

SYRIA EDUCATION SECTOR ANALYSIS

The effects of the crisis on education in areas controlled by the Government of Syria, 2010-2015

Whole of Syria Education Focal Point
وحدة تنسيق التعليم لكل سوريا

Syria Education Sector Working Group
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Acronyms

4Ws	Who has done What, Where and When
CBS	Central Bureau for Statistics
CLC	community learning centre
DoE	Directorate of Education
EiE	education in emergencies
EMIS	education management information system
ESWG	Education Sector Working Group
GER	gross enrolment ratio
GPI	gender parity index
INEE	International Network for Education in Emergencies
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
IT	information technology
K-G9	kindergarten to Grade 9
K-G12	kindergarten to Grade 12
MENARO	Middle East and North Africa Regional Office
MoE	Ministry of Education
NGO	non-governmental organization
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
STR	student-to-teacher ratio
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNPD	United Nations Population Division
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
WASH	water, sanitation and hygiene
WoS	Whole of Syria
WOSA	Whole of Syria Assessment

Abbreviated titles

About the Crisis	Syrian Arab Republic: Regional overview – About the crisis. OCHA. (July 2015)
CP Issues	Child protection priority issues in Syria: Desk review. (June 2013)
CP Assessment	Syria child protection assessment. Global level Child Protection Working Group. (February to May 2013)
Displaced Syrians	Displaced Syrians in informal settlements within Syria and in neighbouring countries. Regional thematic report. REACH. (August 2014)
Dynamo	Dynamic monitoring report. Dynamo, Issue no. 3 and 4. ACU, Syrian Arab Republic. Two separate reports. (July 2014 and March 2015, respectively)
Economic Loss	Economic loss from school dropout due to the Syria crisis: A cost-benefit analysis of the impact of the Syria crisis on the education sector. UNICEF. (2015)
Education Interrupted	Syria crisis: Education interrupted – Global action to rescue the schooling of a generation. UNICEF, World Vision, UNHCR, and Save the Children. (December 2013)
EFA 2014	Education for all global monitoring report, 2013/4: Teaching and learning – Achieving quality for all. UNESCO. (2013 to 2014)
EFA 2015	Education for All global monitoring report, 2000 to 2015: Achievements and challenges. UNESCO. (2015)
Futures Under Threat	Futures under threat: The impact of the education crisis on Syria's children. Save the Children. (2014)
HNO	Syrian Arab Republic: 2015 humanitarian needs overview. OCHA. (November 2014)
HRC	Oral update of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic. Human Rights Council. (16 June 2014)
HRP 2016	Syrian Arab Republic Humanitarian Response Plan. OCHA. (2016)
Idleb Report	Syrian Arab Republic: Idleb situation report Numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4. Four separate reports. OCHA. (2 to 6 April, 7 to 14 April, 15 to 12 April, and 23 April to 6 May 2015, respectively)
INEE	INEE: Minimum standards for education: Preparedness, response, recovery. 2nd edition. (2010)
PSS	Psychosocial support in emergencies: Critical for Syrian children. War Child Holland. (2013).
Rapid Assessment	Rapid public school assessment in Syria: Thematic assessment report prepared by ACU Information Management Unit. ACU. (November 2014)
Regional Plan	Syria regional response plan strategic overview: Mid-year update 2014. (July 2014)
RAS	Regional analysis Syria, Part 1 – Syria. SNAP. (July 2014)
Safe No More	Safe no more: Students and schools under attack in Syria. Human Rights Watch. (June 2013).
SHARP	Syrian Arab Republic Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan. (December 2013 and July 2014)
SHO	Response plan for the Syrian humanitarian operations from Turkey. July 2014-June 2015. (July 2014 to June 2015)

SINA	Syria integrated needs assessment: Complementary operational analysis report. Two separate assessments. ACU. (December 2013 and 24 January 2014)
Situation Report	Syria crisis: Bi-weekly humanitarian situation report. (13 to 27 June 2013)
Squandering Humanity	Syria: Squandering humanity – Socioeconomic monitoring report on Syria. Combined third and fourth quarter report. UNDP, UNRWA and SCPR. (May 2014)
SRRP	Syria Regional Response Plan: Strategic overview. Mid-year update. (2014)
Stolen Futures	Stolen futures: The hidden toll of child casualties in Syria. Oxford Research Group. (November 2013)
Too Young to Wed	Too young to wed: The growing problem of child marriage among Syrian girls in Jordan. Save the Children. (2014)
Under Siege	Under siege: The devastating impact on children of three years of conflict in Syria. UNICEF. (March 2014)
UNHCR	Syria Regional Refugee Response: Inter-agency information sharing portal. UNHCR. (2016)
UNICEF Briefing	UNICEF Syria briefing note: Education. (July 2014)
UNICEF Curriculum	Curriculum, accreditation and certification for Syrian children in Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. Regional study. UNICEF. (March 2015)
UNICEF Lebanon	Lebanon: Education rapid needs assessment for displaced Syrian children in schools, community and safe spaces. UNICEF Education Needs Assessment – Lebanon. (July 2012).
UNICEF Syria	Syrian Arab Republic: Rapid education assessment report. UNICEF Education Needs Assessment – Syria. (December 2012)
UNICEF Za'atari	Sector Working Group. UNICEF Education Needs Assessment – Za'atari. (April 2013)
UNSC 2139	United Nations Security Council Resolution 2139. (22 February 2014)
UNSC 2165	United Nations Security Council Resolution 2165. (14 July 2014)
UNSC 2191	United Nations Security Council Resolution 2191. (17 December 2014)
Untold Atrocities	Untold atrocities: The stories of Syria's children. Save the Children, n.d.



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Executive Summary

Five years after the Syrian crisis began in March 2011, an estimated 13.5 million people are now in need of some form of humanitarian assistance. A total of 6.5 million people, of which 2.8 million are children, has been internally displaced.[1] Almost 4.2 million people, 1.4 million of which are school-age children, have left the country as refugees.[2] If children do not return to school, the loss of human capital formation due to the increased dropout from school could reach US$10.7 billion, or 17.7 per cent of Syria's 2010 gross domestic product.[3] Indeed, the economy has contracted by more than 40 per cent since the crisis began. The literature estimates that life expectancy has reduced by almost 13 years, and that, thus far, Syria's development has regressed by as much as four decades.[4]

The crisis has deeply impacted children and their ability to access high quality education with equity. In October 2015, 5.4 million school age children were in need of humanitarian assistance.[5] Education, as well as other social services, have been compromised by the crisis through the destruction of infrastructure, population shifts, loss of life and consequent distress.

This document thus seeks to describe the current state of education in areas controlled by the Government of Syria using three sources of data: (1) education census data; (2) survey results from 59 schools; and (3) relevant literature written on the subject. Because the circumstances within Syria are neither static nor homogeneous, any remedial interventions proposed require further investigation and should, in all cases, be contextualized appropriately for the circumstances at that time and for that area.

Part I Quantitative Analysis

Using the Government of Syria's education management information system (EMIS) and other data reporting services, researchers conducted a quantitative analysis examining the impact of the crisis on enrolment, the availability of facilities, the quality of facilities, effects on education personnel and on Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries from 2011 to 2015.

Enrolment. Out-of-school children ratios, gross enrolment ratios (GER) and the number of students at risk of repeating grades or dropping out were acquired. To obtain these metrics, the study uses the out-of-school children's conceptual framework formulated by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).[6] Because not all Syrian governorates and districts reported to the Ministry of Education (MoE) throughout the entire study period, the study accounted for data uncertainties by making three sets of calculations, each of which assumed different levels of functionality within districts: (1) none of the schools in an unreported area are functioning; (2) 25 per cent of schools are functioning; and (3) 50 per cent of schools are functioning.[7] The analysis shows that 2.1 million children inside Syria are out of school in K-G12, of which 1.4 million are in K-G9.

1 HRP 2016.

2 Based on data reported by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on the number of refugees in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. Number of children based on age cohort 5-17 years.

3 Economic Loss.

4 HRP 2016.

5 HNO.

6 The framework proposes five dimensions to help one fully understand all the ways in which children can be considered out of school: Children not in pre-primary school (Dimension 1); children of primary and lower secondary school age who attended but dropped out, will enter late or will never enter school (Dimensions 2 and 3); and primary and lower secondary school students at risk of dropping out (respectively, Dimensions 4 and 5).

7 Indeed, since the beginning of the crisis, the total number of schools reporting education statistics to the MoE decreased by about 12,000 (from 22,113 to 10,111) from the 2011/12 to the 2014/15 school years, with basic education schools making up about 9,000 of this decrease. An MoE survey of basic education schools found that 1,200 schools were damaged, used as shelters or destroyed. The survey also reported 1,500 schools deemed inaccessible. Moreover, the MoE was unable to conduct any assessment whatsoever for approximately 800 schools.

The number of school-age Syrian refugees increased drastically from 2011 to 2015. In October 2012, approximately 100,000 refugees of school age were reported. As of September 2015, this number had increased thirteen-fold: There are now 1.3 million school-age Syrian refugees estimated. This indicates that, of all the Syrian children accounted for prior to the crisis, 20 per cent have become displaced.[8] In terms of their enrolment, the refugee out-of-school-children rate is somewhat encouraging in that it has continually decreased from October 2012 to June 2015, reduced from 73 per cent to 53 per cent. However, in terms of absolute numbers, the vast influx of refugees into neighbouring countries still means the number of out-of-school refugee children is very high. In October 2012, there were 27,000 out-of-school refugee children (out of 99,000 total refugee children). As of June 2015, there are 627,000 out-of-school refugee children (out of 1.3 million total refugee children). Thus, continuing efforts are needed from both recipient countries and other stakeholders to address the needs of an increasing Syrian refugee population.

For non-refugee children, if one uses the most likely assumption (25 per cent of schools in the unreported areas are still functioning), the 2014/15 kindergarten to Grade 12 GER was 60 per cent, meaning almost 40 per cent of school-age Syrian children within the country were not attending school.[9] The majority of enrolment losses (2.1 million) occurred in basic education (Grades 1 through 9), with particularly high losses from the Aleppo (0.9 million) and Deir-ez-Zor (0.4 million) governorates. If one calculates the national GER only for basic education, 78.1 per cent of children are enrolled. This number is alarming, for it is far worse than even the earliest recorded value for basic education GER in 1996 (91.72 per cent). Essentially, the war set back educational progress by more than two decades.

Currently, approximately 1.4 million children are estimated to be at risk of repeating grades, or one in three children.[10]

Outside of basic education, one will find that even though the figures are rather small in terms of absolute numbers, the percentage drops are serious. Kindergarten and vocational secondary enrolment fell by 89 per cent and 64 per cent, respectively.

For Palestine refugees within Syria, basic education schools run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) saw 40,000 pupils drop out (60 per cent) from 2011/12 to 2013/14. During this same period, 62 schools closed, with the majority of school closures occurring in Damascus (31 closures, or 50 per cent of total closures) and Rural Damascus (19 closures, or 30 per cent of total closures). Surprisingly, student-to-staff ratios in UNRWA schools fell nationwide. Indeed, all school districts throughout Syria, with the exception of three, reported a decrease in student-to-staff ratios. The exceptions were: Al-Kaboon school district in Damascus Governorate (with an increase of six students for every staff member), Governorate Centre in Rural Damascus Governorate (increase of 12) and Palmyra in Homs Governorate (increase of 16).

Regarding the country's heterogeneity, it should be noted that Damascus and Aleppo governorates contain districts with both substantial increases and decreases in enrolment and school numbers from 2010/11 to 2013/14. Thus, to re-emphasize: The heterogeneous impact of the crisis across and within governorates means that any targeted responses must be district-specific.

In the study's examination for gender disparities, the conflict appears to have affected girls and boys roughly equally in kindergarten, basic education and general secondary education. Vocational secondary schools, however, which historically exhibited a skewed gender ratio (0.73 girl-boy ratio in 2010/11), saw a substantial number of female dropouts, resulting in a 0.48 ratio in 2014/15. In many governorates, this reduction in female enrolment was dramatic. Quneitra's girl-boy ratio dropped from 1.33 in 2010/11 to 0.38 in the 2014/15. Rural Damascus saw a similar dramatic decrease, falling from 1.11 in 2010/11 to 0.55 in 2014/15.

[8] The 20 per cent figure was drawn from comparing the current 1.3 million school-age refugees with the pre-war school-age population of 6.5 million.

[9] Total children is 5.4 million, with 3.2 million enrolled and 2.1 million unenrolled.

[10] It should be noted that this estimation relies on historical data and does not identify the determinants for being at risk of dropping out. Hence, a follow-up study should be conducted to determine not only why so many children were not attending school, but also examine reasons for repetition and dropping out. This information will be crucial to restoring universal basic education in Syria.

In the study's quantitative assessment of educational personnel, it was found that nationally, student-to-staff ratios decreased for kindergarten and basic education, from 18.0 to 14.6 and 17.1 to 15.3, respectively. For general and vocational secondary education, student-staff ratio increased, from 8.7 to 10.4 and from 4.8 to 5.2, respectively. In absolute numbers, Aleppo saw the sharpest decline of educational personnel. In normal circumstances, a lower student-to-staff ratio is associated with higher teaching quality, as each child potentially has access to more staff and teacher time. However, in this case, these statistics should be used with caution, as the qualitative findings demonstrated overcrowded classrooms as a prevalent concern. The lower student-staff ratios found in the quantitative section could derive from a slower "delisting" of the staff that have left the school, and the lower number of children per school.

There were few significant differences in the availability of specific school facilities (libraries, information technology – or IT – rooms and science laboratories) pre- and post-crisis. The most notable decreases were in IT rooms and laboratories per school at the general secondary level. However, the number of classrooms per school dropped by 0.5 to 1.0 per school in all categories except basic education. Even though a decrease of half a classroom per school may not seem substantial, when multiplied across more than ten thousand schools, it means that there are now 700 less classrooms for use that there would be otherwise. As a consequence, this exacerbates overcrowded classrooms and decreases the supply capacity of the system as a whole.

Part II Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative information in this report is drawn from two sources: Primary data extracted from surveys and supplemental information from secondary data sources found in the available literature. The surveys from which primary data were gathered covered 59 schools.[11]

The qualitative analysis is structured around the five domains and the corresponding standards set forth by the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), which proposes what is an acceptable minimum educational standard, even during an emergency. The first domain, the "foundational standards," involves community participation, community coordination and community analysis. The second domain covers "access and learning environment", setting three minimum standards: Equal access; protection and well-being; and facilities and services. Thirdly, the domain of "teaching and learning" sets four minimum standards: Curricula; training, professional development and support; instruction and learning processes; and assessment and learning outcomes. The fourth domain, "teachers and other education personnel", covers recruitment and selection, conditions of work, and support and supervision. Finally, the fifth domain of "education policy" sets two standards: Law and policy formulation, as well as planning and implementation.[12]

Surveys were conducted at the end of April 2015. Structured interviews were conducted with key informants and school principals. Structured focus group discussions were held with teachers, parents and children. Enumerators from the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) and the Ministry of Education (MoE) collected and submitted data. The exercise was supported by the Damascus-based Education Sector Working Group (ESWG).[13]

[11] This study used purposive and convenience sampling methods to preserve the safety of enumerators. Because random sampling methods were not used, generalizations to the sub-district or district level would not be statistically valid. It is likely that the information provided by respondents will be typical of many more schools in the country, but the relevance of interventions based on such data should be mentioned before implementation.

[12] See: http://www.ineesite.org/en/minimum-standards

[13] Three-quarters of the key informants were male, as were half of the principals. Forty-eight of the teachers' groups were mixed, while 11 were female-only. All but seven of the parents' groups were mixed, four had only female representation and three only males. Fifty-four per cent of the participants in children's groups were girls.

In government-controlled areas, parents and children were asked to list changes they noted over the past four years. The most frequently occurring answers, ordered from most frequent to less frequent, were:

1 Decline in living standards;
2 Deterioration in education;
3 Security and safety;
4 Displacement and immigration; and
5 Increases in levels of trauma.

Also noticed, but not to the same extent as the above, were: A decline in in social values and relations; declines in children's behaviour; and the spread of disease and inadequacy of health services.

Community participation

In many areas, the wider community has changed throughout the course of the conflict. The departure of large numbers of people and the arrival of displaced persons have redefined the community's social fabric. Because members may not "recognize" their community or feel familiar and at ease with their surroundings, localities may require external assistance in building a new identity. Schools are firmly rooted within communities. Thus, a strong, positive sense of communal identity is essential if members are to feel motivated to and proactive in addressing educational needs.

Indeed, parents tended to only see a responsibility for their children, and in general, did not show an awareness of the need to work with other parents in the interest of the school. In the wider community, there was evidence of providing tangible aid to schools, most often in the form of repairing buildings and providing stationery. Sector coordinating bodies should prepare guidelines for activating communities. Capacity building might be needed to unlock the capacity of parents and of the wider community.

Coordination

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has been coordinating donor and non-governmental organization (NGO) efforts in various sectors across Syria. For the education sector, the ESWG in Damascus and the Education Cluster in Gaziantep, Turkey, have played major roles. The sound coordination among organizations made possible rapid responses to urgent needs, such as quickly creating "school bag kits" and "school in a box" items sufficient for 12,000 displaced children two weeks after an upsurge in conflict.

Overall, programmed aid activities by international and NGO players are limited by available financial and human resources, and they may have to be further cut if donors do not meet their pledges. In mid-2014, the Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan (SHARP), for example, was funded at only 26 per cent of overall requirements. The Syria HRP, by December 2015, was funded only 43 per cent.

Response plan coordination is improving, albeit with challenges. In 2015, a unified Whole of Syria (WoS) plan replaced and harmonized the separate initiatives that had previously been developed. It was hoped that this would lead to long-term and predictable funding for aid programmes. However, because the number of school-age children who require help keeps escalating, it is unlikely that funding models will be sustainable year after year.

Regarding coordination between Syrian authorities and civilians, respondents expressed that the Directorate of Education (DoE) in each governorate play a stronger role in meeting common school needs, such as providing psychosocial counselling, furniture, equipment and "communicating with students' parents". The latter need suggests that the DoEs have not been communicating relevant information to schools and its attendant communities. However, given that there are no further details, respondents should be more specific about the information they believe they ought to be receiving to help the DoE serve them.

Schools tended to look to donors and NGOs for material support, such as the repairing/rehabilitation of facilities, providing textbooks and supplies, and providing financial support. Both national and international NGOs have been providing school necessities to children and funding school clubs to increase recreational and learning opportunities.

Analysis

Intuitively, realistic planning depends on a sound analysis of needs. Unfortunately, the state of education needs assessment in Syria requires improvement. The MoE's annual education census has lost access to a large number of schools since the crisis began, resulting in large gaps in data.

Since 2010, all other education assessments used sampling approaches that do not permit generalization for whole geographical areas. Of the assessments conducted, partners routinely submitted summary data through the "4Ws" approach: Who has done What, Where and When? This reporting, however, lacks a qualitative dimension. Partners need to share positive and negative lessons learned during implementation to replicate good practices, scale up the most effective practices and eliminate inefficiencies. While input data, and to some extent output data, are routinely provided for aid programmes, outcome data are scanty.

Several secondary documents available on education were compiled for advocacy purposes. Advocacy can be improved by more comprehensive analysis of the education situation.

Equal access

Prior to the crisis, school enrolment was high: Primary grade enrolment was described as almost universal, while secondary enrolment was reportedly 76 per cent on average. However, enrolment data from the annual education census, adjusted for the non-responding schools, showed a 44 per cent drop in enrolment between 2010/11 and 2014/15, with a slight increase in the proportion of female students. The quantitative analysis[14] used in this study calculates that 2.1 million school-aged children were out of school during the 2014/15 school year.[15] This general picture is complicated by geographical variations and by fluctuations over time. Because of these dramatic changes, it was important to examine how, and if, any populations were disproportionately affected by the crisis.

Seven schools (out of 51) reported a drop-out rate above 20 per cent. Prior to the crisis, only one of the schools had fallen in this category, demonstrating that the crisis is affecting schools under the Government's control.

Survey respondents identified the following as the main reasons children are out of school:

1. The need for children to work and supplement the family income;
2. Safety considerations (the school itself is dangerous, or travel to and from school is dangerous);
3. Supply-oriented factors, such as the lack of facilities or perceptions that tuition is of poor quality; and
4. Demand-oriented factors, such as poverty and trauma, which reduce the level of priority given to education.

The children's discussion groups attributed most of dropouts to poor living conditions. For children, they perceived other factors, such as parental negligence, security, displacement and a lack of interest in studying as playing a lesser role.

[14] Part II of this report.

[15] The literature covering the period of the crisis provides different estimates of the number of out-of-school children. However, this study utilizes a rather transparent method, generating enrolment numbers based on three different assumptions (None of the schools in unreported areas are functioning, 25 per cent are functioning and 50 per cent are functioning).

It appears that female student enrolment was not more seriously affected than that of boys. Regarding enrolment patterns among age groups, there was no clear explanation in differences of enrolment patterns between younger and older children. Younger children seemed to be enrolled at lower rates than older children, which is surprising, as older children are more likely to be pulled out of school to work and generate income.

The latest data in the literature report that over the first three years of the crisis, the consumer price index (CPI) in education increased by 74 per cent. By the end of 2013, almost half of the population fled their homes, with 54 per cent living in extreme poverty and 20 per cent in abject poverty. Due to these trends in movement and poverty, the literature reports that education for many families is "not a priority", not because they do not value education, but because of more pressing needs. As a result, the literature states the demand for education has decreased, which may explain the increase of out-of-school children. Additionally, the lack of a healthy diet and poor health might keep children away from school.[16] There were also reports of children having to work to supplement the family income.

The literature also illuminates other factors that may contribute to children not attending school: The unavailability of school buildings. Prior to the conflict, more than 22,000 schools were available. Since the conflict began, classrooms have been destroyed or damaged, and school buildings have been repurposed to serve other operations, such as community shelters. Abandonment is also an issue, in which functional buildings are no longer in use because the community has been displaced. The literature shows that these problems continue to persist and become more serious. In December 2012, 2,400 schools were reported as destroyed or damaged. In October 2013, the MoE reported 4,500 out-of-service schools. In areas surveyed across nine governorates in late 2014, 55 per cent of 7,118 schools were not functioning. In April 2015, reports of additional schools being converted to collective shelters were reported. In informal settlements, the non-attendance of children was linked to the lack of education facilities. In some areas buildings doubled up as schools and shelters, putting a strain on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities.

While the surveys do not completely line up with the topics presented by the literature above, the following findings can help supplement and nuance the above reports:

- Seventy-eight per cent of the 471 schools offered grades in the basic education range (Grades 1 to 9), while 23 per cent offered secondary grades (Grades 10 to 12).
- In 13 of the 59 neighbourhoods, fewer than three-quarters of the schools were functioning.
- All schools had water and sanitation facilities.
- In three neighbourhoods surveyed, more than a quarter of the schools had suffered severe damage. In 10 neighbourhoods, more than a quarter of the schools had suffered moderate damage. Only three key informants were aware of temporary learning spaces in their neighbourhoods.
- In the vast majority of surveyed schools within government-controlled areas (91 per cent), upwards of 80 per cent of school-aged children had been enrolled prior to the crisis. After four years, this was true of only 69 per cent of the neighbourhoods. Moreover, only three key informants were able to report that the nearest local school was well attended every day. They added that these schools regularly followed up on absent students.

The ability of displaced children to access education is of serious concern. Currently, across all schools in government-controlled areas, displaced children made up at least 20 per cent of total enrolment, 60 per cent of whom were girls. The large influx of displaced children has placed a strain on facilities and has thus made equal access to education difficult for these children. At 51 of the schools, displaced children have been required to take a placement test prior to admission because of these strains. Overall, principals acknowledged that 1,400 children, not necessarily of displaced families, had been turned away when they tried to enrol. The majority of school principals (60 per cent) saw no difference in attendance patterns between children of the host community and children of displaced families. Those who saw a difference attributed it to the lack of a settled home, to loss of interest in education or to economic conditions.

[16] There exists scientific evidence that nutrition plays an influential role in keeping children in school. This connection is why school feeding programmes have been introduced. For more information, please see: http://www.unicef.org/nutrition

Regarding children with disabilities, there also appears to be a general lack of facilities for them. In 2008, there were 32 centres for children with disabilities throughout the country. Fifty-three per cent of the surveyed schools in government-controlled areas had enrolled children with disabilities. Although the nature of the disabilities is not specified, no school claimed to have adapted instructional methods or made use of special teaching equipment for these children. It may be that the only disability catered to was restricted mobility.

Kindergarten or early childhood education received little mention when needs were identified, probably because this level of education was not extensively available prior to the crisis, and during the crisis, it was overshadowed by the need for basic and secondary education. Thirty-seven of the 59 surveyed government-controlled neighbourhoods had some provision for kindergarten.

"Equitable provision" requires sufficient, adequately repaired school buildings with access for physically disabled students. Buildings should be close enough to children's homes and accessible to both girls and boys. There should be qualified and competent staff with sufficient teaching equipment and materials for all the students in all the subjects taught.

Evening classes should be available to those of school age who have taken on day jobs. These should also cater to older children who may have very few years of schooling and who may be functionally illiterate. Those studying at home should have regular adult support and encouragement.

Protection and well-being

At the end of 2013, it was estimated that 11,400 children had been killed in the conflict, including children who were attending school at the time they were fatally injured. Schools have been deliberately attacked, and some have been converted for military use. Appeals by humanitarian actors to preserve schools as safe havens for children have gone unheeded. Safety concerns were serious among parents, children and teachers. The surveys on feelings of protection and well-being revealed the following:

- The vast majority of parents' groups in government-controlled areas (more than 80 per cent of the groups) identified poor security situation as the greatest risk facing children. The decline in health services was identified as the second most serious risk, and increases in negative behaviour within the community ranked third. Key informants agreed with parents on the top three risks.
- Recent unrest in the neighbourhood was reported by 36 per cent of the key informants. Effects of unrest in these and other neighbourhoods led, naturally, to feelings of insecurity and fear. However, unrest was identified as being related to the emergence of violence among students, reported by almost a quarter of the respondents. This points to an urgent need for psychosocial counselling.
- Dropping out of school and vandalizing schools were also reported as risks facing children.

In terms of safety experienced within the school community and school preparedness, enumerators in government-controlled areas found the following:

- Outside observers deemed that in 60 per cent of neighbourhoods, all or most of the schools provided a safe environment.
- In 22 per cent of neighbourhoods, less than half the schools appeared safe.
- Most key informants (88 per cent) judged their nearest school to be safe, although a smaller percentage (78 per cent) reported the nearest school had a safe play area. Almost all enumerators saw schools' play areas being used for collective sporting activities.
- According to principals, 19 per cent of the surveyed schools did not have a secure perimeter wall.
- Fifty-one per cent of the surveyed schools were described as "fully" weather protected.
- Few key informants had suggestions on how the school environment could be made safer beyond "fencing camps and paving roads" (14 per cent) and appointing psychosocial counsellors to the staff of schools (12 per cent).

- Parents (54 per cent of groups) believed they could minimize risk to their children by accompanying them to school or ensuring a secure transport arrangement. They also mentioned guidance and counselling, raising the question whether this was something they themselves could provide.
- Only eight per cent of the groups appeared aware of the importance of regular communication with the school on matters of security.
- While 85 per cent of principals did not believe their students were at risk of gender-based violence (GBV), four referred to the threat of kidnapping, three to girls subjected to violence by men and one to domestic violence.

Student well-being is inextricably related to school performance and engagement. When this subject was explored, it was found that, 93 per cent of principals reported that they noticed behavioural changes in the children at their schools. Yet, only 15 per cent of principals reported that counsellors provided services to students in all grades during school hours, and 10 per cent reported that guidance was given to all students "outside the curriculum". This highlights the large gap between the need for counselling and psychosocial support as a component of education and the currently low levels of provision.

The literature reports that many students are unable to concentrate in class due to trauma from various sources (witnessing violence, having family members injured or killed, or having to flee their homes). To ensure students benefit from their schooling, it is strongly recommended that both students and teachers be provided adequate psychosocial support.

Recreational and other extracurricular activities are helpful for children who have experienced trauma: They improve mental health, promote socialization and decrease children's sense of isolation. However, references to life skills, or risk education, provide little detail, and any intervention reported appears to be small scale.[17] In some areas, children were forbidden to play outside because there were no safe play areas. There was little reference to health and hygiene activities, and only five schools (out of 59) provided snacks to children.

Facilities and services

As the Syrian crisis continues with its frequent threats of fighting, shelling and bombardment, special attention and care should be paid to the quality of educational facilities and services.

Almost half of key informants listed infrastructure deterioration as a noticeable change. Indeed, they stated damaged schools should be rehabilitated and school overcrowding should be alleviated. Over a third of the principals responded that schools needed additional classrooms. Almost one third noted that maintenance work was required. These observations were supported by enumerators and children's groups.

All 59 of the surveyed neighbourhoods had water and sanitation facilities. At eight schools, water and sanitation facilities were shared by girls and boys. Seven schools had water and sanitation facilities with wheelchair access. Although water and sanitation facilities are available at all schools, a third of the principals stated they required rehabilitation. If water and sanitation facilities are in need of maintenance, it is most likely that the entire school is far from adequate. Indeed, eight schools had no handwashing facilities. Three neighbourhoods did not have electricity. Half of the surveyed schools had lost furniture and equipment to looting. Nearly a third of the principals reported a shortage of furniture and equipment.

With regards to educational services, 46 per cent of key informants believed schools had insufficient supplies of teaching and learning materials. Indeed, two-thirds of enumerators placed additional textbooks and teaching aids at the top of their list of school needs. Half of the schools expected parents to purchase learning materials, and half of the surveyed schools lost furniture and equipment to looting.

[17] In the current context of Syria, life skills education programming aims to increase self-esteem and peer support, eventually strengthening positive coping strategies in children

Shockingly, at three schools, parents were expected to purchase furniture. Parents unable to provide materials from their own resources appealed to charity, relatives or international aid organizations. A principal reported that students without materials shared with others, stole or worked after school for funds. Some simply attended without any materials.

Curricula

From 2008 to 2012, the Government of Syria phased in a new curriculum, with further modifications made to the Grade 8 curriculum. These changes, which took place as the crisis unfolded, have generated numerous challenges for teachers, students and parents. Overall, the literature reports a general dissatisfaction with the new curriculum, with many expressing the curriculum is too difficult and not reflective of Syrian society's richness and diversity.

In areas controlled by opposition groups, those who changed the curriculum were accused by some of undermining the concept of Syria as a national and geographic entity. For Syrian refugee children in neighbouring countries who hope to reintegrate into the national system upon their return to Syria, the curricula of their host countries might present challenges, as their certificates may not be recognized, the subject content they learned differs or because the language of instruction in the neighbouring country is different from that of Syria's.

In government-controlled areas, only the official curriculum is used. Respondents revealed that:

- Among key informants, 32 per cent believed that the curriculum and materials had been better before the crisis (presumably the curriculum before it was revised).
- Thirty per cent of key informants criticized the new curriculum for being too difficult. Of the parents' groups, 22 per cent noted the curriculum was difficult. Children's groups (24 per cent) linked the difficulty of the curriculum with the style of teaching.
- Fifty-three of the 59 principals reported their schools received guidelines on the curriculum and on using teaching and learning materials.
- Students said that the subjects they liked best were the Arabic language and mathematics. Liking the subject was linked mainly to the teaching style (86 per cent) or perceived importance (71 per cent) of the subject.

For children who left school without obtaining a Grade 12 certificate, parents wished that there had been vocational training opportunities available. In one publication, the practice of orienting failing students to vocational education was criticized as neither appropriate nor equitable. For this study, vocational education was not well canvassed and should be investigated further.

Initiatives helping out-of-school children catch up on work include remedial courses and self-learning programmes. These approaches tend to trim the curriculum to what may be regarded as "core" subjects. UNICEF cooperated with the MoE to adapt the UNRWA self-learning materials.

Training, professional development and support

Currently, the literature does not report how teachers are initially trained or provide data on teacher competence since the crisis began. There only exist mentions of organizations providing a small amount of training to teachers on pedagogy, education in emergencies (EiE) and psychosocial support.

According to the MoE, in the 2009/10 school year, the Ministry began in-service training with the new curriculum's phasing-in process, with the intention that every teacher would receive 36 hours of training annually. Currently, the programme does not appear to have been sustained, possibly because of the crisis.

According to principals, from 2011 to 2015, training opportunities were provided at 45 of the 59 surveyed schools in government-controlled areas. In 2015, 19 schools reported that they received training, with 18 in 2014, 3 in 2013 and 10 in 2012. A further 115 "courses" were reported without a clear indication of the year in which they were conducted. Seventy-seven per cent of the courses were provided by the MoE. The others were delivered by UNICEF, the Danish Refugee Council, the Boy Scout Organization and other NGOs.

Teachers also reported that short training courses in child-centred active learning were offered to staff.

Of the 59 schools surveyed, 41 schools provided training courses; 17 schools provided "other" courses.[18] Thirty-two teachers' groups felt the training courses were useful, while 20 groups felt they conferred no advantage, as what was learned could not be applied "due to current circumstances". Eighteen felt that their teaching competency was improved because they could prepare lessons better, and 12 thought the training helped them adapt to current circumstances.

Forty per cent of teacher respondents saw little relevance in the training courses that they attended. There is also scant evidence of teachers having benefited from NGO trainings.

Currently, UNICEF (with an international NGO) is planning and/or implementing trainings with 50 trainers on EiE topics and providing psychosocial support training to 60 teachers.

Instruction and learning processes

Schools exist to provide instruction and learning. Thus, every component of a school exists to allow teaching and learning to occur effectively and efficiently. However, since the crisis began, the literature reports that the quality of education has deteriorated, even in the safest areas.[19] Indeed, parents' groups named the poor quality of education as a primary reason for why students were not in school. Key informants echoed these thoughts, with a quarter expressing that teaching practices were better prior to the crisis.

The reasons offered for the decline in educational quality are varied. Teachers most often named overcrowding and multiple shifts (35 per cent), the culture and behaviour of the students (27 per cent), shortages of equipment and supplies (24 per cent) and the educational level (20 per cent) as challenges to their instructional quality. Principals and children supplemented the teacher's most common responses, naming overcrowding as a major challenge to quality learning. Indeed, key informants reported that close to 60 per cent of schools with which they were familiar had class groups in excess of 40 students. A difficult curriculum that required changes in teaching practices was also named as a challenge to providing quality education, with 28 per cent of teachers' groups naming this factor.

Teachers were asked how they solved certain challenges, such as addressing security issues, large classes, double shifts, the shifting behaviours and psychologies of students and other challenges. For all topics, teachers named "providing material and moral support" as their method to address difficulties, a somewhat unsatisfying answer. For example, it is not clear how providing moral support to students properly addresses large classrooms. Additionally, material and moral support are vague terms. Without specificities, the teacher responses indicate that they may not fully grasp, or have not fully thought about, the challenges facing them. There were some encouraging answers: 80 per cent of the groups named "activating the role of psychological and social counsellor" as their method of addressing behavioural problems and 71 per cent of groups named using "alternative methods" to address a lack of teaching equipment.

Of the schools surveyed, only two reported having combined classes: One had Grades 11 and 12 in one class, while another combined Grades 1 through 4 in a single class. While teaching combined classes (essentially, teaching multiple curricula simultaneously) would pose its own challenges, it is imagined that these challenge are also exacerbated by a large number of students.

Forty-seven per cent of surveyed schools ran double shifts, a frequency that reflects the literature. More than half of the schools (56 per cent) ran shifts of five hours; 15 per cent of schools ran longer shifts; and 29 per cent of schools had a school day of four hours or less. The survey data did not report what proportion of the school day (or shift) was used for teaching and what was used for other school programmes, such as assemblies or school announcements. In any case, these reports are concerning, as the ability to properly cover the curriculum, implement effective activities and ensure quality learning takes place is related to the amount of time available for instruction.

[18] The distinction between training courses and "other" courses is not clear.

[19] See UNRWA's "Alienation and Violence: Impact of Syria crisis report 2014", available at: http://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/alienation_and_violence_impact_of_the_syria_crisis_in_2014_eng.pdf

Using the EMIS data to measure the student-to-staff ratio of schools surveyed, the ratios did not exceed 25 in 52 of the 59 surveyed schools. The INEE identifies a student-to-teacher ratio of 40 as the limit for acceptable class size. While it may be encouraging that a majority of schools have a student-to-staff ratio that is less than 40, it must be remembered that overcrowded classes have been frequently cited by all survey participants. As aforementioned, key informants named 60 per cent of schools had classes in excess of 40 students, meaning some serious discrepancies exist. Thus, these EMIS figures should be evaluated with caution. Things to keep in mind are: The EMIS counts both teachers and administration without distinguishing among them in its data, meaning the number of teachers available is inflated (student-to-staff ratio, as opposed to student-to-teacher ratio). Moreover, these ratios are only meaningful if all teachers teach every day and have low absenteeism rates. On the other hand, it could be that some overcrowded claims, especially from teachers, are not justified. When respondents blame large classes on poor outputs, such as poor learning outcomes, it may be that class sizes are actually manageable and that a teacher's poor classroom management or poor pedagogy is the real issue. For example, two major challenges to classroom management relate to children who have re-entered school and are older than other students.

Textbook shortages were also reported. For Grades 1 through 4, approximately one quarter of schools did not have enough textbooks for every student in the four main subjects (Arabic, English, mathematics and science). This shortage increased slightly for Grades 5 through 9, in which 30 per cent of schools did not have enough textbooks for every student in the four main subjects. The survey only had data for four schools providing Grades 10 through 12. Of these four schools, only one had enough books for every student across the four main subjects.

When teachers were asked to suggest ways in which students' learning might be improved with resources currently available, they steered away from discussing improvements to be made within the classroom, with 40 per cent proposing remedial classes. The second most commonly named suggestion, the "activation" of teaching aids and equipment, leads one to wonder whether they were not using what was already available. Only 15 per cent named cooperating with parents (which ranked as the most infrequent suggestions) to improve student learning. For students who had missed school, teachers recommended the vague suggestion of "educational courses", which may mean remedial courses. Overall, the impression is that teaching deficits should be addressed through classes or courses presented by others.

Sixty-three per cent of surveyed schools reported that they offered remedial classes during the summer holidays of 2014. However, there was no indication that these reached all the children in need of such support, or that the students were "up to standard" by the end of the holidays. Another concern: If the availability of remedial work is delayed until the school holidays, students who are already behind during the school year will slip further behind in their work. Private tutoring, while an option, would be available only to those students whose parents could afford it.

Assessment and learning outcomes

Apart from the certificate examinations taken at the end of Grades 9 and 12, all students are evaluated at the end of the academic year for promotion to the following grade. Certificate examinations at the end of Grades 9 and 12 are normally taken at the students' own schools. However, many students have been displaced due to the crisis. Because of this, the MoE has made a concession that students in areas affected by the conflict are allowed to take their examinations at other centres.

Ninety-five per cent of key informants reported that, in their neighbourhood, students had been able to take the national examination at the end of Grade 9, and 92 per cent reported students had taken the Grade 12 examination. In 93 per cent of the neighbourhoods, the examination had been taken at the local school. Others had to complete exams at nearby schools or in another district.

Repetition rates for year-end examinations showed some deterioration since the crisis began. The repetition rate, as described by principals, remained within the 0 to 20 per cent band for 50 per cent of the school areas. This is a wide band; data did not allow more precise percentages to be calculated.



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After examining the MoE's statistics for the national certificate examinations and the number of successful candidates over a four-year period, it is clear that further investigation is required to truly understand the factors influencing examination statistics, especially pass rates:

- From 2011 to 2012, the number of exam takers for all major national certifications, Grade 9, Grade 12 Humanities and Grade 12 Science, increased (by 2 per cent, 16 per cent and 4 per cent, respectively). The pass rates from 2011 to 2012 increased substantially for all three exams (by 9 per cent, 16 per cent and 9 per cent, respectively).
- In 2013, the number of students taking the national examinations all decreased compared to the previous year, falling below 2011 levels, with 2011-to-2013 drops of 33 per cent, 15 per cent and 6 per cent (Grade 9, Grade 12 Humanities and Grade 12 Science, respectively). Yet, curiously, the pass rates of the national exams continued to increase, exceeding the 2011 pass rates. For the Grade 9 examination, the 2013 pass rate was 78 per cent (compared to the 2011 pass rate of 70 per cent). The 2013 Grade 12 Humanities and Grade 12 Science examinations pass rates were 63 per cent (from 55 per cent in 2011) and 92 per cent (from 73 per cent), respectively.
- In 2014, the number of students taking the Grade 9 and Grade 12 Humanities examinations increased, but did not meet 2011 levels. However, the number of Grade 12 Science exam takers spiked – the number of 2014 exam takers was higher than any of the preceding years, an unexpected finding.
- In 2015, the number of students taking each exam reached historic lows, with fewer students taking the exam than any of the previous years. Yet, pass rates remained relatively constant from the previous year, with 71 per cent passing the Grade 9 exam (three per cent decrease from 2014), 64 per cent passing the Grade 12 Humanities exam (one per cent decrease) and 77 per cent passing the Grade 12 Science exam (two per cent decrease).

As aforementioned, these trends require further investigation. With the well documented deterioration in almost all areas of education (facilities quality, equipment availability, materials availability, the proportion of qualified teachers, trauma experienced by students), a drop in the pass rate can readily be accounted for, but not for some improvements of the magnitude reflected in the MoE's data.

Repetition rates for year-end examinations showed an increase since the crisis began. Of the 57 neighbourhoods surveyed, prior to the crisis, only two neighbourhoods reported repetition rates above 20 per cent. Since the crisis began, this number has increased to nine neighbourhoods.

Recruitment and selection of teachers and other education personnel

The survey did not explore the criteria for selecting school staff, recruitment procedures or job descriptions.

According to the literature, recruiting teachers has been affected by displacement, challenges with remuneration, emigration and loss of life. In 2013, almost 500 educational workers were killed. Others were injured, kidnapped or arrested. Some teachers avoided schools for security and personal safety reasons. Some teachers were permitted to relocate to a school closer to their places of residence.

With regards to teacher quality, holding a formal qualification does not necessarily equate to actual competence. However, schools will normally desire a fully qualified staff, as this more likely ensures a higher number of competent teachers.

The majority of principals (70 per cent) reported that, within their school, over 90 per cent of their teachers were qualified.[20] However, a discrepancy exists between what principals report and what key informants perceive, as only 40 per cent of key informants reported this high level of qualified staff at their nearest school. When it comes to schools with a low number of qualified staff, the numbers are more consistent: Twelve per cent of principals and 17 per cent of key informants reported that, in their schools, fewer than half the teachers were qualified.

[20] "Qualified teachers" means that instructors hold all the correct formal requirements for teaching their assigned subjects and classes. Unqualified teachers may be unqualified in a number of ways: They may hold recognized university degrees and certifications, but not for the subjects they currently teach; some unqualified teachers may not have the proper prior teaching experience; some may have degrees related to their subjects but no training in being instructors. There are, naturally, other ways in which teachers are unqualified to instruct their assigned classes.

Enumerators judged that in 48 out of 59 neighbourhoods (81 per cent), at least three quarters of schools in the neighbourhood had sufficient staff. Nine neighbourhoods (15 per cent) did not have adequate staff at the majority of schools.

From a general perspective, 2,586 out of the 3,045 teachers (85 per cent) surveyed were both formally and properly qualified. Of the unqualified teachers, discussion groups revealed 18 per cent held a university or institute qualification and 76 per cent had attended training or "other" courses, presumably of short duration.

Twenty-one (out of 59) key informants were of the opinion that, at their "nearest school", more than 90 per cent of female teachers who had been at the school prior to the crisis were still able to work, but only 15 felt that this proportion of male teachers were still working. When key informants were asked why teachers employed before the crisis were no longer teaching, more than half of the respondents named emigration, displacement, or travel; two-fifths named security conditions and fear.

The literature broadly recommends that schools prioritize appointing sufficient, well-trained teachers. The literature also recommends international funds be allocated for recruiting additional teachers and teacher training. Schools wishing to appoint displaced teachers should have access to a database of teacher qualifications.

Conditions of work

The literature urges schools to continue assured payments to teachers, and, if possible, steps should be taken to assist teachers with maintaining their standard of living, particularly because the cost of essential commodities is escalating. Teachers perform vital work, and if their compensation does not help them maintain their purchasing power, they may cease to teach. On the flipside, the literature reports that some teachers attended non-functioning schools to continue receiving a salary, as a 15-day absence cuts the teacher off from payroll.

Key informants reported that teachers at 57 (out of 59) of their nearest schools were receiving their salaries. At the surveyed schools, 3,860 staff members received payments from the government and 165 received payments from another source. Only at two schools were salaries received late. Apart from some teachers being redeployed due to their community's displacement, principals did not note any substantive administrative problems.

Support and supervision

Support and supervisory mechanisms are important for maintaining teacher motivation and quality. However, the literature did not reveal any information on this aspect of education in Syria. When queried by the authors of this report, the MoE reported that within its plans to phase in a new curriculum, it envisioned that each teacher would receive 36 hours of cascade training annually, as well as a minimum of two classroom visits a year from a subject supervisor.

The survey revealed that supervisory visits during the 2013/14 and 2014/15 school years were conducted at just over half of the schools (32 out of 59 schools). Observers only evaluated the teaching process and teacher preparation in only 16 and 10 instances, respectively. According to the MoE's guidelines, each teacher should be visited by a subject supervisor at least twice every academic year. It would appear these guidelines are not being met.

The MoE provided short training courses in child-centred active learning methodologies to 14 schools; one DoE provided this training to 27. Ten schools received training from other government organizations or NGOs. Sixty-five teachers had attended training courses provided by 41 schools, while 24 attended "other" courses provided by 17 schools. Thirty-two groups thought the training courses were useful, while 20 groups said they provided no advantage.

Law and policy formulation

The survey did not directly address law and policy formulation. However, respondents illuminated a particular policy need: Students need to be able to take their examinations safely, and successful candidates should be able to receive recognized certificates allowing them to proceed to tertiary studies without having to put their lives at risk.

Education policy

The survey did not directly address law and policy formulation. In response to the crisis, the MoE relaxed its regulations on school uniforms, admission procedures and national examination regulations. To accommodate those who had lost their school records (and could consequently not prove their grades completed), as well as those unable to write examinations, the MoE administered placement tests for students seeking admission to new schools. Because schools have been closed and because the Government has lost control over schools, candidates have been permitted to take their exams outside of their assigned locations.

Planning and implementation

Providing education effectively during crises requires careful planning and implementation. Naturally, because it is uncertain how long the crisis will last and how it will unfold, detailed and realistic planning is understandably difficult. However, efforts are still under way. The most recent literature reports NGOs and international agencies are planning to address the immediate needs of Syrians, as well as some long-term planning. These plans include assisting with the availability of competent teaching, providing psychosocial support to students, the rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure, the provision of teaching and learning materials in sufficient quantities, and strategies to allow children to catch up on schooling they had missed and return to school or to engage in self-learning activities.

Donors' and sector partners' response

In 2014, the ESWG in Damascus and the Education Cluster in Gaziantep, Turkey, undertook multi-sectoral responses to the crisis. Both groups developed plans to address education and strengthening human capacities in the sector. In 2015, the planning processes were merged, with a joint process to be implemented jointly by both organizations. The 2015 Syria Strategic Response Plan required US$224 million, of which US$137 million was allocated for "priority" requirements.

The number of adult beneficiaries targeted in the 2014 plans totalled 22,000. This included trainers, teachers, and community workers. However, only 5,500 teachers were to be trained in skills which would be required for daily interaction with students in the classroom, with a further 1,600 trained in psychosocial support concepts. In the 2015 plan, the number of adult beneficiaries targeted rose significantly, from 22,000 to 480,000. The plans currently do not indicate what proportion will undergo "professional development".

Interventions to increase equitable access and improve the quality of education were proposed. Vocational training was included in the plans as well.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions and recommendations are based on a survey of a small number of schools selected for convenience, as well as observations in the literature which present, at best, purposive sampling results. Implementation of recommendations should, as aforementioned, be contextualized for the specific areas in which they are applied.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Community support for schools is vaguely described as "moral support", with material assistance provided in some cases. There does not appear to have been serious attempts to mobilize community members or define the precise nature of assistance required. It is recommended that school principals

make efforts to involve parents. It is imperative that parents are active and involved in their child's education, as they can more likely ensure children are actually sent to school, stay in school and do not drop out. Only if school principals mobilize parents are they likely to rise to this challenge, thereby making the larger community more likely to take action.

The ESWG should prepare guidelines for activating communities and should provide training to school management on how to mobilize them. School requests for their communities should be concrete and specific, and the feasibility of proposals should be tested. Capacity building might be needed to unlock the capacity of the parent community and of the wider community. Participating partner organizations should act as catalysts to get the process moving.

COORDINATION

There is a need to strengthen coordination for an evidence-based response among partners implementing across Syria.

The 4Ws reporting process is a fundamental function of information management and essential to the work of the ESWG. Information is critical to decision making and planning in a humanitarian response. Decisions should be based on reliable data and the needs of children most affected. This is not easy when access to people affected by the crisis is difficult, when the operating environment is dangerous and when requests for information are frequent and diverse. This exchange encourages parties to share lessons learned, avoid duplicated efforts and scale up what works well. ESWG members should produce brief qualitative reports on assistance to education annually.

ANALYSIS

All efforts to improve children's equitable access to quality education should be based on sound quantitative and qualitative data. Sector partners should share information gleaned during their work with schools.

The MoE should engage with sector partners to make contact with schools whose connection has been lost to collect EMIS-equivalent data from schools in their area, regardless of whether or not they are submitting census returns to the Government of Syria's MoE. Questions should be added to the questionnaire to gather information on what schools lack.

Firm conclusions on teacher and student attendance could not be drawn because detailed attendance data were not requested during the survey. Attendance trends should be investigated, and schools themselves should be encouraged to keep detailed records of teacher and student attendance. If a school records the attendance of its own staff and students, accountability is fostered and attendance may improve.

Further investigation is needed on how teaching responsibilities are allocated in the school and on what actually happens in the classroom.

EQUAL ACCESS

There is little educational provision for children with disabilities. Awareness should be raised among teachers on the implementation of inclusive approaches to the schooling of such children.

Currently, special measures encouraging out-of-school children to re-enrol ignore the need for remedial teaching and psychosocial support.

Parents should be drawn into the efforts to get out of school children to return to school.

Evening classes should be available for those of school age who have taken on day jobs.

PROTECTION AND WELL-BEING

Many suggestions from survey participants, such as relocating schools and ending fighting within the vicinity of the school, lie beyond the capacity of education authorities and sector coordinating bodies. Rather, efforts should be expended from the MoE. The MoE should implement a methodical assessment procedure, an investigation of addressing safety deficits and a plan to make schools weatherproof.

Information on psychosocial services in schools is confusing, partly because psychosocial support is not clearly defined. However, the need for such support for students, teachers and parents is well documented from both the survey data and literature. Students who are unable to work with their trauma are unlikely to engage effectively in learning. At this point, it is not clear whether schools regard recreational and cultural activities as a form of psychosocial support. The extent to which sector partners help facilitate these services appears woefully inadequate. Thus, education sector members who have already provided training or guidance on psychosocial support should pool their resource materials, agree on a standardized approach (in cooperation with education authorities) and scale up training to empower as many schools as possible to provide such services to students and teachers. Teachers should receive guidance on managing classes without resorting to abusive language or behaviour.

Additionally, schools should review their recreational activity programme to ensure all students can participate regularly. Parents should be drawn in to help with supervision and coaching.

Lastly, the general decline in community values can be countered only if there is close cooperation among the school, parents, community leaders and wider community.

FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Upwards of a third of schools experienced shortages in classrooms and furniture. Although all surveyed schools had water and sanitation facilities, this was not true of neighbourhood schools in general. A prioritized list of rehabilitation projects and furniture required should be prepared. These plans should work towards achieving classrooms with sufficient seating and tables. Efforts should be made to ensure adequate wash and sanitation facilities.

Moreover, the school environment should be clean and, ideally, attractive. If the school lacks cleaning staff, users of school facilities should clean classrooms and water and sanitation facilities daily. If school environments are in a state of disorder, students, teachers and parents should strategize clean up and maintenance plans.

CURRICULA

Schools should ensure that they are fully covering the curriculum in core subjects and other topics that will be tested in certificate examinations. A small-scale study should explore which components of the curriculum are perceived to be too difficult. DoEs should ensure that all schools have, and use, the official curriculum guidelines.

If the school day is shortened, either for security reasons or to accommodate a second shift, it might not be possible for the teachers to complete the curriculum or to cover it in sufficient detail. Thus, consideration should be given to extending school hours to ensure students are adequately prepared and teachers have ample time to teach the curriculum fully.

Adaptations of the curriculum for home study tends to reduce the curriculum. These adaptations should assure that, upon completion, an adequate level of literacy and numeracy is acquired.

A study examining student interest in vocational subjects should be undertaken, as these subjects were not offered at surveyed schools.

TRAINING, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

The need to train teachers and principals is well established, and the reasons why are many. Some teachers were trained on modern teaching methods while in college; many schools have not received training from the MoE on the new curriculum; instructors and administrators need new skills to effectively work during the crisis; creative teaching strategies need to be developed in the face of insufficient furniture, equipment, textbooks and stationery; and, most important, trainings conducted actually need to be effective.

The overall picture suggests that few teachers have been benefiting from relevant in-service training. Consequently, class observation in a number of classes should be undertaken by competent teacher trainers, who will then be able to prepare a prioritized list of skills in which teachers need training.

ESWG members, in cooperation with the MoE, should review and adopt training materials to address the most serious teacher needs and carry out short training courses. Training courses, focusing on methodology rather than subject content, should be presented in an interactive style. This would allow teachers of various subjects to work together in improving their skills.

If possible, self-learning materials to develop these skills should be designed. Subsequently, identified trainers could learn from these modules, and later, deliver cascade trainings to as many schools and teachers as possible. Teachers can deliver trainings to neighbouring schools.

Where possible, all teachers at a school and the principal should be involved in a training programme at the same time so that learning may be enhanced through peer support.

Providing teacher training should also come with sound coordination and record-keeping. In reporting, sector partners should not give only the number of trainers trained, but also the number of teachers actually reached through the training.

INSTRUCTION AND LEARNING PROCESSES

All classrooms should have a writing board with a good surface, as well as an adequate supply of chalk and markers. Sector partners have been providing textbooks, stationery and teaching kits on a fairly extensive scale. These efforts should be maintained. Where new and used textbooks are not sufficiently available, realistic arrangements for sharing should be negotiated with the students.

Recently developed self-learning materials should play an important role in helping children catch up on missed learning opportunities. These self-learning materials hold great promise. Their use should be carefully monitored and support mechanisms be adapted in response to observations. Remedial and catch-up classes should also be provided, at no cost to the student.

Schools should ensure they are fully covering the curriculum, especially for subjects tested in certificate examinations. Possibilities to increase time on task should be explored. Daily homework should be set. Teachers should regularly discuss with parents the progress of their children. Parents should monitor their children's school work every day.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

Standardized testing in literacy and numeracy conducted at the end of primary education (at the end of Grade 4 or during the course of Grade 5) should be considered. The national certificate results for 2011 and 2014 suggest that many students may be failing in mastery of the curriculum. It would be useful at the end of Grade 4 to have standardized test results in literacy and numeracy to determine whether interventions at an early stage would improve Grade 9 and Grade 12 certificate results. Consideration should also be given to introducing a random sample of standardized literacy and numeracy tests to determine whether the competencies of the first cycle curriculum are being mastered by the end of Grade 4.

The improvement in national examination results for the years 2012 and 2013 despite reports of deteriorating teaching standards requires further investigation.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF TEACHERS AND OTHER EDUCATION PERSONNEL

The survey did not explore the criteria for selecting school staff, recruitment procedures or job descriptions.

According to the literature, recruiting teachers has been affected by displacement, challenges with remuneration, emigration and loss of life. In 2013, almost 500 educational workers were killed. Others were injured, kidnapped or arrested. Some teachers avoided schools for security and personal safety reasons. Some teachers were permitted to relocate to a school closer to their places of residence.

The literature broadly recommends that schools prioritize appointing sufficient, well-trained teachers. The literature also recommends international funds be allocated for recruiting additional teachers and teacher training. Schools wishing to appoint displaced teachers should have access to a database of teacher qualifications. Such a database is held by the MoE.

CONDITIONS OF WORK

Teachers should be paid. Not only that, they should also be paid equitably and transparently.

Each school should keep an accurate record of teachers' attendance which includes late arrivals, early departures, and reasons for absence.

Undoubtedly, teachers are working under difficult circumstances. They feel the local and wider community could motivate them by supporting the students and school, envisioning student support as encouraging their attendance and strengthening discipline. Support from the wider community would mainly manifest as financial aid (ideally, for teacher remuneration), providing equipment and improved security. Consistent parental support should be provided to them. Opportunities should be created for teachers to meet with parents and discuss ways in which collaboration between parent and teacher might be strengthened.

The DoEs should reinstate supervisory visits to all teachers. Supervisory visits to staff members from the principals, and meaningful discussion of challenges teachers face, would provide a measure of support.

SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION

Support and supervisory mechanisms are important for maintaining teacher motivation and quality. However, the literature did not reveal any information on this aspect of education in Syria. When queried by the authors of this report, the MoE reported that within its plans to phase in a new curriculum, it envisioned that each teacher would receive 36 hours of cascaded training annually, as well as a minimum of two classroom visits a year from a subject supervisor.

Efforts should be made to reinstate the supervisory programme by the Directorates of Education (DoE). Additionally, principals should conduct supervisory visits themselves and have meaningful discussions on challenges teachers face.

LAW AND POLICY FORMULATION

The survey did not directly address law and policy formulation. In response to the crisis, the MoE relaxed its regulations on school uniforms, admission procedures and national examination regulations. To accommodate those who had lost their school records (and could consequently not prove their grades completed), as well as those unable to take examinations, the MoE administered placement tests for students seeking admission to new schools. Because schools have been closed and because the Government has lost control over schools, candidates have been permitted to take their exams outside of their assigned locations. Respondents from opposition-controlled areas illuminate a particular policy need: Students need to be able to take their examinations safely and successful candidates should be able to receive recognized.

DONORS' AND SECTOR PARTNERS' RESPONSE

The sector partners have been making efforts to meet the educational needs of the Syrian children in a variety of ways. This could not have been done without the support of international donors. However, the support falls far short of the actual needs.

In programming their activities, the sector partners have to balance clearly articulated needs against a shortage of human and financial resources. Many of the recommendations made under the INEE standards will be only partially implemented, or not implemented at all, because of insufficient resources. Despite this, every effort should be made to extend in-service training programmes, at least in interactive classroom practices and in supporting traumatized children.

Information should be provided beyond the level of input and output statistics on the implementation of the previous year's plan.



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Introduction

Five years after the Syrian crisis began in March 2011, over 250,000 people have been killed and over one million have been injured.[21] More than half of the population have been forced to leave their homes, and many have suffered multiple displacements. A total of 6.5 million people, of which 2.8 million are children, have been displaced.[22] Registered Palestine refugees in Syria have also been affected, with as many as 60 per cent being displaced.

Almost 4.2 million people, 1.4 million of which are school-age children, have left the country as refugees.[23] The out-flux of children is quite worrisome, for if they do not return to school, the loss of human capital formation due to the increased dropout from school could reach US$10.7 billion, or 17.7 per cent of Syria's 2010 gross domestic product.[24] Indeed, the economy has contracted by more than 40 per cent since the crisis began. The literature estimates that life expectancy has reduced by almost 20 years, and that, thus far, Syria's development has regressed by as much as four decades.[25] An estimated 13.5 million people are now in need of some form of humanitarian assistance. To assist those in greatest need, the United Nations Security Council has adopted Resolutions 2139, 2165 and 2191 to specifically facilitate the distribution of humanitarian aid from bases in Jordan, Syria and Turkey.[26]

Social services in Syria, including schooling, have been compromised by the crisis through the destruction of infrastructure, the devaluation of Syrian currency, major population shifts and the loss of life. The experiences of war and disruptions in family routines have exerted psychosocial pressures on many students and teachers, making teaching and learning difficult or, at times, impossible. Therefore, this study aims to better understand the current issues by examining the challenges facing children and young people who have dropped out of school, or are at risk of dropping out. It attempts to identify, evaluate and analyse the factors affecting these children's realistic chances of obtaining recognized educational qualifications, finding work or furthering their studies.

Tables 1 and 2 show the adult literacy rates and primary school gross enrolment ratios (GER) of Syria and its neighbouring countries, providing a rough impression of Syria's changing educational capacity pre-crisis and early-crisis.[27, 28] Overall, Syria ranked fifth of the seven countries in adult literacy for both school years ending in 2011 and 2012.[29] Syria's female literacy rate is six percentage points lower than the total literacy rate.[30]

In terms of primary school enrolment, Syria has the highest GER of the seven countries.[31]

[21] About the Crisis.

[22] HRP 2016.

[23] Based on data reported by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on the number of refugees in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. Number of children based on age cohort 5-17 years.

[24] Economic Loss.

[25] HRP 2016.

[26] UNSC 2139; UNSC 2165; UNSC 2191.

[27] EFA 2014, Annex Table 2; EFA 2015, Annex Table 5.

[28] These figures have their limitations – comparing data from different sources is difficult, as different understandings of the same term are applied from source to source. For example, although the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted a formal definition of functional literacy in 1978, some countries are still using narrower definitions, which, for example may be simply the ability to read, write and understand a simple statement related to daily life. Moreover, in censuses, counting the number of literate persons in a household may not be based on a test, but on a declaration made by a third party (EFA 2014, p.312). Primary school GERs present a similar problem: Some countries consider primary education as a six-year period, whereas others define their primary school systems as comprising five or four years.

[29] These are for the most recent period, 2005-2011 (or 2005-2012), for which the country was able to provide data or an estimate.

[30] EFA 2014, Annex Table 2; EFA 2015, Annex Table 5.

[31] GERs are obtained by dividing the number of children enrolled in a grade range over the number of children of the "correct" age for those grades. Overage and underage children will push up the ratio. A GER below 100 per cent may indicate that the country has insufficient school places for those who should be in school. In 2012, the Government of Syria introduced a new curriculum, defining the "first cycle" of education as Grades 1 to 4, which is here reported as "primary school".

Table 1 Adult literacy rate, 15 years of age and over (percentage)

COUNTRY	2005-2011		2005-2012	
	TOTAL	FEMALE	TOTAL	FEMALE
Egypt	72	64	74	76
Iraq	78	71	79	72
Jordan	93	89	98	97
Lebanon	90	86	90	86
State of Palestine	95	92	96	94
Syria	84	78	85	79
Turkey	94	90	95	92

Table 2 Primary school GERs (percentage)

COUNTRY	AGE GROUP 2011	1999		2011		2012	
		TOTAL	FEMALE	TOTAL	FEMALE	TOTAL	FEMALE
Egypt	6-11	98	93	102	99	113	111
Iraq	6-11	97	88	–	–	–	–
Jordan	6-11	96	96	92	92	98	98
Lebanon	6-11	112	110	108	106	107	102
State of Palestine	6-9	100	100	92	92	94	94
Syria	6-9	108	104	121	121	122	120
Turkey	6-10	103	98	104	104	100	99

To build off this rough impression further, this education sector analysis uses three sources of data to understand Syria's education sector: (1) annual school censuses from the Ministry of Education (MoE) in Damascus, which contains figures on school facilities, enrolled students and school staff; (2) survey results from 59 schools in government-controlled areas, which yield a combination of factual and subjective information from children and adults; and (3) relevant literature (often reports and implementation plans) produced by international agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and others, providing larger sectoral and cross-sectoral perspectives. This document primarily examines primary and secondary education. Higher education is not included, and there is little reference to pre-school education.

Of course, circumstances within Syria are neither static nor homogeneous. Some areas experience dramatic changes on a weekly basis, while others are more stable. More settled areas receive high influxes of internally displaced persons, which has consequently strained communities and schools. The government's and aid organizations' access to schools also vary from region to region; access to some areas is highly restricted or entirely suspended. Thus, the present analysis can, in no sense, be considered the last word on the status and needs of the Syrian education sector. The need for fresh data will continue, not only while the crisis lasts, but also well into phases of reconstruction.

Part I of the report presents quantitative data provided by the MoE. Prior to the crisis, all registered schools contributed to this database. Since the 2011/12 school year, access to schools in some parts of the country has been cut, resulting in data gaps.

Part II of the report presents qualitative data, describing the survey findings of 59 schools and data reported in the literature of the past four years.

Annexes to the report provide detailed statistical tables using MoE data and survey data. The Annexes can be accessed at the Whole of Syria website: http://wos-education.org/.



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PART I QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

1 Introduction

This section analyses quantitative data provided by the MoE's education management information system (EMIS) and other sources. It aims to generate information to help the MoE plan future support for the education sector. The quantitative analysis focuses on (1) changes in student numbers in both Syria and among school-age Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries; (2) the availability of facilities and school personnel in Syria; and (3) estimated GERs and out-of-school children both nationally and regionally.

Section 2 details the methodology. As the EMIS could not consistently collect data from all districts and governorates over the last five years (from the 2010/11 school year to 2014/15), the summary tables indicate which governorates and districts provided statistics to the MoE during this time. Section 3 covers enrolment in Syrian schools, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) schools, and Syrian refugee enrolment, discussing enrolment at different education levels and area where possible. Included in this section is an examination of the crisis's impact on girls and boys. Section 4 estimates the upper and lower bounds for GERs and out-of-school children within the Syrian and refugee school-age populations. Section 5 examines the supply of educational resources, such as the number of educational and administrative staff, schools, and facilities (classrooms, libraries, IT rooms and science laboratories). Section 6 summarizes the major findings and making recommendations. The large annexes attending these findings are not attached in this document, but are available online for reference at the Whole of Syria website.[32]

2. Methodology

This report heavily relies on the MoE's EMIS, which covers all 14 Syrian governorates. Unless otherwise stated, the data refer to public schools only. Table 1.1 shows that most districts consistently reported to the EMIS over the study period, although some data are missing, as summarized in Table 1.2. The records do not have statistics from Ar-Raqqa governorate, and latter year data lack information from Deir-ez-Zor. The impact of these data gaps is shown by the changes in reported figures. In 2011/12, these two governorates were home to 4.7 per cent and 7.0 per cent of all Syrian students, respectively. This implies that overall educational enrolment in 2013/14 is underestimated by approximately 12 per cent. While the percentage of underreported students has likely remained similar for the 2014/15 school year, the re-drawing of districts makes precise calculation not possible.

There could be (and probably are) schools that are functioning in unreported governorates and districts. However, further data from these locations cannot be collected due to security and other concerns. Thus, readers must keep in mind that changes in raw enrolment and the supply of educational resources are partially influenced by decreases in districts reporting to the MoE. The GER and out-of-school-children estimates attempts to account for data uncertainties by making three sets of calculations, each of which assumed different levels of functionality within districts not reporting to the EMIS: (1) none of the schools in an unreported area are functioning; (2) 25 per cent of schools are functioning; and (3) 50 per cent of schools are functioning.

[32] See: http://wos-education.org/

Table 1.1 Number of districts reporting to the EMIS by governorate and year

GOVERNORATE	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Aleppo	11	11	11	12	8
Al-Hasakeh	4	4	5	5	4
Ar-Raqqa	2	2			
As-Sweida	3	3	3	3	3
Damascus	16	16	16	15	1
Dara	3	5	5	5	5
Deir-ez-Zor	3	3	3		1
Hama	5	5	5	5	6
Homs	7	7	7	7	6
Idleb	5	5	5	5	5
Lattakia	5	5	5	5	4
Quneitra	3	3	3	3	4
Rural Damascus	9	9	9	9	9
Tartous	5	5	5	5	5
Total	**81**	**83**	**82**	**79**	**61**

Source: EMIS, MoE

Table 1.2 Summary of unreported districts by educational level and governorate in 2012/13 and 2013/14

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	GOVERNORATE	UNREPORTED DISTRICTS		
		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Kindergarten	Aleppo	Afrin, Ain Al Arab, Al Bab, As-Safira, A'zaz, Menbij	Afrin, As-Safira, A'zaz	All except Aleppo Centre
	Dara	n.a.	Busra Esh-Sham, Governorate Centre, Izra', Nawa	All
	Deir-ez-Zor	n.a.	All districts	All except Deir-ez-Zor Centre
	Hama	Muhradah	n.a.	n.a.
	Homs	Ar-Rastan	n.a.	Ar-Rastan, Palmyra
	Idleb	Jisr-Ash-Shugur	Jisr-Ash-Shugur	All
	Quneitra	Damascus	n.a.	All
Basic education*	Aleppo	n.a.	n.a.	Afrin, Al Bab
	Damascus	n.a.	Al Moukhaiam[33]	
	Deir-ez-Zor	All	All	All but the centre
General secondary	Aleppo	n.a.	n.a.	Afrin, Al Bab
	Damascus	n.a.	Al-Kaboon, Al Moukhaiam, Al Qadam	
Vocational secondary	Aleppo	Afrin, Ain Al Arab, Al Bab, As-Safira, A'zaz, Jarablus, Jebel Saman, Maskana, Menbij	Al Bab, As-Safira, A'zaz, Jarablus, Jebel Saman, Maskana	All but the Aleppo Centre
	Damascus	Al Qadam	Al-Kaboon	
	Deir-ez-Zor	n.a.	All	All but the centre
	Quneitra	n.a.	n.a.	Rural Dumascus
	Ar-Raqqa	All	All	All
	Idleb	Ariha	n.a.	n.a.

Source: EMIS, MoE

* Basic education is understood to mean Grades 1 through 9.

[33] This district lies in the Palestinian camp of Yarmouk.

3. Enrolment

This report uses the out-of-school conceptual framework formulated by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's Institute for Statistics (UNESCO UIS). The framework proposes five dimensions to help one fully understand and assess the ways in which children can be considered out of school (*see Figure 1.1*).

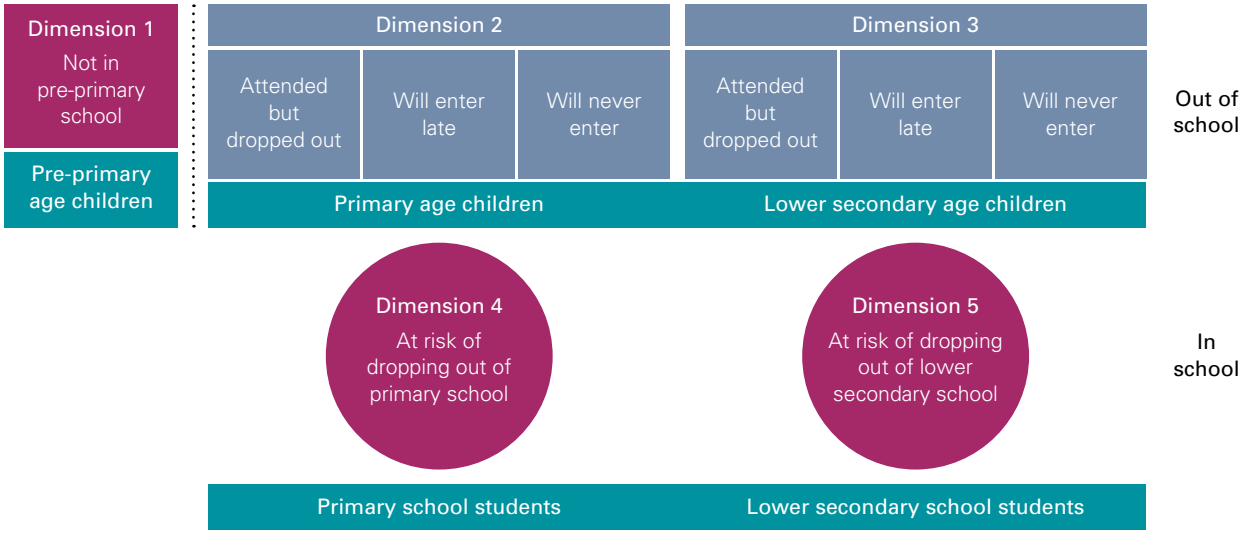
Dimension 1 covers out-of-school children of pre-primary age children not attending school. This report departs from the standard UIS definition of kindergarten-going age being from ages three- to five-years-old. Because kindergarten is not fully developed and mainstreamed in Syria, this report's Dimension 1 analysis considers pre-primary school age to be five-years-old only.

Dimensions 2 and 3 cover out-of-school children in primary school (Grades 1 to 6) and lower secondary school (Grades 7 to 9). In Syria, Grades 1 to 9 are compulsory. These are further divided into two phases, a "first cycle" (Grades 1 to 5) and a "second cycle" (Grades 6 to 9). This complexity renders it infeasible to calculate out-of-school children in Dimensions 2 and 3 separately, and they are combined in this report to cover children of ages 6 to 14. Lastly, the out-of-school children population is derived for upper secondary school (Grades 10 to 12) from EMIS data, although these data should be evaluated carefully. Children can legally work from age 15 onwards. Thus, those not attending school may simply have chosen to work or stay at home.

Dimensions 4 and 5 analyse out-of-school children beyond quantifying those enrolled and those not enrolled. Dimensions 4 and 5 focus on currently enrolled children who are at risk of repeating grades or dropping out entirely as a signal of system failure. Dimensions 4 and 5 are combined together, following the example of Dimensions 2 and 3.

When data of students in upper secondary schools are available, the analyses for Dimension 2, 3, 4 and 5 are extended to cover the upper secondary schools.

Figure 1.1 Conceptual framework of the five dimensions of UNICEF's exclusion model



Source: UNICEF[34]

[34] See: http://www.unicef.org/education/files/OOSCI_flyer_FINAL.pdf, accessed 10 September 2014.

School-age population and total national population

Since the conflict's outbreak, Syria has experienced drastic changes in its population distribution: About 6.5 million have been internally displaced[35] and 4.2 million have become refugees.[36] The last Syrian census was conducted in 2004. While 2011 figures for subnational populations are available from the Government, they must be adjusted because of mass migration since the war began. Thus, this report adopts a middle-of-the-road approach by averaging estimates from other reliable sources: Population projections from both the United Nations Population Division (UNPD) and the United States' Census Bureau and population data from the 2011 civil affairs record, fine-tuned with refugee data from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The UNPD produces population estimates for every year that is a multiple of five.[37] As there are no figures available for years within these five-year periods, the projections for 2010 and 2015 (medium variant) are used to estimate the Syrian population and share of school-age children from the 2010/11 to 2013/14 school years by extrapolation. On the other hand, the US Census Bureau compiles yearly foreign population projections broken down into single-year age cohorts.[38] The Government's Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) publishes official statistical abstracts annually from 2003 to 2011, which includes estimates of the national population and explicitly excludes Syrians living overseas (although, only overall totals are provided).[39]

Populations of school-age categories have therefore been calculated using data on demographic patterns from UNPD and US Census Bureau estimates. The share of age groups against the total population was estimated for each of the two datasets first, and then its average was combined with the registration data to find the actual number of children in each age group.

Table 1.3 provides projected Syrian school-age and overall population figures (including Syrian nationals who have become refugees) from the three datasets and the calculated estimates used in this study (titled "Average").[40]

The 2014 population data from the US Census Bureau are updated to take into account population movement. However, they assume about 4.5 million refugees in 2014, which is higher than the number reported by the UNHCR. Because GER calculations are based on UNHCR statistics, the US Census Bureau estimates will not be used for the population estimates in 2014/15.

[35] HRP 2016.
[36] HRP 2016.
[37] Available at: http://esa.un.org/wpp/unpp/panel_population.htm, accessed 10 September 2014.
[38] Available at: http://www.census.gov/population/international/data/idb/informationGateway.php, accessed 10 September 2014.
[39] Available at: http://www.cbssyr.sy/index-EN.htm, accessed 10 September 2014.
[40] "Kindergarten to Grade 9" and "kindergarten to Grade 12" are denoted K-G9 and K-G12, respectively.

Table 1.3 Estimated Syrian population by year, source and educational category

YEAR	SOURCE	AGE					TOTAL NATIONAL Pop.
		KINDERGARTEN (5 YRS)	BASIC (6-14 YRS)	SECONDARY (15-17 YRS)	K-G9 (5-14 YRS)	K-G12 (5-17 YRS)	
2010	UNPD	519,000	4,536,000	1,345,800	5,055,000	6,400,800	21,533,000
	US Census Bureau	532,613	4,747,702	1,476,170	5,280,315	6,756,485	22,198,110
	Syria Stat. Abstract	508,689	4,490,063	1,364,360	4,998,752	6,363,113	21,153,000
	Average	**520,101**	**4,591,255**	**1,395,443**	**5,111,356**	**6,506,799**	**21,628,037**
	Share of total pop.	2.4%	21.2%	6.5%	23.6%	30.1%	–
2011	UNPD	517,800	4,549,800	1,359,240	5,067,600	6,426,840	21,679,600
	US Census Bureau	533,659	4,740,504	1,487,140	5,274,163	6,761,303	22,517,750
	Syria Stat. Abstract	508,598	4,493,322	1,376,035	5,001,921	6,377,955	21,377,000
	Average	**520,019**	**4,594,542**	**1,407,472**	**5,114,561**	**6,522,033**	**21,858,117**
	Share of total pop.	2.4%	21.0%	6.4%	23.4%	29.8%	–
2012	UNPD	516,600	4,563,600	1,372,680	5,080,200	6,452,880	21,826,200
	US Census Bureau	522,119	4,655,418	1,480,250	5,177,537	6,657,787	22,530,746
	Syria Stat. Abstract	502,513	4,459,657	1,379,483	4,962,169	6,341,653	21,455,446
	Average	**513,744**	**4,559,558**	**1,410,804**	**5,073,302**	**6,484,107**	**21,937,464**
	Share of total pop.	2.3%	20.8%	6.4%	23.1%	29.6%	–
2013	UNPD	515,400	4,577,400	1,386,120	5,092,800	6,478,920	21,972,800
	US Census Bureau	507,668	4,544,880	1,462,990	5,052,548	6,515,538	22,457,336
	Syria Stat. Abstract	494,997	4,413,490	1,377,981	4,908,487	6,286,468	21,492,547
	Average	**506,022**	**4,511,923**	**1,409,030**	**5,017,945**	**6,426,975**	**21,974,228**
	Share of total pop.	2.3%	20.5%	6.4%	22.8%	29.2%	–
2014	UNPD	514,200	4,591,200	1,399,560	5,105,400	6,504,960	22,119,400
	US Census Bureau	403,857	3,549,776	1,154,416	3,953,633	5,108,049	17,951,639
	Syria Stat Abstract	495,853	4,421,122	1,380,364	4,916,975	6,297,339	21,529,713
	Average*	**505,026**	**4,506,161**	**1,389,962**	**5,011,187**	**6,401,150**	**21,824,557**
	Share of children	2.3%	20.6%	6.4%	23.0%	29.3%	–

Source: UNPD, US Census Bureau, and Central Bureau of Statistics (Syria)

* Excludes estimates of US Census Bureau

School-age and total refugee population

The number of Syrian refugees in 2012/13 (308,317 as of October 2012), 2013/14 (2,106,920 as of October 2013), and 2014/15 (about 4.1 million) in the neighbouring countries of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey was obtained from UNHCR,[41] along with the number of children enrolled in both formal and non-formal education. There exists no detailed demographic disaggregation by age, although the size of the overall school-age population was known in October 2013 (748,112). July 2014 cohort data were also available to the UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Office (MENARO). This study therefore assumes that the number of children in each educational category as a share of the total refugee population in October 2012 was the same as July 2014. The study then modifies these percentages for October 2013 to match the relative increase in proportion of school-age refugees from 33.2 per cent to 35.5 per cent (a multiplication factor of 1.06). For example, the number of kindergarten-age refugees in July 2014 was 3.6 per cent of the total refugee population. Holding this constant gives an estimated 10,887 (3.6 per cent of 305,317) kindergarten-age refugees for October 2012. Multiplying by the adjustment ratio estimates that 3.8 per cent of all refugees in October 2013 (80,446) are of kindergarten age.

[41] See: http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php, retrieved 10 September 2014 and 4 September 2015.

The number of school-age refugees increased drastically since 2011. In 2012, the refugee school-age population was 101,244; it is now 1.3 million in 2015. Because the pre-war, school-age population of Syria was 6.5 million, this new figure reveals that approximately one in five Syrian children have become refugees.

Table 1.4 Estimated Syrian refugee population in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt by year and educational category

DATE		EDUCATIONAL CATEGORY			SCHOOL-AGE REFUGEES	REFUGEE TOTAL
		KINDERGARTEN (5 YRS)	BASIC (6-14 YRS)	SECONDARY (15-17 YRS)		
October 2012	Population	10,887	72,430	17,927	101,244	305,317
	Share	**3.60%**	**23.70%**	**5.90%**	**33.20%**	
October 2013	Population	80,446	535,202	132,465	748,112	2,106,920
	Share	**3.80%**	**25.40%**	**6.30%**	**35.50%**	
July 2014	Population	104,189	685,913	170,755	960,856	2,894,146
	Share	**3.60%**	**23.70%**	**5.90%**	**33.20%**	
September 2015*	Population	115,303	921,837	268,352	1,305,493	4,064,023
	Share	**2.80%**	**22.70%**	**6.60%**	**32.10%**	

Source: UNHCR, UNICEF MENA

Enrolment in areas failing to provide data to the MoE in 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15[42]

Assumptions 1 and 2 facilitate estimation of school-age populations at various levels of education in Syria and for Syrian refugees. However, deriving GERs and out-of-school children rates also require enrolment figures, which are incomplete because, as noted earlier, some districts and governorates were unable to report data to the MoE. This study accounts for these uncertainties by performing three scenario-based estimates of the missing data enrolment simulations, assuming that (1) none, (2) 25 per cent and (3) 50 per cent of schools in unreported areas are functioning, with student numbers unchanged from 2011/12 in the latter two cases. In the future, when supplementary enrolment information is available from other sources, another set of estimations will be made.

Table 1.5 Total enrolment estimates in Syria under different scenarios by year and educational category

YEAR AND SCENARIO		KINDERGARTEN (5 YRS)	BASIC (6-14 YRS)	SECONDARY (15-17 YRS)	K-G9 (5-14 YRS)	K-G12 (5-17 YRS)
2010-2011		171,497	4,774,276	590,886	4,945,773	5,536,659
2011-2012		168,248	4,860,348	605,575	5,028,596	5,634,171
2012/13	1 (-100% unrep.)	86,306	2,965,500	445,351	3,051,806	3,497,157
	2 (-75% unrep.)	89,172	3,027,383	451,868	3,116,555	3,568,423
	3 (-50% unrep.)	92,037	3,089,266	458,386	3,181,303	3,639,689
2013/14	1 (-100% unrep.)	98,692	3,123,882	462,090	3,222,574	3,684,664
	2 (-75% unrep.)	104,266	3,282,508	477,748	3,386,773	3,864,522
	3 (-50% unrep.)	109,778	3,441,134	493,407	3,550,912	4,044,318
2014/15	1 (-100% unrep.)	18,893	2,677,906	383,567	2,696,799	3,080,366
	2 (-75% unrep.)	26,388	2,824,172	388,479	2,850,560	3,239,038
	3 (-50% unrep.)	33,883	2,970,438	393,390	3,004,320	3,397,710

[42] The 2014/15 data does not include private schools.

Repetition and drop-out rates

Normally, the numbers of children at risk of repeating grades or dropping out are drawn from historical data. However, because past trends cannot be assumed to apply during a tumultuous and ever-changing environment, it is inappropriate to make assumptions in the Syrian context. This report therefore adopts previous UIS repetition and dropout figures (available until 2011) to establish a lower bound estimation.[43] Repetition and drop-out rates in kindergarten and upper secondary education were not recorded and are assumed to be zero in this study, thus establishing a lower-bound estimation.

Table 1.6 Syrian repetition and drop-out rates by educational level and year[44]

INDICATOR	LEVEL OF EDUCATION	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Repetition rate	Kindergarten	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Primary	6.49	7.08	7.61	7.78	7.74	7.74	7.57	7.5	7.5	7.5
	Lower secondary	7.61	6.75	6.92	6.80	7.55	7.53	6.18	6.1	6.1	6.1
	Upper secondary	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Drop-out rate	Kindergarten	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Primary	7.82	4.83	3.32	6.51	5.41	4.35	6.84	30.0	24.0	36.0
	Lower secondary	37.94	34.37	33.86	38.42	35.54	34.85	32.54			
	Upper secondary	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

Source: UIS, MoE

Note: Coloured cells indicate assumptions.

National level

In 2010/11, there were approximately 5.5 million students in kindergarten, basic, general secondary and vocational secondary education in Syria (*see Table 1.7*). Of these, the vast majority (4.7 million) of students were enrolled in basic education, which increased in 2011/12 by 90,000 students. However, the total number of students drastically decreased from 5.6 million in 2011/12 to just 3.1 million in 2014/15. Correspondingly, most of the slightly more than two million students who dropped out within a year were again basic education students. The enrolment level in 2014/15 is 56 per cent of 2010-11 levels (*see Table 1.8*).

Table 1.7 National enrolment (in thousands) by sex, educational level and year

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	2010/11			2011/12			2012/13			2013/14			2014/15*		
	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Kindergarten	**171**	90	81	**168**	88	80	**86**	45	41	**99**	51	48	**19**	10	9
Basic education	**4,774**	2,480	2,294	**4,860**	2,525	2,335	**2,966**	1,543	1,423	**3,124**	1,617	1,507	**2,694**	1,380	1,314
General secondary	**414**	191	223	**421**	192	229	**322**	147	175	**352**	161	191	**319**	142	178
Vocational secondary	**177**	102	74	**184**	108	76	**123**	75	48	**110**	70	41	**64**	43	21
Total	**5,537**	**2,864**	**2,673**	**5,634**	**2,914**	**2,721**	**3,497**	**1,810**	**1,687**	**3,685**	**1,898**	**1,786**	**3,096**	**1,574**	**1,522**

Source: EMIS, MoE

[43] Available at: http://data.uis.unesco.org/, accessed 10 September 2014.

[44] This table will be further updated using MoE data in the revised version of the Education Sector Analysis for 2015/16.

Table 1.8 Changes in national enrolment (thousands) from 2010/11 by sex, educational level and year

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	2011/12			2012/13			2013/14			2014/15*		
	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Kindergarten	-3	-2	-1	-85	-45	-40	-73	-40	-33	-152	-80	-72
Basic education	86	45	41	-1,809	-937	-871	-1,650	-863	-787	-2,080	-1,100	-980
General secondary	7	1	6	-92	-44	-48	-63	-30	-32	-95	-49	-45
Vocational secondary	8	6	2	-54	-28	-26	-66	-32	-34	-113	-59	-53
Total	98	50	48	-2,040	-1,054	-985	-1,852	-966	-886	-2,441	-1,290	-1,151

Source: EMIS, MoE

Table 1.9 National enrolment as percentage of 2010/11 level by sex, educational level and year

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	2011/12			2012/13			2013/14			2014/15*		
	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Kindergarten	98	98	98	50	50	51	58	56	59	11	11	11
Basic education	102	102	102	62	62	62	65	65	66	56	56	57
General secondary	102	100	103	78	77	79	85	84	86	77	74	80
Vocational secondary	104	106	102	70	73	65	62	68	55	36	42	28
Total	102	102	102	63	63	63	67	66	67	56	55	57

Source: EMIS, MoE

Two years after the conflict began, total enrolment had improved slightly by about 200,000 (3,497,000 to 3,685,000) from 2012/13 to 2013/14. It must be remembered, though, that the MoE did not receive data from Deir-ez-Zor in 2013/14, resulting in the 240,000 students it hosted in 2012/13 effectively considered lost. As shown in Table 1.10, removing Deir-ez-Zor from the figures and recalculating provides a truer understanding of enrolment increases: The remaining 12 governorates increased their student enrolment by approximately 440,000, indicating children in most of these regions have begun returning to school. The enrolment figure in 2014, however, suggests that a substantial number of children left school again (some as refugees).

Table 1.10 Changes in enrolment from 2012/13 to 2014/15 by educational level and governorate

GOVERNORATE	KINDERGARTEN		BASIC EDUCATION		GENERAL SECONDARY		VOCATIONAL SECONDARY		TOTAL	
	CHANGE IN NO. OF STUDENTS	2014/ 2012 RATIO	CHANGE IN NO. OF STUDENTS	2014/ 2012 RATIO	CHANGE IN NO. OF STUDENTS	2014/ 2012 RATIO	CHANGE IN NO. OF STUDENTS	2014/ 2012 RATIO	CHANGE IN NO. OF STUDENTS	2014/ 2012 RATIO
Aleppo	4,395	17.52	147,586	1.43	14,338	1.53	1,436	1.17	**167,755**	**1.44**
Al-Hasakeh	862	1.22	41,440	1.12	3,360	1.10	-1,109	0.90	**44,553**	**1.12**
As-Sweida	357	1.05	5,565	1.08	381	1.04	-372	0.94	**5,931**	**1.06**
Damascus	2,186	1.14	-23,158	0.92	-4,136	0.90	-3,066	0.86	**-28,174**	**0.92**
Dara	-558	0.02	-56,194	0.68	-4,129	0.75	-308	0.91	**-61,189**	**0.69**
Hama	5,082	1.86	68,401	1.22	9,774	1.29	1,765	1.14	**85,022**	**1.24**
Homs	897	1.10	5,316	1.02	1,648	1.05	-3,166	0.75	**4,695**	**1.01**
Idleb	1,468	2.71	130,062	1.62	9,368	1.51	830	1.17	**141,728**	**1.60**
Lattakia	967	1.09	5,454	1.03	1,785	1.06	385	1.03	**8,591**	**1.04**
Quneitra	14	1.02	-378	0.99	110	1.01	32	1.01	**-222**	**1.00**
Rural Damascus	-120	0.99	54,028	1.16	5,139	1.15	-247	0.97	**58,800**	**1.15**
Tartous	1,215	1.07	9,862	1.06	2,380	1.09	-1,095	0.89	**12,362**	**1.06**
Total	**16,765**	**1.20**	**387,984**	**1.14**	**40,018**	**1.13**	**-4,915**	**0.96**	439,852	1.14

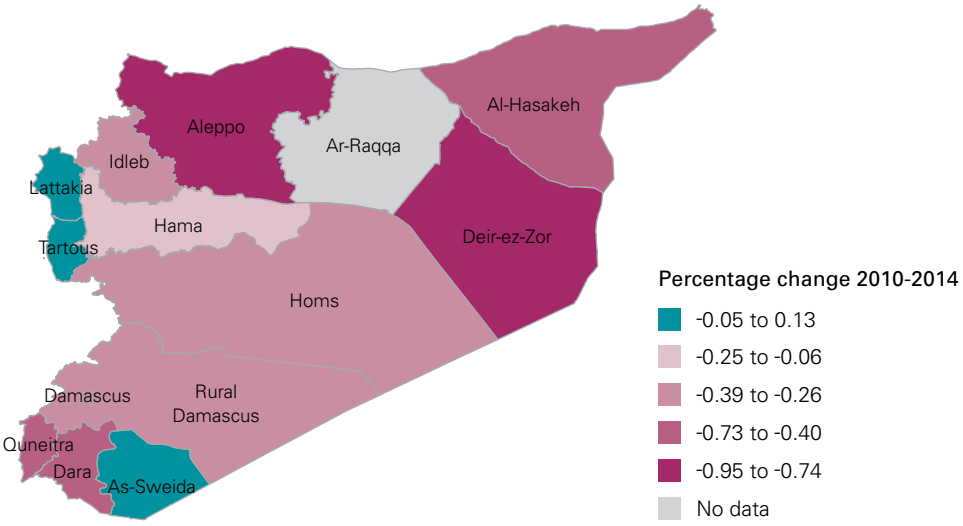
Source: EMIS, MoE

Note: Deir-ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa governorates excluded because some or all their data for this period are missing.

Projecting Table 1.10's data onto a map allows us to spatially visualize these enrolment changes between the 2010/11 and 2014/15 school years. The largest decreases took place in Aleppo and Deir-ez-Zor. Changes in Deir-ez-Zor are likely to be associated to a lower percentage of schools reporting and a lower level of enrolment, although it is impossible to disentangle the influence of these two factors from the data. Three governorates (Lattakia, Tartous and As-Sweida) have seen their number of enrolled students increase during this period. This is probably due to the internal movement of children to less affected governorates.

Map 1.1 Change in enrolment between 2010/11 and 2014/15 per governorate

Stria – education change in school enrolment between 2010-2014



Governorate level

KINDERGARTEN

Changes in kindergarten enrolment across governorates (*see Table 1.11*) vary considerably. Some governorates lost almost all kindergarten pupils, while others have become recipients of internally displaced pupils. The governorates of Aleppo, Dara, Idleb, Quneitra and Rural Damascus faced tremendous difficulties in providing continuous kindergarten education. For example, enrolment in Aleppo decreased from 19,000 pupils in 2010/11 to only 266 (one per cent of the original level) in 2012/13 and 388 in 2014/15, while Dara decreased by 94 per cent in 2012/13. In 2013/14, Dara reported just 12 pupils in kindergarten. The recent and current status of kindergarten enrolment in the unreported governorates of Deir-ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa is not known, but it is highly likely that kindergarten systems in these governorates are also severely affected. In contrast, governorates such as Al-Hasakeh, As-Sweida and Tartous experienced rapid increases in enrolment of 43, 25 and 33 per cent from 2010/11 to 2013/14, respectively.

Table 1.11 Kindergarten enrolment and as percentage of 2010/11 level by governorate and year

GOVERNORATE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15*
Aleppo	19,239	19,229	266	4,661	388
Al-Hasakeh	3,381	3,969	3,978	4,840	222
Ar-Raqqa	2,546	2,999	no data		
As-Sweida	5,550	5,751	6,602	6,959	1,772
Damascus	25,730	25,965	16,067	18,253	6,221
Dara	9,719	9,824	570	12	no data
Deir-ez-Zor	4,992	4,650	4,379	no data	979
Hama	12,208	10,919	5,942	11,024	2,576
Homs	18,825	14,715	8,660	9,557	1,792
Idleb	7,391	7,024	858	2,326	no data
Lattakia	11,300	11,309	11,269	12,236	252
Quneitra	4,012	4,538	855	869	no data
Rural Damascus	33,327	32,099	10,477	10,357	1,856
Tartous	13,277	15,257	16,383	17,598	2,835
Total	**171,497**	**168,248**	**86,306**	**98,692**	**18,893**

Source: EMIS, MoE

BASIC EDUCATION

With regards to basic education (*see Table 1.12*), Aleppo, Dara, Deir-ez-Zor and Quneitra governorates faced significant decreases in enrolment from 2010/11 to 2014/15. Aleppo governorate alone lost about 637,000 students in first two years, making it the most affected of all Syrian governorates. Assuming all basic education schools in the unreported governorate of Ar-Raqqa are no longer functioning, Ar-Raqqa would be one of the most affected governorates (-238,000) for student losses.

Contrastingly, Lattakia, As-Sweida and Tartous governorates experienced increases in basic education enrolment of 12 per cent (increase of 22,000 students), 24 per cent (15,000) and 25 per cent (35,000) from 2010/11 to 2014/15, respectively. However, because the total increase of about 72,000 is minute compared to losses elsewhere, these figures indicates a large number of affected children are not being absorbed into the education system, and these governorates may not have the capacity to do so. Furthermore, the basic education systems in these governorates are themselves relatively small, so increases still create serious pressure: Additional services may be required to provide a decent education to both host and internally displaced children.

Table 1.12 Basic education enrolment levels by governorate and year, 2010/11

GOVERNORATE	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15*	2010/2014 (%)
Aleppo	1,126,688	1,164,263	341,716	489,302	284,902	25.3
Al-Hasakeh	326,878	335,387	337,094	378,534	200,175	61.2
Ar-Raqqa	237,896	247,532	no data			
As-Sweida	62,329	64,562	71,095	76,660	77,572	124.5
Damascus	315,640	316,540	288,779	265,621	241,223	76.4
Dara	246,210	248,677	173,803	117,609	103,306	42.0
Deir-ez-Zor	347,167	359,220	229,602	no data	16,116	4.6
Hama	371,534	374,562	307,449	375,850	350,190	94.3
Homs	395,128	386,019	282,065	287,381	295,757	74.9
Idleb	385,400	391,691	211,211	341,273	296,216	76.9
Lattakia	177,428	178,545	176,553	182,007	199,132	112.2
Quneitra	105,422	107,527	60,245	59,867	57,702	54.7
Rural Damascus	537,593	544,367	332,749	386,777	398,137	74.1
Tartous	138,963	141,456	153,139	163,001	173,594	124.9
Total	**4,774,276**	**4,860,348**	**2,965,500**	**3,123,882**	**2,694,022**	**56.4**

Source: EMIS, MoE

GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION

About 95,000 students dropped out of general secondary education between 2010/11 and 2014/15. While this may not be considered large, especially compared with those from basic education, it is still a substantial decrease of 23 per cent. Because secondary education is a highly influential factor in long-term nation rebuilding, its decline should not be underestimated.

Aleppo, Damascus, Dara and Deir-ez-Zor in particular experienced large decreases in enrolment. General secondary student numbers in Aleppo plummeted from 71,000 in 2011/12 to 30,000 in 2014/15. Despite a subsequent resurgence to 41,000 in 2013/14, Aleppo still suffers from a significant enrolment loss (56 per cent decline since 2010/12). Even worse, general secondary enrolment in Dara continues to decrease; it is currently at 35 per cent of 2010/11 enrolment levels.

Enrolment in Hama, Lattakia and Tartous increased more than 10 per cent after the onset of the conflict, signifying that these governorates received internally displaced children at the secondary education level.

Table 1.13 General secondary enrolment levels by governorate and year, 2010/11

GOVERNORATE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15*
Aleppo	67,434	71,636	27,108	41,446	29,578
Al-Hasakeh	31,484	32,561	33,612	36,972	19,840
Ar-Raqqa	No general secondary schools				
As-Sweida	10,026	9,759	10,129	10,510	10,742
Damascus	42,829	43,218	41,312	37,176	31,707
Dara	23,173	23,354	16,339	12,210	8,106
Deir-ez-Zor	23,864	23,938	10,727	no data	1,219
Hama	38,093	39,354	33,920	43,694	44,521
Homs	41,312	38,731	34,411	36,059	38,483
Idleb	30,484	31,991	18,460	27,828	23,328
Lattakia	27,559	27,657	28,356	30,141	32,472
Quneitra	10,299	11,118	8,007	8,117	12,404
Rural Damascus	43,702	44,386	33,649	38,788	38,902
Tartous	23,971	23,714	26,402	28,782	28,176
Total	**414,230**	**421,417**	**322,432**	**351,723**	**319,478**

Source: EMIS, MoE

VOCATIONAL SECONDARY EDUCATION

Similar to the general secondary situation, the absolute number of dropouts from vocational secondary schools is much smaller than that of basic education. In total, enrolment decreased by about 113,000, from 177,000 in 2010/11 to 64,000 in 2014/15. This is, however, a relative decrease of about 64 per cent and spread unevenly amongst governorates, with some experiencing a tremendously larger loss of pupils over the last two years. For instance, 2014/15 enrolment in Dara, Aleppo, and Deir-ez-Zor was at only 12, 13 and 23 per cent of the pre-crisis level, respectively. Unlike other levels of education, no governorate experienced increases in enrolment.

Table 1.14 Vocational secondary enrolment levels by governorate and year, 2010/11

GOVERNORATE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15*
Aleppo	20,204	21,603	8,369	9,805	2,688
Al-Hasakeh	10,019	10,996	10,996	9,887	3,980
Ar-Raqqa	19,646	21,227	no data		
As-Sweida	5,941	6,152	6,489	6,117	3,431
Damascus	22,129	23,799	21,997	18,931	11,774
Dara	9,338	9,220	3,605	3,297	1,086
Deir-ez-Zor	10,046	10,916	7,637	no data	2,345
Hama	13,710	14,203	12,793	14,558	9,954
Homs	17,938	16,337	12,746	9,580	6,942
Idleb	8,832	8,722	4,758	5,588	1,561
Lattakia	10,675	11,258	11,313	11,698	5,913
Quneitra	4,132	4,614	3,483	3,515	2,578
Rural Damascus	14,946	15,445	8,614	8,367	6,602
Tartous	9,100	9,666	10,119	9,024	5,235
Total	**176,656**	**184,158**	**122,919**	**110,367**	**64,089**

Source: EMIS, MoE

Thus, over the last three years, Syria has lost a significant number of students, with Aleppo and Dara governorates hit the hardest. The total number of school-age children leaving school is 2.3 million, 2.1 million of which left basic education. Inside Syria, 2.1 million children are out of school in K-G12, out of which 1.4 million are in K-G9. The governorate-level analysis reveals major variation in terms of magnitude of enrolment changes at all levels of education. Because there are a number of districts that did not send data to the MoE, data collection from these areas is necessary. Other seriously affected governorates are Homs (at the kindergarten and basic education levels), Idleb (kindergarten), Quneitra (kindergarten and basic education) and Rural Damascus (kindergarten and basic education). Al-Hasakeh, As-Sweida and Tartous experienced significant increases in enrolment, functioning as recipient governorates for internally displaced students.

GENDER ANALYSIS

This section analyses whether the war has affected boys and girls differently, using the girl-boy ratios.[45]

At the national level, girl-boy ratios in kindergarten and basic education have remained stable within the 0.90 and 0.95 range since 2010, both showing slight increases in relative female enrolment from 2010/11 to 2014/15 (pre-primary girl-boy ratio increased by 0.05; basic education by 0.03). In general secondary education, the pendulum swings towards more female than male students, with the ratio stable since hitting 1.16 in 2010/11. In vocational secondary schools, female students have traditionally been outnumbered. This has been skewed even further since the conflict began: The pre-crisis national girl-boy ratio of 0.73 in 2010/11 has fallen to 0.48 by 2014/15.

Table 1.15 National girl-boy ratio by level of education and year

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15*
Kindergarten	0.90	0.91	0.92	0.95	0.95
Basic	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.93	0.95
General secondary	1.16	1.19	1.19	1.19	1.25
Vocational secondary	0.73	0.70	0.64	0.58	0.48
Total	**0.93**	**0.93**	**0.93**	**0.94**	**0.97**

Source: EMIS, MoE

While the pre-primary girl-boy ratios have been stable at the national level, there are some variations among governorates. In 2014/15, the Lattakia's kindergarten girl-boy ratio (0.85) was lower than the norm. This should be interpreted carefully. The figure does not necessarily mean that Lattakia failed to bring more girls to pre-primary schools. The exact reasons can only be confirmed by further investigation.

[45] A ratio greater than 1.0 indicates more female than male students and vice versa.

Table 1.16 Kindergarten girl-boy ratios by governorate and year

GOVERNORATE	YEAR				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15*
Aleppo	0.90	0.91	0.82	0.96	0.94
Al-Hasakeh	0.82	0.87	0.88	1.19	0.93
Ar-Raqqa	0.81	0.82		no data	
As-Sweida	0.88	0.90	0.93	0.92	0.91
Damascus	0.95	0.96	0.94	0.93	0.96
Dara	0.88	0.88	1.06	0.71	no data
Deir-ez-Zor	0.85	0.89	0.89	no data	0.92
Hama	0.90	0.88	0.90	0.93	0.96
Homs	0.86	0.83	0.91	0.92	0.98
Idleb	0.86	0.84	0.78	0.89	no data
Lattakia	0.92	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.85
Quneitra	0.88	0.91	0.90	1.83	no data
Rural Damascus	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.91	0.92
Tartous	0.94	0.94	0.93	0.95	0.96
Total	**0.90**	**0.91**	**0.92**	**0.95**	**0.95**

Source: EMIS, MoE

The girl-boy ratio for basic education shows little fluctuation over time, even at the individual governorate level. The only exception is Deir-ez-Zor, where the girl-boy ratio in 2014/15 is only 0.75. This is much lower than any other governorate.

Table 1.17 Basic education girl-boy ratios by governorate and year

GOVERNORATE	YEAR				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15*
Aleppo	0.91	0.91	0.87	0.91	0.95
Al-Hasakeh	0.9	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.94
Ar-Raqqa	0.89	0.89		no data	
As-Sweida	0.94	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.94
Damascus	0.95	0.95	0.97	0.98	0.99
Dara	0.95	0.95	0.97	0.97	0.96
Deir-ez-Zor	0.89	0.89	0.86	no data	0.75
Hama	0.92	0.92	0.93	0.93	0.94
Homs	0.93	0.94	0.93	0.93	0.94
Idleb	0.92	0.91	0.91	0.92	0.92
Lattakia	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.95
Quneitra	0.94	0.95	0.92	0.92	0.91
Rural Damascus	0.98	0.97	0.95	0.95	1.00
Tartous	0.93	0.92	0.93	0.94	0.94
Total	**0.92**	**0.92**	**0.92**	**0.93**	**0.95**

Source: EMIS, MoE

Until 2013/14, girl-boy ratios in general secondary education exceeded 1.0 in all years and governorates except Aleppo, where it was nearly 1.0 (0.98 in 2013/14). Rural Damascus saw an especially large drop in female enrolment from 2010/11 to 2013/14, falling from 26,741 to 22,364 female students enrolled: A loss of 4,000 female students, or a 16 per cent drop. Meanwhile, male student numbers in Rural Damascus remained fairly constant, resulting in a girl-boy ratio decrease from 1.58 to 1.36. Quneitra also saw a falling girl-boy ratio, although on a much less drastic scale (from 1.34 to 1.25, or a decrease in 0.09). Other governorates saw girl-boy ratios by at least 0.05 points (Dara's increased by 0.07, Hama by 0.05, Idleb by 0.06 and Lattakia by 0.05). However, it seems the 2014/15 school year is a critical one for girls' education, as the girl-boy ratio reduced significantly: The ratio in 2014/15 fell to 0.97, a reduction of 0.22 points from the previous year.

Table 1.18 General secondary girl-boy ratio by governorate and year

GOVERNORATE	YEAR				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15*
Aleppo	0.94	0.96	0.82	0.98	0.96
Al-Hasakeh	1.01	1.10	1.09	1.09	0.96
Ar-Raqqa	no data				
As-Sweida	1.39	1.35	1.36	1.33	0.96
Damascus	1.27	1.30	1.27	1.26	1.02
Dara	1.22	1.25	1.36	1.29	0.97
Deir-ez-Zor	1.13	1.24	1.21	no data	0.82
Hama	1.11	1.13	1.16	1.16	0.94
Homs	1.23	1.25	1.24	1.21	0.95
Idleb	1.00	1.03	1.03	1.06	0.93
Lattakia	1.27	1.28	1.27	1.32	0.97
Quneitra	1.34	1.40	1.36	1.25	0.97
Rural Damascus	1.58	1.54	1.35	1.36	1.02
Tartous	1.22	1.27	1.25	1.22	0.96
Total	**1.16**	**1.19**	**1.19**	**1.19**	**0.97**

Source: EMIS, MoE

Female enrolment at vocational secondary schools has always been historically lower than that of male students. However, the imbalance in girl-boy enrolment exacerbated over the past four years: Almost all governorates' girl-boy ratios saw a decrease, and, overall, the national girl-boy ratio reduced from a 0.73 in 2010/11 to 0.48 in 2014/15. The reasons for these decreases, especially in Rural Damascus and Quneitra, should be the subject of further qualitative research.

In summary, at the governorate level, the war appears to have affected girls and boys in pre-primary, basic, and general secondary education rather equally. However, vocational secondary schools felt a particularly severe impact.

Table 1.19 Vocational secondary girl-boy ratio by governorate and year

GOVERNORATE	YEAR				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15*
Aleppo	0.66	0.64	1.17	0.53	0.49
Al-Hasakeh	0.76	0.70	0.70	0.51	0.30
Ar-Raqqa	0.84	0.90	no data		
As-Sweida	0.94	0.84	0.79	0.70	0.56
Damascus	0.66	0.65	0.57	0.66	0.68
Dara	0.76	0.71	0.80	0.48	0.54
Deir-ez-Zor	0.42	0.40	0.46	no data	0.87
Hama	0.68	0.64	0.61	0.53	0.38
Homs	0.71	0.65	0.50	0.65	0.45
Idleb	0.51	0.50	0.64	0.51	0.31
Lattakia	0.60	0.56	0.48	0.44	0.38
Quneitra	1.33	1.29	0.83	0.56	0.38
Rural Damascus	1.11	1.10	0.81	0.72	0.55
Tartous	0.82	0.78	0.70	0.67	0.47
Total	**0.73**	**0.70**	**0.64**	**0.58**	**0.48**

Source: EMIS, MoE

District level

Table 1.20 lists districts that lost more than half of their students since 2010/11. In Al-Kaboon and Jowbar districts within Damascus governorate, enrolment decreased to about one tenth of its previous levels, with As-Safira in Aleppo falling to 14.2 per cent of its 2010/11 levels and Izra' in Daraa falling to 16.2 per cent.[46] In absolute numbers, student losses in the Aleppo Centre district in Aleppo and Governorate Centre district in Homs stand out. Aleppo Centre alone lost 440,000 pupils.

Table 1.20 Districts that lost more than 50 per cent of students in K-G12 education since 2010/11

GOVERNORATE	DISTRICT	ENROLMENT AS % OF 2010/11 LEVEL	CHANGE IN ENROLMENT
Damascus	Al-Kaboon	10.5%	-15,270
Damascus	Jowbar	12.6%	-18,180
Aleppo	As-Safira	14.2%	-50,855
Dara	Izra'	16.2%	-71,331
Aleppo	Aleppo Centre	27.6%	-441,645
Rural Damascus	Duma	36.3%	-88,765
Dara	Dara Centre	36.8%	-93,691
Aleppo	Dayr Hafir	37.0%	-19,833
Dara	Nawa	42.6%	-22,853
Homs	Governorate Centre	43.0%	-115,098
Damascus	Al Qadam	45.1%	-9,769
Homs	Al-Qusayr	45.4%	-19,485
Quneitra	Rural Damascus	47.0%	-38,667
Rural Damascus	Darayya	48.3%	-35,313
Quneitra	Damascus	50.0%	-14,242

Source: EMIS, MoE

[46] The analysis in this section is limited to 2010-2013 data as the numbers of districts are inconsistent with the 2014/15 data.

Overall enrolment in 36 of the 81 (41.8 per cent) districts in the dataset increased since 2010/11. Five of the top 10 districts with increased enrolment by percentage (Rukn Eddine, As Salhieh, Al Shaghour, Al Qanawat and Kafar Soussa) are located in Damascus governorate. Because Damascus governorate also hosts the two districts that suffered the largest percentage losses (Al-Kaboon and Jowbar), it is implied that the impacts of the war on education within Damascus and the other governorate, Aleppo (which holds 11 districts), are fairly complex. Other districts that saw rising student numbers are located in areas less directly affected by the conflict, such as As-Sweida and Tartous.

Table 1.21 Top 10 districts with percentage increases in K-G12 enrolment since 2010/11

GOVERNORATE	DISTRICT	ENROLMENT AS % OF 2010/11 LEVEL	CHANGE IN ENROLMENT
Rural Damascus	At Tall	148.60%	18,728
Damascus	Rukn Eddine	145.30%	9,038
Damascus	As Salhieh	137.30%	5,739
Damascus	Al Shaghour	126.80%	7,377
Hama	Masyaf	123.90%	10,414
Tartous	Tartous Centre	122.10%	17,774
Damascus	Al Qanawat	121.90%	3,854
Tartous	Dreikish	121.70%	3,348
Damascus	Kafar Soussa	121.00%	3,706
As-Sweida	Governorate Centre	120.50%	10,459

Source: EMIS, MoE

Table 1.22 shows districts whose basic education enrolment increased by more than 20,000 students between 2012/13 and 2013/14 (the full list is included in the Annex). These districts most likely need support in many forms, such as the increased availability of learning materials, setting up of remedial classes, double-shift teacher training and so on.

Table 1.22 Districts where basic education enrolment rose by more than 20,000 students from 2012/13 to 2013/14

GOVERNORATE	DISTRICT	CHANGE IN ENROLMENT	% CHANGE
Idleb	Ma'arrat An Nu'man	71,606	376.4%
Aleppo	Aleppo Centre	67,062	198.6%
Tartous	Tartous Centre	59,705	558.6%
Idleb	Idleb Centre	49,883	186.1%
Al-Hasakeh	Al-Hasakeh Centre	48,673	146.3%
Rural Damascus	Governorate Centre	43,833	151.9%
Aleppo	A'zaz	32,317	270.7%
Homs	Ar-Rastan	25,201	534.5%
Aleppo	Al Bab	25,067	250.7%
Hama	Governorate Centre	23,973	114.6%
Idleb	Harim	20,994	155.0%
Hama	Muhradah	20,601	209.7%

Source: EMIS, MoE

UNRWA schools

The approximately 66,000 students enrolled in Syrian UNRWA schools (all providing basic education) in 2011/12 had dropped by almost two-thirds to only 26,000 (-40,000) in 2013/14.[47] Most of this decline was a consequence of large closures in Damascus (especially in Al Moukhaiam)[48] and Rural Damascus (particularly in Governorate Centre), with about 22,000 (-71.4 per cent) and 11,000 (-53.9 per cent) children respectively leaving UNRWA schools in these two governorates alone.

Table 1.23 UNRWA enrolment in and changes from 2011/12 to 2013/14

GOVERNORATE	DISTRICT	ENROLMENT			
		2011/12	2013/14	CHANGE	2013/14 AND 2011/12 RATIO
Aleppo	**Aleppo Centre**	**4,609**	**3,327**	**-1,282**	**72.2%**
Damascus	Al-Kaboon	615	2,439	1,824	396.6%
	Al Moukhaiam	23,642	2,297	-21,345	9.7%
	Barza	185	1,407	1,222	760.5%
	Dummar	1,670	532	-1,138	31.9%
	Jowbar	1,525	1,403	-122	92.0%
	Mazzeh	1,262	522	-740	41.4%
	Old Damascus	1,010	185	-825	18.3%
	Rukn Eddine	1,673	261	-1,412	15.6%
	Total	**31,582**	**9,046**	**-22,536**	**28.6%**
Dara	**Dara Centre**	**3,823**	**1,802**	**-2,021**	**47.1%**
Hama	**Hama Centre**	**1,200**	**71**	**-1,129**	**5.9%**
Homs	Governorate Centre	2,465	1,076	-1,389	43.7%
	Palmyra	10	285	275	2850.0%
	Total	**2,475**	**285**	**-2,190**	**11.5%**
Lattakia	**Lattakia Centre**	**1,294**	**1,463**	**169**	**113.1%**
Rural Damascus	Darayya	2,220	1,026	-1,194	46.2%
	Duma	1,507	346	-1,161	23.0%
	Governorate Centre	14,300	6,436	-7,864	45.0%
	Qatana	3,081	1,931	-1,150	62.7%
	Total	**21,108**	**9,739**	**-11,369**	**46.1%**
As-Sweida	**Shahba**	**0**	**306**	**306**	**(n.a.)**
Total		**66,091**	**26,039**	**-40,358**	**39.4%**

Source: EMIS, MoE

Refugee population and enrolment

Table 1.24 summarizes the numbers of refugees enrolled in both formal and non-formal education from kindergarten to upper secondary education in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey from October 2012 to June 2015. Refugees who were school-age children increased from 100,000 in October 2012 to 1.3 million in June 2015. Since 2013, about 300,000 children had left Syria annually. The enrolment rates are not more than 50 per cent in most of the countries.

[47] The analysis of UNRWA schools is limited to 2011-14 due to data restriction.
[48] This district lies in the Palestinian camp of Yarmouk.

Table 1.24 Population and enrolment of school-age (K-G12) Syrian refugees from October 2012 to June 2013 by receiving country

COUNTRY	OCTOBER 2012		OCTOBER 2013		OCTOBER 2014		JUNE 2015	
	POPULATION	ENROLMENT	POPULATION	ENROLMENT	POPULATION	ENROLMENT	POPULATION	ENROLMENT
Turkey	39,720	no data	256,157	69,596	318,329	117,694	602,428	213,501
Lebanon	26,114	4,660	233,473	84,615	380,230	103,023	405,268	174,233
Jordan	20,861	20,563	181,200	105,481	211,827	178,612	218,600	163,042
Iraq	12,678	1,954	39,930	8,005	58,038	18,184	73,372	41,198
Egypt	No refugees		37,352	16,181	42,567	41,689	41,506	35,432
Total	**99,373**	**27,177**	**748,112**	**283,878**	**1,010,992**	**459,202**	**1,341,174**	**627,406**

Source: UNICEF MENA

Note: There is a high chance of double-counting in the 2012 Jordanian data; though this does not affect the regional GER as the number of refugees as of October in that year was not large.

Summary

- In 2011/12 there were about 5.6 million students across all educational categories in Syria. However, after the conflict commenced, the enrolment declined by 2.1 million. In 2013/14, in the 12 districts reporting to the MoE, total enrolment had increased from 2012/13 by almost half a million (440,000), indicating children in these areas have, on aggregate, begun returning to school. According to the UNHCR data, refugee enrolment in the neighbouring countries of Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt also swelled in this period, from just 27,000 in October 2012 to nearly 750,000 a year later.
- However, the enrolment reduced drastically again in 2014/15. From 2013/14 to 2014/15, total enrolment in K-G12 education reduced by 600,000.
- The majority of students (2.7 million out of 3.1 million in 2014/15) are enrolled in basic education. Predictably, this category has been hit hardest by the crisis. Kindergarten and vocational secondary numbers have also deteriorated badly in terms of percentage, but they each constitute no more than three per cent of the school-age population.
  - The governorates of Aleppo, Dara, Idleb, Rural Damascus and Quneitra faced tremendous difficulties in providing continuous kindergarten education.
  - Basic education enrolment suffered most significantly in Aleppo (-840,000 students, or -74.7 per cent), Deir-ez-Zor (-330,000, or -95.4 per cent), Dara (-143,000, or -58 per cent).
  - Largest percentage increases were observed in Tartous (+35,000, or +24.9 per cent), As-Sweida (+15,000, or 24.5 per cent) and Lattakia (+22,000, or +12.2 per cent). These three governorates need support, as they are most likely at upper capacity limits and therefore require service and supply reinforcement to maintain decent standards of education.
  - UNRWA schools in Syria, all of which provide basic education, lost almost two-thirds (40,000) of their students from 2011/12 to 2013/14, with the majority of losses coming from Damascus and Rural Damascus.
  - Although general secondary enrolment in absolute numbers has been affected much less severely by the crisis (-95,000 students, or -23 per cent), the sector's importance to long-term national reconstruction should not be dismissed or go unaddressed. Aleppo (-38,000, or -56 per cent) and Dara (-15,000, or -65 per cent) were worst hit. Movement to Lattakia (+4,900, or +18 per cent) and Tartous (+4,200, or +18 per cent) were observed.
  - Vocational secondary education saw a similar number of dropouts as that of general secondary education, with losses of 113,000, or 64 per cent. Among the 13 governorates which reported to the MoE, the enrolment levels in seven governorates were less than half of 2010/11 levels. Enrolment decreases around 50 per cent were recorded in Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh, Dara, Deir-ez-Zor, Idleb and Rural Damascus.

- Generally speaking, all levels of education in Aleppo, Damascus, Dara, Homs, Idleb, Quneitra and Rural Damascus governorates experienced decreases in enrolment from 2010/11 to 2014/15. The most serious decreases occurred in Aleppo and Dara. Student numbers rose in As-Sweida and Tartous over this period, though to a far lesser degree, signalling a limited intake of internally displaced children.
- The total number of school-age children who became refugees in 2015 totals to 1.3 million, which is 13 times higher than that of 2012. This is about 20 per cent of the school-age children in Syria. Since 2013, 300,000 children became refugees annually.
- Damascus hosts both five of the top 10 districts with increased enrolment and the two of the top 10 districts with the largest losses percentage-wise from 2010/11 to 2013/14. This suggests the impact of the war on education is heterogeneous within Damascus. Aleppo experienced a similar heterogeneity in terms of the effects of education on its districts.
- The district-level figures reveals that enrolment increases from 2013/14 to 2014/15 in Ma'arrat An Nu'man, Idleb; Aleppo Centre, Aleppo; and Tartous Centre, Tartous; etc., among others, will urgently require support to accommodate schools reaching their upper limits.
- In general, the conflict seems to have impacted girls and boys in pre-primary, basic and general secondary schools equally. For vocational secondary education, however, the already-low girl-boy ratio has fallen even further (0.73 to 0.48) and require further examination.

4 Estimating GERs and out-of-school children

Estimate GERs were calculated for five levels of education: (1) kindergarten; (2) basic (G1-9); (3) secondary (G10-12), with general and vocational secondary education combined; (4) K-G9 (kindergarten to basic education); and (5) K-G12 (kindergarten to upper secondary) under the three scenarios.[49]

Under the best-case scenario (in which 50 per cent of schools in unreported areas are functioning), the GERs for the 2014/15 school year are only 8.2 per cent (kindergarten), 78.1 per cent (basic), 34.6 per cent (combined secondary), 71.2 per cent (K-G9, kindergarten and basic) and 63.4 per cent (K-G12, entire pre-tertiary system).

From the most ideal scenario to the less ideal one, GERs decrease by about 1.8 per cent for kindergarten, 3.8 per cent for basic education, 0.4 per cent for combined secondary, 3.7 per cent for K-G9 and 3.0 per cent for K-G12, respectively.

Under the scenario in which no schools are functioning, the kindergarten GER drops to 24.2 per cent of 2011/12 levels. Traditionally, the GER in kindergarten has been low, even before the crisis, and the margin for decrease is also small. However, the GER of kindergarten has become less than one fourth since the onset of the crisis, meaning that it has seriously been impacted.

Basic education's GER decreased from 105.8 per cent in 2011 to 78.1 per cent under the best-case scenario. The secondary level also loses 8.4 per cent of GER from 2011/12 to 2014/15 in this scenario. This leads to a GER fall of 27.1 per cent (from 98.3 per cent to 71.2) in the combined K-G9 category and a 22.9 per cent drop (from 86.4 to 63.4) for K-G12.

[49] Annex A.25 presents comparisons between the GERs estimated for 2010 and 2011 with those available from the UIS. There are no substantial differences from this study's findings and those reported by the UIS, confirming that this study's results are consistent with existing data.

Table 1.25 GERs changes for different scenarios by educational level (%)

YEAR AND SCENARIO		KINDERGARTEN (5 YRS)	BASIC (6-14 YRS)	SECONDARY (15-17 YRS)	K-G9 (5-14 YRS)	K-G12 (5-17 YRS)
2010-2011		33.0	104.0	42.3	96.8	85.1
2011-2012		32.4	105.8	43.0	98.3	86.4
2012/13	1 (-100% unrep.)	17.2	66.1	32.0	61.2	54.8
	2 (-75% unrep.)	17.7	67.5	32.4	62.5	55.9
	3 (-50% unrep.)	18.3	68.8	32.9	63.8	57.0
2013/14	1 (-100% unrep.)	23.2	78.6	36.2	73.2	64.9
	2 (-75% unrep.)	24.5	82.5	37.4	76.9	68.1
	3 (-50% unrep.)	25.8	86.5	38.7	80.7	71.2
2014/15	1 (-100% unrep.)	4.6	70.4	33.8	63.9	57.5
	2 (-75% unrep.)	6.4	74.2	34.2	67.6	60.5
	3 (-50% unrep.)	8.2	78.1	34.6	71.2	63.4

Source: Author's calculations

October 2012 and 2014 GERs for Syrian refugees in K-G12 education have been estimated to be 27.3 per cent (13.7 per cent if half of the enrolment of Syrian refugees in Jordan is assumed to be double-counted) and 53.2 per cent, respectively. Due to a large number of new arrivals, the GER of refugees continues to decrease, which implies more efforts to provide education are needed for refugee children.

Table 1.26 GERs, number, and share of out-of-school children among Syrian school-age refugees for K-G12 education in 2012 and 2014/15

YEAR	SCHOOL-AGE POPULATION	ENROLMENT	GER	NUMBER OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN	OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN AS SHARE OF SCHOOL-AGE POPULATION
October 2012	101,244	27,689	27.3%	73,555	72.7%
October 2013	748,112	283,878	37.9%	464,234	62.1%
October 2014	1,010,992	459,202	45.4%	551,790	54.6%
June 2015	1,341,174	627,406	46.8%	713,768	53.2%

Source: UNICEF MENA

Using refugee data, regional GERs for all Syrian refugee children can be estimated. Under Scenario 3, the GERs for K-G12 education stood at 56.6 per cent for 2012/13, rose to 67.3 per cent in 2013/14 and reduced to 55.3 per cent in 2014/15. When only Dimensions 1, 2 and 3 are calculated, the GER for these categories is 44.7 per cent for 2014/15. In 2014/15, it is estimated that about 2.5 million school age Syrian children (inside and outside Syria) are out of school, which is slightly higher than the previous year in spite of the efforts made by the Government, international stakeholders and local stakeholders.

Table 1.27 GERs for all Syrian children in K-G12 education

	SCENARIO		
	1 (-100%)	2 (-75%)	3 (-50%)
2012			
Enrolment, Syria	3,497,157	3,568,423	3,639,689
Enrolment, Refugee		27,177	
Population		6,484,107	
GER	**54.4%**	**55.5%**	**56.6%**
2013			
Enrolment, Syria	3,684,664	3,864,522	4,044,318
Enrolment, Refugee		283,878	
Population		6,426,975	
No. of out-of-school children (Dim 1-3 only)	2,458,433	2,278,575	2,098,779
GER	**61.7%**	**64.5%**	**67.3%**
2015			
Enrolment, Syria*	3,080,366	3,239,038	3,397,710
Enrolment, Refugee		459,202	
Population		6,401,150	
No. of out-of-school children (Dim 1-3 only)	2,861,582	2,702,910	2,544,238
GER	**55.3%**	**57.8%**	**60.3%**

Source: Author's calculations

By how much has educational development in Syria regressed due to the war? According to the UIS database, the estimated kindergarten GER in 2013/14 is equivalent to the 1999 level (around 8.3 per cent).[50] GER for basic education is available only for 1996 onwards, but its lowest value (91.72 per cent in the starting year) is still considerably higher than the best-case estimate of 78.1 per cent in 2014/15. In other words, under Scenario 3, the crisis has set back Syrian basic education by a minimum of two decades.

Table 1.28 Comparison between pre- and post-crisis GERs by educational level

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	PRE-CRISIS		POST-CRISIS**		
			NATIONAL (IN SYRIA), 2014/15	REGIONAL, 2013/14	REGIONAL, 2014/15
Kindergarten	31.22 (2006)	32.4* (2011)	8.2	–	–
K-G9	–	98.3* (2011)	71.2	–	–
G1-9	91.72 (1996)	105.8* (2011)	78.1	–	–
K-G12	–	86.4* (2011)	63.4	67.3	60.3

Source: UIS, author's calculation

* Also author's calculation;

** assuming Scenario 3.

Finally, including the at-risk population to the above figures permits new insights into the numbers and shares of out-of-school children (*see Table 1.29*). This calculation was possible only for the population within Syria, as the repetition and drop-out rates for refugee schools are not known nor feasible or meaningful to estimate. Ultimately, the results show that, under the assumptions of Scenario 3, a total of 2.7 million (63.8 per cent) of K-G9 age students can be considered out of school in 2014/15, of whom 1.2 million (28.8 per cent) were not actually attending school. The remaining 1.5 million (35.0 per cent) are considered at risk.

[50] Recall kindergarten age is considered by the UIS to be from three- to five-years-old, whereas this study uses the much narrower definition of children at only five years of age. Hence, the UIS GER is multiplied by three to account for the comparative tripling of potential student numbers.

Under Scenario 3, the number of out-of-school children and its share for the K-G12 education under Dimensions 1 through 3 are 2.0 million, or 36.6 per cent. As the repetition and drop-out rates for upper secondary education are assumed to be zero, the number of at-risk students (Dimensions 4 and 5) is the same with K-G9 numbers.

Adding out-of-school children Dimensions 4 and 5 to the analysis reveals two related and important facts. Firstly, out-of-school children under Dimensions 4 and 5 comprise a sizeable proportion of total estimated out-of-school children: For K-G9 in 2014/15, they range from being 31.8 per cent (Scenario 1) up to 35.0 per cent (Scenario 3). This results in the second finding, revealing that the total estimated out-of-school children varies little across scenarios. For Dimensions 1 through 3 (children not in school), decreases from Scenario 1 to Scenario 3 are observed, as more schools are assumed to be functioning in unreported areas. However, the ensuing difference is counterbalanced by a corresponding rise in Dimensions 4 and 5 (children enrolled in school but at risk). This highlights the significant influence of the high drop-out and repetition rates in Syria (36 per cent and 7.5 per cent, respectively) in 2014/15 for basic education. Thus, it is strongly suggested that implementing programmes targeted at lowering the number of at-risk children will be one effective means of improving the out-of-school children situation.

Table 1.29 Estimated number and share of out-of-school children in Syria by Dimensions 1-3 and 4-5 for K-G9 and K-G12

	YEAR AND SCENARIO		K-G9 (5-14 YEARS)			K-G12 (5-17 YEARS)		
			DIM1-3	DIM4-5	TOTAL	DIM1-3	DIM4-5*	TOTAL
Number of out-of-school children	2010/11		165,583	682,721	**848,304**	970,140	682,721	**1,652,862**
	2011/12		85,965	695,030	**780,995**	887,862	695,030	**1,582,892**
	2012/13	1 (-100% unrep)	1,938,179	1,112,063	**3,050,241**	2,885,705	1,112,063	**3,997,485**
		2 (-75% unrep.)	1,873,430	1,112,063	**2,985,493**	2,814,440	1,112,063	**3,926,219**
		3 (-50% unrep.)	1,808,682	1,112,063	**2,920,744**	2,743,174	1,112,063	**3,854,953**
	2013/14	1 (-100% unrep)	1,179,724	1,171,456	**2,352,897**	1,994,199	1,171,456	**3,165,655**
		2 (-75% unrep.)	1,015,524	1,230,940	**2,248,182**	1,814,342	1,230,940	**3,045,282**
		3 (-50% unrep.)	851,386	1,290,425	**2,143,529**	1,634,545	1,290,425	**2,924,970**
	2014/15	1 (-100% unrep)	1,522,313	1,339,959	**2,862,272**	2,274,760	1,339,959	**3,614,719**
		2 (-75% unrep.)	1,368,552	1,408,982	**2,777,534**	2,116,088	1,408,982	**3,525,070**
		3 (-50% unrep.)	1,214,792	1,478,004	**2,692,796**	1,957,416	1,478,004	**3,435,420**
Percentage of total age group	2010/11		3.2%	13.4%	**16.6%**	14.9%	10.5%	**25.4%**
	2011/12		1.7%	13.6%	**15.3%**	13.6%	10.7%	**24.3%**
	2012/13	1 (-100% unrep)	38.8%	22.3%	**61.1%**	45.2%	17.4%	**62.6%**
		2 (-75% unrep.)	37.5%	22.3%	**59.8%**	44.1%	17.4%	**61.5%**
		3 (-50% unrep.)	36.2%	22.3%	**58.5%**	43.0%	17.4%	**60.4%**
	2013/14	1 (-100% unrep)	26.8%	26.6%	**53.4%**	35.1%	20.6%	**55.7%**
		2 (-75% unrep.)	23.1%	28.0%	**51.0%**	31.9%	21.7%	**53.6%**
		3 (-50% unrep.)	19.3%	29.3%	**48.7%**	28.8%	22.7%	**51.5%**
	2014/15	1 (-100% unrep)	36.1%	31.8%	**67.8%**	42.5%	25.0%	**67.5%**
		2 (-75% unrep.)	32.4%	33.4%	**65.8%**	39.5%	26.3%	**65.8%**
		3 (-50% unrep.)	28.8%	35.0%	**63.8%**	36.6%	27.6%	**64.2%**

Source: Author's Calculation

Note: As the repetition and drop-out rates for general and vocational secondary schools are assumed to be zero, they contribute no additional children to Dimensions 4 and 5, which remain constant from that for K-G9 education.

Given the rapidly changing situation, this report utilizes Scenario 2 as the most appropriate case for the estimation of the out-of-school children. According to this scenario, 2.1 million children inside Syria are out of school in K-G12, out of which 1.4 million are in K-G9.



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5 Supply of educational resources

This section examines whether the supply of human and other educational resources (such as schools and facilities) has drastically changed since the crisis began. EMIS datasets from 2010/11 to 2013/14 are used, incorporating a few variables related to human educational resources at the school level (such as the number of teachers, librarians and administrative staff). However, it should be noted that the data are not well defined and quite inconsistent. The Syria MoE advises to use the total number of teaching and administrative staff as the best proxy for the number of teachers available for students, as teaching staff and other staff are not distinguished in the data. Thus, because administrative and other employees are combined with teaching staff, student-staff ratios will appear more favourable than they really are, seriously impairing the usefulness of EMIS data.

Personnel

Table 1.30 reports the overall number of educational personnel available to students at different levels in 2011/12 and 2014/15. There is a minimal student-staff ratio change in vocational secondary education (+0.4 increase in the ratio, or +9 per cent increase) since the war began. Changes were slightly more pronounced in general secondary education, where the number of students per educational staff member rose from 8.7 to 10.4 (+1.7, or 19.6 per cent). The student-staff ratio of kindergarten and basic education reduced from 18.0 to 14.6 and 17.1 to 15.3, respectively.

Table 1.30 National student-staff ratio by level of education in 2011/12 and 2014/15

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	2011/12			2014/15*			CHANGE IN STUDENT-STAFF RATIO	2013/14 RATIO AS % OF 2011/12 RATIO
	TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF	STUDENT-STAFF RATIO	TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF	STUDENT-STAFF RATIO		
Kindergarten	168,248	9,325	180.0	18,893	1,298	14.6	-3.4	80.9%
Basic	4,860,348	284,350	17.1	2,694,022	176,007	15.3	-1.8	89.5%
General secondary	421,417	48,630	8.7	319,478	30,715	10.4	1.7	119.6%
Vocational secondary	184,158	38,733	4.8	64,089	12,253	5.2	0.4	109.0%

Source: EMIS, MoE

For kindergarten, subnational level trends vary from the national level, with some governorates experiencing rapid changes in student-staff ratios (*see Table 1.31*). Kindergarten student-staff ratios substantially decreased in Aleppo (from 31 to 9.0, a 21.8 decrease, or -70 per cent), and Lattakia (14 to 6.3, -7.7 points, or -55 per cent). Rural Damascus is the only governorate that experienced a student-staff ratio increase, although it is very small.

Table 1.31 Kindergarten student-staff ratio by governorate in 2011/12 and 2014/15

GOVERNORATE	2011/12			2014/15*			DIFFERENCE IN STUDENT-STAFF RATIO	CHANGE IN STUDENT-STAFF RATIO (%)
	TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF	STUDENT-STAFF RATIO	TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF	STUDENT-STAFF RATIO		
Aleppo	19,229	626	31	388	42	9.0	-21.8	29.8
Al-Hasakeh	3,969	166	24	222	no data			
Ar-Raqqa	2,999	145	21	no data				
As-Sweida	5,751	367	16	1,772	111	16.0	0.0	99.8
Damascus	25,965	1,316	20	6,221	309	20.1	0.1	100.7
Dara	9,824	499	20	no data			–	
Deir-ez-Zor	4,650	257	18	979	103	9.5	-8.5	52.8
Hama	10,919	611	18	2,576	183	14.1	-3.9	78.2
Homs	14,715	1,047	14	1,792	174	10.3	-3.7	73.6
Idleb	7,024	376	19	no data				
Lattakia	11,309	804	14	252	40	6.3	-7.7	45.0
Quneitra	4,538	252	18	no data				
Rural Damascus	32,099	1,770	18	1,856	98	18.9	0.9	105.2
Tartous	15,257	1,089	14	2,835	238	11.9	-2.1	85.1
Total	**168,248**	**9,325**	**18**	**18,893**	**1,298**	**14.6**	**-3.4**	**80.9**

Source: EMIS, MoE

The student-staff ratios of basic education vary significantly across governorates. Some governorates, such as Aleppo, Dara and Homs, experienced significant reduction. Contrastingly, Deir-ez-Zor, Idleb, Lattakia and Quneitra experienced increases. This corresponds to changes in enrolment. The former governorates experienced reduction of students and the latter governorates experienced increases in enrolment.

Table 1.32 Basic education student-staff ratio by governorate in 2011/12 and 2014/15

GOVERNORATE	2011/12			2014/15*			DIFFERENCE IN STUDENT-STAFF RATIO	CHANGE IN STUDENT-STAFF RATIO (%)
	TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF	STUDENT-STAFF RATIO	TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF	STUDENT-STAFF RATIO		
Aleppo	1,164,263	48,296	24	284,902	15,994	17.8	-6.2	74.2
Al-Hasakeh	335,387	21,849	15	200,175	no data			
Ar-Raqqa	247,532	14,141	18	no data				
As-Sweida	64,562	6,289	10	77,572	7,444	10.4	0.4	104.2
Damascus	316,540	16,954	19	241,223	12,811	18.8	-0.2	99.1
Dara	248,677	13,664	18	103,306	8,315	–	-5.6	69.0
Deir-ez-Zor	359,220	19,473	18	16,116	742	21.7	3.7	120.7
Hama	374,562	25,214	15	350,190	27,622	12.7	-2.3	84.5
Homs	386,019	19,566	20	295,757	22,522	13.1	-6.9	65.7
Idleb	391,691	21,970	18	296,216	9,294	–	13.9	177.1
Lattakia	178,545	24,323	7	199,132	25,125	7.9	0.9	113.2
Quneitra	107,527	6,570	16	57,702	1,630	35.4	19.4	221.3
Rural Damascus	544,367	27,992	19	398,137	22,715	17.5	-1.5	92.2
Tartous	141,456	18,049	8	173,594	21,793	8.0	0.0	99.6
Total	**4,860,348**	**284,350**	**17**	**2,694,022**	**176,007**	**15.3**	**-1.7**	**90.0**

Source: EMIS, MoE

Some governorates experienced drastic student-staff ratio increases in general secondary education (e.g., Deir-ez-Zor, Idleb and Quneitra). The student-staff ratio of these three governorate experienced drastic increases in the vocational secondary education as well.

Table 1.33 Combined secondary education student-staff ratio by governorate in 2011/12 and 2014/15

	GOVERNORATE	2011/12			2014/15*			DIFFERENCE IN STUDENT-STAFF RATIO	CHANGE IN STUDENT-STAFF RATIO (%)
		TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF	STUDENT-STAFF RATIO	TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF	STUDENT-STAFF RATIO		
General secondary	Aleppo	71,636	9,706	7	29,578	2,894	10.2	3.2	146.0
	Al-Hasakeh	32,561	3,292	10	19,840	no data			
	Ar-Raqqa	no data	145	21	no data				
	As-Sweida	9,759	1,234	8	10,742	1,314	8.2	0.2	102.2
	Damascus	43,218	3,867	11	31,707	2,918	10.9	-0.1	98.8
	Dara	23,354	2,596	9	8,106	950	8.5	-0.5	94.8
	Deir-ez-Zor	23,938	2,552	9	1,219	67	18.2	9.2	202.2
	Hama	39,354	4,050	10	44,521	4,922	9.0	-1.0	90.5
	Homs	38,731	4,636	8	38,483	3,769	10.2	2.2	127.6
	Idleb	31,991	3,100	10	23,328	757	30.8	20.8	308.2
	Lattakia	27,657	4,813	6	32,472	5,875	5.5	-0.5	92.1
	Quneitra	11,118	1,072	10	12,404	180	68.9	58.9	689.1
	Rural Damascus	44,386	4,513	10	38,902	3,007	12.9	2.9	129.4
	Tartous	23,714	3,199	7	28,176	4,062	6.9	-0.1	99.1
	Total	**421,417**	**48,630**	**9**	**319,478**	**30,715**	**10.4**	**1.4**	**115.6**
Vocational secondary	Aleppo	71,636	9,706	7	2,688	925	2.9	-4.1	41.5
	Al-Hasakeh	32,561	3,292	10	3,980	no data			
	Ar-Raqqa	no data	145	21	no data				
	As-Sweida	9,759	1,234	8	3,431	957	3.6	-4.4	44.8
	Damascus	43,218	3,867	11	11,774	1,542	7.6	-3.4	69.4
	Dara	23,354	2,596	9	1,086	368	3	-6.0	32.8
	Deir-ez-Zor	23,938	2,552	9	2,345	146	16.1	7.1	178.5
	Hama	39,354	4,050	10	9,954	1,985	5	-5	50.1
	Homs	38,731	4,636	8	6,942	1,750	4.0	-4.0	49.6
	Idleb	31,991	3,100	10	1,561	97	16.1	6.1	160.9
	Lattakia	27,657	4,813	6	5,913	2,050	2.9	-3.1	48.1
	Quneitra	11,118	1,072	10	2,578	47	54.9	44.9	548.5
	Rural Damascus	44,386	4,513	10	6,602	974	6.8	-3.2	67.8
	Tartous	23,714	3,199	7	5,235	1,412	3.7	-3.3	53
	Total	**421,417**	**48,630**	**9**	**64,089**	**12,253**	**5.2**	**-3.8**	**58.1**

Source: EMIS, MoE

Student-staff ratios at the district level were also obtained. However, due to differences in district coding throughout the years, only 2011/12 and 2013/14 ratios were compared. At the district level, there are larger variations in student-staff ratios. The next few tables (Table 1.34, Table 1.35, Table 1.36 and Table 1.37) report districts in which each educational staff member has become responsible for an extra 10 or more students in kindergarten, basic and secondary education respectively.

Student enrolment for 2013/14 pre-primary education is fairly small, so these results should be used carefully. Still, of the selected districts, some recorded more than 1,000 pupils: Al Muhajirin (1,999) and Kafar Soussa (1,058) in Damascus, as well as Aleppo Centre (3,998).

Table 1.34 Districts with changes in student-staff ratio larger than 40 per cent, kindergarten

GOVERNORATE	DISTRICT	2011/12			2014/15*			CHANGE IN STUDENT-STAFF RATIO	2013/14 RATIO AS % OF 2011/12 RATIO
		TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF	STUDENT-STAFF RATIO	TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF	STUDENT-STAFF RATIO		
Damascus	Al Muhajirin	2,570	115	**22.3**	1,999	42	**47.6**	25.2	213.0%
Damascus	Al Qanawat	422	27	**15.6**	156	4	**39.0**	23.4	249.5%
Damascus	Old Damascus	950	39	**24.4**	738	16	**46.1**	21.8	189.4%
Quneitra	Governorate Centre	1,041	57	**18.3**	560	16	**35.0**	16.7	191.6%
Damascus	Kafar Soussa	779	39	**20.0**	1,058	31	**34.1**	14.2	170.9%
Aleppo	Aleppo Centre	15,922	512	**31.1**	3,998	90	**44.4**	13.3	142.8%

Source: EMIS, MoE

Nine of the districts with the top 10 rises in basic education student-staff ratios are in Aleppo, all with at least nine more students per staff member in 2013/14 when compared to 2011/12. Most exceptionally, the ratio almost tripled in Ain Al Arab (from 22 to 61); other districts, such as Maskana, Dayr Hafir, As-Safira and Al Bab, have all seen near-doublings of the student-staff ratio. These areas certainly face serious shortages of teachers and supporting administrative personnel.

Table 1.35 Top 10 districts with large changes in student-staff ratios, basic education

GOVERNORATE	DISTRICT	2011/12			2014/15*			CHANGE IN STUDENT-STAFF RATIO	2013/14 RATIO AS % OF 2011/12 RATIO
		TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF	STUDENT-STAFF RATIO	TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF	STUDENT-STAFF RATIO		
Aleppo	Ain Al Arab	60,960	2,737	**22.3**	35,589	586	**60.7**	38.5	272.7%
Aleppo	Maskana	34,833	1,341	**26.0**	17,114	357	**47.9**	22.0	184.6%
Aleppo	Dayr Hafir	32,133	1,312	**24.5**	11,140	249	**44.7**	20.2	182.7%
Aleppo	As-Safira	58,812	2,467	**23.8**	8,274	191	**43.3**	19.5	181.7%
Aleppo	Al Bab	63,994	2,859	**22.4**	41,698	1,022	**40.8**	18.4	182.3%
Aleppo	Menbij	90,148	4,106	**22.0**	71,118	2,047	**34.7**	12.8	158.2%
Aleppo	Jarablus	16,939	920	**18.4**	14,738	512	**28.8**	10.4	156.3%
Aleppo	A'zaz	75,935	4,100	**18.5**	51,246	1,796	**28.5**	10.0	154.1%
Aleppo	Afrin	37,571	2,262	**16.6**	22,603	876	**25.8**	9.2	155.3%
Damascus	Al Qanawat	8,154	503	**16.2**	13,343	615	**21.7**	5.5	133.8%

Source: EMIS, MoE

Of the selected districts with notable increases in secondary student-staff ratios, only one was at the vocational level. As was the case for basic education, more than half of schools with large increases were from the Aleppo governorate. The magnitude of increases range from 5.0 to 13 additional students per staff member, which is a modest magnitude relative to increases observed in kindergarten and basic education.

Table 1.36 Districts with large changes in student-staff ratio between 2011/12 and 2013/14, secondary education

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	GOVERNORATE	DISTRICT	2011/12			2014/15*			CHANGE IN STUDENT-STAFF RATIO	2013/14 RATIO AS % OF 2011/12 RATIO
			TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF	STUDENT-STAFF RATIO	TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF	STUDENT-STAFF RATIO		
General	Aleppo	Maskana	1,160	257	**4.5**	882	50	**17.6**	13.1	390.8%
General	Aleppo	Ain Al Arab	3,022	460	**6.6**	2,328	125	**18.6**	12.1	283.5%
General	Aleppo	Afrin	2,117	330	**6.4**	2,413	169	**14.3**	7.9	222.6%
Vocation	Hama	Governorate Centre	8,785	2,633	**3.3**	9,797	1,139	**8.6**	5.3	257.8%
General	Aleppo	A'zaz	4,613	812	**5.7**	3,459	323	**10.7**	5.0	188.5%
General	Homs	Ar-Rastan	2,464	315	**7.8**	2,551	200	**12.8**	4.9	163.1%
General	Idleb	Jisr-Ash-Shugur	3,688	420	**8.8**	4,048	298	**13.6**	4.8	154.7%
General	Aleppo	Menbij	5,386	808	**6.7**	4,554	400	**11.4**	4.7	170.8%

Source: EMIS, MoE

UNRWA STAFFING

Information on UNRWA schools is limited to EMIS data before 2014/15. Consequently, the analysis is limited to the 2011/12 and 2013/14 periods. In total, the number of education personnel available for 119 UNRWA schools in 2011/12 was 2,183. Despite an above 50 per cent reduction in staff members for 59 schools in 2013/14, falling to 1,015 persons, there was in fact a decrease from 30 to 26 students per staff member. The highest district student-staff ratio (44) in 2013/14 was in Governorate Centre (Rural Damascus). Again, because the student-staff ratios include both teachers and administrative support, this ratio acts as a lower boundary, while actual class sizes would be much bigger. Other student-staff ratio increases occurred in Al-Kaboon (Damascus, +6) and in Palmyra (Homs). In the latter district, the only UNRWA school alone saw an increase of 275 pupils but only an increase of 10 staff members.

Table 1.37 Changes in number of UNWRA personnel and student-staff ratio between 2011/12 and 2013/14 by governorate and district

GOVERNORATE	DISTRICT	CHANGE IN NUMBER OF STAFF	2011/12 STUDENT-STAFF RATIO	2013/14 STUDENT-STAFF RATIO
Aleppo	**Aleppo Centre**	**-26**	**33**	**29**
Damascus	Al-Kaboon	65	18	24
	Al Moukhaiam	-618	34	27
	Barza	73	19	17
	Dummar	-30	30	20
	Jowbar	5	28	24
	Mazzeh	0	25	10
	Old Damascus	-28	26	17
	Rukn Eddine	-51	23	11
	Total	**-584**	**31**	**21**
Dara	**Dara Centre**	**-96**	**22**	**23**
Hama	**Hama Centre**	**-47**	**23**	**14**
Homs	Governorate Centre	-27	36	26
	Palmyra	10	10	26
	Total	**-59**	**35**	**26**
Lattakia	**Lattakia Centre**	**1**	**26**	**29**
Rural Damascus	Darayya	5	36	15
	Duma	-46	23	18
	Governorate Centre	-297	32	44
	Qatana	-37	29	28
	Total	**-375**	**31**	**32**
As-Sweida	**Shahba**	**18**	**(n.a.)**	**17**
Total		**-1,168**	**30**	**26**

Source: EMIS, MoE

Number of schools

The total number of kindergarten, basic, general secondary and vocational secondary education schools reporting to the MoE before the crisis was 22,113 in 2010/11 and 22,663 in 2011/12 (*see Table 1.38*). In the pre-war period, the number of reported schools increased from 2010/11 to 2011/12 by around two to five per cent at all levels of education (*see Table 1.39*). However, it drastically decreases to 10,111 in 2014/15. Although it is assumed that the actual number of functional schools is higher than the reported number, some 12,000 or 55 per cent, of schools have been damaged, closed, used as shelter or are otherwise unable to report their statistics to the MoE.

Within the four categories of education, schools for basic education are the most affected: The number of basic education schools alone has decreased from 17,430 in 2010/11 to 8,557 in 2014/15 – a decrease of approximately 9,000 within four years.

Table 1.38 Total number of schools by level of education and year

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15*
Kindergarten	2,060	2,147	1,528	1,409	206
Basic	17,430	17,785	11,907	11,420	8,557
General secondary	1,821	1,918	1,535	1,636	1,031
Vocational secondary	802	813	578	575	317
Total	**22,113**	**22,663**	**15,548**	**15,040**	**10,111**

Source: EMIS, MoE

Table 1.39 Total number of schools as percentage of 2010/11 level by educational level and year

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15*
Kindergarten	100.0%	104.2%	74.2%	68.4%	10.0%
Basic	100.0%	102.0%	68.3%	65.5%	49.1%
General secondary	100.0%	105.3%	84.3%	89.8%	56.6%
Vocational secondary	100.0%	101.4%	72.1%	71.7%	39.5%
Total	**100.0%**	**102.5%**	**70.3%**	**68.0%**	**45.7%**

Source: EMIS, MoE

The MoE conducted a survey of government schools at the basic education level in 2014 (*see Table 1.40*). They found that out of 18,129 basic education schools, 15,432 are currently functioning; the remaining (approximately 2,700 or 15 per cent) are damaged, being used as shelters or inaccessible to the MoE. When one compares this MoE survey to EMIS data (which show a decrease of 6,400 from 2011/12 to 2013/14), there is a difference of 3,700 schools. This is partially due to zero reports from the two unreported governorates, Deir-ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa, which removes around 2,900 schools from the EMIS. The remaining discrepancy of 800 schools is assumed to be the number of schools for which the MoE could not conduct assessment.

Table 1.40 Status of government basic education schools as of March 2014

GOVERNORATE	TOTAL NUMBER OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS (A+B)	SCHOOLS USED FOR EDUCATION		SCHOOLS NOT USED FOR EDUCATION OR INACCESSIBLE				
		TOTAL NUMBER OF FUNCTIONING SCHOOLS (A)	PARTIALLY DAMAGED SCHOOLS	TOTAL SCHOOLS AFFECTED/ DAMAGED (B)	DAMAGED BUT FIXABLE	USED AS SHELTERS	OUT OF SERVICE	INACCESSIBLE TO MoE
Aleppo	**1,421**	1,074	156	347	132	42	10	163
Al-Hasakeh	**2,373**	2,332	43	41	4	28	6	3
Ar-Raqqa	**1,476**	1,434	41	42	–	11	9	22
As-Sweida	**561**	561	–	–	–	–	–	–
Damascus	**600**	492	179	108	3	16	75	14
Dara	**940**	844	329	96	15	10	11	60
Deir-ez-Zor	**1,438**	1,193	35	245	5	48	75	117
Hama	**1,824**	1,622	123	202	18	11	16	157
Homs	**1,421**	1,074	156	347	132	42	10	163
Idleb	**1,686**	1,215	137	471	137	51	114	169
Lattakia	**1,256**	1,143	–	113	3	–	–	110
Quneitra	**339**	175	38	164	7	24	10	123
Rural Damascus	**1,298**	809	230	489	27	31	43	388
Tartous	**1,496**	1,464	27	32	27	5	–	–
Total	**18,129**	**15,432**	**1,494**	**2,697**	**510**	**319**	**379**	**1,489**

Source: MoE

Table 1.41 summarizes districts that experienced school losses of more than 50 per cent during the 2011/12 and 2013/14 period.[51] The decreases in schools are concentrated in a few governorates: Of the 86 districts[52] in Syria, 17 lost more than half of their schools during the conflict, the bulk of which (13 districts) are located in Aleppo (especially As-Safira, 87.9 per cent loss, from 281 to 34 schools), Ain Al Arab in Aleppo (72.8 per cent loss), Jowbar in Damascus (87.7 per cent loss) and Izra' in Dara (69.8 per cent).

[51] "Losses" include unreported schools, as it is not possible to distinguish between these and damaged facilities from the data.

[52] The EMIS data includes an unnamed district, so the total number of districts in this report may differ slightly from other public figures.

Table 1.41 Districts losing more than 50 per cent of schools from 2011/12 to 2013/14, from largest percentage loss to smallest

GOVERNORATE	DISTRICT	% LOSS IN TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS
Aleppo	As-Safira	87.9
Damascus	Jowbar	87.7
Aleppo	Ain Al Arab	72.8
Damascus	Al-Kaboon	71.4
Aleppo	Maskana	70.0
Dara	Izra'	69.8
Aleppo	Dayr Hafir	59.8
Rural Damascus	Duma	59.0
Quneitra	Rural Damascus	58.4
Rural Damascus	Darayya	57.7
Damascus	Al Qadam	54.5
Aleppo	Aleppo Centre	54.3
Dara	Dara Centre	52.2
Aleppo	Afrin	51.7
Homs	Al-Qusayr	51.2
Aleppo	Al Bab	50.9
Dara	Nawa	50.7

Source: EMIS, MoE

The pace of any increase in the number of schools is much slower by nature, but district records show that in some areas, schools were constructed at high speed. In Dummar (Damascus), the total number of schools increased by 15.3 per cent from 2011/12 to 2013/14 (from 72 to 83 schools in three years). Likewise, other districts in Damascus such as Saroujah,[53] As Salhieh and Al Shaghour reported increased numbers of schools. As Damascus also hosts districts that lost many schools, the data show that the impact of the war is mixed and responses need to be at least district-specific. Other governorates which incorporate districts with an increased number of schools include As-Sweida, Tartous, Al-Hasakeh, Hama and Rural Damascus.

Table 1.42 Districts with an increase in total number of schools from 2011/12 to 2013/14

GOVERNORATE	DISTRICT	INCREASE IN TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS
Damascus	Dummar	15.3
Damascus	Saroujah	12.7
Damascus	As Salhieh	12.2
Damascus	Al Shaghour	11.3
As-Sweida	Governorate Center	9.2
Al-Hasakeh	Al-Hasakeh Centre	8.9
Tartous	Tartous Centre	7.6
Hama	Masyaf	6.6
Al-Hasakeh	Quamishli	6.4
As-Sweida	Shahba	6.3
Rural Damascus	At Tall	5.9
Al-Hasakeh	Ras Al Ain	5.4

Source: EMIS, MoE

[53] Also spelled Sarwja.

PER-SCHOOL ENROLMENT IN ALEPPO AND DAMASCUS GOVERNORATES

The previous sections analyse changes in enrolment and number of schools, but do not provide information regarding whether the number of students per school has increased or decreased, as the number of schools has also changed. Taking into account changes in the overall number of schools as previously discussed, it is possible to use enrolment to calculate student numbers per school in basic education at the district level. Detailed statistics for Aleppo and Damascus are presented in this section, as both governorates have districts with large influxes of students and others with significant decreases in enrolment and school availability.

Aleppo governorate

Per-school enrolment from 2011/12 to 2013/14 skyrocketed by over 100 students in Ain Al Arab (an increase of 189.7 students) and Maskana (134.1 students), as the number of functioning schools decreased (-335 schools, or -75.3 per cent in Ain Al Arab; -59 schools, or -72.6 per cent in Maskana) at a higher rate than enrolment (-23,990 students, or -40.3 per cent in Ain Al Arab; -15,984 students, or -48.3per cent in Maskana). Consequently, existing schools have become extremely overcrowded. On the other hand, per-school numbers decreased from 1,030 to 672 (a decrease of 358) in Aleppo Centre because the sharp drop in enrolment (-405,739 students, or -75.0 per cent) outpaced that of schools (-342 schools, or -61.7 per cent).

Table 1.43 Changes in basic education enrolment per school in Aleppo governorate by district, from 2011/12 to 2013/14

DISTRICT	2011/12			2014/15*			(F/C*100)	CHANGE IN ENROLMENT PER SCHOOL (F-C)
	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS (A)	ENROLMENT (B)	ENROLMENT PER SCHOOL (B/A=C)	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS (D)	ENROLMENT (E)	ENROLMENT PER SCHOOL (E/D=F)		
Afrin	269	36,521	135.8	126	22,603	179.4	132.1	43.6
Ain Al Arab	445	59,579	133.9	110	35,589	323.5	241.7	189.7
Al Bab	295	61,256	207.6	146	41,698	285.6	137.5	78.0
Aleppo Centre	525	540,829	1030.2	201	135,090	672.1	65.2	-358.1
As-Safira	262	56,587	216.0	32	8,274	258.6	119.7	42.6
A'zaz	290	73,397	253.1	183	51,246	280.0	110.6	26.9
Dayr Hafir	108	30,232	279.9	41	11,140	271.7	97.1	-8.2
Jarablus	103	16,537	160.6	85	14,738	173.4	108.0	12.8
Jebel Saman	551	131,406	238.5	no data			no data	
East Jebel Saman	no data			214	67,885	317.2	no data	
West Jebel Saman	no data			42	12,807	304.9	no data	
Maskana	219	33,098	151.1	60	17,114	285.2	188.7	134.1
Menbij	365	87,246	239.0	257	71,118	276.7	115.8	37.7
Total	**3,432**	**1,126,688**	**328.3**	**1,497**	**489,302**	**326.9**	**99.6**	**-1.4**

Source: EMIS, MoE

Note: No entries for East and West Jebel Saman districts in the 2011-12 database and none similarly for Jebel Saman district in 2013-14.

Damascus governorate

Five districts in Damascus experienced large increases in average per-school enrolment from 2011/12 to 2014/15: As Salhieh (an increase of 182.4 students on average per school), Kafar Soussa (+128.5), Al Qanawat (+132.8), Rukn Eddine (+172.9) and Al Shaghour (+134.5). Although total enrolment in these districts increased by only a few thousand from 2011/12, they do not and have never hosted a large number of schools (only Al Midan has more than 100 schools), resulting in the sharp rises in per-school enrolment. Unlike in Aleppo, only Jowbar and Al-Kaboon saw sharp decreases in school numbers: Jowbar decreased from 38 schools to 5. Al-Kaboon observed a decrease from 19 schools to 7. Both Jowbar and Al-Kaboon saw decreases in enrolment, with losses of 16,207 (89.7 per cent) and 11,815 (86.8 per cent) students, respectively. These districts have demonstrably been hardest hit by the war.

Table 1.44 Changes in basic education enrolment per school in Damascus governorate by district, from 2011/12 to 2013/14

DISTRICT	2011/12			2014/15*				
	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS (A)	ENROLMENT (B)	ENROLMENT PER SCHOOL (B/A=C)	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS (D)	ENROLMENT (E)	ENROLMENT PER SCHOOL (E/D=F)	(F/C*100)	CHANGE IN ENROLMENT PER SCHOOL (F-C)
Al-Kaboon	19	13,604	716.0	7	1,789	255.6	35.7	-460.4
Al Midan	106	72,875	687.5	63	39,392	625.3	90.9	-62.2
Al Moukhaiam	5	2,184	436.8	no data			no data	
Al Muhajirin	48	20,019	417.1	46	16,842	366.1	87.8	-50.9
Al Qadam	35	16,248	464.2	20	8,013	400.7	86.3	-63.6
Al Qanawat	29	9,968	343.7	28	13,343	476.5	138.6	132.8
Al Shaghour	41	20,871	509.0	44	28,317	643.6	126.4	134.5
As Salhieh	29	12,253	422.5	29	17,542	604.9	143.2	182.4
Barza	32	21,648	676.5	22	14,201	645.5	95.4	-31.0
Dummar	37	21,727	587.2	42	25,276	601.8	102.5	14.6
Jowbar	38	18,070	475.5	5	1,863	372.6	78.4	-102.9
Kafar Soussa	25	15,572	622.9	25	18,784	751.4	120.6	128.5
Mazzeh	57	24,234	425.2	60	26,815	446.9	105.1	21.8
Old Damascus	31	11,542	372.3	27	10,062	372.7	100.1	0.3
Rukn Eddine	40	16,248	406.2	40	23,163	579.1	142.6	172.9
Saroujah	38	18,577	488.9	38	20,219	532.1	108.8	43.2
TOTAL	**610**	**315,640**	**517.4**	**496**	**265,621**	**535.5**	**103.5**	**18.1**

Source: EMIS, MoE

NUMBER OF UNRWA SCHOOLS

UNRWA schools are hosted in seven governorates. In both the 2011/12 and 2013/14 school years, the highest number of schools were found in Damascus (47 in 2011/12; 16 in 2013/14). Nevertheless, in Damascus absolute decreases were the highest among all governorates (-31), with most of these (-26; from 29 to 3) in Al Moukhaiam district.[54] Rural Damascus saw the second-largest fall (a decrease of 19 schools, from 35 to 16) in UNWRA schools. Collectively, these two governorates account for the vast majority of UNWRA schools lost in Syria from 2011/12 to 2013/14.

[54] As a reminder, this district lies in the Palestinian camp of Yarmouk.

Table 1.45 Number of UNWRA schools and changes from 2011/12 and 2013/14

GOVERNORATE	DISTRICT	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS		
		2011/12	2013/14	CHANGE
Aleppo	**Aleppo Centre**	**11**	**9**	**-2**
Damascus	Al-Kaboon	3	4	1
	Al Moukhaiam	29	3	-26
	Barza	1	3	2
	Dummar	2	1	-1
	Jowbar	4	2	-2
	Mazzeh	2	1	-1
	Old Damascus	2	1	-1
	Rukn Eddine	4	1	-3
	Total	**47**	**16**	**-31**
Dara	**Dara Centre**	**11**	**6**	**-5**
Hama	Governorate Centre	4	3	-1
	Al-Salamiyeh	0	3	3
	Total	**4**	**6**	**2**
Homs	Governorate Centre	6	1	-5
	Palmyra	1	0	-1
	Total	**7**	**1**	**-6**
Lattakia	**Governorate Centre**	**4**	**4**	**0**
Rural Damascus	Darayya	3	1	-2
	Duma	3	1	-2
	Governorate Centre	22	9	-13
	Qatana	7	5	-2
	Total	**35**	**16**	**-19**
As-Sweida	**Shahba**	**0**	**1**	**1**
Total		**119**	**59**	**-62**

Source: EMIS, MoE

Other facilities: Classrooms, libraries, information technology (IT) rooms and science laboratories

Because the EMIS reports the number of classrooms, libraries, information technology (IT) rooms and science laboratories in each school the availability of these resources from 2011/12 to 2013/14 was analysed (*see Table 1.46*). Overall, few striking differences are observed across facilities availability, except for kindergarten classrooms (a decrease of 0.67 classrooms per school, or decrease of 13 per cent per school), IT rooms (-0.12 per school, or -12 per cent) and laboratories (-0.14 per school, or 16 per cent) at the general secondary level. The decreases in classrooms per school for general secondary education (-0.87, or seven per cent) and vocational secondary education (-0.51, or five per cent) are less significant percentage-wise, but of unusually large magnitude.

Table 1.46 Average number of facilities per school and changes by educational level between 2011/12 and 2013/14

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	FACILITIES PER SCHOOL											
	CLASSROOMS			LIBRARIES			IT ROOMS			LABORATORIES		
	2011/12	2013/14	DIFFERENCE	2011/12	2013/14	DIFFERENCE	2011/12	2013/14	DIFFERENCE	2011/12	2013/14	DIFFERENCE
Kindergarten	5.34	4.67	**-0.67**	0.13	0.12	**-0.01**	0.20	0.16	**-0.04**	0.10	0.08	**-0.01**
Basic	7.96	8.02	**0.07**	0.22	0.25	**0.03**	0.38	0.39	**0.01**	0.27	0.27	**0.00**
General secondary	12.18	11.29	**-0.89**	0.45	0.44	**-0.02**	1.10	0.98	**-0.12**	1.02	0.88	**-0.14**
Vocation secondary	10.11	9.60	**-0.51**	0.40	0.43	**0.03**	1.42	1.45	**0.03**	0.80	0.80	**0.00**

Source: EMIS, MoE

Summary

- The sum total of educational personnel reported to EMIS is the only viable proxy for teacher numbers. Hence, students-staff ratios underestimate (in other words, are better than) the real student-teacher ratios because administrative and other employees are also included under this definition. This strongly limits the utility of EMIS data.
- Analysing differences in the student-staff ratio over time requires meaningful analyses of both enrolment changes and staff changes.
- Nationally, significant differences in the student-staff ratio were observed for kindergarten and basic education.
- The student-staff ratio decreased from 18.0 to 14.6 for kindergarten and from 17.1 to 15.3 for basic education. These are, approximately, 20 per cent and 10 per cent decreases, respectively.
- Some governorates, such as Deir-ez-Zor, Idleb and Quneitra, experienced drastic increases in student-teacher ratios in basic and secondary education.
- Greater variations in student-staff ratio are seen at the district level. Annexes A.8, A.9 and A.10 identify those that most urgently require teachers and supporting personnel. Annexes can be accessed at the Whole of Syria website: http://wos-education.org/.
- There were significant decreases in the number of reporting schools at all levels of education. Kindergarten and basic education were substantially more affected, with school decreases of 90 per cent and 51 per cent, respectively. Some 12,000 schools for basic education have been damaged, closed, used as shelter or otherwise unable to report statistics to the MoE since the conflict began, with 9,000 losses from basic education alone.

UNRWA basic education schools saw a decrease in student-staff ratios at both the overall and individual district levels. The exceptions are Governorate Centre in Rural Damascus (+12 students, -300 staff and -13 schools), Al-Kaboon in Damascus (+1,800 students, +65 staff), and the one UNRWA facility in Palmyra in Homs (+275 students and +10 staff). Damascus and Rural Damascus account for most of the 62 total UNRWA closures in Syria from 2011/12 to 2013/14.

6 Education Severity Scale

It is important to analyse the Syrian education sector in ways that are useful for preparing both humanitarian responses and regular programming. Towards this end, this section assesses to what extent assistance is needed at the sub-district level using the Educator Severity Scale. Indicators in this scale were calculated as part of the 2016 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The indicators are measured along a seven-level scale: A level of zero indicates "no problem", while a level of six refers to a "catastrophic problem". Calculated at the sub-district level, the indicators include variables under two broad categories, education access and quality of education.

Four variables were used to measure the level of access to education:

- Whole of Syria Assessment (WOSA) enrolment: This metric categorizes the perceived level of enrolment by sub-district in four ranges: 0-25 per cent, 26-50 per cent, 51-75 per cent and 76-100 per cent.
- UNICEF's "4Ws": This comprises population estimates at the sub-district level from the HNO matched with 4Ws' enrolment data to estimate the proportion of out-of-school children.
- WOSA functional school spaces: This metric identifies the perceived proportion of schools that are functional by sub-district in four ranges: 0-25 per cent, 26-50 per cent, 51-75 per cent and 76-100 per cent.
- 4Ws of school supplies distribution: HNO population estimations at the sub-district level are matched with the 4Ws' number of children receiving school supplies, estimating the percentage of children covered.

Three variables were used to measure the quality of education:

- Pupil-teacher ratio: The pupil-teacher ratio at the school level was aggregated using the mean at the sub-district level.
- Proportion of qualified to unqualified teachers: The proportion of qualified to unqualified teachers at the school level was aggregated using the mean at the sub-district level.
- Percentage of teachers paid: The proportion of paid teachers at the school level was aggregated using the mean at the sub-district level.

It should be noted that the availability of data from each of these seven variables varies by sub-district, with an average of 3.2 variables available for each of the 270 sub-districts. The value from each indicator served as an input to calculate the severity scale, based on the thresholds in the Education Severity Scale. The severity scale by the sub-district was calculated as the mean of the indicator-level severity scales available by sub-district. For 17 sub-districts for which no indicator was available, the assessed severity scale was requested from a team of experts. The results of the severity scale are presented in Map 1.2.

Map 1.2 Education Severity Scale by sub-district

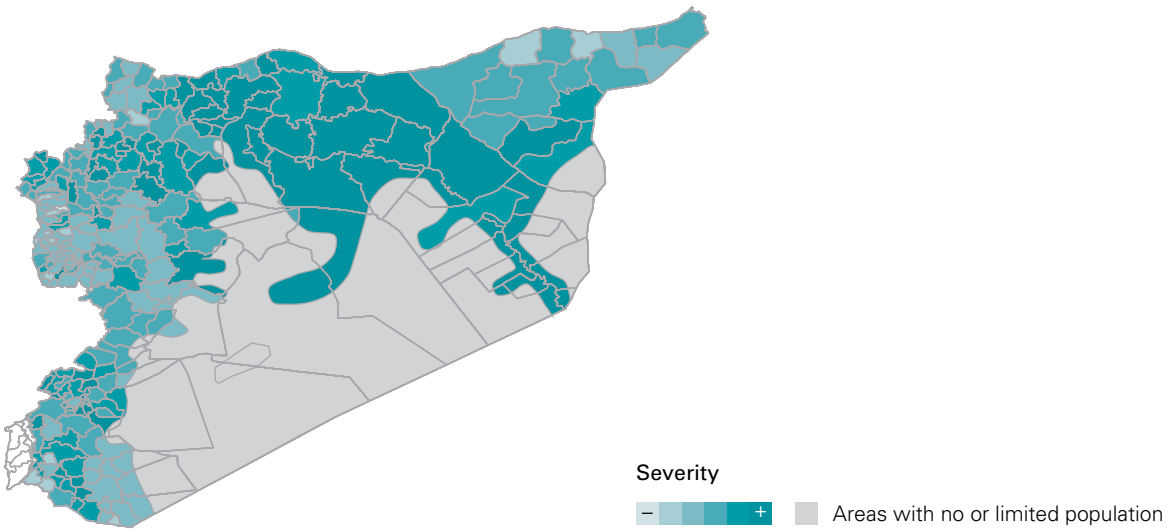


Table 1.47 Estimated population by severity scale of sub-district

SEVERITY SCALE	# OF SUB-DISTRICTS	# BOYS AND GIRLS (5-17 YEARS)	% OF ALL BOYS AND GIRLS
0	–	–	0%
1	1	1,493	0%
2	14	167,353	3%
3	67	1,349,116	25%
4	71	1,819,054	34%
5	47	965,788	18%
6	70	1,110,725	21%
Total	270	5,413,530	100%

Source: EMIS, MoE

Table 1.47 presents the estimated population of children between 5 and 17 years of age for the start of the 2015/16 school year (September 2015). These estimations are based on the severity scale of the sub district. The table shows that over 70 per cent of children in Syria live in sub-districts categorized as having an acute and immediate need for humanitarian assistance (severity scale level four and above). Furthermore, 21 per cent of children are living in areas considered to have catastrophic problems (severity scale level six). A severity scale level six represents an area where less than 44 per cent of children attend school, less than 44 per cent of schools are functional and less than 44 per cent of teachers are paid.

The conflict in Syria has further increased the number of out-of-school children and increased the severity of the conditions for the education sector. This is especially true in hard-to-reach and besieged locations. The challenges of reaching children are greater in areas controlled by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), primarily Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor Governorates, as well as besieged and enclaved areas in Aleppo, Homs, Hama and Rural Damascus.[55, 56] This is confirmed looking at Map 1.2, where the highest levels of severity are observed in the north-eastern regions of the country, in the south-western regions and in the Aleppo governorate.

7 Conclusion and recommendations

Key Findings

- In Syria, 2.1 million children in K-G12 are out of school, of which 1.4 million are children in K-G9.
- Total enrolment of K-G12 education in Syria fell by 2.3 million (from 5.5 to 3.2 million) from 2010/11 to 2014/15.[57] In this period, most of the loss occurred in basic education over this period occurred (-2.1 million), in particularly large losses observed in Aleppo (-0.84 million) and Deir-ez-Zor (-0.33 million) governorates. The best-case estimate for national basic education GER in 2014 (78.1 per cent) is far worse than any historical value. The war has set back the education system by two decades.
- Kindergarten and vocational secondary enrolment fell – these decreases were small in absolute numbers but sharp and huge percentage-wise, with losses of 89 per cent and 64 per cent, respectively.

[55] ISIL is also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, or ISIS. Self-proclaimed as the "Islamic State", it has since 2014 seized territories in Syria (such as Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor governorates) and Iraq.

[56] "Besieged areas" refers to locations surrounded by armed actors with the sustained effect that humanitarian assistance cannot enter regularly and that civilians, the sick and wounded cannot regularly exit the area. "Hard-to-reach areas", on the other hand, are areas not regularly accessible to humanitarian actors for the purpose of sustained programming. This inaccessibility usually results from denied access, the need to negotiate access on ad hoc bases or other restrictions (active conflict, multiple security checkpoints or failure to receive timely approval from authorities).

[57] The enrolment figure in 2014/15 does not include private schools.

- Student numbers rose in Lattakia, As-Sweida and Tartous over the study period, implying their education systems were able to accommodate a limited number of affected children. However, the total increase in enrolment in these governorates (and receiving districts generally) is miniscule compared to that of dropouts, suggesting they may be at the limits of their present receiving capacity.
- The conflict appears to have affected girls and boys roughly equally in kindergarten, basic and general secondary education.
- Vocational secondary schools, however, which historically exhibit an already skewed gender ratio, have further seen a substantial number of female dropouts in many governorates, most notably in Quneitra and Rural Damascus during the period between 2010/11 and 2014/15.
- Nationally, the availability of educational personnel in kindergarten and basic education was negatively affected by the conflict, but the student-teacher ratio of secondary education has increased.
- Numerically, Aleppo's decrease of 837,000 students from basic education is by far the most severe observed between 2010/11 and 2011/12, but this governorate has seen an even sharper drop in the availability of educational personnel. This requires additional teacher deployment, intensive training and resources for double-shift schools.
- Since the beginning of the crisis, the total number of schools reporting education statistics to the MoE decreased by about 12,000 (from 22,113 to 10,111) from 2011/12 to 2014/15, with basic education schools making up about 9,000 of the decrease. A MoE survey of basic education schools found 1,200 schools damaged, used as shelters, or destroyed; a further 1,500 schools inaccessible; and was unable to conduct any assessment whatsoever for approximately 800 schools.
- Aleppo has also seen the largest decrease in schools. It is home to 13 of the 17 districts that lost more than half their reporting schools during the conflict in 2013/14.
- On the other hand, some districts in Damascus, Hama, Rural Damascus and the receiving governorates of Al-Hasakeh, As-Sweida and Tartous saw small amounts of school construction during the conflict period.
- There were few significant differences in the availability of specific school facilities (libraries, IT rooms and science laboratories) pre- and post-crisis. The most notable decreases are in IT rooms (a decrease of 0.12 rooms, or 12 per cent) and laboratories (-0.14, or 16 per cent) per school at the general secondary level, though the number of classrooms per school did drop by around -0.5 to -1.0 in all categories except basic education.
- Damascus hosts both districts with substantial increases and decreases in enrolment and school numbers from 2010/11 to 2013/14. The heterogeneous impact of the crisis within the governorate means that within both Damascus and Aleppo, responses must be district specific.
- UNRWA basic education schools have seen 40,000 pupils (60 per cent) drop out in 2013/14, with the majority of the 62 closures (52 per cent) occurring in Damascus (31 closures; of these, 26 occurred in Al Moukhaiam district) and Rural Damascus (19 closures; of these, 13 in Governorate Centre district). Surprisingly, student-staff ratios in UNRWA schools still decreased nationally and in most districts, with the exception of Al-Kaboon (Damascus, +6), Governorate Centre (Rural Damascus, +12) and Palmyra (Homs, +16).
- In the best-case scenario (half of pre-conflict enrolment is sustained in unreported areas), regional K-G12 2014/15 GER of all the Syrian children in Syria and Syrian children in neighbouring countries is 60.3 per cent. Not including at-risk refugees, at least one third of school-age Syrian children, inside and outside Syria (2.5 million) are out of school.
- Refugee out-of-school children rate has continued to decrease from October 2012 to 2014, falling from 72.7 per cent to 53.2 per cent. However, the vast influx of refugees into neighbouring countries means the number of Syrian refugee children still increased drastically from 101,000 in 2012 to 1.3 million in 2015.

Table 1.48 Summary of estimated out-of-school children in millions and as share of school-age population in 2014/15

EDUCATIONAL CATEGORY	DIMENSIONS	NATIONAL (WITHIN SYRIA)	REFUGEE (OUTSIDE SYRIA)	REGIONAL (TOTAL)
K-G9	1-3	1.37	no age distribution data for refugees	n.a.
		32.4%		
	4-5	1.41		
		33.4%		
	Total	2.78	n.a.	
		65.8%		
K-G12	1-3*	2.12	0.55	2.67
		39.5%	54.6%	42.2%
	4-5	1.41	no at-risk refugee data	n.a.
		26.3%		
	Total	3.53	n.a.	
		65.8%		

Source: Author's calculation. In-Syria estimates are obtained under Scenario 2 (the moderate scenario); outside-Syria estimates are based on October 2014 reports.

Recommendations

- EMIS' data collection capabilities should be strengthened, as data gaps restrict analysis coverage and the identification of specific areas with the greatest educational needs. Specifically, creating district and sub-district codes is important to track the changes in enrolment and other education statistics. In addition, schools seem to face reporting difficulties. New technology, such as mobile phone platforms, could be used to address difficulties in collecting data from schools.
- Furthermore, the current incarnation of Syria's EMIS only provides somewhat basic education statistics (enrolment, staffing and facilities). EMIS' scope could be extended to cover areas such as access to running water and sanitation, school governance and security, which affect children's learning and life. EMIS data quality might also be improved by training head teachers and clarifying and/or simplifying definitions. For instance, teachers are represented by multiple variables in the current EMIS questionnaire, which potentially leads to confusion among respondents.
- The enormous magnitude of damaged and devastated educational infrastructure necessitates immediate follow-up surveys and reconstruction investment.
- Efforts to ensure adequate numbers of personnel, educational resources and school constructions should be especially focused in basic education and governorates receiving displaced children (Lattakia, As-Sweida and Tartous) and those with large increases in re-enrolment over the past year (Aleppo, Idleb, Hama and Rural Damascus). The provision of learning materials and extra classes will become increasingly urgent as more children return to school from previously damaged or devastated areas. Aleppo, in particular, requires additional human educational resources, although responses there (and in Damascus) need to be district-specific.
- Reasons for the further drop of an already-low vocational secondary girl-boy ratio, both nationally and in many individual governorates, particularly Rural Damascus and Quneitra, need additional qualitative investigation.
- Historical repetition and dropout data, as well as the estimated numbers of children at risk (out-of-school children Dimensions 4 and5), suggest the importance of quality education in Syria has only increased during the emergency. Even assuming repetition and drop-out rates have remained at 2011 levels, the study found the at-risk portion of out-of-school children rather high (23 per cent in K-G12). A follow-up study should be conducted to determine not only why so many children are not attending school, but also examine reasons for repetition and dropping out. This is crucial to achieving universal basic education in Syria.
- A full summary of identified and suggested interventions by governorate and district levels of education based on 2011 to 2013 data are provided in Annex A.27. Annexes can be accessed at the Whole of Syria website: http://wos-education.org/.



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PART II QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

1 Introduction

While quantitative data provide numbers of children enrolled and numbers of children out of school, they do not explain changing patterns of enrolment, or why children are out of school other than through a general reference to the crisis, displacement of population, destruction of infrastructure and fatalities. Qualitative information, however, provides information on how people think and feel about schooling, helping to complete the picture provided by the quantitative data.

This chapter therefore examines data collected in April 2015 from 59 schools in government-controlled areas of Syria, supplemented by information drawn from secondary data sources. These sources assess education, describe plans to aid children whose schooling has been affected, and provide insight on other relevant and connected sectors, such as child protection. Much of the secondary material refers to areas not under government control.

Because this study did not use statistically random sampling, generalizations cannot be extrapolated. Instead, the study applied convenience sampling, selecting schools based on safe access for enumerators. Schools also had to meet one or more of the following requirements: Affected by conflict in the area; experiencing an influx or egress of residents; marked by a disruption of other social services; and/or already receiving assistance as catering for people in need.

Even though statistically sound generalizations cannot be formed, the data highlight many meaningful and important obstacles to providing high quality, universal education in Syria.[58] Moreover, this kind of countrywide, in-depth analysis of Syrian education post-crisis has not been completed before. The findings of this report therefore serve as the best evidence available to inform education response planning and programming in Syria.

Design of the qualitative data analysis

Face-to-face interviews with school personnel and stakeholders were completed. Stakeholders include students, their families, members of the community in which the school is located and those exercising authority over the school. Questionnaires were designed with substantial involvement from members of the Damascus-based Education Sector Working Group (ESWG). Organizations affiliated with the ESWG provided enumerating staff members, and these staff members were trained in data collection protocols. The MoE approved the schools included in the survey.

After the MoE granted its approval, the Government's Ministry of Foreign Affairs reviewed the questionnaires and subsequently instructed that the CBS was to assume responsibility for disseminating and conducting the survey with their own personnel. Ultimately, CBS only made slight modifications to the original design and accepted the list of schools. Inevitably, these interventions resulted in some delays, with data collection occurring during the final two weeks of the second semester of the 2014/15 academic year, as opposed to early in the first semester as had been intended.[59] The tables extracted from the data set were made available, translated into English and used for this chapter of the report.

[58] It is worth noting that for much of the secondary data, the authors applied purposive and/or convenience sampling as well. Some secondary data sources describe the crisis's effect on education based on casual observations and/or small-scale studies.

[59] A fuller description of the survey, together with the protocols and questionnaires, will be found from Annex B to Annex L.

Surveys focused on the school. Guided interviews were conducted with principals (also referred to as head teachers); focus group discussions were held separately with groups of teachers, parents and children/students; and knowledgeable members of the local community were interviewed (with the enumerator recording her or his own observations). Instead of gathering a history of education over the five years of the crisis, surveys drew attention to the ways in which communities could strengthen education, gathered what respondents felt were necessary interventions and encouraged suggestions on ways external agencies could assist.

Table 2.1 illustrates the geographic distribution of the 59 schools surveyed. Fifty-two (88 per cent) schools were in urban areas, five (nine per cent) in rural areas, and two (three per cent) were camp schools.

Table 2.1 Number of schools included in the survey

GOVERNORATE	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS
Aleppo	9
Al-Hasakeh	7
As-Sweida	5
Damascus	5
Dara	3
Hama	6
Homs	4
Lattakia	6
Quneitra	4
Rural Damascus	4
Tartous	6
Total	59

Fifty-five schools offered basic education and four offered general secondary education.[60] Seven schools, two of them secondary schools, enrolled only girls, and four (two secondary) enrolled only boys. Enrolment of the four secondary schools totalled 3,005. Enrolment of the 46 schools with mixed enrolment totalled 46,959.[61]

RESPONDENTS

In total, 1,748 respondents participated in the survey, either as individuals (in the case of key informants and principals) or as members of focus group discussions. Table 2.2 displays the number of respondents for each of the questionnaires by governorate.[62]

Key informants: Twenty-four per cent of key informants were women. Sixty-nine per cent of respondents were over the age of 40, and 29 per cent were between 31 and 40-years-old. One was younger than 31 years. Most worked in the government sector (64 per cent women and 62 per cent men), one woman served as a salaried employee in the private sector, 38 per cent of the men were self-employed, and four (29 per cent) women were not working.[63] Eighty-one per cent of key informants had lived in the neighbourhood for five years or longer. Three men and one woman had lived in the area for less than two years.[64]

[60] EMIS data provided by the MoE on the 59 schools. "Secondary" here refers to Grades 10 through 12.
[61] Enrolment figures were not provided for two schools with presumed mixed enrolment.
[62] The more detailed table can be found in Annex H.
[63] Annex C.3, 5.
[64] Annex C.3, 6.

Table 2.2 Respondents to each of the questionnaires, disaggregated by gender

GOVERNORATE	SCHOOLS NUMBER	KEY INFORMANTS		SCHOOL PRINCIPALS		TEACHERS		PARENTS		CHILDREN	
		FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE
Aleppo	9	4	5	5	4	55	18	135	127	41	32
Al-Hasakeh	7	1	6	1	6	20	19	20	16	27	21
As-Sweida	5	1	4	1	4	31	9	123	17	23	22
Damascus	5	1	4	5	–	34	6	34	8	24	17
Dara	3	1	2	1	2	16	5	10	9	6	22
Hama	6	1	5	3	3	46	8	32	24	29	33
Homs	4	–	4	4	–	26	4	30	6	28	8
Lattakia	6	2	4	3	3	37	11	31	17	27	25
Quneitra	4	–	4	1	3	20	12	9	24	14	19
Rural Damascus	4	1	3	2	2	27	6	27	6	27	17
Tartous	6	2	4	3	3	41	11	33	17	33	19
Grand Total	**59**	**14**	**45**	**29**	**30**	**362**	**109**	**374**	**271**	**279**	**235**

Key informants were not only knowledgeable about the neighbourhood, but most had also directly interacted with the school system since their children, all under the age of 21, numbered 134 (with 21 children younger than six years).[65] Six boys and two girls had completed Grade 9; two boys and five girls completed Grade 12; and four girls were registered in higher education, while two boys were employed.[66]

School principals: Of the 59 principals, 49 per cent were women. Twenty women (69 per cent) and 15 men (50 per cent) had served at the present school for four years or more and consequently, could confidently comment on changes that had taken place during the crisis. Three principals had been at the school for less than a year. Of those who had been at the school between one and three years (36 per cent), eight (28 per cent) were women and 13 (43 per cent) men.[67] In two instances, the school principal was on sick leave at the time of the survey, and questions were answered by another senior staff member.[68] Nearly three-quarters of the respondents were over the age of 40.[69]

Teachers' groups: Fifty-nine discussion groups were held. The 471 group members included 362 women (77 per cent) and 109 men (23 per cent). Eleven groups had only female participants, and 48 groups (81 per cent) were mixed. Ages of participants ranged from 21 to 60 years, and the age composition of the groups varied. For a group, the youngest member may be 40-years-old, and for other groups, the oldest participant could be 35-years-old. Group discussions generally numbered six to 12 participants, with five exceptions: A two-person group, a three-person group, a four-person group and two five-person groups.[70] Table 2.3 details participants' years of experience as a teacher and how long they have been teaching at their current school.[71] Table 2.4 shows what percentage of teachers taught a particular subject.

[65] Annex C.78A. Fifty-six of the children were girls and 78 boys.
[66] Annex C.78B, 78G.
[67] Annex D.4-5.
[68] Annex D.3.
[69] Annex D.5-6.
[70] Annex E.1-3.
[71] Annex E.4-5: 457 teachers (97 per cent) declared their length of time as a teacher. Only 417 (89 per cent) declared their length of time at the present school.

Table 2.3 Total years of experience as a teacher and years at current school

LENGTH OF TIME	YEARS					TOTAL
	5 OR LESS	6 TO 10	11 TO 15	16 TO 20	21 OR MORE	
As a teacher	23	19	19	12	26	**100**
At present school	66	17	11	3	4	**100**

Table 2.4 Subjects taught by teachers participating in focus group discussions

SUBJECTS TAUGHT	PERCENTAGE
First cycle (Grades 1 to 4)	40
Subject: Arabic language	14
Subject: Foreign language	9
Subject: Mathematics	10
Science subjects	9
Other subjects	18
Total responses	**100**

Parents' groups: Fifty-eight discussion groups were held.[72] All but seven (12 per cent) were mixed-gender groups (four women only groups, 3 men only groups).[73] Group sizes varied between two and 108,[74] with an average size of 11. Eight groups had fewer than six members and two groups more than 13. If the two groups with 108 members each (with roughly equal male and female representation) are excluded, the average group size is eight. The age of group members ranged from 23 to 70. At five of the six schools in rural areas, the groups were predominantly male. Males predominated in eight of the 50 groups (16 per cent) representing schools in urban areas. Participant's length of time living in their neighbourhoods ranged from less than a year to 70 years. In six groups (10 per cent), residence had been less than five years for all group members.[75]

Children's groups: In total, 59 discussion groups were held. The 514 group members included 279 girls (54 per cent) and 235 boys.[76] Up to 32 of the group members (six per cent) were out-of-school children who came from Damascus, Tartous Centre, As-Sweida Centre, and Khan Arnaba, Quneitra.[77] In 12 groups (20 per cent), all members had not lived in the same area for three years (or longer); 47 groups (80 per cent) had members who had lived in the same area for 10 years or longer.[78] In 41 groups (69 per cent), all members were in primary school; in 11 groups (19 per cent), all members were in secondary school; in five groups (8 per cent), the membership was a mix of primary- and secondary-school students.[79] Fifteen groups (25 per cent) included members as young as five, six or seven-years-old. At the other extreme, seven groups (12 per cent) had participants aged between 17 and 21 years. In 23 groups (39 per cent), the age range exceeded four years, which is unfortunate, since younger children might have felt discouraged from expressing their viewpoints.[80] Nine participants reported they had left school without completing the first cycle (Grades 1 to 4), two had completed only the first cycle, three had completed up to Grade 6 and three completed up to Grade 7.[81]

[72] No response was recorded from an urban school in Jebel Saman, Aleppo.

[73] Annex F.1-3.

[74] This is far too large for a focus group discussion. Most of the data tables provided from the parents' groups are not disaggregated in a way that makes it possible to examine whether the responses of these two groups, each of 108 members, should be excluded.

[75] Annex F.4-5 on the children of parents' group members yielded data that are questionable and have not been used.

[76] Annex G.1-3.

[77] Annex G.6 gives the total number as 506, with 32 of the group members being out-of-school children and 474 being in school. The total is slightly lower than the total in Annex G.1-3.

[78] Annex G.1-3.

[79] Annex G.7. The primary school category, Grades 1 to 6, includes some groups where the members were all in first cycle grades, Grades 1 to 4.

[80] Annex G.1-3. The extreme case was the group that included the five-year-old and also the 21-year-old.

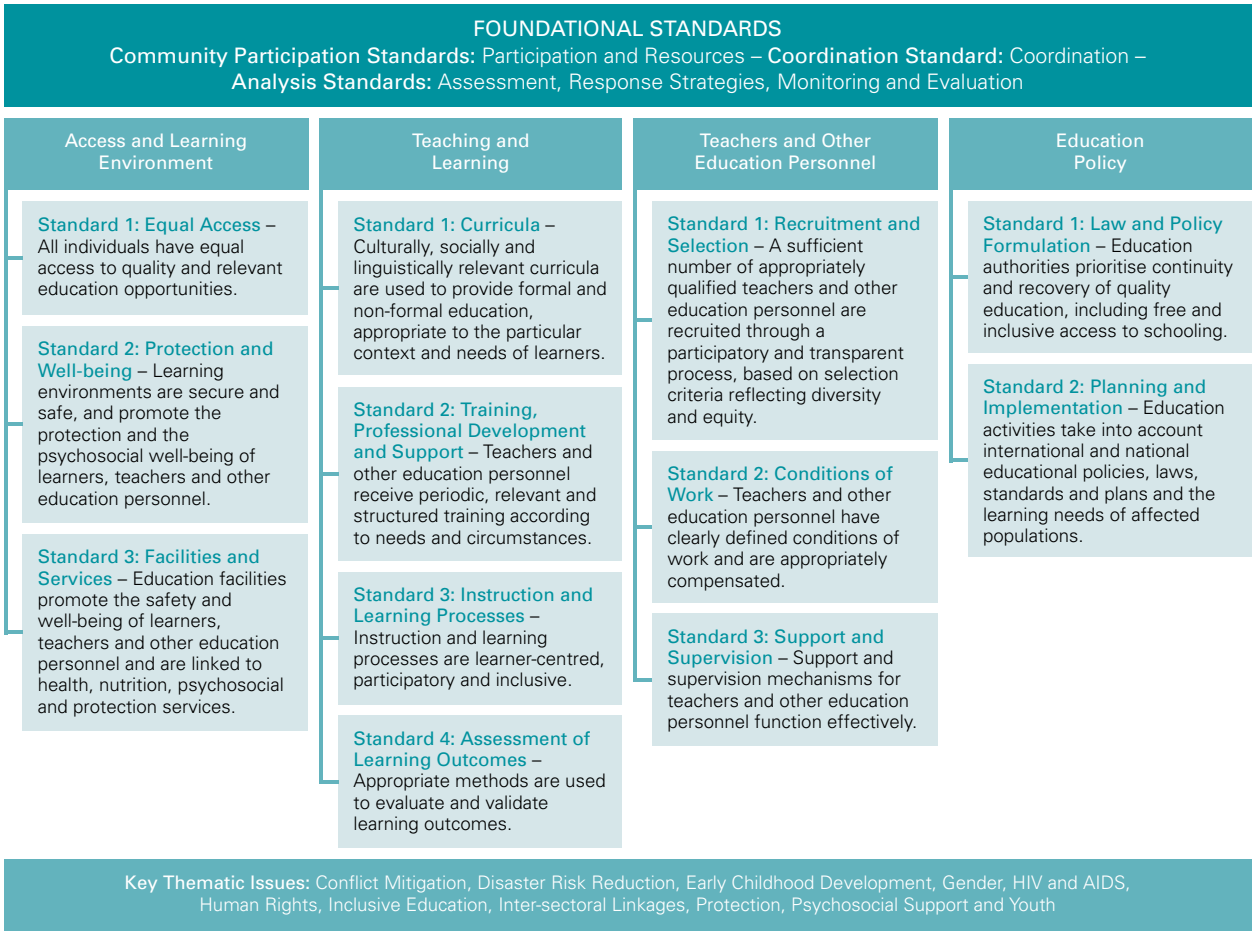
[81] Annex G.10. This is a smaller number than the 32 reportedly out of school in Annex G.6. It is possible that in Annex G.10, the enumerator was recording the presence of one (or more) children in the group who fell in the category rather than recording the number of individuals.

INEE FRAMEWORK

This qualitative analysis is organized under the INEE framework for education.[82] As described in Part I, the INEE proposes the minimum standards of education during emergencies, standards which then provide a solid foundation from which better education will be possible once the crisis has ended.[83] Not only should schools provide a measure of stability for children during a crisis, but they should also be used as an entry point for access to other life-enhancing services.[84]

Some of the information collected might fit under more than one of the standards;[85] it has been placed where most appropriate in the context of the present analysis.

Figure 2.1 INEE minimum standards for education



[82] INEE.

[83] INEE, p.5.

[84] INEE, p.2.

[85] As a reminder, these INEE consists of five domains with standards underneath each one. The first domain, the "foundational standards," involves community participation, community coordination and community analysis. The second domain covers "access and learning environment", setting three minimum standards: equal access; protection and well-being; and facilities and services. Thirdly, the domain of "teaching and learning" sets four minimum standards: curricula; training, professional development and support; instruction and learning processes; and assessment and learning outcomes. The fourth domain, "teachers and other education personnel", covers recruitment and selection, conditions of work, and support and supervision. Finally, the fifth domain of "education policy" sets two standards: law and policy formulation, as well as planning and implementation.



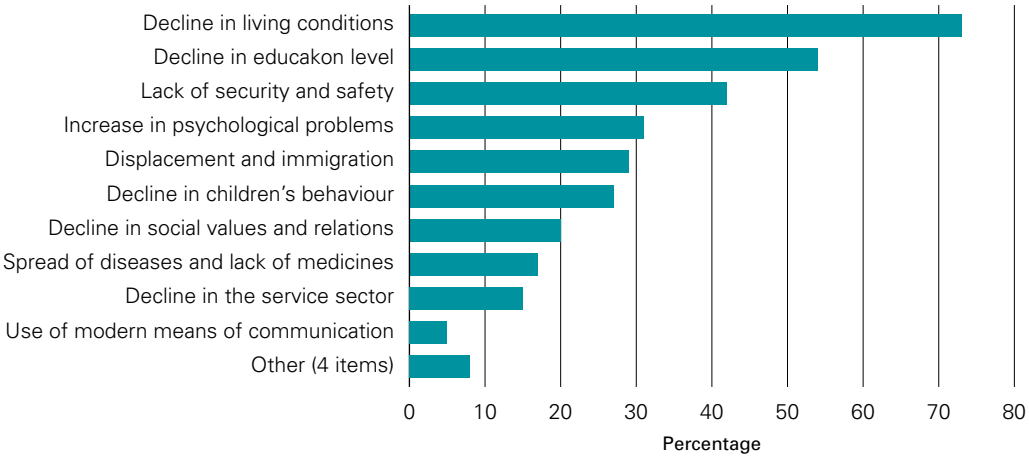
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2 Cross-cutting concerns

Several responses cut across multiple INEE domains. These are answers to questions such as, "What are the greatest needs of children in the community?" and "What are the top priorities that schools need to address?"

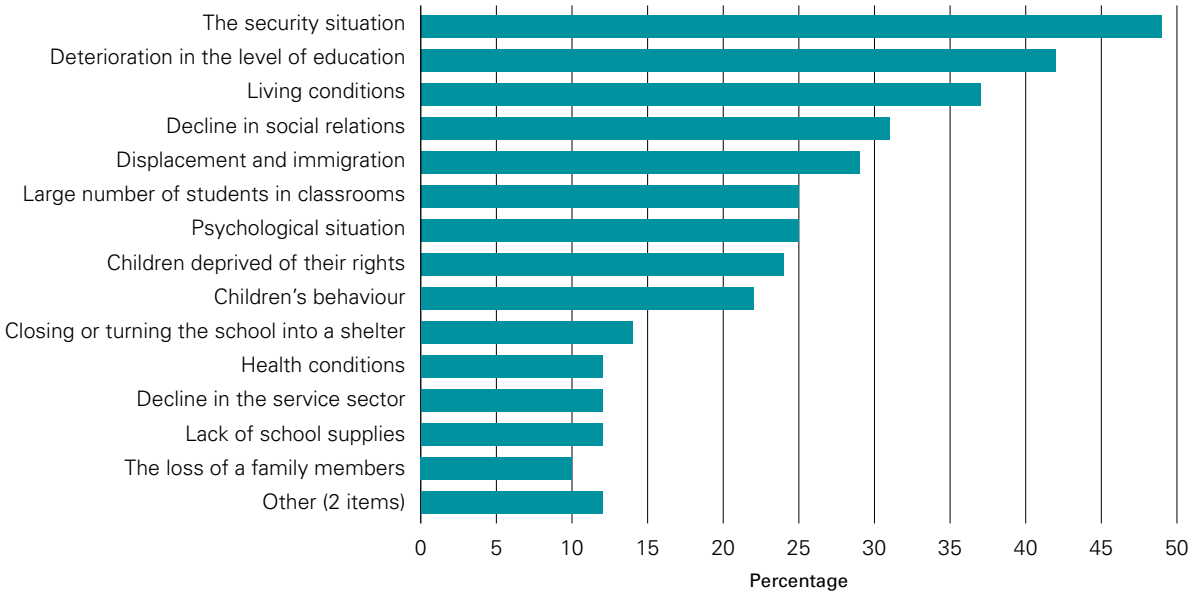
Perspective of parents: Parents named the decline in living conditions as the most noticeable change (73 per cent) since the crisis began; security, displacement, and health issues were also mentioned (*see Figure 2.2*). Regarding changes in schools, decline in the level of education stood as the most prominent answer, mentioned by 54 per cent of the groups. Over the most recent six months, parents saw a continuing decline in living conditions, coupled with high prices and changes in consumption patterns (53 per cent). While 20 per cent still saw the security situation as poor, 24 per cent actually reported an improvement.[86] This is not surprising: It shows that different areas are affected in different ways.

Figure 2.2 Changes observed since the start of the crisis by parents



Perspective of children: Responding to the same questions, the children's groups agreed with parents on four of the top five changes observed, although they switched the positions of the security and the decline in living conditions (*see Figure 2.3*).

Figure 2.3 Changes observed since the start of the crisis by children



[86] Annex F.11. Groups in As-Sweida and Quneitra, in the As-Safira district of Aleppo and the Quamishli district of Al-Hasakeh had no comment on security.

When comparing differences across governorates in parents' and children's identification of the most prominent changes, parents are consistently more aware of a decline in living conditions than are children. Over 80 per cent of the parents' groups noted this change in As-Sweida, Damascus, Hama and Quneitra. The lowest awareness of this aspect was registered by parents in Dara and children's groups in Dara did not note this change at all. Regarding security, parents and children were equally aware of the change in Aleppo and Quneitra; parents were more aware of the change in Dara, Hama and Lattakia; children were more aware than parents in Al-Hasakeh, As-Sweida, Damascus, and especially in Homs and Rural Damascus, where over 70 per cent of the children's groups mentioned it. No change was reported for Tartous by either parents or children.

Parents' and children's awareness of a decline in education level was roughly equal in Rural Damascus and Tartous. In Al-Hasakeh, Dara, Lattakia and Quneitra, parents were more aware of the decline than were children. The greatest difference in perception was in Hama, where over 60 per cent of the parents but none of the children noticed a deterioration in the level of education.

Figure 2.4 Changes observed since the start of the crisis by parents, by governorate

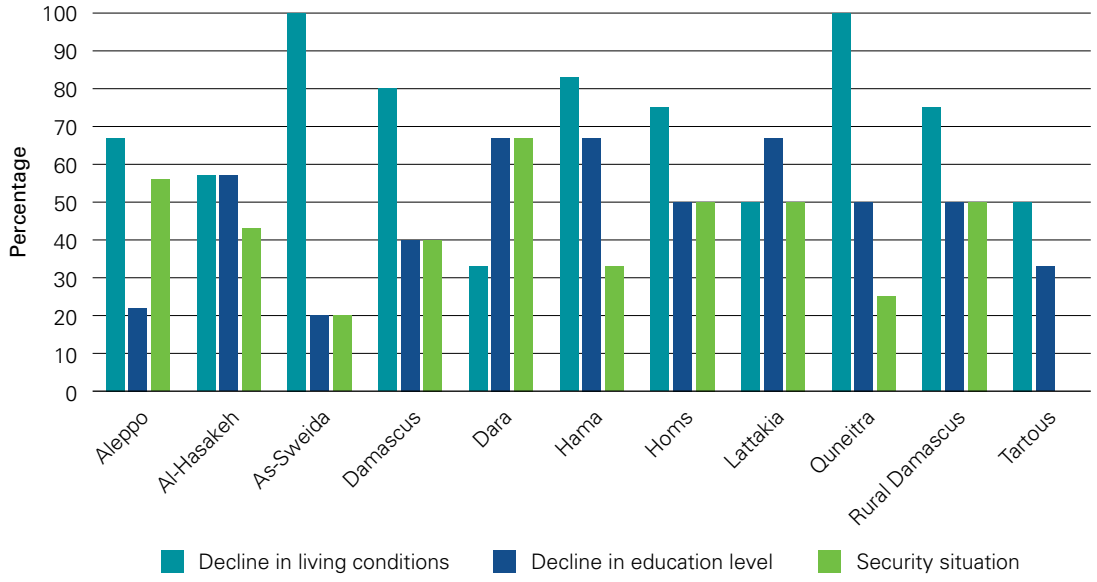
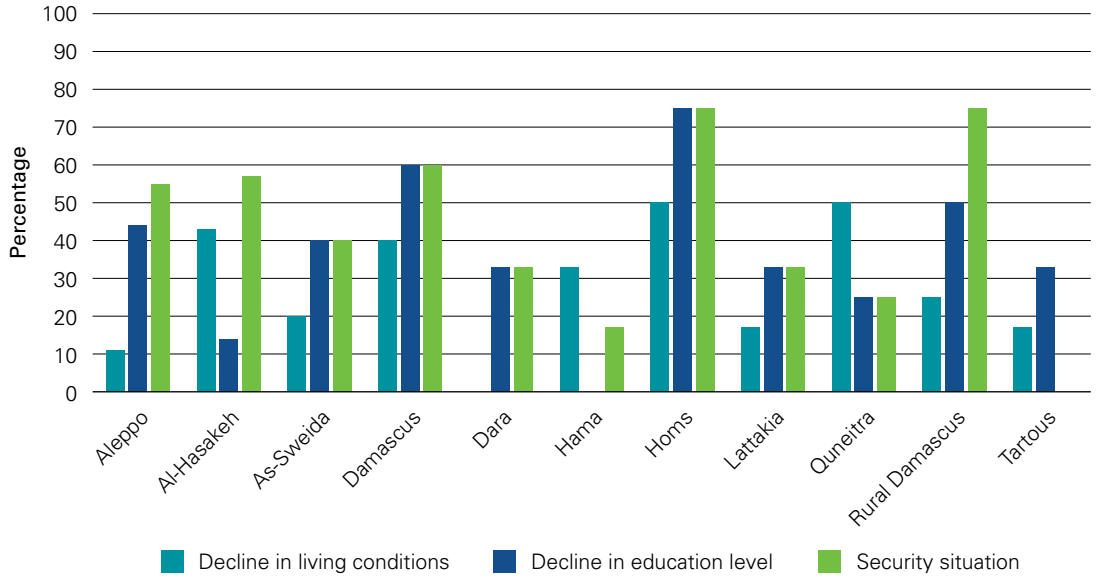
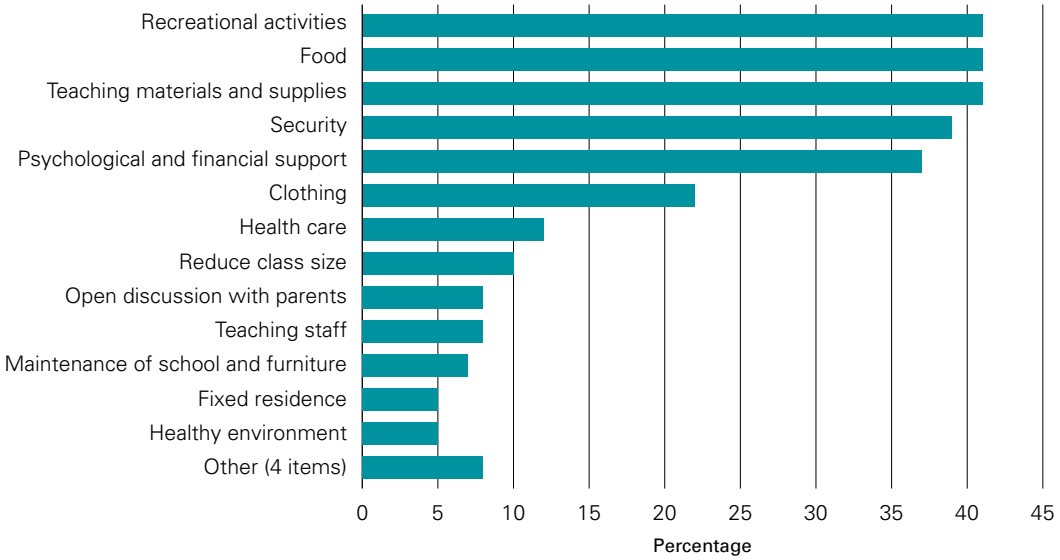


Figure 2.5 Changes observed since the start of the crisis by children, by governorate



Perspective of key informants: Key informants were questioned on the greatest needs of the children of the community.[87] Of the seven aspects topping their list, only one – teaching materials and supplies – refers directly to education. Although, the need for recreational activities almost certainly partly refers to the schools.

Figure 2.6 Greatest needs of children of the community identified by key informants



Perspective of teachers: When teachers were asked about changes they had observed over the past four years, their focus was almost exclusively on changes in the school rather than the wider context.[88] A combination of overcrowded classrooms and multiple shifts were identified by 71 per cent of teachers' groups as the most obvious change. A change in the culture and behaviour of students, in third place, had also been identified by the parents' and children's groups.[89] It is unfortunate that this could not be explored in more detail, but it must be related, to some extent, to psychosocial needs and the fact that security measures have restricted the free movement of children in the neighbourhood. Seventeen per cent of teachers' groups noted an improvement in the security and educational situation over the most recent six months.[90]

BOX 2.1 "DETERIORATION" IN LIVING CONDITIONS AND IN THE LEVEL OF EDUCATION

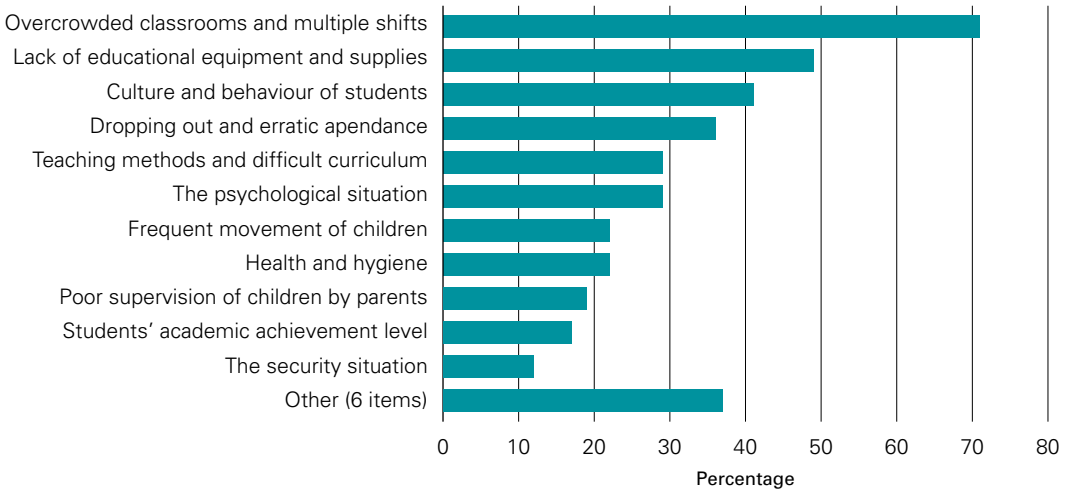
Deterioration, or a decline, in living conditions is readily understood: loss of employment, rapidly rising prices of commodities, essential services suspended, and so on.

With regard to school education, the most obvious symptoms of deteriorations and decreases "in the level of education" are evident in the classroom. These take the form in three or more of the following:

- Availability or use of teaching equipment (maps, models, laboratory equipment, etc.)
- Availability and use of textbooks by students
- Sufficient supplies of stationery
- Adequate chalk boards or white boards in every classroom ("Adequate" meaning at least a square metre in extent, with chalk or pens available, and writing on the board able to be read by students at the back of the classroom)
- Weekly teaching time in each subject meeting, or exceeding, MoE requirements
- Competence of teacher(s)
- Teachers present in class for every lesson
- Sufficient seating for all students, with suitable writing surface.

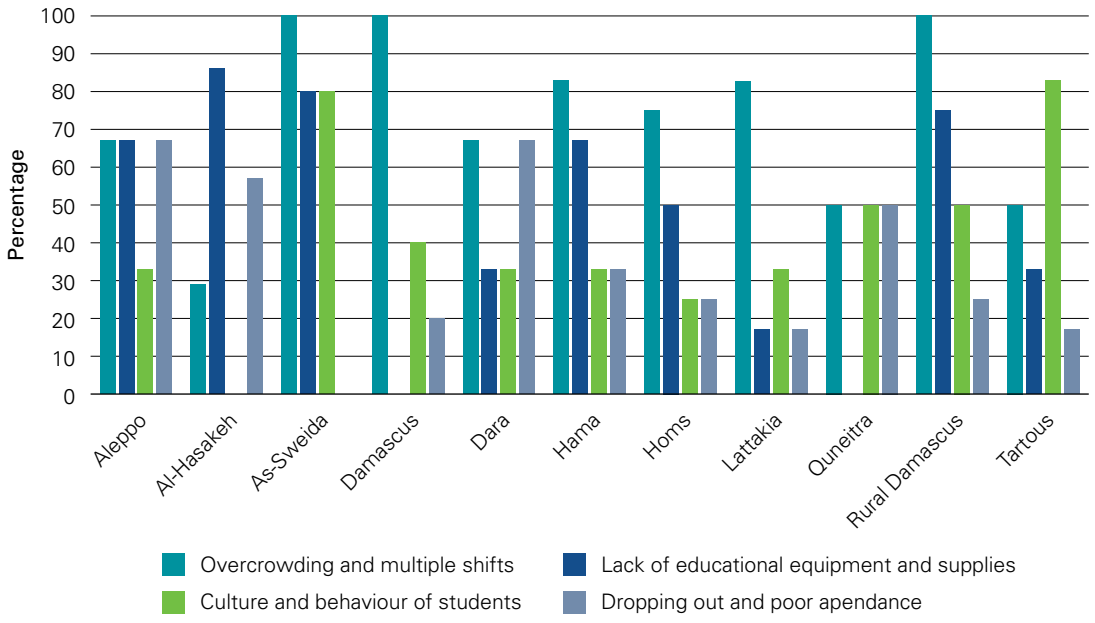
[87] Annex C.9.
[88] Annex E.8A.
[89] Annex F.10, G.11A. (Parents placed it sixth and children ninth.)
[90] Annex E.9.

Figure 2.7 Changes observed since the start of the crisis by teachers



When reorganized by governorate, all teacher groups in As-Sweida, Damascus and Rural Damascus mentioned overcrowding and multiple shifts; over 80 per cent of respondents in Hama and Lattakia reported overcrowding and multiple shifts. A lack of educational supplies was identified by 80 per cent of groups in Al-Hasakeh and As-Sweida and just short of 80 per cent in Rural Damascus. This was not mentioned in Damascus or Quneitra. The culture and behaviour of students was regarded most seriously in Tartous and As-Sweida, but was not mentioned in Al-Hasakeh. Dropping out and poor attendance was most seriously regarded in Dara and Al-Hasakeh at around 60 per cent.

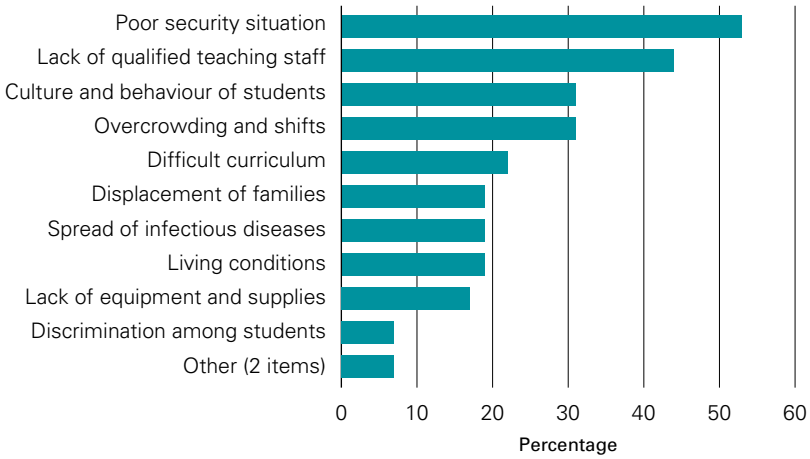
Figure 2.8 Changes observed since the start of the crisis by teachers, by governorate



Perspective of parents: Poor security is of highest concern for parents when they think about their children's education. Over half the parents' groups identified this as the greatest threat to their children's acquiring a good education, placing it ahead of the shortages of qualified teachers.[91]

[91] Annex F.8-9.

Figure 2.9 Parents' main concerns about their children's education



Perspective of key informants: When asked about what has deteriorated since the crisis began, key informants ranked teacher competence highest,[92] placing it above destruction, damage and schools repurposed for other infrastructure. The fact that teaching practices also appears on the list further reinforces the noticeability of deteriorated teacher competence. The reduction in relationships with school staff requires more investigation and detailing. It is also not clear what respondents would have understood by "participatory school management".

Table 2.5 What key informants saw as better about the school prior to the crisis, by governorate

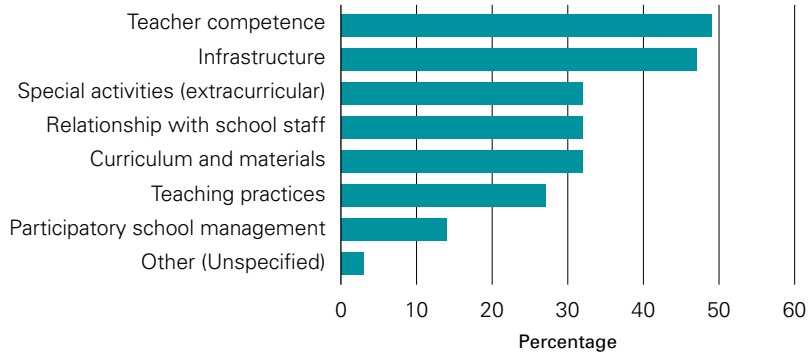
GOVERNORATE	TEACHER COMPETENCE	INFRASTRUCTURE	CURRICULUM AND MATERIALS	RELATIONSHIP WITH STAFF	SPECIAL ACTIVITIES	TEACHING PRACTICES	PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT	OTHER (UNSPECIFIED)	NO RESPONSE
Urban areas	28	24	18	17	16	15	5	2	31
Aleppo	7	2	1	3	3	4	1		6
Al-Hasakeh	3	4	5	3	1		4	1	
As-Sweida	1	2	1	1		2	1	1	3
Damascus	3	3	1	1		1			6
Dara	2	2		2	2		1		
Hama	3	3	3	2	3	3	1		
Homs	2	1	2	1	3				3
Lattakia	4	4	4	1	1	1			3
Quneitra			1	1			1		3
Rural Damascus	2	2		1	1				3
Tartous	1	1		1	2				4
Rural areas	1	3	1	2	1	1	3	3	
Quneitra	1	2		1	1		1		
Rural Damascus									3
Tartous		1	1	1		1	2		
Camps		1			1		1		3
As-Sweida		1			1		1		
Tartous									3

Note: Each of the 59 respondents was requested to list three changes. The maximum number of responses is therefore 177.

[92] Annex C.85.

Key informants were aware of a reduction in the range and frequency of extracurricular activities offered by the school, as well as a reduction in levels of participation by students. It has already been reported (*see Figure 2.6*) that key informants ranked recreational activities as a top need for children, suggesting key informants are aware that children are at a loss on how to spend their free time. Key informants may also be aware of the importance of recreational activities as an antidote to the stresses of the crisis. Neither parents (*see Figure 2.2*) nor children (*see Figure 2.3*) mentioned a decline in recreational and extracurricular activities since the crisis began.

Figure 2.10 What key informants saw as better about the school prior to the crisis



Moving from a review of changes that had taken place to a consideration of action moving forward, key informants identified their present concerns with school education (*see Figure 2.11*).[93] The deteriorating levels of education are a general expression embracing many other points identified. Overcrowding, the state of the infrastructure, teaching equipment, absenteeism among staff and students,[94] and better monitoring of students may all be seen as components of a "deteriorating level of education". Responses reporting that the curriculum is "difficult" may point to the capacity of teachers, rather than to the curriculum's design.

Figure 2.11 Main concerns about education conditions in Syria: Perspective of key informants

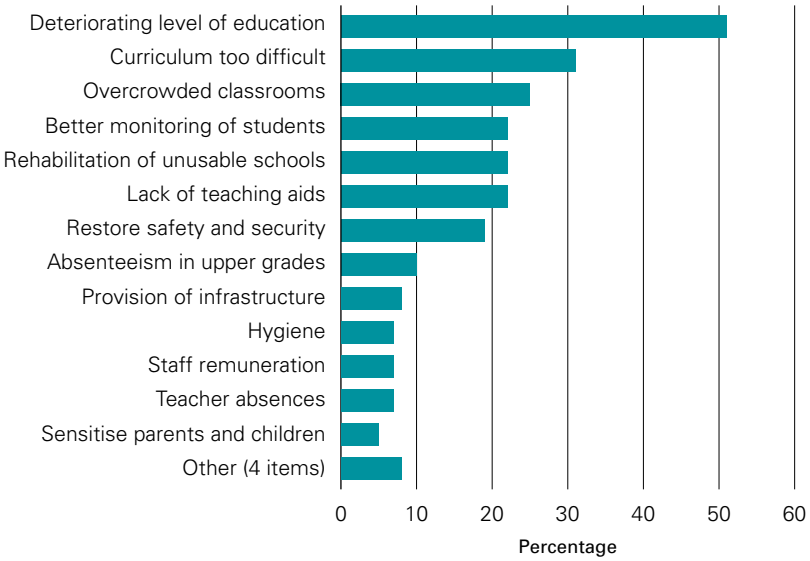


Figure 2.12 details the top six most frequently mentioned items from Figure 2.11, disaggregated by gender. Figure 2.13 details the geographic distribution of these same six most frequently mentioned items.[95]

[93] Annex C.90.

[94] Absenteeism of students "in the upper grades" was attributed by respondents to employment.

[95] The deteriorating level of education, which headed the list in the comprehensive figure, has been omitted from the supplementary figures because it is too general. To avoid making the geographical distribution figure too dense, the rehabilitation of unusable schools was omitted. It was listed in six governorates: Aleppo (11 per cent), Al-Hasakeh (71 per cent), Dara (33 per cent), Hama (50% per cent), Quneitra (25 per cent) and Rural Damascus (75 per cent).

Figure 2.12 Source of teachers' remuneration as reported by teachers and head teachers

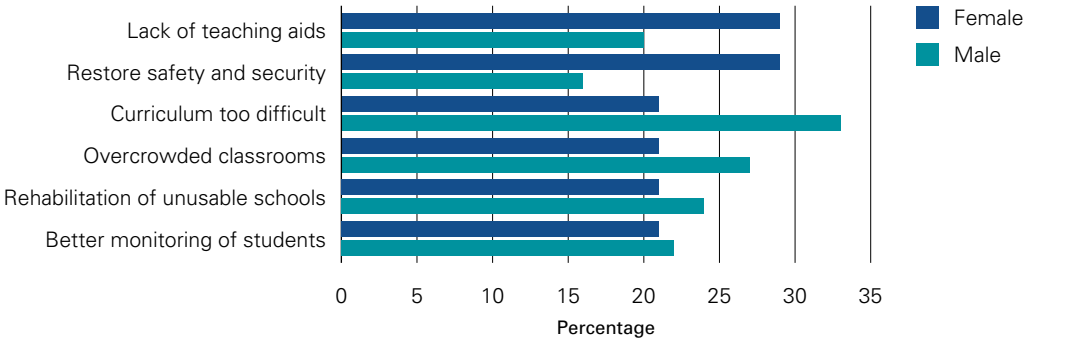
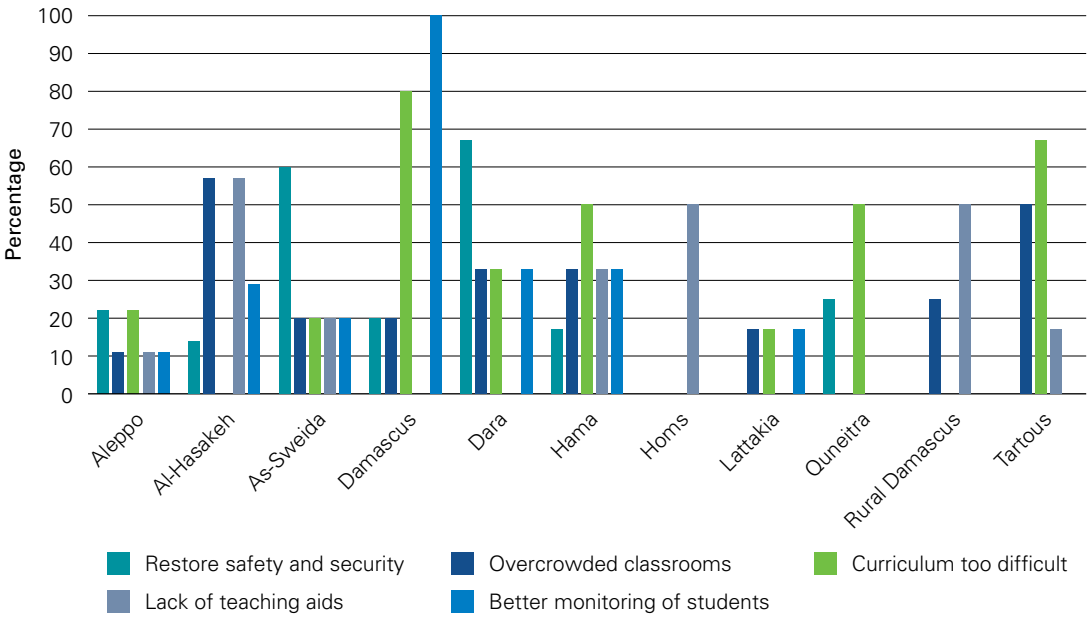
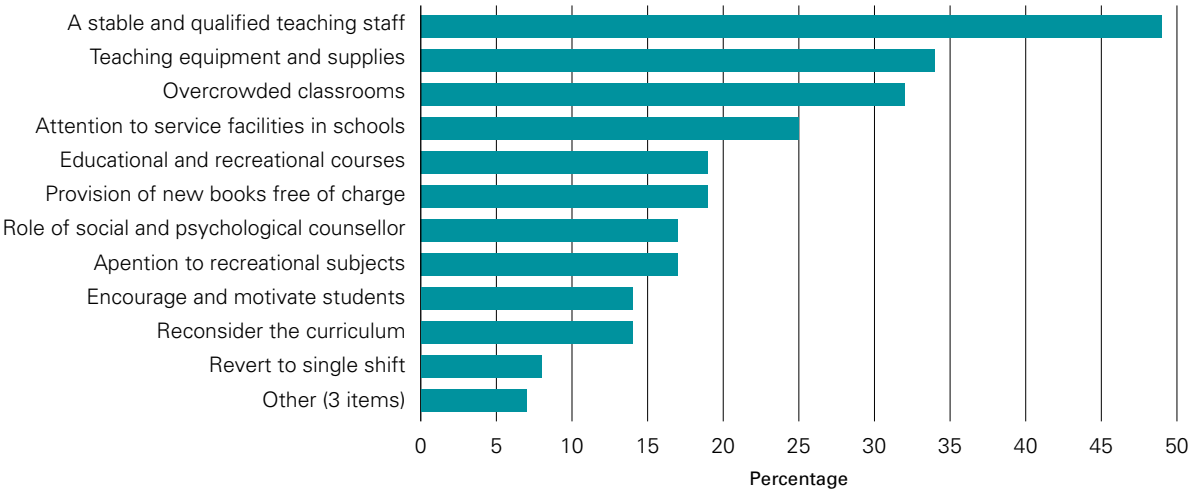


Figure 2.13 Key informants' main concerns about education conditions, by governorate



Perspective of parents: When asked what needs to change for students to receive a good education, parents most frequently mentioned a stable and qualified teaching staff (*see Figure 2.14*).[96] Providing proper equipment and materials and reducing class sizes were each identified by a third of parents' groups.

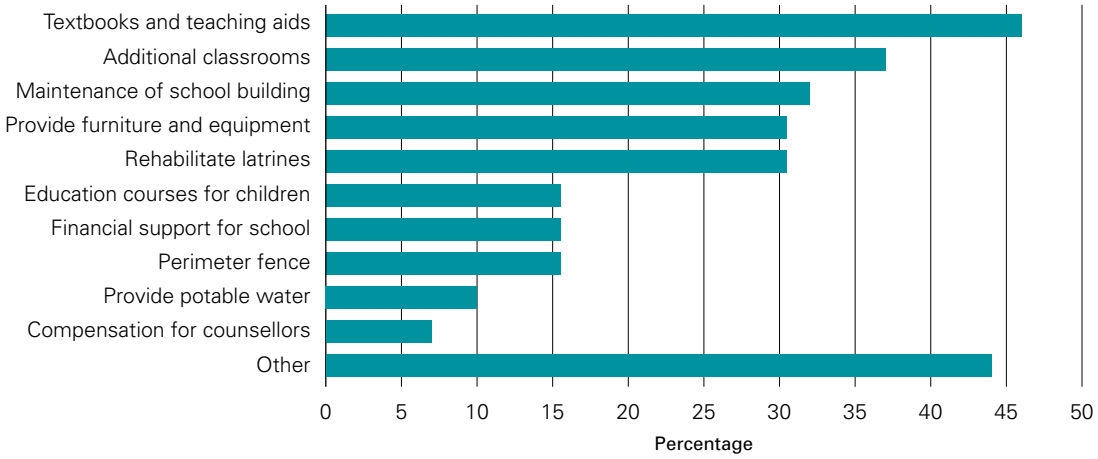
Figure 2.14 What needs to change at school for students to get a good education



[96] Annex F.18.

Perspective of school principals: Although teacher competence was named as a key concern by key informants and parents,[97] this was not true for principals. Rather, principals identified more tangible and physical needs, such as infrastructure, furniture, equipment, materials, utilities, textbooks and teaching aids.[98] Principals also mentioned financial support. The only non-material need, expressed by 15 per cent of the principals, was "education courses for children". Because this is what the school is actually there to provide, it is surmised that this possibly refers to catch-up classes for students who have missed extended periods of schooling.

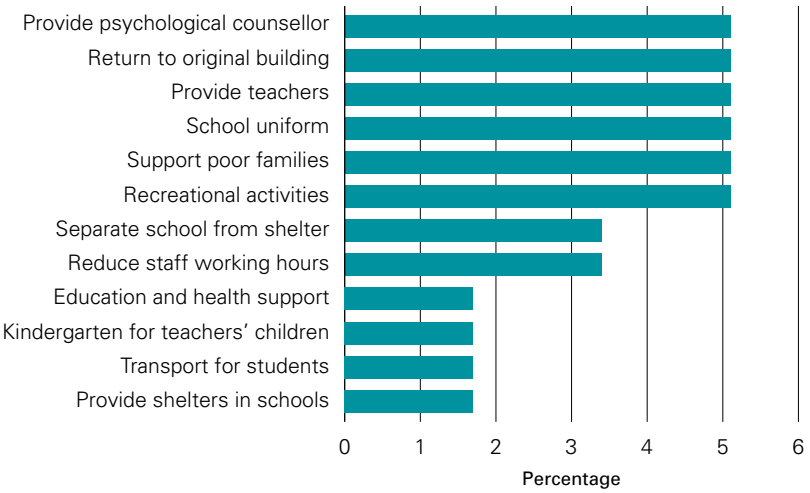
Figure 2.15 Priority needs of the school identified by principals



Needs grouped in Figure 2.15's "Other" category are listed separately in Figure 2.16. Each need was mentioned by more than three respondents (five per cent). It is not clear what principals mean when mentioning "school uniforms" as a concern, as students are no longer obliged to wear them. Five children's focus groups (eight per cent) also noted "commitment to school uniform" as one change they wished to see in their school.[99] The two mentions of "shelter" appear to use the word in different senses: The first mention uses shelter as a home for displaced persons and implies it should be separated from the school; the second mention refers to shelter as a place of refuge for students and teachers in the event of threatened violence.

Perspective of enumerators: Because enumerators did not observe the teaching and learning process, they tended to concentrate on the material aspects of education in their comments (*see Figure 2.17*).[100] Enumerators, like principals, mentioned textbooks and teaching aid shortages most frequently, well ahead of their second-ranked need.

Figure 2.16 "Other" priority needs of schools identified by principals



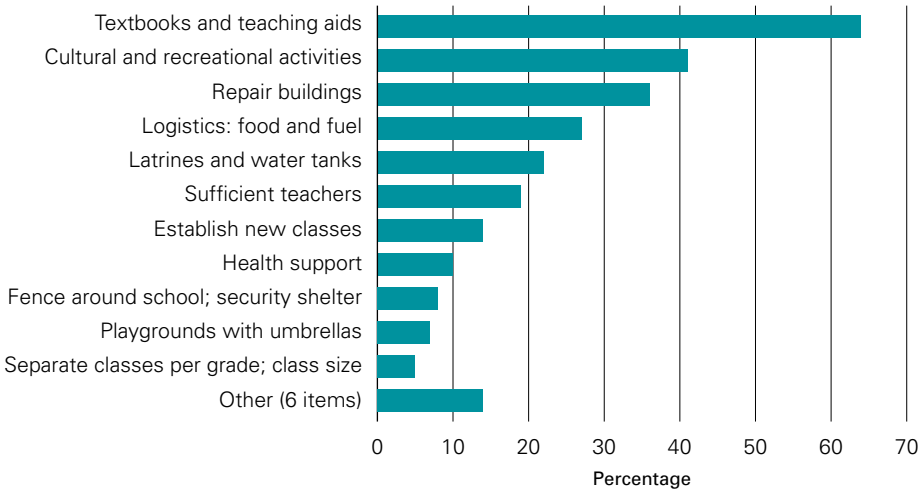
97 Annex C.85, F.18, F.8-9, Figure 2.9 and 2.10, above.

98 Annex D.96. The "Other" category included six items which had each been mentioned by five per cent of the principals: recreational activities, support for poor families, school uniforms, the provision of teachers and of a psychosocial counsellor, and return to the original building. Note that with the small sample, five per cent of respondents represents only three responses.

99 Annex G.15-16A.

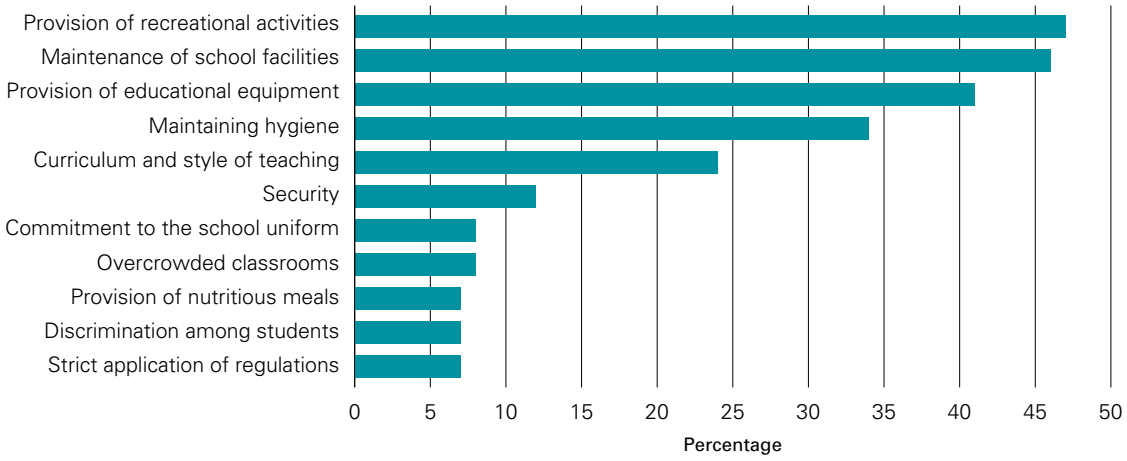
100 Annex B.25.

Figure 2.17 Greatest needs of schools in neighbourhood as observed by enumerators



Perspective of children: When children's groups were asked what they would like to see changed at their school, nearly half identified providing recreational activities as a first priority (*see Figure 2.18*).[101] Maintaining hygiene, mentioned by a third of the groups, is interesting, as it suggests that those who use the school often neglect its cleanliness. Less than one quarter expressed a concern for curriculum and teaching changes.

Figure 2.18 What students would like to see change at their school



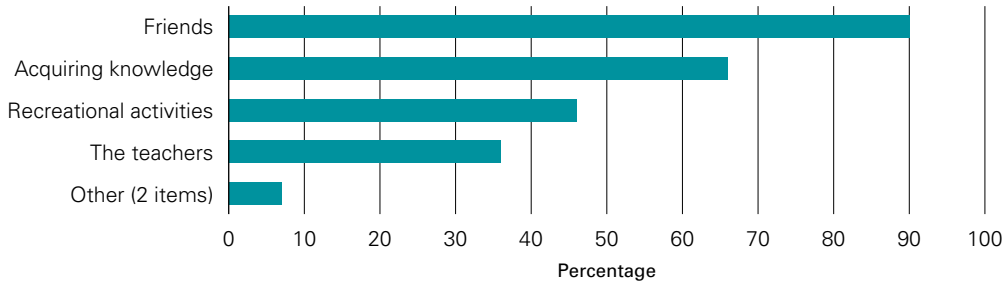
When asked about assistance desired, over 40 per cent of the teachers' groups placed equipment and materials at the head of their list.[102] When, at the end of the discussion, they were asked whether they had any further comments to make, they requested "material and moral" support for the teacher and a re-evaluation of the status of the teacher.[103]

Key informants, in their additional comments,[104] highlighted how many children need financial and food aid (21 per cent of female respondents; 22 per cent of male respondents). For issues confined to education, 12 per cent of respondents requested a revised curriculum. Five per cent wished to see a re-introduction of the "military system"[105] ("Fotowa") in schools. When key informants were asked to prioritize the needs of their nearest functioning school, teaching aids and equipment topped the list (81 per cent of respondents), with additional classrooms (41 per cent) following.[106]

[101] Annex G.15-16.
[102] Annex E.18.
[103] Annex E.19.
[104] Annex C.93.
[105] It is assumed that this refers to a subject with theoretical and practical components that formed part of the curriculum of primary and secondary schools until 2003. The practical component was conducted during summer camps. The suggestion was made by two male respondents, both over the age of 50 (from Damascus and Hama) and one female respondent aged between 31 and 40 (from Tartous).
[106] Annex C.72.

In their final comments, children's groups mentioned a general need to "improve the level of education" and improve security. The maintenance of facilities, recreational activities, and attention to hygiene were also mentioned.[107] When asked what they liked best about school, 90 per cent of children's groups mentioned "friends" (*see Figure 2.19*),[108] with over 40 per cent of groups adding that school is the only place where they can meet their friends. Two-thirds of the groups acknowledged the importance of acquiring knowledge, with "building my future" given as the main reason. Three groups asserted "I have a right to learn", which suggests that there has been pressure to keep some of group members out of school. Recreational activities were cited by just under half the groups, confirming that these are not offered at many schools.

Figure 2.19 What children like best about going to school



The enumerators, in their final comments, touched on a wide range of topics.[109] The most frequently mentioned issue, although mentioned by only 20 per cent of respondents, was the importance of having a social or psychosocial counsellor on staff.

The foregoing figures detail the ways in which living conditions and education experiences have deteriorated over the first four years of the crisis, identifying what facets of education need immediate and ongoing attention if education quality is to be improved. General concerns raised are:

- Security and safety issues, with increases in levels of trauma experienced;
- Displacement and emigration;
- Changes in social values and relations, as well as changes in children's behaviour; and
- The spread of diseases and unavailability of health services.

The following concerns explicitly relate to schools and education:

- Children in need of financial assistance, food and clothing;
- The dropping-out and erratic attendance of students;
- The need for repairs and rehabilitation in sanitation, potable water systems and other infrastructure-related services;
- School cleanliness;
- Classroom furniture shortages;
- Classroom overcrowding and multiple shifts;
- The difficulty of the curriculum;
- Shortages in teaching equipment, textbooks and other supplies;
- Shortages in qualified teachers;
- Teacher competence and teaching style;
- The status of teachers and their need for material and moral support;
- Psychosocial counselling;
- Recreational and other extracurricular activities for students;

[107] Annex G.20.
[108] Annex G.13.
[109] Annex B.26.

- Education courses for students; and
- Parental supervision of children.

3 Foundational standards

The foundational standards emphasize how those affected by a crisis should take ownership over interventions, aid, coordination, and the ongoing collection and analysis of data to help maximize effectiveness.

Community Participation

According to the INEE, successful responses to education during crises require "active community participation". This is very different from "symbolic participation", in which members acquiesce to decisions made by others: "Community involvement and ownership enhance accountability, strengthen the mobilisation of local resources and support the maintenance of education services in the long term".[110]

The secondary literature review reports that, because crises will affect communities differently, local residents should take part in identifying challenges and appropriate solutions. For example, some Syrian locales have had to cope with the loss of many members, while others are experiencing a large influx of internally displaced persons. Residents should therefore play a role in solution making, managing and monitoring implementation. The role of children and youth should not be underestimated or ignored.[111]

However, because Syria's education system is highly centralized, this structure had discouraged any stimulus for active community participation with local schools.[112] Yet, the crisis rendered traditional authorities unable to fully meet the educational needs of the community. Moreover, for displaced persons, the willingness to participate can be further inhibited when they believe they will return to their own homes and their sojourn is brief. For example, in the Za'atari refugee camp in Jordan, Syrians expressed the hope that they would soon return to Syria.[113] This attitude may incapacitate their attempts to actively improve their lives in the camps, in which they may stay for long periods of time. Additionally, newcomers may not feel connected to one another, and thus, they may feel no responsibility for one another, generating a culture of hostility. One reason given for children being out of school was the fear of harassment or violence from other Syrian refugee children on the way to school, which suggests a positive community identity has not been cultivated.[114]

However, it is possible for an identity and positive sense of ownership to develop. For example, some older children have taken the place of teachers, caregivers and counsellors for friends and younger siblings. Children in some host communities have also taken on the task of walking refugees to school and shielding them from bullies.[115] These examples demonstrate not only the potential for communities-in-crisis to thrive, but also the potential of older children to play positive roles in community rebuilding. Because of what they can contribute, "children and youth have a right to be heard in matters that affect their lives, including the development and management of the education system."[116]

Syrian refugees in Lebanon have observed that host communities had initially been protective and supportive towards the newcomers, but as time passed, fatigue on the part of the hosts had set in.[117] This led to a sense of insecurity from refugees.[118] Newcomers have also been perceived as competition

[110] INEE, p.20.
[111] INEE, p.20.
[112] Based on discussion with members of the ESWG.
[113] UNICEF Za'atari, p.10.
[114] UNICEF Za'atari, p.26.
[115] Under Seige, p.3.
[116] INEE, p.25.
[117] UNICEF Lebanon, pp.28-29.
[118] UNICEF Lebanon, p.29: "The level of attention the Syrians were getting from the government and civil society angered many Lebanese."

for jobs, thus threatening host communities.[119] While these observations are drawn from the experience of neighbouring countries, where more than four-fifths of 4.8 million Syrian refugees were living in host communities rather than in camps,[120] these observations are likely to apply to communities with a large influx of internally displaced persons within Syria. The provision of extracurricular activities in which refugee (or internally displaced) youths participate together with those of the host community can contribute to social cohesion.[121]

Apart from these references, the literature provides little mention of current community participation. Such references generally take the form of recommendations, presumably based on casual observation, that community identities are not playing positive roles. The literature does not indicate the extent to which these recommendations have been implemented. However, it can be presumed that Syrian communities are identifying alternative learning spaces and implementing home-based learning.[122] It is also implied that school councils are currently engaged with the community to support school activities.[123]

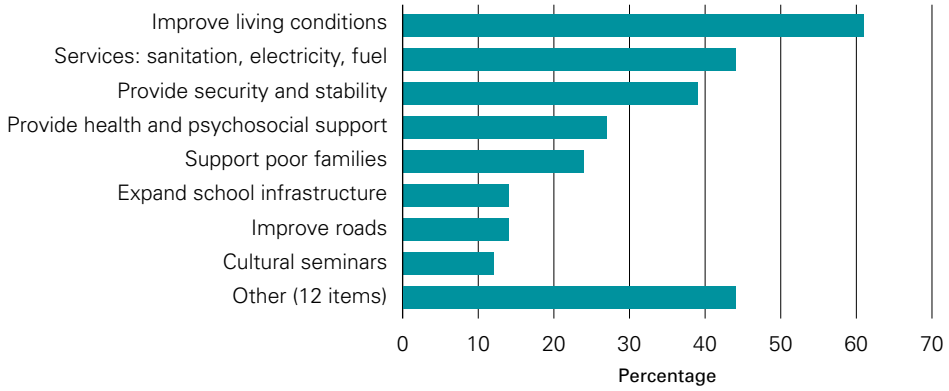
Respondents in the survey were not asked what constituted the community. However, one can conceptualize communities in three important ways: The immediate learning community of teachers and students, a community that includes parents and others directly linked with the school, and a wider community in which the school (and perhaps other schools) is located, whose members do not necessarily see themselves in any way responsible for the school.

Thus, to facilitate active participation (as opposed to symbolic participation) from the wider community, the INEE recommends capacity building efforts be expanded.[124] This is especially needed in centralized education systems like Syria, where immediate local responses may be more effective than waiting for instructions from national authorities.

Figure 2.20 reports what key informants believe to be the community's greatest needs.[125] Unsuprisingly, responses prioritized many concerns above education, many of which fall in line with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, such as physiological needs and safety. However, these concerns are not irrelevant to education; if living conditions, social services and community stability are improved and assured, education is likely also to benefit, as school staff and children will be more focused on educational matters. However, the schools can be also used as an entry point for health and welfare services, a perspective that is often overlooked.

Regarding Figure 2.20's "Other" category comprised of 12 items, only three drew between seven and eight per cent support. Two of these were related to education: Science education and remedial classes.[126]

Figure 2.20 The greatest needs of communities according to key informants



[117] UNICEF Lebanon, pp.28-29.
[118] UNICEF Lebanon, p.29: "The level of attention the Syrians were getting from the government and civil society angered many Lebanese."
[119] UNICEF Lebanon, p.29.
[120] UNHCR.
[121] SRRP, p.26.
[122] Futures under Threat, p.15.
[123] UNICEF Syria, p.18.
[124] INEE, p.20.
[125] Annex C.10.
[126] The third was a request for "assembly hall, bakery and garden".

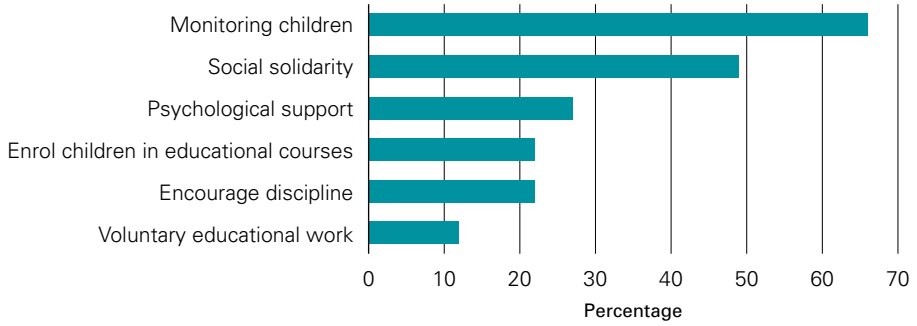


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Enumerators saw evidence of community support for 13 urban schools, two rural schools and two camp schools – a total of 17 schools.[127] For 70 per cent of schools, there was no obvious evidence of community support.[128] Tangible aid most often manifested as providing stationery (27 per cent) and repairing damaged school facilities (20 per cent).[129]

Although they may not recognize it, parents and caregivers can form a community with the school and improve elements of the school. However, when asked about how they may work together, this awareness did not emerge strongly. In group discussions, parents suggested that they might monitor children and provide social solidarity (*see Figure 2.21*).[130] Neither of these actually entail "working together" on an extensive scale to improve schools.[131] "Monitoring children" might be understood to mean a network of parents that knows if children are at school, where they are if not at school and with whom they associate. It might also mean being aware of their mental health or regularly checking their schoolwork. The 22 per cent suggesting enrolling children in educational courses, details of which were not provided, may refer to supplementary classes outside of school, thus reflecting parents' lack of confidence in the school's ability to meet children's educational needs.

Figure 2.21 How parents, working together, may improve their children's education



Since a strong parent community can help the school to achieve its objectives, the school principal should take the lead in mobilizing parents and should, if necessary, be shown how to do this. As appropriate, this should be done in cooperation with community leaders and principals from neighbouring schools.

Parents, working together, can play a constructive role by:

- Encouraging out-of-school children to re-enrol and attend regularly;
- Providing protection for children to and from school;
- Undertaking minor repairs of school facilities;
- Helping establish a clean and attractive school environment; and
- Supporting school efforts to provide more teaching time.

On an individual basis, parents can facilitate recreational activities, cultural activities and catch-up classes.[132]

[127] The camp school in Tartous was opened at the start of the second semester of the 2014/15 school year. Details of the camp school in As-Sweida were not provided.

[128] Annex B.19.

[129] Annex B.20.

[130] Annex F.12-13.

[131] Forty-two per cent of children indicated that school was the only place where they could meet their friends (Annex G.13). One can only speculate where these children would be when out of school – at home, running errands for their parents, working to support the family, or open to undesirable influences on the streets.

[132] Of course, parents and the wider community cannot be expected to give financially beyond their means; local authorities most likely have little budget flexibility; and in-kind support normally requires someone to take a lead in organizing.

Because of rapid changes taking place, communities may not understand how they have been redefined. Therefore, members might need support through capacity building from an external agency to achieve more than symbolic participation.[133] Capacity building can address topics such as convening meetings, drawing up agendas, identifying challenges, prioritizing them, generating solutions, managing implementation, completing monitoring and providing feedback. These activities can build "social cohesion" between host communities and internally displaced families.[134]

Coordination

National education authorities are expected to lead responses during emergencies. According to the INEE, only situations in which the "education authorities lack capacity or legitimacy" may leadership be assigned "by agreement to an inter-agency coordination committee, such as the Education Cluster or another sectoral coordination group".[135]

The MoE leads the Damascus-based ESWG with UNICEF having a co-leadership role. UNICEF also provides a full time staff member to co-lead efforts, check for adherence to Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines, ensure existing gaps and needs are identified, and see that relevant information is regularly shared among partners. At the sub-national level, DOEs and UNICEF collaborate in Homs, Tartous and Qamishly.

OCHA coordinated and harmonized the education sector's efforts with non-education sectors, resulting in annually produced joint-operation plans among United Nations agencies, international agencies and their local partners.[136, 137] During the latter part of 2014, coordination from OCHA offices resulted in a country-wide "Humanitarian Needs Overview" for the WoS, which draws together the planning efforts of the ESWG and those of cross-border assistance groups, coordinated (at that time) almost exclusively by the Education Cluster working from Gaziantep, Turkey.[138]

According to the literature, cooperation among the education, protection, nutrition, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sectors has been common in humanitarian responses. SHARP reports how the child protection sector has assisted education, developing a checklist for mainstreaming protection in education and proposing cooperation with the nutrition on school feeding.[139] However, one report criticizes the child protection and education sectors for having "remained in their own silos" and for having done their programming "independently of each other".[140] In the same report the need to "integrate" education and child protection is stressed.[141] However, "integration" of sectors may diminish the importance of a sector's efforts and may be counterproductive. Sound coordination, including regularly sharing information, should ensure there is no basis for the type of criticism that has been made.

The coordination of education responses should be "timely, transparent, [and] results-oriented".[142] In February 2014, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2139 to partly address delays in delivering humanitarian aid in Syria.[143] Because neighbouring countries often faced obstructions when delivering relief to Syria,[144] the Security Council adopted Resolution 2165 in July 2014, which permits until January 2015 the cross-border shipment of humanitarian supplies from Turkey and Jordan

[133] INEE, p.20.
[134] Futures under Threat, p.5.
[135] INEE, pp.20-21.
[136] SHARP, December 2013; SHO.
[137] The efforts of the Government were not included in the Damascus-based plan, even though government through the ESWG was involved in the process of developing this plan.
[138] HNO.
[139] SHARP, December 2013, p.77.
[140] Futures under Threat, p.12.
[141] Futures under Threat, p.11.
[142] INEE, p.21.
[143] UNSC 2139, para. 6-7.
[144] RAS, pp.57-58.

by United Nations agencies without the need for further authorization from national governments.[145] Resolution 2191 extended this approval until January 2016, and Resolution 2258 further extends this approval to January 2017.[146]

Sound coordination can lead to a rapid response. For example, within two weeks of an upsurge in conflict within Idleb in April 2015, "school bag kits" and "school-in-a-box" for over 12,000 students were distributed in the Ariha district of Idleb and in Homs to displaced children.[147]

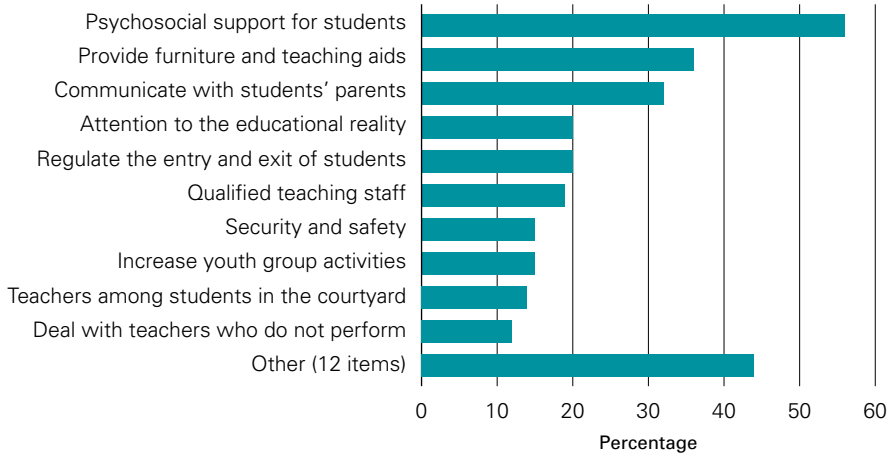
Key informants were asked what issues should be prioritized by education authorities (in this case, the DoEs in each governorate). Psychosocial support for students headed the list, followed by providing furniture and teaching aids. These responses imply that current efforts are not sufficient (*see Figure 2.22*).[148]

The third most frequently mentioned item, "communicate with the students' parents", while understandable, raises the question: What should DoEs be communicating to parents? If specificities could be articulated, principals can bring them to the DoE's attention. "Attention to educational reality", also requires further clarification: What aspects of "educational reality" require attention and have not been mentioned already (for example, shortages of furniture and equipment and teaching staff competence)?[149]

The fifth most frequently mentioned item, "regulate the entry and exit of students" suggests procedural concerns that MoE authorities could further refine and clarify. Indeed, 10 principals reported that they had been unable to accommodate all children seeking admission in the 2014/15 school year.[150] It is not known whether these children were enrolled in another school.

Overall, these requests could benefit from further clarification.

Figure 2.22 What school authorities should be attending to, according to key informants[151]



When asked about what donors and NGOs should be prioritizing, key informants did not mention coordinating functions (*see Figure 2.23*); rather, informants requested a variety of material assistance.[152] What, precisely, respondents had in mind when requesting "health and psychosocial support" is not clear. This could mean setting up clinics, providing funds for on-staff nurses and counsellors, or training

[145] UNSC 2165, para.2-3. Through the unanimous adoption of Resolutions 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014) and 2258 (2015) until 10 January 2017, the United Nations Security Council has authorized United Nations agencies and their partners to use routes across conflict lines and the border crossings at Bab al-Salam, Bab al-Hawa, Al Yarubiyah and Al-Ramtha, to deliver humanitarian assistance, including medical and surgical supplies, to people in need in Syria. The Government of Syria is notified in advance of each shipment and a United Nations monitoring mechanism has been established to oversee loading in neighbouring countries and confirm the humanitarian nature of consignments.

[146] UNSC 2191, para. 2.

[147] Idleb Report no.2, p.6.

[148] Annex C.91.

[149] It is presumed that familiarity with the students is what is objected to when "teachers among students in the courtyard" was mentioned. This requires elaboration. Although each item is mentioned by only one or two key informants, all the items in Annex C.91 are worth exploring further.

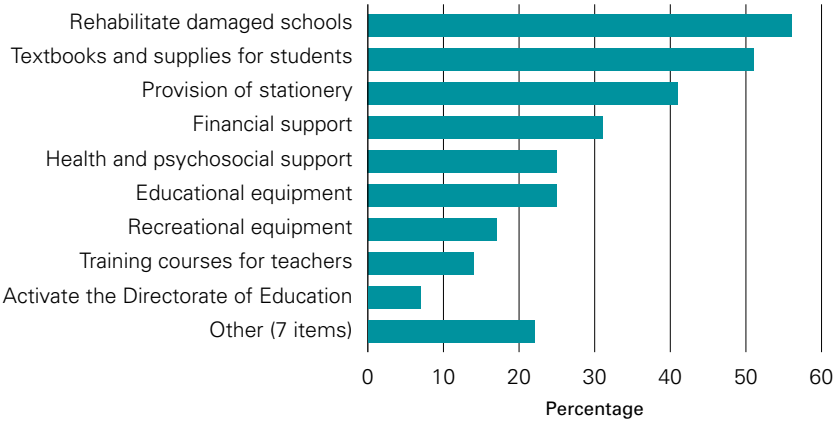
[150] Annex D.18.

[151] "Monitoring school management" was mentioned by eight per cent of respondents, and "entertainment for children" by seven per cent.

[152] Annex C.92.

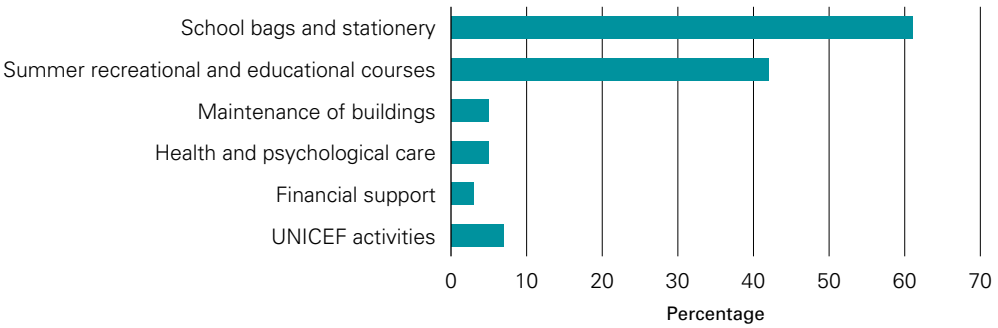
existing staff. Training courses for teachers are mentioned, without an indication of topics that need to be covered. A small number (fewer than 10 per cent) felt that DoEs were not effective and wished NGOs to improve DoE performance. As before, these requests would benefit from further detailing.

Figure 2.23 Priorities for assistance from donors and NGOs



Enumerators reported what kinds of assistance schools actually received, based on their observations (*see Figure 2.24*).[153] Teachers' groups reported that 48 schools (81 per cent) received support for students, with 76 per cent receiving supplies and stationery, 15 per cent receiving items for personal hygiene, and 12 per cent support for school clubs.[154] Schools also received assistance with repairs.

Figure 2.24 Assistance provided to schools from NGOs and other organizations



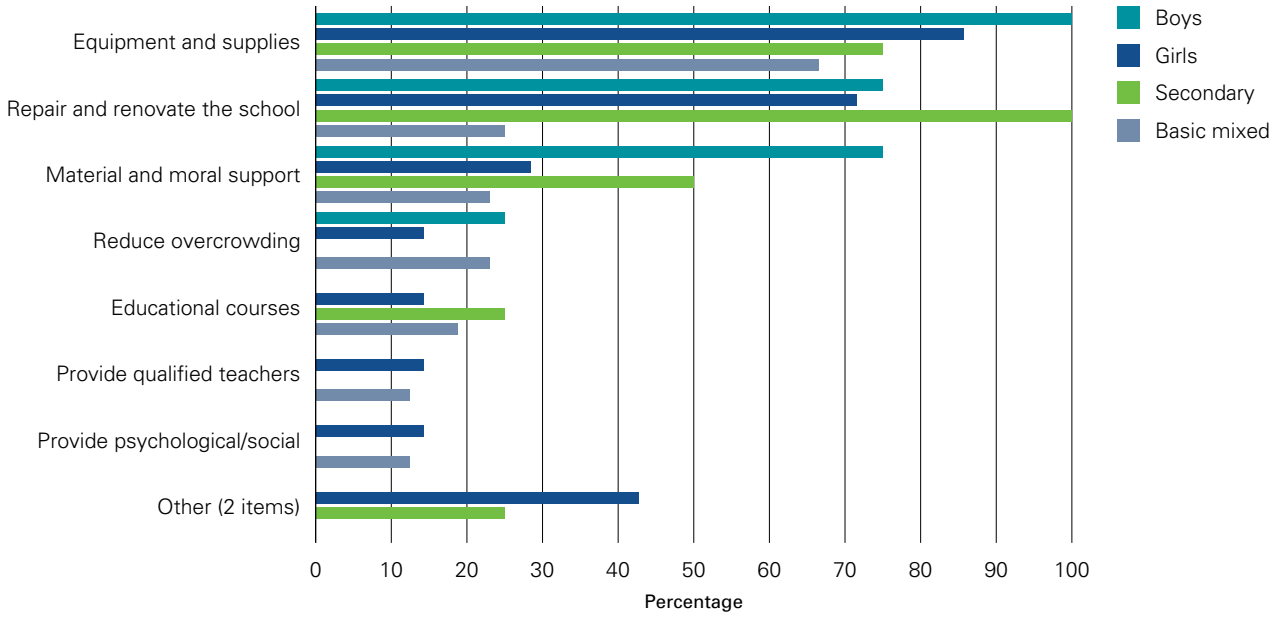
Teachers were asked what authorities and NGOs should prioritize when providing aid. Figure 2.25, details their responses.[155] Notably, teachers in secondary schools are more concerned than the other groups about repairs needed, but apparently, do not have a problem with overcrowding and a shortage of qualified teachers and counsellors. Teachers at all-boys schools expressed a greater need for material and moral support than the other groups, but did not experience a shortage of qualified staff or a need for educational courses. Mixed-sex schools, which form the majority of schools surveyed, expressed little need for rehabilitating school buildings.

[153] Annex B.22. It is not clear what is intended by "UNICEF activities", since UNICEF support is given for activities already listed.

[154] Annex E.16. "School clubs" provide supervised recreational and catch-up educational opportunities for students.

[155] Four all-boys schools, four all-girls schools and 48 mixed-sex schools. The four secondary schools, which are single-sex schools, are represented twice in the figure, once as secondary schools, and again as either girls' schools or boys' schools.

Figure 2.25 Priorities for assistance from the authorities or NGOs, as expressed by teachers



While it is appropriate for international agencies to assist in emergencies, the INEE warns against "setting precedents that cannot be maintained" or applying aid in a way that may intensify division. The INEE guidelines also draw attention to the principle of "doing no harm".[156] Improper or misguided use of local influence in compiling lists of beneficiaries, for example, may negate the intended neutral distribution to those in greatest need within a particular area. This may be especially true when providing financial compensation to education personnel.[157]

Relatedly, planned interventions require funding, but there are currently many obstacles in this regard. Not only are funding targets not being met,[158] but these targets might be too modest for immediate educational needs.[159] Moreover, even with these modest targets, funding efforts are not meeting them: The 11th EFA Global Monitoring Report noted international donors have not lived up to the commitment they made at Dakar, Senegal, in 2000, leaving an annual US$26 billion global funding gap for basic education.[160] A similar situation can be found in Syria. Recently, OCHA coordinated with agencies a plan with estimated implementation costs. They then relied on international donors to pledge support and make timely payments of the amounts pledged. For the education sector, SHARP for 2014 required US$103 million[161] and the response plan for assistance from Turkey for mid-2014 to mid-2015 required US$20.1 million.[162] The plans made no pretence to being able to reach everyone in need: "The need is so great that only a portion of children and youth in need of protective learning opportunities will likely be reached."[163] In 2014, the SHARP mid-year report complained that implementation had lagged partly because of insufficient funding.[164]

Relatedly, tracking expenditures is necessary to ensure progress and continual optimizations. For the No Lost Generation Initiative, which covers Syria and Syrian refugee children in the five neighbouring countries, there was apparently no centralized tracking of how funds were spent and best practices, making it difficult to monitor funding gaps.[165]

[156] INEE, p.42.
[157] INEE, p.32.
[158] Futures under Threat, p.30.
[159] Futures under Threat, p.31.
[160] EFA 2014, p.112.
[161] SHARP, July 2014, p.39.
[162] SHO, p.18.
[163] SHO, p.20.
[164] SHARP, July 2014, p.3.
[165] Futures under Threat, p.3.

Recommendations in the literature include:

- Obtain a more accurate cost assessment of needs and better tracking system for spending on education (by development partners).[166]
- Deliver long-term, predictable funding for a comprehensive plan for education in Syria and across the region.[167]
- Fully fund the efforts of host entities to accommodate students in relevant programmes.[168]
- Consider a revolving fund to help schools and look into management modality options.[169]
- Obtain international funding to support the recruitment of additional teachers.[170]
- Allow greater flexibility in the use of aid.[171]

The SHARP indicates that the number of people in need in the 3 to 17 years of age range comes to 3.9 million; however, only 316,778 are covered under its proposed activities.[172] Thirty partners were involved in the implementation of the programme.[173]

Overall, long-term, predictable funding is necessary if the Syrian education system is to be enabled for recovery. Realistic planning is only possible if funding is assured and provided on time. Just as national governments are encouraged to develop mid-term expenditure frameworks, funding for sector partners should be assured at least a year in advance of the period for which planning is done. The sustainability of interventions often depends on investment over a continuous period of two or more years before results can be expected. Currently, the evidence suggests that planning is completed with no reasonable assurance that pledges, which are already insufficient to meet the needs of affected children, will be fulfilled.

Analysis

Ideally, "the collection and analysis of information should produce transparent, publicly available and disaggregated educational data necessary for all stages of an emergency through to recovery".[174] Even for short-term interventions, effective planning requires accurate data.

While "local perceptions and knowledge should be central to the analysis to avoid a humanitarian response based on the perceptions and priorities of people from outside",[175] the difficulty, or impossibility, of accessing some areas of Syria[176] makes it impractical to apply random sampling and thus generate more sound analyses. Therefore, the current literature analysing Syria has primarily used purposive sampling, with the exception of the annual school census. Consequently, assessments with incomplete results have had to be supplemented by lessons learned from other contexts (The alternative is to delay assistance until comprehensive assessments are complete, an undesirable option).

Recognizing that data have been difficult to obtain, UNICEF recommends that assessments be conducted on the educational needs of internally displaced persons, that better coordinated data are routinely collected on new arrivals in refugee camps within and outside the country, and that actors with sporadic access to data on education share it regularly in a pre-agreed format.[177] To some extent this has been done through the 4Ws. As monthly reports arrive from each partner, a cumulative picture of humanitarian response emerges. To some extent, data are cumulated at the ESWG level and made available to partners in readily understood formats (maps, infographics) so that future decisions are better informed by evidence.

[166] Futures under Threat, p.36.
[167] Futures under Threat, p.35.
[168] Futures under Threat, p.34.
[169] UNICEF Syria, p.23.
[170] Education Interrupted, p.9.
[171] Futures under Threat, p.36.
[172] SHARP, July 2014, p.39.
[173] SHARP, July 2014, p.39.
[174] INEE, p.21.
[175] INEE, p.38.
[176] The SHARP mid-year review for 2014 notes the difficulty of conducting assessments and field monitoring because of access constraints (p.3).
[177] UNICEF Syria, p.23.

Although this survey provides fresh information, and those leading intervention efforts can draw on these data presented, the study still carries serious limitations. The data disaggregation has been possible only to a small extent because of the small sample size. Only five of the 59 schools were in rural areas (located across three governorates); only four schools were secondary (Grades 10 to 12) schools; only two of the basic education schools were all-boys schools; and only five were all-girls schools. Moreover, as aforementioned, this survey does not implement random sampling, making data extrapolation and forming conclusive, generalized comparisons/contrasts of different school categories impossible. Secondly, the analysis is not based on full data sets. Thirdly, the wide range of aspects canvassed made it difficult to obtain detailed information on every component reported. For example, key informants were asked to give their impressions on the differences in attendance between girls and boys, and principals were asked to estimate drop-out rates. A more rigorous study would have required gender-specific data on attendance and drop-out rates drawn from reliable school records.

Some of the literature combines a rapid assessment with implementation plans for assistance to affected children and schools.[178] The implementation plan might cover new support to be given, or a continuation of activities already initiated.

The call for "Robust advocacy for access to education across the country, including stressing the importance of schools as safe havens for today and guarantors of progress for the future"[179] is directly related to the INEE's "response strategies", since it is in part directed at potential donors.

Although SHARP and SRP contain provisions for monitoring interventions, little detail is available on what has been completed.

None of the documents reviewed included periodic reviews to evaluate which outcome targets had been achieved.[180] Although, there is a recommendation from December 2012 that "a macro-level analysis of the impact of the crisis on the educational system as a whole" be conducted at a later stage;[181] pending such an assessment, short-term and long-term recommendations are included in that document.

The routine collection of statistical school data is an important part of managing education, as it allows trends to be established and predictions made on the need for infrastructure, equipment and trained teachers. This in turn allows for planning the orderly pre-service teacher training and school education in a country or sub-national area. Historical data on attendance, drop-out and student performance can also be useful in managing an efficient and effective school.

The data annually collected by the Government's EMIS provides useful, standardized information on all schools with which the Ministry has managed to maintain contact.[182] This information should be shared with development partners as soon as it is gathered. Census-type data, results from national examinations and from certificate examinations should also be collected at more frequent intervals. These types of data can assist development partners to play a stronger role.

4 Access and learning environment

Because "education plays a crucial role in helping affected people cope with their situation and establish normality in their lives […] provid[ing] life-saving knowledge and skills for survival, and […] offer[ing] opportunities for change that will improve equity and quality of education,"[183] this means that the importance of education is increased, not reduced, in a time of crisis or emergency. Therefore, all possible steps should be taken to ensure that children are not excluded.

[178] HNO, for example.
[179] SHARP, December 2013, p.78.
[180] "Outcomes", as opposed to "outputs". Compare with INEE, p.48.
[181] UNICEF Syria, p.23.
[182] Up to the 2010/11 school year, the data from the EMIS are available for all registered functioning schools in Syria, but since the start of the crisis, contact between the MoE and schools in some governorates, districts and sub-districts has been lost, leaving gaps in the data sets for Deir-ez-Zor, Ar-Raqqa, Dara, Idleb and Quneitra.
[183] INEE, p.54.

Prior to the crisis, school enrolment was described as almost universal for the primary grades, while secondary enrolment was reportedly 76 per cent on average. These ratios had been stable for five years. In 2010, the primary school GER was 121.5 per cent and 73.4 per cent for secondary.[184]

According to the EMIS data in Table 2.6, enrolment in basic education (Grades 1 to 9) for the 2014/15 school year was 56 per cent of what it had been prior to the crisis. General secondary enrolment had dropped by less; vocational secondary by more; and pre-primary enrolment had dropped to 11 per cent of its pre-crisis level. The proportion of girls in the system had remained constant, or increased slightly (except in vocational secondary enrolment).

Table 2.6 National enrolment in thousands, 2010/11 and 2014/15

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	2010-11		2014-15		2014-15 AS % OF 2010-11
	TOTAL	% FEMALE	TOTAL	% FEMALE	
Kindergarten	171	47	19	47	11
Basic education	4,774	48	2,694	49	56
General secondary	414	54	319	56	77
Vocational secondary	177	42	64	33	36
Total	5,537	48	3,096	49	56

When examined by geographic distribution, Al-Hassakeh, As-Sweida, Hama, Lattakia and Tartous showed increases in enrolment over the four-year period,[185] probably due to influxes of displaced persons. The most recent year has no enrolment data for Deir-ez-Zor or Ar-Raqqa. For other governorates, enrolment declined (Aleppo and Dara by more than half). For those planning interventions, data may need to be disaggregated further.

Enrolment may fluctuate during the course of the year due to conflict and/or the influx of internally displaced persons. Consequently, if enrolment figures for the same area from different sources do not align, it is important to know the approximate date of when the data were collected.

A clear explanation as to why there exists a lower enrolment of boys in primary grades compared to older boys is not apparent (older boys usually have lower enrolment rates, as they are more likely to be working to support the family). Usually, views that education no longer has value affect the enrolment of older children, but it does not seem to apply here. (However, this rationale might have a bearing on the enrolment of boys in the secondary grades). Specific to the Syrian context, difficulties obtaining a recognized school certificate are also a dissuasive factor for older boys remaining in school.

Overall, there is insufficient evidence to draw firm conclusions on the differences in girls' and boys' enrolment.

The expression "out of school" is sometimes used loosely to indicate children who are not enrolled and those who attend school erratically. Strictly, it should be reserved for those who are not enrolled. Those who are enrolled but frequently absent are however in danger of joining the "out of school" category as they find themselves slipping behind in their school work. These students could be considered "at risk" of dropping out.

Estimates of the number of out-of-school children have been provided by various sources. Some estimates refer only to a local area, while others attempt to provide estimates for the WoS, taking into account Syrian children believed to be attending school as refugees in neighbouring countries. In addition to what was presented in this study's quantitative analysis, a few additional figures are given below.

[184] SINA, p.33.
[185] Annex A.3.



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The Syria Integrated Needs Assessment estimates that at the end of 2013, over 1.7 million children were out of school: More than half of primary-aged children and 60 per cent of secondary-aged children were not attending school regularly.[186]

The December 2013 SHARP gives the number of out-of-school children as 1.1 million in Syria,[187] with a further 1.26 million at high risk of dropping out.[188] In addition, 20,000 Palestine refugee children in the country were without access to school education.[189] The update seven months later states that "Sixty-eight of UNRWA's 118 schools in Syria have been closed due to conflict-related damage or insecurity in 2014, with only one third of 67,000 Palestine refugee students[190] able to access education in the period from January – June."[191] Also in July 2014, the Regional Analysis for Syria, quoting UNRWA, reported that 39,600 Palestine refugee children were attending UNRWA schools and afternoon classes at other schools.[192] The large discrepancy between these two documents, published at the same time, on the number of Palestine refugee children in school, is puzzling.

The quantitative analysis, quoting MoE's EMIS as the source, reports 26,039 Palestine refugee children enrolled in 2013 (November) as against 66,091 in 2011 (December).

According to an August 2014 report, almost 79 per cent of children did not attend school in settlements with access to education infrastructure.[193] The remoteness of certain settlements also plays a role in the lack of educational provision, while cyclical migration patterns tends to render access to formal schooling intermittent.[194]

The quantitative analysis estimates the number of out-of-school children based on EMIS data, estimating around 2.1 million school-age children (from kindergarten to Grade 12) were out of school in the 2014/15 school year, slightly more than in the previous year despite efforts to reverse the trend.

In the first two weeks of April 2015, 77,000 people from Idleb were reported as displaced by an upsurge in conflict.[195] In the following week, the number grew to an estimated 101,800,[196] and by the end of the fifth week, to 133,831.[197] The school-going children among these displaced persons were compelled to leave their schools at a critical stage of the year, and not all were able to find a school in the area to which their family fled, particularly since some families were displaced a second or even a third time within the space of a few weeks.[198]

[186] SINA, p.32.
[187] SHARP, December 2013, p.15.
[188] SHARP, December 2013, p.26.
[189] SHARP, December 2013, p.76.
[190] Approximately 22,350.
[191] SHARP, July 2014, p.40.
[192] RAS, p.13, quoting UNRWA.
[193] Displaced Syrians, p.11.
[194] Displaced Syrians, p.11.
[195] Idleb Report no.1, p.6.
[196] Idleb Report no.2, p.2.
[197] Idleb Report no.4, p.7.
[198] Idleb Report no.3, p.1.

BOX 2.2 POTENTIALLY CONFUSING TERMINOLOGY: "ATTENDANCE"

Attendance is sometimes used to mean enrolment, or registration at the school, even if the child is frequently absent. In other contexts, attendance means physical presence at school. In some contexts, the meaning may be clear, while in others it may be misleading.

SINA, December 2013 (p.33), for example, refers to the pre-crisis "primary attendance rate" as approximately 100 per cent on average and secondary 76 per cent on average. The former looks like attendance in the sense that few enrolled students stayed away from school, but the latter looks more like the GER, since it is unlikely that 24 per cent of enrolled students would habitually be absent.[199] Elsewhere on the same page, reference is made to "stable" GERs for five years prior to the crisis, with 121.47 per cent for primary and 73.4 per cent for secondary in 2010.

SHARP, December 2013 (p.77), distinguishes between the two in indicating that the sector will attempt to "collect sex-disaggregated enrolment and attendance data".

Equal Access

Equal access to education can be thought of in terms of supply and demand. The literature describes some factors that have reduced the demand for education.

During times of instability, back to school campaigns are unlikely to be successful if facilities are not safe, within a safe distance, or if the instruction is of poor quality. Poverty, unemployment, and trauma from violence and displacement can reduce demands for education. Expenses such as school uniforms, supplies and transportation may prohibit children from enrolling. According to the literature, over the first three years of the crisis, education's consumer price index increased by 74 per cent.[200]

Poverty is also a barrier to accessing education, and this has become more widespread due to multiple displacement. As the crisis progressed during the first three years, 45 per cent of the population had to flee their homes.[201] Many breadwinners consequently lost their employment. By the end of 2013, 54 per cent of the population were living in extreme poverty, and 20 per cent were living in abject poverty.[202] In April 2014, out of 104 sub-districts surveyed, 49 per cent reported that the most vulnerable internally displaced persons were those living in shelters; 29 per cent reported that those in empty houses were most vulnerable.[203] Under such conditions, children's education is likely to fall to the wayside.[204] Children of displaced families are also less likely to attend school than are children of the host community,[205] as they do not consider themselves as settled enough to begin school, and many stay for a short time before moving again. Additionally, the more times children have to change schools, the more likely they are to drop out completely.

Transport to school might be available, but unaffordable.[206]

Impoverished families are unable to provide a healthy diet to their children, which may also keep them from attending school. Meeting basic needs, which can be difficult if impoverished, can be addressed by providing food, clothing and learning materials,[207] which is why donors and host countries are encouraged to support measures increasing refugee livelihoods.[208]

At the end of November 2014, a "lack of money to send children to school" was reported as the main factor keeping children out of school in 66 per cent of the surveyed areas, followed by child labour (65 per cent), unpaid teachers (49 per cent) and lack of security at schools (48 per cent).[209]

[199] EFA 2014 gives the GER for lower secondary, upper secondary and total secondary for the school year ending 2011 as 92 per cent, 40 per cent and 73 per cent, respectively.
[200] Squandering Humanity, p.27. It is not clear how much of this increase was driven by tertiary education.
[201] Squandering Humanity, p.33.
[202] Squandering Humanity, p.5.
[203] Dynamo 3, p.51.
[204] Squandering Humanity, p.38; SINA, p.32 (Noted as second-most frequently cited reason for children not attending school, SINA, p.34).
[205] SINA, p.34.
[206] UNICEF Syria, p.17.
[207] UNICEF Syria, p.18.
[208] Futures under Threat, p.35.
[209] Dynamo 4, p.53.

Many families were compelled to rely on their children, particularly older children, to supplement the family income,[210] possibly because the breadwinner had been killed in the conflict. Children separated from their families often had to fend for themselves. During the second quarter of 2014, child labour was witnessed in the eastern part of the Aleppo governorate.[211] Once children have engaged in regular work, the likelihood of their return to school is reduced.

A bare five weeks after the intensification of hostilities in Idleb in April 2015, it was reported that an increasing number of displaced children were required to work,[212] presumably to support their families.

One report describes that children may be out of school because they have been recruited into the armed forces. In the first half of 2013, a survey covering all governorates revealed 40 per cent of the respondents personally knew of children who had joined an armed group, and 21 per cent stated that boys and girls were equally at risk of recruitment.[213]

National authorities have the ultimate responsibility to ensure that "All individuals have access to quality and relevant education opportunities".[214] This includes the provision of safe and adequate physical structures in which relevant educational programmes of reasonable quality are offered without barriers to access.

In a 2012 report, the second most common obstacle to school attendance given was damaged infrastructure.[215]

All categories of respondents consulted as part of the survey drew attention either to a shortage of classrooms or to the need for rehabilitation of damaged rooms.

When families are displaced from their homes due to conflict or natural disasters, school buildings are often the first facilities to be used as temporary shelters. In December 2012, 1,499 schools were in use as shelters for internally displaced persons.[216] According to the MoE, schools were used as shelters in 12 out of the 14 governorates in 2012.[217] While this should be a short-term option,[218] in many parts of Syria, school buildings have been used as community shelters for an extended period, effectively excluding many children from schooling. Additionally, when schools close for the holidays, they are likely to be taken over as collective shelters. It is not clear whether these buildings become available for schooling when the new term starts after the holidays.[219]

The unavailability of school buildings varied across governorates, depending on whether conflict took place there or not. Prior to the conflict, more than 22,000 schools were available (including 118 UNRWA schools).[220] In December 2012, 2,400 schools were reported as destroyed or severely damaged.[221] In the same month, it was estimated that in Idleb, 60 per cent of schools were either damaged or used as shelters; while in Aleppo and Dara, the proportion was between 30 and 40 per cent.[222] Some schools were described as "abandoned".[223] In April 2013, it was reported that 2,963 schools had been destroyed.[224] In June 2013, 20 per cent of the country's schools did not provide instruction because of damage or conversion for other uses.[225] In October 2013, the MoE reported that between 4,100 and 4,500 schools were out of service.[226]

[210] UNICEF Syria, p.13.
[211] RAS, p.13.
[212] Idleb Report no.4, p.7.
[213] CP Assessment, p.13.
[214] INEE, p.55.
[215] UNICEF Syria, p.14. Education Interrupted, p.9 calls for an end to the devastation of schools.
[216] UNICEF Syria, p.7.
[217] UNICEF Syria, p.17.
[218] HNO, p.91.
[219] RAS, p.13.
[220] UNICEF Syria, p.7.
[221] UNICEF Syria, p.7.
[222] UNICEF Syria, p.14.
[223] UNICEF Syria, p.15.
[224] CP Issues, p.19.
[225] CP Issues, p.19.
[226] SHARP, December 2013, p.77.

At the end of 2013, about half of available learning spaces were non-functional in Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh, Hama, Idleb, Homs and Lattakia, while in some sub-districts, nearly all were out of service.[227] In March and April 2014, out of 6,420 schools surveyed, 39 per cent were out of service. The proportion of non-functional schools was 67 per cent in Homs, 66 per cent in Lattakia and 54 per cent in Idleb.[228] In May 2014, 88 schools in Damascus were not functional, with 17 used as evacuation centres.[229]

During April 2015, a number of school buildings were converted to collective shelters: 10 in the Ariha district of Idleb and six in Hama;[230] a week later, the number of affected schools in Hama was reduced to four;[231] and a further week later, the numbers had changed to eight in Idleb and six in Hama, with an indication that three of the six had previously already been in use as shelters, presumably before the upsurge in fighting.[232] By the end of the first week of May 2015, 90 schools in Idleb were used as shelters "or for other purposes": 69 in Harim, 4 in Idleb, 7 in Al Ma'ra and 10 in Ariha.[233]

In northern Syria, according to an August 2014 report, the non-attendance of children in informal settlements was "largely attributable to the on-going conflict and the fact that the majority of settlements do not have education facilities." A survey of camps in which 30,031 children were living revealed that only 17 per cent (33 per cent primary-aged and two per cent secondary-aged children) were attending school. Twenty-seven per cent of the children were in camps with no functional learning spaces.[234]

The distance between home and the nearest school might make it impossible for children to attend school. Areas in which displaced families have taken refuge might be too far from existing schools. Additionally, providing facilities is of low priority because they may exist for only a short duration.

In areas from which information was obtained in March and April 2014, 22 per cent of respondents gave "insufficient funds" as the reason why schools were out of service. Sixteen per cent reported use as a shelter, 15 per cent each reported security and the state of the buildings, and 13 per cent report a lack of staff.[235] It is not clear whether funds were required for repairing, for teaching materials, for teacher remuneration, for a combination of these or for other purposes.

The literature has recommended providing prefabricated classrooms and water and sanitation facilities.[236] By December 2013, rehabilitating classrooms and providing prefabricated classrooms and tents had been insufficient to meet the need for learning spaces. This resulted in double shifting and an almost exclusive focus on primary education.[237] Some buildings doubled as schools and shelters, placing extra pressure on the water and sanitation facilities.[238]

Principals reported what grades were offered in their schools (*see Table 2.7*). However, this range of grades do not agree with those reported in the EMIS database.[239]

[227] SINA, pp.32-34.
[228] Dynamo 3, p.39.
[229] RAS, p.30.
[230] Idleb Report no.1, April 2015, p.6.
[231] Idleb Report no.2, April 2015, p.6.
[232] Idleb Report no.3, April 2015, p.5.
[233] Idleb Report no.4, May 2015, p.7.
[234] SINA, p.36.
[235] Dynamo 3, July, 2014, p.42.
[236] UNICEF Syria, p.16.
[237] SINA, p.32; Situation Report, p.3.
[238] UNICEF Syria, p.17.
[239] Annex D.17.

Table 2.7 Grades offered by schools surveyed

GRADES	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	
	PRINCIPAL	EMIS
Grade 1-4	1	7
Grade 1-6	33	34
Grade 1-9	6	2
Grade 1-1	2	1
Grade 5-9	2	3
Grade 7-9	1	8
Grade 7-1	2	9
Grade 10-12	3	4
Total	**56**	**58**
Missing	3	1

Key informants reported the number of functioning schools in their neighbourhoods and the grades offered by each (*see Table 2.8*).[240] Of the five rural neighbourhoods, all but one (in Quneitra) offered upper secondary education (Grades 10 to 12). Upper secondary schooling was not available in the two camp neighbourhoods. Ten of the neighbourhoods without upper secondary provision were in urban locations.

Table 2.8 Number of functioning schools in the neighbourhood offering the indicated grades

GOVERNORATE	GRADES								
	1 TO 4	1 TO 6	1 TO 9	1 TO 12	5 TO 9	5 TO 12	10 TO 12	OTHER	TOTAL
Aleppo	4	22	10	11	–	1	5	1	54
Al-Hasakeh	1	31	2	–	2	1	6	14	57
As-Sweida	1	9	1	–	1	–	3	2	17
Damascus	7	27	5	5	11	10	14	9	88
Dara	10	10	7	6	5	5	3	1	47
Hama	6	22	–	–	7	–	7	3	45
Homs	1	11	–	–	4	–	8	4	28
Lattakia	13	6	1	–	9	1	4	2	36
Quneitra	13	16	7	1	2	1	3	1	44
Rural Damascus	5	13	3	2	2	2	5	6	38
Tartous	3	2	5	–	3	1	2	1	17
Total	**64**	**169**	**41**	**25**	**46**	**22**	**60**	**44**	**471**

Fifty-nine key informants reported that 57 of their nearest schools had operated before the crisis.[241] Of these, 34 have operated continuously, and 20 had resumed after having been closed for a period of time.[242] These schools vary in size, with eight having fewer than 10 classrooms, 31 having between 11 and 20 classrooms, and 16 having between 21 and 30 classrooms. Three schools were larger.[243] All schools had water and sanitation facilities, and 35 schools had facilities shared by girls and boys. Fifty-four schools had handwashing facilities.[244] The range of grades taught at these schools is shown in Table 2.9.[245]

[240] Annex C.14.
[241] Annex C.23. Forty-five were less than a kilometre away, 13 between one and two kilometres away, while one was close to 5 kilometres away.
[242] Annex C.24-25.
[243] Annex C.26. For one the number of rooms was not given; for one, it was given as 99.
[244] Annex C.27-30. One school's toilet system reported as not functioning; four respondents did not know whether the system was functional.
[245] Annex C.31-32.

Table 2.9 Nearest school to key informant: Number of schools with indicated grades

GRADES	1 TO 4	1 TO 6	1 TO 9	1 TO 12	5 TO 9	5 TO 12	7 TO 8	7 TO 9	7 TO 12	10 TO 12	TOTAL
Number	4	35	6	1	3	0	1	3	3	3	59

Enumerators observed and estimated what proportion of schools were operating in the neighbourhoods (*see Table 2.10*).[246] Of those in which less than 50 per cent the schools were functioning, two areas were camp schools and five were urban areas.

Key informants were asked twice about the number of non-functioning schools in their neighbourhood: Once in the section with general questions about their neighbourhood and a second time in a series of questions about schools that had ceased to function. Some respondents gave different answers to the two questions. Table 2.11 gives the different responses ("A" and "B") for the number of schools that had ceased to function and for the number of neighbourhoods for which such schools were reported.[247] Between 26 and 30 of the 59 surveyed neighbourhoods had school buildings no longer functioning as schools. The operations of neighbourhoods in As-Sweida and Tartous were unaffected. Respondents reported that 28 schools in their neighbourhoods were not functioning because of extensive damage to the infrastructure, 47 because the buildings were being used for other purposes, six for lack of teachers and five for lack of students.[248] Of those not operating, three had ceased to function in 2011, 12 in the following year, six in 2013, and two in 2014.[249] It was indicated that there was a need to reopen 24 schools. In 16 cases, those using the building for shelter would first have to be relocated.[250]

Table 2.10 Enumerators' estimate of proportion of functioning schools in the neighbourhood of surveyed schools

GOVERNORATE	NONE, OR ONLY A FEW (0-25%)	FEW (26-50%)	SOME (51-75%)	MANY (76-90%)	ALL OR ALMOST ALL (91-100%)	SURVEYED SCHOOLS
Aleppo	1	3	–	2	3	9
Al-Hasakeh	–	–	2	3	2	7
As-Sweida	1	–	–	–	4	5
Damascus	–	–	1	1	3	5
Dara	–	–	1	–	2	3
Hama	–	–	1	1	4	6
Homs	–	–	–	2	2	4
Lattakia	–	–	–	–	6	6
Quneitra	1	–	–	2	1	4
Rural Damascus	–	–	–	–	4	4
Tartous	1	–	1	–	4	6
Total	**4**	**3**	**6**	**11**	**35**	**59**

[246] Annex B.1.
[247] Annex C.75 ("A") and Annex C.17 ("B"). Where the number of affected schools is given as a range, it is because a single school might have been reported as having ceased to function for more than one reason.
[248] Annex C.17.
[249] Annex C.74.
[250] Annex C.76-77.

Table 2.11 Number of non-functioning schools in surveyed neighbourhoods

GOVERNORATE	NON-FUNCTIONING SCHOOLS		NEIGHBOURHOODS SURVEYED		
	NUMBER	RANGE	TOTAL	AFFECTED	
	A	B		A	B
Aleppo	19	16-35	9	5	6
Al-Hasakeh	11	10-11	7	5	5
As-Sweida	–	–	5	–	–
Damascus	12	16-8	5	5	5
Dara	3	4	3	1	2
Hama	1	2	6	1	2
Homs	5	5	4	4	4
Lattakia	1	1	6	1	1
Quneitra	5	4-7	4	2	3
Rural Damascus	3	3	4	2	2
Tartous	–	–	6	–	–
Total	**60**	**61-86**	**59**	**26**	**30**

Overall, in 29 to 33 neighbourhoods, all schools were functioning.

Enumerators reported damage observed in school buildings (*see Table 2.12*).[251] They also reported evidence of the MoE repairing buildings in 36 neighbourhoods. In 19 neighbourhoods, no evidence of such work was observed.[252]

Severe damage to more than a quarter of the school buildings was reported for the Al-Tadamoun neighbourhood in Damascus and to more than half the buildings for the Saif Al-Dawleh and Al-Qadesiyeh neighbourhoods in Aleppo.[253]

Table 2.12 Damage to school buildings in neighbourhoods

PROPORTION	NUMBER OF NEIGHBOURHOODS IN WHICH THE INDICATED PROPORTION OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS SUFFERED		
	SEVERE DAMAGE	MODERATE DAMAGE	NO DAMAGE
Up to a quarter	56	48	15
From a quarter to half	1	7	1
From half to three-quarters	2	1	2
Three-quarters to 90%		1	11
91% to all		1	30

Only three key informants were aware of temporary learning spaces in their neighbourhood: One mosque in a neighbourhood and private houses in the other two.[254] Enumerators, however, reported seeing temporary learning spaces in six neighbourhoods. These included government buildings, shared facilities with a school, an old house and a hall with wooden partitioning to separate the classes.[255]

Half of the surveyed schools, according to their principals, had suffered damage (*see Table 2.13*).[256]

[251] Annex B.2-4. There was one "Do not know" response to the moderate damage question.
[252] Annex B.23.
[253] Annex B.2.
[254] Annex C.18-20 (five and three houses, respectively).
[255] Annex B.11-12.
[256] Annex D.91.

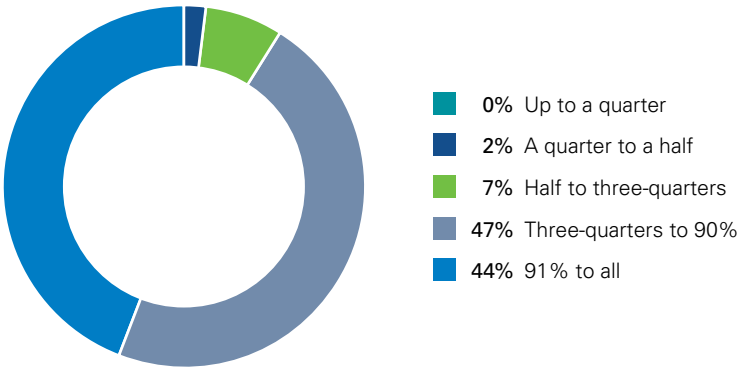
Table 2.13 School buildings damaged as a result of the crisis

GOVERNORATE	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS SURVEYED	NUMBER OF DAMAGED SCHOOL BUILDINGS
Damascus	5	4
Aleppo	9	6
Rural Damascus	4	3
Homs	4	1
Hama	6	3
Lattakia	6	–
Al-Hasakeh	7	3
Tartous	6	3
Dara	3	3
As-Sweida	5	1
Quneitra	4	3
Total	**59**	**30**

Six principals reported that the MoE had undertaken repairs, furniture replacement and equipment replacement at their schools. Another 15 reported that the DoE had done the same (in cooperation with UNICEF). In two instances, an NGO or charitable organization had provided this assistance.[257]

Enumerators reported the proportion of neighbourhood children that appeared to attend school. For an outside observer, this will be difficult to assess accurately, especially when all children are not attending the same shift. Figure 2.26 reports enumerators' impressions.[258]

Figure 2.26 Percentage of neighbourhoods in which the indicated proportion of children appear to attend school



Principals were asked to share their impressions on changes in enrolment patterns pre-crisis and during the time of the survey.[259] Prior to the crisis, principals report almost 90 per cent of schools had enrolled more than four-fifths of the children in their catchment area. This proportion dropped to 70 per cent of the schools over the course of four years.

[257] Annex D.95.
[258] Annex B.13.
[259] Annex D.26-27. Note that these, too, are impressions of the respondents. Three principals failed to respond to Question 26 and eight to Question 27. The five neighbourhoods missing from the Question 27 data are all urban.

Figure 2.27 Percentage of surveyed neighbourhoods having the indicated enrolment before the crisis

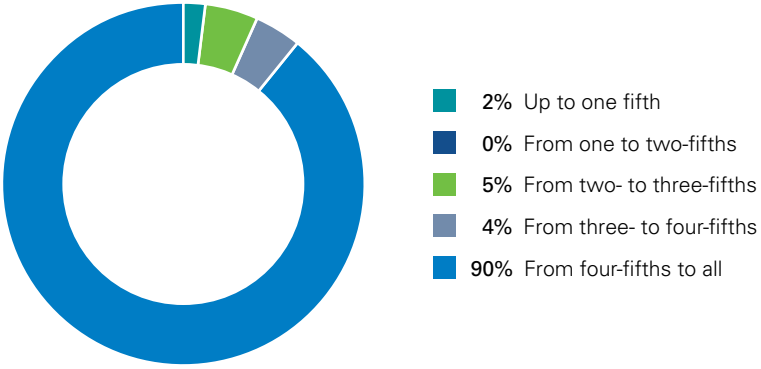
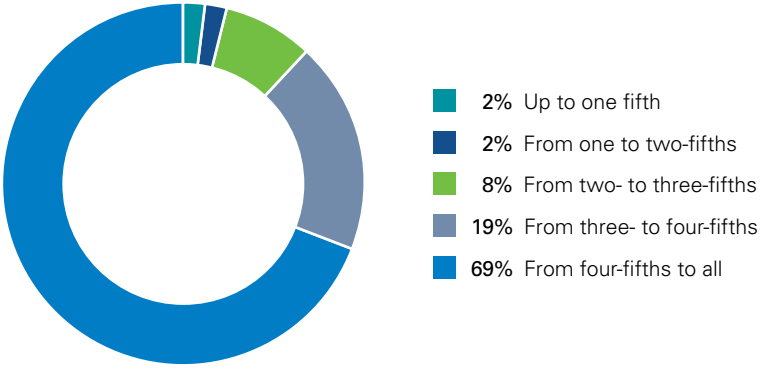


Figure 2.28 Proportion of surveyed neighbourhoods having the indicated enrolment at the end of the 2014/15 school year



Only three key informants described their nearest school as well attended every day.[260] Respondents said the area's stability, the short distance between home and school, and the school's regular practice to follow-up with absent students resulted in strong attendance.[261] However, parents' lack of awareness, poor security, child labour, disease and "frequent special courses for students provided by parents"[262] facilitated lower attendance rates.[263] To encourage regular attendance, schools should improve their services, use technology effectively, provide training courses to teachers and conduct sessions to raise parents' awareness of the importance of education.[264]

Forty-three schools reported enrolling displaced children (*see Table 2.14*). Combined, a total of 19,822 students were enrolled (the majority of which were girls).[265] The average number of displaced children enrolled at a surveyed school varied between 90 (Al-Hasakeh) and 1,105 (Lattakia). The average gender parity index (GPI) of 1.4 is well above the parity range of 0.9 to 1.1.

[260] Annex C.35-36. One of the three schools was the camp school in Tartous, already described as having a low attendance rate.
[261] Annex C.37.
[262] In the absence of clear information, it is conjectured that this a form of private tutoring. If children are absent from school for private tutoring, they may miss more work and require further tutoring. Any special courses or other forms of private tutoring should be outside school hours.
[263] For the school in Lattakia, lack of awareness on the part of parents, child labour and disease were cited as reasons for poor attendance. For the school in Al-Hasakeh, the security situation and the "frequent courses" were given as reasons. No further information was provided on the nature of the courses.
[264] Annex C.38.
[265] Annex D.34.

Table 2.14 Displaced children enrolled at surveyed schools

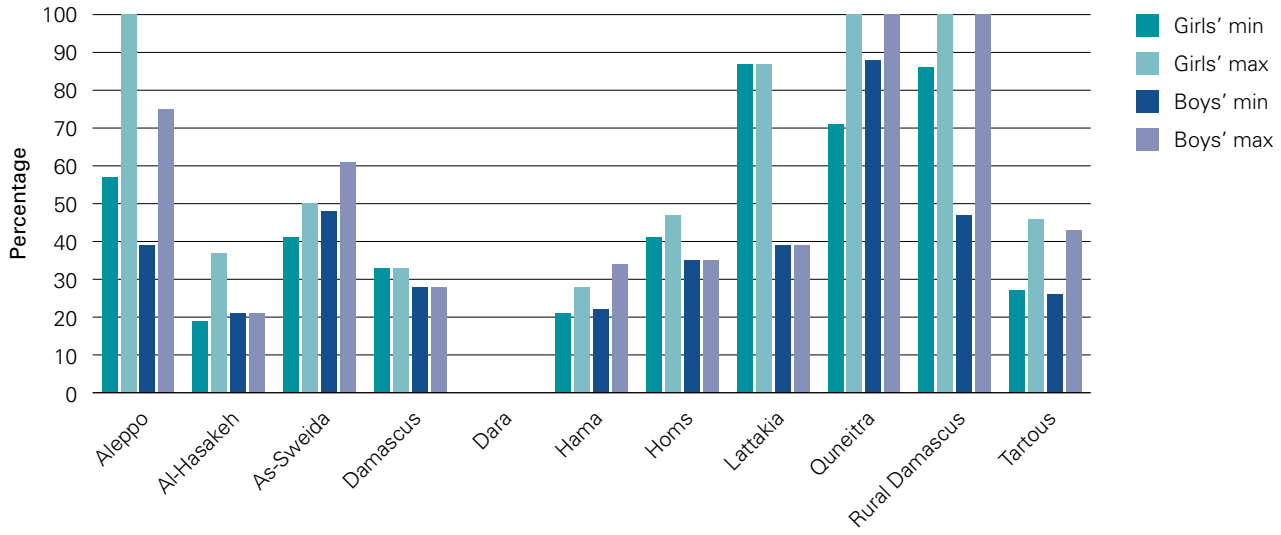
GOVERNORATE	SCHOOLS SURVEYED	SCHOOLS WITH DISPLACED CHILDREN ENROLLED	DISPLACED CHILDREN ENROLLED			
			GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL	GPI
Aleppo	9	4	2,700	1,628	4,328	1.7
Al-Hasakeh	7	5	287	164	451	1.8
As-Sweida	5	4	261	309	570	0.8
Damascus	5	5	770	531	1,301	1.5
Dara	3	3	273	617	890	0.4
Hama	6	4	474	599	1,073	0.8
Homs	4	3	698	294	992	2.4
Lattakia	6	6	4,530	2,105	6,635	2.2
Quneitra	4	2	421	525	946	0.8
Rural Damascus	4	2	823	846	1,669	1.0
Tartous	6	5	490	477	967	1.0
Total	**59**	**43**	**11,727**	**8,095**	**19,822**	**1.4**

Figure 2.29 compares the number of displaced children enrolled in each governorate to the governorate's total enrolled student population. Unfortunately, 16 schools reported they did not enrol displaced children, and due to the nature of the data, it has not been possible to exclude these 16 schools from the total enrolment. To compensate, minimum and maximum[266] percentages have been given for each governorate. For Damascus and Lattakia, all surveyed schools reported the enrolment of displaced children – these comparisons will therefore be correct. Dara was excluded from the figure because of missing data.

Notably, in each governorate, displaced children comprised at least 20 per cent of the total enrolment. The minimum percentages of girls were roughly equal to boys in three governorates and exceeded that of boys in five (Lattakia and Rural Damascus by at least 40 percentage points).

Unless a large departure of children occurred in these schools, the significant enrolment of displaced children almost certainly places a strain on these facilities.[267]

Figure 2.29 Displaced students as percentage of total enrolment at surveyed schools



[266] The maximum has been capped at 100 per cent.

[267] It is not known when, and over what period, these students enrolled, meaning it could have taken place gradually or in a sudden surge.

Even though the total number of displaced children within the communities is unknown, it is clear, from the percentages in Figure 2.29, that the population is significant. Initiatives to motivate displaced, out-of-school children to re-enrol are therefore encouraged to draw from the experiences of currently enrolled, displaced students and their families.

As shown in Box 2.2, "school attendance" is an ambiguous term. Because of these multiple understandings, when respondents were asked if they noticed differences between the attendance rates of displaced children and children from the host community, they may have responded inconsistently. Nevertheless, 38 principals (64 per cent) saw no differences in attendance patterns.[268] When principals noted distinctions, they attributed them to a lack of a settled home (14 per cent), to a loss of interest in education (12 per cent), to poor economic conditions or to having to be employed (7 per cent each). Reasons mentioned with lower frequencies included parental indifference, the distance between shelter and school, the absence of parents, or customs and traditions which were different from those of the host community.

All principals who supervised schools with displaced children reported that they had also implemented special measures to integrate them (*see Table 2.15*).[269, 270] The increase in equipped classrooms, the rehabilitation of buildings, and procurement of textbooks and supplies are surprising, since reports keep suggesting that these efforts lie outside of the school's capabilities, and often, even the DoE is unable to meet these needs.

Seven per cent of principals mentioned combining classes as an accommodation effort to integrate displaced students. However, it is not clear how enrolling more students relates to combined classes.

Notably, there were no mentions of psychosocial support and only one mention of catch-up classes (offered in collaboration with UNICEF). There appears to be little opportunity for these students to attend remedial or catch-up classes.

Four principals asked to see school records before admitting displaced children; 54 had enrolled such children without examining records.[271] At 51 schools, children took a placement test before admission, while at seven schools, a placement test was not required.[272] One principal reported requiring a medical examination before admitting a student (perhaps more than one).[273]

Table 2.15 Measures taken by schools to integrate displaced students

MEASURES TO INTEGRATE INTERNALLY DISPLACED STUDENTS	PERCENTAGES
Increase the number of classrooms and equip them	58
Setting a placement test	21
Introducing a second shift	16
Procurement of textbooks and supplies	14
Combining classes	7
Rehabilitation of buildings and additional toilets	5
Provide the right atmosphere for displaced students to get along with other students	5
Preparing files for those without school records	2
Meetings with parents to raise awareness	2
Remedial classes in cooperation with UNICEF	2

[268] Annex D.36.
[269] Annex D.47.
[270] Annex C.3, D.48. Percentages are calculated on the 43 principals who had enrolled displaced students.
[271] Annex D.82-83. This question was also answered by principals who had earlier indicated that they had not enrolled displaced children. Only one of the 59 principals indicated that this question was not applicable.
[272] Annex D.84.
[273] Annex D.85.

Principals acknowledged turning away 1,415 children from schools, including schools claiming to have found a place for all the children (Those turned away were not specifically identified as displaced children).[274]

Seven principals reported that neighbourhood schools were experiencing a 21 to 40 per cent dropout rate (*see Table 2.16*).[275] Prior to the crisis, only one neighbourhood fell within this category.

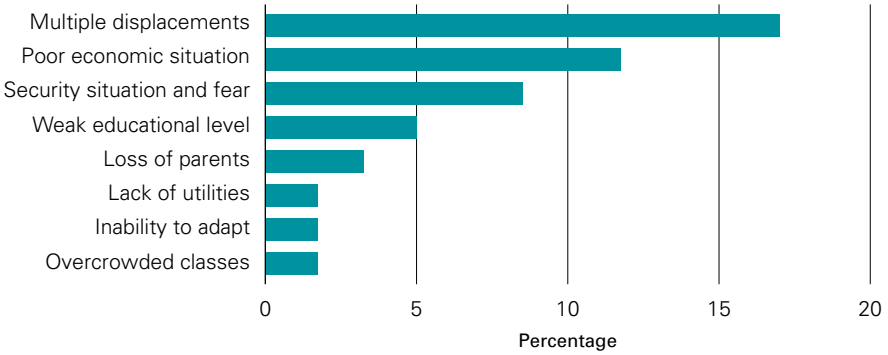
Table 2.16 Dropout rates in neighbourhoods of surveyed schools

	BEFORE THE CRISIS		AT TIME OF SURVEY		
GOVERNORATE	0-20%	21-40%	0-20%	21-40%	61-80%
Aleppo	9	–	8	–	–
Al-Hasakeh	6	–	3	–	–
As-Sweida	4	–	4	–	–
Damascus	9	–	5	–	–
Dara	3	–	2	–	1
Hama	6	–	6	–	–
Homs	4	–	4	–	–
Lattakia	6	–	6	–	–
Quneitra	4	–	4	–	–
Rural Damascus	3	1	2	2	–
Tartous	5	–	5	1	–

Twenty-six principals offered reasons why 1,415 students had dropped out of their schools (*see Figure 2.30*).[276, 277] Two reasons offered, overcrowded classes and the lack of water and electricity (presumably at school), are supply-oriented constraints.[278] Another two, "weak educational level" and "inability to adapt", are most likely caused by a combination of trauma, unsettledness and being out of school (further reinforcing how schools are unable to provide adequate psychosocial educational support).

While schools cannot be expected to assist with family finances or poverty, education systems can reduce the negative impacts of multiple displacement by encouraging displaced children to enrol as quickly, and as easily, as possible. To these ends, schools should avoid imposing additional material requirements on students and their families, such as asking them to procure their own uniforms, books and stationery.

Figure 2.30 Reasons why children have dropped out of surveyed schools



[274] Annex D.18-20.
[275] Annex D.31-32.
[276] Annex D.19-20. Three schools each reported between 150 and 200 students having dropped out in the course of the year, with a further five schools reporting upwards of 50 dropouts.
[277] Overall, the dropout figure represents less than three per cent of the schools' aggregate enrolment.
[278] Mentioned only by a school in Aleppo, and then as joint reason with the security situation. This school had lost nearly half its enrolment.

The same set of principals were asked why changes in dropout rates have occurred since the crisis began.[279] Figure 2.31's most frequently mentioned item, "students forced to work" aligns well with Figure 2.30's second-highest ranking item, "poor economic situation". New reasons appear and require further investigation. For example, if "unanticipated travel" is not equivalent to displacement, it is difficult to understand why it is such a prominent reason for drop-out.

"Failure to monitor children", accounting for only seven per cent of responses, suggests both a lack of follow-up by parents on their children's schooling and the loss of education resulting from extended periods of absence.

Figure 2.31 Reasons for changes in drop out over the period of the crisis

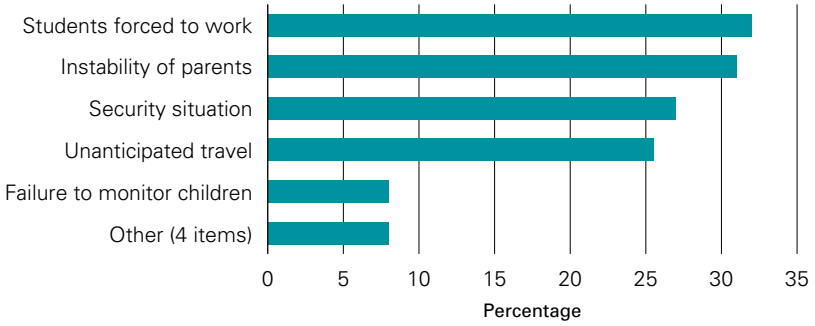
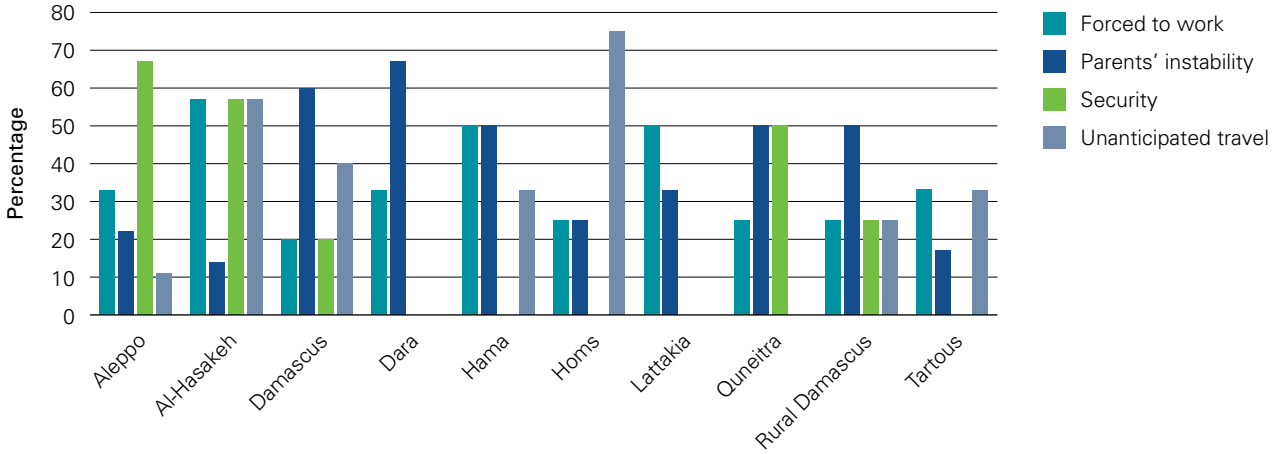


Figure 2.32 presents Figure 2.31's top four responses and distributes them by governorate.[280] Notably, Hama, Homs, Lattakia and Tartous do not mention security as a factor; Dara does not mention students having to work as a factor; and Dara, Lattakia and Quneitra do not report unanticipated travel.

The survey asked teachers the same questions.[281] Overall, the top reasons for students dropping out were: The need to supplement family income (63 per cent), displacement (36 per cent) and parental negligence. The latter relates to a response from principals: "failure to monitor the children".

Figure 2.32 Reasons for changes in drop out in neighbourhoods surveyed, by governorate



Children also provided reasons for dropping out (*see Figure 2.33*).[282] Poor living conditions tops the list by a wide margin – every other reason was mentioned by fewer than 20 per cent of respondents. It is interesting that children's' groups mentioned "violence and bad behaviour at school" while no principal did. Moreover, only one children's group reported "child labour", despite parents and principals naming this as a top reason.

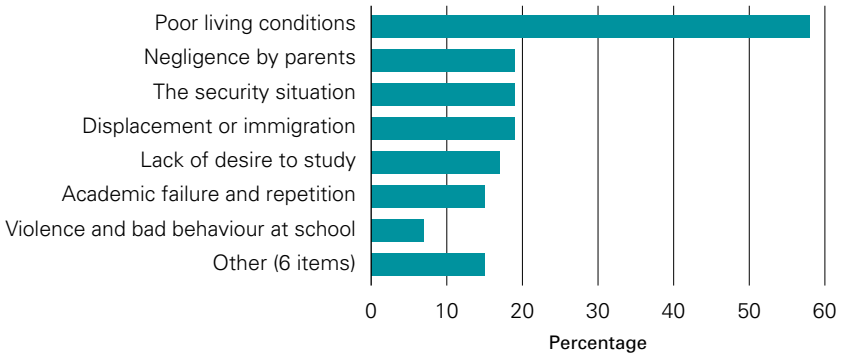
[279] Annex D.33. Note that in this figure, principals were commenting on the situation in general, whereas Figure 2.30 provides actual reasons for drop-out in a limited number of schools.

[280] Annex D.33. No reasons were provided by the surveyed schools in As-Sweida.

[281] Annex E.15A.

[282] Annex G.18A. "Other" reasons included early marriage, health, and psychological situation (three per cent each), and child labour, no nearby school, and school's refusal to register the child (two per cent each). Gender disaggregation is not possible, since the table in the Annex does not give school-level data. School-level data would have allowed the responses from the four all-male groups to be compared with those of the eight all-female groups. At 47 schools the responses came from mixed groups.

Figure 2.33 Children's perspective on why children are out of school

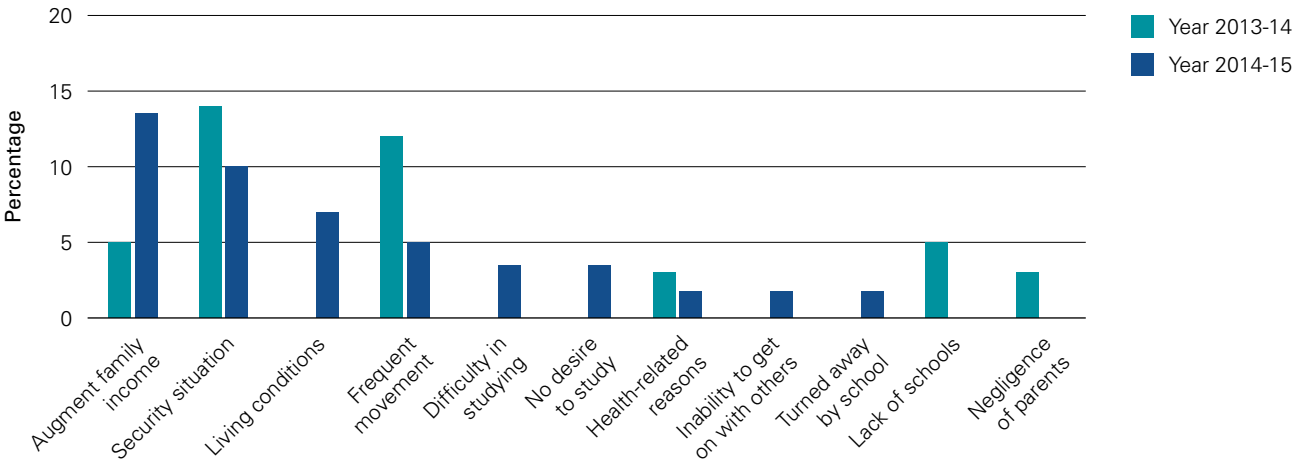


The variety, and disparities, among principals, teachers, parents and children on why children are out of school further reinforces the need for intervention efforts to be contextualized to localities' needs.

Fifty-three per cent of the teachers' groups believed that following up with parents of out-of-school children was the best way to get them re-enrolled; 46 per cent suggested students would need material and moral support. Only eight per cent believed an improved school environment would entice them to return.[283] Corroborating teachers' responses, children's groups favoured material and moral support when asked the same question.[284] Presumably, "moral support" comprises of raising awareness about the importance of education and providing guidance on how to succeed at school. It would also be important for the returning children to feel accepted and not to be made fun of either by teachers or fellow-students.

When children who had previously been out of school were asked to give the reasons for their dropping out, the small number who had been away from school during the 2013/14 academic year named security issues, displacement, having to contribute to family income, a lack of schools (or school availability), health and parental negligence.[285] For those who were, or had been, out of school during the 2014/15 year there was a wider range of reasons.[286] A large number worked to help provide for their family, and security issues lost some prominence. Frequent displacement also declined in importance. Figure 2.34 contrasts answers from the two groups. Of the group members out of school at the time of the survey, nine had not completed the first cycle, two had not gone beyond Grade 4, three had completed Grade 6 and three had completed Grade 7.[287]

Figure 2.34 Reasons why focus group children were out of school during the 2013/14 and 2014/15 school years



[283] Annex E.15.
[284] Annex G.18B.
[285] Annex G.5.
[286] Annex G.9.
[287] Annex G.10. It is not possible to determine the ages of these respondents.

BOX 2.3 GETTING OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN BACK INTO SCHOOL

Fifty-three per cent of teachers' groups believed that "follow-up with the parents" with out-of-school children was the best way to get them re-enrolled. If groups elaborated on this view, the details were not recorded.

From these responses, one can assume that parents play instrumental roles in deciding whether children are enrolled or not. As revealed in the literature and survey responses, these reasons vary: Parents may require their children to work, keep children at home for safety reasons or not make any effort to register children in school. Therefore, contacting parents may be the most effective intervention, especially because most children will be minors and thus, highly influenced by parental decisions.

Schools should hold intensive discussions with parents and recently re-enrolled children. This helps reveal factors that can be utilized to assist other children to return to school. For example, if parents and children mentioned a child returned because "education is important for our future", one should ask why the child had then been out of school for weeks or months and what factors made the child's return possible.

Parents of out-of-school children could then be invited to a meeting at which the school principal or a senior teacher would explain the importance of getting their children to return to school. A few parents of recently re-enrolled children could explain what prompted them to re-enrol their child. The parents of out-of-school children should be given the opportunity to raise their concerns and receive responses. At the end of the meeting, parents should be able to begin the procedures to re-enrol their children. Meetings might be more successful if children are provided some form of entertainment during the session, such as a choral item.

A few notes school administrators should consider before initiating contact with parents and children:

- Which staff members should be involved (besides the principal)? Volunteers or senior teachers? Staff members with administrative responsibilities? Male or female teachers?
- How would students and parents be selected for consultation? How might children of different ages (and their parents) be moved by different arguments? How many should be brought together? Should males and females attend separate meetings?
- Could strategies other than a meeting at the school be considered? For example, it may be worthwhile to ask parents of enrolled children to approach two or three parents living near them whose children are not enrolled.
- How many meetings with parents of out-of-school children would be feasible? One meeting may not be sufficient for all parents to attend. Additionally, a number of smaller, more intimate meetings may be more productive than one large gathering.
- Could the school build a team of parents who would see this as an ongoing contribution to rebuilding the school and contributing to the future of the country?

Below are a few concerns parents of out-of-school-children may raise; the school should have responses prepared:

- Is there space for my child? Would not my child just be another one in an already overcrowded class?
- Will any financial demands be made? I cannot afford to buy school uniforms, books or stationery.
- Will textbooks and stationery and other requirements be provided, or will my child have to manage without these essential aids to learning?
- Will remedial or catch-up assistance be provided? When and how will this be done?
- Will the students be welcoming towards newcomers?

Questions such as these suggest that careful planning, including discussion with all staff members and with student representatives, would need to be done well in advance of any approaches to parents of out-of-school children.

Children separated from their parents (due to the crisis) are more likely to drop out. Sixty-nine per cent of principals reported their community had such children, while 31 per cent were not aware of any.[288] The most frequently given reason for separation was "death, divorce or separation of parents" (53 per cent), with emigration or travel of parents the second-most frequent.[289] Key informants pointed out that some parents had to live close to their workplaces if the family home is too far away. Key informants also mentioned that rural areas may not have schools and so children going to school will be separated from their family.

[288] Annex D.54. Additionally, from Annex C.12, key informants had the same impression: 68 per cent were aware of such children.
[289] Annex D.55. Key informants concurred. Annex C.13: 12 per cent of key informants reported "unethical reasons".

In summary, four broad categories explain why children are not in school:

1 The need to supplement family income by working during school hours;

2 It is unsafe for children to attend school, either because the school is unsafe or because commuting between home and school is dangerous;

3 Supply-oriented factors, such as the school cannot accommodate children, or the programme offered by the school is perceived to be of poor quality; and

4 Demand-oriented factors, such as families being too traumatized and/or impoverished to consider enrolling their children, or because faith in the value of education has been lost.

For those working to help support the family, evening classes or home study programmes should be considered in intervention efforts.[290] The materials should cater to children's needs and be well publicized. Those studying at home would require regular adult support, which may not be available from parents or other adult family members. In these instances, an alternative support system would be needed. Evening classes should not exclude those unable to enrol at the beginning of the academic year.

Neither school nor the community can guarantee the safety of students and teachers. However, all reasonable steps should be taken to reduce risk.

Supply-oriented factors receive further attention below. Apart from ensuring that schools are well-run and that classes are productive, schools should encourage students and parents to publicize successes.

A decline in demand for education because of trauma, displacement and a loss of faith in education's value must be urgently tackled through formal arrangements and word-of-mouth encouragement. Displaced families that have enrolled their children could play a significant role.

Out of 59 schools, 31 enrolled students with disabilities.[291] Of these schools, 21 reported implementing special measures to facilitate the students' integration, such as enrolling students in classrooms on the ground floor; dedicating a staff member to assist them; providing health and psychosocial support; and implementing play, music and sport programmes.[292] Respondents did not mention adapting instructional methods or using special equipment and materials in class. Gender disaggregation of data was not possible.

Among responses, the challenges facing basic education tended to overshadow the need for kindergarten or early childhood education. The pre-primary enrolment rate reportedly dropped from 12 per cent in 2010 to five per cent in 2012.[293] The quantitative analysis of EMIS data gives a higher calculated GER for 2010 of 33.0 per cent (and 32.4 per cent for 2011).[294] Although its importance is acknowledged, no clear strategy was proposed by respondents, other than the need of psychosocial support and a school feeding programme for children in pre-primary classes.[295]

Thirty-seven neighbourhoods provided kindergarten education; 22 did not (*see Figure 2.35*).[296] Because kindergarten was only provided at a modest scale pre-crisis, it would be surprising if its expansion is prioritized post-crisis, especially because basic education faces so many challenges.

[290] Primary: Grades 1 to 6. First cycle: Grades 1 to 4.

[291] Annex D.57-59.

[292] Details of special measures were provided by only 15 schools. This was an open-ended question; respondents were not asked to select responses from a list of options.

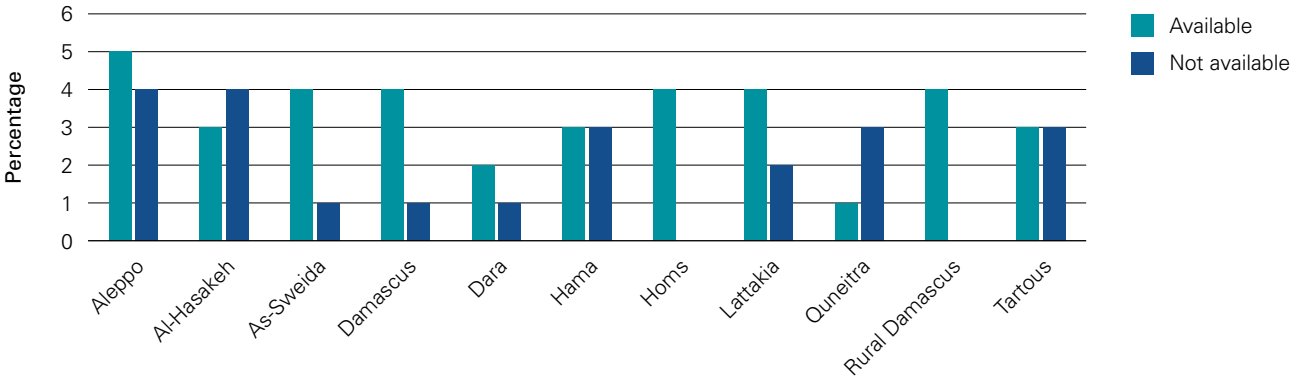
[293] SHARP, December 2013, p.77. Pre-primary (kindergarten) in the Syrian context is generally the single year prior to Grade 1, not a three-year period as in some countries.

[294] Annex A.25.

[295] SHARP, December 2013, p.77.

[296] Annex C.15.

Figure 2.35 Number of surveyed neighbourhoods with and without kindergarten



"Equitable provision" has not been explicitly identified in the literature as an issue. Respondents would probably regard this as something that "goes without saying". However, a commitment to equity requires not only sufficient school buildings in an adequate state of repair, but also education accessible for students with special needs. For example, those with physical disabilities will need facilities close enough to homes. The acceptable distance between home and school might vary according to context. A school might be "close enough" to a student's home, but an unsafe area might require the student to make a long detour. Reliable transport might bring a school within reach of children who would otherwise not be able to attend school.

Protection and well-being

Children out of school are at risk of child labour. Boys, especially those aged 15 and older, may be recruited into armed forces, and girls may be forced into early marriage.[297] However, children may be kept from going to school if being in school is dangerous. It is estimated that, at the end of 2013, 11,400 children had been killed in the conflict, including children who were attending school at the time that they were fatally injured.[298]

The INEE asserts that schools should be "secure and safe, and promote the protection and the psychosocial well-being of learners, teachers and other education personnel."[299] The "safety and well-being of learners, teachers and other education personnel…" are linked to health, nutrition, psychosocial and protection services.[300]

While the literature identifies children are at risk both at school and while travelling to and from school,[301] no document makes reference to measures already taken to make schools safe. As aforementioned, safety is a reason why children are not attending school.[302]

Schools have been treated as "easy targets" for attacks.[303] One example "outlined the experience of a boy who witnessed a random 'arrest' of 50 children from his village following demonstration – 'As a punishment, armed men went to the school. They selected 50 children at random in the classrooms, from Grades 1 to 7. They took them out of the school and tore out their fingernails. Many of these children were six years old, just six – They kept the children.'"[304]

A 15-year-old boy reported, "Some men came to our village. I tried to escape, but they took me to jail. Except it wasn't a jail – it was my old school. …It's not unusual to see a school used in this way."[305] Schools have been used as military bases, as barracks, as sniper posts, and as detention centres, sometimes briefly, but some also for extended periods.[306] This turns the school into a "legitimate"

[297] SINA, p.32.
[298] SINA, p.32.
[299] INEE, p.62.
[300] INEE, p.68.
[301] SINA, p.34; compare with UNICEF Syria, p.13.
[302] UNICEF Syria, p.13.
[303] HRC, p.7.
[304] CP Issues, p.8.
[305] Untold Atrocities, pp.8-9.
[306] Safe No More, p.25.



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military target. Occupying schools has reportedly happened even while classes were in progress,[307] and schools have been shelled while children were inside.[308] Checkpoints very close to schools also put the schools at risk of bombing or shelling.[309]

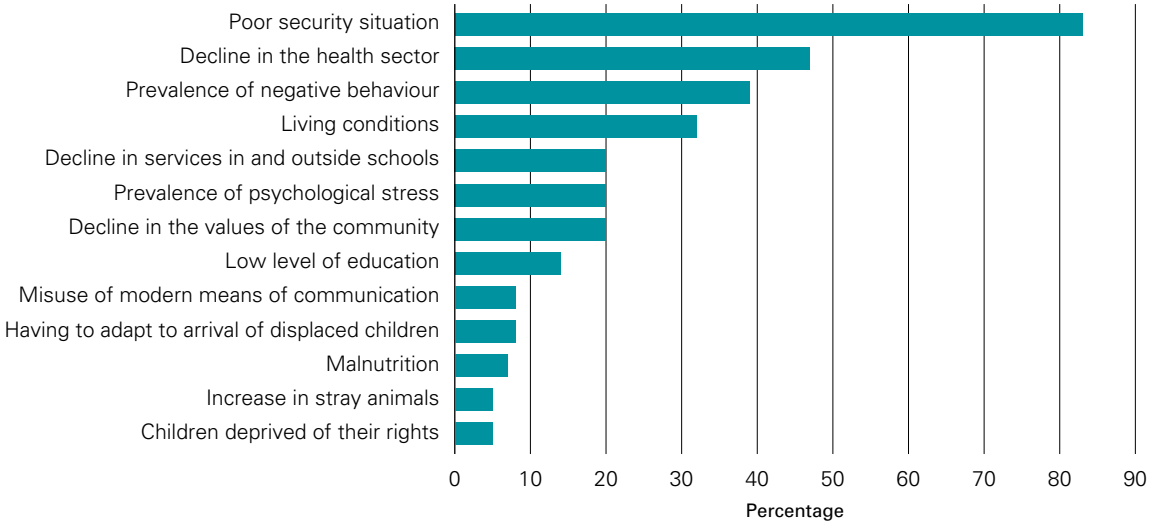
In June 2014, an increase in attacks on functioning schools, especially in Aleppo and Damascus, was reported.[310] In the first nine months of 2014, UNICEF reported 35 attacks on schools, with 105 children killed and 293 injured.[311]

It is recommended that safe learning spaces should be established, or that buildings be rehabilitated to make them safe and as close to children as possible.[312]

Regular appeals by humanitarian actors to combatants to preserve schools as safe havens for children had, by November 2014, not had the desired effect.[313]

Parents were asked to describe the main risks faced by children in their community (*see Figure 2.36*).[314] Over 80 per cent of parents named poor security, which far outpaced any other risk identified ("decline in the health sector" was the next most frequently mentioned risk, reported by under half of the groups). When examining the risks, one will see they are all related. Increases in encounters with "stray animals" could exacerbate issues with "the health sector"; "decline in services" are linked to declines in "living conditions", with "malnutrition" as a consequence. "Decline in the values of the community" is associated with the increase in "negative behaviour" and the "misuse" of cellular phones and other devices, all of which can result because of "poor security", "living conditions". "Low level of education" among children is symptomatic of dropping out and of extended periods of absence, related to many aforementioned factors. "Psychological stress" similarly results from most of the risks mentioned. It is assumed that the deprivation of children's "rights" refers to children's right to an education.

Figure 2.36 Main risks to children in the community: Parents' perspective



The survey asked key informants whether their neighbourhood had been quiet in the days prior to the survey – only 38 key responded positively.[315] However, all 59 respondents reported that neighbourhood unrest had effects in their neighbourhoods, implying unrest has occurred at some point since the crisis began (*see Figure 2.37*).[316] The emergence of violence among students, reported by a quarter of

307 Safe No More, p.3.
308 Safe No More, p.21.
309 Safe No More, p.26.
310 RAS, p.61.
311 Statement of the UNICEF Representative for Syria on 7 November 2014.
312 SINA, p.32.
313 HNO, pp.29, 91.
314 Annex F.7.
315 Annex C.7.
316 Annex C.8.

respondents (and evidenced in the slaughtering of animals) points to an urgent need for psychosocial counselling.[317] It also points to a possible shortage of recreational opportunities for children. There are no indications of who is responsible for vandalizing schools.

Figure 2.38 isolates three consequences of unrest to see if the number of respondents reporting vandalism and violence relates to the number of respondents reporting insecurity and fear.

A third of the neighbourhoods in Dara reported violent acts by students, yet feelings of insecurity and fear were not reported. Homs and Lattakia reported insecurity and fear, but did not report violent acts. Damascus and Tartous neighbourhoods did not report any of the three indicators.

Key informants also identified risks faced by children (*see Figure 2.39*).[318] Corroborating the parents' groups, security issues topped the list. Key respondents also listed many risks named by parents, albeit with different frequencies. One risk, "fear of not completing education", may be a self-fulfilling prophecy if not addressed through appropriate encouragement and support. Threats posed by motorcycles are here mentioned for the first time: It is not clear whether the risk is held by the motorcyclist, to pillion passengers or to pedestrians. Drugs are also mentioned for the first time. Key informants detailed "insecurity", reporting that it manifested as combat, explosives and kidnapping.

Figure 2.37 Effects of unrest in the neighbourhood as reported by key informants

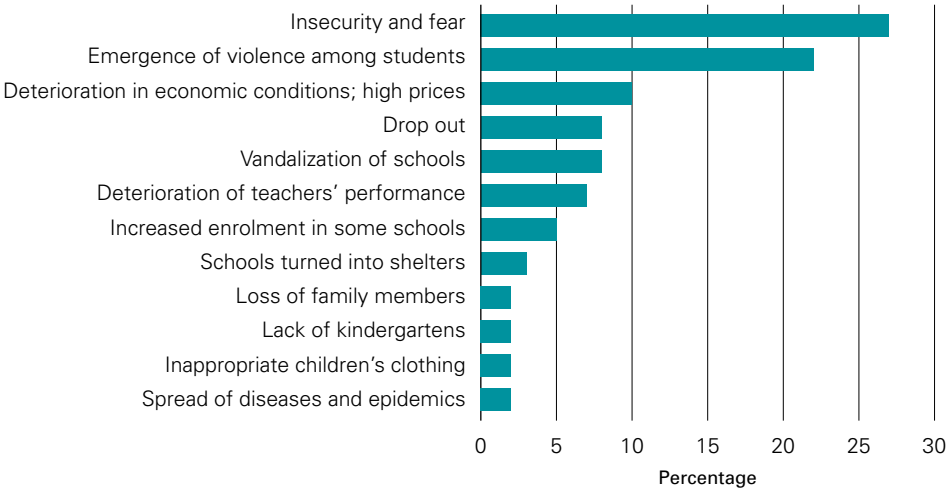
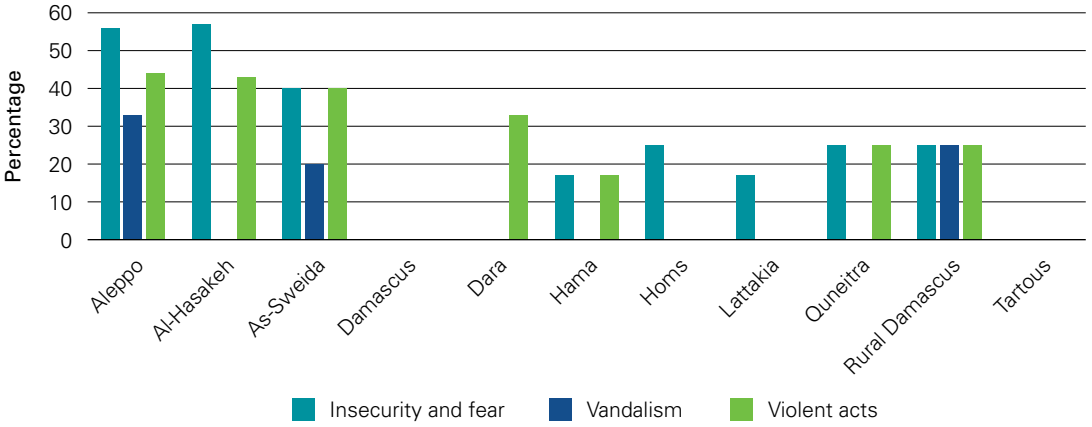
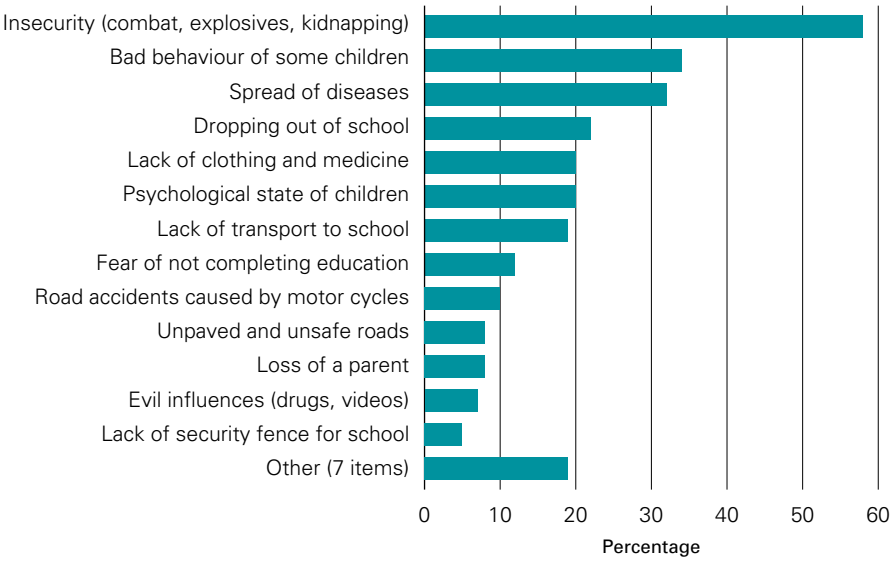


Figure 2.38 Incidence of insecurity/fear, vandalism, and violent actions in surveyed neighbourhoods



[317] Annex C.8.
[318] Annex C.11.

Figure 2.39 Risks faced by children in the community, as reported by key informants



The question, then, is to what extent can schools provide a safe environment for students? Enumerators evaluated neighbourhoods, and only 60 per cent of all neighbourhoods fell in the category of "all or most" schools are safe and secure. Seventeen per cent of the neighbourhoods fell in the category of "51 to 90 per cent of the schools appeared to be safe". This means 22 per cent of neighbourhoods falling in the category of "fewer than half the schools" were deemed secure by an outside observer.[319] Eighty-eight per cent of key informants reported that the nearest functioning school provided a safe environment for students, and 78 per cent had a safe play area.[320] In 29 cases (49 per cent), children used the play area outside of school hours. However, seven of these schools (in which children used play areas outside of school hours) were not described as safe. Almost all enumerators (95 per cent) saw play areas used for collective sporting activities, while 10 per cent saw recreational activities and games.[321] Activities mentioned by observers included agricultural activities, boy scout activities and reading. Two enumerators reported seeing fights and quarrels among students.

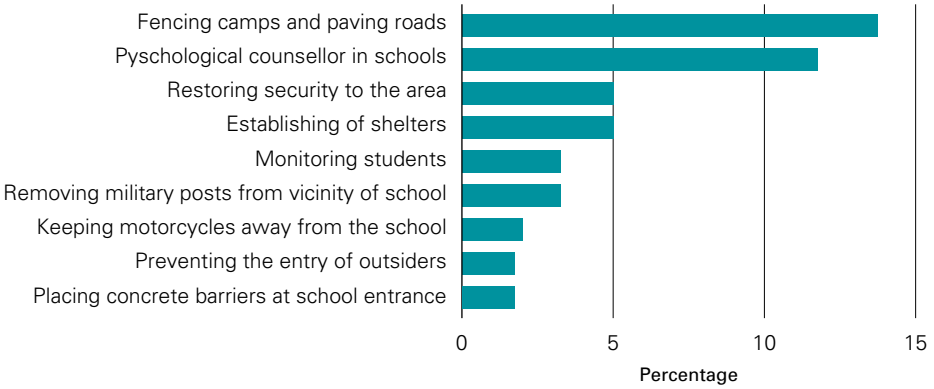
Principals reported that 56 (out of 59) schools had a gate that could be locked. However, since only 48 schools had a secure perimeter wall or fence, the lockable gate offers no protection at eight schools.[322] Only 30 schools could be described as "fully" weather-protected and a further 24 schools as partly so. Five principals said their schools were not weather-protected. The surveyed schools in Idleb, Deir-ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa failed all of these protection checks.

Parents' groups believed parents could minimize risks by: Accompanying children to school or ensuring a secure transport arrangement (54 per cent), providing psychosocial counselling and support (34 per cent) or providing "guidance and counselling" (27 per cent), which might be the same as psychosocial counselling.[323] Five groups (8 per cent) suggested regular communication with school administration, and two groups advised enrolling children in schools near their homes. Since the question asked what parents themselves could do, suggestions of psychosocial support and counselling seem unrealistic. Certainly, parents can (and should) provide guidance to their children on such matters as the route to and from school, the dangers of loitering along the way, how to avoid or resist bad influences, and so on, but psychosocial support should lie with the school itself. Moreover, ensuring children get psychosocial support may not happen unless parents regularly contacted school administrators. Unfortunately, only eight per cent of groups saw this parent-school communication necessary. The groups from 86 per cent of schools did not seem to recognize a need for regular liaising between home and school to improve children's safety.

[319] Annex B.7.
[320] Annex C.53, 55-56.
[321] Annex B.18B.
[322] Annex D.13-14, 16.
[323] Annex F.15. This was an open-ended question; groups were not expected to select answers from a pre-determined list.

Few key informants offered suggestions on how the school environment could be made safe.[324] Fencing camps and paving roads, which ranked first, were mentioned by only 14 per cent of the respondents (*see Figure 2.40*). Twelve per cent of respondents suggested having a psychosocial counsellor on staff.

Figure 2.40 How to make the School Environment Safe: Perspective of Key Informants



Bullying of younger students by older boys may also be a direct consequence of trauma, which tends to drive some boys towards aggressive behaviour, whereas traumatized girls are more likely to withdraw from social contact and feel driven to hurt themselves.[325]

The literature reports school harassment and violence between students of differing political views.[326] It also reports political interrogations, with corporal punishment for giving the "wrong" answer.[327] Some parents kept children out of school, for they feared children would be detained.[328] A safe learning environment cannot be achieved without a "zero tolerance" approach to violence in the schools.[329] One report stated:

> "Female children and young girls are perceived as most vulnerable to violence and insecurity and their attendance rates are greatly influenced by the level of human security. This may threaten women's future opportunities for political, social, and economic participation and result in regional and gender inequality which will distort future economic growth, while inhibiting the allocation of opportunities and resources."[330]

Regarding enrolment disparities between boy and girl students, the national GPI does not reflect this; data would have to be analysed at local level.

Eighty-five per cent of principals said students were not at risk of gender-based violence. Nine principals reported their school had students at risk (*see Table 2.17*).[331] Regarding other risks, four principals reported "kidnapping and threat" (perhaps threat of kidnapping), three reported women subjected to violence by men (it is unclear if this is from students or staff) and one reported domestic violence.[332]

[324] Annex C.54. An open-ended question.
[325] CP Assessment, p.8.
[326] Safe No More, p.14.
[327] Safe No More, p.14.
[328] Safe No More, p.20.
[329] Regional Plan, p.26.
[330] Squandering Humanity, p.38.
[331] Annex D.60.
[332] Annex D.61. Two principals described the "nature of violence" as "ignorance of children's parents".

Table 2.17 Risk of gender-based violence, as reported by principals

GOVERNORATE	SCHOOLS SURVEYED	STUDENTS AT RISK OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE	
		YES	NO
Aleppo	9	2	7
Al-Hasakeh	7	–	7
As-Sweida	5	1	4
Damascus	5	1	4
Dara	3	–	3
Hama	6	–	6
Homs	4	1	3
Lattakia	6	1	5
Quneitra	4	1	3
Rural Damascus	4	–	4
Tartous	6	2	4

There does not appear to be any record in the literature of married girls returning to school. However, it has been pointed out that girls who wed young may be unable to return to school because some school administrations and some parents are unwilling to mix married girls with those who are unmarried.[333] This implies that returning to school for married girls may be made more difficult by community attitudes and practices.

The conflict exposed many children to violence and fear to the extent that their ability to concentrate on their school work was severely impaired.[334] One report states that up to half the children surveyed were unable to concentrate in class.[335] Additionally, the school itself might be a place in which children experience the sound of air raids and other dangers.[336] Emotional stress was highlighted as one of the top three safety concerns in a survey conducted in 24 sub-districts. A 13-year-old girl reported that she was safe in a shelter, but because she witnessed violence done to her brother, she had a fit: "My sister told me it was a nervous breakdown. …I don't know how long it will take us to recover – perhaps a lifetime."[337] Parents testified to the signs of emotional stress, such as nightmares, bed-wetting and uncharacteristic aggression and withdrawal shown by their children.[338] Children who had been internally displaced, in itself a traumatic experience, are likely to have been subjected to, or a witness of, violence. Consequently, they might be unable to return to school, and if so, their school performance might be affected.[339]

While some children display remarkable resilience,[340] psychosocial problems have affected children's ability not only to participate in education, but also in recreational activities, which are essential for mental health.[341] "Psychosocial support" should not be interpreted narrowly; rather it should be understood to include a variety of "processes and activities that promote the holistic well-being of people in their social world. It includes support provided by family, friends and the wider community."[342]

[333] Too Young to Wed, p.7. Although this statement comes from Syrian refugees in Jordan, it is likely to apply also to child brides inside Syria.
[334] UNICEF Syria, p.17; SINA, pp.35-36.
[335] Futures under Threat, p.11.
[336] SINA, p.36.
[337] Untold Atrocities, p.15.
[338] CP Issues, pp.16-17.
[339] UNICEF Syria, p.17.
[340] "Children show tremendous courage, resilience and compassion. The words of individual children that punctuate this report are testament to that. … Older children have taken the place of teachers, caregivers and counsellors for friends and younger siblings. Children in host communities have taken on the task of walking refugees to school and shielding them from bullies." Under Siege, p.3.
[341] SINA, pp.35-36.
[342] CP Assessment, p.51.

A 2013 report states, "the number of Syrian children who have received [psychosocial] support within the country is unknown. However, considering humanitarian organizations' lack of access to the population inside Syria, the number is most likely very low."[343]

Teachers, themselves subjected to psychosocial strain,[344] had not been equipped in their pre-service training to deal with this sort of situation, nor, apparently, was there a referral system for children in need of professional counselling.[345]

Prior to the conflict an interagency working group on psychosocial support and mental health was established to build capacity and strengthen services in Syria. It planned to set up a national Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Council, but this did not happen due to the conflict. In 2010, a comprehensive professional handbook for those providing specialized care was planned, but it is not known what progress has been made on this project.[346]

It is expected that in emergencies, on average, the percentages of people with severe mental disorders and with mild-to-moderate mental disorders will increase, and that most, but not all, of those in the latter group will recover over time without outside intervention.[347] Since many children have been subjected to prolonged or repeated traumatic experiences, it is expected that the need for counselling will be great, and that the longer this is delayed, the more severe the need will become. It is clear that teachers should be trained to provide a basic level of psychosocial support and for a system of referral to mental health specialists made available.[348] It is recommended that psychosocial support "be mainstreamed across all efforts that focus on formal and non-formal education delivery".[349]

While trauma contributes to increasingly aggressive behaviour, the erosion of public order and the lack of "constructive, age-appropriate activities and services" also contribute to violent behaviour in children,[350] which further underscores the importance of counselling and recreational activities for students.

Fifty-five (out of 59) principals noticed behavioural changes in students.[351] Parents, children and teachers all mentioned children's behaviour when asked about the state of education generally, with a few mentioning "negative" behaviour.[352]

Three-fifths of enumerators saw clear evidence of psychosocial support provided to children at school (*see Table 2.18*).[353] However, only nine principals (15 per cent) reported counsellors served students in all grades during school hours.[354] Three principals said that no psychosocial services were provided because the school had no on-staff counsellor; two reported having "games that develop the intellect, mind and body"; and two reported having "wall magazines". For 27 schools (46 per cent), no details were given of relevant measures. Six principals said that guidance was given to all students "outside the curriculum" (which might still mean within school hours).[355] Three said their schools offered counselling sessions in collaboration with UNICEF, and one referred to recreational activities outside the curriculum. Nine principals said that psychosocial support was given outside the curriculum but provided no details. Forty-two per cent of schools claimed to have a system to identify and refer students to services the school was unable to provide.[356]

[343] PSS, p.3.
[344] SINA, pp.32, 36; HNO, pp.30, 88.
[345] UNICEF Syria, p.15.
[346] CP Issues, p.16.
[347] CP Issues, p.16, drawing on WHO and IASC sources.
[348] Recommended in UNICEF Syria, pp.16, 18.
[349] SHARP, December 2013, p.77.
[350] CP Assessment, p.11.
[351] Annex D.51. The four schools at which no behavioural changes had been noticed were in urban areas of Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh, Hama and Lattakia.
[352] From Annex F.8-9, 31 per cent of teachers mentioned negative behaviour. Forty percent of all other respondents, according to Annex F.10, G.11A and E.8A, mentioned negative behaviour.
[353] Annex B.16.
[354] Annex D.50A.
[355] Annex D.50B.
[356] Annex D.53. It is not possible from the available data to determine whether or not these schools also provide psychosocial support within the school.

Table 2.18 Evidence of students receiving psychosocial support in school, as observed by enumerators

	URBAN		RURAL		CAMP	
GOVERNORATE	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Aleppo	6	2	–	1	–	–
Al-Hasakeh	–	6	1	–	–	–
As-Sweida	3	1	–	–	1	–
Damascus	5	–	–	–	–	–
Dara	3	–	–	–	–	–
Hama	–	6	–	–	–	–
Homs	3	1	–	–	–	–
Lattakia	4	2	–	–	–	–
Quneitra	2	–	1	1	–	–
Rural Damascus	2	1	1	–	–	–
Tartous	3	–	1	1	–	1
Total	**31**	**19**	**4**	**3**	**1**	**1**

The variety and intensity of traumatic experiences are many, even within a single class of students. There were children who had been displaced from their home, those who had to adapt to the loss of family income, those who had been forced into unhygienic and unsafe living conditions, those who had witnessed extreme violence, and those who had lost family members or friends during attacks. These require some form of psychosocial support to help students work through trauma. Other issues requiring these services include stress about school work missed, national examinations and the recognition of certificates, and opportunities for employment or further study after completing school.

The literature reports that life skills education is credited with "contribut[ing] to increased self-esteem and peer support," and "strengthen[ing] positive coping strategies."[357] For adolescents, it was suggested their life skills education cover "civic engagement, reconciliation and tolerance initiatives and training on livelihoods and employment."[358] From the documents reviewed, it is not clear what should be covered in a life skills programme for younger children, nor whether there is already a syllabus which needs only to be modified to give better coverage of safety issues. Given that "displaced persons are particularly exposed to explosive remnants of war (ERW) while moving through contaminated areas" and that this would be a risk to children long beyond the end of the conflict,[359] it is a topic which should be covered during life skills education classes.

Extracurricular activities might be a way of promoting well-being and of relieving trauma. Catch-up classes would provide encouragement to students who had fallen behind in their school work.

The literature draws attention to the importance of recreation to children's mental health: "The lack of spaces and means for play causes children to become more isolated and tense, and is associated with an increase in the level of violence among children affected by the conflict. ...Play offers a means for distraction, to let out energy and express and share feelings."[360] In some areas, "children said that they were not able to play because the camps and host communities lacked safe places, because adults wouldn't allow them to play out of fear, and because they need to work."[361] These Syrian children interviewed were in refugee camps, but within Syria, children in many areas were likely to be denied opportunities to play for the same reasons.

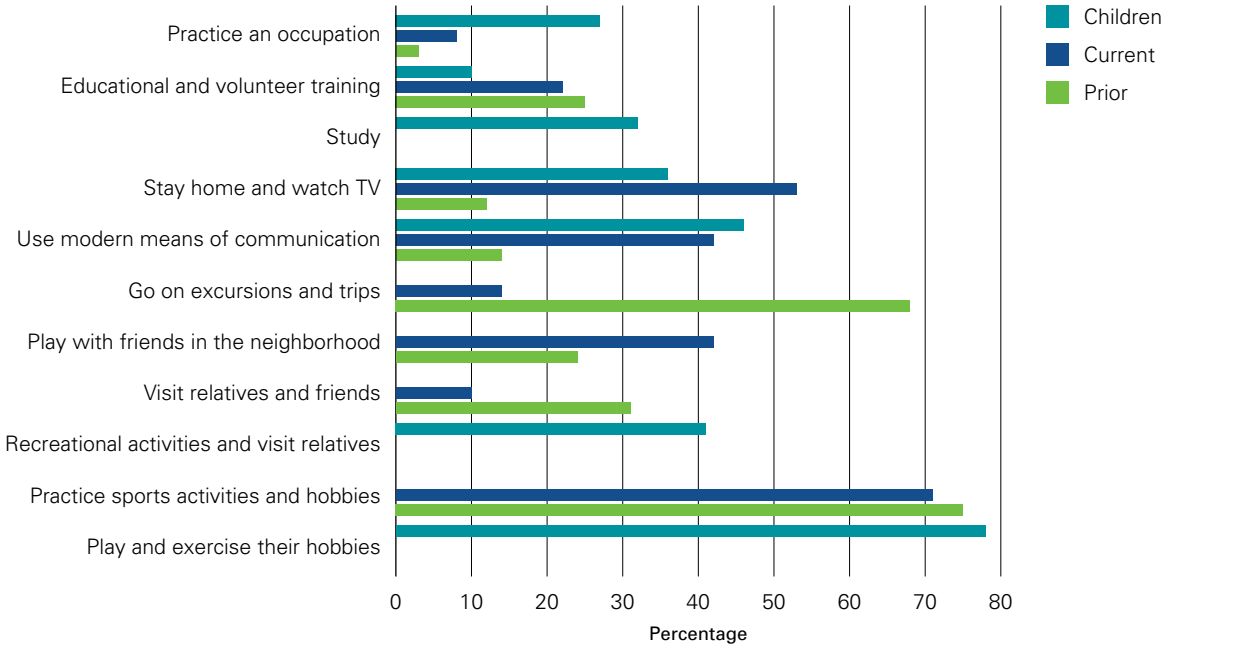
[357] SHARP, December 2013, p.77.
[358] SHARP, July 2014, p.41.
[359] CP Issues, p.7.
[360] PSS, p.6.
[361] PSS, p.6.

The extent to which the school provides a protective environment must be viewed within a broader context of the community. The activities in which children engage when they are not in school function as indicators of safety. Children's and parents' groups listed children's activities outside of school hours. Parents also listed their activities in which children were engaged prior to the crisis (*see Figure 2.41*).[362, 363] Trips and excursion experienced the greatest change since the crisis began, dropping significantly. Children have spent more time watching television at home compared to pre-crisis rates. The increased use of "modern means of communication" need not be linked to the crisis, as cellular phones have become much more widely available since 2011. Playing with friends in the neighbourhood had increased, while visits to relatives and friends had decreased, possibly because of the difficulty and danger of travel.

There were few mentions of schools' responsibility for student help in the open-ended section of the survey. Whether respondents think of it or not, schools should inform students and parents on how to keep healthy, what to do when ill, immunization information and the like. The school environment itself should be clean and conducive to healthy activity.

Table 2.19 indicates the nature of health and hygiene activities conducted within and outside the curriculum at surveyed schools.[364] The numbers are low, with a maximum of 15 per cent of schools reporting any one activity. However, a third of the students' groups identified maintaining hygiene as something that needed to change at their schools.[365] It is not known whether this perhaps refers to wash and sanitation facilities that are in need of rehabilitation, or whether it refers to the general cleanliness of the classrooms and outdoor areas of the school.

Figure 2.41 Children's activities outside school hours (as indicated by children, and by parents for the time of the survey and prior to the crisis)



[362] Annex F.16-17, G.19.

[363] Two categories were differently worded in the children's and parents' questionnaires. Recreational activities was linked with visiting relatives. Hobbies was associated with play rather than sports.

[364] Annex D.49.

[365] Annex G.15-16.

Table 2.19 Health and hygiene activities available at surveyed schools

NATURE OF ACTIVITIES WITHIN NORMAL CLASSES	PERCENTAGE
Information provided by teachers during the classes	5
Teaching health curriculum (health guidance)	15
Handwashing and hygiene	15
Health vaccines	2
Psychological support	3
Details not provided	44
NATURE OF ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE CURRICULUM	**PERCENTAGE**
Visit the school health doctor regularly	7
Hygiene campaign in the school	3
Visits to school clinics	5
Health vaccines	3
WASH workshop	2
Health guidance seminars	3
Details not provided	19

Snacks or food were provided to students at only five surveyed schools (four in Aleppo and one in Rural Damascus). The World Food Programme provided the food.[366] Reporting on the nearest school, six key informants said snacks were provided.[367] Impoverished children might be kept in school by regularly providing snacks. Conversely, they might drop out of school for want thereof.

Overall, the low level of safety training and other safety considerations reported here agrees with earlier references to few schools having well-rehearsed emergency plans. It is possible that traumatic experiences have dulled the ability to plan and a fatalistic sense have made planning for emergencies appear futile. In either case, school management should accept that it has a positive role to play in protecting its students, and various practical steps can be taken in this regard, possibly with the assistance of the wider community. A students' group asked for lessons in public health and first aid to be included in the curriculum.[368]

Facilities and Services

Half of key informants named infrastructure deterioration as a major, noticeable change since the crisis began.[369] They named school rehabilitation as a key intervention to alleviate overcrowded classrooms.[370] Over one third of principals called for additional classrooms, with just under a third noting that maintenance work was required.[371] The appeal for rehabilitated facilities was echoed by nearly half the children's groups.[372] Enumerators themselves (35 per cent) observed that many school buildings were in need of repair.[373]

As shown in Table 2.20, the majority of schools had more than 10 usable classrooms each.[374] Only 11 of the 59 schools had fewer than 10 classrooms. The "more than 10" category should have been broken down further, as enrolment figures suggest that many schools would have had more than 10 classrooms. Wheelchair access was available at only four of the schools.

[366] Annex D.62-63.
[367] Annex C.67.
[368] Annex I.8. Girls and boys participated in this discussion group at a secondary school.
[369] Annex C.85.
[370] Annex C.90; 25 per cent commented on overcrowding and 22 per cent on the need for rehabilitation.
[371] Annex D.96.
[372] Annex G.15-16.
[373] Annex B.25.
[374] Annex D.7.

Table 2.20 Usable classrooms at surveyed schools

GOVERNORATE	NUMBER OF USABLE CLASSROOMS			WHEEL-CHAIR ACCESS	
	FEWER THAN 6	6 TO 10	MORE THAN 10	YES	NO
Aleppo	–	1	8	–	9
Al-Hasakeh	–	1	6	1	6
As-Sweida	–	4	1	–	5
Damascus	–	–	5	1	4
Dara	1	–	2	–	3
Hama	–	1	5	–	6
Homs	–	–	4	–	4
Lattakia	–	–	6	1	5
Quneitra	–	1	3	–	4
Rural Damascus	–	–	4	–	4
Tartous	1	1	4	1	5
Total	**2**	**9**	**48**	**4**	**55**

Principals were asked to report on the availability of water and sanitation facilities (*see Table 2.21*).[375] While all schools had water and sanitation facilities, 19 did not have separate facilities for girls and boys. If the single-sex schools are excluded, facilities would be shared by girls and boys at eight schools.

Table 2.21 Latrines and handwashing facilities at surveyed schools

GOVERNORATE	LATRINES AVAILABLE		SEPARATE FOR GIRLS AND BOYS		WITH WHEELCHAIR ACCESS		HAND-WASHING FACILITIES	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Aleppo	9	–	2	7	–	9	9	–
Al-Hasakeh	7	–	4	3	2	5	6	1
As-Sweida	5	–	4	1	–	5	4	1
Damascus	5	–	5	–	1	4	4	1
Dara	3	–	2	1	–	3	2	1
Hama	6	–	3	3	–	6	5	1
Homs	4	–	2	2	–	4	4	–
Lattakia	6	–	5	1	1	5	5	1
Quneitra	4	–	4	–	1	3	4	–
Rural Damascus	4	–	4	–	1	3	4	–
Tartous	6	–	5	1	1	5	4	2
Total	**59**	**0**	**40**	**19**	**7**	**52**	**51**	**8**

Eight schools had no handwashing facilities. Only seven had water and sanitation facilities with wheelchair access. Almost one third of principals called for rehabilitating these facilities, suggesting that what is available may be far from adequate.[376] Enumerators observed the need for water and sanitation facilities in 22 per cent of the neighbourhoods.[377]

From enumerators' observations, it appears that in 27 neighbourhoods (46 per cent), fewer than 90 per cent of the schools had functioning toilets. The proportion drops to less than a quarter in five neighbourhoods (*see Table 2.22*).[378]

[375] Annex D.8-12.
[376] Annex D.96.
[377] Annex B.25.
[378] Annex B.5.

Table 2.22 Proportion of schools with functioning latrines in neighbourhoods visited

GOVERNORATE	0 TO 21%	26 TO 50%	51 TO 75%	76 TO 90%	91 TO 100%
Aleppo	–	1	–	4	4
Al-Hasakeh	1	1	–	2	3
As-Sweida	1	–	–	–	4
Damascus	–	–	–	2	3
Dara	–	–	1	1	1
Hama	–	–	–	1	5
Homs	–	–	1	1	2
Lattakia	–	3	1	1	1
Quneitra	1	1	–	–	2
Rural Damascus	–	–	–	–	4
Tartous	2	1	–	–	3
Total	**5**	**7**	**3**	**12**	**32**

Enumerators also reported that 25 neighbourhoods (42 per cent) would fall in the category of "fewer than 90 per cent" having safe water points (*see Table 2.23*).[379]

Table 2.23 Proportion of schools with safe water points in neighbourhoods visited

GOVERNORATE	0 TO 21%	26 TO 50%	51 TO 75%	76 TO 90%	91 TO 100%
Aleppo	1	2	1	1	4
Al-Hasakeh	4	1	1	–	1
As-Sweida	1	–	–	2	2
Damascus	–	–	–	1	4
Dara	–	–	–	2	1
Hama	–	–	–	–	6
Homs	–	–	–	–	4
Lattakia	–	–	–	1	5
Quneitra	–	1	–	2	1
Rural Damascus	–	1	–	1	2
Tartous	2	–	–	–	4
Total	**8**	**5**	**2**	**10**	**34**

Only three schools did not have electricity (one in Aleppo, one in Al-Hasakeh and one in Tartous).[380]

Thirty per cent of principals mentioned furniture shortages.[381] Although a few students' groups complained of overcrowded classrooms, they did not specifically mention furniture.[382]

Reporting on the nearest functioning school, 30 per cent of key informants believed teaching and learning materials were adequate, while 46 per cent believed supplies were inadequate.[383] However, 66 per cent of enumerators placed textbooks and teaching aids at the top of their list of needs for schools observed,[384] as did almost half of principals.[385] At 35 schools (59 per cent), parents were expected to purchase learning materials for their children, and at 22 schools (37 per cent) this

[379] Annex B.6.
[380] Annex D.15.
[381] Annex D.96.
[382] Annex G.15-16.
[383] Annex C.60-65. Two respondents did not know.
[384] Annex B.25.
[385] Annex D.96.

expectation was not set. Only at 14 schools (24 per cent) did respondents believe parents were in a position to purchase materials; at 18 schools (31 per cent) respondents believed parents could not do this. Of the 25 who responded to another question, 24 attributed poverty and finances to parents' inability to purchase required materials for schools.[386] One mentioned a lack of supplies in the shops, and another a lack of interest on the part of parents.

A slightly different picture was given by principals: 27 (46 per cent) said parents were not expected to provide any school supplies, while 28 (47 per cent) expected parents to provide stationery and learning aids. At 20 schools (34 per cent) parents were to provide uniforms and school bags and at three schools, furniture.[387] When asked what families did when unable to provide materials, only 24 principals answered.[388] Eleven reported parents resorted to charity, appealing to relatives, teachers, or international organizations. One said students shared learning materials; one reported students stole from their classmates, and two said students worked after school to pay for their requirements. Three reported that their students attended school without learning materials. Students "dress[ed] differently" if they did not have uniforms.

Half the schools complained of looting.[389] All governorates, except Damascus, experienced looting (*see Table 2.24*). It is not known if school buildings housing displaced persons were more seriously affected than other schools.

Table 2.24 Number of school buildings looted during the crisis

GOVERNORATE	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS SURVEYED	NUMBER OF LOOTED SCHOOLS
Aleppo	9	5
Al-Hasakeh	7	5
As-Sweida	5	2
Damascus	5	–
Dara	3	2
Hama	6	5
Homs	4	3
Lattakia	6	1
Quneitra	4	4
Rural Damascus	4	1
Tartous	6	2
Total responses	**59**	**30**

Table 2.25 Nature of equipment looted[390]

NATURE OF EQUIPMENT LOOTED	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS AFFECTED
Classroom furniture	18
Educational, sport, or computer equipment	16
School equipment, pumps, electrical extensions	11
Fuel	4
Burning and cracking of some classes	3
Total responses	**52**

[386] Annex C.66.
[387] Annex D.38-39.
[388] Annex D.41. Three principals responded "procure stationery" without stating how.
[389] Annex D.92.
[390] Annex D.93.

The learning environment is made up of facilities, equipment and a range of services, all of which provide the setting for learning to take place. Deficits in the environment have a negative effect on classroom experiences. The schools in the survey appeared to see themselves as unable to do much to improve their environment, which again underlines the importance of the foundational standards of community empowerment and coordination.

5 Teaching and learning

"Access to education is only meaningful if the education programmes offer quality teaching and learning."[391]

Curricula

It has been suggested that "emergencies may offer opportunities for improving curricula …so that education is relevant, supportive and protective for learners. …Education about human rights and education for peace and democratic citizenship should be emphasised,"[392] and that "special curricula may be needed for certain groups, such as: Children and youth earning a livelihood …[and] learners older than their grade level or returning from long periods out of school …".[393]

"Curriculum" is used in different senses, and it is not always possible to be sure which meaning is intended. There is the curriculum provided by the education authority, which schools are required to follow. Secondly, there is the curriculum implemented by the school, which may be almost exactly what the education authority has prescribed, but it may also include small or significant variations, either in the form of additions or deliberate omissions of subjects or subject content. Thirdly, there is the curriculum as taught by the teacher, who may further modify the curriculum accepted by the school by emphasizing or omitting certain elements of the curriculum. Teachers may also be unable to complete the curriculum. Apart from specifying content to be covered, or competencies to be achieved, there may also be expectations about the way in which topics are to be taught. To teach an active learning curriculum by encouraging rote learning is to depart completely from the spirit of the curriculum.

A new curriculum for Syrian schools was phased in from 2008 to 2012.[394] Official adjustments were subsequently made to the Grade 8 curriculum.[395] Evidence shows some teachers being unmotivated to teach the curriculum[396] and many opinions that the curriculum is too difficult, especially after the basic level, and "'not fully reflecting' the richness and diversity of Syrian society".[397] Since these comments in the literature were made by respondents at the end of 2012, before the curriculum had a chance to take root, they might have been based on an incomplete understanding of the new curriculum.

Alongside the official curriculum, some groups introduced slight or extensive modifications to the curriculum in schools partly or fully under their control.[398] These groups have been criticized for "increas[ing] the prospect of fragmentation …through reinforcing ideas of difference in values, principles, belonging and identity" and for "directly and indirectly exploiting the educational learning process to increase their influence". It was commented that "The mobilisation of the educational system to create a culture of fear, polarization, fanaticism and disrespect for other people is insidious and only serves to undermine the concept of Syria as a national and geographic entity."[399] In some areas controlled by ISIL, more drastic changes to the curriculum were implemented during the 2014/15

[391] INEE, p.76.
[392] INEE, p.76.
[393] INEE, p.79.
[394] UNICEF Syria, p.10; UNICEF Curriculum, pp.28-29.
[394] UNICEF Curriculum, p.31.
[396] UNICEF Syria, p.15.
[397] UNICEF Syria, pp.12, 16.
[398] HNO, p.85; UNICEF Curriculum, p.31.

school year.[400] These might include the removal of artistic composition, Islamic Studies, music, sport, and philosophy:[401] "According to the Institute for the Study of War, the [ISIL] educational programme is devoted to training the next generation of [ISIL] members."[402]

In other areas of Syria, changes in the education system were initiated in 2013, when Kurdish was introduced as language of instruction. A Kurdish version of an adapted official Syrian curriculum was introduced in some schools, while in other schools the official Syrian curriculum was in use with the additional subject of Kurdish language. At the beginning of the academic year 2015/16, a Kurdish curriculum was rolled out for Grades 1 to 6, with Grades 1 to 3 using Kurdish as language of instruction and Grades 4 to 6 teaching Kurdish as a subject matter. The use of Kurdish language as medium of instruction has reportedly created difficulties for displaced children from other parts of Syria, who may not be fluent in the language[403] or for whom the language may not be relevant.

For Syrian refugee children in neighbouring countries, the curriculum provides particular challenges. Lebanon has a bilingual curriculum, with some of the subjects taught either in English or French. Not only did the Syrian children have difficulty in engaging in the classroom linguistically, but there have been reports of stigmatization because students lack the language competence to participate fully. The alternative arrangement, teaching a Syrian curriculum in separate schools, was, at least early on, rejected: Refugees living in host communities did not wish their children to be segregated into separate schools.[404] The overriding concerns of parents were that, when families were able to return to Syria, the children should easily reintegrate into the Syrian school system, and if, in the meantime, they undertook school certificate examinations, the qualifications should be recognized in Syria.

All schools surveyed taught the Government of Syria's curriculum.[405] Key informants confirmed this, reporting the "nearest functioning school" used the official curriculum.[406]

Of the key informants, 32 per cent felt the curriculum and materials had been better before the crisis, (presumably a reference to the old curriculum, since the new curriculum had begun phasing in when the crisis erupted).[407] Thirty per cent felt the new curriculum was too difficult.[408] When parents reported changes needed at school, 14 per cent asked that the curriculum be "reconsidered".[409] Twenty-two per cent of parents named the "difficult" curriculum among their concerns for their children's education.[410] The children's groups also expressed dissatisfaction about the curriculum. However, they linked it to teaching style.[411]

Initiatives that attempt to introduce new content, such as life skills and emergency procedures, should consider how well they will be received. Across the board, key informants, teachers, parents and children feel the curriculum is difficult or unsatisfactory, and one should be cautious about introducing new content. Teachers may not be motivated to introduce new topics, especially if they currently experience difficulties without them. However, introducing these topics into language curricula as prompts for class discussion, writing assignments or reading assignments could be an efficient solution.

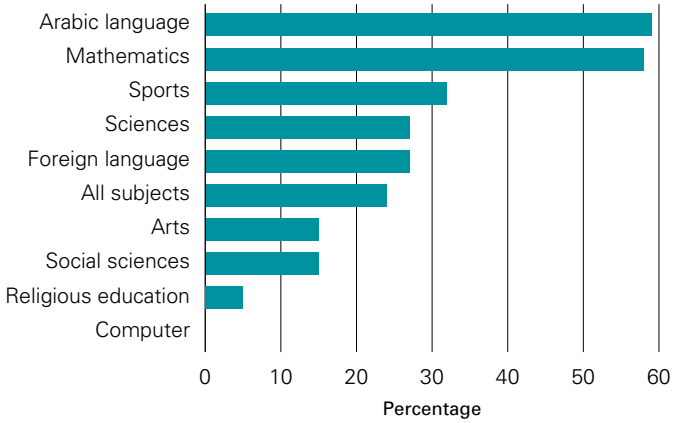
Fifty-three principals reported that teachers working in their school received guidelines on how to teach the curriculum and/or on how to use teaching and learning materials.[412] The six principals whose schools had not received such guidelines spanned five governorates.

[400] HNO, pp.30, 86.
[401] UNICEF Curriculum, pp.31-32.
[402] HNO, p.84.
[403] UNICEF Curriculum.
[404] UNICEF Lebanon, pp.5, 12-13.
[405] Annex D.42.
[406] Annex C.62.
[407] Annex C.85.
[408] Annex C.90.
[409] Annex F.18.
[410] Annex F.8-9.
[411] Annex G.15-16.
[412] Annex G.15-16.

According to the MoE, the new curriculum was piloted during the 2009/10 academic year. At this time, the MoE also trained primary and secondary teachers on interactive teaching strategies. These trainings covered child-centred learning, lesson preparation, evaluation methods and using textbook-based practices to make learning more practical. From 2009/10 to 2013/14, each teacher should have received 180 hours of training.[413]

Children's groups were asked which school subject they liked best within a list.[414, 415] The Arabic language and mathematics clearly stood as the most popular subjects.[416] No student listed "computer", although a lack of equipment could explain this. When asked why students enjoyed their selected subjects, the reasons offered were marginally related to the subject's content: Six respondents chose "easy" subjects; 12 enjoyed mathematics because it is "a sport for the mind". Overall, however, teaching style and a subject's "importance", played major roles in children's enjoyment of them (51 responses and 42 responses, respectively). For example, Arabic, foreign language and mathematics were popular largely because of the teaching style deployed. Arabic, sciences and "all subjects" were enjoyed because of their importance.

Figure 2.42 School subjects children like best



Regarding vocational curricula and education, refugees in the Za'atari camp in Jordan discussed it approvingly. However, the Syrian refugee community in Lebanon was less enthusiastic. In Lebanon, children aged 15 to 18 indicated they were willing to attend vocational training, but expressed a preference for academic education at the tertiary level. Their response might be influenced by the scarcity of jobs in their community.[417] For children in the Za'atari refugee camp, "Vocational training like construction, metal work and mobile phone repair are popular among boys, while girls are interested in tailoring/sewing and cooking."[418] Boys of secondary school age within Syria also expressed interest in vocational training activities as a form of recreation.[419]

When the topic of orienting failing students to vocational education came up, some respondents criticized this practice as neither appropriate nor equitable.[420]

Table 2.26 describes the vocational activities available in neighbourhoods in Syria, according to key informants.[421] Lattakia's surveyed areas had the greatest variety of vocational activities, followed by Aleppo. Quneitra, Damascus and Dara had little to offer, and no activities were recorded for Hama.

[413] Annex I. Written responses from the MoE to questions submitted by the author. It is not known to what extent pre-service training has been adapted to the needs of the new curriculum. No response was received to written questions submitted to the Ministry of Higher Education in this regard.
[414] Gender disaggregation of the responses would be interesting, but is not possible from the available data.
[415] Annex G.12.
[416] If those who selected "all subjects" are added to those who selected Arabic or mathematics, the popularity of these two subjects is even higher.
[417] UNICEF Lebanon, p.30.
[418] UNICEF Za'atari, p.3.
[419] UNICEF Za'atari, p.34.
[420] UNICEF Syria, p.16.
[421] Annex C3, 89. It is unfortunate that the "various" activities were not specified.

If one relates the availability of training opportunities to a demand for skilled workers, there appears to be little call for vocational training. This is, however, unlikely to be a true picture and should be investigated further. When asked whether any of their own children had undergone vocational training, the survey received three positive responses out of the 59 key informants: One from Aleppo and one from Lattakia had completed training (the latter in plumbing); one from Quneitra was still enrolled in a computer technology training course.[422]

Table 2.26 Vocational activities available in the neighbourhood

VOCATIONAL ACTIVITIES	FREQUENCY	ALEPPO	AL-HASAKEH	AS-SWEIDA	DAMASCUS	DARA	HAMA	HOMS	LATTAKIA	QUNEITRA	RURAL DAMASCUS	TARTOUS
Sewing	10	1	1	1	1	–	–	1	1	2	1	1
Carpentry	9	3	1	–	–	–	–	–	4	–	–	1
Smithy	6	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	3	–	–	1
Electronics maintenance	5	1	–	1	1	–	–	1	–	1	–	–
Canning and packaging	4	2	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Bakery	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	–	1	–
Dairy products	3	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	–	–	–
Plumbing	3	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–
Construction	2	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Hairdressing	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
Motor vehicle maintenance	2	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1
Pastry	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	–
Agriculture	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Aluminium carpentry	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–
Manufacturing fragrances	1	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Various activities	7	1	–	–	–	1	–	2	1	–	1	1
Total	**62**	**12**	**7**	**5**	**2**	**1**	**–**	**4**	**19**	**3**	**4**	**5**

To assist children who have been out of school, remedial courses and self-learning materials have been designed to help them catch up. UNICEF cooperated with the MoE to adapt the UNRWA teaching materials for self-learning.[423] Remedial courses were offered for those living in shelters, and "school clubs", which provide a combination of remedial and recreational activities as a form of psychosocial support, were established at a number of schools.[424]

Even though choosing a curriculum usually lies beyond a school's control, and temporary closures are mostly caused by external factors, instructors can still strategically allocate time such that curricular components are covered fully and effectively. Moreover, school management can decide whether, and how, lost time might be made up. Overall, efforts should be extended wherever possible to assist teachers with fully teaching the curriculum.

[422] Annex C.86-88.
[423] UNICEF Curriculum, p.32.
[424] UNICEF Curriculum, p.32.

Training, professional development and support

The INEE standards envisage that "teachers and other education personnel receive periodic, relevant and structured training according to needs and circumstances".[425] And, in emergencies, "untrained and under-trained teachers and education personnel, often filling gaps left as a direct or indirect result of the disaster or crisis, need to be trained in skills to convey learning content effectively to students. Teachers and other education personnel should participate in specific trainings on how to support children who have experienced distress."[426]

In 2009/10, the MoE began implementing in-service training for the new curriculum, intending that all teachers would receive 36 hours of training annually. However, this was not carried out nationwide.[427] Thus, many teachers are experiencing difficulties in teaching the new curriculum.

The literature does not describe teacher training or how teacher competence has changed since the crisis begin; it only provides recommendations and mentions of initiatives with humanitarian and development partners. Whatever recommendations have been made, they are more likely to be based on some observation of teacher performance, although this is not explicitly mentioned. Recommendations include "training teachers",[428] training on "quality education",[429] training counsellors and teachers on psychosocial support,[430] and "[Early Childhood Development] teachers to engage in activities for children and attend to their psychosocial well-being".[431] Activities planned and implemented include a training of 50 trainers in education in emergencies by UNICEF with an international NGO,[432] also described as training to teachers on "techniques for enhancing the educational process in difficult situations";[433] and providing psychosocial support training to 60 teachers.[434]

Of the surveyed schools, 45 received training over the four-year period of 2011 to 2015.[435] Nineteen schools received training in 2015, 18 in 2014, three in 2013 and 10 in 2012. An additional 115 courses were reported, but without a clear indication of the year they were conducted. The MoE provided 77 per cent of sources. UNICEF, the Danish Refugee Council, the Boy Scout Organization and NGOs provided the others. In response to another question, 41 schools reportedly had "training" courses over the four-year period and 17 had "other" courses.[436, 437]

When asked what advantages teachers gained from trainings, 20 said they provided no benefit because the trainings did not apply "under current circumstances".[438] Eighteen felt their teaching competency improved (respondents felt they could plan lessons better), while 12 felt trainings helped them adapt to current circumstances. One spoke of creating an atmosphere of innovation for students and another of psychosocial support. Overall, it is clear that the vast majority of teachers do not perceive their trainings as relevant.

[425] INEE, p.83.
[426] INEE, p.76.
[427] Written response from the MoE, 12 January 2015, to questions submitted by the author.
[428] SINA, p.32.
[429] SHARP, December 2013, p.80.
[430] UNICEF Syria, p.18.
[431] UNICEF Syria, p.18.
[432] SHARP, December 2013, p.81.
[433] Situation Report, p.3.
[434] Situation Report, p.3. Documents such as the Syria Strategic Response Plan, because of space limitations, provide only aggregated information on plans, which does not allow for detail to be extracted.
[435] Annex E.12.
[436] Annex E.11.
[437] Only 65 teachers felt they benefited from the training and 24 from the "other" courses. Because this information came from focus group discussions, answers most likely refer only to the training to which participants were exposed. Thus, even though 45 schools out of 59 report that they received training, among participants, a maximum of 19 per cent had received training.
[438] Annex E.11. Not clear whether responses represented consensus of the group or the opinion of an individual group member. If the latter, the number of responses is small.

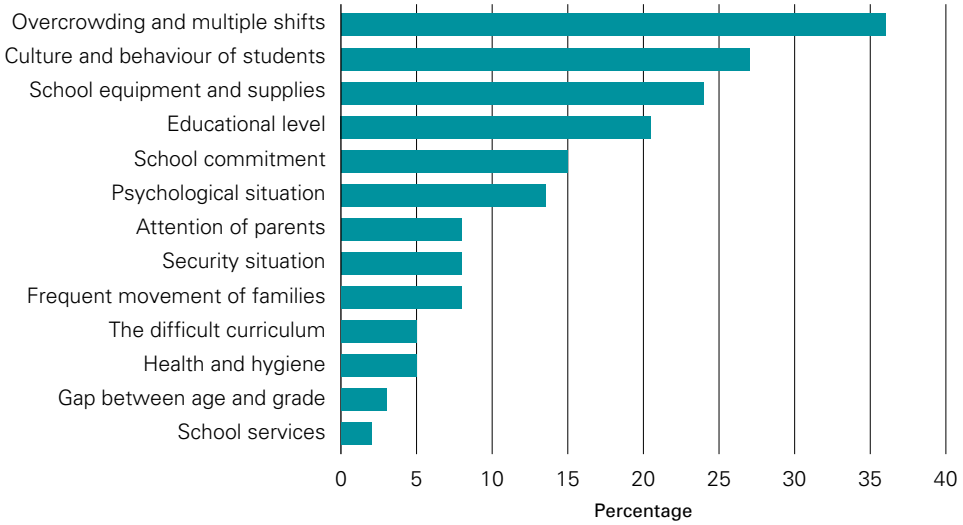
Instruction and learning processes

Instruction and learning processes are the central functions of a school. Every aspect of a school environment should facilitate these activities and ensure all students experience quality learning and instruction. To this end, appropriate methodologies should be employed: "Instruction and learning processes are learner-centred, participatory and inclusive."[439]

To fully understand what factors affect quality learning in the classroom, a more thorough investigation than those available is required. Unfortunately, direct class observation by a competent educationalist was not feasible for this study. The literature, however, does touch on two preconditions for quality learning: The availability of instructors and teaching materials. Indeed, it was reported that the "quality of education has deteriorated and is constantly compromised even in the safest areas."[440] This was likely to be true of areas where there are teacher shortages, learning materials insufficiencies and where instructional time had been reduced.

Figure 2.43 presents what teachers felt were challenges facing them. In the open-ended section of this question, they commented that teaching methods had changed since the beginning of the crisis and linked this to the "difficult" curriculum (28 per cent of teachers' groups). The groups did not note if these changes were for the better.[441]

Figure 2.43 Challenges experienced by teachers



Over one third of teachers named "overcrowding and multiple shifts" as a major challenge. This challenge was widely felt by others, as one third of children's groups[442] and one third of parents' groups also mentioned this.[443] Many teachers named "providing material and moral support" as their method to address difficulties, a somewhat unsatisfying answer. For example, it is not clear how providing moral support to students properly addresses large classrooms. Additionally, material and moral support are vague terms. Other solutions reported were external to the classroom, such as communicating with parents or "remedial courses".[444] While remedial courses might help students from overcrowded classes, when and where would they be provided to the students, and would teachers see this as their own responsibility or someone else's? Without specificities, the teacher responses indicate that they may not fully grasp, or have not fully thought about, the challenges facing them. There were some encouraging answers: 80 per cent of the groups named "activating the role of psychological and social counsellor" as their method of addressing behavioural problems and 71 per cent of groups named using "alternative methods" to address a lack of teaching equipment.

[439] INEE, p.87.
[440] Squandering Humanity, p.40.
[441] Annex E.8A.
[442] Annex G.11A.
[443] Annex F.18 (in which eight per cent of parents' groups also complained about double shifts).
[444] Annex E.10.

Teachers require sufficient time to fully cover the curriculum. However, to address overcrowding, some schools have introduced double shifts, which, while they accommodate more students, significantly reduces the time teachers have to hold class.[445] In the survey, 31 schools operated on a single shift and 28 a double shift.[446] Figure 2.44 shows that while 56 per cent of the schools surveyed had a daily five-hour shift and 15 per cent had shifts of up to seven hours, 29 per cent of the schools had a school day of four hours or less. Thirty-five key informants reported their nearest school operated on a double shift.[447] Of the enumerators, 32 reported that fewer than half the schools were running double shifts in the areas they visited, while 27 enumerators estimated that more than half the schools were running double shifts.[448]

There are a number of pertinent questions that cannot be answered from the available data: Do all schools run five days per week? Does the duration of the school day vary depending on the grade? What portion of a school day is actually used for teaching (as opposed to assemblies, breaks and other activities)?

Figure 2.44 Duration of each shift in hours

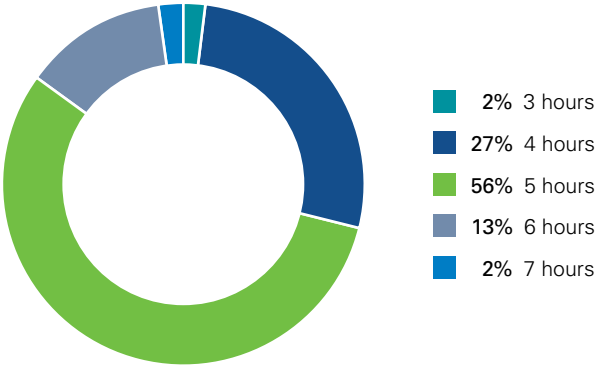
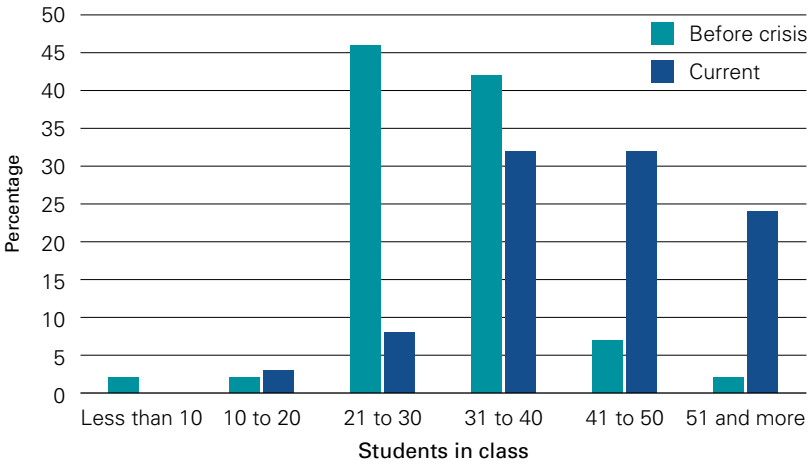


Figure 2.45 compares average class sizes pre-crisis with class sizes during the time of the survey. Key informants provided this information based on the nearest school.[449]

Figure 2.45 Average class size prior to and during the crisis, as reported by key informants



[445] Double shifts refers to schools in which two "shifts" of classes are conducted within one typical school day. While there are different models of double shifts, this report generally refers to the "end-on shifts", which means that a group of students goes for classes in the morning and another group goes for classes in the afternoon, when the first group has completed its school day. The second shift will teach the same curriculum, but to another set of students, during the afternoon. Often double shifts present shortened instruction time.

[446] Annex D.22-23.

[447] Annex C.33.

[448] Annex B.8.

[449] Annex C.39-40.

In some situations, instructors must teach multiple grades at once and hold combined classes. This is likely to present challenges to the teacher, especially if class sizes are large, if the hours of teaching are reduced and if some students require catching up. In the survey, only two schools reported having combined classes: An urban school in Aleppo held a combined Grades 11 and 12 class and an urban school in Dara grouped Grades 1 through 4 into one class.[450] However, key informants added two more schools to this list: A camp school in Tartous and a "school and shelter" in Aleppo.[451]

One factor influencing teaching effectiveness is the number of students for which a teacher is responsible. The student-to-teacher ratio (STR) is obtained by dividing the number of students enrolled by the number of teachers. Available EMIS data permitted STRs to be generated for 52 out of 59 schools. In only four instances did the STR exceed 25. In three cases, the STR was in the upper twenties, and in one, the STR was 137 (most likely an incorrect transcription).

The INEE standard places 40 students as the limit to an acceptable class size. All schools surveyed appear to meet the criterion. However, a sense of acceptability from an STR assumes all teachers are teaching for the entire time that schools are open. It does not take into account teachers' subject specialization, teacher qualifications and it assumes there are sufficient classrooms for all staff members to be teaching simultaneously during the shift. Since this is unlikely, the actual number of students a teacher would be facing in the classroom is likely to be rather higher than the STR suggests. Moreover, the EMIS counts both teachers and administration without distinguishing among them in its data, meaning the number of teachers available is inflated (student-to-staff ratio, as opposed to student-to-teacher ratio). To judge to what extent the claims of overcrowded classrooms are justified, details of enrolment per grade, allocated teaching responsibilities of teachers, number of usable classrooms and other teaching rooms (e.g., laboratories), and size and furnishing of classrooms would be needed.

Principals report that more than a quarter of schools offering basic education (Grades 1 to 9) did not have a textbook for every student in the four core subjects (*see Table 2.27*).[452] For upper secondary grades, three-quarters of schools did not have a textbook for every student in core subjects. Moreover, less than one fifth of the parents' groups said textbooks were "free of charge".[453] While textbooks can be shared during school, it is unreasonable to expect students to work at home without them. It may also be possible to teach effectively without textbooks, but this would almost certainly require smaller class groups and more lesson time than is the norm in Syrian schools. Thus, given these considerations, the shortage of textbooks may play a very significant role in making the curriculum appear "difficult".

[450] Annex D.24-25.

[451] Annex C.47-49.

[452] Annex D.37. There are some errors in the data provided. For example, whereas 43 of the surveyed schools offered Grades 1 to 4, there were apparently 53 schools that provided mathematics textbooks for these grades. Some schools might have reported different proportions for different grades within the first cycle range. For general secondary, reporting on schools from Damascus and Quneitra was excluded, since all the schools surveyed in these governorates offered only basic education.

[453] Annex F.18.

Table 2.27 Number of schools reporting availability of textbooks in key subjects

SUBJECT	PROPORTION OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE TEXTBOOKS IN THE SUBJECT				
	ALL (100%)	MOST (76-95%)	AVERAGE (26-75%)	FEW (6-25%)	NONE
Grades 1 to 4					
Arabic	39	7	4	–	1
Mathematics	38	10	4	–	1
Science	38	8	4	1	1
English	39	7	3	–	1
Grades 5 to 9					
Arabic	35	9	3	1	1
Mathematics	35	9	4	1	1
Science	35	9	4	1	1
English	37	9	3	1	1
Grades 10 to 12					
Arabic	1	1	1	1	–
Mathematics	1	2	1	–	–
Science	1	2	1	–	–
English	1	2	1	–	–

Respondents reported that teaching material shortages occurred due to damage, looting, and the burning of print shops and warehouses.[454] Internally displaced persons might have fled without taking their personal school materials with them.[455] The devaluation of the Syrian currency made it more costly for books to be produced, and transport blockades sometimes prevent books from reaching intended destinations.[456] Some schools have attempted to mitigate the shortages by collecting and re-using textbooks that students no longer required.[457]

It has been recommended that the necessary "teaching and learning materials"[458] or "resources"[459] be provided to schools and other learning spaces. International partners have already made learning kits available.[460] Another recommendation was that textbooks, activity books and teachers' guides be printed for distribution with learning kits.[461]

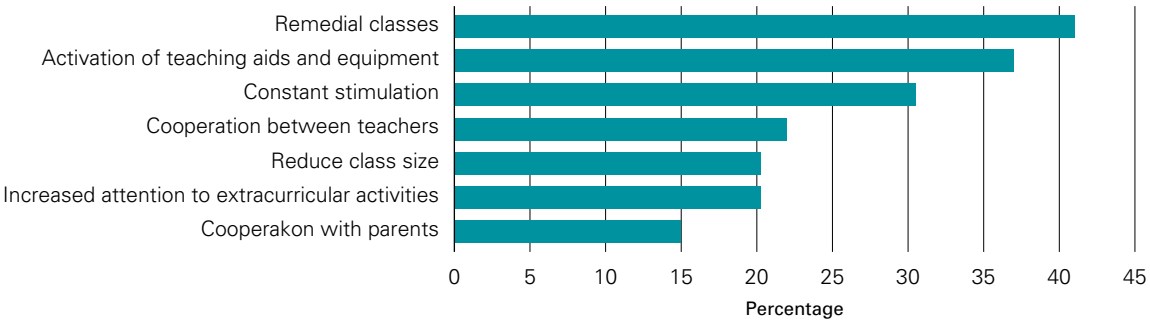
If transport difficulties prevented books from being delivered on time, the same is likely to be true of stationery. For students who are expected to demonstrate their competence in written examinations, regular written practice would be essential preparation. Simply transcribing notes from the board would not be helpful enough.

A major challenge teachers report relates to the culture and behaviour of students.[462] This could seriously challenge a teacher's ability to manage classrooms, especially if it is overcrowded and ill-equipped. Moreover, the presence of older students could further complicate classroom management attempts, especially if behaviour is an issue. It is likely, therefore, that many teachers are not facing one particular challenge in their classrooms, but a mix of them. Combined, attempts to manage class and engage students with the content meaningfully becomes severely compromised. Classroom management should be further investigated through a combination of observing classes and focus groups (one with teachers and one with students).

[454] UNICEF Syria, p.15.
[455] UNICEF Syria, p.17.
[456] UNICEF Curriculum, p.34.
[457] UNICEF Curriculum, pp.34-35.
[458] UNICEF Syria, p.18.
[459] SINA, p.32.
[460] Situation Report, p.3.
[461] UNICEF Syria, p.16.
[462] Also identified in Annex E.8A, F.8-10, G.11A.

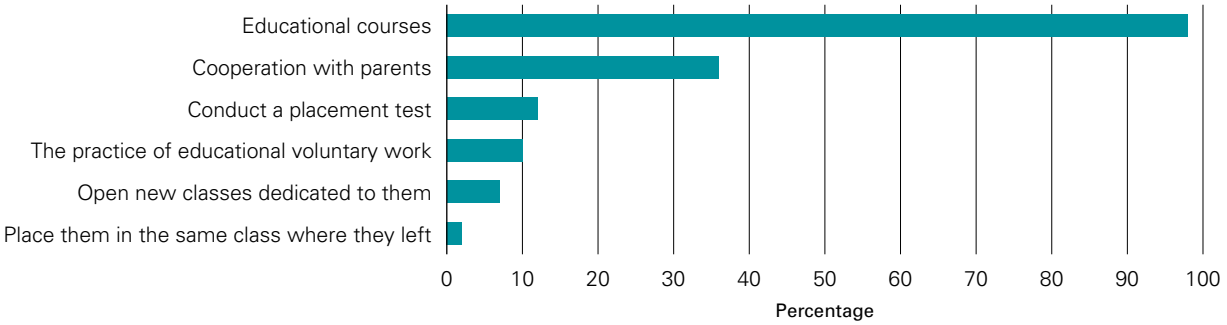
When teachers were asked to suggest ways in which students' learning might be improved *with resources currently available*, they steered away from improving things in the classroom, as seen in Figure 2.46.[463] These suggestions raise many follow-up questions. If teachers should activate teaching aids, then why are the "currently available" teaching aids and equipment not being used? What precisely is meant by "constant stimulation", and who should be doing this? What sort of cooperation among teachers would improve students' learning, and who should initiate it? With the "present resources" it appears that class sizes cannot be reduced, unless schools currently running a single shift were to introduce a second shift.[464] Increased attention to extracurricular activities is certainly needed, but who would organize, supervise and run them?

Figure 2.46 What can be done to improve students' learning, according to teachers



Remedial classes and self-learning materials may be needed for all students. Those who have missed school for weeks, or even months, will require catching up. Students whose teachers could not fully cover the curriculum will need additional instruction. Figure 2.47 lists suggestions teachers had to help students catch up on missed work.[465]

Figure 2.47 Ways to help students catch up on the missed work



Thirty-seven of 59 schools offered remedial classes during the summer holidays of 2014.[466] Twenty-four schools indicated they intended to hold such classes during the 2015 "mid-term" holidays.[467] While these efforts are encouraged, they should not be regarded as a full substitute for systematic, effective orientations for new-comers and assisting them catch up on work missed.

"Cooperation with parents", the second-most frequently mentioned intervention in Figure 2.47, would need to be initiated either by an individual teacher or by the school. The latter is preferable, as a coordinated and reasonably uniform approach is more likely to succeed. Schools can invite parents to a parents' evening in which the school shares its plan, its concerns and suggestions for actions parents can take, and parents can meet one another to build a network.

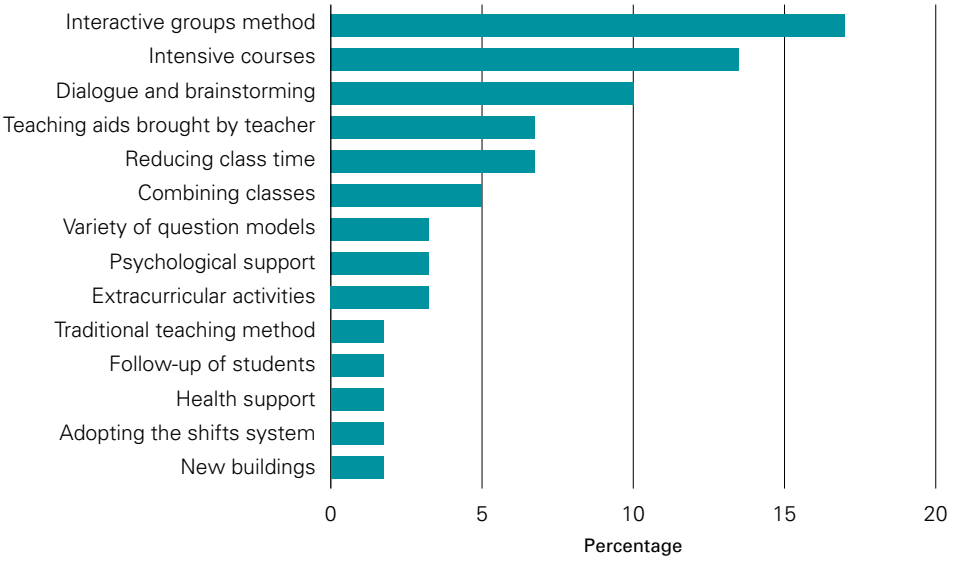
[463] Annex E.14.
[464] Since enrolment numbers were not recorded in the questionnaire, it is not possible to determine a student-to-teacher ratio for each school.
[465] Annex E.13.
[466] Annex D.64-65. At five schools the remedial classes apparently took the form of games and recreational activities.
[467] Annex D.66. The questionnaire referred to the "winter" holidays, since it had been anticipated that the survey would be conducted prior to December 2014. It is assumed that enumerators nevertheless consistently asked about the forthcoming summer holiday.

It is not clear how "educational voluntary work" will help students catch up on classes and how this would feasibly be accomplished. Who should volunteer? Are teachers, or older community members, providing volunteer work? How does one monitor students and ensure they are learning, or catching up on curriculum requirements, through this work? Ultimately, this idea needs to be organized by competent and knowledgeable persons.

Administering placement tests and enrolling students in the appropriate grade is only helpful to a certain point.[468] Those who have been out of school for a lengthy time period need to be re-oriented with practising sound study habits, especially if they did not have these prior to dropping out.

Principals reported 33 out of 59 (56 per cent) schools reported that teachers adapted their teaching approaches as a result of the crisis.[469] The first three suggestions ("interactive groups method", "intensive courses" and "dialogue and brainstorming") and "variety of question models" suggest a positive change in teaching practices. "Intensive courses" could mean teachers implemented a course for students experiencing difficulties keeping up. If teachers switched to a "traditional teaching method", one wonders what they were doing previously: Should it be understood to mean that teachers had abandoned interactive teaching for lecturing to cope with larger classes? The use of teaching aids, providing psychosocial support, and "following up on students and increasing interest in their education" are sound practices. While extracurricular activities and health support may contribute to better learning, they cannot be regarded as changed teaching approaches in the classroom. Four items cannot be considered as positive teaching approaches at all: Combining classes reduces the amount of time teachers can give to individual students; acquiring new buildings or introducing shifts are not teaching practices; reduced class time would likely diminish instructional quality.

Figure 2.48 Ways in which teachers have changed their teaching practices as a result of the crisis



In the children's discussion groups, those who had missed a period of schooling were asked about learning opportunities while out of school. Since the question was addressed only to those who had been out of school, it elicited only a small number of responses. Eleven reported they had no opportunities. Seven mentioned private lessons and courses; two referred to "alternative learning"; and one to UNICEF school clubs.[470]

[468] Which already seem to be widely used; see Annex D.84-85.

[469] Annex D.45-46. Percentages in Figure 2.48 are calculated on the 59 schools in the survey, not on the 33 schools whose principals reported that changed approaches had been adopted.

[470] Annex G.14.

When principals and parents mentioned education courses (15 and 22 per cent, respectively),[471, 472] it appears they referred to private tutoring, rather than school clubs or catch-up classes. The fact that families resorted to private tutoring underscores the fact that instruction in public schools is inadequate. While private tutoring is certainly a solution, it cannot be a large-scale recommendation because it would only be available only to families that can afford it.

In December 2012, a recommendation was made for parents to support teacher-guided, home-based schooling[473] and web-based learning.[474]

In December 2013, the MoE, UNRWA and UNICEF developed a self-learning programme aligned with the Government curriculum. This programme intends to assist children continue their education in areas considered unsafe to attend school.[475] The proposal envisaged that there would be community learning centres (CLCs) where students could receive additional support. Thus far, materials for the four core subjects (Arabic, English, mathematics and science) from Grades 1 to 9 have been completed. The community would be encouraged to play a role in managing, implementing and monitoring the use of the materials.[476] Although it was hoped that over a million children would benefit from these materials during the first year of implementation, there was no funding for training the staff that would assist the students through the CLCs.[477] The programme holds great promise, but is likely to encounter implementation challenges. It is important to scale up this initiative and systematically document challenges and lessons learned.

For self-learning programmes to be attractive, to parents and students they should either allow the student to reintegrate into the formal school system or give the student access to the national examinations. As of late 2014, the Ministry of Social Affairs runs accelerated learning courses in clinics, mosques, churches, sports halls and other venues near to shelters. Although the courses were not recognized by the MoE, students who had completed them were eligible to sit for the MoE's placement tests, and, if successful, could return to formal school.[478]

Assessment of learning outcomes

Apart from the certificate examinations taken at the end of Grades 9 and 12, all students are evaluated at the end of the academic year for promotion to the following grade. However, since the crisis began, many students have experienced difficulties with sitting for the examinations and various accommodation efforts have been endeavoured.

In Idleb, the volatility of the security situation in April and May 2015 prompted authorities to allow first and second cycle students to take their end of year examinations earlier than usual for fear of later disruptions. Around 9,000 students in the Ariha district were exempted from final examinations.[479]

For students attending schools with a modified curriculum, and displaced children attending schools in neighbouring countries, many have concerns that the Government of Syria would not recognize their certificates, "deepening fears for their careers and futures".[480]

Joint efforts from UNICEF and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) resulted in a decree from the Government of Lebanon allowing Syrian refugee children to sit for the Grade 9 and 12 official examinations on the condition that students submitted the necessary documentation as soon as it was retrievable from Syria.[481] However, Syrian refugee children and their parents were concerned that if they followed the Lebanese curriculum and took the examinations of their host country, they would be at a disadvantage when they returned to Syria because their qualifications might not be recognized.[482]

[471] Annex D.96.
[472] Annex F.12-13.
[473] UNICEF Syria, p.16.
[474] UNICEF Syria, p.16.
[475] SHARP, December 2013, p.77; UNICEF Briefing, p.5.
[476] UNICEF Curriculum, p.32.
[477] SHARP, July 2014, p.41.
[478] UNICEF Curriculum, pp.33-34.
[479] Idleb Report, no. 4, p.7.
[480] Under Siege, p.14.
[481] Situation Report, p.1.
[482] UNICEF Lebanon, p.34.

School principals commented on and categorized general changes in repetition rates in their neighbourhood as a result of the crisis.[483] All but two principals placed their school's repetition rate in the "zero to 20 per cent" category prior to the crisis. One urban school principal in Hama reported a pre-crisis repetition rate of 21 to 40 per cent; one in Tartous fell in the 81 to 100 per cent category.[484] At the end of the 2014/15 school year, most schools fell in the zero to 20 per cent repetition band (nine had a higher repetition rate); seven fell in the 21 to 40 per cent band, one in the 41 to 60 per cent band, and one had between 81 and 100 per cent of their students repeating.[485] Principals attributed the increases in repetition to displacement, followed by the "instability" of displaced children, poor economic situations and dangers to life (posed by the crisis). Seven per cent of principals referred to the overcrowded classes.[486]

Ninety-five per cent of key informants reported that, in their neighbourhood, students had been able to sit for the national examination at the end of Grade 9; 92 per cent reported that students had sat for the Grade 12 examination. In 93 per cent of neighbourhoods, the examination was conducted at the local school; in seven per cent, students had to sit for it elsewhere.[487] Thirty-two per cent of key informants had children of their own who sat for certificate examinations in June 2013. Of these, only 16 per cent took the exam at their own school; 68 per cent sat for the exam at a nearby school; and 16 per cent in another district.[488] Twenty-four per cent of key informants had children who sat for the examinations in June 2014: 29 per cent at their own school, 71 per cent at a nearby school, and seven per cent in another governorate.[489]

Statistics on entrants for the national certificate examinations and the number of successful candidates over a five-year period were provided by the MoE (*see Table 2.28*).[490] From 2011 to 2012, there was an increase in the number of candidates for each of the three certificates (presumably Grade 9, Grade 12 science and Grade 12 humanities). Numbers in 2013 dipped below the 2011 level. For the "primary" certificate (presumably Grade 9), candidates fell by 34 per cent. In 2014 numbers rose again, but not to the 2011 level, except for the Grade 12 science certificate, where the number of candidates was higher than in any of the three preceding years. In 2015, the number of entrants for all three certificates dropped to their lowest level in five years – only 43 per cent of the 2011 entry, and 48 per cent of the 2014 entry.

The proportion of successful candidates rose substantially in 2012 for all three certificates, and then, in 2013, remained constant for the Grade 9 certificate, dropped by 8.6 percentage points for the Grade 12 humanities certificate, and rose by 9.3 percentage points for the Grade 12 science certificate. In 2014, a second round of examinations was introduced for the secondary certificates. That year, the percentage of successful candidates dropped slightly in the primary certificate, rose slightly in the secondary humanities certificate, and dropped by 16 per cent in the secondary science certificate. These trends require further investigation. The explanation may lie in the classroom, in the examination or in both. The 2011 results also prompt questions about the effectiveness of teaching techniques at a time before school staff and outsiders were complaining about overcrowding in the classroom. With the well-documented deterioration in many aspects (facilities, equipment, materials, proportion of qualified teachers, trauma experienced by students), a drop in the pass rate can be accounted for, but not improvements of the magnitude reflected in the data.

[483] Annex D.28-29. The zero to 20 per cent band should have been split, since a repetition rate in excess of 10 per cent is already high.
[484] Only 57 of the 59 principals responded to the question.
[485] 58 principals responded.
[486] Annex D.30.
[487] Annex C.21-22.
[488] Annex C.81-84.
[489] Annex C.81-84.
[490] Data provided by the MoE at the request of the author.

Table 2.28 Entrants and successful candidates in the national examinations

CERTIFICATE	YEAR	EXAMINEES				
		EXAMINED	SUCCESSFUL	SUCCESSFUL IN THE SECOND ROUND*	SUCCESSFUL (TOTAL)	PERCENTAGE SUCCESSFUL
Primary	2011	383,455	269,902	–	269,902	70
	2012	389,643	307,009	–	307,009	79
	2013	256,804	201,010	–	201,010	78
	2014	323,253	240,489	–	240,489	74
	2015	253,926	180,958	–	180,958	71
Humanities	2011	180,473	100,156	–	100,156	55
	2012	204,471	146,190	–	146,190	71
	2013	154,089	96,952	–	96,952	63
	2014	161,735	80,720	24,082	104,802	65
	2015	77,876	41,598	8,452	50,050	64
Science	2011	99,131	71,981	–	71,981	73
	2012	103,361	85,136	–	85,136	82
	2013	92,837	85,136	–	85,136	92
	2014	106,971	75,122	9,391	84,513	79
	2015	92,169	63,523	7,574	71,097	77

6 Teachers and education personnel

"Teachers and other education personnel are essential contributors to education in emergencies through to recovery. They also have a right to support and guidance themselves."[491] In the literature, school staff include qualified[492] teachers, unqualified teachers, community volunteers with little formal education, head teachers and school supervisors. School staff may also include administrators, cleaners, and others. Thus, it is not always clear in references to staff whether all staff working at the school are intended or only those directly associated with the teaching and learning process.

Recruitment and selection

The survey did not touch on criteria for the selection of school staff, recruitment procedures, or on job descriptions.

However, from the literature, studies report the orderly recruitment of teachers was affected by displacement, problems with remuneration and loss of life during the crisis: "The quality of education was affected by the loss of human resources with teacher shortages due to emigration, refugee flight and displacement. … Almost 500 educational workers were killed in 2013 according to the Ministry of Education, while many more have been injured, kidnapped or arrested."[493] Security concerns kept some teachers from attending school.[494]

[491] INEE, p.94.

[492] "Qualified teachers" means that instructors hold all the correct formal requirements for teaching their assigned subjects and classes. Unqualified teachers may be unqualified in a number of ways: They may hold recognized university degrees and certifications, but not for the subjects they currently teach; some unqualified teachers may not have the proper prior teaching experience; some may have degrees related to their subjects but no training in being instructors. There are, naturally, other ways in which teachers are unqualified to instruct their assigned classes.

[493] Squandering Humanity, p.40; UNICEF Syria, p.15.

[494] UNICEF Syria, p.15.

Officially, governorates submit their vacancies for primary teachers to the MoE, and the Ministry supplies teachers to the Directorate of each governorate proportionally (according to governorate needs).[495] However, high numbers of vacancies imply that needs for teachers are not being met. To alleviate the demand, young people in the Youth Employment Programme could fill subject specializations for which graduates from teaching programmes cannot be found.[496] For secondary teachers, a recruitment competition is held based on the needs of governorates.[497]

Some teachers were permitted to relocate to a school closer to their place of residence; however, some have been unable to transfer their credentials, making it difficult to secure a new teaching post.[498]

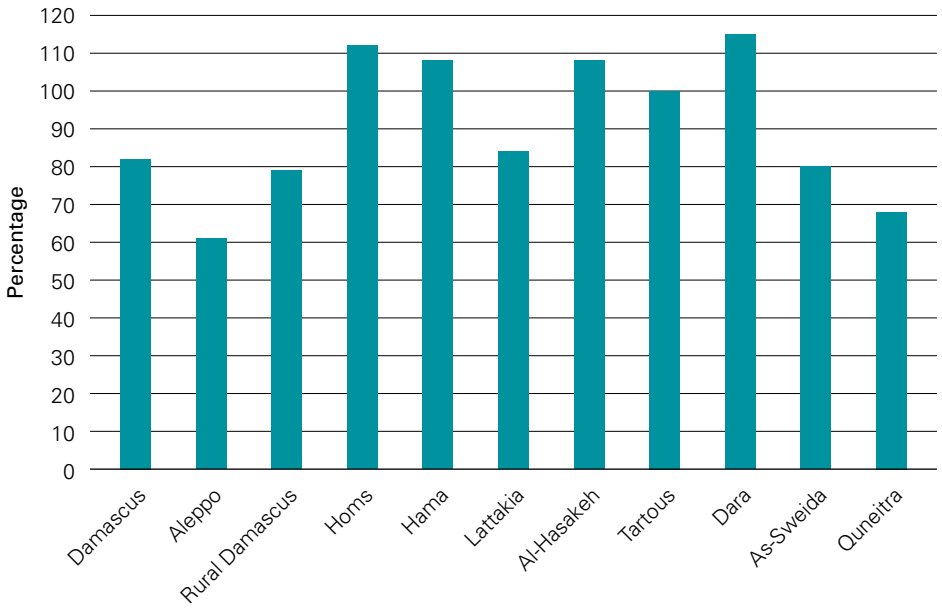
At some schools, tensions developed among staff with different political sympathies. It is not clear whether teachers left the school as a result.[499]

A broad recommendation called for appointing sufficient numbers of well-trained teachers.[500] There were also calls for international funding to allow recruiting additional teachers[501] and for teacher training.[502]

With regards to teacher quality, holding a formal qualification does not necessarily equate to actual competence. However, schools will normally desire a fully qualified staff, as this more likely ensures a higher number of competent teachers. Almost half of key informants confirmed that teacher competence had been better prior to the crisis.[503] Half of parents' groups hoped that schools might have "a stable and qualified" teaching staff.[504]

Figure 2.49 details the percentage of qualified teachers in surveyed schools by governorate.[505] Nine schools across five governorates reported a number of qualified teachers that exceeded the total number of teachers on the staff.[506]

Figure 2.49 Proportion of qualified teachers at surveyed schools, by governorate



[495] Teachers can appeal their placement.
[496] Annex I, p.13. Written responses to questions submitted to the MoE by the author.
[497] Annex I, p.12.
[498] UNICEF Syria, pp.17-18.
[499] UNICEF Syria, p.15.
[500] UNICEF Syria, p.18; SINA, p.32.
[501] Education Interrupted, p.9.
[502] SINA, p.32.
[503] Annex C.85.
[504] Annex F.18.
[505] Based on Annex D.66.
[506] There was no way of verifying the numbers provided.

Figure 2.50 reorganizes surveyed schools into percentage of qualified staff they have, while Figure 2.51 reports perceptions of key informants about percentage of qualified staff in the nearest school.

Figure 2.50 Proportion of qualified teachers at schools surveyed

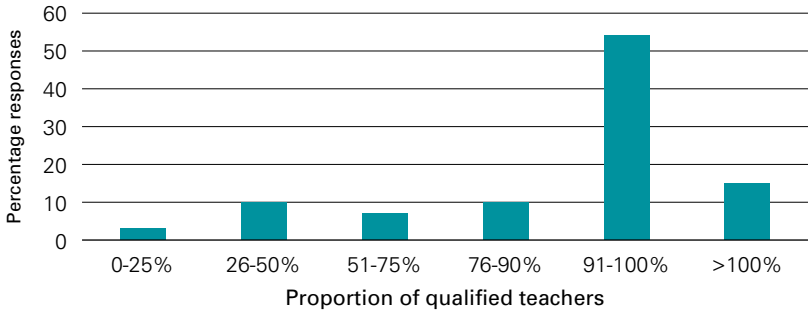
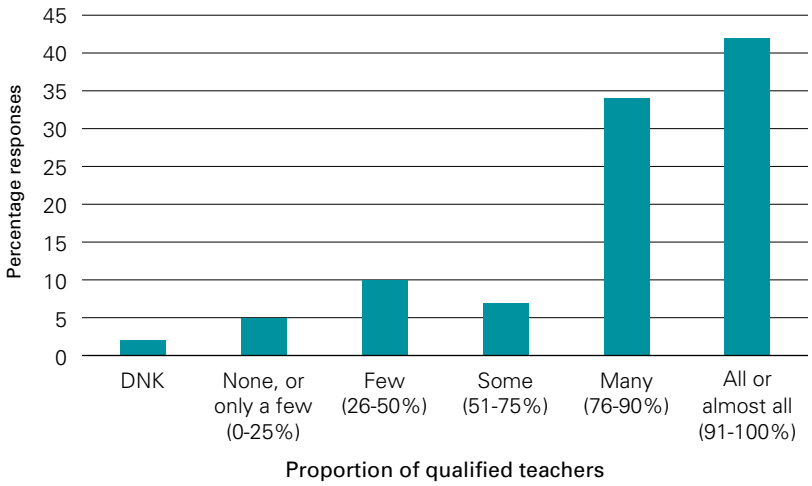


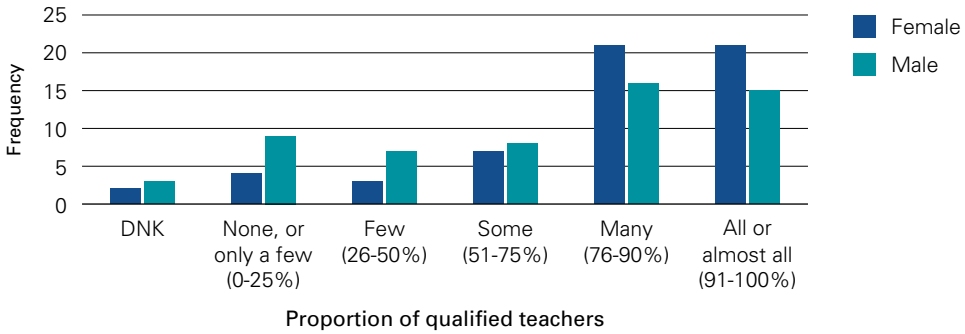
Figure 2.51 Proportion of qualified teachers at school nearest to key informant



The literature also recommends the MoE maintain a record of teachers' credentials and provide this information to schools wanting to hire displaced teachers.[507]

Key informants estimated the how many teachers (who taught pre-crisis) were still able to work at the time of the survey (*see Figure 2.52*).[508]

Figure 2.52 Proportion of teachers still teaching after four years of the crisis

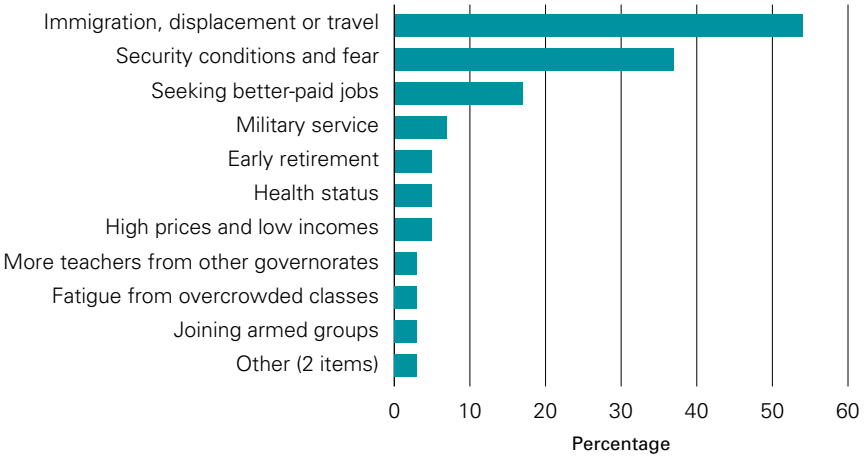


[507] UNICEF Syria, p.19.

[508] Annex C.58. Two respondents were unable to provide an estimate of the proportion of female teachers still working, and three could not provide an estimate of the proportion of male teachers ("Do Not Know").

Figure 2.53 illustrates the reasons provided for the reduction in the number of teachers still working at their schools.[509] More than half of the respondents ascribed the drop in numbers to emigration, displacement or travel; two-fifths mentioned security conditions and fear. Because "high prices and low incomes" were mentioned, some teachers most likely left the profession to seek better-paid jobs.

Figure 2.53 Reasons why teachers employed before the crisis are no longer teaching



Out of 3,045 teachers surveyed, 2,586 were qualified.[510] This gives an average of 52 teachers per school, 44 of whom are qualified. The actual number of teaching staff at an individual school ranged from seven to 257. The median staff size was 40.

Since the crisis began, some schools have had to fill staff vacancies with instructors lacking formal teaching qualifications (*see Table 2.29*).[511] These formally unqualified teachers comprised a quarter of the participants in the teachers' discussion groups.

Table 2.29 Professional training background for teachers who were not trained as teachers

NATURE OF TRAINING	FREQUENCY
University degree or higher	14
Institute	8
Secondary school	7
Training course	67
Other courses	26
Total responses	**122**

Conditions of work

In the literature, it was recommended that teachers be paid and on a regular, assured basis.[512] It has also been recommended that, with the cost of essential commodities escalating, additional incentives should be provided to teachers to help maintain their purchasing power.[513] Another report recommended "appropriate remuneration to ensure that they can continue their vital work".[514]

Some teachers were apparently attending non-functioning schools in order to retain their salaries, since absences 15 days resulted in being cut from the payroll.[515]

[509] Annex C.59.
[510] Annex D.66-68.
[511] Annex E.6.
[512] UNICEF Syria, p.18.
[513] UNICEF Syria, p.18.
[514] Futures under Threat, p.12.
[515] UNICEF Syria, p.16.

In Idleb, April and May 2015, where fighting had intensified, teachers had to travel to collect their salaries; many teachers previously paid were not receiving salaries.[516]

Fifty-seven per cent of key informants reported that teachers at the nearest schools were receiving their salaries.[517] The exceptions were: One school in Dara and one in As-Sweida. At 10 schools, teachers also received financial assistance from an NGO or other organization.[518]

A totally of 3,860 teachers and other staff members received government salaries; 165 received allowances from some other source.[519] At all but two schools, staff regularly received their salaries on time. The exceptions were a school in As-Sweida, where delays of up to two months were experienced, and one school in Hama, where delays were even longer.[520]

Regarding other administrative issues affecting staff, one principal reported delays in paying the principal's salary and three reported a lack of housing for displaced teachers.[521] Some teachers were redeployed because their locality experienced large displacements of people. This caused considerable inconvenience, as they had to relocate their homes or find temporary accommodation.

Table 2.30 How teachers have been affected by the regulations covering redeployment[522]

HOW THE STAFF WERE AFFECTED	PERCENTAGE
Transport difficulties and commitment	2
Lack of commitment to attendance	3
Teachers dismissed due to their absence	1
Increase in the number of teachers	4
High staff turnover	2
Loss of distinctive character of staff	1
Differences (arguments) between teachers	1
Overcrowded schools for lack of space	2

Support and supervision

The INEE guidelines assert that support and supervisory mechanisms are "vital to maintaining teacher motivation and teaching quality," and that "even trained and experienced teachers and other education personnel may find themselves overwhelmed by crisis events."[523] Support can manifest in two major forms – printed materials that support teacher performance or face-to-face interactions, such as training sessions.

Support and supervision provided by the MoE is not described in the literature. However, as part of the implementing the new curriculum, the Ministry envisaged providing approximately 36 hours of cascade training annually to every teacher, starting in the 2009/10 school year. In addition to this, every teacher would receive a minimum of two classroom visits a year from a subject supervisor.[524]

The MoE provided short training courses on child-centred active learning methodologies to 14 schools; one DoE provided this training to 27 schools; 10 schools received training from either the Government or an NGO.[525]

[516] Idleb Report no.3, p.6; Idleb Report no.4, p.7.
[517] Annex C.60.
[518] Annex C.61. At 43 schools, teachers were not receiving such assistance, and for six schools the respondent did not know whether assistance was received or not.
[519] Annex D.74-75. It is not known whether any of those receiving allowances were not also in receipt of government salaries.
[520] Annex D.76.
[521] Annex D.77-78.
[522] Annex D.88-89.
[523] INEE, pp.102-103.
[524] Written response from the MoE, 12 January 2015, to questions submitted by the author.
[525] Annex D.73.



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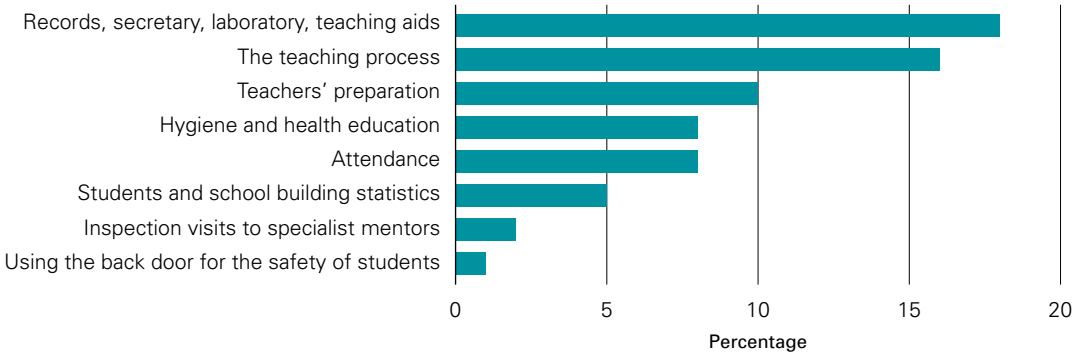
Over half the schools received supervisory visits over the 2013/14 and 2014/15 academic school years (*see Table 2.31*).[526] Twenty-five of these visits were initiated by the local office and seven by the provincial (presumably governorate) office.

Table 2.31 Time of last supervisory visit to the school

TIME OF LAST SUPERVISORY VISIT	COUNT
First semester 2013/14	4
Second semester 2013/14	7
This academic year	21
None of these	27

Figure 2.54 reveals what aspects were evaluated during the most recent supervisory visit.[527] Over a quarter of the schools had their teaching process reviewed. This criterion is especially important due to the crisis.

Figure 2.54 Aspects checked during the most recent supervisory visit to the school



As with recruiting teachers, routine MoE support mechanisms appear to have been disrupted.[528] Each teacher should be visited by a subject supervisor at least twice every academic year for teaching evaluation using a "supervisory checklist". During a visit, the supervisor should check the school's compliance with general administrative matters. The subject supervisor should also conduct educational seminars and provide "illustrative lessons" to all teachers, "especially [to] novice and probationary teachers".[529] These seminars should be held regularly.

7 Education policy

Law and Policy Formulation

The survey did not directly address law and policy formulation, but observations on Grade 9 and Grade 12 assessment point to the need for policies allowing students to take their examinations in a safe environment and allow successful candidates to receive widely recognized certificates.

Because of the crisis, the MoE relaxed its regulations on school uniform, admission procedures, and on the taking of national examinations.

[526] Annex D.79-80.
[527] Annex D.81. Percentages are based on all schools surveyed, not only on those that received supervisory visits.
[528] Annex I.
[529] Annex I.

The MoE suspended student obligations to wear school uniforms, as many students abandoned their possessions when fleeing, and those impoverished as a result of the crisis could not afford uniforms.[530] However, 14 of the 59 surveyed schools (spread across five governorates) insisted at the time of the survey that their students wear uniforms.[531] Five students' groups (eight per cent) mentioned "commitment to the school uniform" as one thing that should change in schools.[532] It is not clear whether students objected to the requirement that they should wear uniform, or whether they felt that all students should wear uniforms (perhaps so that outsiders on the school premises could more readily be identified).

To accommodate those who had lost their school records and could not prove their last grade completed, or who had been unable to take examinations, the Ministry instituted placement tests, allowing students to enrol in any government school.[533]

The literature provides other policy recommendations: Implementing inclusive education, flexible policy for displaced populations, the continued suspension mandatory uniforms and streamlining placement tests.[534]

Planning and implementation

Developing emergency education plans is a somewhat intuitive policy recommendation. However, these policies should contain clear links between the emergency response and longer-term development.[535] There are references in the literature that NGOs and international agencies are attempting to do this. However, the nature of the crisis and the uncertainty as to how long it will endure has, understandably, made long-term, realistic and detailed planning extremely difficult. Obvious plans developed were training teachers, supplying teachers and providing psychosocial support; rehabilitating and replacing damaged infrastructure; and replacing teaching and learning materials that had been destroyed. Plans to allow children to catch up were difficult to formulate in a detailed fashion, especially because the future was so uncertain.

Short-term recommendations in the literature include:

- Addressing the educational needs of internally displaced persons (in and out of collective centres) and their host communities. If accessible, Ar-Raqqa, Al-Hasakeh, Homs, Aleppo, Deir-ez-Zor should be prioritized.[536]
- There should be better coordination among partners in regularly providing routine field data on new arrivals in refugee camps in the neighbouring countries in a pre-agreed format.[537]

Longer-term recommendations include:

- Conduct a macro-level analysis of the impact of the crisis on the educational system as a whole.[538]

8 Donors' and sector partners' response

In 2014, cross-sector planning was undertaken for a coordinated multi-sectoral response to the crisis. For the education sector, the ESWG in Damascus developed a response plan that addressed access to, and quality of education, as well as strengthening the sector's human capacity. The SHARP[539] required donor funding of US$103 million.

[530] UNICEF Syria, p.18; Syrian Arab News Agency, an online news portal. The article was accessed 14 September 2014.
[531] Annex D.86.
[532] Annex G.15-16.
[533] UNICEF Briefing, p.5.
[534] UNICEF Syria, p.17.
[535] INEE, p.106.
[536] UNICEF Syria, p.19.
[537] UNICEF Syria, p.19.
[538] UNICEF Syria, p.19.
[539] pp.76-84.

In 2015, the planning process was merged, resulting in a single plan, under the WoS approach. The funding required for the 2015 Syria Strategic Response Plan[540] was US$224 million, of which US$137 million was allocated for "priority" requirements. The latter amount exceeded the total of the two plans for the previous year. It was noted that the humanitarian response inside Syria in 2014 had "not kept pace with the increasing needs".[541]

The 2015 SRP is less detailed than those of the previous year. The number of adult beneficiaries targeted in the 2014 plans totalled 22,000, which included trainers, teachers and community workers. However, only 5,500 teachers were to be trained in skills which would be required for daily interaction with students in the classroom, with a further 1,600 trained in psychosocial concepts. The plan did not detail how long these training programmes would be. In the 2015 SRP, the number of adult beneficiaries rose significantly to 480,000, with no indication of the proportion that would undergo "professional development". While rehabilitating classrooms, furnishing classrooms and providing learning materials should improve the quality of learning, teachers play a key role in determining whether these resources will be used effectively. It would be helpful to provide more detailed information on the nature and duration of training, as well as the number of teachers targeted for each of the different types of training.

Including vocational training in the plan for both years should address parents' plea for vocational training as a realistic path to employment for youth.

[540] pp.27-28.
[541] p.5.

Table 2.32 Education partners' response plan to the Syrian crisis, 2014 and 2015

The SHARP, the multi-sector coordinated plan for implementation from Damascus, was compiled with the participation of Government, including the MoE. The main education activities for 2014, at an estimated cost of US$103 million, are in the light-blue shaded cells in the table.		2015 Strategic Response Plan, a multi-sector coordinated plan for the WoS. Required funding was US$224 million, of which "priority requirements" were US$137 million.	
ACTIVITY	BENEFICIARIES	ACTIVITY	BENEFICIARIES
OBJECTIVE: Increased access to safe learning spaces		OBJECTIVE: Ensure access to education for crisis-affected girls and boys (aged 3 to 17), with specific focus on the most vulnerable	
Rehabilitation of 600 learning spaces Construction of 440 temporary learning spaces		Rehabilitation of schools Learning spaces established and furnished with gender-sensitive WASH facilities	3,500,000 children
OBJECTIVE: Learning programmes		OBJECTIVE: Enhance quality of teaching and learning for children and adolescents within a conducive and protective environment	
Remedial classes or accelerated learning programmes	365,000 children	Formal curriculum, with certification through textbooks, self-learning materials	4,500,000 children
Participation in self-learning programmes	1,020,000 children	Non-formal and alternative content (remedial and accelerated learning, and life-skills-based education)	
OBJECTIVE: Vocational training			
Vocational education and life skills for adolescents	32,000 adolescents	Vocational training (formal and non-formal) for adolescents (aged 14 to 17)	
OBJECTIVE: Teaching and learning materials			
Provision of accelerated learning textbooks	1,000,000 children		
Provision of regular textbooks	3,000,000 students		
School supplies to kindergarten and basic education	1,163,500 students		
OBJECTIVE: Training personnel			
Training on remedial and accelerated learning	100 teachers	Teaching and learning through childcentred, protective and interactive methodologies strengthened	
Training on quality education	3,300 teachers		
Train trainers on EiE	50 trainers		
OBJECTIVE: Well-being activities			
School feeding	395,000 students		
OBJECTIVE: Training national organizations, community members, and other stakeholders		OBJECTIVE: Strengthen capacity of education sector to deliver effective and coordinated education response	
Train national organizations to provide vocational training	24 organizations	Capacity on INEE and crisis-relevant issues strengthened	480,000 education actors
OBJECTIVE: Teacher incentives			
		Professional development and incentives	
OBJECTIVE: Coordination, advocacy and sector capacity			
Advocacy for access to education (5 initiatives)		Capacities of education stakeholders to advocate for needs and rights of childen to education in crisis contexts develped and sustained	
		Monitoring and evaluation capacities of education actors developed and strengthened (rapid assessments, school-based data collection, EMIS)	

Note: Beneficiary numbers for the year 2014 are not necessarily cumulative. For example, the students benefiting from school-based health activities also benefit from school feeding.



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9 Conclusions and recommendations

The findings in this document revealed a series of conclusions and recommendations. However, a few points must not be forgotten: There exists gaps in statistical data; a small number of schools were surveyed; and none of the studies within the literature used random sampling methods. While some conclusions and recommendations may apply to the general educational landscape in Syria, others relate to situations which may not be prevalent in a specific locality. Interventions should therefore be contextualized.[542]

Responsibility for taking forward the recommendations may appropriately rest with the MoE, with UNICEF as the education sector's lead agency or with sector partners. In the spirit of the foundational standard, coordination, they should initially be reviewed by all three groups.

Foundational standards

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND RESOURCES

Even though respondents assured enumerators that schools received moral and non-material support, there still exists a need to strengthen this relationship through tangible activities.

Before embarking on community building, an assessment should identify the strengths and weaknesses of the communities at various levels (the school community, those directly linked to the school and the wider community). Schools may need to address organization and management issues before mobilizing communities in larger senses, after which principals should lead efforts to engage the immediate school community and the wider community. Parents should attend meetings to explore how, both individually and collectively, they can support learning in a safe and healthy environment. Students should also be given the opportunity to discuss ways in which their learning environment may be improved. Once school and parent communities have designed a plan for more effective involvement, efforts to engage wider community can take place. For areas in which "the wider community" is served by multiple schools, a coordinated approach involving all schools should be made.

The ESWG should therefore standardize guidance and programmes to help school management teams and local partners initiate and facilitate such efforts efficiently. They might include the following elements:

- How to run effective staff, parent, student and community meetings
- How to manage groups for effective problem identification and analysis (using varied techniques, such as brainstorming, focus discussion and prioritizing activities)
- Effective record-keeping of meetings and effective follow up of decisions taken
- How capacity building might be provided to a cluster of schools, rather than to individual schools
- How NGOs could be empowered to provide guidance areas they serve and how they could monitor/report results to the ESWG

Problems to be addressed through community support might include:

- Organizing patrols to protect children travelling to and from school
- Establishing emergency response teams
- Designing and rehearsing effective emergency response plans
- Improving the school environment and its surroundings
- Training others on effective parental support for children's learning

[542] INEE, p.21.

COORDINATION

The ESWG and WoS approach are already performing coordinating roles. Greater face-to-face exchanges of lessons learned could improve opportunities for scaling up. The present sector analysis is the result of cooperation among the MoE, CBS, UNICEF and ESWG members. The group members are encouraged to continue collaborating to formulate and implement recommendations. Implementing recommendations will include prioritizing feasible suggestions, lobbying authorities, drafting implementation plans, recruiting and training implementers or trainers, and monitoring implementation. Sector partners should also share their individual insights so that best practices may be scaled up and wasted effort may be avoided.

When local NGOs implement programmes in communities, accountability should be maintained. Local NGOs and other aid organizations should not make promises that cannot be kept and avoid setting unrealistic expectations. If assistance is only for a limited duration, this should be made clear before implementation begins. If capacity building programmes are instituted, sustainability should be ensured. The possibilities of scaling up should be explored in the earliest stages (in consultation with beneficiaries). With regards to national response plans, it is admittedly difficult to directly demonstrate "accountability to the affected communities" because their scale and immense detail. However, extensive information should be assembled during the development of the plan and should be available data are monitored.[543]

ANALYSIS

All efforts to improve education equity and quality should be based on sound data. The MoE's annual education census (aggregated in the EMIS) should be available to education sector partners as early as possible to improve their intervention efforts.

Quantitative data need to be supplemented with qualitative data, ideally collected through stratified random sampling techniques. However, this approach has not been possible, and so studies thus far have used purposive or convenience sampling. While the results of these studies cannot be generalized to national and governorate levels, they provide useful insights for future interventions.

Many of the reports reviewed testify to the sector's commitment to advocacy. These publications can be found on the Internet. United Nations agencies and international NGOs have thus far informed what types of assistance have proven effective. Unfortunately, lessons learned from local NGO activity has not been readily available.

The MoE should work with organizations that have contact with schools that have stopped reporting to the EMIS's annual education census. Regarding this recommendation, it should be noted that most EMIS questions ask what schools currently have. However, there is an opportunity for questionnaires to also identify what schools lack.[544]

Schools should keep accurate records of teacher and student attendance (as well as late arrival and early departure). For comparative purposes, an agreed monitoring tool should regularly collect and analyse attendance data, even if informally constituted. Results can be shared among schools, encouraging them to improve their record. This could lead to meetings with parents and students to determine reasons for erratic attendance and develop solutions.

In addition to the "4Ws" approach, reports should identify which strategies work and which faced significant challenges. Wherever possible, NGO activities to alleviate the same issue should be harmonized, as this eases scaling-up efforts and reduces confusion when school are faced with different options to resolve their issues. For example, there should be standardized modules on training teachers in psychosocial support and in classroom management.

Further investigation is needed on how teaching responsibilities are allocated throughout the school and on what actually happens in the classroom.

[543] INEE, p.1.
[544] Rapid Assessment.

Access and Learning Environment

EQUAL ACCESS

Current efforts by the MoE and donor members of the ESWG to rehabilitate school buildings and provide additional furnished classrooms should continue and be expanded wherever possible.

Special measures to encourage out-of-school children to return to school generally appear to ignore the need for remedial teaching and the need for psychosocial support. Remedial teaching in core subjects should be available to all students and schools should draw parents into supporting these efforts. Remedial or catch-up classes which have been successfully offered during school holidays should continue as the need for them exists.

Children with disabilities appear to be scarcely served. There also appears to be a poor understanding of "inclusive" education. Efforts should be made to identify the needs of children with disabilities who are not attending school and to accommodate as many as possible.

Parents of displaced children who have returned to school should be enlisted to persuade out-of-school children to return. At each school, a strategy should be developed based on the reasons why children have returned to school and how parents have overcome the difficulties to enable their re-enrolment.

Schools should make it as easy as possible for children to return to school. Information should be spread among displaced communities on school places available and enrolment procedures. Broadcasting services should be used.

For youngsters who are committed to their jobs, evening classes should be offered, preferably at a nearby school. The Ministry and other ESWG members should jointly work out how classes should be offered (For example, should evening classes be taught by regular school teachers or by volunteers?)

It is not clear whether girls who have married young may return to school. This should be clarified. If not, they should be encouraged to attend evening classes, or have separate study opportunities available to them.

PROTECTION AND WELL-BEING

Having well-rehearsed emergency plans, providing first aid training, establishing firefighting procedures and other emergency responses can build confidence and reduce fear. Parents should discuss with school staff how to provide a safe learning environment at the school. Students, particularly older children, should share in these discussions, or participate in parallel discussions. Only after the school community has explored possibilities should the wider community be drawn in.

The extent to which psychosocial support is available to students and teachers is by no means clear; nor is there clarity as to what constitutes psychosocial support. Does it include recreational activities, or are sporting and cultural activities supplementary to psychosocial support? It is not clear whether psychosocial counsellors are available at all schools. This should be clarified. All children who have experienced trauma should probably participate in group therapy sessions and all should have the opportunity to participate in organized recreational activities at school. Individual counselling, either at the school or through referral, should be available to those who need it. Teachers should have access to counselling support. Schools should review their recreational and extracurricular offerings, seeing whether these could be extended for all students to participate regularly. Students and parents should indicate in what ways they could support the activities. Parents might provide supervision or coaching; older students might coach younger students.

The extent to which sector partners have provided support for psychosocial support through trainer's courses appears woefully inadequate. This sort of training should be standardized across the sector and stepped up.

The DoEs should survey what repairs and modifications are needed to improve school facilities.

Schools should outline the programme of psychosocial support activities and services they are able to provide, and discuss these at meetings with parents.

School staff should know to whom they can report cases of child neglect, abuse or child labour with confidence that the cases will be followed up. ESWG partners should play a role in prompting the education authorities to make such information available to all schools in their area of responsibility. Where possible, this information should also be broadcast by radio and television services.

Life skills education should be standardized and taught in all schools. Parents should be made aware of this curriculum content.

Teachers should receive guidance on managing classes without resorting to physical, emotional or verbal abuse. Classrooms should be a place where children can feel secure, at ease and open to learning. Every school should have a code of conduct for staff and students.

FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Moving schools to safer areas (which may be safe only for a time) is not a realistic solution, especially after considering the budgetary requirements for rehabilitating infrastructure.

Continued efforts should be made to restore repurposed school buildings back to their original function: Educating children.

Rehabilitating classrooms should be done wherever possible. Infrastructure not fully usable should be repaired (and made weather-proof).[545] However, before rehabilitating facilities, all needs should be identified and appropriately prioritized.

Classrooms should have sufficient seats for students. Students should also have a correctly positioned flat surface for them to maintain a good posture when doing written work.

Wash and sanitation facilities should be added to those schools that lack them. Planning should be done in coordination with the WASH sector. Repairs, wherever possible, should be completed to provide water and electricity.

All members of the school community should participate in cleaning up and create a plan for routine maintenance. It is reasonable to expect students to play a role, possibly on a roster basis, for keeping their classrooms and play areas clean and tidy.

Teaching and Learning

CURRICULA

A substantial number of respondents deemed the new Government curriculum too difficult. DoEs should deliver guidelines to both trained and untrained teachers.

Adapting the curriculum for home study has tended to trim the curriculum. These materials should ensure a level of literacy and numeracy allowing students to study more generally on their own.

A future study should examine the amount of time actually spent on instruction. Another should examine students' interest in vocational training courses and their availability across governorates.

TRAINING, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

It is unlikely that any authority or organization would have the resources to meet the demand for qualified teachers. However, the ESWG, in cooperation with the MoE, could review and adopt training materials which would address some of the more serious needs of teachers. These materials should be based on the real needs of teachers, so consultation with previously practising teachers and classroom observations should inform the materials' design.

No information emerged on what kinds of skills newly qualified teachers acquired from their pre-college training.

[545] Weather-proof buildings refers to facilities constructed such that the infrastructure functions regardless of seasonal weather patterns.

The Ministry's intention to provide regular, in-service training to all teachers on the new curriculum appears not to have materialized. Indeed, 40 per cent of teacher respondents saw little relevance in their training courses. There is scant evidence local NGOs and international NGO trainings benefited teachers. Efforts should be made to revive the MoE's programme, with modifications for the current contexts if appropriate. This may require support from sector partners.

While experts should design training courses, cascading these courses is the only feasible option for training many teachers face-to-face. In other words, these same experts designing the training courses will be unable to train teachers themselves, and efforts must rely on individuals at different levels of the education system. Online systems for such training should be explored.

The need for training is too acute to wait modular courses leading to a recognized certificate.

Training courses should be interactive, assisting teachers develop skills needed in the classroom. Lecturing teachers on interactive approaches would be pointless.

Where possible, teachers and principals should receive training at the same time, allowing them to provide mutual support. Training might be provided to a cluster of schools, thereby enhancing the possibility of wider mutual support.

Providing training will also require sound coordination and record-keeping, allowing for follow-ups at appropriate intervals and ensuring different trainers do not provide conflicting advice. This could confuse teachers or lead to rejection of the training as irrelevant.

When providing training, there should be an acknowledgment of the difficulties under which teachers are working.

INSTRUCTION AND LEARNING PROCESSES

Every classroom needs a writing board. Where this is lacking, the teacher's ability to teach effectively is seriously inhibited.

Sector partners have already provided textbooks, stationery and teaching kits on a fairly extensive scale. This effort should be maintained, and schools should have assurance that they will have the necessary materials at the very start of the new school year so that no time is wasted. Where new or used textbooks are not available in sufficient quantities, realistic arrangements for sharing should be negotiated with the students so that a book is shared by students who live sufficiently close to one another.

Possibilities for increasing time on task should be explored. Where classes are large, furniture is inadequate, equipment and materials are in short supply, and a number of students have missed weeks or months of schooling, the teacher will require more time than usual to cover the same amount of work. If the school day has been shortened, whether for security reasons or to accommodate a second shift, ways should be explored for making up some of the lost time.

Daily homework tasks should be set to reinforce concepts already taught in class and prepare students for future lessons.

A regular class routine should ensure that students are able to commence work as soon as the lesson starts without having to waste several minutes negotiating what is to be done. The disruption of late arrivals and early departures should be minimized by having teachers and students agree to a code of conduct.

Opportunities should be created for teachers to discuss with parents the progress of their children, both as a routine (two or three times a year) and when particular problems arise. Parents should be requested to monitor their children's school work every day and to assist them in establishing sound study habits.

"Courses for students" (which, apparently, means private tutoring) can only be a possibility for well-off parents. Remedial and catch-up classes for those who have missed schooling on account of the crisis should be provided through the school at no cost to the student.

Producing materials for self-learning is commendable. Intense efforts from sector partners will be required to implement programmes with sufficient, regular support. If children regularly experience difficulty keeping up, those (with the exception of the occasional strongly motivated students) who do not have the daily pressure of a teacher monitor their progress may allow their efforts to slacken. Sector partners will also have to persevere to ensure students who use the self-learning programme (as an alternative to attending school) will be permitted to take placement tests and be given access to certificate examinations.

ASSESSMENT

Thorough, interactive curriculum coverage with sufficient opportunities for the students to practise or implement what they are learning is the best way to ensure that students are ready and confident for examinations.

It appears that the Grade 9 examination is the first opportunity for comparing educational standards across the nation. Standardized tests should be introduced at the end of Grade 4, or during Grade 5, to determine whether basic competence in literacy and numeracy has been achieved.

For certificate examinations, sound work has already been done to allow students to sit for an examination which will lead to a recognized qualification. However efforts that do not require students to take or costly journeys should be continued and improved.

Patterns of improvement and deterioration in national certificate examination results from 2011 to 2015 should be investigated by a competent body.[546]

Teachers and other Education Personnel

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

There was insufficient information for any conclusions to be drawn or recommendations to be made on this topic.

CONDITIONS OF WORK

Each school should keep an accurate record of teachers' attendance, which includes late arrivals, early departures and reasons for absence.

Teachers indicated that they would appreciate greater parental support. Routine meetings and adequate responses from parents when specific concerns relating to their children are brought up could achieve this. Parental support for the school in general (safety issues, school environment, school activities) would also be encouraging.

SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION

Although this aspect was not addressed in the assessment, and the ESWG would be unable to arrange external supervisory visits from authorities. Supervisory visits to staff members by principals and meaningful discussion of the challenges teachers face would provide a measure of support.

It appears DoEs have not been able to regularly visit all teachers, as originally envisaged.[547] Every effort should be made to reinstate this programme.

[546] Table 2.28 covers only four years, from 2011 to 2014, but the 2015 results would also be available by the time these recommendations are considered.

[547] Annex I.

Education policy

The ESWG is already trying to ensure that children have viable alternatives to formal schooling, that they may re-enter school and that they may have access to examinations for certificates that will be recognized for employment and for further study.

Some schools appear to discriminate against students who do not have school uniforms. The MoE should remind these schools, and the public at large, that the uniform requirement has been suspended.

Donors' and Sector Partners' Response

Sector partners have made significant efforts to meet the education needs of Syrian children. This has not been possible without the support of international donors. However, the support has fallen short of actual needs.

Sector partners need to programme their activities in accordance with specific needs, human resource shortages and financial shortages.

Every effort should therefore be made to extend in-service training programmes, especially in interactive classroom practices and working with traumatized children. Of course, these trainings should recognize the challenges facing teachers with large classrooms, large numbers of students dropping out and large numbers of students needing to be caught up.

Programme effectiveness should be delivered in more detail than simply input statistics, output statistics and comparisons against the previous year's plan. While a targeted number of trainers, for example, is appropriate for a multi-sector plan, information should also be provided on the number of teachers reached through these trainers over a given period. There should be cumulative benefits to training trainers, and these should be reported.

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Annex: Summary of main recommendations

Table A.1 summarizes the recommendations from both Part I and Part II, the quantitative and qualitative analyses. Implementation is entirely dependent upon the ESWG. Where other implementers are indicated, they are unlikely to react without prompting from ESWG members. Many recommendations have financial implications, and the ESWG will need to decide what can be accommodated in the sector budget. The ESWG will prioritize those activities that it deems feasible.

Table A.1 Summary of main recommendations from the quantitative and qualitative data analyses

	INEE DOMAIN, STANDARD AND RECOMMENDATION	IMPLEMENTER
Community participation and resources		
1	Conduct meetings with parents and students to find ways to improve the learning environment.	School management
2	Explore ways in which to draw greater concrete support from the wider community.	School management
3	Provide guidance to school management on how to organize effective meetings with parents, students and community.	ESWG
4	Use parent and community meetings to address safety concerns and the state of the school environment.	School management
Coordination		
5	Ensure that all recommendations in this report are considered and that those judged feasible are prioritized for implementation.	ESWG and MoE
6	Hold regular occasions at which ESWG members share qualitative information on activities implemented, with a focus on the possibilities of scaling up interventions that work well.	ESWG
7	Brief annual qualitative reports on assistance to education of each ESWG organization	ESWG members
8	Prepare draft templates on: Activating community support School emergency plan	ESWG
9	Provide training to school management on activating community support.	NGOs
10	Standardize psychosocial support training materials already in use and attempt to scale up training for teachers.	ESWG and MoE
11	Non-governmental organizations train their members to act as catalysts in getting school management to: Activate community support Adapt (contextualize) and implement an emergency plan Conduct discussions with students, staff and parents on addressing discrimination and bullying in the school	NGOs
Analysis		
12	EMIS' data collection capabilities should be strengthened by: Creating district and sub-district codes for each reporting point (school). Using new technology such as mobile phone platforms to collect data from schools.	ESWG and MoE
13	EMIS' scope should be extended to cover such aspects as running water and sanitation, school governance, and security.	ESWG and MoE
14	Training on the completion of EMIS data collection instruments should be provided to head teachers.	ESWG and MoE
15	Definitions should where necessary be clarified or simplified (e.g., teachers are represented by multiple variables in the current EMIS questionnaire).	ESWG and MoE

Table A.1 Summary of main recommendations based on quantitative and qualitative analyses (continued)

	INEE DOMAIN, STANDARD AND RECOMMENDATION	IMPLEMENTER
Analysis *(continued)*		
16	Follow-up surveys of damaged infrastructure should be conducted for targeted investment in reconstruction.	ESWG and MoE
17	Follow-up studies should be conducted to determine why so many children are not attending school and to examine reasons for repetition and dropping out.	ESWG and MoE
18	Make use of sector partners to extend coverage of the annual education census to areas with which the MoE has lost contact.	ESWG and MoE
19	The EMIS questionnaires should be expanded to collect information on deficiencies in the school's facilities and furnishing.	ESWG and MoE
20	"4Ws" reporting should be complemented by detailed reporting of interventions that work and the way challenges with implementation are addressed	ESWG
21	Schools should keep detailed records of teacher and student attendance.	School management
Equal access		
22	Enlist parents of children who have returned to school to help develop strategies to get other out-of-school children to return.	School management
23	Make information available within the community to encourage out-of-school children to enrol.	DoE and School management
24	Provide remedial teaching in core subjects to all students who return to school after displacement or after dropping out.	School management
25	Draw parents into supporting remedial instruction for children who have returned to school.	School management
26	Provide evening classes in core subjects for children who cannot return to school because they are working.	DoE and School management
27	Provide study opportunities for girls who have dropped out of school because of early marriage.	ESWG and MoE
28	Remedial or catch-up classes in school holidays should continue to be offered.	ESWG and MoE
Protection and well-being		
29	Assess the safety of school facilities and develop plans for remedying deficiencies.	School management
30	Undertake a survey of schools to determine what repairs are essential to make schools safe and weather-proof.	ESWG and MoE
31	Include modifications to schools to make them safe and weather-proof in the MoE's building programme.	MoE
32	Draw up workable emergency plans in collaboration with parents, students and community members, regularly rehearsing plan implementation.	School management
33	Provide guidance on how training in first aid, firefighting and other relevant emergency procedures may be undertaken by schools.	ESWG
34	Clarify the availability and role of psychosocial counsellors at schools.	MoE
35	All schools should offer psychosocial support to the students and teachers, at least in the form of group sessions.	ESWG and MoE
36	Provide information to parents on psychosocial services available at school.	School management
37	Standardize short training courses in psychosocial counselling for teachers.	ESWG and MoE
38	Expand the programme of training in psychosocial counselling for teachers to reach all schools.	ESWG and MoE
39	Standardize the curriculum for life skills education and make parents aware of what is taught.	ESWG and MoE
40	Every school should have a code of conduct for staff and students.	School management
41	Teachers should receive training in staff meetings on implementing the school's code of conduct without resorting to abusive behaviour.	School management
42	An outline training programme on classroom management practices should be provided to schools.	ESWG and MoE

Table A.1 Summary of main recommendations based on quantitative and qualitative analyses (continued)

	INEE DOMAIN, STANDARD AND RECOMMENDATION	IMPLEMENTER
Protection and well-being *(continued)*		
43	All schools should provide a structured programme of recreational and cultural activities for their students.	School management
44	Encourage education authorities to make schools aware of the procedures they should follow in dealing with seriously stressed staff members or students.	ESWG and MoE
Facilities and services		
45	Prepare a prioritized list of rehabilitation and furniture required. School management, in collaboration with parents, should determine how the school community members (parents and students) could make repairs.	School management
46	Provide sufficient classroom furniture such that every student has a seat with a suitable writing surface.	DoE and School management
47	Add wash and sanitation facilities to those schools that lack them.	MoE
48	Users of school facilities should assume responsibility for keeping the environment clean and attractive.	School management
Curricula		
49	Provide curriculum guidelines to schools that do not have them.	DoE and School management
50	Undertake a small-scale study to determine which components of the curriculum's subjects are perceived as too difficult and also determine the amount of classroom time spent on each subject.	ESWG and MoE
51	Undertake a study of students' interest in following vocational training courses and on the availability of such courses.	ESWG and MoE
Training, professional development and support		
52	Competent teacher trainers should conduct class observations in a number of schools. The trainers will then prepare a prioritized list of skills (methodology, rather than learning content) for which teachers need training. A series of modules to cover these skills should be prepared and teachers should be trained to cascade the training to as many schools as possible.	ESWG and MoE
53	The possibility of online support for teacher in-service training should be explored.	ESWG
54	The MoE's programme to train teachers on the curriculum should be revived.	MoE
55	All teachers' training should be presented in an interactive style, with activities resembling those used in the classroom.	ESWG and MoE
56	All teachers at a school, including the school principal, should receive training at the same time to allow them to provide mutual support to one another.	ESWG and MoE
57	An effective system of record keeping of in-service training and of follow-up visits to teachers should be maintained.	ESWG and MoE
58	Reporting on the training of trainers should be supplemented with information on the number of teachers reached by those trainers.	ESWG and MoE
59	All teachers should receive training on how to teach effectively "under current circumstances" and on how to provide psychosocial support to their students.	ESWG and MoE
60	The teachers of a school, or teachers from neighbouring schools, should meet to discuss the challenges they face and jointly develop ways to deal with them.	School management
Instruction and learning processes		
61	Every effort should be made to ensure that every classroom has a writing board with a good surface and an adequate supply of chalk or markers as appropriate.	ESWG and MoE
62	Maintain efforts to provide every student with textbooks and stationery.	ESWG and MoE
63	Where there are insufficient textbooks, negotiate practical sharing arrangements.	School management
64	Schools should ensure that they are fully covering the curriculum in core subjects and other subjects which will be tested in certificate examinations.	School management
65	Increase teaching time to allow full coverage of the curriculum.	School management

Table A.1 Summary of main recommendations based on quantitative and qualitative analyses (continued)

	INEE DOMAIN, STANDARD AND RECOMMENDATION	IMPLEMENTER
66	Opportunities should be created for teachers to meet with parents and discuss ways in which collaboration between parent and teacher may be strengthened in the interests of children.	School management
67	The use of self-learning materials should be carefully monitored and support mechanisms should be adapted in light of what is learned.	UNICEF
	Assessment and learning outcomes	
68	Consideration should be given to introducing a randomly sampled standardized test in literacy and numeracy to determine whether the competencies of the first cycle curriculum are being mastered by the end of Grade 4.	ESWG and MoE
69	The changes in the pass rates of the national certificate examinations from 2011 to 2015 should be investigated to determine, in particular, how the improvements in certain years were possible against the background of deteriorating conditions in the classroom.	ESWG and MoE
	Teachers: Conditions of work	
70	These recommendations overlap with others made in other headings. They are not repeated here.	
	Teachers: Support and supervision	
71	Teachers at schools should meet regularly to review teaching guidelines provided by the MoE and to discuss practical solutions to the challenges they face in the classroom.	School management
72	Supervisory visits from the district office for all teachers should take place regularly, as intended by the MoE.	MoE and DoE
73	Educational seminars should be held regularly.	MoE and DoE
	Law and policy formulation	
74	Schools and the public at large should be reminded that there should be no discrimination against students who do not have school uniforms.	MoE
	Donors' and sector partners' response	
75	The in-service training components of the sector plan should be expanded.	ESWG
76	The sector component of the multi-sector annual plan should be supplemented with detailed reporting on what has been achieved to the level of output and outcomes.	ESWG

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