



# Situation Update # 1

## southern Syria

### Needs

An estimated 1,077,371 people live in the two governorate of southern Syria - Dara and Quneitra. Out of this, an estimated 954,726 people are in Dara governorate and 122,575 people are in Quneitra governorate. Food Security Sector's updated data in June (2018) estimates that in both these governorates there are approximately 466,560 food insecure people and 533,799 people at risk of food insecurity which makes the sector's People in Need 93% of the total population in southern Syria.

#### Dara

Population		People in Need (acute + at risk)	
HNO 2018 (September 2017)	898,910	HNO 2018 (September 2017)	628,861
MYR 2018 (June, 2018)	954,725	Draft MYR 2018 (June, 2018)	885,808

#### Quneitra

Population		People in Need (acute + at risk)	
HNO 2018 (September 2017)	1,000,561	HNO 2018 (September 2017)	79,659
MYR 2018 (June, 2018)	1,022,575	Draft MYR 2018 (June, 2018)	114,551

### Preparedness

The Inter Sector Groups of Jordan (Cross Border) and Syria have prepared a contingency plan outlining four possible scenarios for southern Syria and humanitarian planning assumptions, including a potential deterioration of security situation due to GoS offensive. Based on stock updates received from WFP and 9 sector partners, the Food Security Sector's preparedness is summarized below from both Jordan and Syria hubs:

Hub	Planning assumption	Preparedness - STOCK		
		Immediate assistance (RTERs)	Second Level Assistance (Food Rations, MPCG)	Bread (through bakery)
Jordan	Up to 170,000 IDPs in NSAG areas	25,000 RTERs sufficient for 125,000 people	69,000 packages/households sufficient for 345,000 people	Sufficient for 250,000 people
Syria	Up to 95,000 IDPs in GoS areas	35,000 RTERs sufficient for 175,000 people	57,800 Food Rations sufficient for 289,000 people	

NOTE: The stock is being updated with new information. The stock may be used for repeated distributions (especially for Food Rations).



## Current Situation

Since 17 June, hostilities in southern Syria have been escalating, with heavy artillery and aerial shelling to NSAG areas, particularly in north-eastern Dar'a and to a lesser degree in western Dar'a in the Hara and Kafr Shamis area. There are also reports of retaliatory shelling hitting GoS-controlled areas, including in Dar'a and Sweida.

As per reports received on 22 June the targeted locations were Hrak, Bisir Al Harir, Mseifra, Eastern Gariyah, Nahta and Mjdeil and Meskia in Lajat. In northeastern rural Dar'a; Aqraba, Mal, and Tiha, Hara, and Namar. Meanwhile, armed opposition shelling targeted GoS positions in Dor, Smad, Sakaka, and Deir Eladas. Armed opposition groups also targeted GoS military convoys on the road between Kherbet Ghazala and Izra. On 23 June, the targeted locations were Bisr Al Harir, Shyah and Maskya in Lajat, Mjeidel in Lajat, Hrak, Mseifra and Karak. Reports also indicate that GoS is attempting to advance towards Lajat to separate it from the east side of Dara'a, however there is no change of control in territory so far. In response, armed opposition groups are likely to initiate an offensive against GoS forces in Dar'a city, Kherbet Ghazala, Sheikh Miskine, and Izra'. Also of note, unknown actors reportedly targeted Government of Syria-controlled As-Sweida city with mortar shells.

Initial reports also indicate that prices are hiking in West dara'a, this includes fuel, diesel, gas and food as a result of immediate increased in taxation and monopoly. Markets are expected to deteriorate in the coming weeks as supply routes may get cut off. However, all commercial roads are currently open.

Commercial roads status East Dara'a

- Sweidah road totally closed from resupplying markets
- GHerbet Ghazalah: gharia west totally closed from resupplying markets
- Gherbet ghazala- dael: still open but noticeable customs/tax hikes
- Kafar sham- deir bakhat: still open but noticeable customs/tax hikes

Furthermore, three checkpoints to Dara'a are currently open; only 3 of the 7 checkpoints to Sweida are partially open to IDPs.

## IDP Response



1- Picture Credit – WFP/AFAK

Since 20 June, triangulating data from various sources it is estimated that around 6,389 households (approximately 32,000 people) are currently reported to be displaced in 36 villages and 9 camp locations in the NSAG controlled areas. These villages and camps are located in the sub districts of Dara, Hrak, Bushra Esh Sham, Jijeh, Msfeira and Kherbet Gazala in Eastern Dara; Jasim and Nawa sub districts in Western Dara; and Al Kashniyeh, Khan Arnaba, Quneitra and Fiq sub districts in Quneitra.

Each organization verifies these numbers on ground and based on that distributes assistance. Therefore, there is a difference between the number of households reported to be displaced and the number of households verified and assisted by location.

In the GoS areas, reportedly 100 families have arrived and more information is awaited on their needs.

From Jordan hub, WFP is the only organization that has responded within 48 hours of displacement. As of 23 June, WFP reached distributed 3024 Read to Eat Rations (people) in 21 locations including 4 camps. Thus a total of 15,722 IDPs have been verified and assisted by WFP out of the estimated 32,000 people reported to have been displaced as of now.



The rapid needs assessments (RNA) conducted by WFP indicate that the main coping strategies for the communities were reducing the number of meals, relying on less preferred food and borrowing food. Food is occasionally available and mostly purchased from main shops or road vendors in the villages where the assessment was conducted in Dara and Quneitra. Some food items, such as meat, fruit and pulses were reported to be not available, especially in the camps. Moreover, the assessments indicated that although food was available in most areas, it is not affordable and was reported as expensive. These findings were mostly noted in Quneitra and for food items such as meat, dairy products and fruit. The RNAs showed that the main priorities reported by the communities were security, food, shelter, water, fuel and clothes.

Note: Some reports indicate that the significant vegetables production in the west can no longer move to Damascus and thus the affected farmers may sell vegetables at very low prices thus incurring losses.

## Challenges and Recommendations

- All sector partners with stock are requested to expedite their pre-positioning to be able to respond to scale.
- As markets may deteriorate, assistance reliant on local procurements or cash transfers should be expedited.
- Karak, in the North Eastern part of Dara, with an estimated 400 IDP households currently remains inaccessible due to insecurity.
- Concerns around accessing other villages around that area remain.
- Partners have also reported that the security situation in Aqraba area remains volatile.
- Due to the fluidity of the situation tracking IDP movements as well as verifying such data is challenging. Thus, various data/information is being triangulated by the sector for operational partners to verify that on ground.
- The sector recommends that operational partners ensure alignment with the sector endorsed guidelines for working with Local Councils, response packages and safe distribution processes.
- As fuel and food prices are reported to be going high, partners are requested to monitor and share price data with the sector.