Source: highest figure by governorate from OCHA (Dec 13) and SINA (Dec 13)

How to use the RAS

This report is divided into three sections:

- The regional overview summarises the whole report into one page, highlighting the key issues and developments of the last month.
- Part I focuses on the situation in Syria, firstly by outlining the issues on a country level and afterwards, in more depth, on a sectoral level.
- Part II deals with the host countries Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq, and discusses the main humanitarian issues related to the crisis.

The RAS is intended as a reference document and the different parts and components can be read separately, according to information needs. While those working in a host country or a specific governorate might only be interested in small parts of the report, individuals working on a regional level can benefit from reading all sections.

The information in blue contains explanatory notes on the structure of this report while the information in red boxes outlines SNAP's analysis.

How to quote this document

The Syria Needs Analysis Project is established to support the humanitarian response by providing an independent analysis of the humanitarian situation of those affected by the Syrian crisis. We support the communication of humanitarian needs and agree to them being used by other organisations to this end. Please note that most information is derived from secondary data and the original source should be quoted when this information is used. The original source can be found at the end of a paragraph and if possible, the hyperlink to this source has been made available. All information which is not sourced is based on SNAP's own analysis and should be quoted as such.

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Possible developments

- **Instability on the Syrian-Turkish border:** The re-grouping of ISIL fighters to their strongholds along the border increases insecurity as the Turkish authorities seek to indirectly support their removal. The closure of border crossings by the Government of Turkey in response to the increasing influence of ISIL limits the flow of commodities and humanitarian aid upon which many northern governorates rely.
- **Yabroud operation:** Although the SAF made rapid advances in the Qalamoun region in late 2013, gaining a number of towns, the current low-level conflict around Yabroud develops into an intense and prolonged battle to control the town's strategic access to the Lebanese border, across which supplies of commodities and weapons flow. Although movement of civilians is severely restricted, the military operation causes significant displacement to Rural Damascus, Homs and Lebanon.
- **Humanitarian access to Ar-Raqqa:** Humanitarian access in the governorate of Ar-Raqqa has been severely constrained throughout 2013, with WFP reporting that the area has been completely inaccessible to the organisation since December 2013. The ISIL retreat from Aleppo city and much of Idleb governorate results in the group more tightly controlling its remaining areas of control in Ar-Raqqa, including Ar-Raqqa city. As a result, international aid and staff are prevented from reaching the most vulnerable in the governorate while Syrian aid organisations are also severely restricted.
- **Besiegement policy:** The policy to besiege and seal off areas persists as parties to the conflict realise the political and military benefits outweigh the expense of civilian lives. The inability to agree on a ceasefire to lift the siege on some 800 civilian families in Homs city does not indicate that there will be a wider solution for the estimated 242,000 civilians living under siege by armed actors in Syria.
- **Limited rainfall:** While rainfall for the 2013 harvest was very good, agricultural production dropped by 40% compared to the 10-year pre-crisis average. The below average rainfall in the 2013/2014 winter season, coupled with the ongoing limitations on inputs and damaged infrastructure results in a significant decline in food production in 2014. This further increases the number of people vulnerable to food insecurity, currently estimated at 9.9 million. In addition, the lack of rainfall exacerbates the lack of access to water supplies and existing health issues, particularly in the summer season as demand on water increases and communicable diseases spread more easily. This, in turn, puts increasing pressure on the already stretched health system.

Latest developments

December and January

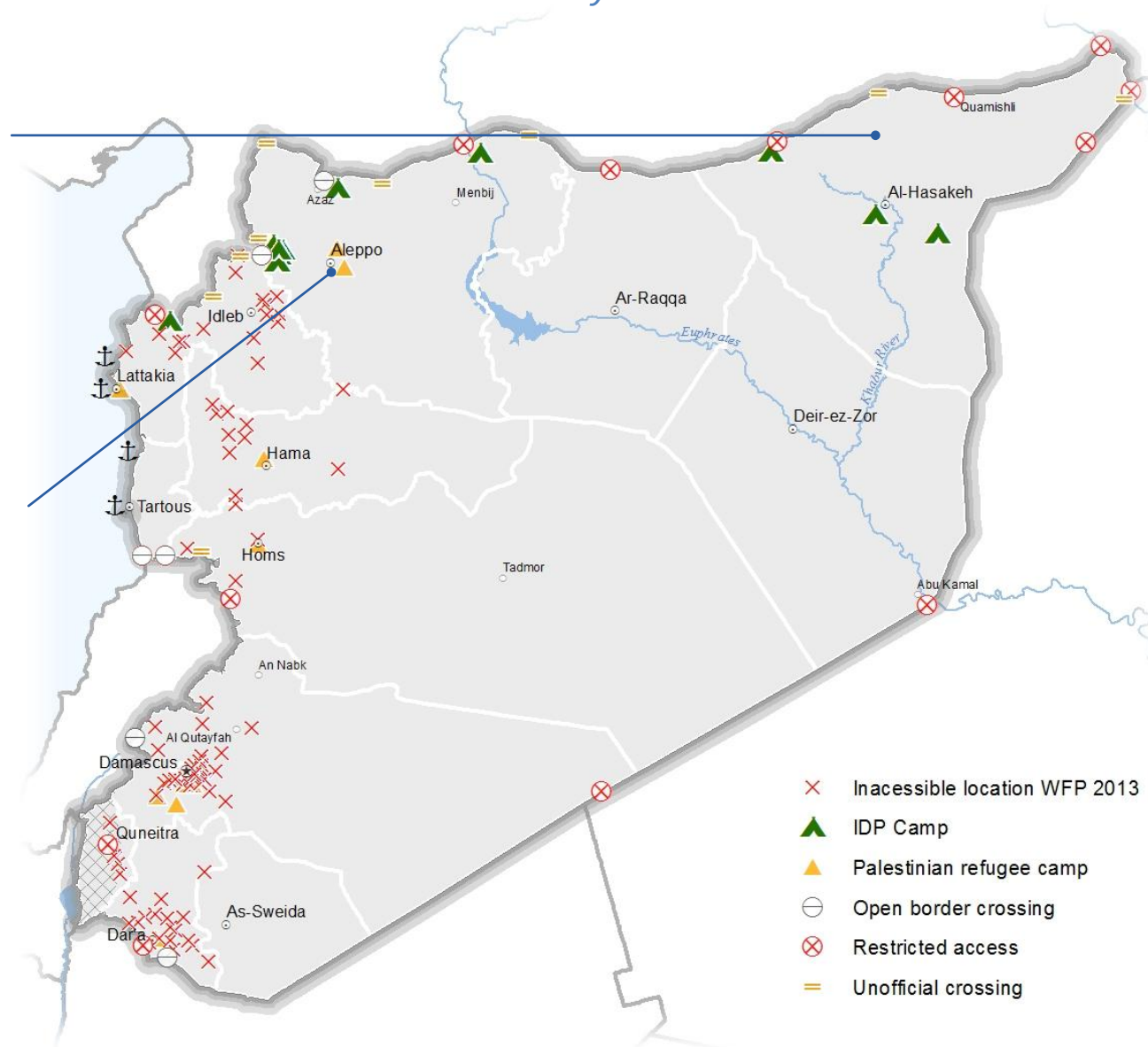
Al-Hasakeh: The humanitarian situation in Al-Hasakeh is rapidly deteriorating as widespread insecurity, continued closure of all but one (open with severe restrictions) border crossings and all access routes have severely disrupted market and humanitarian deliveries over the last 6 months. Some WFP food aid comes in through airlifts.

Aleppo: Aleppo faced fierce infighting among opposition groups and intensive attacks from the SAF forces as the forces captured areas on the outskirts of Aleppo city. Fighting between opposition groups escalated in January, and over 1,500 people, primarily opposition fighters, were killed.

Indiscriminate weapons: In December 2013 and January 2014, the SAF increased the use of improvised barrel bombs, particularly in its offensive on Aleppo city, but also in Damascus and Dar'a. Barrel bombs were first used by opposition groups in 2012. An estimated 700 people were killed in Aleppo over a 6 week period by barrel bombs.

Displacement: Local reports indicate that a mass movement of people from the eastern part of Aleppo city to the western, GoS-controlled, part of the city and to rural Aleppo started in January. By early February, an estimated 300,000 – 350,000 people were fleeing air raids and conflict in the eastern part of the city.

Vaccination campaign: 1 more case of polio was confirmed in Al-Hasakeh governorate. Dozens of cases of acute flaccid paralysis have been detected in northern Syria and are suspected to be polio. Although it has been reported that the campaign achieved 88% coverage, health experts are skeptical due to the high levels of violence and numerous obstacles to access.



Timeline key events 2013

Dec/Jan- Yarmouk

Violent clashes in the Yarmouk neighborhood of Damascus result in the displacement of at least 50% of the 150,000 Palestinians residing in the camp, mostly to Damascus, Homs and Lebanon.

Apr - ISIL presence

Since its appearance in April, ISIL (the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) has taken over large swathes of land in the north, including the 4 border towns of Atmeh, al-Bab, Azaz, and Jarablus. The rise of ISIL has resulted in a significant increase in clashes between opposition groups. Humanitarian access is significantly influenced by ISIL as the group has been responsible for kidnapping several aid workers and places strict conditions on the delivery of aid in areas under their control

Aug - Chemical weapons

On 21 August chemical weapons were used in Ghouta, killing at least 355 people. An international military intervention in response to this attack was averted after an agreement was made on the elimination of Syria's chemical weapons.

Nov - Polio

13 cases of polio were confirmed in November, following reports of acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) at the start of October. The identification of polio triggered a mass vaccination campaign. The re-appearance of polio in Syria is illustrative of the collapse of the health and wash infrastructure.

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

Mar - Opposition control of Ar-Raqqa

Anti-Government forces take control of Ar-Raqqa city on 6 of March, the first and only provincial capital to be taken over by opposition groups.

May - Battle for Al-Qusair

Heavy fighting started in the strategic city of Al-Qusayr and surrounding areas, causing the displacement of many people. The GoS victory in June over Qusair is a severe strategic and symbolic loss to the opposition.

May - Restrictions to departure

The number of daily arrivals to Jordan decreased significantly (from 1,700 to 300), reportedly due to border restrictions imposed by the Jordanian authorities

July - Restrictions to departure

As of July, Syrians were no longer permitted to travel to Egypt without a visa prior to arrival. In addition, the Government of Lebanon imposed stricter border controls that require Syrians to present full, undamaged documentation.

Nov - Kurdish autonomy

Following several military gains in Al-Hasakeh, Syrian Kurds announced plans to form a transitional administration to run Kurdish-majority areas in the northeast.

2013 - Recorded conflict incidence per month*
(Source: UNMAS)



*Conflict incidence recorded from open sources and include: shelling; weapons fire; arrests; IEDs; rockets; Mortars.

Information gaps and data limitations

Data limitations

The security and political context severely constrained the collection and publication of data in 2013. Thus information available on the humanitarian situation, specifically primary data, is extremely limited. To obtain a countrywide and objective picture of the needs and priorities, SNAP analyses a multitude of sources. In addition to consolidating the reports and assessments of humanitarian organisations SNAP relies on GoS, opposition, and media sources as well as key informants collated in researching this document.

All these sources, however, are subject to specific limitations:

- **Syrian media:** Access for journalists to and within Syria is highly constrained. To date 29 journalists have been killed and 49 kidnapped. Freedom of press is limited and many media sources are dependent on their political allegiances to continue to operate, leaving limited space for independent analysis. The media landscape in Syria is shaped by sources that are affiliated with the GoS, such as the state-run [SANA News](#), and sources affiliated with the opposition, such as [Eqtisad](#). Although local activists are vocal in sharing their experiences, this information is often impossible to verify. ([Guardian 2014/01/07](#), [RSF 2013/12/18](#))
- **Media attention:** As in all protracted crises, the media is often forced to focus on new developments at the expense of structural and humanitarian issues. In the Syria crisis this approach diverts the overall attention away from important issues. A striking example was the situation at the end of August 2013, when international publications focused on the chemical attacks and subsequent possibility of an international military intervention, with the deteriorating humanitarian situation largely neglected. In January 2014, the media focus has been on Geneva II and very little information was provided on the humanitarian situation in general.
- **Relief actors:** Movement for international and national organisations is severely limited and publications are subject to scrutiny by the armed groups and the GoS. Publication of information or advocacy deemed controversial by any party to the conflict has direct implications on humanitarian access. Protection concerns, for instance, are often too politically sensitive to be included in assessments or publically available reports.
- **Monitoring systems:** The fracturing of the country into areas controlled by the GoS, contested areas and areas led by non-state actors make a countrywide monitoring of the situation by one actor next to impossible. Multi-sectoral joint assessments in Syria are similarly difficult. Although several structures were in place prior to the crisis (including monitoring of disease outbreaks through the EWARS), the security situation hampers countrywide coverage.

Publicly available assessments and reports 2013

Despite the constraints, several assessments and studies have been made available in 2013, including:

- **Multi-sectoral:** 3 large-scale multi-sectoral assessments were conducted in northern Syria. The Joint Rapid Assessment in Northern Syria (J-RANS) in January covered 58 sub-districts of 6 northern governorates (Aleppo (city excluded), Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa, Deir-ez-Zor, and Idlib); a J-RANS of Aleppo city in March and JRANS II in May covered 104 out of the 150 sub-districts in 7 northern governorates (those covered by J-RANS I and Hama).
- **Livelihoods and Food security:** 2 large food security assessments have been undertaken. In July, the results of a joint FAO/WFP Crop and Food Security assessment (CFSAM) were published. 6 months later, FAO and WFP undertook a Joint Rapid Food Needs Assessment (JFRNA), an update of the JRFNA undertaken in December 2012. ([FAO/WFP 2013/07/05](#))
- At the start 2013 the Syria Centre for Policy Research published a study on the socioeconomic roots and impact of the Syrian crisis. In cooperation with UNRWA, the SCPR also publishes quarterly reports on the socioeconomic situation in the country. ([SCPR 2013](#))
- **Education:** The main publicly available education assessment is the UNICEF assessment conducted in December 2012 and published in March, which assessed the status of schools (damaged or used as shelter for IDPs) and current attendance rates per governorate. ([Global Level CPWG 2013/09](#))
- **Shelter:** In the absence of a large-scale shelter assessment, numerous small-scale assessments were conducted, mostly focused on the situation of IDPs in camps and collective shelters.
- **Protection:** The Commission of Inquiry of the UN Human Rights Council publishes periodic reports on the human rights situation in Syria, as does Human Rights Watch. Several assessments were undertaken remotely. One such was the September child protection assessment undertaken by the Global Level Child Protection Working Group, during which refugees recently arrived from Syria and humanitarian workers who were working/had worked in Syria were interviewed. ([Human Rights Council 2013/06/04](#))
- **Health:** The Early Warning and Reporting System (EWARS) published regular reports on health issues throughout the year. However, communication channels were often interrupted and some areas were not included in the system, thus the Assistance Coordination Unit (ACU) established a parallel surveillance system – the Early Warning Alert and Response Network (EWARN) – in opposition-held areas in September.
- **Monitoring:** In addition to the EWARS and EWAR, WFP runs a price and market monitoring system and a MoH/WHO early warning and response system. The ACU, in cooperation with international partners, leads several

monitoring systems in northern governorates, including the regularly updated EWARN system and an IDP camp monitoring system. However, due to the significant access constraints, these systems are often not comprehensive, covering only parts of Syria.

Recent information sources

- 🚩 2 reports on the humanitarian needs in Syria have become available in January.
 - Syria Integrated Needs Assessment. ([SINA 2014/01](#), SINA Common Operational Analysis Report (COAR) 2014/01)
 - Dar'a Multi-Sector Needs Assessment. ([Dar'a 2014](#))
- 🚩 In addition, the Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan 2014 contained information from recent assessments conducted to support the appeal, but which have not necessarily been made public.
- 🚩 UNRWA launched its Syria Regional Crisis Response Plan in January, which was informed by a needs assessment conducted in October 2013. ([UNRWA 2014/01/23](#))

Planned humanitarian assessments

- 🚩 To ensure the on-going humanitarian response is based on the needs, several multi-sectoral assessments are planned, including the OCHA-led Joint Humanitarian Assessment (JHA), a reduced version of which has recently received GoS approval. Enumerator training is planned to begin in February.
- 🚩 Several other assessments have been finalised or planned, but, because of the nature of the assessment or lack of GoS approval, no information on these assessments can be shared.

Operational constraints

Key developments December and January

- 🚩 In November, the Damascus-Homs highway was closed due to the tense security situation severely hindering relief operations. WFP reported that the closure of the Damascus–Homs highway suspended all movement to the central part of the country, affecting food deliveries to populations residing in Hama and Homs governorates. The highway has since re-opened, improving transportation. ([USAID 2013/12/06](#))
- 🚩 In December, the storm front 'Alexa' halted relief convoys and closed Quamishli airport for several days, delaying UN aid flights. The extreme weather simultaneously blocked access and increased needs, most particularly for those in substandard shelter. ([WFP 2013/12/16](#))
- 🚩 Aerial bombardment of opposition-held areas in Aleppo peaked in December and January compounding humanitarian access problems. ([WFP 2013/11/20](#), [Daily Star 2013/12/15](#))
- 🚩 The fighting between an alliance of opposition groups and ISIL that started in early January has spread the conflict to previously relatively calm areas and has altered the dynamic and the space for humanitarian access in Aleppo, Idlib and Ar-Raqqa.
- 🚩 Several areas continue to be under siege, including over 40 locations in Rural Damascus, affecting an estimated 800,000 people. The siege on Yarmouk Palestinian refugee camp left nearly a reported 63 people dead due to the shortage of food and medical supplies. Food aid entered Yarmouk mid-January for the first time since a very limited delivery in November 2013. The January deliveries were not nearly enough to meet the needs of the 18,000, mostly Palestinian, residents. On 14 Dec, the SARC delivered food and medicine to Aleppo central prison, which has been under opposition siege for 8 months. ([WFP 2014/01/30](#), [UN News Centre 2013/01/28](#))
- 🚩 WFP and its partners, the main provider of food aid, have not been able to reach large parts of Syria for long periods of time:

Area	Inaccessible since
Rural Aleppo*	September 2013
Al-Hasakeh**	October 2013
Deir-ez-Zor	November 2013
Ar-Raqqa	December 2013

* Food aid to Aleppo city has resumed since the end of October

**Accessed by WFP through airlifts

Source: WFP 2013/01

Operational constraints - Key developments 2013

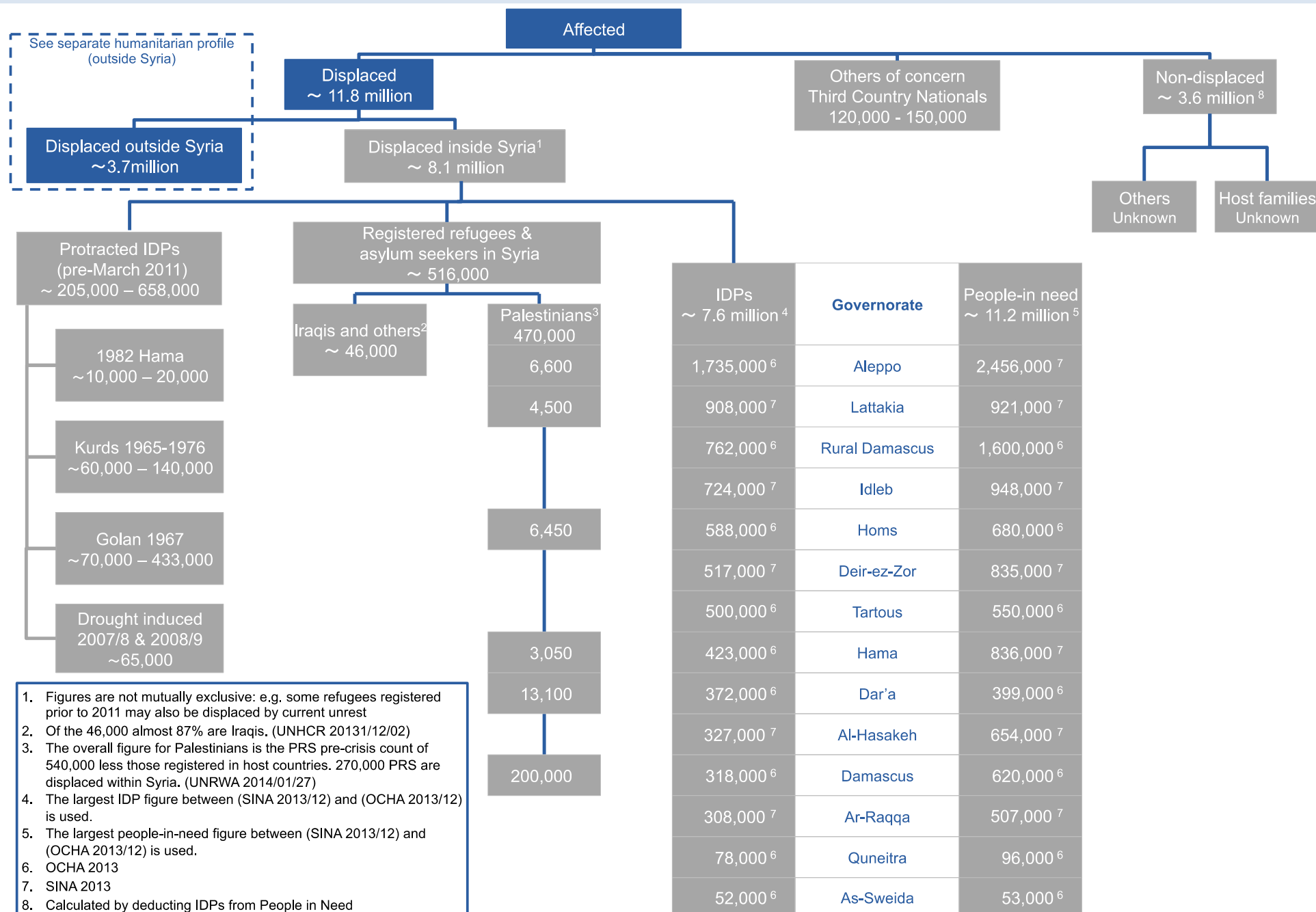
The security situation in Syria deteriorated throughout 2013 and, as armed groups became increasingly fragmented and extremist elements more prevalent, the humanitarian space contracted. Transport and warehousing became ever more unpredictable and insecure due to the spreading conflict and the dynamic areas of control with numerous checkpoints manned by various groups. Humanitarian actors have been subject to kidnappings, harassment and theft of supplies and equipment and it has become increasingly difficult for partners to provide assistance. 12 UN workers (up from 8 in December 2012) and 32 Syrian Red Crescent staff have been killed during the Syrian crisis and, as of 16 December, 21 United Nations staff were in detention. ([OCHA 2014/01/31](#))

- **Population movement:** During 2013, 1,700,500 people were estimated to have fled Syria while 44,500 registered refugees returned to Syria from neighbouring countries. Within Syria the number of IDPs has doubled with the majority having been displaced multiple times.
- **Increasing denial of needs:** The nature of access constraints changed significantly between April and November 2013. While in April the main humanitarian access constraints were ongoing hostilities, interference by powerful groups and restrictions of movement, by November 2013 ongoing insecurity/hostilities and denial of the existence of humanitarian needs were the most severe problems reported in humanitarian access. "Denial of needs" includes types of access constraints where assistance and needs of the population in several areas are neglected, overlooked or hidden. This category includes a discrepancy between reported needs and official acknowledgement of existing needs. ([J-RANS II 2013/05](#), [SINA COAR 2014/01](#))
- **Interference of armed groups:** The further consolidation of control of areas in the north and centre of Syria was coupled with increasing restrictions on humanitarian aid delivery. In September, ISIL issued rules requiring aid agencies working in Jarablus in Aleppo to register and regularly report to them and took responsibility for approving aid staff and beneficiary selection. ([Noria 2013/12/05](#), [Life4Syria 2013/10/25](#))
- **Hard to reach and besieged areas:** As the challenges and obstacles to humanitarian access multiplied, so too did the numbers of those in need of assistance, particularly in the areas most difficult to reach. 2013 saw a growing trend of policies of siege increasingly used by parties to the conflict as a means of strategic control. Due to access limitations, over 3 million people are currently estimated to be living in hard to reach or besieged areas, having received little or no humanitarian assistance in more than 10 months, up from an estimated 2.8 million in July. There are no estimations from 2012. ([OCHA 2014/01/31](#), [USAID 2013/12/06](#), [WFP 2013/07/01](#)).
- Data from the SINA assessment in 8 of the 14 governorates in Syria further shows the severe impact of restriction of movement, with more than 8.7

million people currently residing in areas facing moderate and severe restrictions of movement for both humanitarian actors and affected populations. ([SINA COAR 2014/02](#))

- **GoS impediments to humanitarian access:** The bureaucratic procedures imposed by the GoS on entry of international organisations, movement of goods, especially medical items, have posed a major challenge to operations. The international humanitarian response was significantly impeded when the GoS reduced the number of local NGOs authorised to support the work of international aid agencies from 110 to 60. As of October 2013, 16 international NGOs were registered inside Syria, up from 8 in January 2013. ([UN 2012/12/18](#), [ECHO 2013/01/14](#), [ECHO 2013/09/04](#), [OCHA 2014/01/31](#), [USAID 2013/12/06](#), [WFP 2013/07/01](#))
- **Border crossings:** Cross-border relief operations and the import of goods are important sources of aid for the population, particularly in areas difficult to reach from Damascus. However, the border crossings between Syria and its neighbouring countries have been subject to intermittent openings and closures throughout the year, particularly the Jordan/Syria official border crossing point 'Al-Naseeb', a vital point for the entry of goods. The Lebanon/Syria border crossing 'Al-Masnaa' has been consistently operational; while the Lebanon/Syria 'Al-Arida' crossing point faced closures depending on the security situation along the Northern Highway to Tripoli.
- The border crossings with Turkey are subject to closures depending on the security situation on the Syrian side. Mid-2013, the Government of Turkey (GoT) announced plans to build a wall along a stretch of the border to combat the smuggling and irregular entrance into the country. As ISIL is gaining territory along the border areas, it is becoming increasingly likely that the borders will be closed by the Turkish authorities. ([Logistics Cluster 2013/07/01](#))
- Cross-border assistance from Turkey was further hampered in mid-2013, when the GoT more strictly enforced registration requirements for all organisations in Turkey. A directive was issued requesting all unregistered INGOs to cease activities. Registration is reportedly lengthy and complex. ([PI 2013/06/19](#))
- Both the GoS and Iraqi authorities authorised the passage of humanitarian supplies between the 2 countries. This new corridor is expected to allow more regular assistance to reach this previously hard to reach governorate and eventually Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor. ([WFP 2013/12/16](#), [WFP 2013/11/20](#))
- **Supply routes:** Throughout the country, the conflict has led to intermittent closures of the main roads that connect the country. The Damascus-Homs highway experienced sporadic openings and closures throughout 2013 due to the security situation. The vital supply route when blocked meant, for example, that food aid in WFP's warehouses in Damascus could not reach areas in the centre of Syria.

Humanitarian profile (see annex B for definitions)



Conflict developments (Dec 2013- Jan 2014)

Kurdish Regions: Following the declaration of a Kurdish administrative autonomy in Al-Hasakeh in September, a similar declaration was made in Ain Al Arab and Afrin in Aleppo in January. Towards the end of January, the fighting over Ras Al Ain re-ignited between Kurdish groups and Islamist fighters.

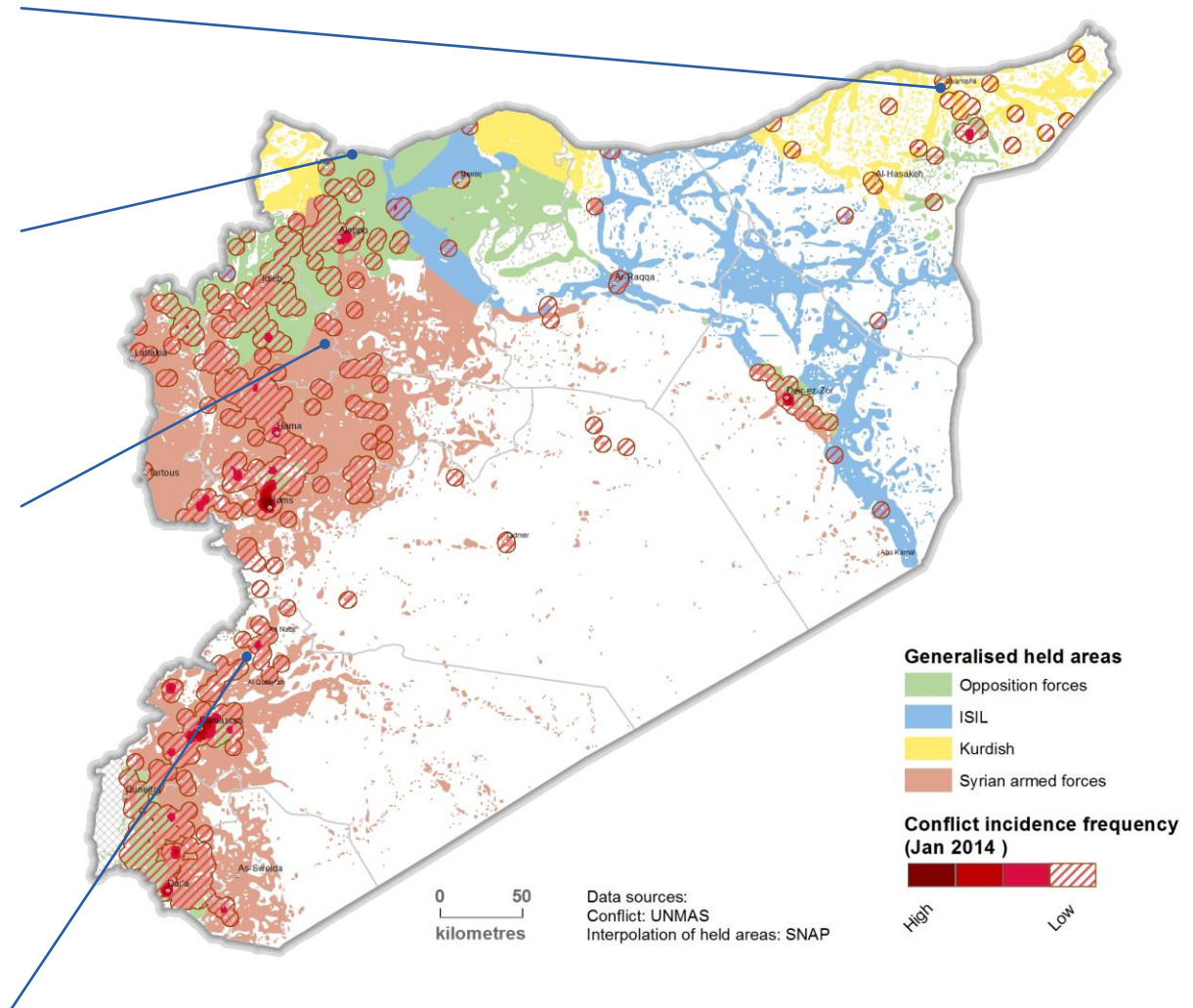
Opposition infighting: Fierce fighting broke out between the newly formed alliance of opposition fighters and ISIL. The alliance was able to take control of ISIL's strongholds in Aleppo city with ISIL retreating to the northern and eastern countryside. In Idleb, ISIL was pushed out of some strategic areas close to the Turkish borders. In response, ISIL retreated to strongholds in Ar-Raqqa city on 13 January and other strategic locations in Aleppo such as Al Bab and Jarablus border crossing.

Aleppo: The relentless GoS barrel bomb assault on Aleppo city caused hundreds of casualties. At the end of January, the SAF made its first advance in a year towards the east of the city and in the southeast countryside. Opposition forces took control of the military base of Aleppo international airport and Al-Kindi hospital.

Israeli air raids: On 27 January, Israeli airplanes targeted Russian-made missile launchers in Lattakia. 4 similar incidents were recorded in 2013 in Lattakia and Damascus.

Homs: Fighting erupted in Zara village at the end of January, threatening the fall of the strategic opposition-held Krak des Chevaliers castle, which would strengthen control of the main road between Homs and Tartous. ([Independent 2014/02/04](#))

Rural Damascus: After taking control of An Nabk in Qalamoun, the SAF started preparations for a military operation in Yabroud, a strategic town close to the Lebanese borders. In addition, SAF took control of several hills around Joosieh, an area which opposition groups used to shell Hezbollah strongholds in Lebanon.



Conflict – Key developments 2013

- **Overview:** In 2013, violence spread to all Syrian governorates. By mid-2013, the GoS started re-gaining control of several strategically important towns, particularly around Rural Damascus, Homs and Aleppo. With the prolonged incessant fighting, the opposition and the areas of control have become more fractured. This has resulted in intense fighting among opposition groups erupting in the north in the beginning of 2014.
- The short-term objective of the SAF appears to be to safeguard the capital and its surrounding areas, ensuring control of the key axis from Damascus to the north and across Lebanese borders and the border with Jordan, while trying to defend the strongholds of the coastal governorates. As the opposition has fragmented in certain areas, several opposition elements appear to be fighting primarily to increase areas of local control and take over supply routes and border crossings.
- **Northern governorates:** Throughout 2013, conflict in the north was concentrated primarily in Aleppo, Idleb and Al-Hasakeh. After opposition forces took control of **Ar-Raqqa** city in March, conflict incidents in the governorate have dramatically decreased.
- **Aleppo** experienced the highest levels of conflict during 2013, with the Syrian Armed Forces (SAF) regaining control in the southeast while opposition groups retained their control of northern Aleppo. Despite severe fighting in and around Aleppo city, a stalemate persisted between its western GoS-held part and eastern opposition-held part. **Idleb** also witnessed fierce fighting in 2013 with the SAF regaining control over strategic areas and towns.
- Since May, the Kurdish-majority regions in the north have been witnessing fierce fighting between the Popular Protection Units (YPG) and extremists groups, including ISIL. The YPG, the military wing of the Democratic Union Party (PYD) managed to take control most of **Al-Hasakeh** while expelling extremists from **Ras Al-Ain** bordering Turkey and **Ya'roubiyah** bordering Iraq in October. Simultaneously, clashes erupted in other majority Kurdish regions in Ar-Raqqa (**Tell Abiad**) and Aleppo (**Ain El Arab**).
- The northern part of Syria has witnessed incidents of opposition infighting since mid-2013. In April, ISIL was formed after splitting from Jabhat al-Nusra. Since then, clashes between different opposition groups have increased with the hard-line ISIL increasingly dominating areas. A number of large Islamic brigades decided to merge in September in response to ISIL's growing dominance. In early December, a new opposition front named the «Islamic Front» was formed. At the start of February, Al-Qaeda allegedly denounced its affiliation with ISIL, signifying a formal split between the two groups that share similar ideologies.
- **Eastern governorates:** In **Deir-ez-Zor**, the opposition maintained its territorial gains stretching from Deir-ez-Zor city to the Iraqi border despite regular GoS bombardment of the city. In November, extremist groups cut off the GoS's access to all Deir-ez-Zor's oilfields.
- **West and Centre:** The SAF made notable gains in **Homs during 2013** retaking the strategic town of Al-Qusair in May and **Khalidiyah** neighbourhood in July while sealing off other opposition-controlled areas in the governorate, including **Old Homs** and other northern towns such as Talbisseh. Neighbouring **Hama**, mostly under the SAF control, continues to witness clashes between the SAF and opposition forces in the north and southeast.
- With opposition fighters trying to enter **Damascus** at the start of February 2013, the battle for the capital started and intensified in March. The SAF was able to seize control of large areas in and around Damascus, except for some opposition pockets. Since May, the SAF has taken control of several towns in besieged Eastern and Western Ghouta. After the chemical attack on 21 August in opposition-held Eastern Ghouta, which killed more than 350 civilians, the risk of an international military intervention threatened to alter the status quo. However, a Russian-led proposal to eliminate Syria's chemical weapons averted US intervention by early September. The Qalamoun battle intensified in mid-November and the SAF seized control of strategic towns (Qara, Deir Attiyeh, An Nabk) aiming at cutting the opposition's supply routes from Lebanon.
- **Lattakia**, the ancestral home of President Assad, has also witnessed clashes in the mountainous region of Jabal Al-Akrad and the Rabiaa region. Despite the opposition's military operation in August, the SAF was able to regain full-control of these areas. **Tartous**, a Government stronghold, has also remained relatively unaffected by the conflict despite violence occurring in Bayda village in May.
- **Southern governorates:** **Dar'a**, which witnessed the first uprisings in March 2011, has seen ferocious fighting. Opposition forces have taken control of large swathes of the governorate and Dar'a city has been completely cut off from Damascus. With some areas being under opposition control and others under GoS control, many towns remain contested.
- The level of fighting was moderate to non-existent in 2 other governorates. **Quneitra**, which contains part of the contested Golan Heights, witnessed sporadic clashes between GoS and opposition fighters. In March and June, opposition groups overran several towns near the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights and took over the Quneitra crossing, the only crossing in the Golan Heights. **As-Sweida**, mainly inhabited by Druze communities, appears to be one of the governorates least affected in Syria, experience 1 bomb attack on a Government facility.

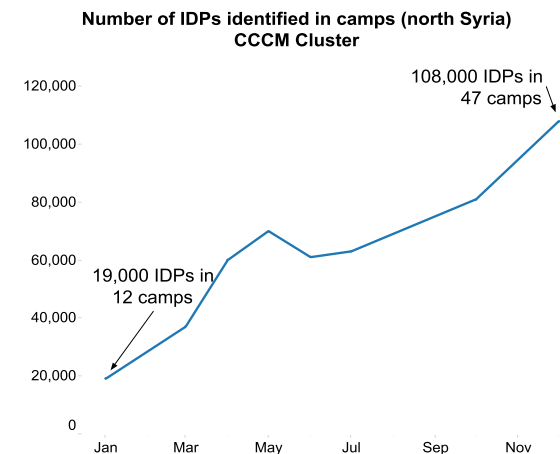
Displacement profile

Displacement December and January

- In December, 2 new sources on the number of people displaced became available:
 - Nationwide **6.52 million people** were estimated to be displaced as of December 2013, most residing in Aleppo, Rural Damascus, Homs & Idleb. (SHARP 2013/12/16)
 - The SINA assessment estimated **4.1 million IDPs** to be in the 111 sub-districts assessed in 8 northern governorates (out of a total of 272 sub-districts countrywide). (SINA 2013/12/31)
- In addition, several instances of large-scale displacement were reported in December and January:
 - **Al-Hasakeh:** Due to clashes between the PYD and extremist groups, security throughout Al-Hasakeh governorate significantly deteriorated in December 2013 and January 2014. 1,500 families are reported to have fled Tal Hmis, Tal Brak, Jaza'a, Kharab Askar and Al Hol; extremely poor rural areas in south-eastern Al-Hasakeh, finding refuge primarily in Quamishly. (WFP 2014/01/26)
 - **Aleppo:** Continued intense fighting in Aleppo caused mass population displacement towards Turkey from the north and eastern rural parts of the governorate. Reports indicate a mass movement of people from the eastern part of Aleppo city to the western, Government controlled, part of the city and to rural areas of Aleppo. By the end of the first week of February, an estimated 300,000 – 350,000 people were fleeing air raids and conflict in the eastern part of the city. Options to flee the city are limited. Civilians passing through the Bustan el Kaser crossing, the only remaining crossing between the east and west part of Aleppo city, are subject to sniper fire and arrest. (WFP 2014/01/26)
 - **Damascus/Rural Damascus:** Continued fighting in the Qalamoun area led to the displacement of thousands of Syrians to Homs, Rural Damascus and Lebanon. Meanwhile fighting around Damascus led to the displacement of at least 30,000 people from Az Zabadini, Deir Atiyeh and Adra. (OCHA 2013/12/05, WFP 2013/12/20, USAID 2013/12/20, WFP 2014/01/22)
 - **Quneitra:** By the end of December, an estimated 20,000 people had fled the southwestern locations of Al-Rafed, Al-Ma'alak, Al-Heran, Al-Jamoussa due to heavy fighting, seeking refuge mainly in the eastern

and central areas of the governorate. 8,500 of them subsequently fled to areas outside the governorate due to the lack of public services. (WFP 2013/11/20, WFP 2013/12/20)

- **Hama:** Between mid-October and mid-December 2013, over 8,000 families were displaced from Aleppo to the Salamiya and Mesaif areas. (OCHA 2013/12/19)
- Areas with large IDP concentrations continue to be subject to violence, causing large-scale secondary displacement. Thousands of families for instance settled in the relatively safe towns of Adra and nearby Yalda. When intensive fighting started in December 2013, at least 20,000 people were forced to flee. (WFP 2013/12/20, OCHA 2014/01/07)
- Evacuations from some besieged areas are on-going following local agreements, with people often forced to leave the areas without belongings. This was the case in Al Wa'er neighbourhood in Homs for instance, around 50 families are reportedly allowed to move out of the area on a daily basis, provided they obtain approval from local authorities. (WFP 2013/12/20)
- **IDP camps:** the number of IDPs residing in the IDP camps along the Turkish border continues to increase. At the start of December, it was estimated that 108,000 IDPs were residing in 47 camps. Most of the camps lack proper management capacity which has a negative impact on aid delivery. The majority of IDP camps are established without proper site planning. (CCCM 2014/01)

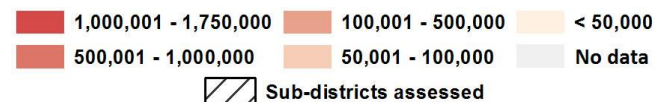


- **Palestinian refugees:** UNRWA estimates that of the 540,000 Palestine refugees registered with UNRWA in Syria, about 270,000 were displaced in Syria as at the start of December, a 15% increase from the June estimate of 235,000. A further 80,000 Palestinians have fled to other countries. (UNRWA 2013/12/18, UNRWA 2013/10/20)
- **Other refugees:** By the end of November, around 46,000 refugees were registered with UNHCR in Syria, mostly from Iraq (87%). (UNHCR 2013/12)
- **Returnees:** UNHCR reports that from January 2013 to mid-November, approximately 44,500 registered refugees returned to Syria from neighbouring countries. Among the cited reasons for return are reunification with family members in Syria and difficult living conditions in host countries. (USAID 2013/12/19)

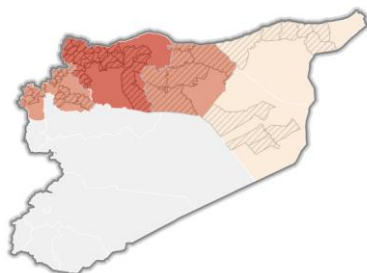
Displacement - Key developments 2013

Displacement over time

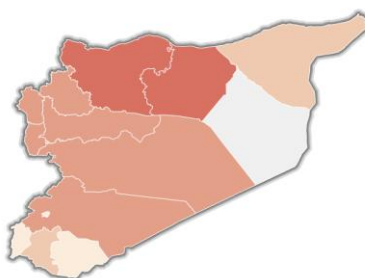
Estimated number of IDPs by governorate



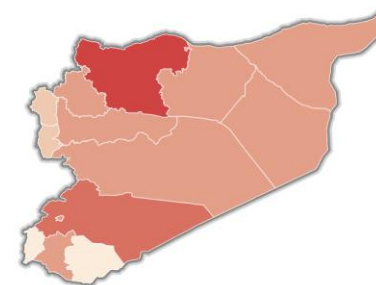
Source : JRANS January
Total : 1,570,123
58 sub-districts covered



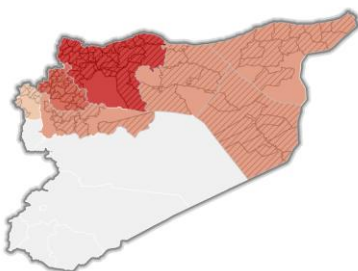
Source : MoLA January
Total : 3,619,255



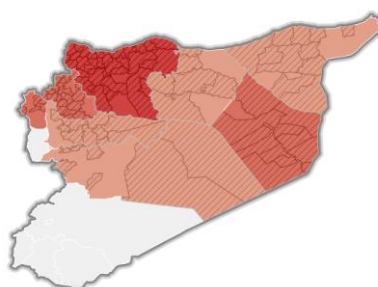
Source : OCHA April
Total : 4,254,500



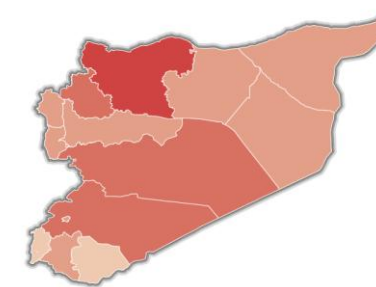
Source : JRANS II April
Total : 3,227,100
104 sub-districts covered



Source : SINA November
Total : 4,262,582
111 sub-districts covered



Source : OCHA December
Total : 6,520,000



Data sources

In 2013, there were two main sources available on the number of people displaced:

- OCHA: OCHA published 3 updates of the estimated number of people displaced countrywide. These estimates are reportedly derived from triangulation across a number of sources, including SARC.
- Multi-sectoral needs assessments northern Syria: J-RANS I, II and the SINA provided IDP figures for the assessed sub-districts in northern Syria. These figures are based on information provided by key informants and measured against registration lists, beneficiary lists, and local knowledge or secondary data verifications.

Displacement trends

The number of people internally displaced doubled during 2013. According to OCHA, Aleppo governorate, followed by Tartous and Idleb, registered the largest increase in IDPs between June and December. There was a major increase in IDPs seeking refuge in areas of low conflict, such as Tartous (456% increase), Lattakia (217%) and As-Sweida (189%), which are safer and have better access to services. Several assessments revealed that most IDPs settle in locations near their area of area of origin. However, as the violence spread and intensified throughout the year, an increasing number of people were forced to flee to other districts or governorates. During 2013 over 1.75 million Syrians fled the country registering as refugees with UNHCR in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt.

Country sectoral analysis

Priority sectors

- Although priority needs differ significantly by location, some generalisations can be made: Protection concerns are widespread, with many areas in the north subject to indiscriminate bombing and human rights violations by armed groups. Over 3 million people are currently estimated to be living in hard to reach or besieged areas. Throughout 2013, access to food and health care were highlighted as the main priorities in the multi-sectoral needs assessments undertaken in northern Syria. By November, health was regarded as a higher priority than food security, reflecting the deterioration of the health system and increase in prevalence of disease. In some areas, specifically Deir-ez-Zor and Homs, access to safe water has also become a higher priority.
- Priority needs in central and southern Syria are likely to be similar. This is confirmed by a recent assessment in Dar'a, during which key informants indicated food security as the main priority in all but 2 sub-districts assessed. While GoS supported services have a wider coverage in the areas of Lattakia, Tartous and Damascus city, the lack of income opportunities and high numbers of IDPs result in a lack of access to food. In these governorates, and other relatively safe areas hosting a large number of IDPs, it is likely that access to shelter is a priority, including rental support and assistance to host families. Reports of arbitrary arrests and torture in GoS prisons are widespread.

Prioritisation of sectors SINA*



* As prioritised by key informants in 111 sub-districts assessed (darker colour reflects a higher priority)

Health

Key Developments December and January

- Polio Vaccination Campaign:** It was reported that, as of 11 January, reported that 1.2 million children were immunised in the governorates of Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa, Deir-ez-Zor, Hama, Idleb and Lattakia, achieving 88% coverage although some health experts suggest that the vaccination coverage was likely lower (approximately 70% at best) due to heavy fighting, besiegement, access constraints and communication challenges in certain areas. The population used to calculate the number of people covered by the vaccination campaign are derived from administrative population data, not from actual surveys. As a result, the actual number of people covered might differ
- Previously unreachable areas, including Ar-Raqqa, Dar'a, Deir-ez-Zor and Rural Damascus, were covered during the National Vaccination Campaign against measles and polio during January. However, heavy fighting in some areas disrupted operations, depriving an estimated 100,000 of the vaccine. A second round of the house-to-house vaccination campaign was launched on 28 January in 7 northern governorates, and is scheduled to continue through 2 February 2014. On 30 January, a polio vaccinator was killed as a result of shelling targeting a hospital in Saraqeb, Idleb. WHO officials cautioned that polio had not yet been eradicated in Syria, and that the disease could reassert itself in the spring once warmer weather raises the risk of contagion. ([NYTimes, 2014/01/10](#), [Global Polio Eradication Initiative, 2014/01/14](#), [WHO, 2014/01/13](#), [AFP, 2014/01/14](#), [ACU, 2014/01/28](#) Polio Task Force, 2014/01/30)
- Medication and pharmaceutical shortages:** Reduced availability of medications throughout the country posed a particular problem for addressing medical needs in Aleppo and Rural Damascus. These severe shortages of medicines and medical equipment are affecting the capacity of centres offering specialised care for chronic diseases (as in the governorate of Quneitra), as well as resulting in procurement through drug dealers who are not monitored for quality-control and who are selling medications at higher prices. ([Tishreen, 2014/01/14](#), [ARA News, 2014/01/08](#), [MSF, 2013/12/12](#), [Al-Iqtisadi, 2013/12/10](#))
- Recent efforts to address shortages include the licensing of 163 pharmaceutical factories inside Syria and the delivery, cross lines, of more than 125 tons of medical equipment and medicines to health providers in both GoS and opposition-controlled areas of Aleppo. ([Al-Iqtisadi, 2013/12/15](#), [OCHA, 2014/01/13](#))
- Health infrastructure:** Attacks on health facilities are on-going; a Qatar Red Crescent hospital in Tel Abayad, Ar Raqqa was attacked in early January and occupied by warring parties. ([ORC, 2014/01/11](#))

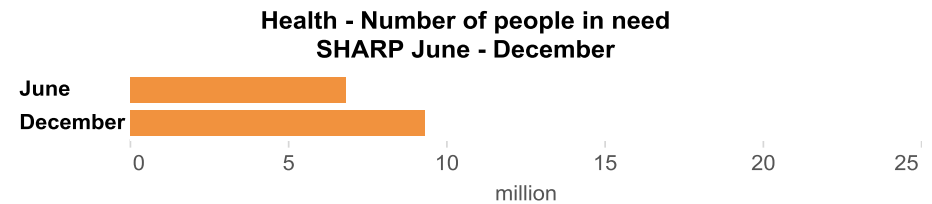
🚩 **Malnutrition:** Malnutrition is increasingly a concern. Recent reports of people dying of hunger in Yarmouk camp, south of Damascus, and reports of malnutrition cases from various health institutions in Aleppo, Hama, Homs and Dar'a reinforce this growing concern. Lacking regular access to supplies of food and medical care, people in besieged areas are particularly at risk of becoming malnourished. Several deaths caused by consumption of rotten food have been reported by the UN human rights office (OHCHR). ([Dar'a assessment, 2014/01/24, SINA, 2013/12/31, AFP, 2013/12/27, Reuters, 2013/12/31, AFP, 2014/01/02, AFP, 2014/01/29, OCHA, 2014/01/31, UN News Service, 2014/01/22](#))

🚩 **Communicable Diseases:** The 28 suspected measles cases in the second week of January might be first symptoms of very low vaccination coverage and could indicate that Syria will soon face a large measles outbreak ([ACU, 2014/01/11, WHO, 2013/10/16](#))

🚩 A recent assessment found that there were cases of Acute Jaundice Syndrome (AJS) reported in Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh, Hama, Idleb and Lattakia. Additionally, tuberculosis (TB) was found in Aleppo, Homs, Hama, Idleb, Al-Hasakeh and Deir-ez-Zor, and diarrhoea was also found in Lattakia and Ar-Raqqa; TB and diarrhoea were both highlighted as a concern in Homs. Leishmaniasis has become a particular problem, especially among IDPs in the sub-districts of Aleppo City and Azaz in the governorate of Aleppo. Several cases of Visceral Leishmaniasis, a fatal disease if left untreated, were reported in Salqeen in Idleb as well. ([MENTOR 2014/01/16, SINA 2013/12/31](#))

🚩 **Disabilities and Psycho-social Needs:** A recent paper by Handicap International found that of the IDPs with new crisis-related injuries that were interviewed, 60% were injured due to explosive weapons and 31% due to gunshots. Given the overall weakening of the health system 88.5% of those seeking treatment were not able to access adequate care and rehabilitation services, placing them at risk of preventable long-term impairments. Additionally, the report found that 26.9% of the interviewed victims were among the most vulnerable groups (women, children and elderly), underscoring the indiscriminate nature of the violence and its significant impact on civilians. ([WHO 2013/09/22, Handicap International, 2014/01/25](#))

Key developments 2013



- **Weakened Health System:** Syria's health system deteriorated significantly during 2013 for various reasons. Damage to health infrastructure has rendered 60% of public facilities (both hospitals and health centres) either non-functional or only partly functional. Functional facilities are thus overwhelmed in many areas (with Aleppo, Dar'a, Deir-ez-Zor, Homs, Idleb, Rural Damascus being the worst affected), depleting resources more rapidly and compromising the ability to provide sufficient and quality care. The health infrastructure in Aleppo was particularly affected following extensive air strikes and fighting; reports indicate that 34 public and private hospitals, of 112 pre-crisis, have been rendered out of service, placing further strain on its remaining medical institutions. ([Al-Watan, 2013/12/22, OCHA, 2013/08/14](#))
- **Targeting of Health Facilities & Workers:** In direct violation of international humanitarian law, parties to the conflict increasingly targeted health facilities and health workers. Furthermore, in September, it was reported that GoS and opposition forces were preventing medical assistance from reaching the population in certain areas. ([WHO, 2013/06/04, NYT 2013/09/13, UN Human Rights Council 2013/09/13](#))
- In early 2013, reports emerged of patients being arrested, refused treatment or threatened by the presence of snipers near health facilities in the governorates of Aleppo, Dar'a, Damascus, Hama and Homs. As a result, health facilities were no longer safe for patients or staff and more people sought treatment in field hospitals or clandestine health facilities which lacked sufficient qualified staff and medical equipment. ([ICRC 2013/02/15, UN Human Rights Council 2013/02/05, USAID 2013/01/17, OCHA 11/29/12](#))
- **Medicine supply:** The availability of medicines and medical equipment significantly reduced throughout 2013. Reports indicate that 65-70% of all pharmaceutical plants have been affected by the conflict (e.g. damage to factories in Aleppo, Rural Damascus and Homs and increased input prices), reducing overall pharmaceutical production in the country. As such, domestic production meets only 20-30% of required medication demands. The depreciation of the Syrian currency has made it difficult to import medicines to meet the remaining demand. It was also reported that shortages are caused by blockage of supply routes. ([WHO, 2014/01/07, Daily Star](#))

[2013/07/01, AFP 2013/08/19, Tishreen 2013/10/13, Tishreen 2013/09/17, AFP 2013/08/19, SINA, 2013/12, ARA News, 2014/01/12, Tishreen, 2014/01/14\)](#)

- **Referral networks** were severely disrupted due to damaged infrastructure, transport difficulties (e.g damaged and closed roads) and a substantial reduction in the availability of ambulances.
- **Vaccine-preventable diseases:** The reduced number of health workers, the overall weakening of the health system and conflict throughout the country disrupted regular immunisation activities. In October 2013 it was estimated that regular vaccination coverage has dropped from 95% (pre-crisis) to 68% . This has resulted in the resurgence of vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles, polio, meningitis, and typhoid around the country. Symptoms of Acute Jaundice Syndrome (AJS), which could be attributable to brucellosis or hepatitis, are being seen more frequently as well. ([WHO 2013/10/29](#))
- **Polio outbreak and Vaccination Campaign:** Following the confirmation of 17 poliovirus 1 cases in Syria since October 2013, an outbreak which began in the governorate of Deir-ez-Zor, a National Vaccination Campaign (NVC) against measles and polio (supported by WHO, UNICEF and UNHCR) was launched in December 2013. Part of a wider regional campaign, the NVC targets 2.2 million children countrywide with monthly vaccinations (December 2013 – May 2014) to contain the outbreak. ([USAID, 2014/01/15, El Nashra, 2014/01/05, OCHA, 2013/12/05, OCHA, 2014/01/13](#))
- **Communicable Diseases:** The spread of communicable diseases is a growing concern, cited as the largest health problem in all northern governorates in a recent multi-sectoral assessment. These include skin diseases, leishmaniasis, respiratory diseases and diarrhoea. Overcrowding, lack of access to healthcare, poor hygiene, and malnutrition were identified as risk factors for the spread of these diseases. ([SINA 2013/12/31](#))
 - Leishmaniasis cases were recorded in great numbers throughout the year in Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh, Deir-ez-Zor and Hama. Outbreaks were reported in Al-Hasakeh (July) and in Aleppo (August). ([PI 2014/01/06](#))
 - Several measles outbreaks occurred in 2013, with up to 7,000 known cases reported by June. ([MSF 2013/06/18, Daily Star 2013/06/19, WHO 2013/06/04](#))
 - Reduced access to water sources, especially in summer, resulted in outbreaks of water-borne diseases such as typhoid, AJS and diarrhoea in Aleppo, Deir-ez-Zor, Homs, Hama, Idlib, and Rural Damascus.
- **Disease monitoring:** In September an Early Warning Alert and Response Network (EWARN) was established in opposition-held areas. This was a positive development, providing clear definitions and leading to better diagnoses in areas not previously covered under EWARS, and capturing the October polio outbreak in Deir-ez-Zor. Despite better diagnoses, there is still

a great need for identifying laboratories that can assist with confirmation of suspected illnesses. ([PI 2014/01/30](#))

- **Chronic Diseases:** Treatment for chronic diseases has been highlighted as a great concern. Severe shortages of chronic disease medications and supplies (e.g. insulin for diabetes, dialysis machines) around the country were reported throughout 2013. By October 2012 it was estimated that more than half of those chronically ill had their treatment schedules interrupted; with further reduced availability of chronic disease medicines throughout 2013 it is likely that proportion of unmet need has increased. Similarly, the fighting in certain areas led to the interrupted services in specialised cancer centres (as in Quneitra), reducing overall capacity for providing cancer treatment inside Syria. ([PI 2014/01/30, Lancet 2013/06/25, SINA, 2013/12, AJM 2012/10/12, WHO 2012/11/26, WHO 2012/12/20, GoS 2012/12/19, Tishreen, 2014/01/14](#))
- **Malnutrition:** Though cases of severe malnutrition were first reported in December 2012, the risk of increased malnutrition in the population grew as the availability of food, infant formula, water and healthcare was reduced. The first deaths from severe malnutrition were recorded in September in Madamiyat Elsham, Rural Damascus. A MUAC rapid assessment conducted in Damascus in April displayed alarming results (6% of the sample were severely malnourished; 8% were moderately malnourished) and confirmed the deteriorating nutritional status of children. Given the population's general lack of familiarity with malnutrition and its associated risk factors and symptoms, it is also likely underreported. As such, a significant information gap remains with regards to malnutrition throughout the country. ([CNN 2013/09/02, UNICEF 2013/05/15 OCHA, 2014/01/31](#))
- The situation in Yarmouk camp became particularly dire in the final months of 2013, where the number of deaths attributed to malnutrition stood at 15. More people are at risk of developing malnutrition so long as access to adequate food, water and medical services remains limited – particularly in besieged areas. ([Reuters, 2013/12/31](#))

Food security and livelihoods

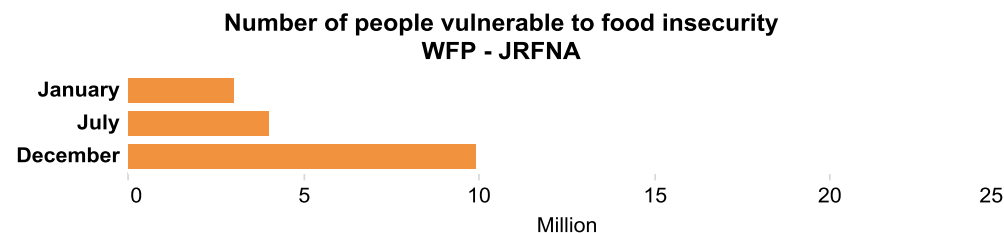
Key Developments December and January

- According to initial findings of the Joint Rapid Food Needs Assessment, 9.9 million people are vulnerable to food insecurity and 8% of families have lost their primary breadwinner, with about 11% of households now headed by women. ([SHARP 2013/12/16](#))
- According to SINA, food security was the highest priority across all assessed areas, with 5.5 million people in severe and moderate need of food assistance. The largest populations affected by food insecurity were located in Aleppo, Latakia and Idleb. The highest concentration of those in life-threatening need of food assistance was in Homs. ([SINA 2013/12/31](#), [SINA COAR 2014/01](#))
- A Dar'a assessment found that food security was the top priority across 12 of the governorate's 17 sub-districts with 85% of the assessed population in immediate and moderate need of food aid. The main food security problem identified was the lack of adequate amounts and diversity of food products, particularly infant formula. The lack of cooking fuel was also identified as a major issue. ([Dar'a 2014/01/24](#))
- Economists estimate that the Syrian economy contracted by 13% in 2013. This follows a 19% contraction in 2012. ([GIEWS 2014/01/28](#))
- Syria's requirements for wheat imports are estimated at 1.47 million tons in 2014, of which 1 million tons is expected to be commercially procured. There has been no forecast of domestic wheat production for 2014, however given the limited winter rainfall, continuing insecurity and high cost of inputs, this is expected to decrease from 2013 production levels. ([GIEWS 2014/01/28](#))
- On 26 December 2013, opposition and the SAF in Modamiyet Elsham agreed to a 48 hour truce to allow food to enter the besieged area in exchange for opposition fighters' weapons. Reportedly a convoy delivered a 1 day ration of food for 3,000-4,000 people, about half the population believed to be in the area which has been sealed off for nearly 1 year. ([WP 2013/12/27](#), [NYT 2013/12/27](#), [Daily Star 2013/12/30](#), [OCHA 2014/01/17](#), [WFP 2014/01/15](#))
- In northern Idleb, wheat production has decreased by 65-70% while consumption has nearly doubled due to the increase of IDPs in the area. In addition, there has been a 75% decrease of irrigated land and the cost of fertiliser has increased between 750-1,200%. ([PI 2014/01/15](#))
- There is concern with the relatively low level of rainfall across Syria and the region, particularly given the destruction to irrigation infrastructure, which has likely rendered most farmers reliant on rain-fed agriculture. In addition, the planting of spring vegetable and legume crops requires inputs of seeds and fertiliser in February and March, at the latest, and due to the increase in

prices, limited fuel supplies and closure of various borders, it is unlikely that there will be sufficient inputs to generate a significant harvest to meet local consumption needs. ([PI 2014/01/15](#))

- Food prices:** Commodity prices continued to fluctuate, with high discrepancies between areas. Fighting in the Qalamoun region along the Damascus-Homs highway in November and December, coupled with limited transport during winter storm Alexa, led to a spike in prices of food and fuel in late December. Food prices reportedly eased in early January nationally. However, in Aleppo and Idleb governorates, commodity prices reportedly increased by 40-50% in early January due to intensification of fighting. The price of unsubsidised bread across Syria ranged from SYP 50 to 500, 3 to 30 times the SYP 15 cost of subsidised bread. ([Tishreen 2014/01/06](#), [Eqtisad 2014/01/08](#), [WFP 2014/01/26](#))
- In January 2014, WFP reported that Al-Hasakeh was experiencing critical shortages of yeast, which threatened to stop bread production. ([WFP 2014/01/26](#))

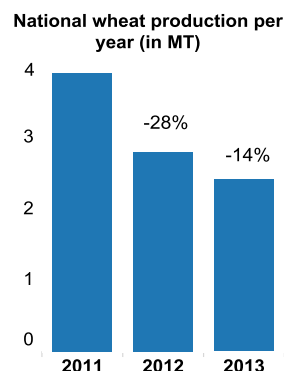
Key developments 2013



- Rapid increase in food insecurity:** The number of people vulnerable to food insecurity more than doubled between July and December 2013 due to a combination of a decrease in domestic food production, an increase in food prices and the lack of access to income opportunities to access food. Besiegements across the country, particularly in and around Damascus, tightened leaving people with no access to food supplies.
- High bread prices:** Bread prices continued to rise in 2013, with large discrepancies between areas depending on levels of conflict, access to supply routes and availability of local production. Due to the crisis, households have been forced to reduce dietary diversity and the most vulnerable groups are consuming almost exclusively carbohydrates, mainly bread. Although bread continued to be subsidised at SYP 15, in many areas subsidised bread was unavailable, insufficient or sold above the 'set' price.

Throughout the year, prices for bread have consistently been highest in Aleppo and rose further during the siege of Western Aleppo in September (SYP 250 for a tie (900g) of bread). ([Al Watan 2013/09/08](#), [Eqtsad 2013/09/04](#), [AFP 2013/10/15](#), [NPR 2013/10/07](#), [PI 2013/10/14](#), [Al Akhbar 2013/10/07](#))

- **Food shortages:** In general, access to, rather than availability of, food has been considered as the main food security issue. However, in contested and besieged areas, food shortages were becoming more prominent. In July, in Idleb city, roughly 400,000 people were reportedly at risk of food shortages, while 1.2 million people in hard to reach areas in Rural Damascus faced food shortages. ([UN Radio 2013/07/30](#))
- **Decrease in agricultural production:** Agricultural production has been further affected during 2013, with the June harvest estimated at 2.5 MT compared to the 10 year average prior to 2010/11 of 4-4.5 MT. However, the above average rains at the start of the year mitigated in part the impact of the crisis in the northern areas of the country. Hence, losses were not as severe in 2013 as they were in 2012 (decrease of 14% in 2013 compared to 28% in 2012). Ahead of the planting season in October, farmers indicated a large number of obstacles towards cultivation including shortages in inputs such as seeds, fertilisers, water and electricity. As a result, the area planted was estimated to far below average. (Trusted source 2013/09, [FAO/WFP 2013/07/05](#), [GIEWS 2013/01/28](#))
- **Exchange rate:** At the start of the 2013, the exchange rate stood at SYP 87 per USD. Throughout the year, the exchange rate fluctuated heavily, with a temporary spike up to SYP 280 per USD in September when an international military intervention seemed imminent. GoS interventions have also impacted the exchange rate. On 4 August, a Legislative Decree was issued banning dealing in currencies other than the Syrian pound as a means of payments "to prevent the dollarization of the economy". ([Al-Akhbar 2013/07/31](#), [SANA 2013/08/04](#), [Hurriyet 2013/08/05](#), [OCHA 2013/09/25](#), [Eqtsad 2013/08/27](#), [Al Watan 2013/09/11](#))
- **Rise of informal economy:** The erosion of the Syrian state and the growth of areas under control of opposition groups, brought a rapid spread of informal as well as illicit economic activity. Estimates suggest that 80% of the workforce was engaged in informal activities in July, up from 30% in 2012. Illicit economic activities, such as extraction of oil and smuggling of goods, have been increasingly reported. ([FAO/WFP 2013/07/05](#), [Clingendael 2012](#), [ODI 2011](#), [ILO 2009](#), [SHARP 2013/12/16](#))



Protection

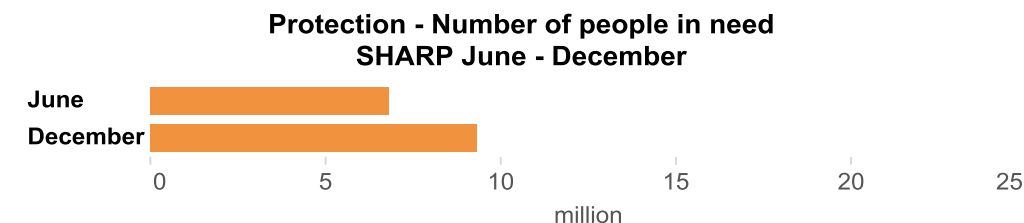
Key Developments December and January

- ✦ Primary protection concerns across assessed areas of Dar'a governorate were the lack of access to basic services, the unfair treatment and abuse of detainees and armed violence against civilians. ([Dar'a 2014/01/24](#))
- ✦ According to the assessment of crisis-related injuries of its beneficiaries conducted by Handicap International assessment, 60% of injuries resulted from shelling or bombing and 31% from gunfire. Furthermore, about 20% of such injuries were found in children, 5% in women and 2% in elderly. 60% of injuries resulted from shelling or bombing and 31% from gunfire. 88% of those injured lacked proper access to rehabilitative services. ([HI 2014/01/21](#))
- ✦ In December 2013, the GoS significantly increased its use of barrel bombs across the country, particularly in its bombardment of Aleppo. Barrel bombs are improvised devices made up of an oil barrel filled with explosive materials and shrapnel. In Aleppo, human rights groups documented the killing of over 200 civilians during 4 days of intense bombardments by the SAF, which included the use of barrel bombs. Elsewhere, the use of barrel bombs was reported in Jasim in Dar'a governorate and Daraya in the Damascus suburbs. ([Daily Star 2013/12/28](#), [Syria Deeply 2014/01/21](#), [OCHA 2014/01/13](#), [Time 2014/01/13](#), [HRW 2013/12/21](#), [Time 2014/01/13](#))
- ✦ An assessment of photographic evidence allegedly provided by a GoS military police defector found that many detainees were subject to starvation and torture, including beatings, strangulation, burns and electrocution. Forensic experts examined photos of 835 bodies in detail and 42% showed signs of emaciation and half showed evidence of trauma. The GoS allegedly documented detainee deaths through photographs in order to produce death certificates, using a falsified cause of death. ([Carter Ruck and Co. 2014/01/21](#))
- ✦ Opposition groups, including Jabhat al-Nusra and Islamist fighters, attacked Adra (Oumaliyyah) in December and reportedly executed 15 civilians from religious minorities. Adra is a diverse, lower-class industrial area located on the far outskirts of Damascus and has been host to an estimated 80,000 IDPs in recent months. In late December, the GoS evacuated 5,000 civilians from the area and an additional 30,000 people fled to parts of Damascus, Rural Damascus and Homs. ([BBC 2013/12/13](#), [ICRC 2013/12/31](#), [AFP 2013/12/13](#), [AFP 2013/12/14](#), [As-Safir 2013/12/13](#), [Daily Star 2013/12/15](#), [WFP 2013/12/20](#), [AFP 2013/12/30](#), [As-Safir 2013/12/30](#), [OCHA 2014/01/17](#), [WFP 2014/01/23](#), [WFP 2014/01/15](#))
- ✦ The humanitarian situation in besieged Yarmouk camp has severely deteriorated in recent month under the heavy siege in place since June. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reports that 63 people have died due to shortages of food and medicine. In December, civil society groups negotiated with armed groups to bring in 2,000 doses of polio vaccines. In

January, a 6-truck UNRWA convoy carrying food for 6,000 people and 10,000 doses of polio vaccines was forced to turn back due to gunfire en-route after the GoS only allowed access through the most dangerous route to the camp. Yarmouk residents are reportedly consuming animal feed and burning doors for heating. On 16 January, 10 Palestinians were killed and 40 injured by an airstrike on the camp. By the end of January, over 1,000 food parcels (enough for a family of 5 for 10 days) had been distributed under rigorous screening of beneficiaries by the SAF and in unsafe areas of the camp close to the frontlines. This was the first time food was distributed in 4 months. Negotiations continued throughout January to evacuate dozens of elderly and sick residents in critical condition. ([UNRWA 2013/12/20](#), [OCHA 2013/12/19](#), [AFP 2013/12/27](#), [AFP 2014/01/02](#), [AFP 2014/01/10](#), [As-Safir 2014/01/10](#), [Reuters 2014/01/15](#), [UNRWA 2014/01/15](#), [Amnesty 2014/01/16](#), [UNRWA 2014/01/17](#), [AFP 2014/01/18](#), [AFP 2014/01/19](#), [UNGA 2014/01/21](#), [UN News Service 2014/01/22](#), [UNRWA 2014/01/30](#), [AFP 2014/01/24](#))

- ✚ A local ceasefire between GoS and opposition groups led to the temporary lifting of the siege of Barzeh neighbourhood in Damascus to allow humanitarian assistance to enter. ([WFP 2014/01/26](#))
- ✚ Human Rights Watch published a report documenting the large-scale demolition of residential neighbourhoods in Damascus and Hama conducted under the supervision of the SAF. Since July 2012, 145 hectares in 7 neighbourhoods were demolished, destroying the homes of thousands of families. Some demolitions took place following military operations, reportedly to prevent opposition groups from returning, while some were located near military bases. In some areas, authorities said that the demolitions took place to remove illegally-built structures, although this was disputed by residents. Residents said they were given inadequate notice and were not able to remove their belongings before the demolitions took place. ([HRW 2014/01/30](#))
- ✚ UNFPA reports that there is anecdotal evidence on the increase of gender-based violence incidents in contested areas in contested areas and among IDPs in the communities. ([UNFPA 2014/01/31](#))
- ✚ Instances of kidnapping continue to be reported. Following the second attack on Maalula, located in the Qalamoun mountains, by opposition fighters in early December, there were conflicting reports of the fate of the nuns from the town's monastery. The nuns were reportedly evacuated by opposition groups to an unnamed opposition stronghold in the Qalamoun region for their safety; however, the groups holding the nuns are reportedly making demands, such as the lifting of the siege on Ghouta in exchange for the release of the nuns. ([NPR 2013/12/20](#), [Al-Akhbar 2013/12/04](#))
- ✚ The conflict in Jasim in Dar'a governorate intensified: 30 children were reportedly killed in fighting and a suicide attack at the Jasim National Hospital caused 40 casualties, including an undisclosed number of deaths. ([OCHA 2014/01/13](#))

Key developments 2013



- **Freedom of movement:** Freedom of movement for civilians has been increasingly restricted in many parts of the country:
 - Throughout 2013, the SAF and other pro-GoS forces tightened their sieges on and sealed off opposition strongholds in the Damascus suburbs, Homs and Aleppo. Opposition forces also besieged a number of GoS-controlled areas in Aleppo, Homs and Idlib. Besiegement ranged from the blockage of vehicles to a full ban of all movement of people and goods in and out of besieged areas, often enforced by snipers. Some areas of Homs have been besieged for more than 1 year. The first death from starvation was reported in Modamiyet Elsham in Rural Damascus in September, followed by increasing reports from other besieged neighbourhoods, particularly Yarmouk refugee camp. In addition, people have died from a lack of medicine and medical supplies and a number of besieged areas have also been intensively shelled. Areas that have been under siege for over 1 month include neighbourhoods of the cities of Aleppo, Damascus, Homs and Idlib and the Palestinian refugee camp Yarmouk. ([OCHA 2013/12/19](#), [AFP 2013/09/18](#), [UNOCHA 2013/09/13](#), [UNICEF 2013/08/29](#), [Human Rights Council 2013/06/04](#))
 - The proliferation of checkpoints continued throughout 2013, particularly with the increased fragmentation of the opposition and additional pro-GoS armed groups to the conflict. Checkpoints along transit routes enabled parties to the conflict to harass, abuse, detain, and rob civilians, including IDPs and minorities. At checkpoints, people must show ID cards indicating their place of origin and religion; some men from areas alleged to support the opposition have reportedly been questioned and detained at GoS checkpoints. ([Brookings LSE 2013/07/10](#), [WFP 2013/07/25](#), [HRW 2013/07/01](#), [Human Rights Council 2013/06/04](#), [PI 2013/09/20](#))
 - Flight options for those trying to leave the country steadily reduced with entry to Jordan restricted in mid-2013, while Turkey closed its borders in mid-2013 as conflict grew in various Syrian border towns, such as Jarablus and Tell Abiad. By July 2013, certain groups had difficulties entering Lebanon through official border crossings and, following the overthrow of President Morsi, Egypt began requiring visas before arrival.

A border crossing into the Kurdistan Region of Iraq opened to refugees in mid August but closed again in late September. It was re-opened in January 2014, but with restrictions. ([UNHCR 2013/07/16](#), [UNFPA 2013/09/01](#))

- **Sexual and gender based violence:** Reports of SGBV continued throughout 2013, although reporting and documentation remains a major obstacle. The threat of SGBV was noted as a significant causal factor among refugees fleeing Syria. One report noted that 20% of SGBV survivors were men. ([EMHRN 2013/11/07](#), [IRC 2013/01/14](#))
- **Indiscriminate weapons:** The increasing use of indiscriminate weapons, including barrel bombs, fuel air explosive bombs and incendiary and chemical weapons contributed to the mounting death toll in Syria, particularly among civilians. In August 2013, a chemical attack killed over 350 people and health clinics treated over 3,000 people affected by neurotoxic symptoms. The use of incendiary weapons, which cause extensive burns, fuel-air explosive bombs and cluster munitions impact large areas and are indiscriminate by nature. The increasing use of barrel bombs witnessed at the end of the year in Aleppo reportedly killed large number of civilians. ([HRW 2013/11/11](#), [HRW 2013/10/01](#), [HRW 2013/08/21](#), [OCHA 2014/01/13](#), [Time 2014/01/13](#), [HRW 2013/12/21](#))
- **Palestinian refugees:** Palestinians are deeply vulnerable to the growing conflict in Syria, as many Palestinian refugee camps and settlements have been engulfed by fighting and heavily damaged. At least half of the Palestinian population in Syria has been displaced and the vast majority are in need of humanitarian aid. Furthermore, Palestinians face major restrictions fleeing the country, particularly to Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon, and have been subject to refoulement. ([Amnesty 2013/10/31](#), [HRF 2013/11/22](#), [HRW 2013/03/22](#))
- **Women's rights:** In 2013, women living in areas which fell under control of Al-Qaeda-linked groups such as ISIL and Jabhat al-Nusra, faced increasing restrictions on their freedom of movement and dress code. In Ar-Raqqa, women were barred from participating in aid efforts. ([Life4Syria 2013/10/25](#))
- **Child protection:** Children continued to face a number of protection challenges due to the conflict, including arrest, detention, torture, kidnapping and hostage-taking. Children were subject to recruitment by armed forces and groups and were participating in looting, pillaging and the recruitment of other children. With the economic collapse and the loss of traditional winners, children were increasingly working and often in dangerous jobs, such as ad hoc oil refining and garbage collection, where they were subject to major health hazards. ([CPWG 2013/09](#))

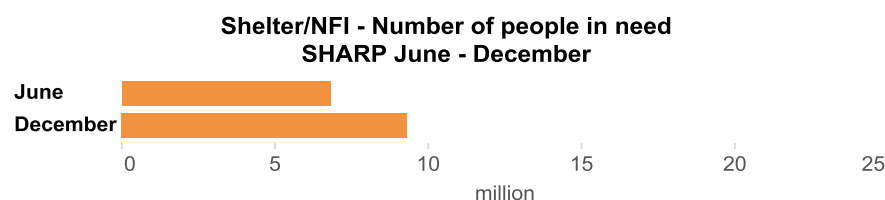
Shelter/NFI

Key developments December and January

- **Electricity:** Access to electricity varies across the governorates, due to fuel shortages, infrastructure damage and conflict over control of power plants. In the northeast, ISIL is reportedly controlling a number of power stations, including the Tishreen Dam. At the start of February, attacks on a supply line in Homs led to electricity cuts in Homs and Deir-ez-Zor, while in late December, power cuts in Damascus were reported due to a gas explosion related to fighting in Adra. According to the SINA, 30% of assessed sub-districts reported to have less than 6 hours of electricity per week while in Dar'a governorate, this rate was 17%. ([Tishreen 2014/01/27](#), [ARA News 2014/01/27](#), [SINA 2013/12/31](#), [SINA COAR 2014/01](#), [Dar'a 2014/01/24](#), [Al Jazeera 2014/02/02](#))
- **Fuel:** Local media reported that since the temporary Damascus-Homs road closure in November and December, combined with the onset of winter storm Alexa and intense fighting near a major fuel depot in Adra, fuel was being rationed at gas stations with 20 litres provided per day per customer. In the besieged Ghouta area, a litre of fuel is selling for SYP 500-900, compared to the official rate of SYP 100. In Damascus, fuel distribution was about 20-25% of pre-crisis levels and the price of a gas cylinder on the black market was approximately SYP 2,000-2,500 compared to the official price of SYP 1,100. The lack of fuel was noted in both the SINA and Dar'a assessments and affected people's ability to cook food and their access to clean water, heating and transport. ([Al-Iqtisadi 2013/12/18](#), [Al-Iqtisadi 2013/12/16](#), [Al-Iqtisadi 2013/12/29](#), [Al-Watan 2013/12/29](#), [Al-Modon 2014/01/03](#), [IWPR 2014/01/13](#), [Al-Iqtisadi 2014/01/21](#), [SINA 2013/12/31](#), [SINA COAR 2014/01](#), [Dar'a 2014/01/24](#))
- **Shelter:** In assessed areas of the 8 northern governorates 1.3 million people are estimated to be in need of shelter assistance, 250,000 of which are in acute need. Aleppo and Idlib host the largest populations in need. The SINA report found a large number of people residing in sub-standard shelter and 3% of the identified IDPs were residing in open spaces. Around 50% of all IDPs identified in Aleppo governorate were accommodated in collective/vacated buildings. Several assessments have indicated that collective shelters and vacated buildings are often congested, do not have the required facilities and are unable to provide sufficient protection to harsh winter weather. ([SINA 2013/12/31](#), [SINA COAR 2014/01](#))
- In Dar'a 342,000 people were assessed to be in need of shelter assistance, of whom 101,000 had acute shelter needs. The sub-districts of Kherbet Ghazala, Jasim, Da'el and Ash-Shajara reported that 35-50% of shelters were heavily damaged or destroyed. ([Dar'a 2014/01/24](#))

- 🚩 In besieged areas of Syria, where there is a lack of electricity and incoming fuel supplies, people are burning doors, window frames and furniture for heating. During winter storm Alexa, 2 children reportedly died due to the severe cold. ([AFP 2013/12/13](#), [Al Akhbar 2013/12/10](#))
- 🚩 A fire, thought to have been caused by a gas heater, destroyed 20 tents at an UNRWA collective centre in the Jaramana neighbourhood of Damascus. 200 households in Atmeh camp were flooded by rain water and another 2,000 were reportedly damaged. ([Egtsad 2013/12/30](#), [UNRWA 2014/01/25](#))

Key developments 2013



- **Severe weather conditions:** In January 2013, unusually severe weather conditions led to a significant deterioration in living conditions, particularly for those residing in substandard shelter such as vacated buildings and tents. A lack of access to fuel and electricity cuts prompted many Syrians to turn to cutting down trees and using doors, furniture, window frames and garbage to keep warm during the winter. Winter storm Alexa in December 2013 led to several reports of people, including an opposition commander, freezing to death, however there was limited information on the humanitarian impact. Although the current winter is milder than the last, heating continues to be a concern as electricity cuts are more widespread than at the start of 2013 forcing people to increasingly rely on wood for fuel. ([RRP 4 2013/12/17](#), [Al Akhbar 2013/10/05](#))
- **Destruction of infrastructure:** At the start of the year, an estimated 3 million buildings were damaged, of which 20% were completely destroyed. Heavy fighting, including the use of heavy weapons, spread and caused further widespread damage to infrastructure and houses. The proportion is specifically high in heavily contested areas. In Homs for instance, an estimated 60-70% of houses in opposition-controlled areas were found damaged or destroyed in May. Human Rights Watch published a report documenting the large-scale demolition of residential neighbourhoods in Damascus and Hama conducted under the supervision of the SAF. Since July 2012, 145 hectares in 7 neighbourhoods were demolished. ([Egtsad 2013/06/29](#), [AFP 2013/07/06](#), [OCHA 2013/04/08](#), [J-RANS 2013/03/28](#), [J-RANS II 2013/05/22](#), [OCHA 2012/12/10](#), [GoS 2012/12/19](#), [SNHR 2012/12/20](#), [HRW 2014/01/30](#))

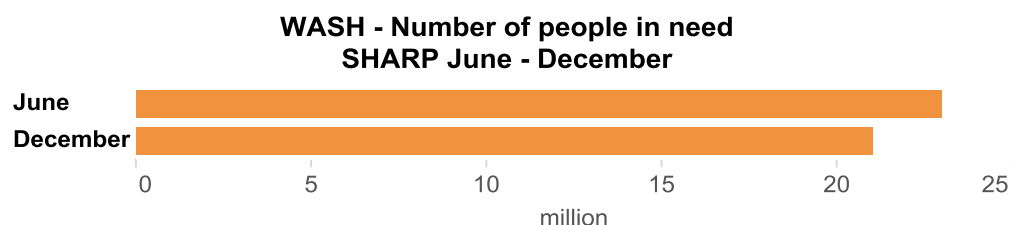
- **Fuel and subsidy cuts:** Rising fuel prices were already of concern in January 2013 and have only increased throughout the year, disrupting transport, heating and cooking. In October, the GoS decided to decrease subsidies on gasoline, leading to further price increases. ([WFP 2013/11/20](#), [WFP 2013/11/20](#))
- **Electricity cuts:** Electricity cuts have become more severe since the start of the year. During J-RANS I, 70% of sub-districts assessed reported to have electricity on a daily basis. By April, this proportion decreased to 50% of the sub-districts assessed during J-RANS II. By mid-2013, power stations were often contested and resulting in blackouts. In July, the GoS reported that fighting around gas and fuel transfer pipelines, which fuel the power generation stations, caused blackouts in the provinces of Dar'a, As-Sweida, Quneitra, Damascus and Rural Damascus. In August, the Ministry of Electricity announced a doubling of electricity prices by September, to address the damage and increased costs of production. ([WB 2009](#), [SANA 2013/07/18](#), [J-RANS 2013/03/28](#), [J-RANS II 2013/05/22](#))
- **Start of the school year:** In June 2013, 680 schools were used as shelters for IDPs. With the start of the school year on 15 September, many IDP families that were residing in school buildings were forced to search alternative accommodation. In Aleppo for instance, 50 schools were evacuated before the start of the school year. ([PI 2013/10/14](#), [UNICEF 2013/10/10](#), [PI 2013/09/19](#), [UNICEF 2013/09/06](#), [IFRC 2013/09/18](#))

WASH

Key developments December and January

- According to the SHARP, the availability of safe water has decreased by 40% compared to pre-crisis levels due to infrastructure damage and increasing costs of materials to produce and access clean water supplies. Water consumption has decreased from 110 litres per person per day to 50 litres. The Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR) estimates that the damage to water infrastructure totals USD 2.5 billion. There are reportedly 60,000 MoWR employees on the payroll and the GoS has committed to pay their salaries. ([SHARP 2013/12/16](#))
- The SINA found that 4.3 million people are in need of access to safe water including 869,000 who face life-threatening shortages. The needs are particularly high in Hama City, where 300,000 people are in acute need of safe water supplies. Much of the trucked water supplies on which the population relies are not treated. ([SINA 2013/12/31](#), [SINA COAR 2014/01](#))
- According to the Dar'a assessment, access to safe water was the last of the 5 sector priorities. However, there were severe water needs reported in Busra Esh-Sham sub-district, with 62% of the population in acute need. Mzeireb, Jizeh and Jasim sub-districts reported 17-21% of their respective populations to be in acute need of safe water. ([Dar'a 2014/01/24](#))
- The Directorate of Water Resources for Rural Damascus estimated that the damage to the local water network amounts to SYP 70 million (USD 0.5 million) revenue had decreased by 40%. This damage estimate appears particularly low given the extensive damage across the country and the high intensity of conflict in areas of Rural Damascus, which has likely taken a toll on the water infrastructure. Water shortages have been reported across the city due to the lack of fuel and electricity and increased demand due to IDPs, particularly in poorer parts of the city. ([Al-Iqtisadi 2013/12/04](#), [Al-Modon 2014/01/13](#))

Key developments 2013



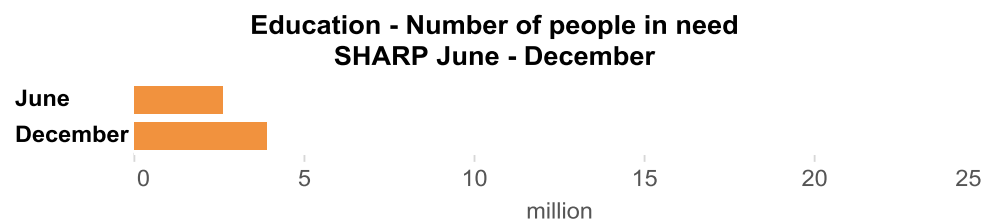
- Damage to infrastructure:** Damage to infrastructure and the lack of fuel to operate the system has become an increasing factor hampering the availability of water. At the start of the year, the main problem related to access and availability of water mentioned during the J-RANS in 58 northern sub-districts was the lack of economic resources. By April, key informants indicated that the main problem was the lack of fuel/electricity to operate the system and the breakdown of the water infrastructure. In August, damage to a water pipeline in Homs affected water supply to an estimated 1.3 million people. This illustrates the interconnectivity of the water infrastructure, with damage to a part of the network affecting water supply to a large number of people. ([Al Iqtisadi 2013/11/12](#), [Al Watan 2013/11/12](#), [Tishreen 2013/11/05](#), [ICRC 2013/08/26](#), [UNICEF 2013/09/09](#), [JRS 2013/09/07](#), [Tishreen 2013/09/02](#), [Tishreen 2013/09/05](#))
- Water shortages:** In February, UNICEF identified six governorates (Idlib, Aleppo, Ar-Raqqa, Deir ez-Zor, Homs and Rural Damascus) where access to water and sanitation was severely limited. In conflict affected areas of Deir ez-Zor for instance, water was being pumped at just 10% of pre-crisis levels. During the summer months, more instances of local water shortages were reported, particularly in contested areas and in areas receiving large numbers of IDPs. By August, some districts were fully reliant on water trucking and buying water in stores. ([Tishreen 2013/07/11](#)) ([WHO 2013/02/05](#), [UNICEF 2013/02/08](#), [ICRC 2013/08/26](#), [UNICEF 2013/09/09](#), [JRS 2013/09/07](#), [Tishreen 2013/09/02](#), [Tishreen 2013/09/05](#), [UNICEF 2013/02/08](#), [Al Watan 2013/06/18](#), [Tishreen 2013/06/11](#))
- Water quality:** Water contamination has become increasingly common over the year, while inputs to treat water are largely unavailable. By December 2012, national production of water treatment chemicals almost completely halted and import of chlorine gas for water treatment was banned. An estimated 35% of water treatment plants were damaged by June. The taking over of oil plants by armed groups in March in Al-Hasakeh resulted in water contamination due to home refinery of this oil, a phenomenon that already led to contamination of water sources in Deir ez-Zor in 2012. ([UNICEF 2013/06](#), [GoS 2013/06](#), [PI 2013/07/19](#), [Al Jazeera 2013-02-05](#), [UNICEF 2013/02/08](#), [J-RANS II 2013/05/22](#), [SHARP 2013/06/07](#))
- Deregulation:** Before the conflict, the GoS tightly regulated the provision of water through the local water boards. In several areas, this regulatory framework is no longer upheld and the lack of control results in the establishment of unofficial water sources. In October, it was for instance reported that in one district the number of wells increased from around 6,500 before the crisis to over 20,000 currently. Although this remedies the current water shortages, it negatively affects the water table and can have long-term implications. ([PI 2013/10](#))

Education

Key developments December and January

- It was estimated that at the end of 2013 over 3,000 schools had been destroyed (13%) and 1.9 million children were out of 22,000 public and private schools in Syria. In addition, the Ministry of Education has reportedly lost 52,500 teachers or 22% of its teaching staff. UNRWA reported that enrolment among Palestine refugee children rose from 35% in early 2013 to 60% by November 2013 due to education campaigns and the allocation of Government schools to UNRWA. (UNHCR 2013/12/16, SHARP 2013/12/16)
- The SINA reported that 1.7 million children were out of school in the assessed areas, with more than half of primary school age children and more than 60% of secondary school age children no longer attending school regularly. Al Hasakeh (41%), followed by Idleb (44%) and Homs (45%) had the lowest rate of primary school age children regularly accessing a learning space. The main problems reported were the destruction of many learning spaces, the lack of school materials, teachers and inability of households to afford the indirect costs of schooling. (SINA 2013/12/31, SINA COAR 2014/01)
- A Dar'a assessment found that on average 28% of primary school age children and 22% of secondary school age children were attending school regularly. The primary obstacle to accessing education was the lack of materials and teaching staff, as well as the lack of security to attend school. (Dar'a 2014/01/24, UNICEF 2013/12)

Key developments 2013



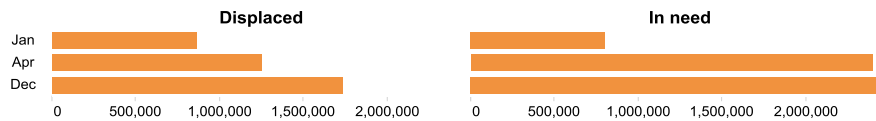
- Destruction of facilities:** At the end of January, the Ministry of Education reported that 22% of the country's 22,000 public schools were not functional, either because they were damaged, destroyed or were used as IDP shelters. The vast majority of the identified affected schools were located in the conflict areas of Idleb, Aleppo, Dar'a, and Rural Damascus. In April, J-RANS II found that 57% of schools were not functional in the 104 sub-districts assessed. The functionality of schools varies greatly among governorates - results of the SINA indicated that by November, the number of functional

learning spaces decreased with, 25% in Ar-Raqqa and up to 63% in Homs. A learning space is defined as a formal school or informal space where children gather on a regular basis for scholastic, as opposed to religious, education. (SINA 2013/12/31, UN 2013/11/12, UNICEF 2013/10/30, UNRWA 2013/07/22, UNICEF 2013/03/05, OCHA 2013/01/30, J-RANS II 2013/05/22, UNICEF 2013/05/15)

- Targeting of schools:** Schools continued to be looted, vandalised and were directly targeted by attacks. In January, an attack hit Aleppo University, killing at least 82 people and damaging a large part of the infrastructure. By August, the GoS reported that at least 64 schools had been attacked since the start of 2013. (Al-Monitor 2013/07/11, Eqtsad 2013/07/14, Tishreen 2013/08/15)
- Alternative schooling:** As a result of the targeting of educational facilities and the large number of non-functional public schools, an increasing number of education activities have been taking place outside of schools. Some 30% of the 104 sub-districts assessed during the J-RANS II reported education activities to be taking place outside of schools, including in mosques and houses. (J-RANS II 2013/05/22)
- UNRWA schools:** The UNRWA education system suffered from similar interruptions. At the end of January 2013, only 50 of 118 UNRWA schools were functional. By January 2014, this number decreased to 42. (UNRWA 2013/01/27, UNICEF 2013/03/05, UNICEF 2013/03/07, UNRWA 2013/09/01, OCHA 2013/09/09)
- Enrolment and attendance rates:** Due to a decrease in access to education, (incl. due to displacement, insecurity and costs) and availability of education, overall enrolment and attendance rates have decreased over the year. In March, the GoS reported that enrolment rates for the first semester amounted to 74%. Actual attendance rates in public schools were much lower, estimated at 50% in April. Thus, almost half of all children were not attending school. There are wide variations in attendance rates between different areas. Results of data collected for the J-RANS II in March and April showed that 56% of children living in relatively safe areas in Idleb regularly attended schools compared to only 3% in heavily contested areas in the governorates. During the SINA assessment, primary attendance rates ranged from 41% in Al-Hasakeh to 64% in Ar-Raqqa. (SINA 2013/12/31, UNICEF 2013/09/07)
- Congestion:** Overcrowding in schools in areas with a high concentration of IDPs was already mentioned at the start of the year in Damascus. The number of IDP children of school-going age has increased significantly over the year (an estimated 900,000 in January 2013 to almost 3 million in January 2014) leading to further congestion of schools. In October, it was estimated that over 35,000 IDPs of school going were residing in Tartous governorate. Before the crisis, around 160,000 students at pre-university level were enrolled in schools in Tartous. Hence, the influx represented an increase of around 20%. (UNICEF 2012/12/20, Tishreen 2013/10/01, UNICEF 2013/03, UNICEF 2013/03/12)

Governorate profiles – Key developments 2013

Aleppo



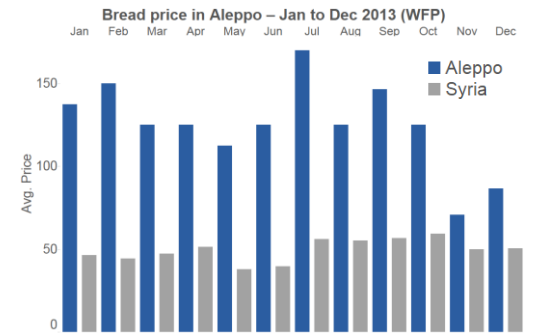
Sources of displaced and in need : MoLA 2013/01, [OCHA 2013/06](#), [OCHA 2013/12](#)

Humanitarian needs

- The widespread conflict and large-scale internal displacement make Aleppo one of the most affected governorates in the country. By April, a third of Syria's estimated 6.8 million people in need of support were in Aleppo governorate.
- The main priority as mentioned by key-informants during a multi-sectoral assessment in January was food, followed by health and WASH. 3 months later, health and food were the main priorities identified, illustrating a further deterioration of the health situation. In November, over 1.3 million people were identified as in need of health support in the governorate. Considering that SINA had a noticeably limited coverage in Aleppo city, the number of people in need is estimated to be even higher. ([J-RANS II 2013/05/22](#), [SINA 2013/12/31](#))
- Health:** Health was a major issue reported throughout the year in Aleppo governorate and in November IFRC identified Aleppo as one of the 4 governorates where people are mainly at risk due to the lack of available health services and health professionals. In May it was reported that 52 out of 228 health centers were partially or totally damaged and 7 out of 11 hospitals were no longer functional. With hospitals and health staff particularly targeted, many clandestine health centres have been set up, often lacking the necessary supplies. The first cases of Leishmaniasis in Syria were reported in Aleppo, a disease endemic to the governorate. In November, WHO confirmed 1 case of polio in Aleppo. ([IFRC 2013/11/19](#), [J-RANS II 2013/05/22](#), [EWARS 2013/04/14](#))
- The intense conflict and widespread use of heavy weaponry has had a significant impact on critical infrastructure:
 - Shelter:** In April, it was found that 20% of private buildings and 22% of public buildings in assessed sub-districts were damaged or destroyed. In Aleppo city, the level of destruction was much higher compared to the rest of the governorate, with over 56% of private buildings and 69% of public infrastructure in assessed areas damaged or destroyed by March. ([J-RANS II 2013/05/22](#))

- WASH:** In April, WHO reported damage to the water supply system to be particularly severe in Aleppo. 90% of sub-districts assessed during the J-RANS II reported many people to be suffering due to a lack of water. (NGO 2013/05, ([J-RANS 2013/03/27](#), [UNICEF 2013/02/08](#)))

- Prices:** Bread prices in Aleppo are the highest in the country (40 – 50% higher than other governorates). Although monitoring of prices between January and March 2013 indicated that prices for staple goods have remained relatively stable nationwide, in Aleppo governorate prices were fluctuating significantly. Prices have been highly volatile throughout the year, mainly due to the insecurity, sharp reduction in milling capacities, wheat supply and transport disruptions in many locations. During the July siege of Western Aleppo bread prices increased considerably (from SYP 120 in May to SYP 170). ([WFP 2013/03/31](#), [WFP/FAO 2013/07/5](#), [WFP VAM](#))
- Since the start of the year, people living in the governorate of Aleppo have largely been deprived of their regular income sources, due to: (i) the closure of Aleppo's factories, which had employed much of the region's population, (ii) the closure of the borders and the suspension of trade with Turkey, (iii) the decline in agriculture, and (iv) irregular GoS salary payment. ([UN News 2013/01/08](#), [BBC 2012/01/17](#), [Mercy Corps 2012/12/12](#), [SI 2012/12](#))
- Education:** In March, school attendance rates were reportedly the lowest of the country at 6%, primarily due to a lack of functioning schools and fear of schools being bombed or targeted. During the SINA assessment, functional learning spaces were found to have significantly decreased, with none remaining in some areas facing heavy fighting such as As Safira and Al Bab. As with health services, education facilities moved to other locations. According to key informants in 52 assessed neighbourhoods in Aleppo City in March, education for children was largely provided in other, improvised facilities (average attendance rate of 67%). ([J-RANS 2013/03/27](#), [SINA 2013/12/31](#))
- Protection:** Since the start of the conflict, the use of indiscriminate, heavy weaponry, including cluster munitions, on densely populated areas has been most severe in Aleppo governorate. In the last two weeks of 2013 alone, more than 540 people were estimated to have been killed in incidents involving barrel bombs while one source reported over 400 people killed by barrelbombs between 22 January and 4 February 2014. Furthermore, most



suicide bombs by extremist groups have occurred in Aleppo. ([AFP 2014/02/02](#), [Reuters 2013/03/19](#), [MSF 2013/01/14](#), [AFP 2013/01/15](#), [HRW 2013/03/16](#), [NYT 2013/02/27](#))

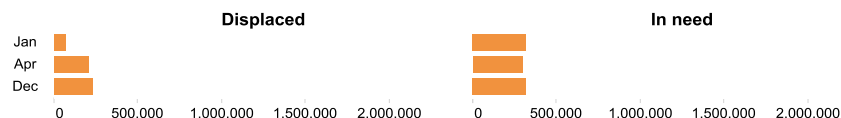
Humanitarian access

- In addition to local and community initiatives, people in Aleppo governorate receive aid from Damascus based actors and via cross-border assistance from Turkey. By the end of 2013, both these aid flows were significantly restricted:
 - **Cross-border operations:** Opposition forces achieved full control of the area between Aleppo city and the northern border of Aleppo governorate in 2013, which initially widened the humanitarian space for actors operating from Turkey. However, by mid-2013, fighting around the two main border crossings, Azaz and Jarablus, had restricted access to Aleppo. Having taken control of Jarablus town and the surrounding areas in June, ISIL began to restrict cross-border humanitarian access through the Jarablus border crossing, permitting the crossing to be used by Syrian nationals but not foreigners. The subsequent increases in checkpoints, border closings and kidnappings further limited humanitarian space.
 - **Damascus:** Supply routes from Damascus to Aleppo have been blocked on multiple occasions. WFP reports that rural Aleppo has been completely inaccessible from Damascus since September, due to fierce fighting around key transit routes, such as the International and Khanaser roads. Regular access to Aleppo city from Damascus was blocked during the siege between July and September, but has resumed since. ([OCHA 2013/09/25](#), [WFP 2014/01](#), [Noria 2013/12/05](#), [WFP 2013/11/20](#), [OCHA 2013/11/20](#), [WFP/FAO 2013/07/5](#), [Assafir 2013/07/08](#), [Assafir 2013/07/10](#), [Al-Monitor 2013/07/15](#))
- **Besieged areas:** Several areas in the governorate have been under siege. During the siege on western areas of Aleppo city between July and October, an estimated 2 million people faced major shortages of essential items. ([Al-Jazeera 2013/07/10](#), [Assafir 2013/07/08](#), [AlertNet 2013/07/09](#), [AFP 2013/07/10](#), [NGO 2013/07](#))
- A multitude of opposition groups are active in Aleppo governorate, making it one of the most fragmented governorates in the country. Access needs to be negotiated with several semi-independent militant factions, often without effective central leadership. In addition, the GoS continues to pose strict conditions on humanitarian operations in areas in the south of Aleppo governorate and western Aleppo city. Illustratively, restriction of movement for relief organisations and interference into humanitarian activities by powerful groups or persons were the main access issues identified during J-RANS II. ([J-RANS II 2013/05/22](#), [J-RANS 2013/03/28](#))

Displacement

- Throughout the year, Aleppo has hosted the largest IDP population in the country, the majority of whom originate from other parts of the governorate. In January, the governorate was hosting an estimated 860,000 IDPs. Continued fighting, including 3 large scale military offensives, displaced an additional 900,000 people by December. With the widespread violence, more people have been forced to flee the governorate: by November, more than 1.2 million people were reported to have fled Aleppo governorate, mostly to Turkey and Latakia city, according to the SINA results. ([INGO 2013/01/22](#), [SI 2012/12](#), [PIN 2012/11/17](#), [INGO 2013/02/20](#))
- At the start of February, there were unconfirmed reports of large-scale displacement following fierce fighting in the eastern part of Aleppo city. Preliminary estimates indicate that up to 350,000 people fled the area, mainly to the western GoS-controlled part of Aleppo and rural Aleppo. (Trusted source 2014/02/06)

Al-Hasakeh



Humanitarian needs

- Bordering Turkey and Iraq and hosting Syria's largest community of Kurds, Al-Hasakeh is particularly vulnerable to the political dynamic of its neighbouring countries, with border crossings predominantly kept closed. The presence of powerful Kurdish armed groups has meant the governorate experiences unique political and conflict-based issues.
- 🚩 According to OCHA figures, IDPs in the governorate only increased from around 300,000 in April to 319,000 in December. The J-RANS II assessment reported 1.2 million people in the governorate were living in areas with acute needs across sectors. In SINA it was reported that more than 538,000 are in need of humanitarian assistance in the 11 sub-districts assessed (out of 16). ([OCHA 2013/06](#), [OCHA 2013/12](#), [SINA 2013/12/31](#), [J-RANS II 2013/05/22](#))
- 🚩 A confirmed case of polio in the governorate in January 2014 is an indication of low vaccination coverage rate and suggests that many people in the area might be at risk. ([UNHCR 2014/01/27](#))
- Al-Hasakeh governorate was one of the poorest regions of Syria prior to the crisis. The majority of people (60%) were employed in the agricultural sector, which has depleted significantly, with wheat production, for example, having declined from 1.1 million tons in 2012 to 690 thousand tons in 2013. ([Tishreen 2008/11/05](#), [SANA 2010/11/03](#))
- The decline in agricultural production and the lack of access have meant that the governorate is highly vulnerable to food insecurity. Recent reports indicated a lack of wheat with some areas being unable to produce bread. ([Tishreen 2013/08/14](#), [Aliqtisadi 2013/10/13](#))
- 🚩 Health is the main priority as indicated by key informants during the SINA in November. The SINA also showed that 69% of reported health issues in Al-Hasakeh are related to communicable diseases; higher than in any other of the assessed northern governorates, suggesting that the population in Al-Hasakeh is particularly vulnerable. Leishmaniasis was the cause of 12% of reported health issues, again higher than in any other assessed governorate.
- The frequent power outages in the governorate led to a drinking water crisis in the cities of Hasakeh and Quamishli during the summer months of 2013 when the pumps stopped bringing water from the wells. Power outages are

still a severe problem, with some areas only receiving electricity for 1 hour a day. ([SINA 2013/12/31](#))

- According to the SINA, 72% of respondents in the 11 assessed sub-districts of Al-Hasakeh, which relies mainly on wells as water sources, reported serious problems with water. The situation regarding access to potable water was described as a critical by 73% of the respondents. ([Tishreen 2013/08/05](#), [El Eqtisad 2013/11/22](#))

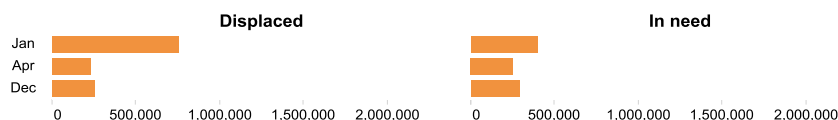
Humanitarian access

- In 2013, humanitarian access to certain areas of Al-Hasakeh was extremely challenging due to intense fighting in its neighbouring governorates of Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor and between Kurdish groups and other opposition movements within the governorate. More restrictions were caused by the security situation on the main highway linking the north-east with Damascus and Aleppo, from which Al-Hasakeh received most of its supplies. Interference in humanitarian activities by powerful groups and violence against relief workers were also reported continually during 2013 as operational constraints. The population's freedom of movement was further restricted by heightened security and border closures in the neighbouring countries Turkey and Iraq. ([SINA 2013/12/31](#), [J-RANS II 2013/05/22](#))

Displacement

- A wave of large-scale displacement towards the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I) occurred during August 2013. It is estimated that more than 75,000 Syrians (mostly Kurds) fled to the KR-I between January and August 2013. The governorate is reported as a main destination for IDPs, especially from Deir-ez-Zor, with around 327,000 IDPs in the sub-districts assessed under SINA (11 out of 16). Many of the displaced are from other areas of the governorate and those who left Al-Hasakeh as economic migrants in previous years and returned during the conflict. ([SINA 2013/12/31](#), [UNHCR 2013/08/20](#))

Ar-Raqqa



Humanitarian needs

- In 2013 the situation in Ar-Raqqa changed significantly due to the proliferation of extremist armed groups taking control of the governorate, except for a few pockets with SAF presence. This development has had a large-scale impact on humanitarian access as well as on the protection situation.
- The governorate has been subject to different critical protection concerns as a result of the presence of extremist groups. Opposition groups captured Ar-Raqqa in March and, following splits in the opposition during the summer, ISIL took control of the majority of the governorate in July. Severe protection concerns were subsequently reported including summary executions, kidnappings and forced evictions. Assaults and violations by ISIL against the Kurdish minority such as targeted shelling of Kurdish villages and neighborhoods and kidnapping members of Kurdish communities, especially in Tal Abiad, were also reported. As a result, the first demonstrations against opposition groups were reported in Ar-Raqqa in May. ([Ara News 2009/09/01](#) [ReliefWeb 2013/09/16](#) [Ara News 2013/09/14](#))
- Following the capture of Ar-Raqqa city in March, the priority needs in the governorate as reported during several multi-sectoral assessments are similar to that of the heavily contested neighbouring governorates; access to healthcare and food security were the most critical problems reported during J-RANS II and SINA. ([SINA 2013/12/31](#))
- A shortage of medical supplies and medical facilities has been reported continually since February. The GoS stopped paying public sector salaries in Ar-Raqqa city after ISIL took control, further reducing the number of doctors, nurses, and technical staff; essential for maintaining medical equipment. (Ar-Raqqa City Council & Relief Office 2013/09/18)
- Lack of access to markets and high prices of food are the main food security problems reported. Although the governorate borders Turkey, border closures and a heavy crackdown on smuggling on the Turkish side have hampered the import of goods. In addition, the high number of checkpoints and looting of commodities further increase prices.
- Shelling of the industrial area in Ar-Raqqa city has affected livelihoods and production. Before the crisis, many households in rural Ar-Raqqa relied on agriculture and sale of produce to GoS facilities. As opposition groups control

most of the governorate, the state system has been highly disrupted and armed groups are not able to buy all yields. Throughout the country the GoS has largely continued to pay the salary of public sector employees, including in areas controlled by opposition groups. However, public salary payments were stopped in Ar-Raqqa city in March, cutting off an important source of income for many individuals in the governorate. (Al-akhbar 2013/06/12)

- Opposition groups have reportedly been able to provide general access to water although parts of the water infrastructure in the city and other areas of the governorate have broken down. A lack of fuel/electricity to operate the water system is an additional problem. In September, Ar-Raqqa's water system was estimated to be operating at 60% of its capacity as a consequence of shortages in electricity supply. Severe, life-threatening problems related to insufficient access to water were reported in 2 out of the 7 sub-districts assessed under SINA. (Ar-Raqqa City Council & Relief Office 2013/09/18, AlertNet 2013/04/09, J-RANS II 2013/05/22, SINA COAR 2014/01)

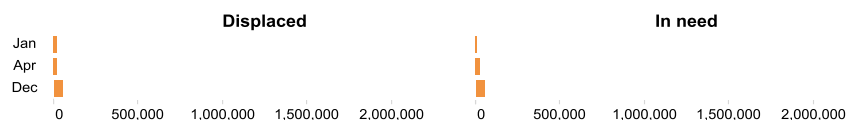
Humanitarian access

- The presence of extremist armed groups in most border areas of the governorate has severely hampered cross-border relief. Cross-border humanitarian access via Tal Abiad has been hampered due to the frequent closure of the border by the GoT. Within the governorate, severe restrictions of movement, interference in humanitarian activities by powerful groups and violence against relief actors is reported. Consolidation of control over areas in Ar-Raqqa by extremist armed groups at the end of 2013, has further restricted access. ([SINA 2013/12/31](#), [OCHA 2013/09/09](#))

Displacement

- Unlike the neighbouring governorates, the large majority of IDPs residing in the governorate fled from other governorates (80% of the IDPs in areas assessed during the SINA in November). Apart from large scale displacement during the battle for Ar-Raqqa city in March, displacement levels within the governorate have been low. In 2012 and at the start of 2013, Ar-Raqqa saw an influx of people fleeing conflict areas in Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh and Deir-ez-Zor. By April, 230,00 IDPs were identified, primarily in Ar-Raqqa city. Between April and December, the influx significantly decreased, with only an additional 20,000 IDPs registered by December. This could be explained by the presence of a number of extremist groups in the governorate. (SINA COAR 2014/01, MSF 2013/05/06, J-RANS II 2013/05/22)

As-Sweida



Humanitarian needs

- As-Sweida is the least conflict-affected governorate in Syria yet its population is indirectly affected by weakened livelihoods, lack of fuel, increase in prices and limited access to goods and water supplies. Agricultural livelihoods, which have been the mainstay of the governorate's economy, have been limited due to the lack of inputs and access to markets. Little information is available on the situation of IDPs in the area. Tensions between IDPs and host communities are of concern, particularly as there is the possibility that Al-Qaeda-linked groups operating in neighbouring Dar'a could provoke Druze communities into the conflict.

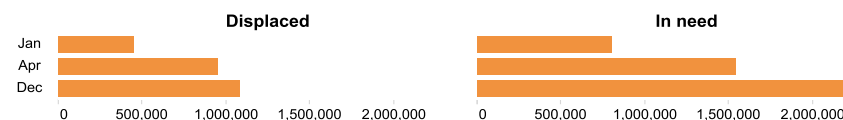
Humanitarian access

- Mountainous As-Sweida governorate and has been relatively isolated from the conflict due to its geography and the mobilisation of Druze autonomous armed groups. Insecurity on the roads between As-Sweida and Damascus has been the primary access challenge. During 2013, GoS military convoys escorted humanitarian supplies transported from Jordan to As-Sweida and onwards to Damascus. However, this modality was used by only a very limited number of UN agencies. In late 2013, the GoS approved the UN's establishment of a sub-regional humanitarian hub in lieu of one originally requested to be based in neighbouring Dar'a. ([SHARP 2013/12/16](#))

Displacement

- Because of its relative stability, the governorate became host to a growing number of IDPs in 2013, estimated at between 30,000 and 52,000 people, many of whom had fled from neighbouring Dar'a. IDP entry and residence in As-Sweida is restricted and closely monitored by GoS forces. ([SHARP 2013/12/16](#))

Damascus and Rural Damascus



In 2013, the conflict further engulfed Damascus city and its suburbs as the GoS aimed to push opposition groups out of their strongholds in the suburbs south and east of the city.

Humanitarian needs

- Although Damascus city had been one of the safer areas of the country with relatively good access to commodities and services, humanitarian needs became more widespread throughout the year as the capital was increasingly subject to very high prices and increased pressures on infrastructure due to various influxes of IDPs. To retake opposition strongholds in and around the city, the GoS tightened its siege, which caused critical humanitarian needs in these pockets. Clashes and shelling reached peak levels in late 2013, affecting most parts of the city.
- Protection:** Beginning in mid-2013, the SAF and other pro-GoS forces tightened their siege and sealed off opposition strongholds in the southern and eastern suburbs, such as Ghouta, Madamiyet Elsham and Yarmouk, denying the movement of people and goods in and out of these areas. The first death from starvation was reported in Madamiyet Elsham in September, followed by increasing reports from other besieged neighbourhoods, particularly Yarmouk refugee camp. In addition to the siege tactics, these areas were heavily shelled and on 20 August 2013, Eastern Ghouta was subject to a major chemical attack, killing over 355 people and affecting several thousand.
- In October 2013, the first agreement to temporarily lift the siege on Madamiyet Elsham was made following extensive negotiations. Some food assistance was allowed in and some civilians, primarily women, children and elderly people were evacuated. Subsequent negotiations have led to similar agreements in Barzeh and Yarmouk.
- Arbitrary arrests, detention and summary executions have been an issue throughout 2013. IDPs fleeing Homs south through northern Rural Damascus were reportedly extorted for money by GoS forces to be able to transit safely through the Qalamoun region towards Damascus. ([Human Rights Council 2013/08/16](#))

- Palestinian refugees, who are primarily concentrated in Damascus, faced specific protection issues as Palestinian camps and settlements became frontlines of the conflict. Fighting in Yarmouk camp and nearby Palestinian settlements began in December 2012 and by the end of 2013, it was estimated that only 20,000 of the 150,000 pre-crisis population remained in Yarmouk. In addition, Palestinians faced additional challenges in fleeing Syria, with Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon imposing specific restrictions to their entry in 2013.
- Large-scale demolitions in the Qaboun, Tadamon and Barzeh suburbs and near the Mazzeh airport took place under the supervision of SAF in 2013. In Qaboun, Tadamon and Barzeh, the demolitions occurred following the SAF takeover of areas from opposition fighters and were believed to be part of the military's clearance operations. The demolitions in Mazzeh reportedly took place due to its proximity to the airport which was considered a military asset. (HRW 2014/01/30)
- **Health:** While the Ministry of Health reported that most of the health facilities in Damascus and Rural Damascus were functioning in early 2013, there were increasing reports of shortages of medicines and supplies due to economic sanctions and devaluation of the Syrian pound, which made it more difficult for the GoS to procure goods. Health facilities in Damascus city likely faced the least amount of damage nationally, with only 1 of its 8 hospitals deemed non-functional in April, compared to 60% across the country. In September, health providers, including SARC, reported notable increases in the number of cases of moderate and acute malnutrition. (UNICEF 2013/09/19)
- **Food security and livelihoods:** Aside from besieged areas, Damascus city generally experienced adequate food availability due to its proximity to imports from Lebanon and its wheat storage silos. However, increasing costs of food commodities and transport coupled with people's decreasing purchasing power limited food access. A number of wheat silos and yeast factories were destroyed during fighting, limiting Damascus' production and distribution networks.
- **WASH:** WASH infrastructure in Rural Damascus was severely damaged by fighting, which caused regular disruptions of the water supply network and left some Damascus suburbs reliant on water tankering. As a result of limited clean water supplies and poor sanitation conditions, skin and respiratory diseases reportedly increased. (Tishreen 2013/07/11, OCHA 2013/09/13)
- **Shelter:** Rents in Damascus city and suburbs increased throughout 2013 as IDPs fled fighting and sought safety in and around the capital in rented accommodation and hotels which previously catered to tourists. Despite the high levels of conflict within Damascus city and its suburbs, it has not faced the same level of destruction as other urban areas such as Aleppo and Homs. (Al-Akhbar 2013/07/09)

- **Education:** In the first quarter of 2013, over 400 schools in Damascus and Rural Damascus were reportedly damaged during the conflict. As a result, student attendance had decreased to 80% in Rural Damascus and 85% in Damascus city. There was no further information available on school attendance rates or damaged schools in 2013 but the increase in insecurity, lack of transport and increased displacement like caused further decreases. (UNICEF 2013/03/15, UNRWA 2013/07/22)

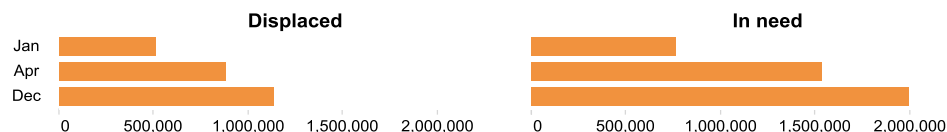
Humanitarian access

- While all international aid agencies registered with the GoS maintain a presence in Damascus, it is also host to some of the most inaccessible areas due to the high number of besieged areas. For example, UN agencies had unsuccessfully requested access to Madamiyet Elsham at least 7 times in 2013. (UNFPA 2013/09/10, WFP 2013/09/10, SHARP 2013/12/16)
- The Damascus-Homs road remained heavily contested throughout 2013 as it linked the capital to Syria's ports and Alawite strongholds in the northeast, particularly towards the end of the year when the SAF captured various towns in the Qalamoun.

Displacement

- In April 2013, the UN estimated that Damascus city hosted 250,000 IDPs, which increased to 318,000 by December 2013. In Rural Damascus, the GoS reported a slight increase of 702,000 to 762,000 at the end of the year. In November 2013, the SAF advanced on opposition strongholds in the Qalamoun region, causing major displacement into Lebanon and areas in Rural Damascus and Homs. Many of these areas were host to significant IDP populations and were already besieged, leaving civilians limited coping mechanisms. (SHARP 2013/12/16)

Dar'a



Humanitarian needs

Similar to other identified humanitarian needs across the country, the priority sectoral needs identified in Dar'a are food security and health.

- Food security:** While subsidised bread priced SYP 15 has reportedly been available in government controlled areas, the average price in non-government controlled areas is 11 times higher at SYP 165. [\(Dar'a 2014/01/24\)](#)
- Health:** Health needs initially focused on emergency trauma care as a direct result of the conflict, but the lack of access and decline of the public health system has also led to major gaps in the availability of services and medicine for chronic diseases, as well as shortages of vaccines. [\(Dar'a 2014/01/24\)](#)
- WASH:** Unlike other parts of the country, WASH was assessed to be the lowest sector priority in rural Dar'a, with the exception of Busra Esh-Sham which faces major water shortages and relies solely on trucked water supplies. In the SINA, WASH was ranked as the 3rd of 5 sector priorities. [\(Dar'a 2014/01/24\)](#)

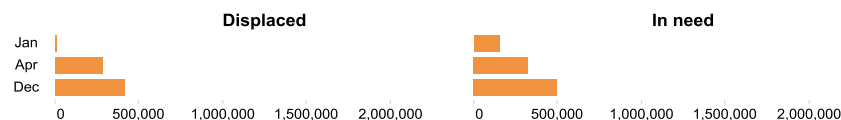
Humanitarian access

- Clashes in Dar'a** have been concentrated along the main Damascus-Dar'a highway and population centres along this route. This has significantly hampered the delivery of basic supplies and assistance, while also limiting the access of civilians to reach basic services, particularly healthcare. By mid-2013, the SAF succeeded in asserting control over the Damascus-Dar'a highway but the proliferation of checkpoints on the road limited civilians' access to basic services, as arbitrary arrests, detention and physical and sexual abuse were frequently reported to take place at the checkpoints. Towns which have been re-taken by the SAF, such as Busra Esh-Sham, Nawa and Kherbet El-Ghazala, have been subject to heavy movement restrictions which have limited the population's access to goods and humanitarian aid. [\(Dar'a 2014/01/24\)](#)

Displacement

- Between June and December 2013, the number of IDPs in Dar'a more than doubled from 180,000 to 372,000. Fighting in Dar'a was at high levels at the beginning of 2013 as opposition fighters went on the offensive against SAF forces, particularly in the south of the governorate, leading to a massive influx of refugees into Jordan. By the end of 2013, over 300,000 individuals from Dar'a were registered by UNHCR in Jordan. By mid-2013, unofficial border restrictions imposed by the Jordanian authorities stemmed the flow of refugees into Jordan, likely leading to a significant increase of IDPs within the governorate. In Jizeh sub-district bordering Jordan, there has been a significant build-up of IDPs making up over 70% of the total population of Jizeh. This increase in IDPs has placed significant pressures on host families and the limited basic services available. Unlike the northern governorates, there are very few tented settlements or IDPs living in the open despite the high level of displacement, as most IDPs come from within the governorate and are more likely to have family or tribal links to rely on as hosts. [\(SHARP 2013/12/16, Dar'a 2014/01/24\)](#)

Deir-ez-Zor



Humanitarian needs

- The situation in Deir-ez-Zor has been severely influenced by its large holdings of Syria's oil, impacting not only the conflict dynamics but also the health and WASH situation. Fighting in Deir-ez-Zor intensified throughout the year, especially once the EU lifted its sanctions on Syrian oil imports in April, prompting different groups to fight more fiercely for control over Deir-ez-Zor's oilfields and gas resources
- Social structures in the oil-rich governorate are primarily tribal, extending across the border into Iraq, and the GoS historically enjoys less of a support base in Deir-ez-Zor. Only some neighbourhoods of Deir-ez-Zor city and the airport remain under GoS control and many of the opposition-controlled areas have not received GoS provided public services since mid-2012.
- In April, healthcare was identified as a very high main priority in the governorate and this remained the case in November. All but 2 areas assessed during the SINA in November reported life-threatening healthcare needs. By May 2013 a large part (6 out of 7 hospitals) of the public health infrastructure was reportedly non-functional, meaning a higher than average proportion of unmet health needs and lowered immunisation coverage. Coupled with severely interrupted water and sanitation services, Deir-ez-Zor was the area in which the polio outbreak first occurred, with 15 cases confirmed in November 2013. An increase in primitive oil-refining activities has resulted in health problems including respiratory illnesses and skin diseases. (SINA 2013/12, Guardian 2013/10/29, Al Modon 2013/08/11, SANA 2013/08/11, AlJazeera 2013/08/14, SANA 2013/08/19, Daily Star 2013/08/12, UNICEF 2012/12/07, AFP 2012/11/25, AFP 2012/11/20, AFP 2012/12/03)
- The WASH situation was highlighted as the second priority need during assessments in both April and November. In some localities of Deir-ez-Zor, water provision had decreased by 90% at the start of 2013 and a lack of fuel to operate the water system is one of the main problems affecting water availability. Water pollution is common due to the refinement of oil and damage to water infrastructure. In September, for instance, the disruption of an oil pipeline led to the shutdown of several water purification plants that were affected by the leak. (Al Watan 2013/09/30, ICRC 2013/08/26, UNICEF 2013/02/08, J-RANS II 2013/05/22)

- Unlike other governorates, food security was not mentioned as a high priority during multi-sectoral assessments, except in Deir-ez-Zor city, most likely due to the income generated from primitive oil-refining activities and food imports from Turkey. (J-RANS II 2013/05/22, MoH 2012/12/13, WHO 2013/04/10, WHO/MOH 2013/04/30)
- The needs are particularly high in Deir ez-Zor city, where most of the fighting in the governorate has been concentrated, with life-threatening food and health issues are reported in all areas of the city. (SINA COAR 2014/01)

Displacement

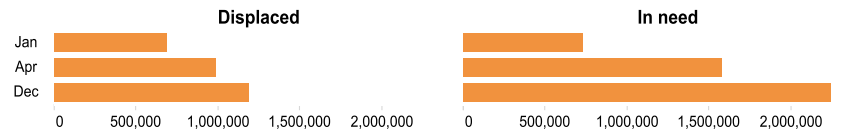
- The end of 2012 saw large population movements out of Deir-ez-Zor to neighbouring governorates. In 2013, however, increased fighting in other governorates sent close to 300,000 people fleeing to Deir-ez-Zor from other previously safer areas such as Ar-Raqqa. In the subsequent 7 months, displacement has been limited out of Deir-ez-Zor, with no large scale instances of displacement reported. By December the governorate was hosting around 420,000 IDPs. (J-RANS II 2013/05/22, OCHA 2013/04/26, MSF 2012/12/12).

Humanitarian access

- Fighting has been primarily concentrated in Deir-ez-Zor city and has limited humanitarian access to that part of the governorate. Other areas have seen an increased presence and strengthening of extremist groups such as ISIL, which pose severe restrictions on humanitarian aid. Interference with humanitarian activities (armed groups stealing shares of assistance/goods) is the most severe humanitarian access problem reported in the SINA assessment in November as well as the J-RANS II, followed by denial of needs of the affected population. There have also been reports of diversion of aid, nepotism, theft and insufficiency of aid, specifically in the sub-districts of Thiban, Ashara and Deir-ez-Zor city, none of which received humanitarian assistance between April and November 2013, according to the SINA. (Guardian 2013/04/02, Al-Akhbar 2013/05/11, J-RANS II 2013/05/22, SINA COAR 2014/01)

Hama

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Humanitarian needs

- There are significant information gaps regarding the humanitarian situation in Hama due to its geographical location and the predominant control of the GoS. According to the SINA, Hama city reported very high rates of acute need in the health, shelter and safe water support sectors. Access constraints due to besiegement and checkpoints were reported as a major obstacle to accessing of basic services and humanitarian aid. Its relative isolation also made the governorate more challenging to reach through cross-border assistance.

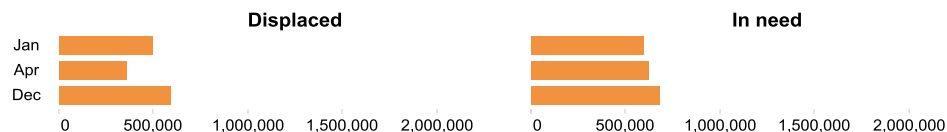
Humanitarian access

- The governorate has endured heavy fighting throughout the conflict and is one of the most affected governorates in Syria due to its proximity to heavily contested areas in the north and central regions. There are severe restrictions on freedom of movement as well as a number of besieged areas located in Hama.

Displacement

- The number of IDPs in Hama increased from 284,000 in April to 423,000 in December, an increase of nearly 50%. ([SHARP 2013/12/16](#))

Homs



Humanitarian needs

- Homs lies along a highway axis running north to Hama and Aleppo and south to Damascus and Dar'a, a vital road juncture linking army bases and ports on the coast and the capital Damascus. As a result of its strategic location and proximity to smuggling routes with Lebanon, Homs governorate has witnessed significant levels of conflict, coupled with a high number of IDPs and people in need.
- Fighting damaged a major water channel which provided water to 1.3 million people in Homs and Hama governorates in late May. The water channel was under intensive repair until October, while humanitarian agencies provided water tankering and other safe water support to address the gap. In November 2013, Hama city continued to experience a critical lack of safe water supplies, leaving 300,000 people in acute need. ([SINA 2013/12/31](#))
- There is a particularly high concentration of acute food insecurity in assessed areas of Homs, where 5 sub-districts reported that the lack of access to food is life-threatening. In comparison to other assessed sub-districts, Homs received the least food aid in the 30 days prior to the assessment. ([SINA 2013/12/31](#))

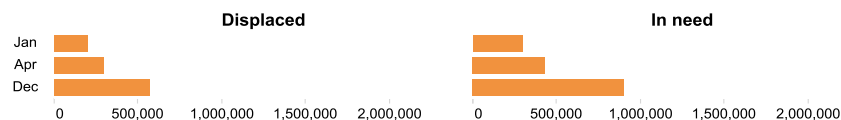
Humanitarian access

- In March, the SAF launched an offensive on opposition areas within Homs city, particularly the Old City, Jouret al-Shieh, Khaldiyyeh and Ar-Rastan, which came under strict siege, which continued throughout 2013, leading to reports of severe malnutrition and deaths due to the lack of medical supplies. The heavily contested and symbolic neighbourhood of Bab Al Amr came under GoS control following intense fighting that damaged an estimated two-thirds of the buildings.
- Access to Homs from Damascus, as well as north towards Hama and Aleppo, has been extremely challenging due to insecurity and the proliferation of checkpoints. Despite the establishment of a UN humanitarian hub in Homs in 2013, it was reported that aid agencies had to go through 50 checkpoints to reach rural areas. ([WFP 2013/07/10](#))

Displacement

- The number of IDPs in Homs increased from 356,000 in April to 588,000 in December, an increase of 65%. Beginning in May and peaking in July 2013, intense fighting in Qusayr de-populated the strategic town, with the majority of residents fleeing to Lebanon. IDPs fleeing fighting from the Qalamoun region of Rural Damascus also fled to Homs. ([SHARP 2013/12/16](#))

Idleb



Humanitarian needs

- The number of people in need almost doubled between April and December (from around 420,000 to 790,000). Food security is a main priority, with almost 800,000 in need of food assistance, according to the SINA. Local production of wheat, which prior to the conflict exceeded the consumption needs, has decreased by 65-70%, while consumption needs have almost doubled following the influx of IDPs in several areas of Idleb. As a result, the governorate is highly dependent on imports from Turkey and is therefore particularly affected by the depreciation of the Syrian pound. An assessment in parts of Idleb found that only 20% of households assessed had a regular source of income. (SHARP 2013/12/16, GOAL 2014/01/31, Daily Star 2013/07/03, Eqtisad 2013/06/30)
- As in the rest of the country, the health infrastructure has been severely affected by the crisis, with 50% of public hospitals out of service by April. A lack of income and a shortage of medicines have further limited access to healthcare since the start of 2013. Of the 7 sub-districts that reported life-threatening health problems during the SINA (out of 111 sub-districts in northern Syria), 2 are in Idleb. Health problems in Idleb are primarily caused by a critical lack of medicines and health facilities. (SINA COAR 2014/01)
- The governorate is hosting a large concentration of IDPs, over 10% hosted in semi-structured camps along the border. The lack of adequate shelter and access to WASH facilities are the main problems reported from these camps. The existing problems are compounded by a lack of site planning and camp management. (SINA COAR 2014/01)

Operational constraints

- As long as the border crossings into Turkey are open, the border areas of Idleb are largely accessible to organizations operating from Turkey. However severe access constraints in and around the city of Idleb were reported, including due to active hostilities and, interference in humanitarian activities. (J-RANS II 2013/05/22)
- The governorate has seen heavy fighting since March 2012 and over 120 opposition armed groups are currently active. These groups have taken control of the major part of Idleb countryside, while the GoS continues to control the main cities, including Idleb city as well as strategic areas including

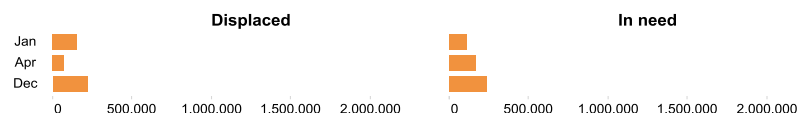
Jis-Ash-Shughur town, Wadi Al Daif military camp in April and some towns of Al-Arba'een Mountain in September. (BBC 2013/10/31)

- In mid-2013, a partial siege was put in place on Idleb, with opposition groups blocking food and other basic supplies from entering the city of Idleb, in an attempt to force civilians to leave the city. An estimated 550,000 people faced severe shortages of basic supplies. Civilians were reportedly not able to move, as there was heavy fighting on-going in and around the city. As a result, prices for staple goods and fuel have increased. By mid-July, the siege was reportedly less strict and goods were able to move into the city centre, albeit in limited amounts. (OCHA 2013/07/29, Daily Star 2013/07/03, Daily Star 2013/07/06, Eqtisad 2013/06/30, Daily Star 2013/07/03, Daily Star 2013/07/06)

Displacement

- There is a high concentration of IDPs in the governorate. According to OCHA, The number of IDPs residing in the governorate almost doubled between April and December, from around 300,000 to 570,000. The SINA assessment indicated an even higher number of people displaced, at around 715,300 in 21 out of 25 sub-districts assessed. Most of the IDPs are residing in rented accommodations while at least 75,000 are staying in semi-structured tents along the Turkish border. (SINA, 2013/12, SHARP 2013/12/16)

Lattakia



Humanitarian needs

- Lattakia governorate is one of the least affected governorates of the country and enjoys a constant supply of goods from the port and from Damascus, though the latter is subject to the Damascus-Homs highway being open. However, humanitarian needs are high in Lattakia city, primarily due to the influx of IDPs and a lack of access to income. Although it can be assumed that subsidised bread is widely available in the city, the lack of income opportunities makes access to a diverse food diet difficult. Illustratively, food insecurity was identified as the main priority in both J-RANS II and SINA. As many as 200,000 people were reportedly experiencing life-threatening food security problems in November.
- The humanitarian situation differs in the northeast of the governorate, where opposition groups are in control of 3 sub-districts. Low intensity conflict occurs on a regular basis in these areas, which are subject to air raids. It can be assumed that public services, including subsidised bread are not as widely available as in other parts of the governorate. In these areas, problems were reported with regards to access to water and healthcare. (SINA, 2013/12)
- Although Lattakia's health infrastructure has remained largely intact, the outbreak of communicable diseases has been reported as a problem. A recent assessment reported communicable diseases (e.g. skin diseases, leishmaniasis, respiratory diseases and diarrhoea) as a great health concern across all assessed governorates, including Lattakia. Additionally, a number of suspected hepatitis cases were reported in Lattakia, due to deteriorating sanitation and hygiene practices. Some 70 documented cases of yellow fever were furthermore reported in the Turkmen Mountain in Lattakia. (PI 2013/12, SINA, 2013/12)
- With the large number of IDPs residing in the city of Lattakia, it can be assumed that shelter is a main concern. The large majority of IDPs identified (95%) during the SINA were residing in rented apartments, necessitating a different approach to shelter assistance than in other governorates, where IDPs are mainly residing with host families. (SINA, 2013/12)

Displacement

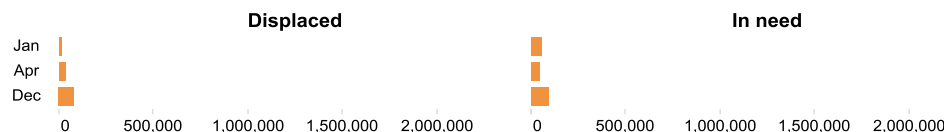
At the end of 2013, Lattakia experienced a large influx of IDPs, being one of the last safe areas. Estimates on the number of people displaced in the governorate vary widely: from 900,000 IDPs in Lattakia city as reported in the November SINA assessment, to 220,000 people reported by OCHA as of December 16. While a large number of the IDPs residing in Lattakia city fled contested areas in other governorates, a significant proportion originates from rural Lattakia. In August and September, for instance, 25,000 individuals from 30 neighbouring villages sought refuge in Lattakia city as a result of clashes. Aerial bombardment at the start of 2013 in Salma and Al Kurd Mountain, in its northeastern region, led to the displacement of thousands.

(SINA 2013/12, OCHA 2013/09/09, SHARP 2013/12/16)

Humanitarian access

- As the GoS is in control of a large part of the governorate and access routes leading to the governorate, humanitarian access is restricted to organisations registered with the GoS. The exception is the 3 sub-districts in the north-east of the governorate. These areas, which border Turkey, are under control of opposition groups and receive cross-border aid from Turkey.

Quneitra



Humanitarian needs

- There is limited information on the humanitarian needs in Quneitra.
 - Health:** In April, WHO reported that the governorate's sole hospital was functioning, although 14 out of 54 health facilities had been damaged or destroyed. Health facilities reported a shortage of medicines and equipment. ([WHO/MoH 2013/04/30](#))
 - Education:** In early 2013, more than one-third of schools in Quneitra were reportedly damaged or destroyed. ([UNRWA 2013/06/30](#))

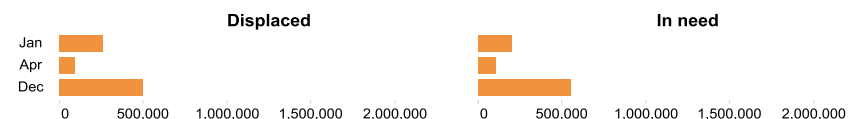
Humanitarian access

- This rural and sparsely-populated governorate is particularly delicate given its proximity to the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. A 1974 armistice prohibits the GoS from engaging in military activity within the buffer zone that runs along the border between Quneitra and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. As the conflict eroded basic services and further limited people's access to services, hundreds of Syrians, primarily the war-wounded, were evacuated to hospitals in Israel. Generally, unarmed opposition members would transport patients to areas along the buffer zone for Israeli soldiers to pick up and transport to hospitals. ([BBC 2013/11/13](#))

Displacement

- Sporadic clashes and shelling have been the primary cause of displacement in Quneitra. While much of the governorate was under opposition control at the beginning of the year, the SAF increasingly pushed southward throughout the year as it sought to limit the opposition's access to Damascus. As a result, between June and December 2013, the number of IDPs more than doubled from 30,000 to 78,000. In September 2013, intense shelling of Ghadir Elbostan led to the displacement of 10,000 people to a neighbouring village and in late November 2013, fighting in the southwestern region of Quneitra led to the displacement of 18,500 people. ([SHARP 2013/12/16](#))

Tartous



Humanitarian needs

- Due to Tartous' relative stability and the availability of services, there was a significant increase in the number of IDPs arriving and people in need in December compared to figures reported in April.
- Damage to Tartous' education and health facilities has been very limited, however, basic services are increasingly overwhelmed by the influx of IDPs. Health facilities face long waits and major shortages of medicines. School attendance rates remain high, however IDP children were not always able to enrol due to overcrowding. Some schools are double-shifted and it was reported in April that 30,000 IDP children had been enrolled in local schools. ([UNICEF 2013/03/15](#), [OCHA 2013/05/06](#), [WHO/MOH 2013/04/30](#))
- In June 2013, leishmaniasis was reported in Tartous; previously the governorate was unaffected by the skin disease, which is endemic in Aleppo. ([WHO 2013/06/04](#))
- The availability of shelter for IDPs has been a growing issue throughout the year. The majority of IDPs are living with host families, in rented accommodation or in unfinished buildings, with a small number reportedly living in a GoS military camp, caves and ancient ruins. In May 2013, there were 9,000 IDPs living in communal centres and SARC reportedly set up a tented camp. ([UNHCR 2013/05/08](#), [MoLa 2013/03](#), [UNICEF 2013/01/25](#), [OCHA 2013/05/06](#), [UNICEF 2013/05/30](#), [USAID 2013/08/22](#))

Humanitarian access

- Tartous is one of the least conflict affected governorates in Syria and it hosts the country's largest port, which remained functional throughout 2013. Despite its relative stability, there was very limited information available on the humanitarian situation. The UN opened a sub-regional humanitarian hub to support humanitarian operations in the north and central region.

Displacement

- Tartous experienced the most significant increase in IDPs among all governorates in 2013, with 90,000 reported in April to 500,000 in 2013. The nearly fivefold increase is attributed to Tartous' relative safety and availability of services. Most IDPs originated from northern and eastern governorates. ([SHARP 2013/12/16](#))

Annex A – SHARP comparison June/December

Syrian Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan	June	December	Change
People in Need	6.8 million	9.35 m	+ 38%
IDPs	4.25 m	6.52 m	+ 53%
Registered aid organisations			
UN agencies	14	15	+1
INGOs	10	12	+2
National NGOs	n/a	70	n/a
Appeal total	\$1.4 bn	\$2.27 bn	+ 62%

- **Limitations:** The SHARP documents are approved by the GoS and are therefore limited in including the needs identified by agencies working in Syria remotely or through cross-border assistance. Humanitarian agencies registered with the GoS face a number of access challenges and must rely heavily on SARC and other Government institutions for information. Not all registered agencies have a system to independently verify the needs or monitor distributions.
- **Strategic objectives:** There was no change in the strategic objectives of the revised SHARP 2013 and SHARP 2014. The objectives for both appeals are to advocate for the protection of civilians, increase the provision of humanitarian assistance, expand early recovery efforts, improve the operational capacity of humanitarian actors and ensure preparedness to meet for further humanitarian needs.
- **Access:** The obstacles to aid delivery identified in both appeals are insecurity, the lack of sufficient local partners, visa delays and the clearance of humanitarian goods into the country. In October, clearance procedures increased, leaving a large quantity of goods stuck in warehouses. In December, visa delays reportedly improved for UN staff, but remained problematic for INGO personnel. There were other reported improvements in access, such as additional approvals for the establishment of 3 UN field hubs in Aleppo, Qamishli and As-Sweida (instead of the initially requested hub in Dar'a) and improved processing of UN visas, although visa delays persisted for INGO staff. Given the significant increase in the number of people (38%) in need and overall funding (62%), the additional registration of 2 INGOs and 1 UN agency appears deeply inadequate to meet the growing needs in an increasingly challenging operational environment.

- **Affected groups:** With the exception of IDPs and host communities, the categories of affected groups changed and expanded in December. The category of “destitute people suffering from the socio-economic effects of the crisis” was discarded, likely due to the fact that most of the population in Syria could be categorised as such. While some groups, such as those injured, migrants and Palestinian refugees are very specific, others, such as women, girls and children are more general. The shift to include general categories re-affirms the widespread nature of the crisis, which has impacted nearly all areas and populations in Syria.
- **People in need:** In both appeals, Aleppo and Rural Damascus are host to the 1st and 2nd largest numbers of people in need as well as IDPs, respectively. Homs hosts the 3rd largest number of IDPs, while Idlib has the 3rd largest population of people in need. Notably, the number of people in need in Damascus city more than doubled, despite having better access to goods and more stable pricing than most parts of the country.
- **Basic services:** The reported number of damaged or destroyed health facilities and schools increased only slightly between June and December, however the number of people affected by the lack of education and health services increased drastically. For example, while 41 more schools were reportedly damaged or destroyed in the 6 months between June and December, the number of children out of school increased from about 1 million to 1.9 million over the same period. Obstacles to accessing basic services go beyond infrastructure to include safe access, insufficient supplies, adequate staff, etc.
- **Nutrition:** Concerns raised in June with growing malnutrition manifested in the December appeal, with assessments in Aleppo and Hama showing high levels of malnutrition, ranging from stunting to severe acute malnutrition. Media and NGO reports of death from starvation in besieged areas in late 2013 were not mentioned, likely due to the lack of independent verification.
- **Sectors:** The food/agriculture sector appeal makes up nearly half of both appeals. In funding terms, the other major sectors in both appeals, in order of size, are NFI/shelter assistance, health and WASH. In terms of the number of people in need targeted for assistance in the June appeal, WASH, health, food/agriculture and the NFI/shelter sectors target the largest number of people in need. In December, the WASH and health sectors again targeted the largest number of people, followed by protection and food/agriculture.
- **Funding:** The SHARP 2013 was 67% funded. While it is too early to say how the 2014 appeal will be funded, donor response has been promising. At the Kuwait conference in January 2014, donors pledged USD 2.2 billion to the crisis in Syria and host countries in the region. This included increased pledges from 20 donors and 7 additional donors. The 2013 Kuwait conference raised USD 1.5 billion in assistance.

Annex B - Definitions Humanitarian Profile

Affected

The number of affected refers to people affected by the violence in Syria. The number of affected can be divided in two groups: those non-displaced and those displaced.

Non-Displaced

The **non-displaced** include all those within Syria that have been, directly or indirectly, affected by the conflict, including those who have been injured, have lost access to essential services, and those whose vulnerability has increased due to the impact of the unrest on livelihoods and access to essential services (OCHA 2012/06/05). In addition, this group should include the **host community**, the people who are part of a community or family receiving affected people. Due to the stress placed on the host families and communities, they are considered part of the humanitarian caseload. As there is currently no information available on the needs of the host community, this group is however currently excluded from this humanitarian profile.

Displaced

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are those persons or groups of persons who are residing in Syria but who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict (OCHA 2004).

Refugees and Asylum Seekers are those who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside Syria, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country. (UN 1951) For the purpose of this document, the category 'refugees' includes those registered, awaiting registration as well as those unregistered – despite the fact that unregistered Syrians are technically not refugees as their refugee status has not been established. Within this group, the Iraqi and Palestinian refugee are in a specifically vulnerable position, both within Syria and outside.

Others of Concern - Persons who have been displaced by the emergency and form part of the humanitarian caseload, but do not fall into either of the above categories (e.g. migrants, returnees).

Previous SNAP reports

- **Regional Analysis for Syria** January – November 2013
- **Thematic reports**
 - Aleppo Governorate Profile April 2013
 - Legal Status of Individuals Fleeing Syria June 2013
 - Impact of the conflict on Syrian economy and livelihoods July 2013
 - Syrian border crossings September 2013
 - Assessment Lessons Learned September 2013
 - Lebanon baseline data October 2013
 - Cross-border movements of goods December 2013
 - Relief actors in Syria December 2013
 - Jordan baseline data December 2013
- **Scenarios** February/September 2013

All reports can be found on: <http://www.acaps.org/en/pages/syria-snap-project>

Forthcoming SNAP reports

- **RAS (Part I and Part II)** Start April 2013
- **Thematic report:**
 - Governorate profile: Al-Hasakeh February 2013
 - Palestinian refugees in Syria February 2013

Map data sources

Administration: OCHA Common Operational Datasets. IDP camps: ACU. Refugee camps: UNHCR. Infrastructure: OCHA, WFP, Global Security. Conflict incidents: UNMAS Border crossings: SNAP and NRC.

Definitions

In this report the term opposition forces is used to refer to all armed groups and individuals engaged in armed conflict against the GoS.

Methodology – This desk study presents estimations of scale, severity and likely impact of a disaster. It aims to inform decision making for preparedness and emergency response and intends to complement and integrate assessment-related data from other agencies. Feedback to improve the RAS is welcome (snap@acaps.org).

Disclaimer – Information provided is provisional as it has not been possible to independently verify field reports. As this report covers highly dynamic subject, utility of the information may decrease with time.

References – ACAPS and MapAction would like to thank all organisations that have provided input to this report. Please note that all sources which are available online are hyperlinked (underlined, in brackets). Information sourced as 'PI' refers to personal interviews with persons unknown to the SNAP project. Information sourced as a 'Trusted Source' refers to information received from an actor known and trusted by the project.

