



# LEBANESE COMMUNITIES HOSTING SYRIAN REFUGEES

**AKKAR GOVERNORATE - LEBANON**

**ASSESSMENT REPORT**

**JULY 2014**

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## SUMMARY

With the support of UNHCR, the Community Support Projects Working Group and other sector working groups in Akkar, REACH undertook an assessment of host community needs in Akkar Governorate, one of Lebanon's most underdeveloped regions and where 63% of the population currently lives below the poverty line.<sup>1</sup> During the course of the assessment, the population of refugees in Lebanon passed the one million mark, with the number of refugees in Akkar surpassing 100,000 around the same time.<sup>2</sup> With approximately one-third of the population of Akkar consisting of refugees, there has been a need to understand the pressures caused by large concentrations of displaced persons in one of Lebanon's poorest regions. Accordingly, integrating findings from secondary research, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions, its goal was to provide a baseline of information about host communities, the challenges they face, and potential interventions that might support them.

As the crisis has continued, host community resilience has deteriorated in many locations, but tensions have varied widely by location. **Lebanese key informants and focus groups may under report instances of outright tension with refugee populations**, but declining attitudes towards hosting refugees, reports of spillover effects from the conflict, and sentiments that humanitarian actors may unfairly prioritize the needs of Syrian populations may indicate an erosion of social cohesion in many areas of Akkar. Rising feelings of insecurity, coupled with a rise in crime and social problems in many communities, provide additional insights into the deterioration in relations between refugee populations and host communities. Moves by individual communities to enact measures restricting refugees' movement as well as community-based policing efforts speak to a need to build local institutional capacity and enhance dispute resolution mechanisms.

This assessment found that **195 villages in Akkar hosted Syrian refugees**. The size of refugee populations, their reasons for settling in specific areas, and accommodation contexts play an important role in the effects of the crisis, and strains felt by host communities. In this assessment, very few key informants reported the existence of outright tensions, when in fact tensions may be pervasive in communities that host refugees. More specific questions regarding the existence of restrictions placed on refugees, identity paper requirements, and other discriminatory policies may also be sensitive and go unreported. On the other hand, there may be more of a willingness to report other trends such as changes in attitudes towards hosting refugees, feelings of security, which may serve as proxies for tensions. Strategies for evaluating the existence of tensions will need to utilize a participatory approach that accounts for multiple perspectives within Lebanese and Syrian populations.

The resources that communities have to address tensions and reinforce social cohesion are varied and often limited. This assessment looked specifically at roles played by local governments, dispute resolution mechanisms, and humanitarian organizations. Local governments provide services as well as settle disputes, but their capacity in Akkar differs widely -- **approximately one-fifth of the villages included in this assessment did not have municipal governments**. Instead, these villages may rely on traditional forms of leadership, such as mukhtars, religious leaders, and elders. Both traditional leaders and municipal officials play important roles in dispute resolution, but a lack of formal mechanisms is common throughout Akkar. While many communities in Akkar report receiving assistance from humanitarian organizations, the effect of external support on social cohesion is not always clear. **The majority of key informants who reported that humanitarian organizations had worked in their village indicated that assistance benefitted only Syrian populations**, suggesting in most cases, a greater need to at least integrate support for host communities into interventions.

**Livelihoods have been affected as well, with tensions created by growing populations competing for scarce income-generating opportunities, more expensive goods and services, and less affordable accommodations.** While Akkar already faced an economy characterized by insufficient number of jobs and low-wage employment before the crisis, an influx of workers who are potentially willing to work for less money has exacerbated competition. The effects of growing populations and demand for goods and services, combined with the closure of commercial relationships dependent on the Syrian border – many illicit – has contributed to increases in the cost of living and reduced the scope of economic opportunities available to vulnerable Lebanese. **Finally, dramatic increases in the population size have led to higher rent costs in most host communities, further compromising vulnerable Lebanese populations' abilities to make ends meet.**

The following paragraphs highlight some of the key findings with regards to livelihoods:

- **Employment and income-generating opportunities:** Most villages reported skilled labour (including military service) and agricultural labour as residents' main sources of income, but remittances and casual labour were also significant in some villages. Focus group discussions reported similar income sources with informal sector opportunities, such as

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<sup>1</sup> World Bank – Lebanon, Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflict. (Beirut 2013)

<sup>2</sup> UNHCR Registration Data.

smuggling, playing a significant role in villages near the border. **Work opportunities appear to be the most significant generator of tensions in most settings**, with Lebanese focus group participants accusing refugees of stealing jobs and expressing resentment over their ability to work for less money or while receiving aid. Both Lebanese and Syrian groups expressed a strong interest in opportunities that build on local economies' agricultural bases, followed by work in manufacturing, handicrafts work for women, and jobs for youth.

- **Goods and Services:** Key informants in a majority of villages reported higher costs of living as a result of the crisis. The vast majority of villages have seen increases in the cost of food staples, while approximately half saw an increase in the cost of services. **Prices for goods may be affected by decreased trade opportunities with Syria, while rising populations may have spurred inflation in many communities.** Approximately half of respondents reported increases in the price of services.
- **Housing:** The availability of housing is likely one of the main factors informing refugee settlement patterns. Lebanese residents of Akkar had inadequate housing options before the crisis, and the large influx has placed additional pressures on rental accommodations, particularly on the lower end of the market. Despite large numbers of refugees who have settled in informal settlements, garages, and unfinished structures throughout Akkar, in most host communities the chief accommodation contexts are houses or apartments. **Approximately three-fourths of key informants said that housing prices in their village were much higher than before the crisis.**

Assessment findings suggest that while tremendous strain has been placed on some host communities as a result of the crisis, in many instances, **current community needs may reflect inadequate levels of service provision which may have been present before the crisis.** Akkar has long had lower levels of economic and social development than other regions of Lebanon, making current pressures on public services particularly acute. At the same time, burdens may vary significantly by community and sector. For example, **key informants named electricity and solid waste management as the services that had been most affected by the crisis. At the same time, they named healthcare, wastewater management, and water supply as the services that residents had lowest access to and as areas of greatest concern.** This may strongly suggest that many of communities' top priorities are ones that predate the current crisis.

The following paragraphs present an overview of the main findings of the assessment in each service sector:

- **Electricity:** Electricity is the public service with the greatest level of access throughout Akkar but was the one key informant reported as being most affected by the crisis. **Services appear to be the most affected in communities that host informal settlements, which may be a product of network tapping – improvised connections to the main network.** These connections may be a source of tension among both Lebanese and Syrian populations. Despite the burdens placed on power supplies, electricity does not rank as one of communities' top concerns and Lebanese and Syrian populations expressed an interest in short-term solutions to problems such as generators.
- **Water supplies:** Key informants considered water supplies to have low levels of access and to have been moderately affected by the crisis; however, water ranked as one of communities' top concerns. **Stress factors on water supplies include environmental and metrological factors, pollution caused by inadequate wastewater management systems, and outdated infrastructure.** Lebanese communities expressed interest in developing long-term and sustainable solutions to current problems, including solving closely related problems with wastewater management simultaneously.
- **Wastewater management:** Sewage and coordinated wastewater management systems were reported to have low levels of access and were considered to be among communities' top concerns. Outdated or non-existent sewage and infrastructure has failed to keep pace with demands. A reliance on septic tanks, which have not been emptied with sufficient frequency, has exacerbated problems. As a result, **wastewater causes tensions as tanks and infrastructure overflow and seep into water supplies or public land.** Similar to water supplies, there was an interest among Lebanese communities in developing longer-term and more sustainable solutions that would also address water shortages.
- **Solid waste management:** Access to organized solid waste management was reported to be high throughout Akkar, but it has also been very affected by the crisis. Despite complaints about garbage collection and removal, solid waste management did not highly over among communities' top priorities. **Solid waste management was more of a concern in villages without municipalities, but it exhibited a potential to engender tensions in all settings, with many Syrian households lacking access to containers not being covered by removal systems.** In focus group discussions, both Lebanese and Syrian communities expressed a strong interest in having additional containers and in expanding trash collection routes.



- **Education:** Key informants judged education to be moderately accessible but in most settings was not considered to be very affected by the crisis and a lower concern in most communities. In Lebanese focus group discussions, dissatisfaction over education varied widely by setting, with grievances centred on school management and less over the impact of Syrian populations. Complaints about education among Syrian populations varied widely as well, but focus group discussions highlighted problems associated with discrimination, bullying, and corporal punishment. **Both Syrians and Lebanese groups expressed a desire for separate school facilities or classes.**
- **Healthcare:** Health coverage was reported as being low in most villages and key informants rated it as a top concern for their communities. Despite the priority status and urgency assigned to healthcare, it was considered to be operating as before in a majority of contexts, quite likely reflecting problems with accessing services that predated the crisis. **Sentiments among Lebanese populations that refugees have advantages in accessing health services that they do not have may contribute to tensions.** In addition to the construction additional clinics and hospitals, Lebanese focus group participants were interested in having similar opportunities to access health care as refugees, including insurance and mobile clinics.

Based on the assessment findings, the following recommendations can be suggested as priorities in programmes to support host communities in Akkar:

- With approximately 20% of villages lacking municipal governments and many others with municipalities that are new or limited in their institutional capacity, many communities in Akkar exhibit limited abilities to absorb and manage aid. As a result, efforts to work with communities may need to account for limited local administrative structures that often vary considerably in terms of structure. Accordingly, interventions may have to employ flexible approaches to working with traditional local community leadership structures and incorporate capacity-building objectives.
- Tensions between Syrian refugees and Lebanese populations may stem from or be exacerbated by vulnerabilities within host communities that predate the crisis. Strategies to address social cohesion should therefore be considered as part of a wider agenda of addressing long-term structural weaknesses.
- Host communities' top priorities are often centred on services to which residents have low levels of access. In a majority of villages, these services are water supplies, wastewater management, and healthcare. Adequately addressing pre-existing deficiencies in these sectors may require longer term developmental assistance as well as reforms.
- Partners may consider addressing issues related to water supplies and wastewater management simultaneously as contamination from inadequate wastewater management systems are often responsible for burdens on water supplies.
- Programmes that address the needs of vulnerable Lebanese in education and healthcare – two services that are perceived as being expensive among host community populations – may address concerns that Syrian refugees receive forms of support not available to Lebanese.
- Services under the most strain are ones that have enjoyed wide access – electricity and solid waste management, in particular. Correspondingly, communities' interests in alleviating burdens on these services may involve shorter-term solutions, such as generators and waste bins.
- Interventions to address strains on services may need to be sensitive to refugees' housing contexts. Pressures placed on services in communities that host informal settlements may be different than in communities where refugees live in houses or apartments.
- The crisis has had an effect on livelihoods in many host communities, with employment opportunities for Lebanese populations being the most affected. Key informants reported greater joblessness and focus group discussions expressed a need for job opportunities that develop local economic bases.
- Efforts to create jobs should be sensitive to tensions surrounding livelihoods programming and strive to incorporate Syrian refugees as well as vulnerable Lebanese populations in settings where both groups can work together.
- The expansion of restrictions placed on refugees' movements and ad hoc policing efforts may signal a need to work closely with communities on addressing and managing security issues resulting from the crisis.
- Efforts to build the capacity of local leaders involved in conflict management and include Syrian populations in dispute resolution mechanisms may be considered as a means to manage tensions.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>CSP</b>	Community Support Project
<b>IS</b>	Informal Settlement
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>ODK</b>	Open Data Kit
<b>RRP6</b>	Regional Response Plan 6
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>USD</b>	United States Dollars

## GEOGRAPHIC CLASSIFICATIONS

<b>Governorate</b>	The highest administrative boundary below the national level, Lebanon has six governorates
<b>District</b>	Governorates are sub-divided into 26 districts
<b>Cadastral</b>	Districts are further sub-divided into cadastrals
<b>Village</b>	Within each cadastre there is either a one village or numerous villages

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## INTRODUCTION

The ongoing crisis in Syria has been a significant pressure on Lebanese institutions and host communities, particularly in regions that were already considered disadvantaged. This may be particularly true in Akkar, one of the country's poorest regions and livelihoods, water, sanitation, education, and overall access to public services are among the most under-developed in Lebanon.<sup>3</sup> Disadvantages and vulnerabilities within host communities that predate the Syrian crisis have been exacerbated by competition for public services that were already strained or scarce.

According to the World Bank, "Lebanon's northern and eastern border areas with Syria have long remained marginal in the national development process."<sup>4</sup> These regions' peripheral positions have manifested themselves in lower levels of infrastructure development and service provision as well as higher rates of poverty.<sup>5</sup> Akkar exemplifies these patterns of uneven national development, posting the lowest or one of the lowest indicators for almost every sector before the crisis.

Increasing demand for services and greater competition for income-generating opportunities has compromised the safety nets and livelihoods that vulnerable Lebanese populations rely on. According to an assessment by the World Bank, "Overcrowding, saturation of basic services and competition for jobs are among the root causes for social tensions between host and refugee communities."<sup>6</sup> For humanitarian actors, increases in tension and deteriorating social cohesion affect the viability and sustainability of response efforts.<sup>7</sup>

Supporting host communities is a critical component of the humanitarian response, both in ensuring continued support for refugee populations and in addressing the needs of Lebanese populations affected by the crisis. Host communities have been a critical component of efforts to support refugees, as sustaining their capacity and resources will be critical to cope with future refugee needs.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, host communities have extended tremendous hospitality and generosity to refugees, and have continued to absorb new arrivals and support them.<sup>9</sup> Communities have limited resources, however, and strains can be seen in reports of tensions and violence, deteriorating attitudes towards hosting refugees, tensions declining security and views that the humanitarian community is not doing enough to address the needs of the Lebanese communities where refugees have settled.<sup>10</sup>

While on micro level, this may entail supporting the continued operation of public services and the availability of livelihoods opportunities, but on a macro scale it contributes to continued peace and stability throughout Lebanon as "growing instances of violence based on perceived inequalities involving refugees threaten wider social cohesion."<sup>11</sup> Tensions and deteriorating social cohesion may also threaten a delicate balance between different groups in Lebanon which may view the crisis in different ways and have political sympathies with actors in the conflict across the border.<sup>12</sup> In other words, efforts to ensure social cohesion at a local level inevitably feed into broader efforts to help prevent the spread of conflict.

There is a growing sense that Lebanese host communities are being asked to accommodate growing numbers of refugees without adequate support.<sup>13</sup> UNHCR and its partners have channelled support to interventions that reduce the risk of tensions and conflict between host community populations and Syrian refugees through increased support for public services and livelihoods opportunities. One key area of support bridging the gap between humanitarian assistance programmes and longer-term development objectives, community support projects (CSPs) are designed to meet urgent needs while addressing the wider objective of easing tensions and promoting social cohesion.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 117.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Swisspeace: Conflict Dimensions of International Assistance to Refugees from Syria in Lebanon (Bern 2013)

[http://www.swisspeace.ch/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Media/Publications/ConflictDimensions\\_SyrianRefugeesLebanon\\_swisspeace2013.pdf](http://www.swisspeace.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/Media/Publications/ConflictDimensions_SyrianRefugeesLebanon_swisspeace2013.pdf) p.10.

<sup>9</sup> The Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, Policy Brief, (Beirut 2013)

[http://www.aub.edu.lb/ifi/Documents/policy\\_memo/20130705ifi\\_memo\\_Fafo\\_IFI\\_Policy\\_brief\\_Syrians\\_in\\_Lebanon.pdf](http://www.aub.edu.lb/ifi/Documents/policy_memo/20130705ifi_memo_Fafo_IFI_Policy_brief_Syrians_in_Lebanon.pdf) p.7.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> World Bank. Op. cit., p. 100

<sup>12</sup> International Crisis Group, Too Close for Comfort, Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (Brussels 2013)

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/Iraq%20Syria%20Lebanon/Lebanon/141-too-close-for-comfort-syrians-in-lebanon.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. 76

To tackle incidents of conflict and tension in refugee-hosting communities, the current Regional Response Plan calls for the expansion of local conflict mitigation mechanisms, efforts to combat misperceptions, reinforcement of service provision through CSPs, and livelihoods activities that target women and youth.<sup>14</sup> In parallel to this focus, is a gradual transition from a humanitarian environment, to one more focused on medium and long term integration of stabilisation and development objectives. According to the Multi Sector Needs Assessment, current priority needs related to social cohesion include the following:<sup>15</sup>

- Mitigation of the impact of the crisis on Lebanese stability, including in electricity, transport, infrastructure, water supply and wastewater and health;
- Alleviation of pressure on immediate sources of tensions, particularly economic pressure and access to livelihoods;
- Access to adequate information on the humanitarian response and the role of government institutions to counterbalance misperceptions;
- Increased opportunities for social interaction between and among communities;
- Protection of vulnerable communities against harassment and violence;
- Increased capacity of local conflict mitigation and response mechanisms;
- “Conflict sensitise” humanitarian sectors to acknowledge that their actions may have effects on community cohesion.

To date, most CSPs have focused on supporting municipalities and unions; however, there is a push to provide aid at lower geographic levels. At the same time, there has been a relative absence of assessments on lower geographical levels.<sup>16</sup> According to an assessment by the World Bank, aid delivery consistent with this shift in focus will “require the participation of local and central government agencies and ministries, as well as local elders and religious leaders to sensitize and gear aid delivery, development planning, and implementation capacities.”<sup>17</sup>

In Akkar, the challenge of developing appropriate support strategies for communities is compounded by disparate local governance structures. Some villages have joined or incorporated municipal governments to provide public services while others have retained traditional leadership structures centred on traditional community leaders. At the same time, some municipalities belong to unions of municipalities and act in concert on community development issues. As a result, Akkar is characterized by a patchwork of ad hoc and formally coordinated local government arrangements ranging from traditional structures, in which villages are headed largely by mukhtars, religious leaders, or elders, to modern ones staffed by civil servants. The strength of these arrangements is likely to have an impact on individual villages’ ability to absorb aid as well as on humanitarian actors’ strategies to work with communities. Furthermore, these differences may pose challenges for humanitarian actors who do not share a common baseline of information about communities, complicating efforts to work with beneficiaries in consistent ways.

The goal of this assessment is to identify sector-specific challenges facing host communities by collecting and analyzing information and data on villages in Akkar Governorate. By acquiring information about villages, humanitarian actors will be able to refer to a baseline of information that is consistent across levels within Akkar and that accounts for communities without municipal governments. By covering topics related to local governance, social services access, livelihoods, and infrastructure, as well as ones related to resilience, it aims to provide a common baseline of data to inform and evaluate community support projects (CSPs). Actors may be able to develop support programmes that account for a broader segment of affected communities and direct their efforts accordingly. It must be highlighted, however, that this report aims to provide an overview of Akkar as a whole and is not a substitute for the types of participatory assessments that are used in programme planning. Actors wishing to intervene in communities should follow up with their own assessments to better understand needs of specific communities.

<sup>14</sup> Syria Regional Response Plan 6. Op. cit., pp 77-78

<sup>15</sup> Multi Sector Needs Assessment, Social Cohesion Chapter (Beirut:2013) <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=5396> p. 11.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Syria Regional Response Plan 6, Op.cit., p 102.



## METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this assessment was to establish a baseline of information on the needs of host communities at the village level throughout Akkar. To achieve this, REACH formulated an approach based on three stages of data collection:

1. A desk-based secondary data and literature review
2. Key informant interviews with village leaders
3. Focus group discussions with village residents and refugees

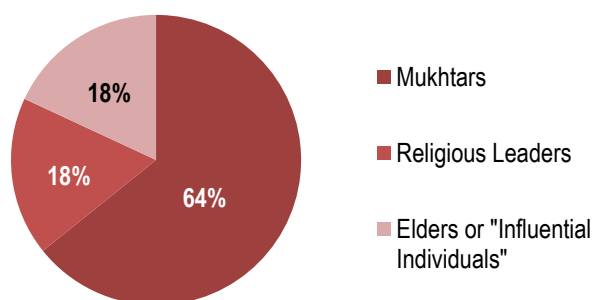
The aim of the secondary data and literature review was to identify sector-specific challenges and provide contextual analysis by incorporating previous research about development in Akkar and the impact of the refugee crisis. Given the unique development challenges Akkar faced before the crisis, where possible, the literature and secondary data sought to establish a baseline of information for Akkar that is comparable with other districts in Lebanon. With the objective of gaining timely and in-depth information about individual villages, REACH formulated an approach based on key informant interviews with community leaders regarding service provision, livelihoods, and community resilience. After being presented to and validated by multi-sector working groups in Akkar, the tool was translated into Arabic and a team of Lebanese information officers were trained in administering the questions.

Data collection was conducted with a version of the tool built on the Open Data Kit (ODK) platform and deployed on Android smartphones. Data collected in the field was validated by the team leader before being uploaded to the centralised database, after which a final data quality check was conducted by a REACH database specialist. In addition to this report, the collected data during key informant interviews was used to develop a database, map products, a tool to inform CSP selection, and village profiles.

### Key Informant Interviews

The first stage of data collection consisted of key informant interviews that took place between March 20 and April 8, 2014 and was based on interviews conducted with community leaders, most commonly, village mukhtars. Mukhtars' primary duties involve registering births and deaths and issuing residency permits; however, they are often the only government officials available at a village level, particularly in villages without municipal governments. In addition to knowing about the inhabitants of their village, interviewing mukhtars also presented certain advantages in municipalities composed of multiple villages, as they were able to speak about needs and community relationships, particularly tensions, in specific locations. Often, mukhtars are called upon to resolve disputes, and recent years, development actors such as UNDP have recognized the dispute resolution role that they play and have tried to enhance their capacity for peacebuilding.<sup>18</sup> Given their roles, mukhtars were prioritized in the selection of key informants; in total, nearly two-thirds of key informants (64%) were village mukhtars.

Figure 1: Key informant positions



Not all villages have mukhtars, and in some cases, they may serve multiple villages or may spend a significant amount of the year outside of the community. In the event that a village did not have a mukhtar or the mukhtar was unavailable, information officers sought to conduct an interview another key informant knowledgeable about the community and with a

<sup>18</sup> UNDP: Project Document-Strengthening Civil Peace in Lebanon. (Beirut: 2011)  
<http://arabstates.undp.org/content/rbas/en/home/presscenter/articles/2012/10/04/launching-of-the-study-the-status-of-mukhtars-and-their-role-in-strengthening-civil-peace-in-lebanon-and-the-guide-local-authorities-and-peace-building/>

high degree of authority about its needs – generally religious leaders or local elders. Religious leaders (sheikhs, priests, or imams) and elders each made up 18% of the remaining key informants, respectively.

With the inclusion of religious leaders and local elders, key informants reflected the nature of typical village-level leadership as one can observe in many Lebanese and Syrian communities, with populations of both countries customarily turning to traditional local leaders to resolve conflicts.<sup>19</sup> In their study of community conflicts in North Lebanon, Partners for Democratic Change International describes these figures as “influential individuals” who are “held in high esteem and well respected in the community” and who may also be consulted in settling disputes.<sup>20</sup> The positions of “influential individuals” may vary, but they are often “locality parliamentary representatives; municipal leaders (when they are not part of the conflict), mukhtars, prominent family leaders, religious sheikhs, influential individuals due to wealth or high position in government agencies and highly educated or well-known personalities – in short, people held in high esteem and well respected in the community.”<sup>21</sup>

The key informants selected were experts on their communities, but their responses represent just one perspective. While efforts were made to mitigate potential shortfalls associated with relying on a single individual through the inclusion of focus group discussions, REACH was only able to conduct focus groups in a fraction of the number of villages where key informant interviews took place. Additional limitations associated with the use of key informants to collect certain information also became apparent throughout the assessment and are highlighted throughout the report.

## Key Informant Interview Site Selection

The villages selected for key informant interviews were derived from UNHCR's Harmonised List of Villages and Locations in Lebanon. Used in registration and reporting activities and assigned p-codes, the list is composed of 2,731 villages and locations, 284 of which are listed as residing in Akkar. It must be emphasized that while UNHCR's Harmonized List is likely one of the most comprehensive lists of communities in Lebanon as well as Akkar, no authoritative list exists and counts of the number of villages in the Governorate may vary widely. In a recent assessment conducted by Lebanese NGO Adel Nord, researchers counted 172 Akkari villages based on local registration data. However, the assessment notes that numbers of villages may vary based on a number of factors, including uncertain cadastral limits, new clusters of houses that may be considered small villages, and a lack of formal mechanisms for counting villages.<sup>22</sup>

In Akkar, information officers assessed 260 villages and locations from the Harmonised List utilising key informant interviews.<sup>23</sup> Twelve locations included in the UNHCR's Harmonised List were visited but not assessed because no key informant resident in the village could be identified. These locations were often sparsely inhabited, the site of one or two households, parcels owned by a single family, or locations devoted to industrial activities. While these locations were mapped, they were not assessed or included in the analysis in this report.

REACH was not able to assess 12 villages on the list due to geographic limitations and security concerns. An unstable security situation along the Syrian border in late March and early April 2014 kept information officers from assessing 11 villages. Longstanding instability in Dayret Nahr El-Kehbir cadastral (the region adjacent to Khat Petrol), which was heightened during this period, prevented access to six villages. Shelling, military blockades, and the subsequent evacuation of some villages prevented access to another five. One village on the Harmonised List (Mahatta) was determined to be in Hermel and was excluded from the assessment. (Please see Annex 1 for more information.)

While basing site selection on the Harmonised List offered the most comprehensive coverage of communities in Akkar, it also presented certain limitations. Some villages that span cadastral boundaries may have been listed in the Harmonised List under slightly different names, resulting in some instances in which locations considered by local populations to constitute single villages were assessed twice. While treated separately by UNHCR, residents and key informants may not have been able to distinguish differences between portions of the village lying in different cadastrals. Similarly, some communities that may widely be considered villages were not included in the Harmonised List and were thus not included in this assessment. Given that these instances were distributed evenly throughout Akkar, any potential bias in the analysis resulting from adherence to the list is likely to be minimal.

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19 Syria Regional Response Plan 6, Op.cit., p. 102.

20 Partners for Democratic Change International, Community Conflicts in Northern Lebanon (Brussels, 2013) <http://www.pdci-network.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/lebanon-assesment-report-16.10.pdf> p. 27.

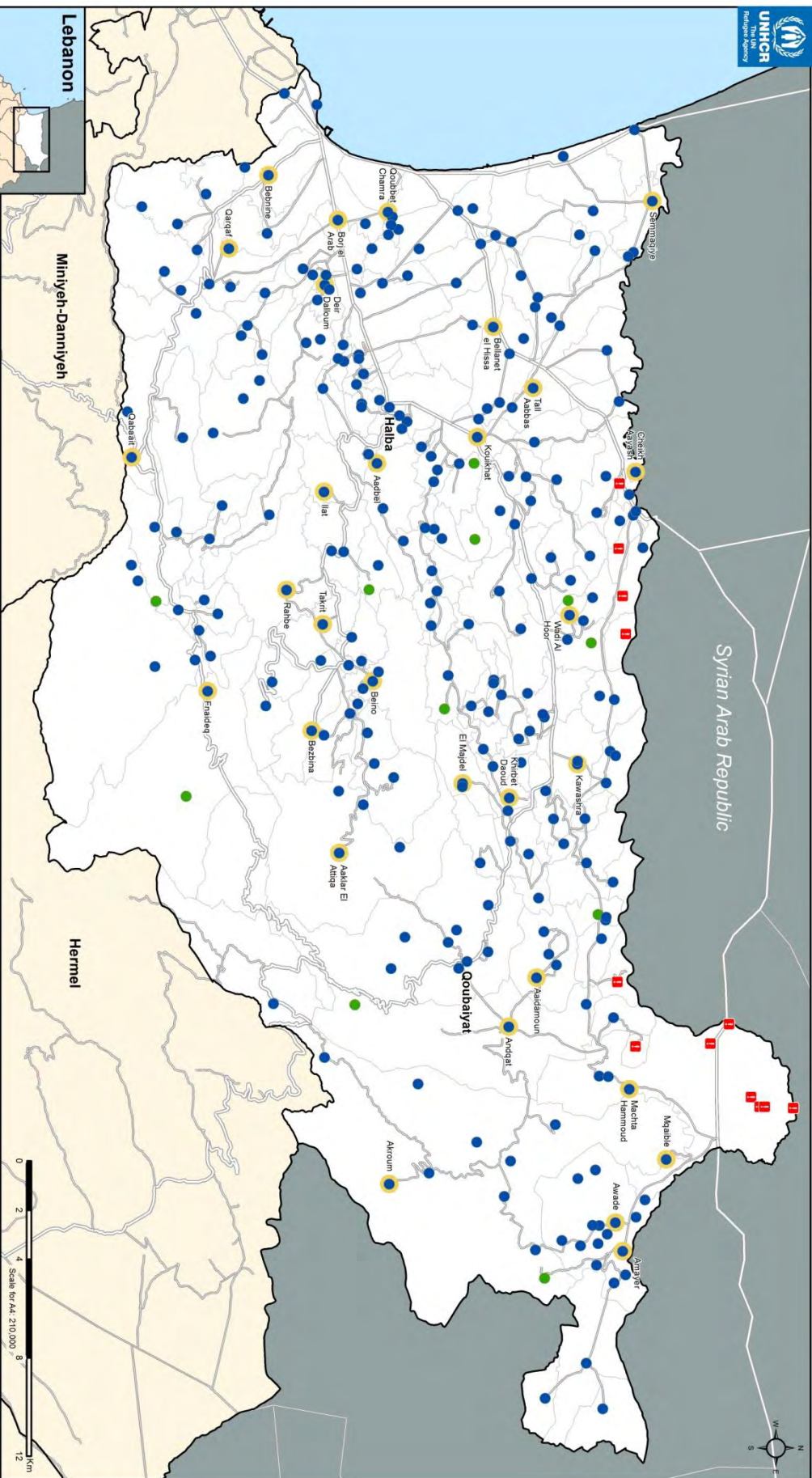
21 Ibid.

22 Adel Nord, Diagnostic Report (Beirut, 2014) [http://www.cdr-adelnord.org/5/8/5/7/0/9/DIAGNOSTIC\\_REPORT\\_20140423\\_FINAL-low2.pdf](http://www.cdr-adelnord.org/5/8/5/7/0/9/DIAGNOSTIC_REPORT_20140423_FINAL-low2.pdf) pp.32-33.

23 UNHCR Data Portal. <https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=3472>

# Lebanon - Akkar Governorate REACH Community Profiling Assessment - April 2014

For Humanitarian Use Only  
Production date : 20 May 2014



## Village Visited

- Village Assessed
  - Sparsely Populated Location
  - Focus Group Village
  - Village Not Assessed\*
- \* Note: Some villages were not assessed due to security reasons

- Major Road
- Other Road
- Cadastre Boundary

Data Sources:  
- Administrative boundaries: GADM  
- Data on Villages: REACH Community Profiling  
Coordinate System: WGS84  
File: LBN\_Akkar\_VillageAssessment\_20140520\_A4L  
Contact: reach\_mapping@impact-initiatives.org  
Note: Data, designations and boundaries contained on this map are not warranted to be error-free and do not imply acceptance by the REACH partners, associated donors mentioned on this map.



## Focus Group Discussions

Key informant interviews allowed for the rapid collection of wide-ranging and generally reliable information about communities throughout Akkar. While each key informant was well qualified to speak about their community, its needs, and tensions, the approach was limited by its reliance on information provided by a single individual and a relative lack of detailed information about the relationship between community needs and tensions. To complement and contextualize data collected during key informant interviews, REACH conducted separate focus group discussions with Lebanese and Syrian populations in selected villages based around open-ended questions about services, livelihoods, and social cohesion that mirrored many of the themes covered in key informant interviews. The objectives of this approach were threefold:

- **Integration of multiple perspectives:** While REACH did not collect detailed demographic information on key informants, they tended to be older and enjoyed a relatively high social status. They were also overwhelmingly male, with women representing only two of the 260 villages assessed. By incorporating the perspectives of Syrians, women, and youth, focus group discussions sought to incorporate multiple perspectives regarding community needs.
- **Validation of key informant interviews:** While key informants were instructed that their responses would not be directly tied to the provision of aid, there is a possibility that some may have perceived incentives to provide motivated or insincere answers. Although key informants were well-placed to provide information about communities and tensions, as community leaders and representatives, some key informants may have felt compelled to underreport tensions and portray their community in as positive a light as possible.
- **Provision of contextual information:** Focus group discussions offered an opportunity to better understand how the refugee crisis has affected host communities and shed additional light on community vulnerabilities, resilience, and coping mechanisms. They also offered a venue for participants to discuss interventions that would be most beneficial to the community, bridging the gap between needs and potential solutions while providing information about local capacities and stress-points that may be useful in efforts to coordinate and condition aid.

Table 1: Total of Assessed Villages

Data Source	Villages
Key informant interviews	260
Focus group discussions	30

REACH conducted focus groups in 30 villages or nearly 12% of the villages where key informant interviews took place. In selecting villages for focus groups, REACH employed a purposive selection strategy. This methodology was based on several challenges and considerations: Not all villages in Akkar host refugees and many do not host them in numbers sufficient as to be conducive to holding focus groups. At the same time, sampling strategies based on host community and refugee population size alone would result in a disproportionate number of larger villages and ones from specific regions of Akkar, overlooking the dynamics present in multiple regions of the Governorate. In addition to these considerations, REACH sought to include villages populated by different sects, villages that host Syrian populations in different accommodation contexts, and villages that the results of key informant interviews indicated to be cohesive or largely unaffected by the crisis.

Once the villages where focus group discussions would be held had been determined, information officers randomly selected participants from communities to take part. To help ensure confidentiality, focus group discussions were held in private locations. Information officers made an effort to hold separate focus group discussions for youth and women from Syrian and Lebanese communities to help ensure a broader selection of viewpoints.

Due to the small sample size, and differences in selection strategy, findings from the discussions were coded and collated but not analysed quantitatively or compared systematically with data collected from the key informant interviews. As the aim of focus group discussions was to provide contextual information on dynamics that may be present in Akkar more generally, this report omitted the names of specific villages.

## FINDINGS

This report is comprised of three sections that present an overview of the effects of the Syrian refugee crisis on host community resilience, livelihoods, and public services in Akkar. It begins with an overview of the units assessed in this report, villages, highlighting their relationship with other units of local government, municipalities, and unions of municipalities. This section also includes an overview of the refugee populations hosted by villages, discussing potential factors that have led displaced populations to settle in some communities but not others. This section also examines host community resilience examines factors associated with host community resilience, including reports of tensions, feelings about security, attitudes towards hosting refugees, and views of the humanitarian response. The goal of this section is to provide a set of baseline indicators for tension and social cohesion and resources that communities have to deal with the effects of the crisis.

The next two sections present summaries of factors that may be key drivers of social cohesion in host communities: livelihoods and public services. There are significant reasons for discussing these areas in depth. As highlighted in the recent MSNA, there is a significant body of evidence that suggests that access to services and competition over livelihoods are two areas that affect social cohesion throughout Akkar and in Lebanon as a whole. In addition, they are the two areas where humanitarian actors are likely to have the greatest opportunity to develop targeted interventions that strengthen social cohesion through CSPs. The first of these sections on livelihoods presents village-level indicators related to employment, prices, and rent costs and discusses how changes in these areas affect social cohesion.

The third section discusses public service provision in Akkar, highlighting relationships between access and coverage, strains resulting from crisis, and host communities' greatest concerns. After discussing the relationships between different services, subsections discuss specific sectors in greater depth, highlighting current problems and potential solutions associated with water supplies, wastewater management, electricity, solid waste management, healthcare, and education.

## REFUGEES, HOST COMMUNITIES, AND SOCIAL COHESION

Host communities have been one of the greatest resources available to refugees, who have been welcomed in many communities throughout Lebanon. Their generosity and hospitality have been critical throughout the crisis; however, in the face of constantly increasing populations and strained resources, co-existence between host and refugee communities will require constant strengthening. Signs of tension, manifested in more extreme cases in instances of violence, and on a lesser scale by everyday resentment and discrimination, need to be evaluated carefully. In many cases, there may be a strong tendency for Lebanese hosts and Syrian refugees alike to underreport instances of tensions.

After briefly reviewing key statistics about the refugee population in Akkar, this section examines host community resilience from two vantage points: resources that host communities have to address challenges and strains on social cohesion. The first examines resources that communities have at their disposal to deal with challenges associated with the crisis, highlighting the roles and effectiveness of local governance, dispute resolution mechanisms, and humanitarian aid. The second examines pressures on social cohesion in host communities as measured by several indicators of tensions, including attitudes towards hosting refugees; reports of crime and social problems, restrictions placed on refugees, and feelings of security. Programming-related assessments will wish to probe further, examining the role of civil society and civic associations, social networks, as well as key micro-level factors such as the quality of interaction between Syrian and Lebanese populations and feelings of trust between groups.

### SYRIAN REFUGEES IN AKKAR GOVERNORATE

Throughout Akkar, 75% (195) of key informants reported that their villages currently hosted refugees. This figure corresponds closely with registration figures from UNHCR available in March, which showed refugees registered in 196 villages.<sup>24</sup> One of the greatest challenges in analysing host communities is an absence of population statistics at the village level. Lebanon has not had a census since 1932, which makes estimating population figures difficult or inherently inaccurate. The Ministry of Public Health estimated Akkar's population to be 249,642 in 2010.<sup>25</sup> In March 2014, the number of registered refugees was 94,982, a figure that rose to 106,301 towards the end of June 2014.<sup>26</sup> This means that about one

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<sup>24</sup> UNHCR Data.

<sup>25</sup> Lebanese Ministry of Public Health Data.

<sup>26</sup> UNHCR Data.



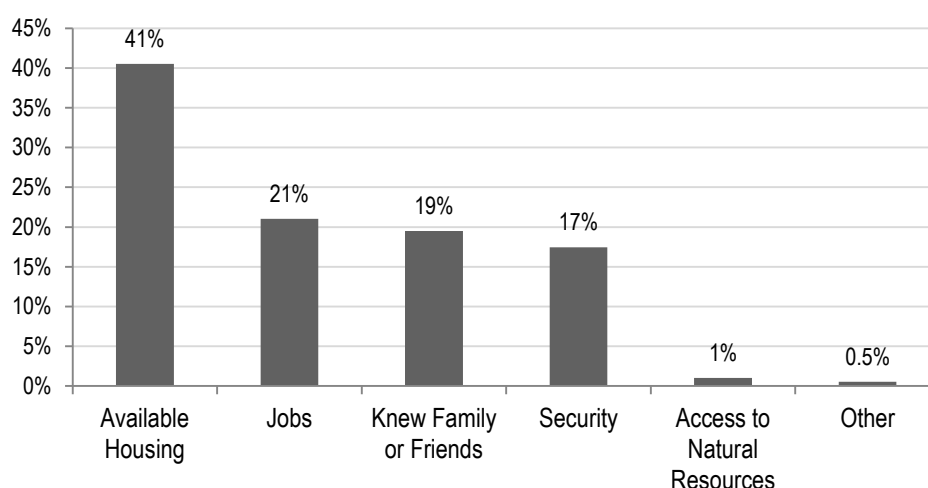
third of the population of Akkar consists of Syrian refugees, a figure that may trend higher or lower depending on changes in the Lebanese population and numbers of unregistered refugees.

While village-level figures on Lebanese populations were not available and not collected as part of this assessment, UNHCR data shows that Syrian refugees make up a majority of residents in some cadastrals, with Syrian populations now comprising the majority of populations in Wadi Khaled, Hnaider, Majdel, Kherbet Daoud, Saadine, Tal Abbas El Charkiye, Tal Abbas El Gharibe, Bire, Kouachra, Qobbet Chamra, Kneisseh, and Dahr Leycineh.<sup>27</sup>

Refugee settlement patterns in Lebanon have occurred along sectarian lines, with refugees settling amongst their own religious groups.<sup>28</sup> According to an assessment by Mercy Corps, these patterns may be particularly pronounced in Lebanon's north, including Akkar, where self-segregating settlement patterns are more common than in the rest of the country.<sup>29</sup> To some extent, they are based on practical, instrumental calculations – refugees may be drawn to areas where they perceive a better chance of receiving help or living independently.<sup>30</sup> Border regions, where Syrians and Lebanese have a history of interactions and share common customs and habits, are bound by intermarriage, or have similar economic profiles may also be prime destinations.<sup>31</sup>

Within Akkar, a region that shares many historical and cultural ties to Syria, a number of other factors may be responsible for settlement patterns, including housing, jobs, interpersonal ties, security, and access to resources such as water or land. In this assessment, key informant interviews indicated that housing, jobs, and security are the main factors driving settlement patterns, or at least perceived to be driving settlement patterns within host communities. Of the 195 villages reporting refugees, 41% (79) reported available housing as the main draw for refugees that decided to settle in their village, with 88% reporting it as one of the top three draws. Approximately 21% (41) indicated jobs were the main draw, followed by knowing family or friends already living in an area (19% or 38), and security (17% or 34). Notably, security ranked highly as a secondary or tertiary concern, with 75% reporting that it was among refugee's top three reasons for settling in their village.

**Figure 2: Perceptions of factors driving refugee settlement patterns**



With housing a dominant concern, villages that reported hosting refugees reported a variety of settlement contexts, but independently rented or owned houses or apartments were the main setting in 70% (137) of villages. Apartments or homes rented or owned by refugees predominated over other situations, such as IS ("Tent" in key informant interviews), which were the dominant accommodation setting in 14% of villages (27). Refugees being hosted by other families free of charge was reported as the dominant context in 7% of villages (14), followed by garages and basements (6% or 12 villages), and collective shelters and centres (2% or 4 villages). Only one village reported that unfinished buildings shelters or buildings were the dominant accommodation contexts.

<sup>27</sup> UNHCR Data.

<sup>28</sup> International Crisis Group, Too Close for Comfort, Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (Brussels 2013)

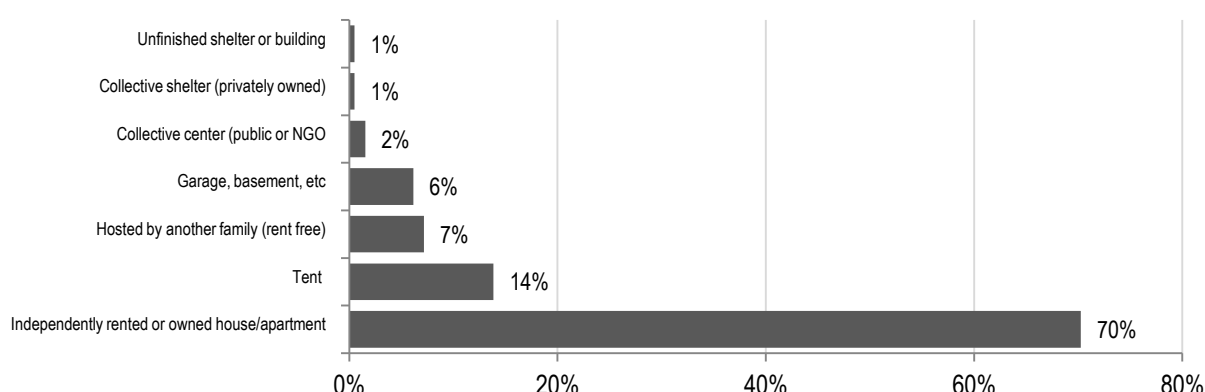
<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/Iraq%20Syria%20Lebanon/Lebanon/141-too-close-for-comfort-syrians-in-lebanon.pdf>, p. 3.

<sup>29</sup> Mercy Corps, Op. cit., pp. 4-5.

<sup>30</sup> Carthage Centre for Research and Information, Understanding the Heightening Syrian Refugee Crisis and Lebanon's Political Polarization (Jar el Dib, 2013) <http://www.ldn-lb.org/UserFiles/carthage%201%20final.pdf> p.14.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

**Figure 3: Top accommodation contexts for refugees**



As the following section on services will discuss, refugee populations and their accommodation contexts, may play a significant role the effects of the crisis on host communities, particularly with regard to service provision. Because they often lack formal access to services, IS in particular may place different demands on communities than other refugee accommodation contexts. While only 14% of key informants reported IS as the dominant accommodation context for refugees in their village, approximately 26% of villages (51) hosting Syrian refugees report the presence of an IS. Additional data collected by REACH suggests that the number of villages hosting IS may be higher than the number reported by key informants, due to the fact that many IS are located outside of the village proper or on its outskirts, and are thus not necessarily acknowledged by villagers.

## HOST COMMUNITY RESOURCES

This assessment examined several resources that host communities have at their disposal to deal with challenges related to social cohesion: local institutions, dispute resolution mechanisms, and humanitarian aid. The capacity of local governments plays a role in communities' ability to adapt to new challenges, provide services, and managing conflicts, with villages that have municipal governments often more equipped to meet complex challenges. Dispute resolution mechanisms are an important element of managing tensions; while many conflicts are handled through mediation, formal mechanisms that include Syrian populations may be more equipped to handle increasingly complex challenges. Finally, humanitarian aid is an important resource as well, but its effect on social cohesion is likely to be closely associated with which population is perceived to be the beneficiary.

### Local Institutions

This assessment examined host communities at the village level because in many areas of Akkar, other levels of local government, such as municipalities, are not present. Instead, many communities may rely on traditional and ad hoc arrangements headed by mukhtars, religious leaders, and elders. According to a recent assessment by Adel Nord, municipal government in Akkar is relatively new and has had beneficial effects: "The creation of municipalities in the villages has triggered a new dynamic and a shift in power and authority of tribal and familial to elected members" and may serve as an "empowering structure for the development and improvement of life conditions."<sup>32</sup> Although the first municipality in Akkar was established in 1909 in Halba, most villages remained unincorporated until the past decade. Between 2002 and 2013, 69 new municipalities were established, increasing the total number of municipalities in Akkar to 131.<sup>33</sup>

Where municipal governments do exist, they are generally credited with playing an important role in solving collective action problems related to the provision of public services, including developing water and wastewater networks, providing lighting, coordinating solid waste disposal, and maintaining parks or recreational facilities.<sup>34</sup> Municipalities may also band together to form unions of municipalities to address common issues. Numbering 42 throughout Lebanon, unions form an intermediate level of local government between municipalities and districts.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>34</sup> World Bank, Op. cit., p.119.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

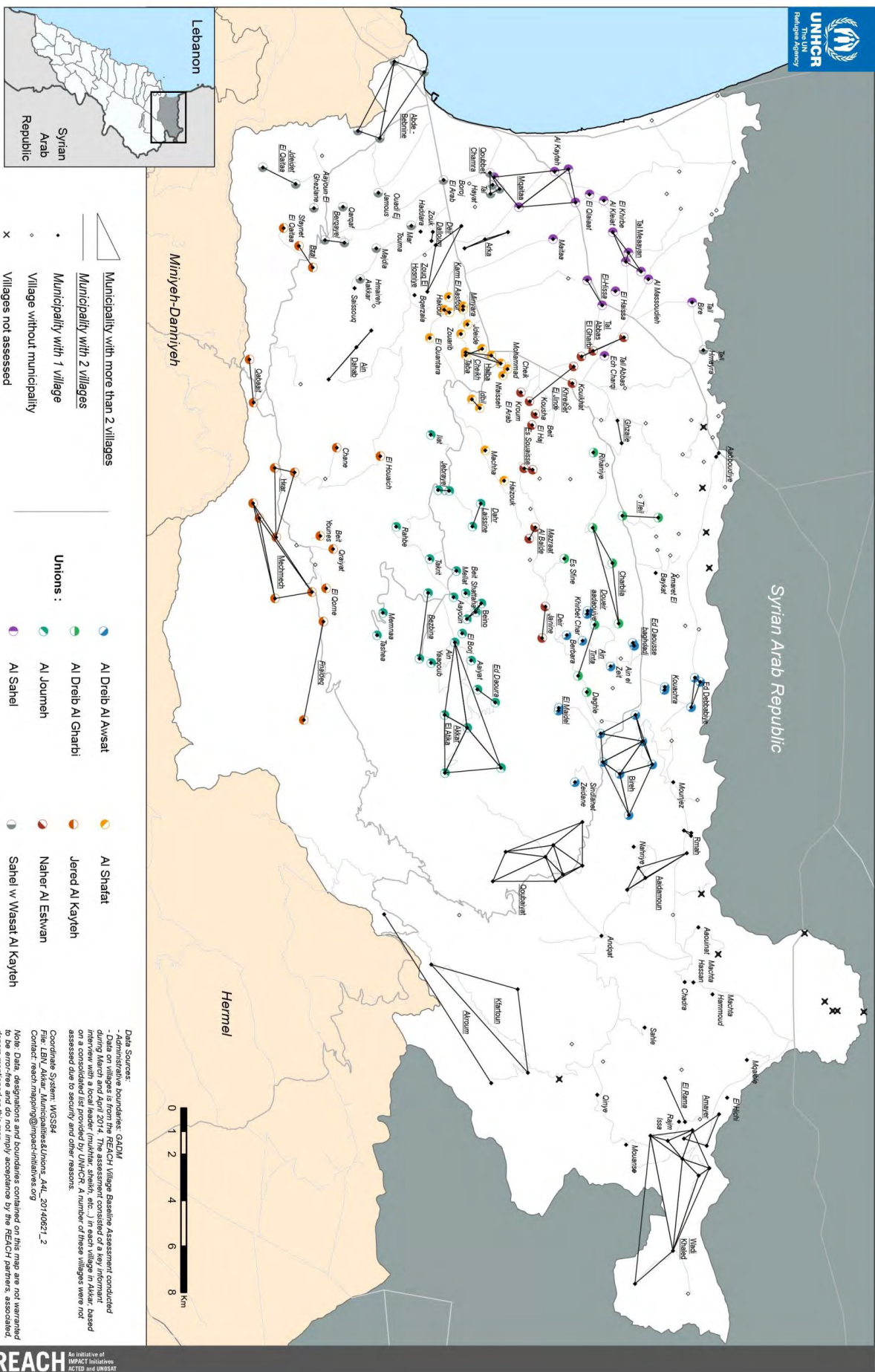
# Lebanon - Akkar Governorate

## Villages, Municipalities and Municipal Unions - April 2014

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Production Date: 19 May 2014



UNHCR  
Refugees Agency



REACH  
An initiative of  
UNHCR and UNISAT

Of the 260 villages included in this assessment, 20% (51) are unincorporated and do not have municipal governments of their own or belong to a municipality. Approximately 78% of these unincorporated villages report no external support source for development or infrastructure. Key informants in six villages without municipalities cited some form of municipal government as a support source. Five of these villages had recently exited or dissolved their municipality due to disputes between stakeholders; however, local officials who had been involved in municipal government had managed to ensure that some services associated with it were maintained.

This assessment found that approximately 80% of villages (209) in Akkar included in UNHCR's Harmonised List have established municipalities or belong to one. Of these, 63% (131) of villages with municipalities are, in turn, members of unions of municipalities. Approximately 79% (165) of villages participating in municipalities and unions report that their municipality or union is a primary source of support in community development initiatives. The remainder of villages without municipalities reported relying on a combination of entities, including the central government, international NGOs, and Lebanese community-based organizations for support.

The presence of municipalities and other forms of local government may be important indicators of communities' resources to address community development issues as well as in managing conflicts and tensions. Focus group discussions indicated that where municipalities exist, they have become important focal points for dispute resolution. In general, effective local governments may play a role in promoting social cohesion by encouraging local development and managing disputes, but they may also have positive benefits associated with social cohesion. In its survey of 600 Lebanese and 600 Syrian households throughout Lebanon, Mercy Corps found that "the more positive one's perception of local government performance, the less likely was one's propensity towards violence," indicating "that if local governance capacity is strengthened, the incentive for Lebanese constituents to turn to violent strategies to advocate will likely diminish."<sup>36</sup>

While municipal governments may present certain advantages for communities, their simple existence alone may not be enough to predict social cohesion. They may frequently have limited institutional capacity and become sites of conflict between stakeholders within communities as evidenced by the number of municipal governments that have been dissolved recently in Akkar. Unions may also fail to achieve their goals of addressing shared challenges. Despite their seemingly important roles, they are often ineffective venues for collaboration due to high transaction costs associated with fragmented service delivery systems.<sup>37</sup> As a result, individual villages managed through ad hoc and traditional arrangements may actually exhibit greater social cohesion and resilience than ones with municipalities. In sum, the presence of local governments may be an important indicator of communities' capacity and resilience, but programming assessments will ultimately have to evaluate the quality of specific local institutions in order to determine their roles and strength.

## Dispute Resolution

The ability of communities to effectively settle disputes plays an important role in resilience. In rural Lebanon, including in Akkar, traditional means of settling disputes may often be more important than the role played by formal judicial institutions. According to 2013 assessment by Partners for Democratic Change International, mukhtars, religious leaders, village elders, and "influential individuals" often take leading roles settling disputes through mediation. According to a recent assessment by Adel Nord, mayors and municipality officials have emerged as focal points for dispute resolution; however, their efforts may be hampered by the fact that municipalities are often the sites of disputes themselves. Only when mediation via traditional means fails, conflicting parties might make recourse to the judicial system for a legally binding resolution. However, this path runs the risk of further exacerbating conflicts between individuals and families as allows tensions to fester, underscoring some of the benefits associated with using traditional methods of resolving disputes.

In this assessment, mukhtars, sheikhs, and elders were not asked directly about whether they thought dispute resolution was adequate due to the role they play in resolving disputes themselves; however, Key informant interviews did ask about the presence of forums through which tensions in the village are addressed. Approximately 13% (33) indicated that such forums existed; however, only nine villages indicated that Syrian populations are invited to participate in them.

In the absence of community forums, most dispute resolution is likely to take place through the initiative of individuals. In the vast majority of Lebanese focus group discussions, participants indicated that they felt dispute resolution was adequate in

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<sup>36</sup> Mercy Corps, Op. cit. p. 4

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.



their communities. Most also indicated that mukhtars and municipality officials as the actors taking leading roles in settling disputes, with sheikhs and elders also playing a role in some villages. In cases where disputes between Lebanese individuals or groups within villages were reported, the size and scope of conflicts was often small, limited to fights between families and were resolved quickly and mukhtars or religious leaders were generally praised for their ability to resolve conflicts quickly. In at least two focus groups, Lebanese participants reported that these types of small local conflicts had gotten worse because of strains placed on communities associated with the crisis. Syrian focus groups were less likely than Lebanese ones to consider dispute resolution to be adequate, but over half still cited dispute resolution mechanisms, referencing linkages with mukhtars, sheikhs, and elders who intervened to settle conflicts.

## Humanitarian Aid

Humanitarian aid can strengthen social cohesion or erode it. Recent assessments in Lebanon, particularly the Multi Sector Needs Assessment, have highlighted the need to counterbalance misperceptions about the humanitarian response, facilitate increased opportunities for interaction among communities, sensitise humanitarian actors to the effects their actions have on conflict and community cohesion, and counterbalance perceptions that Syrian refugees receive a disproportionate amount of support. Other assessments have shown that community leaders also feel a need to address these concerns. For example, according to the World Bank, municipal leaders have voiced concerns about humanitarian and NGO operations, criticizing their activities and questioning its effectiveness, particularly the need to address the need for equity in programming that addresses the needs of vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian refugee populations alike.

This assessment found the perception that humanitarian aid disproportionately benefits Syrian refugees to be common, suggesting a greater need for programming to address the host community and refugee populations at the same time. Throughout Akkar, 37% of key informants (96) reported that a humanitarian agency had worked in their village. Among those that reported a humanitarian presence, 85% (82) reported that agencies had performed work that benefited Syrians, while 39% (37) reported projects that benefited Lebanese. Only 24% (23) felt that Syrians and Lebanese benefitted jointly, however, and it was much more common for key informants to cite Syrians as the sole beneficiaries, with 60% (58) listing them individually. By contrast, only 15% (14) listed Lebanese as the sole beneficiaries of interventions. Similarly in villages where humanitarian agencies had worked, 61% (59) felt that humanitarian assistance has been uneven, with 58% of all key informants (56) indicating that Syrians had been helped more than others.

Throughout Akkar, including in villages that had received support and ones that had not, it was common for key informants to cite gaps in humanitarian coverage. Approximately 65% (170) of key informants reported that they felt there were gaps in coverage. Most commonly, key informants cited geographic gaps, which were listed by 54% (139) of key informants and gaps in coordination, which were listed by 40% (105). Gaps associated with the coverage of vulnerable Lebanese groups were cited by another 20% (53), followed by gaps in coverage for non-Lebanese vulnerable groups, reflecting a perception that non-Lebanese groups receive larger shares of assistance.

In focus group discussions, it was common for Lebanese participants to express that humanitarian organizations just help Syrians. Perceptions that Syrians receive preferential treatment were particularly acute regarding healthcare, with Lebanese expressing a desire for the same sorts of benefits that Syrians receive, including financial support for treatment. Beyond these complaints, focus group discussion participants highlighted the need for organizations to work in villages close to the border, the need for better interaction between municipalities and aid agencies, and problem of corruption, both among aid recipients and donors.

## HOST COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

This assessment attempted to establish a baseline of information about host community resilience by examining a number of factors related to social cohesion and tensions. While there was a tendency among key informants to not directly acknowledge community tensions, interview questions related to social cohesion as well as insights from focus group discussions provided indicators of host community resilience. Information about attitudes towards hosting refugees, restrictions placed on refugees, security, crime, spill-over effects, and dispute resolution highlight multiple factors that can contribute to social cohesion or tensions.

Access to services and livelihoods may be important drivers of host community resilience, but other factors may play significant roles as well. Stereotypes and the effects of crime, insecurity, historical relationships, different political affiliations, and cultural factors may be more difficult to measure, but may ground everyday interactions between host communities and refugees. At the same time, some trends, such as feelings of insecurity, and restrictions placed on refugees may be the product of decreased social cohesion as well as factors driving it. As a result, determining which factors lead to tensions and decreases in social cohesion or are manifestations of it may require more in-depth and location-specific analyses.



## Tensions

According to the recent Multi Sector Needs Assessment, “growing strain on host communities is contributing to tensions between host communities and refugees, as evidenced by an increase in the number of violent incidents.”<sup>38</sup> Beyond incidents of violence, strains placed on host communities may be reflected in everyday micro-level interactions between host communities and refugees. According to an assessment by Mercy Corps, “there is little meaningful interaction” between Syrian and Lebanese communities, with lack of interaction and relationships particularly acute in Lebanon’s north. When there are interactions, “most engagements are instrumental and utilitarian” taking place through trade, employment, or rental arrangements. Furthermore, relationships between Syrian and Lebanese groups are characterized by different mentalities between youth and perceived feelings of superiority among Lebanese men, providing, on a whole, “little reason [for Lebanese] to befriend those Syrians who have settled in their area.”<sup>39</sup>

While this assessment found indications of a lack of meaningful relationships between host community and refugee populations in many villages, high levels of interaction and close relationships were present in others. This may mirror the situation present in Lebanon as a whole, where social cohesion and relationships may be weak throughout the country and its regions but strong within communities and confessional groups.<sup>40</sup> Relationships in settings with high levels of social cohesion and interactions between host communities and refugees were often reinforced by prior positive contact between communities – Syrian refugees had lived or worked in the community before – or through kinship ties and shared tribal affiliations. These types of relationships may be most common along the border and in Wadi Khaled where there have been strong, historic ties between communities on both sides of the border. At the same time, positive ties may still be developing in some regions of Akkar. For example, participants in one focus group discussion with Lebanese residents held in a village in central Akkar reported that relationships with refugees had been strengthened by a recent rise in intermarriages between Syrians and local Lebanese residents.

While tensions, broadly defined, may pervade daily interactions between refugee and host communities in many settings, this assessment found that among the 195 communities hosting refugees, key informants in only 6% (11) reported tensions in their village: seven villages reported tensions related to cultural reasons, seven in relation to livelihoods, four concerning security, and one in relation to infrastructure. No key informants responded that “past experiences” were a current driver of tension. Key informants likely underreported tensions significantly. On the one hand, key informants may have difficulty identifying with general questions that do not reference specific instances resentment, disagreements, or violence. More substantially, perhaps, is that key informants, in keeping with their roles as mediators and community representatives, may prefer to underplay instances of tension and portray their communities in the most positive light possible.

A more accurate measure of tensions may come from measures of attitudes towards hosting refugees. In this assessment, key informants in villages hosting refugees as well as ones not hosting refugees were asked about changes in community members’ attitudes towards hosting refugees. Approximately 72% of key informants (188) reported that attitudes towards hosting refugees had stayed the same in their villages over the past six months. Among villages with attitude changes, it was more common for key informants to indicate that attitudes had worsened than improved. Throughout Akkar, approximately 20% of key informants (53) reported more negative attitudes towards hosting refugees in their village, with 18% (47) indicating that opinions had somewhat worsened and 2% (6) indicating that opinions had greatly worsened. Approximately 7% indicated that attitudes had improved somewhat and only one village indicated that attitudes had greatly improved.

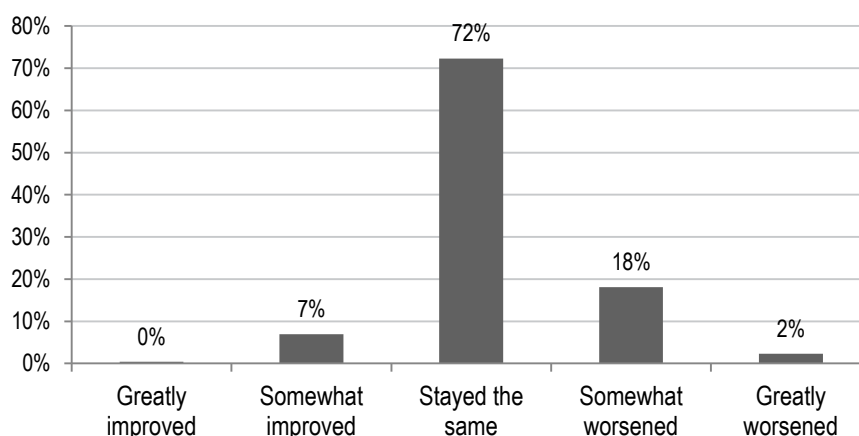
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<sup>38</sup> MSNA, Social Cohesion, Op. cit., p. 7

<sup>39</sup> Mercy Corps, Op. cit., p. 15

<sup>40</sup> World Bank, Op. cit., p. 100

Figure 4: Attitudes towards hosting refugees



Attitudes declined more greatly in the 195 communities that actually reported hosting refugees: 26% (50) reported a decline in attitudes, with key informants indicating that attitudes had greatly worsened or somewhat worsened. By contrast, only 5% of key informants (3) in villages that reported not hosting refugees reported declines in attitudes towards hosting refugees.

## Restrictions on Refugees

Since the crisis began, a number of villages throughout Lebanon and Akkar have sought to restrict refugees' movement. While addressing oftentimes valid concerns about security, curfews and other discriminatory regulations may be indicative of deterioration in social cohesion in villages.<sup>41</sup> They may also be a sign of growing tensions.<sup>42</sup> Approximately 18% of key informants (35) whose villages hosted refugees indicated the existence of one or more guidelines; the most common were curfews, which were reported by 15% (30) villages hosting refugees.

Other strategies for managing refugee presence may also be common but may not have been widely reported in key informant interviews. For example, identification papers may be required to live or work in some villages. Some villages have issued their own ID cards, while others may request registration documents from UNHCR. In this assessment, five key informants in villages hosting refugees reported restrictions on refugees: one reported employment restrictions, three reported residency restrictions, one reported hosting restrictions, and one reported restrictions on operating motorcycles.<sup>43</sup>

Curfews and other restrictions may be much more common than key informants reported. In almost all of the villages in which focus group discussions and partner monitoring reports indicated that curfews were in place, key informants indicated that they were not. As with curfews, restrictions related to ID cards may also be underreported. Only 2% of key informants reported that their villages have ID card requirements, although focus group discussions later found that they were present in a number of villages where key informants said that they were not.

## Security, Crime, and Social Problems

Throughout Lebanon, reports of rises in crime and social problems have been attributed the growing refugee population. According to the recent Multi Sector Needs Assessment, security issues, crime, and social problems may have a deleterious effect on resilience because if crime is attributed to a certain group, it can have an impact on social cohesion.<sup>44</sup> These reports may serve as an indicator of other, deeper seated tensions, particularly competition over livelihoods. As a recent assessment by Mercy Corps summarizes, "Where there is a high level of resentment, Lebanese are apt to also blame the Syrians for a number of other grievances, including crime, vandalism, harassment of Lebanese women, etc."<sup>45</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Multi Sector Needs Assessment: Social Cohesion Chapter (Beirut 2014) <https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=5396> 6

<sup>42</sup> Syria Regional Response Plan 6, Op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>43</sup> It is not clear from the context of the key informant interviews precisely what these restrictions entail, for example, if employment restrictions refer to work permits or if residency restrictions referred to an obligation to possess a residency permit or where refugees could reside within the village.

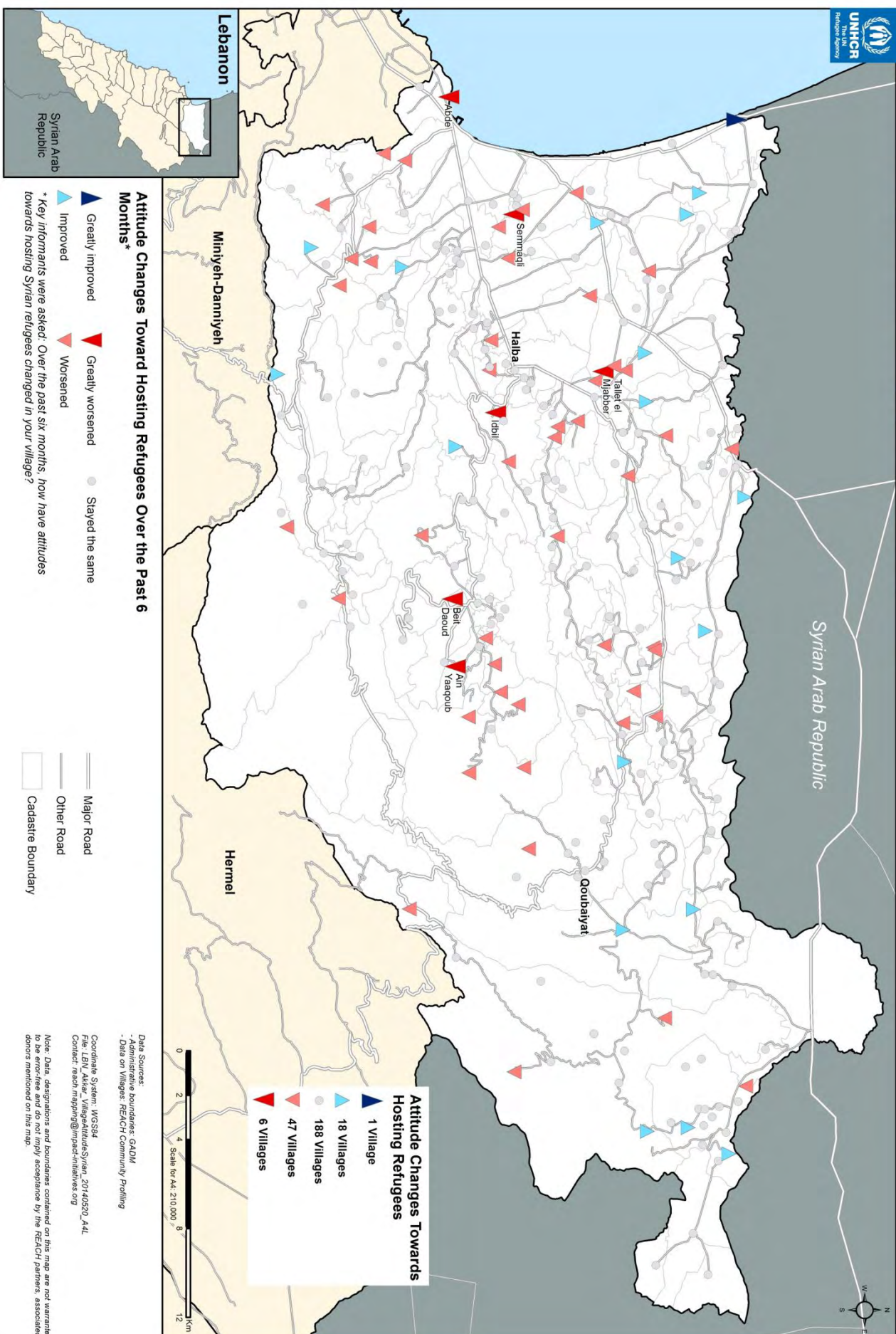
<sup>44</sup> Multi Sector Needs Assessment, Op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>45</sup> Mercy Corps, Op. cit., pp. 2-3

# Lebanon - Akkar Governorate

## Attitude Changes Toward Hosting Syrian Refugees - April 2014

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Production date : 20 May 2014





In the key informant interview phase of the assessment, respondents were asked about whether villages had experienced an increase in crime and other social problems since the crisis began. Thirty percent (78) responded that they had, with increases in theft being the most common. Approximately 28% of key informants (72) reported an increase in theft, with reports of other developments much less common. A rise in youth violence was reported by 5% (12), followed by economic exploitation in 2% of villages (4). Reports on other social problems were low; key informants in only three villages reported a rise in vandalism; only two reported a rise in violent crime; and only two reported a rise in domestic violence.

According to information collected during focus group discussions with Lebanese community members, a rise in theft reported by many key informants was also noted. While very few Lebanese focus groups reported increases in violent crime, some Syrian ones did report incidents of violence. In some cases where Syrians lived in houses or apartments, refugees reported that village residents would knock on their doors, light fireworks, or throw stones at their houses at night. Inhabitants of IS reported similar problems of harassment.

Similar to crime and social problems, feelings of safety also served as a proxy for trends related to social cohesion and tensions. This assessment found that on a whole, feelings of insecurity are on the rise in host communities throughout Akkar. Key informants in only 7% of villages (18) reported that residents felt unsafe three years ago; however 35% (104) reported feeling unsafe now. In approximately 75% (77) of cases, key informants attributed residents' feelings of insecurity to the presence of Syrian refugees. As might be expected, feelings of insecurity may be higher in villages hosting refugees, but key informants in villages not hosting refugees also reported feeling unsafe. Approximately 44% of villages (85) that report hosting refugees said that they feel unsafe now. Notably, the proportion of key informants that reported feeling unsafe was lower in villages hosting IS: 41% (21). Key respondents in 29% of villages that did not host refugees (20) also reported feeling unsafe, with 70% (14) attributing feelings of insecurity to the presence of Syrians.

Feelings of insecurity spanned public and private spaces. In 67% of cases where residents felt unsafe (69), key informants reported that residents felt unsafe in the streets, in 42% of cases (43), key informants said that residents felt unsafe in their homes; in 5% of cases, key informants said that residents felt unsafe in markets; and in 21% of cases (22) key informants reported that residents felt unsafe "everywhere." Only eight key informants reported that residents felt unsafe everywhere and being the target of shelling from Syria.

Feelings of insecurity may not always be related to concrete concerns, as indicated by Lebanese participants in focus group discussions, who indicated that the presence of strangers and individuals they do not recognize may trigger feelings of insecurity. Lebanese residents in smaller villages, which may have been largely closed off or inhabited by several extended kinship groups, may find themselves overwhelmed by large numbers of people they do not know or recognize. As the rise in curfews indicates, there is a desire among some local groups to restrict or cordon off refugees from the larger host community. Along these lines, several Lebanese focus group discussions expressed a need for formal camps similar to ones in Turkey or Jordan as a solution to tensions and security challenges.

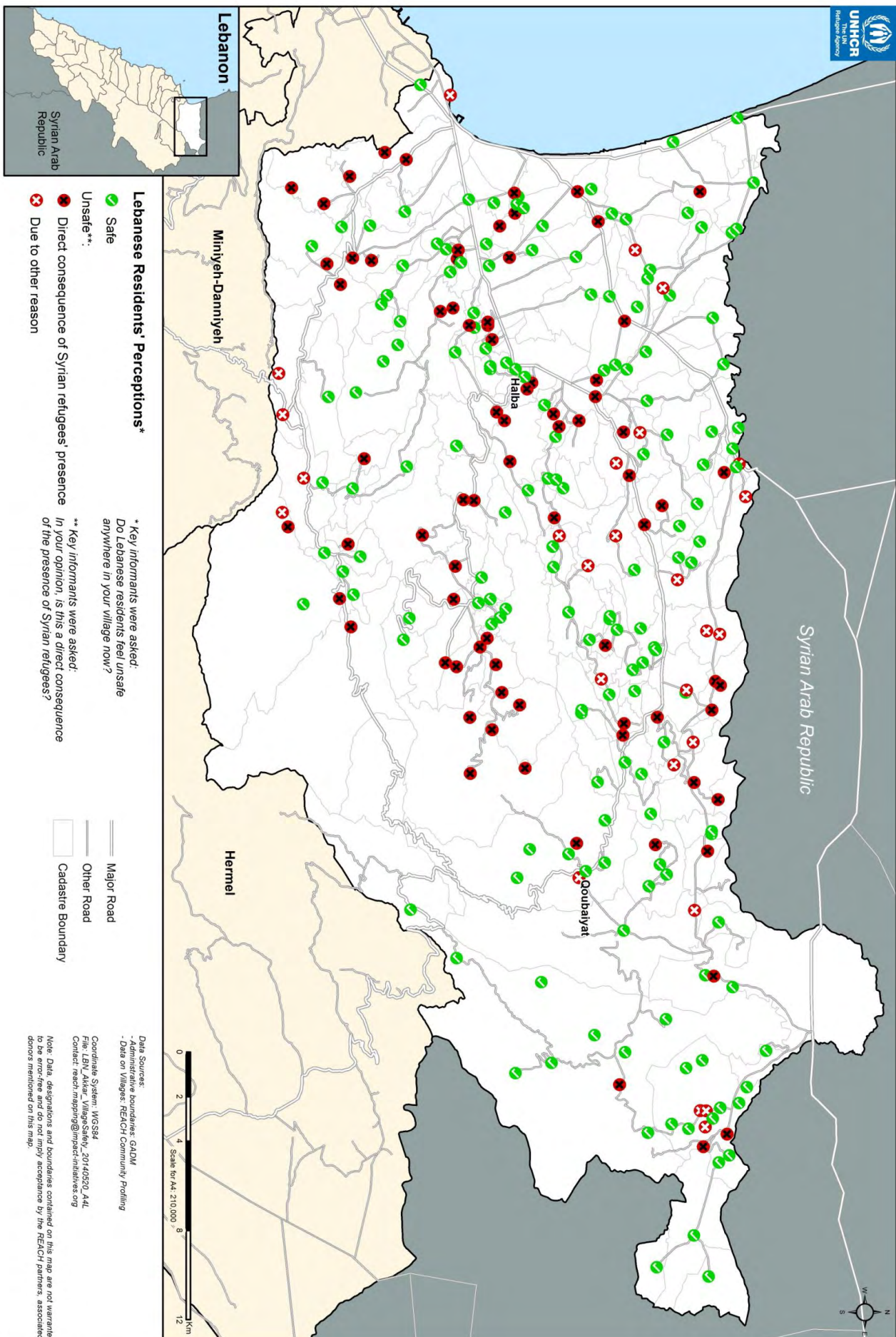
In Lebanese focus group discussions where residents reported feeling safe, participants often attributed it to formal or community-based policing. Syrian focus group participants did not cite these policing efforts as factors contributing to security and it is unclear how they may be perceived. For refugees, who may be accustomed to the highly-centralized security apparatuses found in Syria, the presence of community-based patrols may be viewed menacingly. In some of the same villages, Syrian focus group participants reported feeling unsafe because of groups of young men, "shabab," roamed the community at night. At the same time, focus group discussions with Syrians also indicated a need for greater municipal engagement in law enforcement (which is generally community-based) to prevent harassment by Lebanese groups.

Despite reports of violence, Syrian participants in focus group discussions were almost evenly divided amongst those that felt safe or unsafe and among those that felt that security was improving or deteriorating. In many villages, Syrian refugees reported feeling safe and felt that local residents had helped them. Syrian refugees in these villages seldom reported problems with local residents, but instead highlighted concerns related to restricted movement, curfews, registration, checkpoints, and fighting along the border. In focus group discussions with Lebanese populations, blame for crime and other negative social trends was generally assigned to Syrians, but just as troubling for social cohesion may be a tendency to assign culpability to other Lebanese groups.

# Lebanon - Akkar Governorate

## Lebanese Perceptions of Community Safety - April 2014

For Humanitarian Use Only  
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## Spill-over Effects from the Conflict in Syria

For a number of communities in Akkar, the border and fighting just beyond it has presented unique security challenges, and the conflict in Syria has at times spilled over into Lebanon, particularly in regions close to the border. In this assessment, 23% of key informants (60) reported that their village has been the target of shelling from Syria. Many Lebanese and Syrian focus group discussions reported increased feelings of security, attributing them to a reduction of problems along the border.

Shared historical, cultural, and political ties between Syria and Lebanon may mitigate or exacerbate tensions. According to the International Crisis Group, memories of the past and stereotypes about Syrians as poor, uneducated, menial workers ultimately “could place refugees in a precarious situation.”<sup>46</sup> On the other hand, forms of solidarity based on mutual support or opposition to political figures in Syria has helped reinforce cohesion and mitigated negative perceptions of Syrians.<sup>47</sup> Accordingly, no key informants cited past experiences with Syrians as a cause of tensions; however, participants in one focus group discussion attributed negative views about Syrian populations to the past history.

Instead, present concerns may be much more salient. Focus group participants in villages that straddle sectarian boundaries within Akkar reported concerns that the presence of refugees may throw off local balances between villages. Despite this, only two key informants reported that the conflict in Syria had led to an increase in protests. Despite limited reports of rises in political disputes resulting from the crisis, focus group discussions indicated that Lebanese residents may be concerned that the political activity of some Syrian refugees places their communities in a vulnerable position.

## LIVELIHOODS

The crisis may also place refugees and vulnerable Lebanese in direct competition for scarce livelihoods opportunities. According to the most recent Regional Response Plan, 86% of refugees live in communities where approximately two-thirds of vulnerable Lebanese (66%) also reside.<sup>48</sup> Patterns of settlement in which refugees are drawn disproportionately to poorer communities have increased competition for low-skill labour and decreased salaries amidst a context in which costs of living for Lebanese populations are also rising. While the implications for vulnerable Lebanese are clearly negative, this also has negative implications for refugees, who experience a lower scope for self-reliance themselves.<sup>49</sup>

Supporting livelihoods is also a critical element in reinforcing social cohesion and managing tensions. A recent assessment by Mercy Corps has shown, Lebanese are much more likely to have a negative perception of Syrian refugees if they expect their own wellbeing to get worse both in the short and long-term.<sup>50</sup> Support for livelihoods is a key element of social cohesion and community support programming because economic vulnerability is a main determinant in propensity towards violence.<sup>51</sup>

Before the crisis, about 30% of the Lebanese people already lived on less than 4 USD a day, and economic hardship has affected vulnerable refugees and Lebanese alike. Many Lebanese households have coped by taking on debt, reducing savings, or cutting back on essential items.<sup>52</sup> In addition to being affected by low or strained service provision, areas that host the largest number of refugees have also been disproportionately affected by inflation, competition for jobs, and the curtailment of relatively lucrative activities dependent on the border, including smuggling.<sup>53</sup>

Needs related to livelihoods in Akkar may be particularly urgent, given the Governorate’s historically low levels of economic and human development. Akkar has long had the highest rates of poverty in Lebanon, with income levels far lower than the national average.<sup>54</sup> Demographic trends may also place Akkari families in a more precarious position than ones elsewhere in Lebanon. Households have an average of four children, versus 2.6 for the country as a whole, and in some villages, families have an average of eight children or more.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> International Crisis Group, Op. cit., p. 11

<sup>47</sup> Carthage Centre for Research and Information, Op. cit., p.14

<sup>48</sup> Syria Regional Response Plan 6, Op.cit., p. 75

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., Op cit. p. 14

<sup>50</sup> Mercy Corps: Things Fall Apart (Portland 2013)

[http://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/MC%20Lebanon%20LivelihoodConflict\\_Assesment\\_%20Full%20Report%200913.pdf](http://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/MC%20Lebanon%20LivelihoodConflict_Assesment_%20Full%20Report%200913.pdf) 2

<sup>51</sup> Multi Sector Needs Assessment, Op. cit., p. 65.

<sup>52</sup> International Rescue Committee, Reaching the Breaking Point (2013) <http://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/resource-file/Lebanon%20Policy%20Paper.%20Final%20-%20June%202013.pdf> p. 4.

<sup>53</sup> International Crisis Group, Too Close for Comfort (Brussels 2013)

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/Iraq%20Syria%20Lebanon/Lebanon/141-too-close-for-comfort-syrians-in-lebanon.pdf> p. 9-10.

<sup>54</sup> Association Mada, Forgotten Akkar: Socioeconomic Reality of the Akkar Region, Op. cit., p.13.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

With a population that is younger than the rest of Lebanon's, Akkar has had the lowest percentage of residents eligible to enter the workforce (ages 15-64).<sup>56</sup> A relatively small workforce-aged population overlaps with relatively low participation in the labour market, particularly among women. In 2008, Akkar's workforce participation rate was 26%, compared with a national average of 34%, mainly due to low female participation. Female workforce participation stood at only 5%, in comparison with a national average of 15%. Large numbers of youth, combined with low numbers of female workers, contributes to a high labour dependency rate. This stood at 87% in 2008, versus a national average of 57%, meaning that workers in Akkar have to support a larger than average number of dependents.<sup>57</sup>

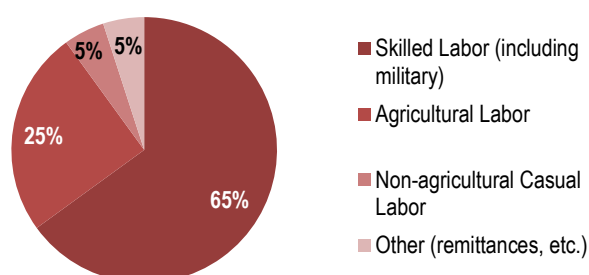
This assessment examined trends related to employment, prices of goods and services, and housing, and found that while all areas have been adversely affected by the crisis, employment is the most urgent need, with the vast majority of key informants reporting increases in joblessness in their villages. These findings were supported by focus group discussions with Lebanese and Syrian populations, who perceive competition for low wage positions from refugees, as well as Syrian focus group participants, who recognize the adverse effect that such perceptions have on relationships. For both, creating work opportunities was a priority, particularly in areas that build on Akkar's agriculture-based economy.

## Employment and Income Generating Opportunities

Before the crisis, the Lebanese job market was characterized by high unemployment combined with insufficient numbers of high quality and high productivity jobs.<sup>58</sup> According to the World Bank, the influx of refugees stands to boost the labour supply by 30-50%, contributing to 10% increases in both unemployment and work in the informal sector countrywide.<sup>59</sup> It adds that these effects will be likely be felt disproportionately amongst women, youth, and unskilled workers.<sup>60</sup> These groups may be among the most vulnerable and other assessments have also shown that job opportunities available to women and youth – in agriculture, construction, and services – may be very limited.<sup>61</sup> In addition to fewer opportunities for work, pay may also be lower. An assessment by the International Rescue Committee found that for agricultural workers, wages decreased by almost 50% during the first two years of the crisis.<sup>62</sup> While refugees and vulnerable Lebanese both urgently need jobs to meet their basic needs, promoting job-creation for refugees may be sensitive due to the potential of fuelling of further tensions.

In this assessment, 65% of key informants reported that "skilled labour" was the predominant source of income for their village, followed by 25% who reported that agricultural labour was their village's main source of income generation. "Non-agricultural casual labour" was the main income source in another 5%, while other sources of income, including remittances, were the main income source in another 5%. It is worth noting that for purposes of this assessment, military service was classified as "skilled labour" and that it may account for a large volume of responses. A relatively high proportion of Akkaris, particularly males, are employed by the military. According to an assessment by Adel Nord, approximately 14% of the labour force in Akkar is enlisted in or employed by the Lebanese army, which provides comparatively high wages for the region. In some clusters of villages, the proportion of male heads of household employed by the military may reach as high as 50-70%.<sup>63</sup>

Figure 5: Top income sources by village



<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>58</sup> World Bank., Op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>59</sup> Syria Regional Response Plan 6, Op. cit., p. 82.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., pp. 77-78.

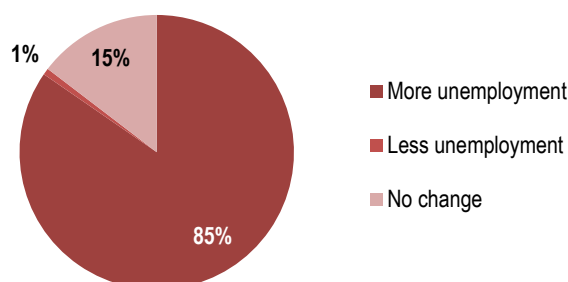
<sup>62</sup> International Rescue Committee, Op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>63</sup> Adel Nord., Op. cit., p. 85.

In Akkar, labour market pressures may be tempered due to low refugee participation in the workforce. Assessments of livelihoods indicate that refugee populations are characterized by high unemployment levels; across Lebanon, around 47% report being economically active, however, these numbers are lowest in Akkar.<sup>64</sup>

In this assessment, key informants reported increases in unemployment in 85% of villages (220) and no change in approximately 15% (38) of villages. Only two villages reported less unemployment now than three years prior. Villages that actually hosted refugees were slightly more likely to report increases in unemployment; in these, 90% of key informants (177) reported a rise in unemployment. The fact that 38% of villages (25) that did not report hosting refugees also reported increases in unemployment may indicate that some pressures associated with labour competition extend beyond village boundaries.

Figure 6: Changes in employment by village



The vast majority of Lebanese and Syrian focus groups named unemployment as the main economic concern in their village. When focus group participants were asked to describe sources of tension or why some groups did not feel welcome, factors related to competition for jobs were the most frequently cited reasons, Lebanese focus group participants complaints centred on Syrian refugees stealing jobs while refugees' ability to work for less money or while receiving benefits were closely related secondary complaints. Notably, there was a tendency among Lebanese focus group participants to blame Syrian workers rather than employers for job losses.

For their part, Syrian focus group participants were generally aware of the way Lebanese residents viewed their effect on employment opportunities. But while Lebanese focus group discussions cited the problems related to labour competition and displacement – Syrian refugees taking Lebanese workers' jobs – a number of Syrian focus groups highlighted their own problems with unemployment as well as exploitation, namely that refugees are recruited for difficult or risky jobs and are then underpaid, if paid at all.

Similarly, when asked how their village's economic situation could be improved, most Lebanese and Syrian focus groups cited the need for additional job opportunities, particularly in agriculture. Most Lebanese focus groups cited opportunities that would employ residents while developing markets for farm goods; dairies, processing plants for fruits and vegetables, and presses for olive oil were cited most frequently. Other Lebanese focus groups mentioned job opportunities that would specifically target youth or women. Syrian focus groups also cited work opportunities related to agriculture but emphasized opportunities to farm and sell the produce they harvest at vegetable stands and shops. Industrial work opportunities as well as developing markets for women to sell handicrafts were also mentioned as possible solutions to unemployment in focus group discussions with Syrian and Lebanese populations alike.

## Goods and Services

Trade with Syria has played a significant role in Lebanon's economy, with the conflict adversely affecting both import and export markets. A decrease in trade, caused by border closures has resulted in fewer opportunities for Lebanese businesses and more expensive goods for consumers.<sup>65</sup> In an August 2013 assessment, the World Bank estimated that Lebanon's export income may have decreased by 2.8 billion USD and that savings from imports forgone may have cost consumers and firms 1.7 billion USD.<sup>66</sup> Rising prices may also be the result of changes in markets for goods and services brought on by reduced trade ties to Syria in the face of security concerns.

<sup>64</sup> International Labour Organization, Assessment of the Impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon and Their Employment Profile (Beirut, 2013) [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms\\_240134.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_240134.pdf) 9.

<sup>65</sup> World Bank, Op. cit., p. 87.

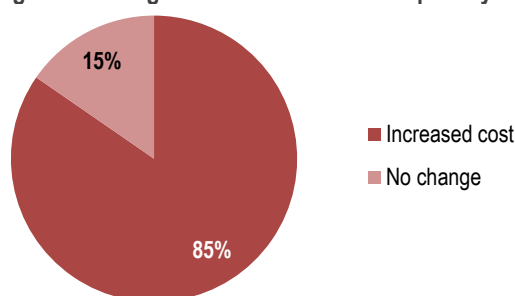
<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

Economic linkages with Syrian cities have been particularly strong among Lebanese populations in Sahel, Wadi Khaled, and Akroum, with Akkaris relying on them as export markets as well as for shopping and healthcare opportunities.<sup>67</sup> With formal industry less developed along Lebanon's northern and eastern border regions, informal and often illicit trade have played an important role in local economies and may have also been severely affected by closed border crossings and security risks associated with cross-border trade.

According to the World Bank, Lebanon's border regions are marked by a number of pockets of poverty where local populations survive "predominantly on cross-border smuggling of merchandise, people and illicit goods."<sup>68</sup> In Akkar, smuggling has been a mainstay of economies in border communities with a wide variety of items such as diesel, gas, cigarettes, household and food items coming from Syria into Lebanon, and construction materials, cement, pebble stone, and iron smuggled out. Conflict has disrupted illicit cross-border trade in the past, with the 2006 war with Israel and the 2007 Nahr al-Bared conflict halting illicit trade in the face of intensified border patrols.<sup>69</sup> So while the kinds of disruptions seen now have occurred before, their scale sustained nature now may pose additional challenges now.

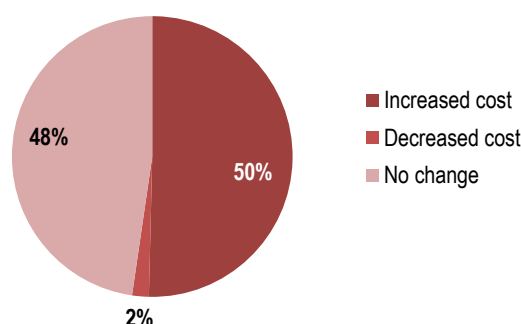
In this assessment, a majority of key informants reported not only a rise in unemployment but an increase in the cost of living, as measured by increases in the cost of goods and services. Prices in some locations may have risen because of aid programmes or the presence of aid workers. Regarding the price of food staples, 85% of key respondents (220) reported an increase in prices, while only 15% of villages (40) did not. Figures reported in all communities mirrored ones hosting Syrians, suggesting that increases in prices or inflation may be evenly distributed across villages in the Governorate as a whole.

**Figure 7: Changes in the cost of food staples by village**



Price increases related to services were less common. Approximately 50% of key informants (131) noted increases in the cost of services, 48% (124) reported no changes, and only 2% of villages (5) reported decreases in prices. Approximately the same proportion of key respondents in villages hosting Syrians reporting increases in the cost of services.

**Figure 8: Changes in the cost of services by village**



Focus group discussions with Lebanese and Syrians prioritized the role of jobs in supporting livelihoods, although Syrian groups in particular focused on the high cost of living associated with life in Lebanon. Concerns about high prices were less pronounced in Lebanese focus group discussions, however, and in several cases, participants alluded to the positive effects of having a large number of new consumers living in the community. For example, in one focus group held with Lebanese youth, participants emphasized the partially beneficial effects of the crisis on the local economy, noting that stores are able to sell more products and that an increase in the number of people renting accommodations had also benefited the local economy. The same group complained, however, that they had not benefited from these developments themselves and that

<sup>67</sup> Adel Nord, Op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>68</sup> World Bank, Op. cit., p. 117.

<sup>69</sup> Association Mada., Op. cit., p. 18.

youth in the village faced challenges in finding a job and establishing a family. While key informants and focus group discussions have highlighted the negative effects of the crisis, this assessment and others have not fully probed tensions resulting from the crisis between vulnerable Lebanese populations who have been adversely affected and the middle and upper-income segments of the population who have benefitted.

## Housing Markets

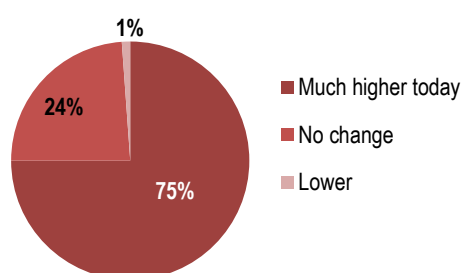
Housing prices have increased in many parts of Lebanon as a result of the crisis, posing particular challenges for poorer Lebanese households.<sup>70</sup> At the same time, pressures on the housing market have been geographically uneven, with Northern Lebanon (including Akkar) and Beka'a affected more than the country as a whole.<sup>71</sup> In Akkar in particular, rising rent costs have affected an already inadequate housing stock characterized by overcrowding. According to a 2008 report by Association Mada, 58% of households in Akkar were overcrowded, versus 34% in Lebanon overall.<sup>72</sup> In Akkar, the number of Syrian refugees living in IS, collective shelters, and garage settlements is a testament to the shortage of vacancies on the lower end of the housing market.

This assessment found that available housing is – or is at least perceived to be – a key driver of refugees' decisions regarding where to settle in Akkar. In this assessment, 41% of key informants in villages hosting refugees felt that housing was the dominant consideration driving refugee settlement patterns. In the 195 villages reporting to host refugees, approximately 70% (137), reported independently owned apartments or houses as the chief accommodation context for Syrian refugees residing in their village.

According to key informant interviews, 175 villages throughout Akkar currently have rental units. The average price key informants listed for a lower quality single-family house or apartment was 161 USD, while on average, a high quality rental cost 346 USD. Notably, these results were largely consistent across settings that hosted refugees. Of the 175 villages where rental units are available, 158 actually host Syrian refugees. In these villages, the average price reported for a lower quality unit was 159 USD, while a higher quality rental was estimated to cost 347 USD.

Amongst villages with rental accommodations, key informants in 75% (132) reported much higher rent prices, while 23% (37) report no change in rent since the start of the crisis. Approximately 1% (2) reported lower rent prices. Again, the percentage of key informants who reported was largely consistent across settings, including in villages that host refugees and villages where the primary accommodation context for refugees was listed as houses and apartments or IS.

Figure 9: Trends in rent prices across villages



Despite the importance of housing to livelihoods, rent costs were seldom mentioned as primary concern in Lebanese or Syrian focus groups. Most discussions about livelihoods and economic challenges focused on lack of work opportunities, which likely serve as an obstacle to obtaining better housing.

Some Syrian focus groups mentioned the cost of housing or the possibility of being evicted as a concern. Refugee evictions, both from apartments and from parcels of land hosting IS may reflect growing tensions between refugee and host communities in some areas.<sup>73</sup> Of the 51 villages reporting IS, only five reported that settlements had been forced to relocate. Of the 195 villages that reported hosting refugees, key informants in 14% (28) reported that Syrian families had been evicted or forced to relocate from their homes.

<sup>70</sup> World Bank, Op. cit., p.127.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 166.

<sup>72</sup> Association Mada., Op. cit., 11.

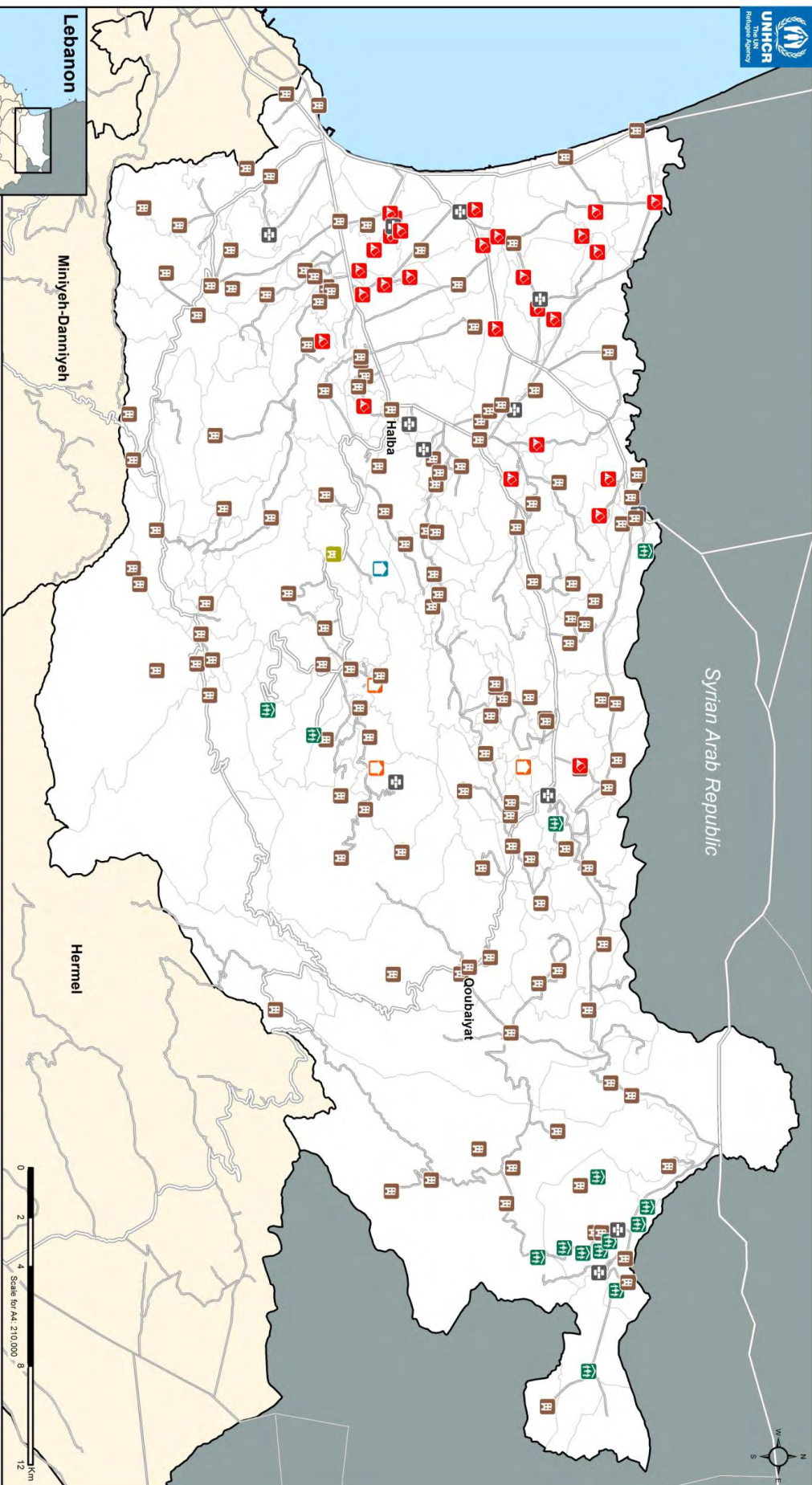
<sup>73</sup> Syria Regional Response Plan 6, Lebanon (2013) <http://www.data.unhcr.org/syria-rp6/country.php?id=122> 76-77.









# Lebanon - Akkar Governorate

## Primary Accommodation of Syrian Refugees by Village - April 2014

For Humanitarian Use Only  
Production date : 20 May 2014



### Top Accommodation\* of Syrian Refugees:

-  House/Apartment
-  Tent
-  Hosted (Rent Free)
-  Collective Center
-  Collective Shelter
-  Unfinished shelter or building

\* Key informants were asked: What is the top accommodation context for Syrian refugees in your community?

-  Major Road
-  Other Road
-  Cadastral Boundary

Data Sources:  
- Administrative boundaries: GADM  
- Data on Villages: REACH Community Profiling  
Coordinate System: WGS84  
File: LBN\_Akkar\_VillageToSyrianRef\_20140520\_A4L  
Contact: reach\_mapping@impact-initiatives.org  
Note: Data designations and boundaries contained on this map are not warranted to be error-free and do not imply acceptance by the REACH partners, associated donors mentioned on this map.

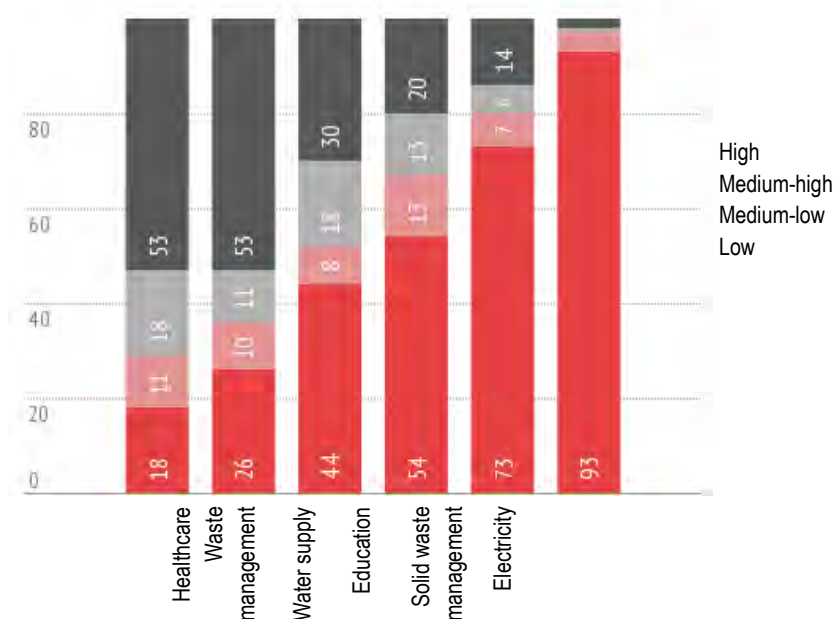
## PUBLIC SERVICES

The provision of public services may vary widely by locality, and in many locations, the central government, sub-national governments, and municipalities have little to do with the delivery of public services such as trash collection, electricity, or water. In the absence of the state and other government actors, contractors, local associations, and private citizens have taken on an outsized role; service delivery may not be consistent across villages or even within them. Still, access to these services is important for all Akkaris and the most vulnerable segments of the population in particular. However, challenges associated with stabilising these sectors may be enormous. According to the most recent Multi Sector Needs Assessment, “Across all key public services, the surge in demand is currently being partly met through a decline in both the access to and the quality of public service delivery” and that an investment of 2.5 billion USD would be required to restore services to their previous levels.<sup>74</sup> As indicated in the most recent Regional Response Plan, lower income families have as borne the greatest burdens stemming from over-stretched public services.<sup>75</sup> Hence, access to services may be a key driver of tension as refugees and vulnerable Lebanese struggle to access services such as education and healthcare, which in the face of increased demand, may also be declining in quality.

Akkar has historically lagged behind the rest of Lebanon in key areas of development, with indicators associated with service provision generally significantly lower than in the rest of the country. Utilizing secondary research, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions, REACH sought to understand how these pre-existing vulnerabilities may be exacerbated by the current crisis. During the key informant stage of the assessment, respondents were asked a series of questions about the provision of public services in their village. The questions sought to measure levels of access, the effects of the crisis, and areas of greatest concern. Six key public services were included in the questionnaire: water supplies, wastewater management, electricity, and solid waste management, education, and healthcare. A seventh category, “administrative services” was added to capture the bureaucratic and legal functions performed by local governments. Subsequent focus group discussions provided a venue for members of host and refugee communities to discuss the impact of the crisis and propose solutions that would address current challenges.

To help establish a baseline for access to services, key informants were asked to estimate the percentage of their village's population that able to access certain services. Services with “high” access were ones which were available to 76-100% of residents; followed by “medium high” access, 51-75%; “medium low” access, 26-50%; and “low” access, 0-25%. Results indicated that in a vast majority of villages, key respondents felt that levels of access to electricity and solid waste management are relatively high in most settings. By contrast, healthcare was the service with the lowest level of accessibility, with 53% of key informants reporting low levels of access for residents of their village.

Figure 10: Villages' levels of access to services and utilities



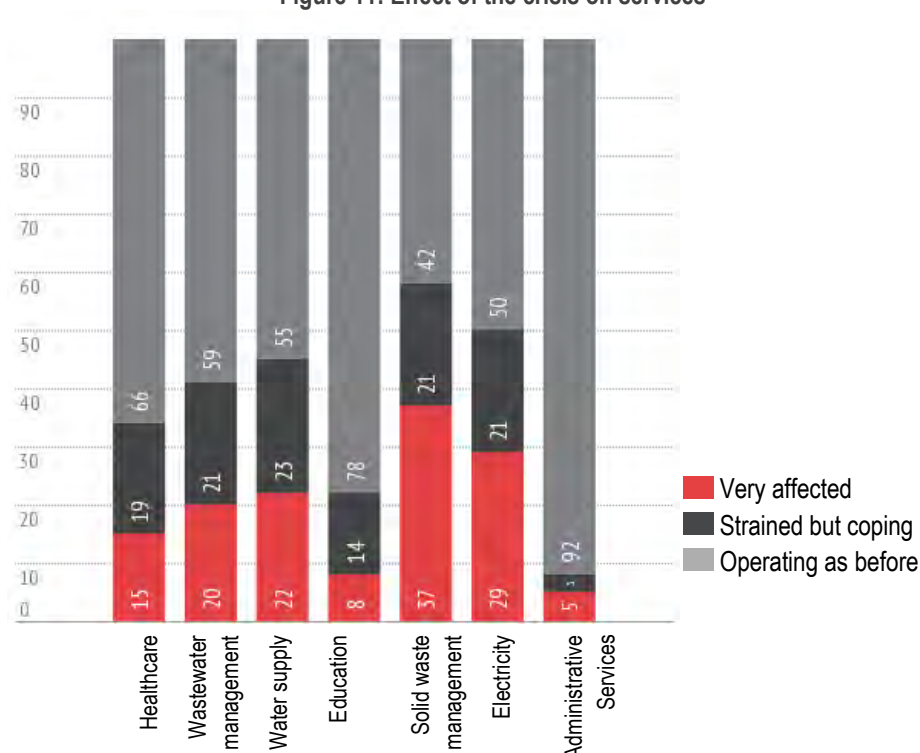
<sup>74</sup> Multi Sector Needs Assessment, Op. Cit., p. 11.

<sup>75</sup> Syria Regional Response Plan 6, Op. Cit., p. 14.

Key informants were also asked about how the crisis has affected individual services. Respondents could select among several options to describe the impact of the crisis on services, including “operating as before,” “strained but coping” or “very affected.” While electricity and solid waste management were the two services for which key respondents reported the highest levels of access, they were also the two that key informants reported to be under the greatest strain.

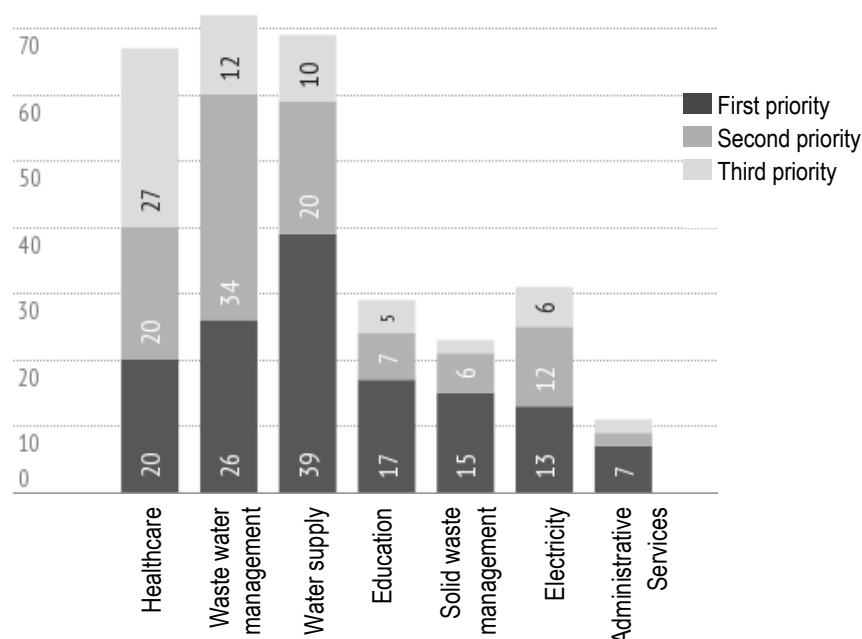
Approximately 37% of key respondents reported solid waste management to be very affected in some or all areas, and only 42% described it as operating as before. Similarly, electricity, a service to which key informants reported wide access was described as “very affected” as a result of the crisis, with only 50% of respondents describing it as operating as before. Similarly, services with low reported levels of access – wastewater management and health in particular – were considered less affected. Only 21% of key informants described water supplies as being “very affected” and 20% described wastewater management systems as being very affected. Conversely, small majorities of key informants described both services as operating as before, with 55% and 59% for water supplies and wastewater, respectively.

Figure 11: Effect of the crisis on services



To gain a better sense of communities' needs and priorities, key informants were asked list and rank the three services that were their village's greatest concern over the next 3-6 months. Water supply, wastewater management, and healthcare were most frequently cited, followed more distantly by electricity, education, solid waste management, and administrative services. Asked to rate their village's top concern, 39% of key informants (102) listed water supply, followed by wastewater in 22% (66) of cases, and healthcare in 20% (51). If not named as villages' main concern, many key informants listed water supply, wastewater, or health services as their second or third concern. By contrast, key informants listed electricity, education, solid waste management, and administrative services with significantly less frequency, but these areas still registered as concerns in a significant number of villages.

**Figure 12: Villages' top concerns according to key informants**



Key informants' responses about their village's greatest concerns corresponded more closely with levels of access to services than with services they perceived to be most affected by the crisis. This strongly suggests that communities' primary concerns are ones which predated the current crisis. Key informants listed healthcare, wastewater management, and water supplies as services with the lowest levels of access as well as the services they considered to be their community's greatest concerns. By contrast, services most affected by the crisis – solid waste management and electricity – ranked far lower among top concerns.

**Table 2: Summary of key informant responses regarding service provision**

Lowest levels of access	Most affected by the crisis	Areas of greatest concern
Healthcare Wastewater management Water supply	Solid waste management Electricity Water supply	Water supply Wastewater management Healthcare

The findings suggest that some services – healthcare, wastewater management, and water supply, in particular – may have posed longer-term challenges to host communities, while services such as solid waste management and electricity may have emerged as challenges more recently. Accordingly, these findings suggest the need in some communities for a two-tiered approach that seeks to address long-term structural deficiencies in some areas, while providing stopgap measures in ones where the need for support is most urgent. Focus group discussions reflect these findings, with participants suggesting a range of long-term and short-term solutions for communities' needs. The table below outlines some of the needs community members expressed during focus group discussions:

**Table 23: Community needs from focus group discussions**

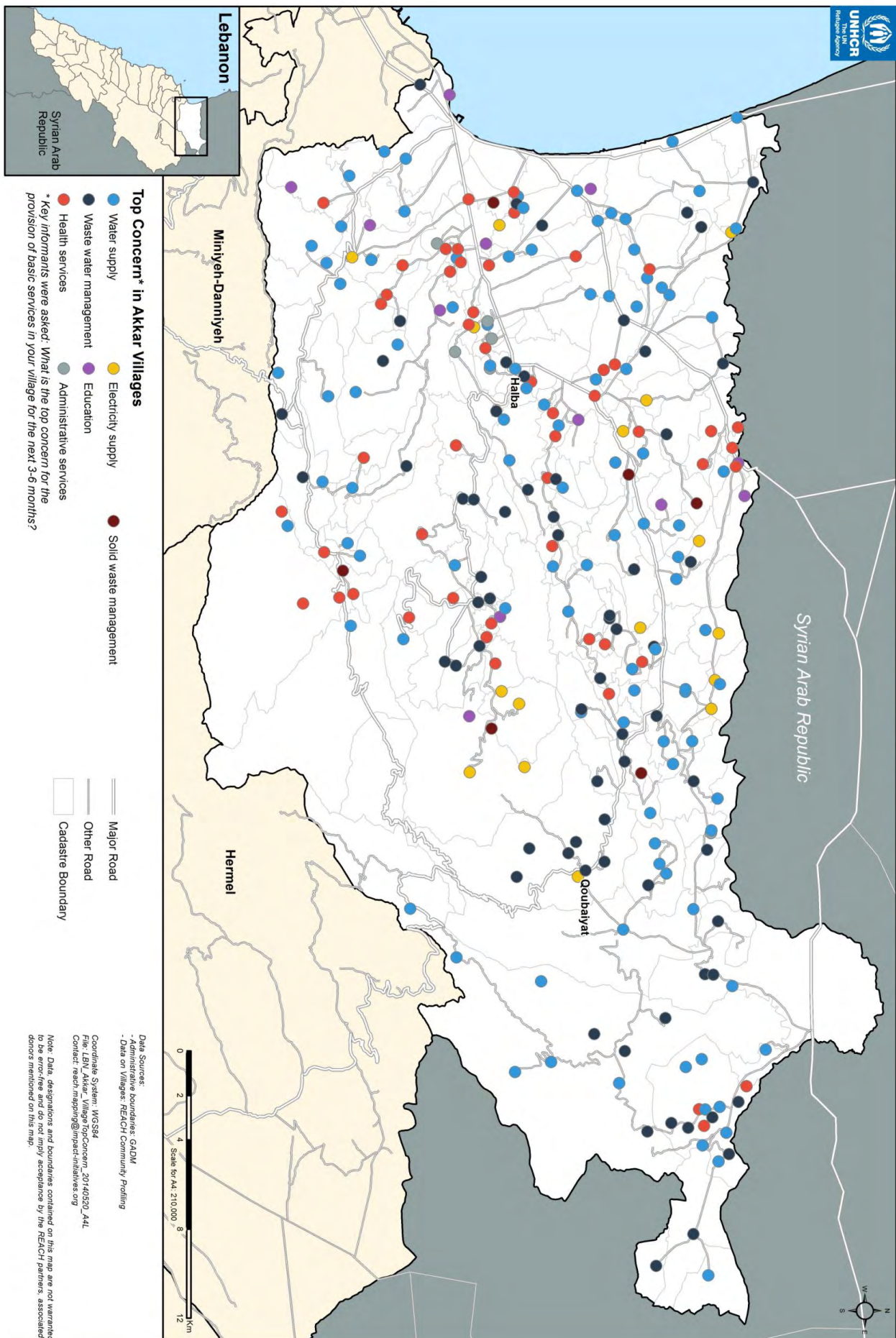
Long-term needs	Short-term needs
Water networks Dams and reservoirs Sewage treatment/reclamation facilities Solar and wind power Recycling plants Clinics and hospitals Secondary and tertiary education facilities	Water trucking Generators Septic-tank services Trash containers Garbage trucks Mobile clinics



# Lebanon - Akkar Governorate

## Communities' Top Concern for Provision of Basic Services for the Next 3 to 6 Months - April 2014

For Humanitarian Use Only  
Production date : 20 May 2014



Drawing on findings from secondary search, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions, the following sections examine in greater depth strains that have been placed on individual public services, and how competition for increasingly scarce access has affected social cohesion. Results from key informant interviews are cover access, impact of the crisis, and salience of concern, with sector-specific indicators included for some services. Results suggest that some services are likely to be less affected by the presence of refugees, while others, such as healthcare and education, are services that are shared amongst several villages. Where relevant, Akkar-wide results are disaggregated to highlight differences based on local governance and refugee accommodation context.

## Water Supplies

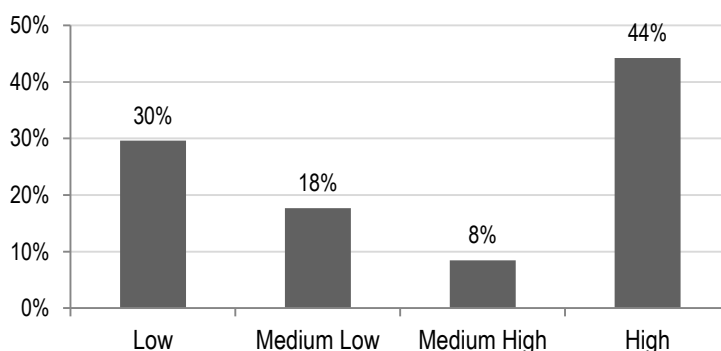
Lebanon's water sector has lagged behind other areas of national economic development since the end of the Civil War in terms of availability and quality.<sup>76</sup> According to an assessment by the World Bank, 79% of the country's population had access to potable water before the Syrian refugee crisis.<sup>77</sup> Nationally, slightly more than half (54%) of households without water connections lacked service because there was no network available in their areas.<sup>78</sup> Areas without water access may be regionally concentrated; according to the World Bank, villages without connections to water supply are most common in Lebanon's North and Beka'a regions. Because these regions hold the highest concentration of refugees, they also stand to be most impacted by strains and shortages.<sup>79</sup>

Before the crisis, the Akkar ranked last in terms of access to public water supplies with only 54% of households connected to networks, versus a national average of 86%. Approximately 21% of the houses in Akkar had no running water, depending instead on private suppliers or wells, which further exhausted water tables and supplies.<sup>80</sup> In areas of Akkar where public water supplies were readily available, many households continued to rely on bottled water for drinking or on individual storage tanks, reflecting at the very least, a level of dissatisfaction with public provision.<sup>81</sup> An aversion to using public water supplies may also have to do with longstanding health concerns about quality and safety from before the crisis, as local drinking water supplies contaminated with sewage have been known to contribute to high levels of typhoid.<sup>82</sup>

In addition to a lack of access, shortages have been regular occurrences in regions near the Syrian border such as Akkar.<sup>83</sup> In areas with water access, low quality and unreliable water supplies may be hampered by an outdated and decaying infrastructure. Due to the current crisis, networks are struggling to cope with rising demand and costs instead of undergoing necessary repair and expansion.<sup>84</sup>

In this assessment, key informant interviews indicated that access to water supplies may still be a problem in most villages in Akkar. This assessment found that 53% of key informants (137) reported high or medium high access to water supplies, while 47% (123) reported levels of access considered to be high or medium high.

Figure 13: Access to water supplies



<sup>76</sup> World Bank, Op. cit., 110.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 109.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Association Mada, *Forgotten Akkar: Socioeconomic Reality of the Akkar Region*. (Beirut 2008)

[http://www.policylebanon.org/Modules/Ressources/Ressources/UploadFile/4261\\_02.03.YYMADA\\_Forgotten\\_Akkar\\_SocioEconomicReality\\_Jan08.pdf](http://www.policylebanon.org/Modules/Ressources/Ressources/UploadFile/4261_02.03.YYMADA_Forgotten_Akkar_SocioEconomicReality_Jan08.pdf) p.6.

<sup>81</sup> World Bank, Op. cit., 110.

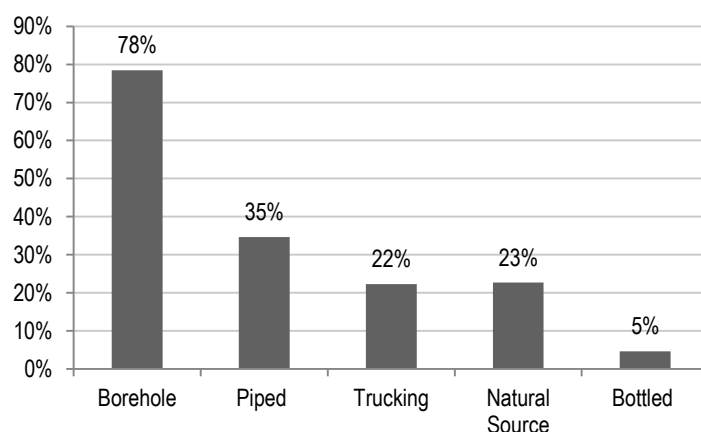
<sup>82</sup> Association Mada. Op. cit., 9.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 117.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 165.

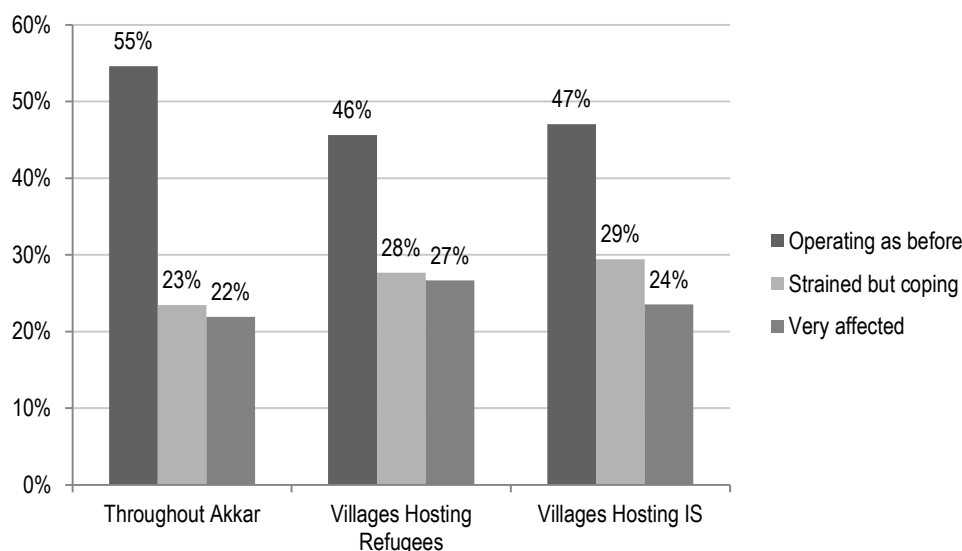
Reliance on multiple water sources has been a common strategy to meet demand, with 31% of key respondents (81) reporting that residents of their village rely on more than one water source. Approximately 78% (204) of villages have some type of borehole system; 35% (90) have piped systems; 22% (58) rely on some form of water trucking; 23% of villages (59) report other natural sources, such as springs. About 5% of villages (12) reported relying on bottled water, while 1% (3) villages reported no system at all. Key informants in 83% of villages (216) considered water supplies to be potable, while 17% (44) reported water that is not potable.

**Figure 14: Water Source by Type**



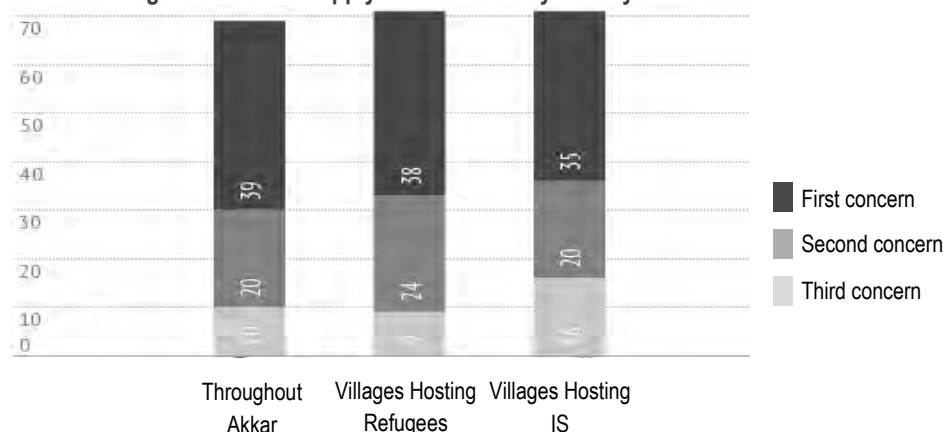
Approximately 55% (142) of key informants said that their villages' water supply systems were operating as they were before the crisis, but 46% (118) indicated that the crisis had placed burdens on supply systems. Of these, 23% (61) considered the water supply system to be strained but coping and 22% (57) considered their village to have water systems that were very affected. Villages with refugee populations reported that water supplies were more affected than in villages throughout Akkar as a whole, but the presence of IS did not appear to have a significant effect. In fact, a slightly smaller percentage of key informants from villages hosting IS reported water supplies to be very affected by the crisis than ones hosting refugees in all accommodation contexts overall. This may have to do with the fact that inhabitants of IS may be more likely to access water from sources other than the main network.

**Figure 15: Strain on Water Supply**



Despite the fact that a majority of key informants indicated that water supplies were relatively unaffected by the crisis, key informants reported it as one of their villages' main concerns. Approximately 70% of key informants (180) named water supplies as one of their villages' top three concerns: 39% (102) reported it as a first concern; 20% as a second concern, and 10% (25) as a third concern. The proportion of villages with key informants reporting water as a top concern was relatively constant regardless of whether villages hosted refugees.

Figure 16: Water Supply as a Community Priority



In focus group discussions, Lebanese participants frequently expressed dissatisfaction with water supplies, citing complaints about water pressure, quality, and coverage. In the vast majority of discussions, Lebanese participants did not attribute difficulties in obtaining water to the current crisis or the refugee populations; instead, they were likely to highlight concerns stemming from recent environmental trends, including low rainfall and snowfall in the previous months.

As results of the key informant interviews suggest, the manner in which villages in Akkar access water differs greatly, and where networks are available, they are often old and in need of repair. Lebanese participants in two focus groups reported having networks that were built by international donors but that they were not designed to handle needs, either before or after the crisis. Two other focus groups reported having networks but that they delivered contaminated water, necessitating the use of trucked or bottled water. In a focus group discussion held in the Sahel region, Lebanese residents reported that saltwater had seeped into the municipal water supply. Communities in the more mountainous southern regions of Akkar, where water supplies are more abundant, may also face challenges in accessing water supplies because they do not have the infrastructure to take advantage of them. Focus group discussions in these areas pointed out a need for dams, reservoirs, and better water networks. While Lebanese focus groups tended to highlight natural and structural impediments to accessing water, some living in communities hosting IS were particularly concerned with the possibility of contamination from untreated sewage.

Water conservation and more sustainable approaches to water management were a theme in Lebanese focus groups, with discussions in some villages emphasizing the need to address wastewater management and water supply simultaneously. In these focus groups, there was often a strong interest in finding ways to improve wastewater management that extended beyond simply ensuring that water supplies are protected from sewage and other pollutants. At the same time, Lebanese focus group participants frequently expressed a strong interest in finding ways recycle effluent so it could be used to meet villages' water needs, particularly for agriculture.

Focus group discussions held with Syrians also highlighted concerns about water supplies, but they varied according to housing context. In villages where refugees lived in houses, apartments, or garage settlements, difficulties focus group participants reported in obtaining water mirrored those of host populations. In villages where refugees lived in IS, participants reported having to spend significant amounts of time and money procuring water supplies through various means. At the same time, by relying on water trucking, natural sources and bottled water, they may be insulated from supply issues affecting the host community. Similarly, impact of IS host communities may be muted due to the fact that many IS may not be connected to water networks.

## Wastewater Management

Many Akkari communities face challenges related to accessing water supplies that may be closely intertwined with wastewater management. The presence of organized wastewater management systems – sewage networks, septic tank services, and treatment facilities – may be highly uneven throughout Akkar; however, this is often the case with Lebanon as a whole. According to the World Bank, throughout Lebanon “most municipalities and villages are not served neither by a



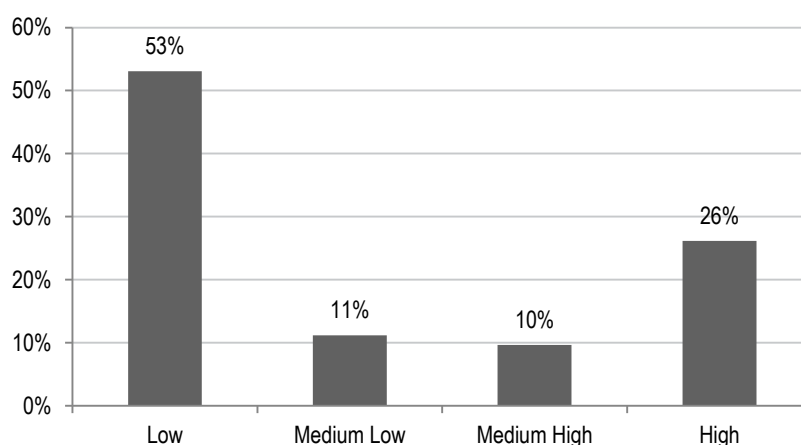
sewerage system nor wastewater treatment facilities.”<sup>85</sup> Deficient wastewater treatment services and infrastructure has led to a system of incomplete and improvised systems, particularly in poorer and rural areas.<sup>86</sup> As with other areas of service provision and infrastructure, these deficiencies have historically been more acute in Akkar. Prior to the crisis, Akkar ranked second to last among districts in Lebanon in terms of residential connections to public sewage networks with only 25% of houses connected to a public sewage system, compared with a national average of 60%. Approximately 64% of villages in Akkar (versus a national average of 37%) relied on pits and tanks, many of which leak and seep into the ground.<sup>87</sup> Villages with sewage systems often lack adequate means of treating wastewater, with sewage being dumped into valleys and rivers and roadside canals.<sup>88</sup> In other cases, villages may have old networks, networks that are incomplete, or treatment facilities that are no longer functioning.<sup>89</sup>

With sewerage networks and wastewater treatment facilities largely absent in many communities, households are often reliant on septic tanks. Growing populations have meant that septic tanks have needed to be emptied with increasing frequency; however, in many locations, this has not occurred. Similar to situations in villages without wastewater management networks, inadequate servicing of septic tanks may have effects on hygiene and public health. Failure to manage tanks properly can affect water quality of local wells and septic tank overflows may lead to outbreaks of mosquitoes and other vectors or diseases.<sup>90</sup>

In this assessment, key informants were asked to describe how wastewater management was handled in their village, particularly, whether it was unmanaged or coordinated by municipalities, unions, or NGOs. Because some villages may have a combination of arrangements, key informants could choose multiple options. It found that 66% of villages (171) reported largely unmanaged wastewater management systems. Approximately 37% (97) reported that the municipality or union coordinated some portion wastewater management, with only 1% (3) reporting that NGOs coordinated efforts.

Most villages also reported low levels of access to coordinated wastewater management and that where coverage exists, it is often low. Only 26% of villages (68) reported high levels of coordinated wastewater management coverage, but the majority, 53% (138), of villages reported low access.

**Figure 17: Levels of access to wastewater services**



At the same time, 59% of villages (153) considered wastewater management systems to be operating as they were before the crisis. Only 21% (54) considered services to be strained but coping, while 20% (53) considered them to be very affected. Key informants from villages hosting refugees or IS were more likely to report effects caused by the crisis on wastewater management. Whereas 59% of key informants reported that wastewater management systems were operating as they were before the crisis throughout Akkar as a whole, only 48% reported them to have stayed the same in communities hosting refugees and only 37% in communities hosting IS.

<sup>85</sup> World Bank, Op. cit., p.117.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

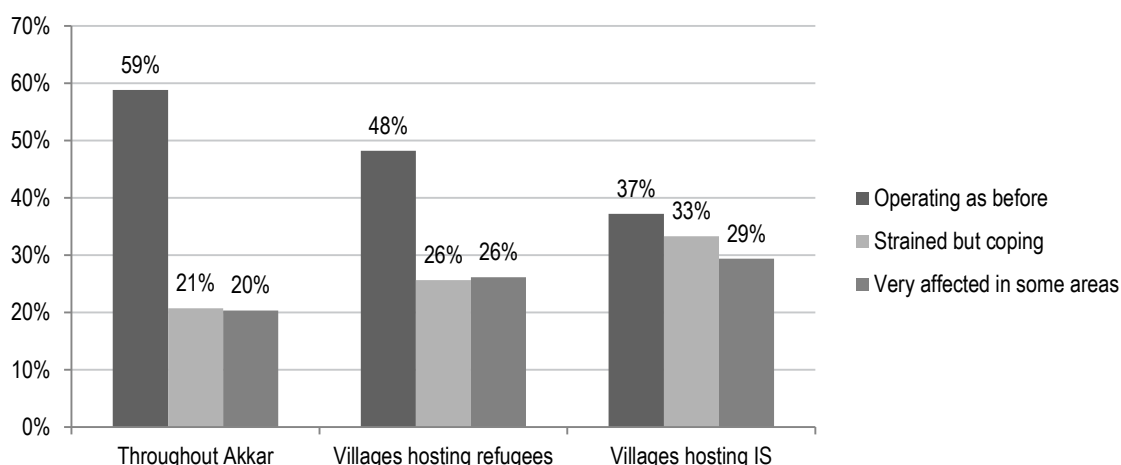
<sup>87</sup> Adel Nord, Op. cit., p. 17.

<sup>88</sup> Association Mada. Op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>89</sup> Adel Nord, Op. cit., pp. 17-18.

<sup>90</sup> World Bank, Op. cit., p.165.

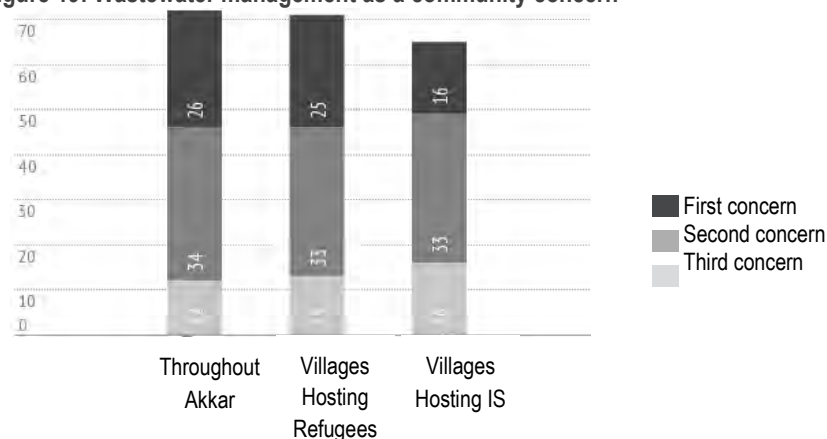
**Figure 18: Effects of the crisis on wastewater management services**



Despite the fact that most key informants considered wastewater management systems to be operating as they were before the crisis, the sector figured prominently in key informants' concerns for their villages. Approximately 72% of key informants (188) indicated that wastewater management was one of their village's top three concerns – the highest level for any service in this assessment. Wastewater management was the first concern in 25% (66) villages, the second concern in 34% (88), and the third concern in 12% (32).

The fact that majorities of key informants indicated that wastewater management systems were operating as before and that they were also among villages' top concerns suggests that wastewater management was a challenge for many communities before the crisis. At the same time, refugee populations' impact on wastewater management may vary greatly, depending on their accommodation context and on the infrastructure in place in host communities. In some villages hosting refugees, particularly those with IS, coordinated wastewater management for refugee households may be largely non-existent, while in villages where refugees are hosted in houses, there may be readily available access to main networks.

**Figure 19: Wastewater management as a community concern**



Focus group discussions highlighted the inadequacy of current wastewater management systems in a number of settings throughout Akkar. Where sewerage networks do exist, they may be little more than pipes or troughs that deposit wastewater away from villages untreated. Even in settings where systems are in place, the fact that networks that are often too limited in extent (generally covering houses in the centre of villages or along its main roads), leading to dependence on septic tanks and improvised solutions.

Septic tanks contain wastewater but they may be old or cleaned too infrequently to serve their purpose. In many cases, municipalities coordinate sewage removal when septic tanks are full, but such systems are under strain due to population growth or residents' inability to pay for tanks to be serviced. Focus groups held with Syrian refugees indicated that problems with septic tanks overflowing had been a cause of tensions in some locations. In many Lebanese and Syrian focus group discussions, there was a fear that sewage leaking from septic tanks could contaminate drinking water supplies. Lebanese participants often referenced other problems related to wastewater pollution, such as sewage networks and septic tanks overflowing onto roads, agricultural lands, or into rivers.

While there appears to be a strong interest in improving current systems, particularly through ways that alleviate environmental pressures, developing sustainable, long-term solutions for wastewater management has proven intractable in some communities. For example, a focus group in one village reported the existence of a sewage network, but indicated that it was closed because it would overflow and contaminate farmland in a nearby village. Residents were forced to rely on septic tanks, which were not emptied frequently enough and led to outbreaks of flies and insects.

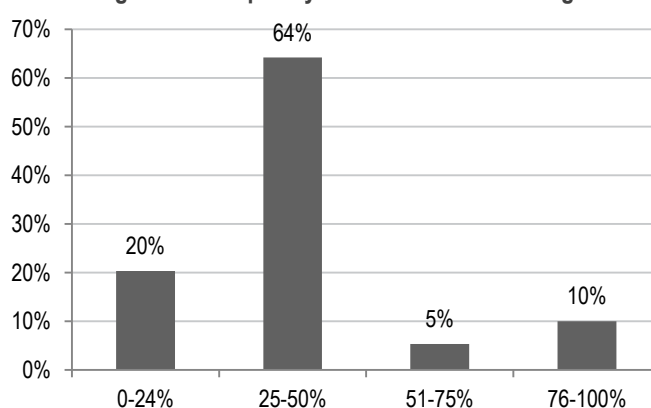
Wastewater management and water supply and access are closely related issues in many host communities; however, they may not be treated as such. For example, a focus group discussion with Lebanese residents of one village highlighted the existence of a new water network, but because the village had no wastewater network, residents felt that the potential benefits of the former were largely compromised. Along similar lines, Lebanese focus group participants expressed a strong interest in wastewater management solutions that would help address water supply issues, particularly through projects that would permit communities to reclaim wastewater for agricultural use. About half of Lebanese focus groups expressed an interest in installing plants that would allow their communities to recycle wastewater.

## Electricity

The Lebanese electricity grid system was unable to keep up with demand before the crisis, resulting in the need for rolling power cuts, regular reductions in supply, and the supplementary use of generators.<sup>91</sup> According to the World Bank, power outages and shortages have long been regular occurrences in peripheral regions of Lebanon such as Akkar.<sup>92</sup> Before the crisis, a majority of Akkari villages received their electricity from *Electricité du Liban*, with significant regional coverage gaps and a lack of service in some villages. Where available, electricity has been delivered by networks and infrastructure that is old and poorly maintained, leading to instabilities and interruptions in supply.<sup>93</sup>

This assessment found that most villages in Akkar have widespread access to electricity but that in a majority of them, power sources seldom worked as they should. Overall, 93% of key informants (242) reported levels of access to electricity supplies considered high, with only 3% of villages (8) reporting coverage levels considered low or medium low. Access to electricity that worked all of the time was a different matter; approximately 85% of key informants (220) reported their villages' electricity supplies worked as they should half the time or less, with only 15% (40) reporting that electricity worked properly more than half the time.

Figure 20: Frequency of access to functioning electricity



Throughout Akkar, about half of villages reported that electricity supplies had not been affected by the crisis, with 50% (131) reporting that services were operating as before. Another 21% (54) reported that electricity supplies were strained but coping, and approximately 25% (73) reporting that it was very affected in some or all areas. In villages hosting refugees, 37% of key informants reported that electricity was very affected by the crisis.

Focus group discussions held in communities hosting refugees, particularly those with IS, highlighted the problem of “network tapping,” or improvised connections to public electricity supplies. These connections may be common in locations where refugees do not have access to electricity, but they may be poorly constructed and are perceived as wreaking havoc

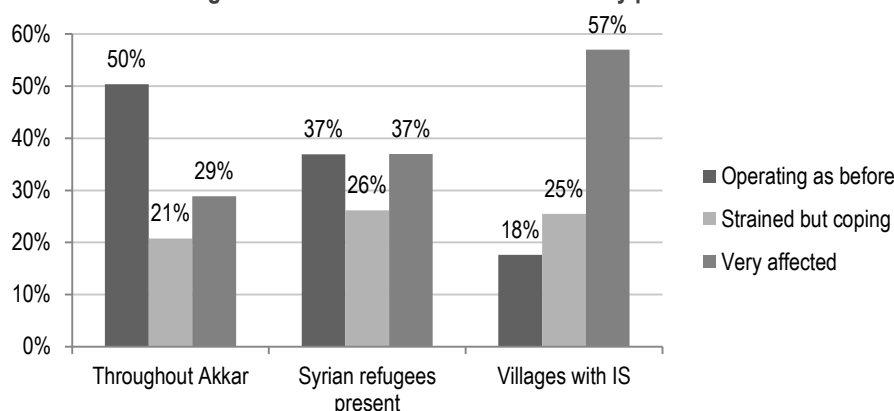
<sup>91</sup> World Bank, Op. cit., p.127.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>93</sup> Association Mada., Op cit., p. 5.

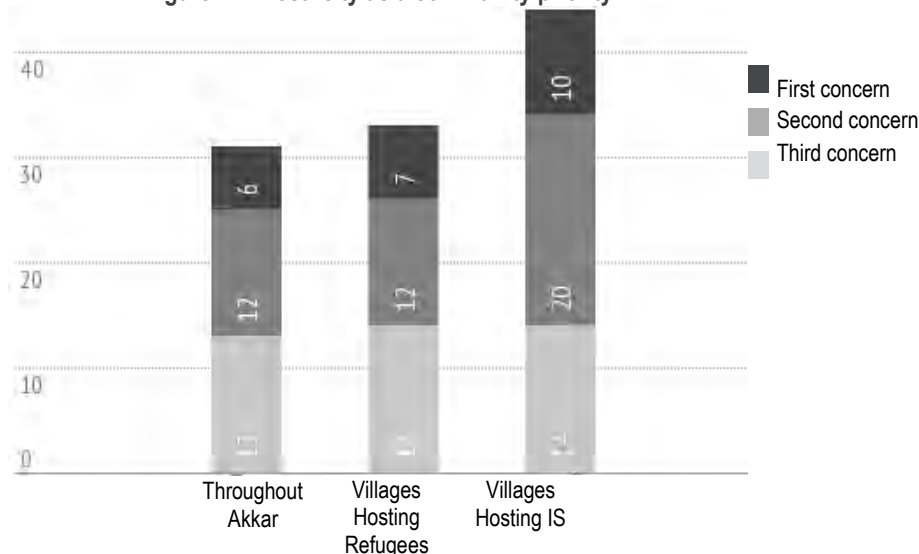
on power local supplies. Not surprisingly, key informants in the 51 villages reporting IS were more likely to mention pressures placed on electricity provision than in villages overall. Approximately 57% of key informants in villages with IS (29) reported that electricity was very affected, while only 24% (13) reported that it was strained but coping and only 18% (9) reported that electricity supplies were operating as before.

**Figure 21: Effect of the crisis on electricity provision**



Despite the impact of the crisis on electricity supplies, approximately 30% of key informants reported that electricity was one of their village's top three concerns, with 6% (16) listing it as a first concern, 12% (30) as a second concern, and 13% (33) as their third concern. As with questions about the effect of the crisis on electricity supply, key informants from the 51 villages reporting the presence of IS were more likely to list electricity supply as a concern, with 43% noting it among their top three priorities.

**Figure 22: Electricity as a community priority**



Focus group discussions indicated that electricity was a concern and source of tension for both Lebanese and Syrian communities, with rationing, planned power cuts, and antiquated infrastructure being common complaints among both groups. Beyond these shared complaints, challenges related to accessing power, both within host communities and among refugee populations, may vary widely by geographic setting and according to the housing context of the local refugee community.

The creation and cutting of ad hoc connections to power supplies can lead to tensions. Lebanese focus group participants complained frequently about network tapping, which they consider to be tantamount to theft. In several Lebanese focus groups, participants expressed a desire for greater legal enforcement and punishments for those responsible for network tapping, including in one case, night patrols to look for refugees trying to connect to the network. For their part, Syrian refugees in these villages sometimes complained that Lebanese villagers who disconnected the connections eliminated their only means of accessing power. Not surprisingly, electricity and the means to access it – equipment, such as generators



and cables – may also be an important driver of tensions. In one Lebanese focus group discussion, residents reported the theft the actual cables connecting the village to the public electricity network, resulting in a three-day blackout. Problems predating the current crisis may have inured some communities to the challenges associated with accessing electricity and produced a dependency on generators. As a result, most Lebanese focus groups reporting problems with electricity provision cited them as a solution, and there was significantly less interest in more sustainable solutions such as solar power, wind power, or hydroelectric dams.

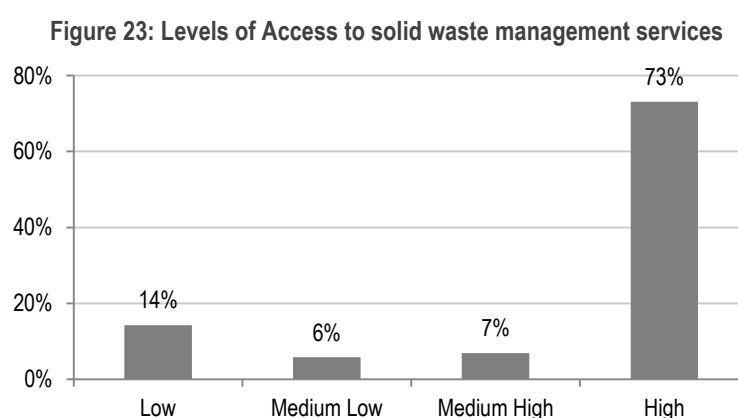
While generator schemes are often utilized to augment inadequate or irregular electricity supplies, their scope and impact may vary widely. Many are ad hoc arrangements supported variously by villages, private individuals and groups of neighbours. Requiring initial investments and ongoing financial commitments to sustain them, they appear to be more common among Lebanese populations, with the high cost associated with procuring the equipment and fuel needed to sustain them being prohibitive for many refugees. For example, one Syrian focus group discussion held near an IS reported owning a generator but indicated that they lacked the money necessary to connect and fuel it. In some Lebanese and Syrian focus group discussions participants expressed a desire for separate generators for each community. While separate generators may be impractical and undesirable in many settings, addressing the needs of refugee communities directly may offer a means to indirectly support host communities.

## Solid Waste Management

Solid waste management was the service that key informants felt was most affected by the crisis but one that had high access levels, reflecting a situation in which previous levels of service may have failed keep pace with current demands. According to the World Bank, there are significant disparities between levels of solid waste management in less developed regions of Lebanon and more advanced ones.<sup>94</sup> With the crisis doubling the quantity of solid waste generated in several areas in Lebanon,<sup>95</sup> problems stemming from inadequate solid waste management have had a far-reaching impact, including on groundwater, soil, and marine pollution.<sup>96</sup>

The impact that solid waste has on the environment is closely related to communities' ability to manage its disposal. In a number of villages in Akkar, municipalities organize solid waste collection using private contractors who collect it and transfer it to approved dumping facilities. In other villages, where no organized systems exist, trash, including industrial or agricultural waste, may be burned or dumped into valleys or rivers.<sup>97</sup>

In this assessment, 73% of key informants (190) indicated that their villages have high levels of coverage for solid waste management services, with only 14% (37) reporting levels of coverage that are low. Accordingly, 15% of villages (40) report solid waste management systems that are largely unmanaged. The majority of villages have systems that are largely managed by municipalities or municipal unions, while 10% (27) utilize some kind of private collection system. Approximately 76% of villages with unmanaged systems also have no municipality.



<sup>94</sup> World Bank, Op. cit., p. 117.

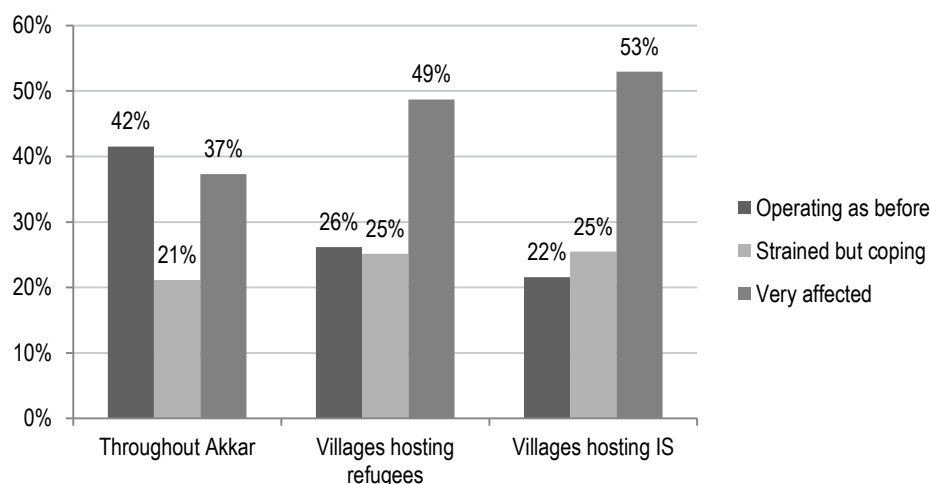
<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Association Mada, Op. cit. p. 6.

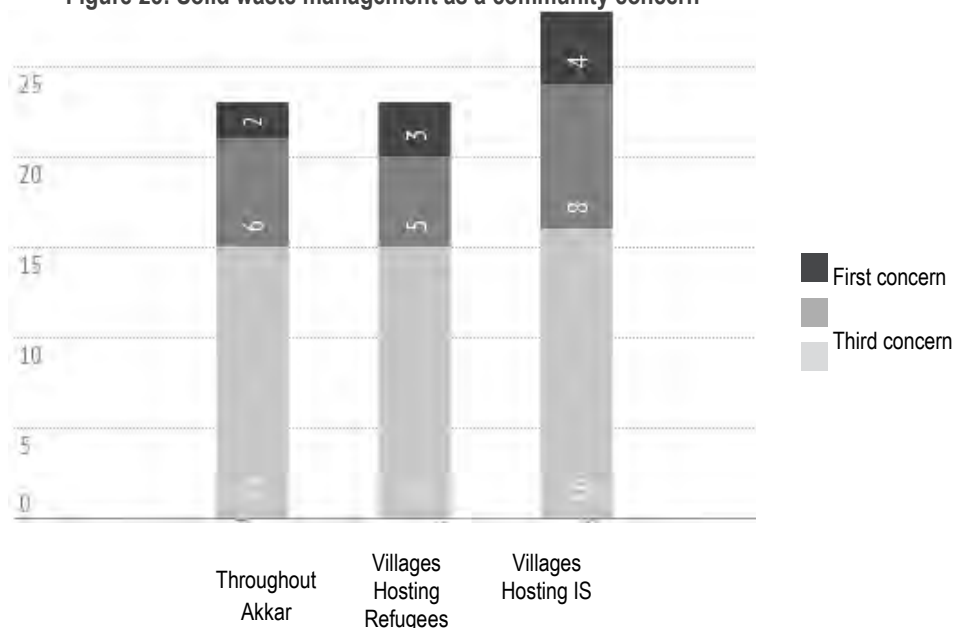
Throughout Akkar, key informants reported significant disparities regarding the impact that the crisis has had on solid waste management. While approximately 42% (108) of key informants responded that their village's system was operating as before, 37% (97) described their system as being very affected. Only 21% (55) responded that their system was strained but coping. The impact of the crisis on solid waste management was more pronounced in villages hosting refugees, where 49% (95) of key informants described trash collection systems as very affected, and in villages hosting IS, where 53% (27) reported the same. By contrast, in villages hosting Syrians, only 26% (51) described systems as operating as before, with 22% (11) reporting the same in villages reporting the presence of IS.

**Figure 24: Impact of the crisis on solid waste management**



Despite these challenges, solid waste management ranked low among key informants' concerns for their communities. In approximately 23% of villages (59), key informants indicated that solid waste management was among residents' top three concerns, with only 2% (6) listing it first, 6% (15) listing it second, and 15% (38) listing it third.

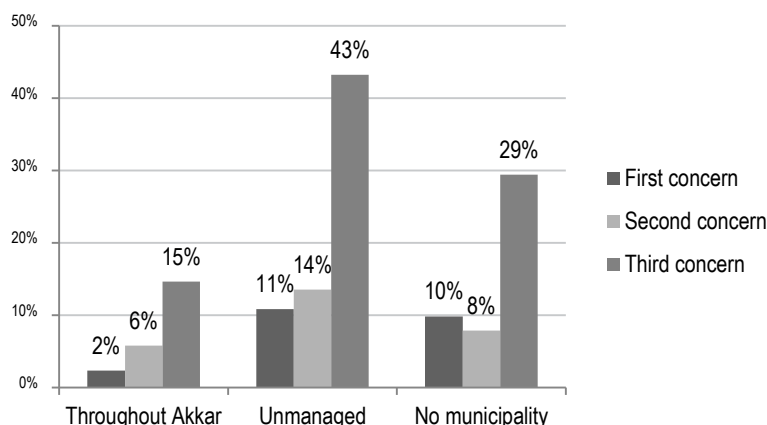
**Figure 25: Solid waste management as a community concern**



Key informants from villages with largely unmanaged systems were much more likely to prioritize solid waste management as a concern, with 68% listing it among their top three. In line with the role that municipalities play in trash collection, unincorporated villages were also more likely to report solid waste management as a priority, with 47% (24) rating it among

their top three concerns. Unsurprisingly, there was substantial overlap between villages without municipalities and villages with largely unmanaged systems.

**Figure 26: Solid waste management as a community concern – management context**



In line with key informant interviews, focus group discussions highlighted the important role municipalities play in organizing solid waste management and in at least two villages without municipalities, a nearby municipality was contracted to manage trash collection. While municipalities may organize trash collection, schemes to finance it may vary widely by location, with the responsibility to pay for removal paid directly by municipalities or by village residents. Coverage and frequency also vary widely, with Lebanese and Syrian focus group participants mentioning collection frequencies ranging from three times per week to twice per month, if at all. Inadequate trash collection affects both vulnerable Syrian and Lebanese populations disproportionately with both groups being forced to dispose of trash in ways that are unsanitary or pollution causing. For example, Lebanese focus group participants in one unincorporated village reported resorting to burning their trash because they did not have enough money to pay the nearby municipality that managed its trash collection.

Failure to manage trash properly may contribute to tensions in some communities. Lebanese focus group participants sometimes complained that refugees have poor hygiene practices and discard trash wherever they please. For their part, refugees may also fret about a lack of receptacles and adequate trash collection and the implications it has on hygiene, community relations, and security. In a focus groups of refugees living in houses, participants acknowledged the need to dump garbage behind their houses, which led to insects and diseases or having to deposit trash in Lebanese households' containers. In a focus group held near IS, refugees acknowledged a need to burn garbage to get rid of it, but that doing so led to pollution and illnesses. In another focus group held near an IS in the Sahel region, refugees admitted to dumping trash in the sea to get rid of it. For inhabitants of IS, removal of trash may be an urgent concern related to security; fears of predatory animals drawn to the IS by garbage were one of refugees' top and largely unexpected security concerns.

The inadequacy of many municipalities' responses to requests for additional help with sanitation may also indirectly fuel tensions. Syrian and Lebanese focus group discussions alike indicated that additional or better containers would make a major contribution to helping solve challenges related to solid waste management. Communities that have containers report not having enough or having ones that are too small or prone to overflowing. In villages without adequate receptacles, trash has ended up collecting on the sides of containers, behind houses, along roads, or in rivers and ravines. Focus group discussions with Syrians indicated a desire to be included in municipal trash collection routes.

## Education

The Syrian refugee population in Lebanon is disproportionately young, with approximately 52.5% of refugees registered aged 17 or under<sup>98</sup>. This statistic is mirrored in Akkar, where 50,289 (53%) of the 94,982 registered refugees are under 17.<sup>99</sup> Across Lebanon, the most recent Regional Response Plan estimates that some 693,000 displaced children from Syria (Syrian, Lebanese Returnee and Palestinian children from Syria) will need schooling by the end of 2014<sup>100</sup>. Combined with

<sup>98</sup> UNHCR 2014 Population Data. <https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122>

<sup>99</sup> UNHCR Data.

<sup>100</sup> Syria Regional Response Plan 6, Op. cit.

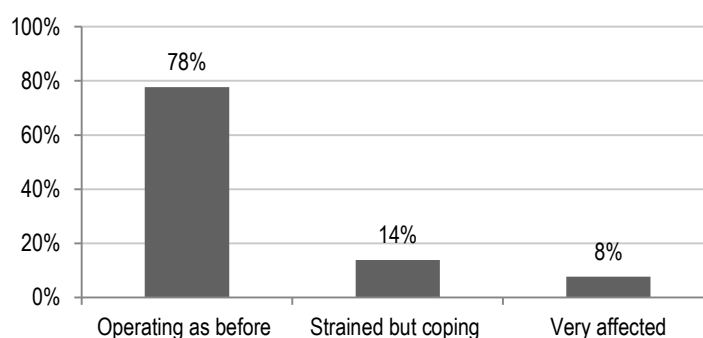
630,000 Lebanese children in the same age group, a total of 1,323,000 school-aged children will be affected by the increasing demand for education.<sup>101</sup>

Public schools have traditionally served children from families that do not have the means to send children to private schools.<sup>102</sup> As a result, pressures placed on the public school system have had a disproportionate effect on the quality of schooling for the most vulnerable Lebanese children. Communities hosting the largest numbers of refugees are among the most vulnerable, and because public schools generally serve the poorest children, in these locations the number of Lebanese children attending public schools is also high.<sup>103</sup> In a country where only 30% of students are educated in public schools,<sup>104</sup> Akkar's 55% public schooling rate is also disproportionately high.<sup>105</sup> This has led to a situation in which the equity of the Lebanese education system has been widening significantly, with the most disadvantaged citizens bearing a disproportionate burden.<sup>106</sup>

Before the crisis, Akkar ranked below national averages in basic measures of educational achievement. The Governorate's illiteracy rate was measured at 31% (compared to a national average of 14%) with grade advancement rates and primary completion rates below the national average. From fourth grade onwards, dropout rates were double the national average. Completion rates have been particularly low for boys, primarily due to labour market and socioeconomic pressures.

Despite significant evidence that tremendous pressures have been placed on public schools, most key informants indicated that education had been largely unaffected by the crisis. Key informants in 78% of villages (202) reported that schools were operating as they were before the crisis, with approximately 14% (36) reporting that local education systems were strained but coping and only 8% of key informants (22) reported that they were very affected.

**Figure 27: Effects of the crisis on education**



Along similar lines, key informants reported that education was a significant but not a primary need for their communities. Key informants in 42% of villages (109) considered education to be an urgent need, while 34% of villages (88) considered education needs to be extremely or very urgent. Only 10% of villages (25) considered education to be "less important than other concerns" or "not important at all."

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> World Bank, Op. cit.

<sup>103</sup> Syria Regional Response Plan 6, Op. cit.

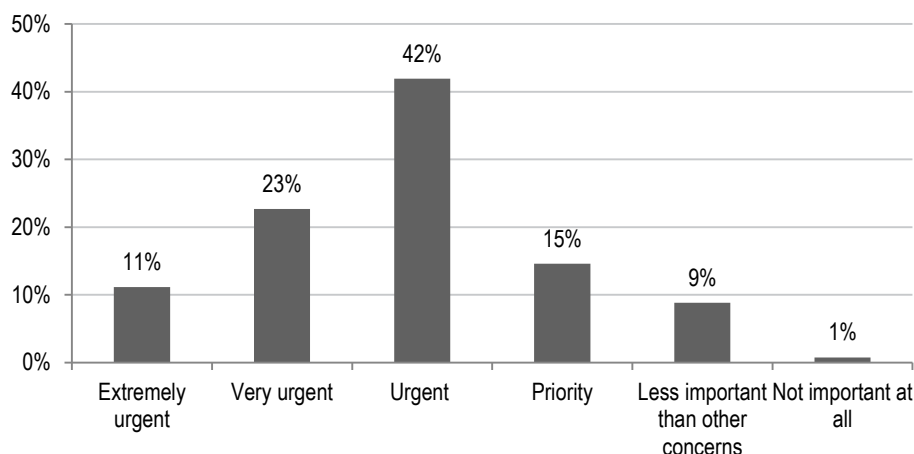
<sup>104</sup> REACH, Akkar Public Schools Assessment (Beirut, 2014).

<sup>105</sup> Association Mada, Op. cit., 12

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

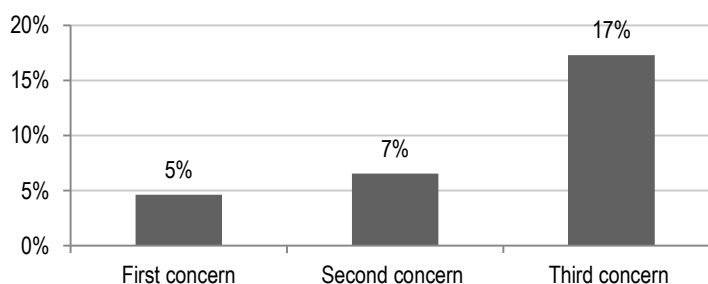


**Figure 28: Urgency of education as a community need**



Despite assigning considerable urgency and importance to education, it ranked lower in relation to other concerns; key informants in only 5% of villages (12) considered education to be their main concern, while 7% (17) and 17% (45) considered education to be a secondary and tertiary concern, respectively.

**Figure 29: Education as a community concern**



In focus group discussions, Lebanese participants indicated that education is accessible but that its quality is often poor. Overall, Lebanese residents voiced more complaints about public schools than private ones; however, the cost of private school for many is prohibitive, making the choice between private and public education one that many Akkaris never have to make. More commonly, Lebanese focus groups complained about limited access to secondary and tertiary education in Akkar and expressed a need for a nearby high school, technical school, or university. A common complaint was that secondary schools were too far and that transportation posed a challenge.

Lack of access to educational choices notwithstanding, many Lebanese focus group participants did report weighting whether to send their children to public or private school. Taken together, their choices may have severe effects on individual schools. In one village, Lebanese focus group participants lamented the shuttering of their village's public school but noted that it had closed because community members had become dissatisfied with the quality of education it provided and stopped sending their children there. Another village also reported having a public school but noted that it was struggling because not many children went there due to its perceived poor quality. Lebanese residents' level of satisfaction with local public schools is highly variable, but it may be highly dependent upon circumstance. Instructional quality and school leadership may play important roles, with focus group discussion participants reporting satisfaction with their local public schools when there were caring teachers and strong school leadership.

Notably, concerns about large Syrian enrolments did not register as a prominent theme in most Lebanese focus groups. To be sure, schools may be a site of tension between Lebanese and Syrian populations, and there was a demand for separate educational facilities in several focus group discussions. This demand may be stronger amongst Syrian populations, where bullying and problems related to differences in the curriculum have kept children from attending. In one focus group discussion held near an IS, parents reported switching their children to informal education (a private "room" near the settlement) because their children faced severe bullying from Lebanese students. In other focus group discussions, Syrian parents had decided to withdraw their children from school because they could not understand the lessons. Lebanese teachers' use of corporal punishment was a complaint in one village that had access to both a Lebanese and Syrian school.

In focus group discussions with Syrian populations, participants reported similar complaints as Lebanese participants related to a lack of educational options, distance from schools, and the high cost of education – even in cases in which NGOs or UNHCR paid for the cost. Syrian focus group participants that reported satisfaction with schools noted the existence of Syrian curriculum options, and assistance from NGOs and UNHCR. Non-formal education and Syrian schools may be vulnerable to the same market pressures as Lebanese ones; in one case focus group participants noted that a school established for Syrians in the village had closed because they were not able to collect enough tuition.

## Healthcare

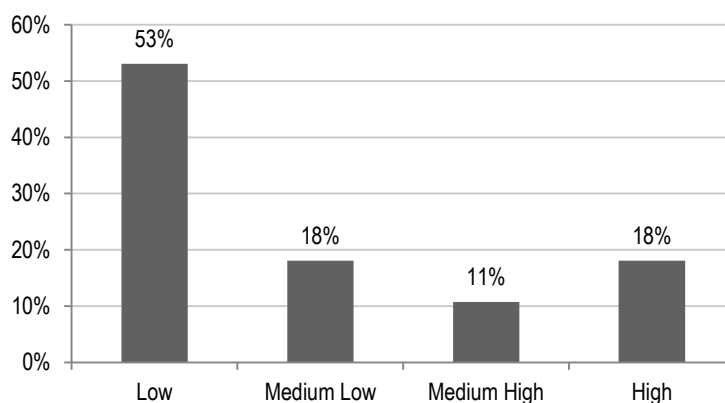
Health care coverage and availability in Akkar lagged behind the rest of Lebanon before the crisis. The Governorate had lower levels of health insurance coverage (35%) versus the national average (42%), with most residents receiving coverage through public sector plans associated with the army, civil service, and National Social Security Fund. Only 0.7% of Akkaris were covered by private insurance.<sup>107</sup>

Low availability, measured in numbers of hospitals and beds (five hospitals with 426 beds in total), was compounded by a shortage of equipment and specialized physicians.<sup>108</sup> Maternal health indicators lagged as well; Akkar had the lowest levels of post-natal care and the highest level of deliveries performed by traditional birth attendants.<sup>109</sup> Finally, many communities in Akkar have historically relied on nearby Syrian cities for healthcare,<sup>110</sup> which may have stunted the development of the sector in Akkar and may be responsible for additional pressures now.

Nationally, public health institutions have reported increases in communicable diseases as well as the threat of measles and polio outbreaks. Treating chronic and serious diseases is another challenge that is likely to result in increased demands on health facilities; 50,000 refugees have been projected to need life-saving health interventions in 2014 alone.<sup>111</sup> Nationally, there have been reports of health facilities demanding upfront payments or collateral in the form of registration documents or bodies of the deceased.<sup>112</sup>

In this assessment, only 18% (47) of key informants reported high levels of access to healthcare in their village; by contrast, 53% of villages (153) reported levels of access that were considered low.

Figure 30: Levels of access to healthcare



At the same time, 66% of key informants (171) reported that healthcare systems were operating as before the crisis, with 19% (50) reporting that it was strained but coping and only 15% (39) reporting that they were very affected. These findings appear to suggest that rather than burden systems that were already over capacity, the crisis has merely extended problems of accessing healthcare which were already out of reach for many Akkaris.

<sup>107</sup> Association Mada, Op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 10.

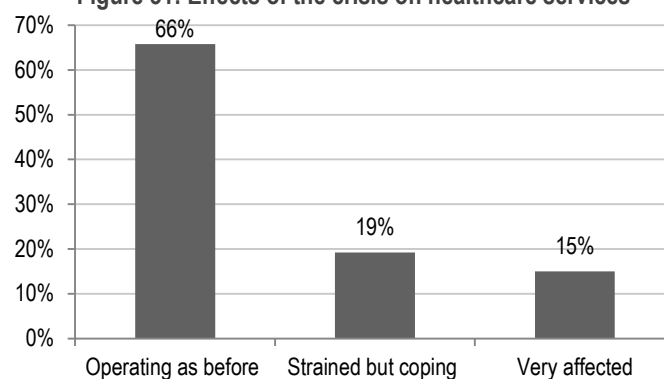
<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>110</sup> Adel Nord, Op. cit., p. 35.

<sup>111</sup> Syria Regional Response Plan 6, Op. cit., pp. 6-7.

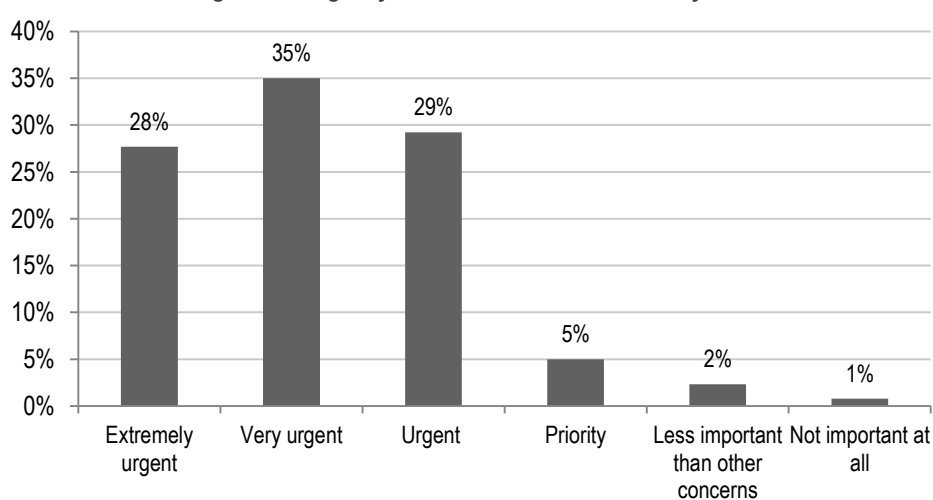
<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 45.

**Figure 31: Effects of the crisis on healthcare services**



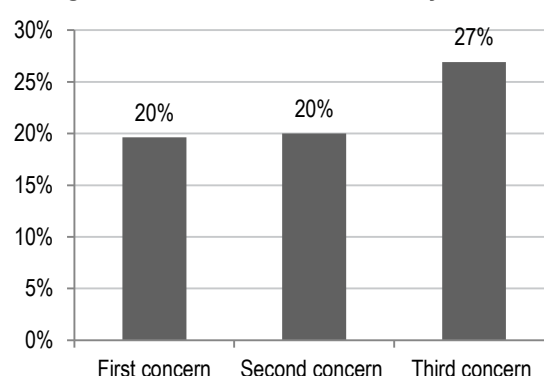
Healthcare was considered to be extremely or very urgent by 62% of key informants (161) and “urgent” in another 29% (76). Only 8% key informants (21) considered healthcare a “priority,” “less important than other concerns,” or “not important at all.”

**Figure 32: Urgency of healthcare as a community need**



Correspondingly, approximately 66% of villages (173) ranked healthcare in their top three concerns, with approximately 20% (51) rating it as their first concern, 20% (52) as the village’s second concern, and 27% (70) as the village’s third concern.

**Figure 33: Healthcare as a community concern**



In focus group discussions, the provision of healthcare was perceived as leading to tensions in at least two separate ways: fear of contracting illnesses from refugees who may live in unsanitary conditions and the perception that Syrians and Lebanese have unequal access to care. According to the recent Multi Sector Needs Assessment, “Ensuring access to healthcare for Lebanese and Syrian communities is an important in managing tensions because disease, if attributed to a

specific group, can erode social cohesion.”<sup>113</sup> Concerns about contracting diseases may be especially prevalent in communities that host IS, as they may pose serious public health risks.<sup>114</sup> These were reflected in focus group discussions; for example, one Lebanese focus group mentioned hygiene and health training for Syrian refugees as a way to improve community health.

In the context of the current crisis, resentment among host community populations may be fuelled by the perception that Syrians have greater access to healthcare. In several focus group discussions, Lebanese participants expressed a desire for “NGO cards” similar to ones held by Syrians and for better access to mobile clinics. Aside from greater equity, suggestions about how to address the healthcare crisis faced by many Lebanese residents of Akkar involved recommendations that would require significant national reforms, financial commitments, and local compromises. In addition to a demand for insurance, nearly every focus group expressed a desire for a new clinic or hospital and that it be built in their village.

Lebanese and Syrian focus groups alike reported widespread frustrations with the availability of healthcare services in Akkar, including a high cost associated with treatment, a lack of facilities, and a shortage of specialists. Only two Lebanese focus group discussions reported that they had adequate access to healthcare or little trouble in accessing services. More generally, participants were more likely to report deficiencies associated with a lack of infrastructure and services that predated the crisis rather than pressures associated with the refugee population.

In some cases, Lebanese participants reported that adequate health care facilities may be available in their village or nearby but that aid is targeted or conditioned. For example, in one Lebanese focus group discussion, participants mentioned having access to a private clinic, but because it was run by a conservative Islamic group, they did not feel that it was open to all.

While Lebanese focus group discussions did not emphasize the role of the refugee crisis on service provision, Syrian focus groups indicated that like Lebanese populations, refugees complain about the high cost of the Lebanese health care system and low quality of treatment when it is available. Among both Lebanese and Syrian focus groups, complaints about health facilities that are perceived to be inadequate spanned every level of health care delivery—from primary health clinics to hospitals and pharmacies.

Focus groups indicated that healthcare facilities are unevenly distributed throughout Akkar and that they need to travel too far for emergencies or serious procedures (often to Halba or Qoubaiyat). Both Lebanese and Syrian focus groups related stories about community members dying en route to treatment. More commonly, there may be a demand among Syrian refugees for more mobile clinics, as well as for mobile clinics that provide a wider range of services and that are staffed by specialized personnel. Despite the difficulties with accessing care in a timely manner, only one or two focus groups mentioned ambulance services as a service which would ameliorate the current situation.

## Other Services

With roughly 20% of villages lacking municipalities, the capacity of local institutions to manage the influx of new residents has been uneven, leading to situation in which other needs of communities have not been adequately addressed. To help measure the impact of the crisis on local institutions, this assessment included an option of “administrative services,” defined as local government services. “Administrative services” may pertain to the capacity of local governments and bureaucracies themselves but may also indicate other services and institutions and services associated with local governments.

In key informant interviews, approximately 92% of villages indicated that institutions that provide administrative services were operating as before. Approximately 3% (7) indicated that they were strained but coping and 5% of villages (13) indicated that they were very affected. Only 11% of villages (28) rated administrative services among the top three concerns, with 4% of villages (11) listing it as a first or second concern and 7% (17) as a tertiary one.

Despite the low priority assigned to administrative services, the general nature of the question posed to key informants and the fact that it may embrace several more specific concerns could suggest that pressures on local government capacity were underreported. In focus groups discussions, the presence of informal local policing structures, such as volunteer night patrols, indicates a lack of formal local institutions equipped to deal with security concerns. Curfews as well as villages reporting that dispute resolution mechanisms were inadequate may also be indicative of strained local institutional capacity.

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<sup>113</sup> Multi Sector Needs Assessment, Op. cit., p.6.

<sup>114</sup> International Rescue Committee, Op cit., p.4.



Focus group discussions asked participants about the status of other social services. When participants mentioned other services, they cited needs for public areas, such as parks, as well as educational and recreational activities, particularly for youth. In Lebanese focus groups, participants sometimes complained that there was nothing for young people to do, leading to situations in which youth congregate along main roads of the town and engage in antisocial behaviour. As a result, there was a strong interest in opportunities related to sports and recreation, such as scouting.

In Akkar challenges facing youth may be especially urgent, with 41% of the population under 15 years old, youth joining the labour force at a particularly young age, and high rates of unemployment.<sup>115</sup> In its report addressing Akkari youth, Lebanese NGO Mada Association also underlined the detrimental impact of a lack of cultural and leisure activities and the resulting negative impact on Akkari youth in terms of education, health, economic opportunities, and social life.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Association Mada, Voice of Akkari Youth: Calling for a Better Tomorrow. (Beirut, 2012) [http://daleel-madani.org/sites/default/files/AkkariYouth\\_ENG\\_WEB.pdf](http://daleel-madani.org/sites/default/files/AkkariYouth_ENG_WEB.pdf)

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

## CONCLUSION

This assessment was conducted to provide a set of baseline data on strains placed on host communities in Akkar to better inform humanitarian coordination and fill gaps in current knowledge about communities' needs. While Akkaris have shown tremendous hospitality in welcoming and absorbing an ever increasing refugee population, signs of strain have begun to appear in many host communities, as manifested by indicators of rising levels of tension. Competition for resources – services and livelihoods, in particular – have disproportionately affected vulnerable Lebanese populations. Combined with changes in everyday life in host communities, the effects of the crisis on host communities has led to an erosion of social cohesion, evidenced by reports of rising levels of crime and declining attitudes towards hosting refugees. In many parts of Akkar, there is a need to support host communities, particularly vulnerable Lebanese populations, to help mitigate the effects of the crisis.

While tensions may go underreported, indicators of deteriorations in social cohesion are present in many communities in Akkar, including lessening attitudes towards hosting refugees, feelings of insecurity, and restrictions placed on refugees' movement, may be associated with declines in host community resilience. These may manifest themselves as independent contributing factors or in relation to other factors tied to livelihoods and services. Regardless, they pose challenges for humanitarian actors to address. Reports of rising crime rates and community-based policing efforts may call for strengthening local institutional capacities and dispute resolution mechanisms. Similarly, actors that have traditionally played a role in dispute resolution may also benefit from increased capacity as they are called upon to mediate community conflicts that may be increasingly complex. Finally, by finding ways to address the needs of refugee and host communities simultaneously, aid actors may be able to secure sustained support for refugee populations while assisting both populations more effectively.

Before the crisis, Akkar had one of the lowest levels of service provision throughout Lebanon, with access and quality levels lagging far behind other districts. In the face of rising demand, these have further deteriorated, posing additional burdens on vulnerable populations that relied on them for support. As a result, humanitarian actors may face the challenge of addressing the effects of the crisis while shoring up public services that were already inadequate or badly strained. With many sectors facing long-term development challenges, actors may ultimately need to weigh whether interventions may serve to provide urgent and necessary stopgap measures or ultimately postpone the implementation of solutions to longstanding problems. Overall, problems related to electricity provision and solid waste management may be more recent and be direct result of the crisis, whereas challenges related to water, wastewater management, and health may be more complex and related to longstanding problems in services provision. Local government capacity, refugees' accommodation context may also play a significant role in challenges affecting different sectors.

Akkar's low development profile is reflected in livelihoods as well as public services, with economic activity in the Governorate trailing the rest of Lebanon and remaining highly dependent upon low-wage industries and ties to Syria. Large numbers of potentially low-wage workers from Syria have threatened to displace Lebanese workers at the bottom rungs of the economic ladder. The same workers that face additional competition for scarce income-generating opportunities may also feel economic pressures due to the rising cost of goods and services and higher rent costs. However, jobs, which may be insufficient in number and perceived to be under threat from low-wage Syrian workers, remain a core issue for humanitarian actors to address in host communities, as they are perceived a core driver of tensions between Lebanese and Syrian communities. Programming that develops local economies while providing jobs to Syrians and Lebanese populations alike may be the central challenge in efforts to support livelihoods.

### About REACH

REACH is a joint initiative of two international non-governmental organizations - ACTED and IMPACT Initiatives - and the UN Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT). REACH was created in 2010 to facilitate the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. All REACH activities are conducted in support to and within the framework of inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. For more information, please visit: [www.reach-initiative.org](http://www.reach-initiative.org). You can write to our in-country team at: [lebanon@reach-initiative.org](mailto:lebanon@reach-initiative.org) or to our global office in Geneva: [geneva@reach-initiative.org](mailto:geneva@reach-initiative.org). Follow us

## ANNEXES

### ANNEX 1: ASSESSMENT SITE SELECTION

#### Villages not assessed due to security concerns during the key informant stage of the assessment

Village	Cadastral
El Kharnoubeh	Al-Kharnoubeh
Aarida	Dayret Nahr El-Kehbir
Bani Sakher	Dayret Nahr El-Kehbir
Bqayaa	Dayret Nahr El-Kehbir
Dayret Nahr el Kabir	Dayret Nahr El-Kehbir
Khat Petrol	Dayret Nahr El-Kehbir
Nassriye	Dayret Nahr El-Kehbir
Aarmeh	El-Armeh
Janine	Janine
Hokr Jouret Srar	Jouret Srar
Khalsa	Khalsa
Khirbet er Roummane	Khirbet Er Remmane

#### Locations mapped but not assessed

Location	Cadastral
El Khoder	Akroum
Haider	Andeket
Dahr Laissine El Melkiye	Dahr Leycineh
Deir Mar Jeryos	Deir Janine
En Nabi Khaled	Fneidek
Aalaiqa	Harare
Hmais	Hmais
Hokr Etti	Katteh
Fard	Omar El Beikate
Mahmoudiye	Rmah
Haouch	Wadi El Haour

#### Villages where focus group discussions were held

Village	Cadastral
Aaklar El Attiqa	Akkar El Atika
Akroum	Akroum
Bellamet El Hissa	Al Hissa
Kouikhat	Al Khraibeh
Abde	Al Mehamra
Semmaqiye	Al Semmakieh
Andqat	Andeket
Bezbina	Bazbina
Bebnine	Bebnine
Beino	Beino
Cheikh Aayash	Cheir Homeirine
Borj El Arab	Deir Daloum
Deir Dalloum	Deir Daloum
Qarqaf	El Karkaf
Kouachra	El Kouachra
Fnaideq	Fneidek

Ilat  
Khirbet Daoud  
Qoubbet Chamra  
Machta Hammoud  
Mqaible  
Majdel Akkar  
Aaidamoun  
Amayer  
Awade  
Qabaaait  
Rahbe  
Tall Aabbas  
Takrit  
Wadi Al Hoor

Ilate  
Kherbet Daoud  
Kobbet Bchamra  
Machta Hammoud  
Machta Hammoud  
Majdel  
Mazraet El Nahrieh  
Ouadi Khaled  
Ouadi Khaled  
Qabbait  
Rahbeh  
Tal Abbas El Charkieh  
Tikrite  
Wadi El Haour



## ANNEX 2: KEY INFORMANT ASSESSMENT FORM

<b>REACH</b> Informing more effective humanitarian action		<b>Akkar Village Level KI Assessment</b>	
<b>Date:</b> [DD/MM/YY]		<b>Database ID:</b>	
<b>Completed by:</b>		<b>Team ID:</b>	
Hello, my name is _____ and I am with REACH. We've been commissioned by UNHCR to conduct an assessment of villages in Akkar. We're collecting very basic information to better inform humanitarian actions.		<b>Reviewed</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>This survey is not tied to any particular project (it will not bring or deny your community money), but UNHCR and its partners will use it better inform planning and implementation of projects related to the needs for Lebanese and Syrian populations in the region as a whole. As such, participating in this survey will ensure your village is appropriately counted in such planning.</p> <p>The survey will take about 30 minutes. Do you agree to let me ask you some questions?</p>			
<b>A BACKGROUND</b>			
A.1	Cadastral	Village / Neighbourhood	Pcode
A.2	Municipality (if any)		
A.3	Union affiliation (if any)		
A.4	KI contact details	Name	
		Position	
		Telephone number A	
		Telephone number B	
A.5	Who provides support when your village requests assistance with infrastructure and/or social services?		
	Central government	Municipal union	District (Qaem Maqam)
	Other municipality	Other village(s)	International NGOs
	Religious orgs.	Qatari	Other (specify)
A.6	How often does your village receive the support mentioned above?		
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
			Less often/Ad-hoc
<b>B VILLAGE DEMOGRAPHICS</b>			
B.1	Estimated Syrian population of the village:		Individuals
B.2	Top 3 reasons refugee populations have settled in your village?		Jobs
	Available housing	Security	Access to Health services
	Access to natural resources (land for agriculture/farming)		Other (please explain)

C ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES									
C.1	What percentage of your village's population is able to access the following basic services?								
		0% - 24%	25% - 50%	51% - 75%	76% - 100%				
	Water supply	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>				
	Waste water management	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>				
	Solid waste management	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>				
	Electricity supply	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>				
	Health services	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>				
	Education	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>				
	Administrative services	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>				
C.2	How have the following basic services been affected by the Syria crisis?								
		Operating as before	Strained but coping	Very affected in some areas	Very affected in all areas				
	Water supply	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>				
	Waste water management	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>				
	Solid waste management	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>				
	Electricity supply	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>				
	Health services	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>				
	Education	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>				
	Administrative services	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>				
C.3	How is water supplied in your village (select all that apply)								
	<input type="checkbox"/> Bore hole	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural Source	<input type="checkbox"/> Piped (municipal)						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Bottled	<input type="checkbox"/> Water Trucking	<input type="checkbox"/> None						
C.4	Who provides the water supply in your village? (check all that apply)								
	<input type="checkbox"/> Water establishment	<input type="checkbox"/> Private distributors	<input type="checkbox"/> Municipality/union	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Provided					
	<input type="checkbox"/> NGOs	<input type="checkbox"/> Other							
C.5	Is the water supplied to your village potable?								
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No							
C.6	What percentage of your village is covered by street lighting?								
	<input type="text"/>	0% - 25%	<input type="text"/>	25% - 50%	<input type="text"/>	50% - 75%			
	<input type="text"/>	75% - 100%							
C.7	What percent of the time does it work (i.e. do you have electricity)?								
	<input type="text"/>	0% - 25%	<input type="text"/>	25% - 50%	<input type="text"/>	50% - 75%			
	<input type="text"/>	75% - 100%							
C.8	Who conducts garbage collection in your village? (check all that apply)								
	<input type="checkbox"/> Private contractors	<input type="checkbox"/> Unmanaged (i.e. burning, individual dumping)	<input type="checkbox"/> Municipality/union						
	<input type="checkbox"/> NGOs								
C.9	Who is responsible for wastewater management in your village? (check all that apply)								
	<input type="checkbox"/> Private contractors	<input type="checkbox"/> Unmanaged (i.e. individual dumping, into rivers/sea, etc...)	<input type="checkbox"/> Municipality/union						
C.10	What healthcare facilities are available to your community?								
	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary health clinic	<input type="checkbox"/> Hospital							
	<input type="checkbox"/> Clinic or healthcare facility managed by an NGO	<input type="checkbox"/> None							
C.11	How urgent would you rate the challenges to water access in your community?								
	<input type="checkbox"/> Extremely Urgent	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Urgent	<input type="checkbox"/> Urgent	<input type="checkbox"/> A Priority	<input type="checkbox"/> Less important				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Not important at all								
C.12	How urgent would you rate the challenges to accessing sufficient education in your community?								
	<input type="checkbox"/> Extremely Urgent	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Urgent	<input type="checkbox"/> Urgent	<input type="checkbox"/> A Priority	<input type="checkbox"/> Less important				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Not important at all								
C.13	How urgent would you rate the challenges to accessing healthcare in your community?								
	<input type="checkbox"/> Extremely Urgent	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Urgent	<input type="checkbox"/> Urgent	<input type="checkbox"/> Prioritised	<input type="checkbox"/> Less important				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Not important at all								
C.14	In your opinion, what are the top three concerns for the provision of basic services in your village for the next quarter?								
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Water supply	Waste water management	Solid waste management	Electricity supply	Health services	Education	Administrative services		

D PRESENCE OF REFUGEES											
D.1	Are there informal tented settlements in your Municipality?							<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
	If yes, approximate population: <input type="text"/>										
D.2	Are there any collective centres in your Municipality?							<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
	If yes, how many? <input type="text"/>										
D.3	What are the top 3 (ranked) accommodation contexts for Syrian refugees?							<input type="checkbox"/>	Independent, rented house / Apartment		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Hosted by another family (rent-free)			<input type="checkbox"/> Collective centre (public building)			<input type="checkbox"/>	Garage / basement / etc.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Collective shelter (private owned)			<input type="checkbox"/> Unfinished shelter			<input type="checkbox"/>	Tent			
D.4	In general, have there been any tensions between Lebanese residents and refugees living in your village?							<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
D.5	If yes, why? (check all that apply)										
	<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural differences			<input type="checkbox"/> Past experiences related to the military occupation			<input type="checkbox"/>	Concerns about security			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Concerns about livelihoods			<input type="checkbox"/> Concerns about strain on infrastructure and services							
D.6	During the past six months, how have attitudes towards hosting Syrian refugees changed in your village?										
	<input type="checkbox"/> Greatly improved		<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat improved		<input type="checkbox"/> Stayed the same		<input type="checkbox"/>		Somewhat worsened		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Greatly worsened										
D.7	Has your village established any of the following guidelines for Syrian refugees?										
	<input type="checkbox"/> Curfews		<input type="checkbox"/> Identification papers		<input type="checkbox"/> Employment restrictions						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Residency restrictions		<input type="checkbox"/> Restrictions on hosting refugees				<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)				
D.8	Have any Syrian informal tented settlements been evicted or forced to relocate because of the following?										
	<input type="checkbox"/> Inability to pay rent		<input type="checkbox"/> Tensions with the local community				<input type="checkbox"/> Other reason (specify)				
D.9	Have any Syrian families been evicted from apartments or homes or forced to relocate because of the following?										
	<input type="checkbox"/> Inability to pay rent		<input type="checkbox"/> Tensions with the local community				<input type="checkbox"/> Other reason (specify)				
D.10	3 years ago, did Lebanese residents feel unsafe in your village?							<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
	<input type="checkbox"/> In the streets		<input type="checkbox"/> In their homes		<input type="checkbox"/> In markets/stores		<input type="checkbox"/>		In school/work		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Mosques/churches		<input type="checkbox"/> Everywhere								
D.11	Do Lebanese residents feel unsafe in your village now?							<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
	<input type="checkbox"/> In the streets		<input type="checkbox"/> In their homes		<input type="checkbox"/> In markets/stores		<input type="checkbox"/>		In school/work		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Mosques/churches		<input type="checkbox"/> Everywhere								
	In your opinion, is this a direct consequence of the presence of Syrian refugees?							<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
D.11	Has your village been the target of shelling (intentional or unintentional) from Syria?							<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
D.12	Have there been any protests in your village against any of the following groups?										
	<input type="checkbox"/> Syrian refugees		<input type="checkbox"/> Central government		<input type="checkbox"/> NGOs and international organizations				<input type="checkbox"/> No		
D.12	Has your village seen increases in any of the following since the crisis began?										
	<input type="checkbox"/> Violent crime		<input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism		<input type="checkbox"/> Theft		<input type="checkbox"/>		Youth violence		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Domestic violence		<input type="checkbox"/> Economic exploitation				<input type="checkbox"/> Negative coping mechanisms to deal with poverty				
D.13	Has your village established any forums through which village tensions are addressed?							<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
	If yes, are Syrians (and other displaced populations) invited to participate?							<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No



E LIVELIHOODS									
E.1	What are the top 3 income sources of the Lebanese community in your village?						Skilled work		
	Formal commerce		Remittances		Gifts from relatives		Non-agricultural casual labour		
	Informal commerce		Savings		Formal credit / debts		Agricultural labour		
	Sale of assets		Informal credit / debts		Sale of food / non-food aid				
	Food voucher		Cash from humanitarian / charitable orgs.			Begging			
E.2	In the last 3 years in your village, has the unemployment rate changed?						<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> More unemployment	<input type="checkbox"/> Less unemployment
E.3	In the last 3 years in your village, have wages changed?						<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Increased	<input type="checkbox"/> Decreased
E.4	In the last 3 years in your village, have prices for everyday services changed?						<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Increased	<input type="checkbox"/> Decreased
E.5	In the last 3 years in your village, have prices of basic food staples (milk, eggs, bread, labneh) changed?						<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Increased	<input type="checkbox"/> Decreased
E.6	In the last 3 years in your village, has the availability of food changed?						<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Increased	<input type="checkbox"/> Decreased
E.7	What percentage of the community has insufficient wages to cover basic needs (food, shelter, education, healthcare)?						<input type="checkbox"/> Today	<input type="checkbox"/> Before the crisis (3 years ago)	
E.8	In the last 3 years in your village, how would you describe changes in rent costs?						<input type="checkbox"/> Lower rents	<input type="checkbox"/> No Change	<input type="checkbox"/> Much higher rents (past inflation)
E.9	Roughly speaking, and on average for a single family home/apartment, what is the cost of rent?						<input type="checkbox"/> Minimum Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> High Quality/Luxury
G HUMANITARIAN AID									
G.1	Have any humanitarian agencies operated in your village?						<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
	If yes, who did they assist? (check all that apply)						<input type="checkbox"/> Syrians	<input type="checkbox"/> Lebanese	<input type="checkbox"/> Palestinians
							<input type="checkbox"/> Other		
G.2	To the best of your knowledge, which humanitarian actors have been active in your village?								
	<input type="checkbox"/> ACTED	<input type="checkbox"/> DRC	<input type="checkbox"/> NRC	<input type="checkbox"/> Solidarites International	<input type="checkbox"/> Save the Children				
	<input type="checkbox"/> OXFAM	<input type="checkbox"/> World Vision	<input type="checkbox"/> etc. etc. (all major INGOs in Akkar listed)						
G.3	For each actor, what sectors have they been working in?								
	<input type="checkbox"/> WASH	<input type="checkbox"/> Shelter	<input type="checkbox"/> Livelihoods	<input type="checkbox"/> Education					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Protection	<input type="checkbox"/> Etc. etc. (sector list)			<input type="checkbox"/> Psychosocial support (counseling/therapy, etc...)				
G.4	Do village residents (all) feel that assistance has helped some groups more than others?						<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Syrians	<input type="checkbox"/> Lebanese	<input type="checkbox"/> Palestinians	<input type="checkbox"/> Specific Syrian groups					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Specific Lebanese groups		<input type="checkbox"/> Specific regions, municipalities, or villages						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Specific classes and occupations		<input type="checkbox"/> Specific businesses						
G.5	What gaps, if any, have you identified in the humanitarian response?								
	<input type="checkbox"/> Geographic coverage		<input type="checkbox"/> Coordination		<input type="checkbox"/> Coverage for Lebanese				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Material coverage		<input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy		<input type="checkbox"/> None				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Coverage for non LBN vulnerable groups		<input type="checkbox"/> Response time	<input type="checkbox"/> Vulnerable Lebanese groups					
I NOTES / COMMENTS									



## Annex 3: Focus Group Discussion Form

### A. Preliminary Information

A.1	Name of Facilitator		
A.2	Name of Note taker		
A.3	Cadastral		
A.4	Village		
A.5	P-code		
A.6	Discussion Site (Community centre, school, PHC, CBD venue, etc.)		
A.7	Respondent demographics (Lebanese, Syrians, women, men, youth 15-24, etc.)		
	Age	Gender	Nationality

### B. Challenges:

B.1 What are the three greatest needs/challenges facing your community?

### C. Basic Services Access

C.1 Which utilities/basic services (water supply, wastewater management, solid waste management, electricity) do community members face the greatest challenge in accessing? What are ways that access could be improved?

Challenge/Concern	Cause	Potential Solution	Outlook
Water Supply			
Electricity			
Waste water management			
Solid waste management			

C.2 In your opinion, which of these services is under the most strain?

### D. Social Services

D.1 Which social services (healthcare, education, other social support) do community members have difficulty accessing? What are ways that access could be improved?

Challenges/Concern	Cause	Potential Solutions	Outlook
Healthcare			
Education			
Other Social Services			

D.2 In your opinion, which of these is under the most strain?

## E. Security

E.1 What are top three safety concerns in this community?

Challenges/Concern	Cause	Potential Solutions	Outlook
1.			
2.			
3.			

E.2 Since the crisis (or shorter if refugees) which of the challenges identified have been improving? Which has gotten worse?

E.3 Do community members feel safe? Why or why not?

## F. Tensions

F.1 Do you feel welcome in the community? Do others feel welcome in the community? OR Are there tensions in the community? Do you think this is improving or getting worse?

F.2 What are some of the reasons why you or others don't feel welcome?

Challenge/Concern	Cause	Potential Solutions	Outlook
1.			
2.			
3.			

F.3 What do you expect will happen to these sources of tension in the future? And why? (i.e. get worse, get better, stay the same, disappear etc)

F.4 Do you feel that dispute resolution is adequate in this community?

F.4 Have attitudes towards hosting refugees improved or deteriorated?

## G. Economy/Livelihoods

G.1 What are the greatest economic challenges in your community? Do you feel that the economy is getting better or worse?

G.2 What are ways in which the economic situation could be improved?

## H. Humanitarian response

H.1 Are you aware of any humanitarian organizations working in your community? If so, have they made a positive contribution to the community? If so, how? If not, why not?

H.2 What can the humanitarian community do to better address gaps and needs in the community?