# SYRIA EDUCATION SECTOR ANALYSIS

## The effects of the crisis on education in areas controlled by opposition groups, 2010-2015

Whole of Syria Education Focal Point
وحدة تنسيق التعليم لكل سوريا

Syria Response (Southern Turkey)
Education Cluster

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The tireless engagement in this work has been remarkable and underlines the commitment of all stakeholders to provide sound and robust evidence-based analysis to guide the programmatic response to the education needs of Syrian children.

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# Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| 4Ws | Who has done What, Where and When |
| ACU | Assistance Coordination Unit |
| 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 |
| SIG | Syrian Interim Government |
| 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 (2016) | Syria Regional Refugee Response: Inter-agency information sharing portal. UNHCR. |
| 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. |

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

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, were compromised by 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 opposition groups using three sources of data: (1) education census data; (2) survey results from 122 schools in opposition-controlled areas; 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 andlaboratories 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 122 schools in opposition-controlled areas.[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 collected in May 2015, and structured interviews were conducted with head teachers (also known as principals) and local council representatives. Structured focus group discussions were held with teachers, parents and children (mainly students attending school). The exercise was supported by the Gaziantep-based Education Cluster in Turkey.[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] The majority of local council representatives and head teachers were male. Forty-nine teachers' groups were mixed, while two-thirds of the remaining groups were male-only. The majority of the parents' groups had only female representation; five groups were mixed and nine had only male members. Two-thirds of the students' groups were mixed; of the single-sex groups there were slightly more boys' groups than girls' groups.

## Cross-domain concerns

In the survey, several questions were not specific to a particular domain or standard, but encouraged respondents to prioritize their concerns. These cross-domain concerns refer to responses that cannot be categorized under one INEE domain and standard. Largely, the responses demonstrate that local council representatives, principals, teachers and parents largely agreed when ranking the top four priorities for improving education:

1 Teachers' remuneration;

2 Teaching supplies;

3 The school environment; and

4 Training of teachers.

In response to a further general question, local council representatives drew attention to the need for providing psychosocial support to teachers and students.

## 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.

Local councils are responsible for one or more villages, towns or for a sub-district. Most did not identify being responsible for camps or settlements within their area.[14] Moreover, the relationship between local councils and schools require strengthening. Almost a quarter of local councils acknowledged their relationship with school administrators was weak or non-existent. Principals seemed to view local councils more harshly: Almost 40 per cent felt they had weak or non-existent relationships with the local council. Seventy per cent of local councils believed they were providing moral support to schools and slightly less than 40 per cent some form of material support. Once again, in contrast to what local councils believe, school representatives did not feel local councils provided moral and material support at the same rate as local councils did – in fact, the figures are half. About 35 per cent of school representatives felt local councils provided moral support and about 20 per cent believed they provided material support.

Local council representatives believed their relationship with schools could be improved by collaboration. They wished to increase material support, but do not have the means to do so. Schools have had to become creative, receiving financial or in-kind assistance from the community, and some community members have been willing to work voluntarily. School representatives, when articulating their expectations of community support, were somewhat unrealistic in their hopes. However, more improvements might be possible if communication between the school and community were to improve.

As for teachers, they looked to the parent community to be supportive of the learning process through two-way communication, assisting with homework, attending meetings and participating in school activities.

[14] Camps refer to formally established camps for internally displaced persons. Settlements refer to informal settlements that can spontaneously form as internally displaced persons move. These informal settlements can then transform into formal camps if humanitarian agencies and government or opposition groups step in.

## 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. In the education sector, the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG) in Damascus and the Education Cluster in Gaziantep have played major roles.

Overall, programmed aid activities by international and national 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)[15] response 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. It was hoped that a coordinated plan would lead to long-term and predictable funding for aid programmes.

Numerous respondents suggested the international community persuade conflicting parties to avoid attacking schools, relocate schools from hostile areas and take other actions to reduce fighting and bombardment in the vicinity of schools.

## 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. Only 30 per cent of the surveyed schools in opposition-controlled areas were submitting statistics to the Government of Syria, and only 25 per cent to the Syrian Interim Government (SIG).[16]

Since 2010, all other education assessments used sampling approaches that do 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

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. This general picture is complicated by geographical variations and by fluctuations over time. The majority of teachers (60 per cent) identified the following as reasons why children are out of school:

[15] A term used to describe all areas of Syria, whether it operates under the Government of Syria or opposition groups.

[16] The Syrian Interim Government (SIG) was established in Turkey in March 2013, with a Cabinet of technical ministers, as an alternative to the Government of Syria. The SIG was formed by the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, an opposition group. It appears that schools affiliated with the SIG send school data from their school registers to the SIG, most likely through the SIG's Directorates of Education (DoEs).

1 Security and fear;

2 Earning money to support the family (the majority of parents agreed with this particular reason);

3 Education is not a priority; and

4 Learning costs.

Surveyed schools varied in size, with 17 schools enrolling 120 students or less, and seven schools enrolling more than 1,000 students. Forty-four schools ran a double shift.[17] Sixty per cent of students were girls, rising to 66 per cent for students in Grades 7, 8 and 9. Thirteen of the schools were all-girls schools and 14 were all-boys schools. Of the 89 schools with mixed enrolment, 34 had more boys than girls, 41 had more girls than boys, and 10 had equal numbers of girls and boys.

The survey responses did not answer why security concerns were not keeping girls away from school in greater numbers than boys, nor did they account for the relatively low enrolment of boys in primary grades, which is surprising, as older boys are more likely to be pulled out of school to work and generate income.

The literature reports that children of displaced families sometimes remain out of school for extended periods because the family expects that: (1) they will soon return to their home, (2) it is difficult to find a school place close to where the family has taken refuge, or (3) because of uncertainties about the procedures to gain admission to a school. This is an area in which the wider community could play a more supportive role.

The latest data in the literature report that over the first three years of the crisis, the consumer price index 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.[18] 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, 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.

Students' groups participating in the qualitative survey drew attention to the uninviting environment of many schools, requesting walls be painted, or decorated with drawings, and that trees and flowers be planted. They also complained of a lack of cleanliness in schools.

[17] Double shifts refer 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.

[18] 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: 33 per cent of the parents' group felt that there were children with mental disabilities in the community, and the same percentage saw there were children with physical disabilities. Fourteen per cent of parents' groups believed that such children were deprived of schooling because schools lacked appropriate equipment. Ten per cent or fewer of the groups were aware of children with speech or hearing disabilities or impaired sight.

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.

## 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:

- Forty-two per cent of principals acknowledged that there had been security problems either at their school or between students' homes and the school during the 2014/15 school year.
- Forty-one per cent of schools reported the local neighbourhood was bombed. Thirty-eight per cent reported that schools were actually bombed. Twenty-two per cent of schools reported local ground fighting occurred in the vicinity.
- More than half of the parents' groups reported that children disliked attending school because they felt unsafe. Sixteen per cent of parents' groups believed that security would have to improve if out-of-school children were to return to school.
- Over 60 per cent of teachers' groups believed security concerns were the main reason for children being out of school.
- This survey, as noted by a teachers' group, did not reach the schools with the most severe security problems.
- While 22 per cent of head teachers declared that their school had a security plan, only nine per cent of schools rehearsed their plan at least once a semester. Suggestions about ways in which the community might help the school to improve security showed little evidence of prior thought or planning.
- The need to protect schools from looting and vandalism was mentioned.

During times of conflict, discrimination becomes a particularly salient topic. Tensions are high and not everyone is treated equally. The survey results reveal:

- Over a third of students' and parents' groups reported discrimination in the school (36 and 39 per cent of groups, respectively). Contrastingly, only 16 per cent of teachers' groups reported discrimination within the school.
- Among the students, boys were more conscious than girls of discrimination.
- Secondary students were more conscious than primary students of discrimination.
- Students perceived the most discrimination directed against girls (20 per cent), with boys listed next. Parents and teachers failed to see boys as victims of discrimination.
- Parents were most conscious of discrimination on the account of an individual's "family connections" (20 per cent).
- Teachers, but only six per cent of them, saw discrimination most directed against internally displaced persons, with girls and family connections listed next (both five per cent).

- In identifying the perpetrators of discrimination, 26 per cent of students identified other students. Only 17 per cent blamed teachers. However, 33 per cent of parents identified teachers as perpetrators of discrimination and only 21 per cent identified students. Eighteen per cent of teachers' groups saw students as responsible for discriminatory behaviour, but 12 per cent admitted that teachers behaved discriminatorily.
- Bullying was ranked second by students' groups (43 per cent) as a reason for disliking school (after "school not properly equipped"). A small number of groups, both parents' and students', complained of physical and verbal abuse from teachers.
    - In the literature, harassment and violence directed against students holding the "wrong" political views was identified. The literature also states girls' attendance is affected by the threat of violence and insecurity.
    - Objections to having girls and boys in the same school or the same class were raised at only six per cent of the schools surveyed. At none of these schools was a request made for female teachers to teach female students.

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. During the survey the issue was also raised, but only from 23 per cent of local councils, 18 per cent of parents' groups, and 15 per cent of head teachers. An even lower proportion of head teachers (14 per cent) indicated that "mental health care" was "always" available to their students.

Recreational and other extracurricular activities are helpful for children who have experienced trauma and improves mental health, as it promotes socialization and decreases children's sense of isolation. However, the frequency of such activities as reported by head teachers was low: 30 per cent for sport and games, 21 per cent for life skills,[19] 21 per cent for creative skills, and 14 per cent for arts skills. Only nine per cent of schools offered catch up classes as an extracurricular activity. Students' and teachers' groups requested safe play areas, sports fields, halls, and recreational equipment.

Objections to having girls and boys in the same school or the same class were raised at only six per cent of the schools surveyed. At none of the schools was a request made for female teachers to teach female students.

## Facilities and services

When surveying what kinds of structures served as schools, two-thirds of local council representatives reported typical school buildings. The other third reported private buildings, temporary structures, mosques and tents serving as learning spaces. Forty per cent of respondents reported that all school buildings in their area were used, properly, as schools. The rest indicated that, in 24 local council areas, a total of 186 school buildings were not being used as schools.

The INEE states that 40 students per teacher is the maximum acceptable limit for a student-to-teacher ratio. In 12 per cent of the schools (all single shift), the average number of students per classroom exceeded 40, with the highest being 76. In 40 per cent of the schools (both single and double shift), the average number of students did not exceed 20. The data suggest that many schools could easily absorb more students.

The state of school utilities in opposition-controlled areas is very worrisome. Only 29 per cent of schools adequately provided potable water. Only one quarter provided adequate heating during winter, while 12 per cent had adequate electricity and eight per cent had Internet access. Only 40 per cent of functioning water and sanitation facilities (single-sex or shared) at schools were adequate. Less than

[19] 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.

60 per cent schools had functioning handwashing facilities. However, there was no clear evidence that inadequate water and sanitation facilities kept girls from attending school: At the 10 schools with mixed enrolment and no water and sanitation facilities, the total girls enrolled outnumbered boys.

Classroom furniture adequacy was difficult to quantify: It was not clear whether tables and chairs were only for teachers' use or used as alternatives to desks. If the furniture was intended for student use, as many as 71 per cent of the schools might have an adequate supply of basic classroom furniture. If these tables and chairs were not intended for student use, the number of schools with adequate writing surfaces fell to 40 per cent. Therefore, it is possible that completing written assignments is extremely challenging for many students.

Few schools indicated they could accommodate students with disabilities. Respondents suggested that children with disabilities should be placed in special schools or special classes. Some responded they could teach them only if the building were modified, additional equipment provided, specialist teachers provided and/or training given to current staff. Only two principals stated they could possibly include the children in regular classes.

Surprisingly, 21 per cent of principals stated that transport services were always or sometimes available for their students. This is rather counterintuitive. If many schools struggled with furniture shortages, it would be unlikely they would have vehicles at their disposals. Further investigation is needed to understand the nature of these services.

## 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. From the surveys, respondents revealed:

- Fifty-four per cent of schools used Government of Syria's curriculum; 43 per cent used the SIG curriculum; and some schools incorporated a "religious" curriculum or included religious elements into the curriculum.
- Sixty-four per cent of local council representatives indicated a preference for the SIG curriculum, and only 17 per cent preferred the official curriculum.
- Opposition groups making changes to the curriculum in their areas of control were accused by some of undermining the concept of Syria as a national and geographic entity.
- In parents' groups, 34 per cent preferred the official curriculum, with 31 per cent preferring the SIG curriculum. Six per cent favoured the religious curriculum; these respondents appeared to understand the religious curriculum as a complete alternative to the official and SIG curricula.
- The strong support for the official curriculum in opposition-controlled areas may be attributed to a desire for children to obtain certificates officially recognized by the Government of Syria.
- In the open-ended response section, almost all comments expressed dissatisfaction with whatever curriculum was offered. Respondents desired a curriculum that was "improved", "more modern", "developed by specialists", "appropriate to the community's culture", "standardised", "shorter" or "less complicated". There was one request for "some educational subjects" to be dropped; there were several requests for subjects to be added, including foreign languages, crafts, practical subjects, information technology, art, music, public health and first aid.

For children who left school without obtaining a Grade 12 certificates, parents wished that there had been vocational training opportunities available so that their children could find work in areas such as carpentry, motor mechanics, electricity and blacksmithing.

Respondents suggested curricula should be more practical, with appropriate equipment available to the teachers. One students' group requested shorter lessons and longer breaks, while another asked for an increase in the length of the school day. A parents' group echoed the call for a longer school day.

Head teachers were asked about the subjects taught at their schools. The most common subjects taught (Arabic, geography and mathematics) were taught at over 80 per cent of the schools. English, history, religion and science were taught at 70 per cent or more of the schools. Civics was not taught at 90 per cent of the schools: It was regarded irrelevant and/or schools were forbidden to teach it. Home economics, philosophy and psychology were also described as no longer relevant. The availability of computer studies was affected by a lack of equipment, while English, French, history and religion were most affected by a lack of qualified teachers. Fourteen per cent of the schools reported that they were also teaching other subjects, such as the Kurdish language or the Holy Qur'an, but most schools did not specify the extra subjects.

Forty-three per cent of the surveyed schools did not offer any extracurricular activities, and only nine per cent offered three or more activities. Surprisingly, even though recreational activities are important for a child's well-being, only 30 per cent of schools offered sport or games.

Teachers need sufficient contact with students to fully cover the curriculum, and it is clear having proper amounts of instructional time is a challenge. School days are often shortened for security reasons, or to accommodate a second shift, making it difficult for teachers to complete the curriculum. Forty-six per cent of the surveyed schools reported a daily first (or only) shift of five hours, with 13 per cent having a longer school day and 32 per cent a shorter day. Where there was a second shift, it ranged in length between three and five hours. The amount of teaching time further depends on the number of days in the week that the school is open for tuition. While five days a week was the norm in the schools survey, 10 reported they were open six or more days a week and two for only four days a week.

Head teachers were not asked to provide the number of days lost every year due to unscheduled closures. However, in the event of a closure, bombardment of the school and/or neighbourhood was the most commonly listed reason (53 per cent of head teachers reported this). Weather conditions were mentioned by 40 per cent of respondents, and a lack of heat, water or power by 38 per cent. Local fighting (32 per cent) came next, followed by no pay for teachers (27 per cent). Only nine schools reported that they had not lost school days through unscheduled closure.

## Training, professional development, and support

The literature does not report how teachers are initially trained or provide data on teacher competence since the crisis began. There only exists mentions of organizations providing a small amount of training to teachers on pedagogy, education in emergencies 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. The programme, however, does not appear to have been sustained, possibly because of the crisis.

Head teachers consistently referred to one particular need: The proper training of "new" teachers, presumably those who do not hold the required teaching qualifications. Moreover, when asked what skills their teachers lacked, principals responded with:

1 Classroom management, at the top of the list (56 per cent);

2 Teaching in a crisis environment (48 per cent); and

3 Planning, pedagogy and presentation (47 per cent).

Teachers, on the other hand, were less concerned than their principals about their classroom management, ranking the stress of teaching in a crisis environment at the top of their list:

1 Teaching in a crisis environment (62 per cent);

2 Planning, pedagogy and presentation (54 per cent);

3 Teaching traumatized children (52 per cent);

4 Reacting in an emergency (43 per cent); and

5 Classroom management (37 per cent).

It is possible that teachers regard their deficiencies in classroom management a direct result of the crisis and not a result of their personal abilities.

Additionally, teachers expected "high-level experts" to train them and recognized certificate provided at the end. This perspective should be addressed, for it precludes teachers from being receptive to training, criticism and feedback from their peers, many of whom have valuable skills to share.

When asked about what head teachers felt were their three greatest training needs, paid and unpaid (volunteering) head teachers responded differently. Paid head teachers identified education in emergencies as their greatest training need, followed by managing trauma, and "leadership and negotiation". Unpaid head teachers named managing trauma as their greatest training need, followed by "leadership and negotiation" and education in emergencies. It is a concern that leadership and negotiation appears on these lists, as these skills should already be held by principals, especially the paid ones.

Students' groups complained that teachers did not explain information sufficiently, did not take missed schooling into account when teaching, used "very traditional" methods and were too frequently absent.

## 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.[20] Indeed, parents' groups named the poor quality of education as a primary reason for why students were not in school.

One factor influencing teaching effectiveness is the number of students for which a teacher is responsible. In at least 79 per cent of the schools the student-to-teacher ratio did not exceed 25 students per teacher. However, the actual number of students in a class would depend also on factors such as the teacher's subject specialization. The information provided does not allow firm conclusions to be drawn.

Thirty-two per cent of teachers referred to developmental differences and bullying (28 per cent) as being challenges to class management.

Each classroom was, on average, shared by two teachers. Often, classes were not taught simultaneously. Thus, unless some of these teachers were teaching assistants, no teacher in a single-shift school was spending more than half the day in the classroom on average. This would mean that during a 30-hour working week, teachers are with students for no more than 15 hours. Another alarming finding is that within Aleppo, there was a double-shift school where each classroom was shared by an average of 6.3 teachers. In Idleb, there was a single-shift school where 5.5 teachers, on average, shared a room. Further investigation is needed on how teaching responsibilities are allocated and what differences there are from school to school.

Effective teaching is partially dependent on the availability of equipment and supplies. Only 46 per cent of surveyed schools had writing boards described as adequate.[21]

For textbooks and stationery, respectively, only 30 per cent and 22 per cent of schools had adequate supplies. To address textbook shortages, teachers summarized textbook contents on the board and/or reused old textbooks. Assuming students have stationery, copying textbook content from the board reduces educational quality, as more class time is spent writing down content instead of reinforcing it through discussion and interaction between teacher and students. Moreover, fewer than 20 per cent of the schools had an adequate stock of teaching aids. Depending on the subject, the teacher's task might become near-impossible without these tools, such as maps for geography lessons and laboratory apparatus for science lessons. Equipment and materials shortages might be the result of damage to, or

[20] 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

[21] "Adequate" is presumed to mean that the board area is at least about a square metre in extent, that the teacher has chalk or markers with which to write on the board, and that the surface is such that students at the back of the class can easily read what has been written. For schools reporting they had inadequate boards, it may be that respondents had perfectly adequate boards, but only in some of their rooms.

looting of, schools, as well as the burning of print shops and warehouses. Internally displaced persons might have fled without taking their school materials with them. Survey respondents also mentioned that supplies were difficult to obtain because of transportation difficulties. Furthermore, the devaluation of the Syrian currency would have made it more difficult for the authorities to finance supplies.

More than 80 per cent of parents' groups said they consulted with teachers about their child. Participation rates in school meetings was lower, but this could be attributed to the infrequency of meetings being held. Over 70 per cent of the students' groups said that their parents helped them with their homework. This mostly aligns with what parents reported: Between 80 and 100 per cent of the parents' groups across all governorates claimed to help children with their homework (with the exception of Lattakia Governorate, where only one third reported they helped children with their homework). However, these percentages may not be representative of parents in general, as it is possible parents who chose to participate in this study have a higher commitment to their children's learning. Indeed, fewer than 30 per cent of teachers' groups believed that "all or the majority" of parents either assisted their children with homework or acted on feedback on their children's work.

Teachers mentioned that their motivation to continue teaching was strengthened when the community gifted equipment and materials. It is recommended the community continue to provide this kind of support, if feasible. International donors should provide textbooks, stationery and teaching kits.

For children unable to attend a regular school for reasons of safety or health, a self-learning programme in core subjects from the official Government of Syria curriculum was developed jointly in 2013 by the MoE, UNICEF and UNRWA. These materials can be used in areas where parents consider it unsafe for their children to attend school. Community learning centres (CLCs) have also been envisaged, as students can visit these CLCs from time to time for additional support. The community would be encouraged to play a role in managing, implementing and monitoring the use of the materials. For such a programme to be attractive to parents and students, it should allow the student to reintegrate into the formal school system or to enter for national certificate examinations.

## 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 (both government- and opposition-controlled) are allowed to take their examinations at other centres. However, this has not always been safe or possible. Additionally, students attending schools in areas not controlled by the Government of Syria may be unable to take the official examination entirely.

There are also concerns by children and parents about education certificate recognition. Since the 2012/13 school year, the SIG has conducted Grade 9 and 12 examinations based on a modified curriculum.[22] However, certificates issued for this exam are not recognized by the Government of Syria. Syrian refugee children and their parents outside the country are expressing their own concerns, for they follow the curriculum and take exams based on their host country's standards. These refugee families outside of Syria worry that they will be treated similarly to those in opposition-controlled areas, and the Government of Syria will not recognize the education certificates from host countries.

In opposition-controlled areas, completing formal exams is particularly challenging, as most students must travel to another centre to take their examinations. Fifty-four per cent of teachers' groups identified threats to the safety during travel as the greatest barrier, and 43 per cent identified the logistics as a problem. Twenty-seven per cent of the groups noted that the certificate might not be recognized, and just under 30 per cent mentioned the additional costs which the student would have to bear for transport and accommodation while away from home as barriers.

[22] During the 2012/13 school year, the Higher Commission for Education, an educational entity that functioned as a Syrian education ministry abroad prior to the formation of the SIG, conducted Grade 9 and 12 examinations based on a modified curriculum. In the following years, the MoE of the SIG was designated to conduct these examinations and take over all education related issues.

The MoE's statistics for national certificate examinations and number of successful candidates over a four-year period clearly demonstrate 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).

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.

When teachers' groups were asked to identify the most serious factors negatively affecting student success, they most frequently identified being "behind" in the curriculum (34 per cent) and migration (25 per cent). Notably, 17 per cent of teachers cited a lack of examination materials, suggesting that, in these circumstances, no student was able to take exams to advance to the next grade.

Seventy-eight per cent of head teachers reported that report cards were regularly issued. In areas where this was not the case, the reasons given were that materials were not available or that these grades would not be recognized.

Parents expressed concern about the lack of opportunities for, and the risks of, tertiary (or university) education. Registering at an institution in an area under government control is perceived as unsafe. Moreover, studying abroad might be financially beyond the means of the family. The need for tertiary training institutions in opposition-controlled areas was stressed.

School leavers, or those who have completed secondary education, experienced great difficulty when trying to secure employment. This applied even to those who received a certificate for their examinations. Forty-seven per cent of parents' groups complained that there were no opportunities available for those with a certificate, neither for further study nor for securing a job; eight per cent complained that the opportunities were "few". Those parents who hinted at the possibility of work mentioned freelancing, volunteering, teaching, or joining a military group. According to parent respondents, the inability of young people to find a job or to study further is a concern. The boys might "kill time by playing cards and loafing in the streets", while the girls "wait for a good husband".

## 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.

At surveyed schools, 78 per cent of the teachers were qualified.[23] For those teaching primary grades (Grades 1 to 6) 73 per cent were qualified, with the percentages for lower secondary (Grade 7 to 9) and upper secondary (Grades 10 to 12) respectively 78 per cent and 89 per cent.

Thirty-eight per cent of schools had a fully qualified teaching staff, and 27 per cent had a largely qualified teaching staff (between 70 and 90 per cent were qualified). Ten schools had a highly unqualified staff (less than a quarter of teachers were qualified).

When examining the gender makeup of teachers and head teachers, it was found that there were slightly more female education professionals than males. Overall, the teaching force was 54 per cent female. This slight majority was somewhat reflected within individual schools. Forty-three per cent of the 122 schools had a gender parity index (GPI) of 1.2 or more, meaning these schools had a female-majority teaching staff. Eleven per cent had a GPI falling within the range of 0.9-1.1, indicating near quality. Only 21 per cent of schools reported a male-majority teaching staff (GPI less than 0.9), 11.5 per cent had a male-only teaching staff and 6.5 per cent of schools reported a female-only teaching staff.

When respondents had the opportunity to raise general concerns, there were, noticeably, few comments about the teaching staff's gender. At only three of the 122 schools (from one school principal and two students' groups) were there requests for female teachers instructing female students. None of the eight schools with single-sex classrooms made any reference to their teaching staff's gender.

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 (education authorities in opposition-controlled areas would, understandably, not be able to access this database).

## 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 another note, the literature also reports that some teachers attended non-functioning schools to continue receiving a salary, as a 15-day absence cuts the teacher off from payroll.

Seventy-seven per cent of head teachers reported that all, or most, of their teachers were at school when they should be. This is a surprising survey result, given that teacher absenteeism is considered a problem. Because the survey did not collect formal data from other school staff, who keep formal records of actual teacher attendance, it is hard to verify what these principals report.

[23] "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.

When head teachers were asked about why teachers were most often absent, respondents reported:

1. Illness (52 per cent);
2. Financial difficulties (44 per cent);
3. Security issues (38 per cent); and
4. Personal reasons (30 per cent).

The number of days missed was not recorded. One head teacher stated substitute teachers for staff paid by the Government of Syria "during their extended absences to collect their pay" were needed. Many teachers have to travel significant distances to receive their payment. These trips not only detract from class time, but they also present safety threats and the risk of detention.

Twenty per cent of head teachers reported teachers missed school because of another job. This corroborates the aforementioned survey finding, as "financial difficulties" was the second-most cited reason for teacher absences. Thus, it is clear that adequate, regular remuneration affects many teachers' commitment. Indeed, a teachers' group drew attention to the need for financial and material support for poor teachers.[24] Furthermore, another group reported that teachers were shown less respect than formerly because they had to rely on handouts (irregular, unpredictable material and financial offers from others).

Teachers were also asked to list the three most important reasons that motivated them to continue their work. Unsurprisingly, almost 90 per cent of the teachers' groups stated income. However, over 60 per cent stated a commitment to work with children, and over 40 per cent stated a commitment to help their country.

It should be noted that not all teachers in opposition-controlled areas are paid and the gender analysis of paid workers does not reflect full equality. Forty-one per cent of the 1,281 paid teachers were female and 68 per cent of the 1,103 unpaid teachers were female.

For teachers receiving payment, almost half received their salary from the Government of Syria, and a quarter received remuneration from NGOs.[25] Others received pay from a local authority or from a private benefactor. Less than five per cent received salaries from the SIG. Many principals reported untimely payments. Only 20 per cent respondents described payment as "always on time" and just over 20 per cent reported "more often (than not) on time".

The extent to which the same teachers were teaching both shifts at double shift schools is not clear from the school survey data.

Teachers felt that the local and wider community motivate them by supporting them, the students, and the school. Support for students would be encouraging their attendance and strengthening discipline. Support from the wider community might be in the form of financial aid and improving security.

Teachers expected support from the local community to be moral support. From the wider community, it would take the form of guaranteeing their remuneration. There was also an expectation that the wider community could provide training.

## 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.

[24] Teachers whose finances are stretched extremely thinly, often for a variety of reasons.

[25] It is not yet known how the Government of Syria pays teachers in opposition-controlled areas.

## 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.

## 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 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 for both years.

# 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, which in turn encourages the larger community to take action.

The Education Cluster and 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 Education Cluster. 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. Education Cluster 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.

Education authorities in opposition areas should 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.

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.

## 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.

At the school and local levels, communities have done little to ensure workable emergency plans exist. Schools should draw up such plans in collaboration with parents, students and community members. The plans should be practised regularly, and training should be provided on first aid, firefighting and other safety procedures. The Education Cluster should prepare a templated emergency plan for schools and advise schools on how to adapt it with partner organizations.

Discrimination and bullying appear to be more widespread in schools than teachers are aware of or willing to admit. Dealing with external threats to safety is more difficult when the students and teachers cannot rely on one another for support. Thus, group discussions should be organized for both school personnel and youth to address discrimination. The education sector, in collaboration with the child protection sector, should prepare guidelines on conducting these discussions. Because more than half of these parents' groups did not identify either students or teachers as victimizers, further investigation is needed on who the bullies are and what forms bullying takes.

Physical, emotional and verbal abuse occur in a number of classrooms. Every school should have a code of conduct, which has been negotiated with students, staff and parents. Teachers should receive training in staff meetings on how to implement the code without resorting to abusive behaviour.

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 cope with their trauma are unlikely to engage effectively in learning. At this point, it is not clear whether schools regard recreational and extracurricular activities as a form of psychosocial support. Currently, many schools do not regularly offer psychosocial support, recreational activities or extracurricular activities. It is encouraged that schools offer at least supportive group sessions to students and staff. Moreover, education sector partners seem to have done very little to facilitate these services. 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. Education authorities should make schools aware of procedures to help seriously stressed staff members and students.

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

School management and parents should prepare a prioritized list of rehabilitation projects and furniture required. In this list, projects that can be completed by community members should be identified. These plans should work towards achieving classrooms with sufficient seating and tables. Efforts should be made to ensure adequate water and sanitation facilities are available.

Students were critical of the lack of cleanliness in the school buildings and environment. Users of school facilities should assume responsibility for keeping the environment clean and attractive. Ideas should be generated by students, teachers and parents, and plans should be drawn for an initial clean up, followed by routine attention to cleanliness.

### CURRICULA

There appears to have been a number of curriculum adaptations, which may render students unprepared for national examinations. More seriously, the shortening of the school day, together with overcrowding of classrooms and shortages of equipment and materials may make it impossible for teachers to cover the full curriculum in a meaningful way.

Schools should ensure that they are fully covering the curriculum in core subjects and other topics that will be tested in certificate examinations. 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, if conditions allow, extending school hours to ensure students should be considered.

### 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 in both government-controlled areas and opposition-controlled areas 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 need to be effective. 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.

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. Education Cluster members, 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.

### 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.

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.

At surveyed schools, 78 per cent of the teachers were qualified. For those teaching primary grades (Grades 1 to 6) 73 per cent were qualified, with the percentages for lower secondary (Grade 7 to 9) and upper secondary (Grades 10 to 12) respectively 78 per cent and 89 per cent.

When examining the gender makeup of teachers and head teachers, it was found that there were slightly more female education professionals than males. Overall, the teaching force was 54 per cent female. This slight majority was somewhat reflected within individual schools. Forty-three per cent of the 122 schools had a GPI of 1.2 or more, meaning these schools had a female-majority teaching staff. Eleven per cent had a GPI falling within the range of 0.9-1.1, indicating near gender parity. Only

21 per cent of schools reported a male-majority teaching staff (GPI less than 0.9), 11.5 per cent had a male-only teaching staff and 6.5 per cent of schools reported a female-only teaching staff.

When respondents had the opportunity to raise general concerns, there were, noticeably, few comments about the teaching staff's gender. At only three of the 122 schools (from one principal and two students' groups) were there requests for female teachers instructing female students. None of the eight schools with single-sex classrooms made any reference to their teaching staff's gender.

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 (education authorities in opposition-controlled areas would, understandably, not be able to access this database).

### CONDITIONS OF WORK

Many teachers in opposition-controlled areas struggled because of erratic payments, or no compensation entirely. 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.

Because they face many difficult classroom challenges, teachers would appreciate more consistent support from parents. Teachers should meet with parents and discuss ways in which collaboration may be strengthened to help children.

### 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.

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 certificates allowing them to proceed to tertiary studies without having to put their lives at risk.

### 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.

# Introduction

Five years after the Syrian crisis began in March 2011, over 250,000 people have been killed and over one million injured.[26] An estimated 13.5 million people are now in need of some form of humanitarian assistance. More than half of the population, a total of 6.5 million people, of which 2.8 million are children, have been forced to leave their homes, and many have suffered multiple displacements.[27] 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.[28] The out-flux of children is quite worrisome, for if they do not return to school, the loss of human capital 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.[29] 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 Syria's development has regressed by as much as four decades.[30] 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.[31]

Social services in Syria, including schooling, have been compromised by the crisis through the destruction of infrastructure, the devaluation of the Syrian currency, major population shifts and the loss of life. The experience of war and disruption in family routines have exerted psychosocial pressure 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.[32, 33] Overall, Syria ranked fifth of the seven countries in the region in adult literacy for both school years ending in 2011 and 2012.[34] Syria's female literacy rate is six percentage points lower than the total literacy rate.

In terms of primary school enrolment, Syria has the highest GER of the seven countries.[35]

[26] About the Crisis.

[27] HRP 2016.

[28] 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.

[29] Economic Loss.

[30] HRP 2016.

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

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

[33] These figures have their limitations – comparing data from different sources is difficult, as different interpretations 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.

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

[35] 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 upon this summary 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 122 schools in opposition-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 122 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/

# 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.[36]

## 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.

[36] 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[37] | |
| | 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.

[37] 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*).

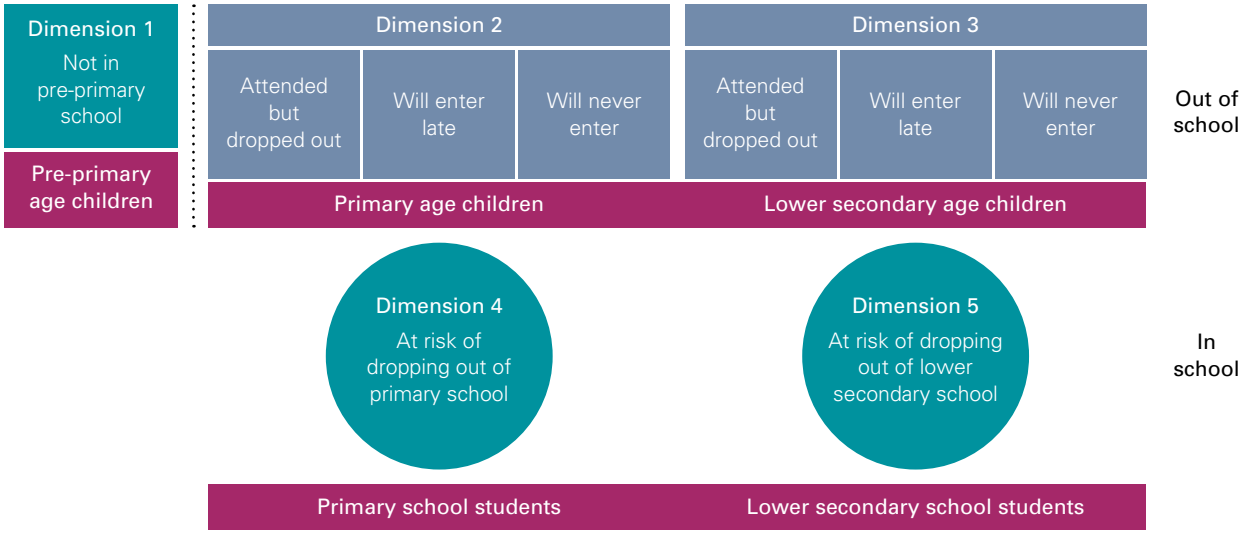
Dimension 1 covers out-of-school children of pre-primary age children not attending school. This report departs from the standard UIS definition of kindergarten-going age being from ages three-to five-years-old. Because kindergarten is not fully developed and mainstreamed in Syria, this report's Dimension 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[38]

[38] 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[39] and 4.2 million have become refugees.[40] 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.[41] 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.[42] 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).[43]

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").[44]

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.

[38] See: http://www.unicef.org/education/files/OOSCI_flyer_FINAL.pdf, accessed 10 September 2014.
[39] HRP 2016.
[40] HRP 2016.
[41] Available at: http://esa.un.org/wpp/unpp/panel_population.htm, accessed 10 September 2014.
[42] Available at: http://www.census.gov/population/international/data/idb/informationGateway.php, accessed 10 September 2014.
[43] Available at: http://www.cbssyr.sy/index-EN.htm, accessed 10 September 2014.
[44] "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,[45] 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.

[45] 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[46]

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 |

[46] 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.[47] 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[48]

| 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

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

[48] 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 |

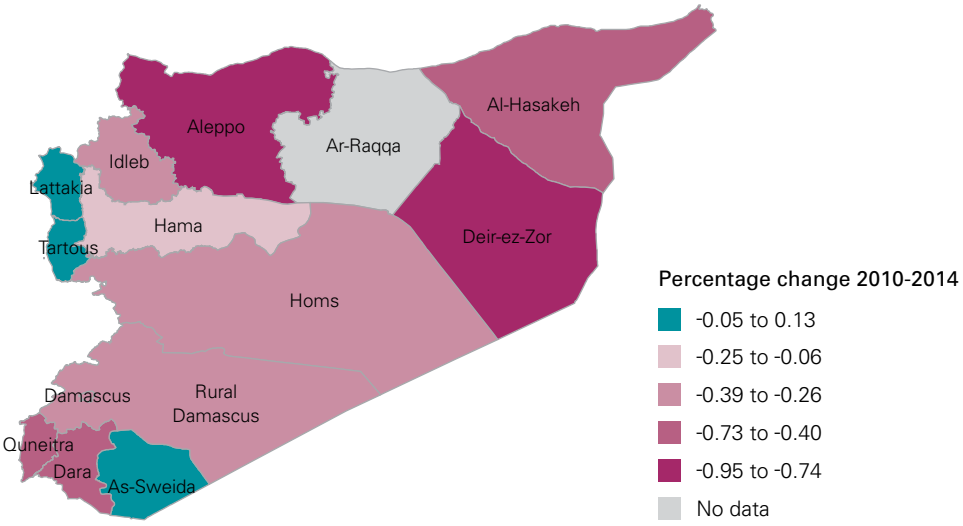
**Source:** EMIS, MoE

**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

| | NUMBER OF STUDENTS | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GOVERNORATE | 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.[49]

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.

[49] 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 Dara falling to 16.2 per cent.[50] 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

[50] 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.[51] Most of this decline was a consequence of large closures in Damascus (especially in Al Moukhaiam)[52] 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.

[51] The analysis of UNRWA schools is limited to 2011-2014 due to data restriction.
[52] 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.[53]

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.

[53] 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).[54] 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.

[54] 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, 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.[55] The decreases in schools are concentrated in a few governorates: Of the 86 districts[56] 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).

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

[56] 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,[57] 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

[57] 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* | | | (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) | | |
| 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.[58] 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.

[58] 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 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

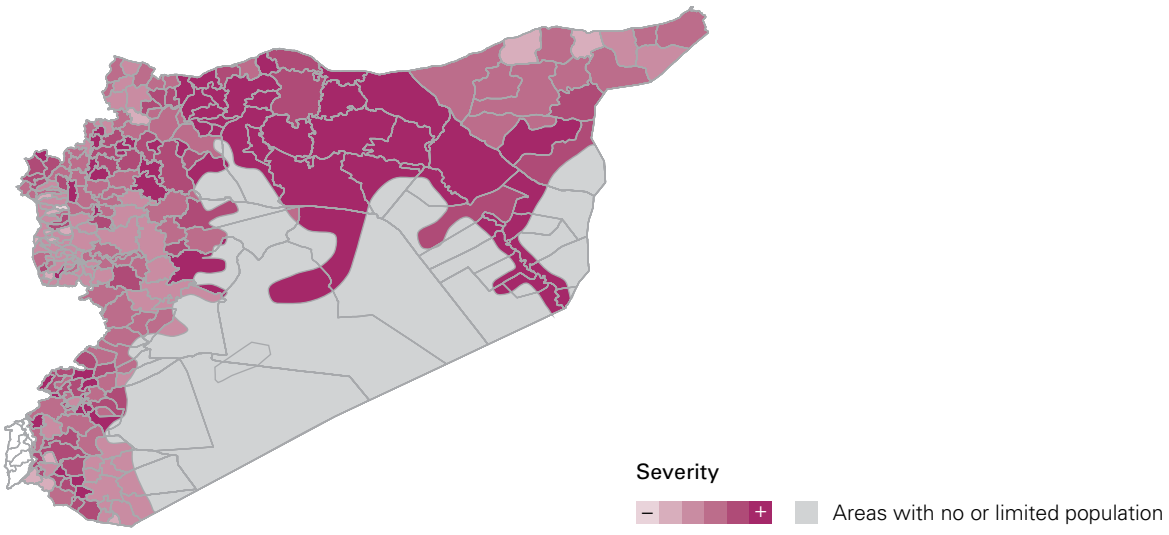

Table 1.47 Estimated population by severity scale of sub-district

| 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.[59, 60] 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 children are 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.[61] 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.

[59] 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.

[60] "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).

[61] 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 primary qualitative data collected in May 2015 from 122 schools in opposition-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. This study did not use statistically random sampling. Thus, results cannot be extrapolated and generalizations cannot be formed. Instead, the study applied convenience sampling, selecting schools based on safe access for enumerators. However, even though statistically sound generalizations cannot be formed, the data highlight many meaningful and important obstacles to providing high quality, universal education in Syria.[62]

### Design of qualitative data analysis

Face-to-face interviews with school personnel and stakeholders in opposition-controlled areas of Syria 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 Gaziantep-based Education Cluster.[63] Organizations affiliated with the Cluster provided enumerating staff members. These staff members were trained in data collection protocols. Schools were all located in areas where one or more Cluster members performed humanitarian and education work. To prevent enumerators and stakeholders from being put at risk, plans to interview at seven schools were cancelled.[64] Delays in preparing materials and training enumerators led to the data collection occurring during the final two weeks of the 2014/15 academic year, which is not an ideal time for schools, as they are focused on routine end-of-year activities. In total, 708 questionnaires were completed, entered and translated into English for an Excel analysis by an external consultant.[65]

Surveys focused on the school. Guided interviews were conducted with head teachers; focus group discussions were held separately with groups of teachers, parents and children/students; and local council representatives were interviewed. 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.

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

[63] The Education Cluster evolved from the Education Sector Working Group (EWG) for Syria.

[64] For one of the schools withdrawn for security reasons, it was possible to substitute another school. Four schools were dropped because the enumerators were not able to reach them before they closed for vacation. Two declined to participate because the teachers did not wish to jeopardize their salaries from the Government of Syria. Three gave no reasons. In all, 16 schools were dropped from the original list and one was added.

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

Table 2.1 summarizes the locations of the 122 schools surveyed. Five of the 14 governorates were not included in the survey. More than half the schools were drawn from two governorates (Aleppo and Idleb). Ninety-four schools were regular community or neighbourhood schools, while 15 were in informal settlements, and six in formal camps[66] for internally displaced persons.[67]

### Table 2.1 Geographic location of the schools included in the survey

| GOVERNORATE | NUMBER OF | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | DISTRICTS | SUBDISTRICTS | SCHOOLS |
| Aleppo | 6 | 12 | 41 |
| Al-Hasakeh | 2 | 3 | 9 |
| Damascus | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Dara | 2 | 5 | 11 |
| Hama | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Idleb | 4 | 11 | 33 |
| Lattakia | 2 | 2 | 6 |
| Quneitra | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Rural Damascus | 4 | 5 | 14 |
| **Grand Total** | 23 | 41 | 122 |

Table 2.2 provides a summary of completed questionnaires. Teachers' and parents' focus group discussions were held at all 122 schools. For five of these schools, no head teacher interview sheet was returned. One school was treated as two (one primary and one secondary school), for the purposes of the children's focus group discussion. The number of interviews conducted with local council representatives is smaller because members were often responsible for areas containing multiple schools. Councils for Al-Hasakeh (which oversees nine surveyed schools) and the Afrin district in Aleppo (which oversees two schools) declined to be interviewed.

### Table 2.2 Overview of completed questionnaires

| GOVERNORATE | SCHOOLS | NUMBER OF COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | LOCAL COUNCIL FACT SHEET | LOCAL COUNCIL INTERVIEW | HEAD TEACHER FACT SHEET | HEAD TEACHER INTERVIEW | FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH TEACHERS | FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH PARENTS | FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN |
| Aleppo | 41 | 14 | 18 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 41 | 42 |
| Al-Hasakeh | 9 | | | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| Damascus | 4 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Dara | 11 | 5 | 5 | 11 | 10 | 11 | 11 | 11 |
| Hama | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Idleb | 33 | 22 | 20 | 32 | 30 | 33 | 33 | 33 |
| Lattakia | 6 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Quneitra | 3 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Rural Damascus | 14 | 4 | 4 | 14 | 14 | 14 | 14 | 14 |
| **Grand Total** | **122** | **52** | **53** | **119** | **117** | **122** | **122** | **123** |

[66] Camps refer to formally established camps for internally displaced persons. Settlements refer to informal settlements that can spontaneously form as internally displaced persons move. These informal settlements can then transform into formal camps if humanitarian agencies, government or opposition groups step in.

[67] For seven schools, the nature of the locality was not stated.

Local council representatives interviewed were almost exclusively male. Only in three of the 51 interviews for which the gender was recorded were female interviewees present. For head teachers, it was envisaged that only one person would be interviewed at each school; however, at 23 of the schools, two or more people participated in the interview. In 21 instances, those interviewed were women, and in 77 interviews, the participants were men. At least six interviews included male and female participants. Eighteen of the teachers' groups had only female members; 42 had only males; and 49 were mixed.[68] Mothers mainly participated in parent focus groups: 100 groups had only mothers, nine only fathers and five groups were mixed.[69] At least 631 parents, of whom at least 564 were women, joined these groups. The children's discussion groups comprised 495 girls and 531 boys with 20 girls-only groups, 24 all-boys and 77 mixed groups.[70] The numbers draw from primary, secondary, and combined schools, respectively (*see Table 2.3*).[71]

Table 2.3 Gender of participants in children's focus group discussions

| | PRIMARY SCHOOLS | | COMBINED SCHOOLS | | SECONDARY SCHOOLS | | TOTAL | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GOVERNORATE | GIRLS | BOYS | GIRLS | BOYS | GIRLS | BOYS | GIRLS | BOYS |
| Aleppo | 86 | 112 | 24 | 10 | 22 | 59 | 143 | 193 |
| Al-Hasakeh | 20 | 9 | | 6 | 17 | 20 | 37 | 35 |
| Damascus | 12 | 8 | | 8 | | | 12 | 16 |
| Dara | 12 | 30 | | | 2 | 21 | 14 | 51 |
| Hama | 3 | 3 | | | | | 3 | 3 |
| Idleb | 57 | 54 | 56 | 49 | 37 | 40 | 159 | 150 |
| Lattakia | 20 | 14 | | | 11 | 8 | 31 | 22 |
| Quneitra | 22 | 8 | | | 9 | 9 | 31 | 17 |
| Rural Damascus | 12 | 15 | 6 | 14 | 39 | 15 | 65 | 44 |
| **Grand Total** | **244** | **253** | **86** | **87** | **137** | **172** | **495** | **531** |

It was intended to have children of similar age surveyed together, thus avoiding older children dominating discussions. From the ages recorded by the enumerators, it would seem this guideline was frequently ignored, or that ages were not always correctly recorded.

The youngest children in primary school groups ranged from 5 to 15 years of age, with the oldest group members ranging from 9 to 18 years. Even for out-of-school children who had returned to school, 18 years seems rather old for primary school. For combined schools, the youngest group members were from 6 to 13 years of age and the oldest from 11 to 18. Ages for children in secondary grades range from 6 to 20, with eight groups recording the age of the youngest group member as being below 10, which, if correct, would mean that the children had entered the first grade before the age of 4 years.

Many questionnaires were not fully completed, and some doubtful responses had to be excluded from consideration.

The survey has demonstrated how much time and effort have to be devoted to a systematic attempt to collect data. Time spent on collecting and processing information means less time for implementing programmes; thus, for future attempts, an acceptable balance between the two should be struck.

[68] Gender was not reported for the other groups.
[69] Eight groups did not report gender.
[70] Gender was not reported for two groups.
[71] A further 28 girls and 19 boys participated in discussions at schools which did not report their grade levels.

## Report structure

This qualitative analysis is organized under the INEE framework for education. 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.[72] 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.[73]

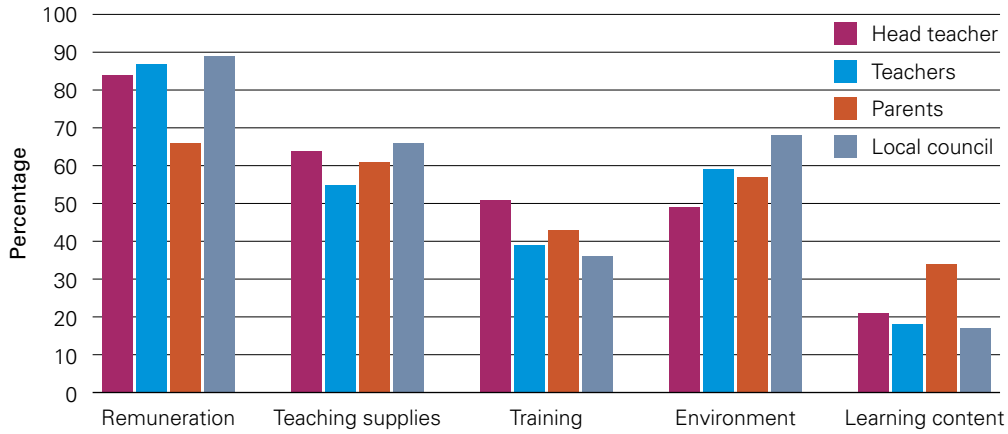
Some of the information collected might fit under more than one of the standards;[74] it has been placed where most appropriate in the context of the present analysis.

# 2 Cross-cutting concerns

Several responses cut across multiple INEE domains. These are the answers to questions such as "What are the top three priorities for improving education?" Figure 2.1 identifies the top five priorities mentioned by local council representatives, head teachers, teachers' groups and parents' groups, respectively.[75] Over 80 per cent of the local councils, head teachers, and teachers ranked teachers' remuneration as the top priority, with over 60 per cent of the parents in agreement. Teaching supplies and the school environment were ranked second and third, respectively, with training for school staff and learning content following. Support for the school from community and parents were ranked sixth and seventh with less than 20 per cent support, with other priorities suggested by the respondents contributing a negligible weight to the overall picture. The top five priorities all relate to what happens in the classroom:

- Teachers who do not receive their pay are not likely to be enthusiastic about teaching.
- Without appropriate equipment and adequate training, teachers cannot get messages across to students.
- Children will be unable to engage in a school environment that is unsafe or disorganized.
- At a somewhat lower priority levels are concerns about the relevance of learning content in relation to children's needs.

Figure 2.1 Percentage of groups identifying specific priorities to improve education




[72] INEE, p.5.

[73] INEE, p.2.

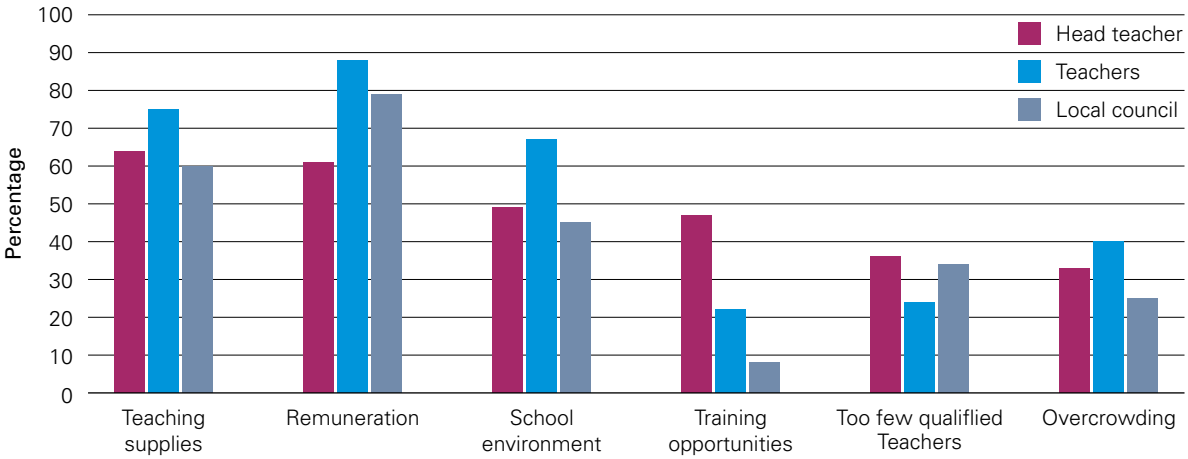
[74] As a reminder, the INEE Minimum Standards consist of five domains with standards underneath each one. The first domain, the "foundational standards," involves community participation, community coordination and community analysis. The second domain covers "access and learning environment", setting three minimum standards: Equal access; protection and well-being; and facilities and services. 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.

[75] Data from Annex D.16, F.42, G.37, H.17. The ranking is according to the head teachers' priorities.

Although "environment" is ranked fourth by head teachers, teachers and the local councils placed it in second place, above teaching supplies, and parents regarded it as more important than training.

Head teachers and teachers were asked about the main challenges facing the school.[76] Inadequate remuneration topped the list, with shortages of teaching supplies and deficiencies of the school environment coming next. Although head teachers saw training opportunities as the way to improve teaching competence, teachers and local councils seemed less concerned with training than with being "qualified". "Overcrowding", placed sixth by head teachers, was ranked fourth by those who have to manage overly large classes every day. If "overcrowding", taken as implying a shortage of classrooms, and the unsafe school environment are taken with the other deficiencies of the school environment, this aspect would top the list.[77] Along with the teachers, local councils placed the remuneration of teachers at the top of their list of challenges, with teaching supplies coming second.[78]

Figure 2.2 Identified challenges to education




When asked what else should be done to improve education in the area, local council representatives covered a wide range of topics, with three predominating: Upgrading the competence or qualifications of teachers, providing some level of remuneration to teachers, and providing psychosocial support to students and teachers.[79] When asked whether there were any other matters they wished to raise, the dominant concern was school certificates delivered in opposition-controlled areas not being recognized and the lack of access to tertiary education.[80]

In the following sections these priorities and challenges will be explored in greater detail.

# 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.

[76] Annex F.36.
[77] Annex G.18.
[78] Annex D.11.
[79] Annex D.13.
[80] Annex D.17.

## 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."[81]

According to the secondary literature, because crises 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.[82]

Eleven local councils out of the 53 reported that the number of internally displaced children in their area could be equivalent to as much as a quarter of the resident children; seven councils gave this figure as between a quarter and a half; and five gave even higher proportions, up to five displaced children for every resident child.[83] In these cases, the community's sense of identity has been redefined considerably and must be rebuilt. Through working together to address the crisis, the members should become conscious of their common membership to a locality and the responsibilities this brings.

Sometimes, the willingness to participate is complicated when newcomers 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.[84] 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.[85]

In contrast, within some communities, an identity and positive sense of ownership can 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.[86] 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."[87]

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.[88] This led to a sense of insecurity from refugees.[89] Newcomers have also been perceived as competitors for jobs, thus threatening host communities.[90] 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,[91] these observations are likely to apply to communities with large influxes 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.[92]

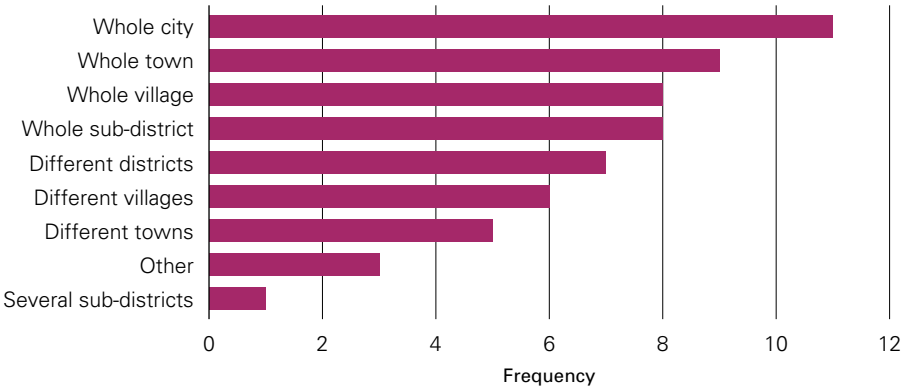
[81] INEE, p.20.
[82] INEE, p.20.
[83] Annex C.1.
[84] UNICEF Za'atari, p.10.
[85] UNICEF Za'atari, p.25.
[86] Under Siege, p.3.
[87] INEE, p.25.
[88] UNICEF Lebanon, pp.28-29.
[89] UNICEF Lebanon, p.29: "The level of attention the Syrians were getting from the government and civil society angered many Lebanese."
[90] UNICEF Lebanon, p.29.
[91] UNHCR.
[92] SRRP, p.26.

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.[93] It is also implied that school councils are currently engaged with communities to support school activities.[94]

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. With regard to survey responses, references to the "community" made few direct references to the local council. References to collaboration or cooperation with the school most frequently referred to the smaller community of school staff, parents and students. However, one source identified "the residents" as having a key role to play; another noted that religious leaders could encourage the community to support the education process.[95]

Representatives of 53 local councils were interviewed. In most cases, two or more of the surveyed schools were situated within the area of responsibility of a single local council. Figure 2.3 indicates a single council's responsibilities, which ranges from a single village/larger urban settlement to several settlements or even an entire sub-district or district.[96] Some of these areas appear extensive, which could account for there being little contact between the council and the school.

Figure 2.3 Areas of responsibility for 53 local councils



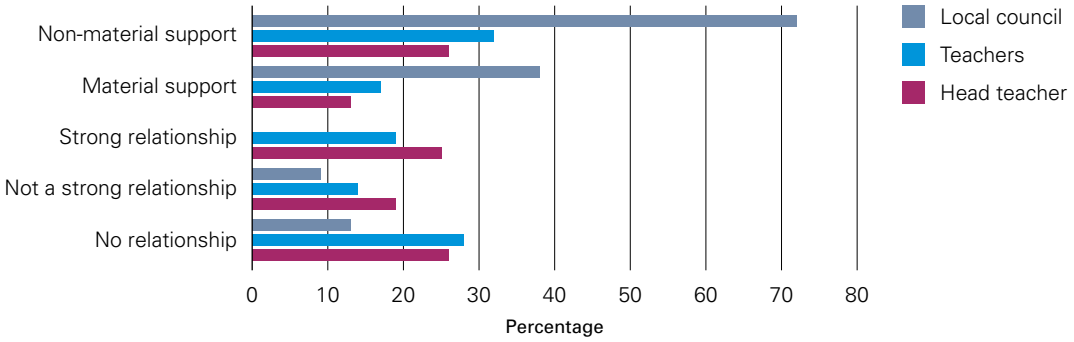

Local councils may be expected to play an important role in strengthening or rebuilding the community, but they might not see themselves as having a role to play unless they are specifically challenged. For example, they may acknowledge only a narrow role, such as identifying suitable buildings to be used as schools. In the case of camps and temporary settlements, the local council might not have the authority to play any role, but this need not exclude them from collaborating with those having such authority. Thirteen of the 53 local councils reported that there were no formal camps or settlements within their geographical area of responsibility; 10 indicated that a United Nations agency or NGO was responsible for formal camps and settlements; five reported an individual or land owner was responsible; and four reported a camp or settlement manager was responsible. In 10 instances, the Government of Syria, the Syrian Interim Government (SIG)[97] or an education office were identified as being in charge over education in camps and settlements. Twenty-five local councils claimed they had responsibility for camps or settlements; in nine of these cases, the council jointly worked with another authority.

[93] Futures under Threat, p.15.
[94] UNICEF Syria, p.18.
[95] Annex G.19.
[96] Annex D.1. Some of the 53 local councils are counted more than once, e.g. town and village, or sub-district and town.
[97] The Syrian Interim Government (SIG) was established in Turkey in March 2013, with a Cabinet of technical ministers, as an alternative to the Government of Syria. The SIG was formed by the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, an opposition group.

When asked about their relationship with school administrators, 22 per cent of local council representatives conceded that such relationship was either not strong or non-existent. Seventy per cent of councils reported they provided moral and other non-material forms of support, while 40 per cent provided some form of material support to schools.[98] However, many head teachers and teachers' groups were seemingly unaware of the support these local councils perceived themselves as providing, as seen in Figure 2.4.[99]

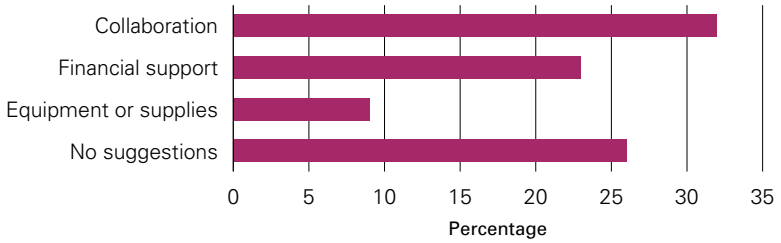
Since "moral" support was not defined in the questionnaires or in the responses, the responses probably encompass a variety of meanings. Moral support might range from expressions of sympathy in the event of the school being targeted to participation in, or initiation of, meetings to discuss improvements.

Figure 2.4 Areas of responsibility for 53 local councils




In an open-ended question, local council interviewees were asked what could be done to improve their relationship with the school. Over a quarter of them had no suggestion to make. Just over 30 per cent mentioned collaboration, while just over 20 per cent suggested financial support, and 10 per cent the provision of equipment or supplies.[100] Ten per cent stated that they would provide financial support if they had the resources, but unfortunately did not.

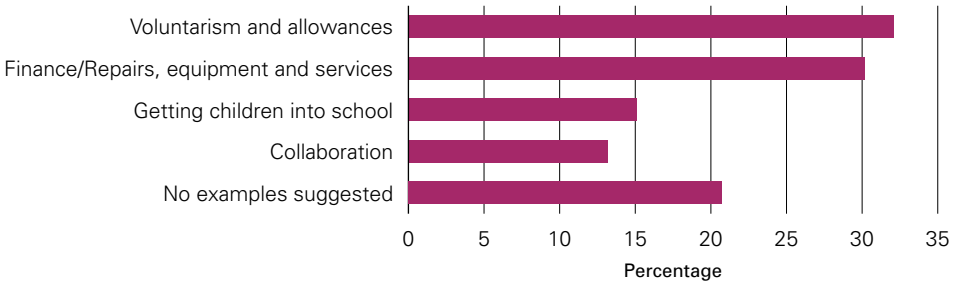
Figure 2.5 Ways in which local councils might improve their relationship with schools




Representatives of local councils, when asked to share positive examples of communities or schools solving their own problems, were not always clear as to whether they were talking of things already done, or of things that might be done in future. For example, "Establish institute to prepare teachers and support it with donations".[101] Additionally, it was not clear whether the interventions were initiated by the schools or by the councils. Figure 2.6 groups the most frequent responses, showing that 20 per cent of the 53 local councils had nothing to suggest. Fifteen per cent of respondents identified that communities solved their own problems by (1) encouraging children to enrol in school and (2) relocating displaced persons and facilitating their enrolment. This form of assistance is actually one in which the local council might be more effective than any other community member. Schools are usually only aware of its own operations, possibilities and limitation. The local council, however, as an entity overseeing multiple schools, is better positioned to direct displaced children to places in which they might best be served.

98 Annex D.14, G.32, F.37.
99 Annex F.37, G.32. The "strong relationship" option was not included in the questionnaire for local councils.
100 Annex D.15.
101 Annex D.12.

Figure 2.6 Examples of communities, or schools, solving their own problems




Head teachers felt that the wider community could do more to help schools prepare for emergencies by providing emergency and medical equipment/supplies, by preparing evacuation plans, and by training staff and students on emergency responses.[102] The realistic actualization of these suggestions would have to be judged by community members. When asked what the community could do to make schools safer, a substantial number of principals responded that the school was safe, or "safe enough" (30 per cent); others said there was nothing that the community could do (15 per cent); however, some reported assistance with security, in a variety of forms, would be appreciated.[103] Only three head teachers out of 117 suggested that their collaboration with the community could serve as a model for other schools or communities.[104]

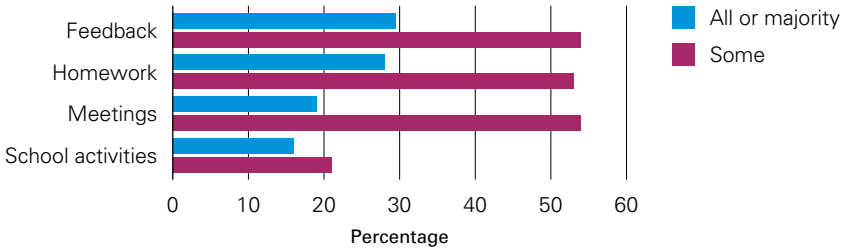
Teachers' groups believed that the community could support the school with equipment and materials, contribute financially (either directly to the school or by supporting teachers' remuneration), and raise awareness about the importance of education. Beyond this, moral support would be appreciated.[105] Some form of collaboration was mentioned by 25 per cent of the teachers' groups, with most of the suggestions aimed at the parent community. Parents were asked to cooperate with schools to solve students' problems, including learning and behavioural issues, to attend parents' meetings, and to participate in other school activities. Fifteen per cent of teachers' groups highlighted the need to make children desire education and attend school regularly. These suggestions, too, were directed primarily at parents. One group appealed to parents to educate their female children. As with the head teachers, there were teachers who did not think that there was anything concrete the community could do (22 per cent). One group suggested "the community can do nothing because the former community members with money have emigrated", and another group reported "the community is part of the problems affecting it". When asked how the community could increase teachers' motivation, given the difficulties under which many of them work, the overwhelming response was the provision of moral support (51 per cent reported this, compared to 25 per cent requesting help with remuneration).[106]

Looking at the parent community, teachers were asked about the extent to which the caregivers support their children's learning. "Caregiver" should be understood as the child's parents, or in the absence of parents, an adult or older sibling assuming responsibility for the child.[107, 108] Less than one third of teachers' groups reported that the majority of caregivers supported the learning process through close liaising with teachers or in homework assistance, although the reason for such a low response rate might be that few activities took place. This theme is taken up again under the discussion of the instruction and learning processes.

Because communities may not understand how they have been redefined, members might need support through capacity building from an external agency to achieve more than symbolic participation.[109] Capacity building can address topics such as convening meetings, drawing up agendas,

[102] Annex F.15-16.
[103] Annex F.28.
[104] Annex F.41.
[105] Annex G.19.
[106] Annex G.30.
[107] For children in an orphanage the caregivers would be institutional workers, who might have little time to deal with the specific needs of individual children.
[108] Annex G.17.
[109] INEE, p.20.

Figure 2.7 The participation of caregivers in the learning process: Teachers' perspective




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.[110]

Save the Children reported they "collaborat[ed] with communities to identify four priorities to improve the quality and availability of education",[111] noting that local councils were willing to be involved but needed training.[112] In northern Syria, where local councils provided "effective governance structures for education provision", they often "lack[ed] the necessary skills to fulfil their role".[113] SHARP also recommended the "capacity building of communities to increase the participation of boys and girls, mothers and fathers, caregivers and the wider community".[114]

Overall, however, it appears that training has received little attention, although it is possible a number of small-scale training initiatives took place, but did not find their way into the literature. If this is so, better coordination and sharing of information needs to occur. Capacity building should help the community to be aware of the "human, intellectual, linguistic, monetary and material resources" available within the community,[115] allowing these resources to strengthen the community.

## Coordination

National education authorities are expected to lead responses during emergencies. According to the INEE, only in 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."[116]

Providing education in contexts where power is contested by several players often calls for cooperation among the Government and neutral sector partners in contested areas. For opposition-controlled areas, the Education Cluster based in Gaziantep, Turkey, coordinates education activities with Save the Children and UNICEF.[117] OCHA coordinates and harmonizes these efforts with non-education sectors, resulting in annually produced joint-operation plans among United Nations agencies, international agencies and their local partners.[118, 119] During the latter part of 2014, coordination from OCHA offices resulted in a country-wide "Humanitarian Needs Overview" for the WoS.[120]

According to the literature, cooperation among the education, protection, nutrition, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sectors has been common in humanitarian relief efforts. 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.[121] However, one

[110] Futures under Threat, p.5.
[111] Futures under Threat, p.14.
[112] Futures under Threat, p.16.
[113] Futures under Threat, p.16.
[114] SHARP, December 2013, p.77.
[115] INEE, p.28.
[116] INEE, pp.20-21.
[117] In government-controlled areas, the MoE and UNICEF co-led education efforts, with the Director of Planning of the ESWG supporting.
[118] SHARP, December 2013, from Damascus, and Response Plan, July 2014, from Turkey.
[119] 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.
[120] HNO.
[121] SHARP, December 2013, p.77.

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".[122] In the same report the need to "integrate" education and child protection is stressed.[123] 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".[124] In February 2014, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2139 to partly address delays in delivering humanitarian aid in Syria.[125] Because neighbouring countries often faced obstructions when delivering relief to Syria,[126] 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 by United Nations agencies without the need for further authorization from national governments.[127] Resolution 2191 extended this approval until January 2016.[128]

In March and April 2014, in a report on cross-border activity from Turkey, "teams of actors" in the education sector were present in 11 governorates. The reference to "teams" implies there were coordination efforts. Local councils, relief councils and local NGOs each participated in teams within 10 governorates, international NGOs in nine, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in seven and United Nations agencies in four. Idleb exhibited the most activity among governorates.[129] However, a large number of actors (or of beneficiaries) does not guarantee the effectiveness of an intervention. These numerical data should be supplemented with descriptions of activities and of outcomes.

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.[130]

Neither the ESWG nor the Education Cluster exercised authority over schools; rather, they coordinated how support was delivered. Some schools reported that they would have liked a more directly responsible body to assume control over education. Respondents expressed this as a need for a "unified body" like a "Directorate of Education";[131] respondents also desired bodies responsible for visiting schools so constraints might be observed first hand.[132] A head teacher wished for a special entity, independent of the political situation, to directly supervise education.[133] Another head teacher wanted schools to be free of interference from local councils in their work, while another desired greater coordination with the city council.[134] When the roles of different coordinating parties conflict, discussion which leads to written agreements on responsibilities are good solutions.

Some expressed a need for "a reference point to go to if a problem occurs in schools regarding psychosocial or material support", and for a body to "assess all teachers in liberated areas" as a means to "enhancing the status" of education.[135]

While the international community is not always directly invoked in appeals to reduce hostilities, or to bring peace to the country,[136] its responsibility in these regards was implied. According to some head teachers, the international community should relocate schools away from hostile areas, persuade conflicting parties to avoid schools, ask the Government of Syria to avoid bombing schools (particularly during school hours) and compel opposition forces to move their security centres away from schools.

[122] Futures under Threat, p.12.
[123] Futures under Threat, p.11.
[124] INEE, p.21.
[125] UNSC 2139, para.6-7.
[126] RAS, pp.57-58.
[127] UNSC 2165, para.2-3.
[128] UNSC 2191, para.2.
[129] Dynamo 3, July 2014, p.25.
[130] Idleb report no. 2, April 2015, p.6.
[131] Annex D.17, G.20. One head teacher looked for a reliable link and regular interaction with the Government's DoE in the governorate (Annex F.43).
[132] Annex F.43.
[133] Annex F.43.
[134] Annex F.43.
[135] Annex G.38.
[136] Annex F.28.

Many frequently proposed imposing "flight bans" and "no-fly zones" in the vicinity of schools to prevent air bombs.[137, 138] Respondents believe international bodies are capable of improving the general status of education and having a "no-fly zone" imposed.[139]

The international community was also expected to channel aid equitably. Participants expressed that pledges should be delivered; empty promises should not be made; and international entities should have a presence inside Syria.[140] A complaint was voiced about the "discrimination between schools in the region", possibly due to a lack of coordination among organizations, donors and "actors on the ground".[141]

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".[142] 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.[143]

Over the two months of October and November 2014, about 44 per cent of the areas assessed by the Assistance Coordination Unit (ACU) reported having received no assistance towards education (Ar-Raqqa reported 100 per cent; Homs 83 per cent; Deir-ez-Zor and Al-Hasakeh both 67 per cent). Where assistance was received, about 38 per cent was for school materials, followed by teachers' remuneration (19 per cent), and school construction and repairs (18 per cent).[144] The report notes that "the number of humanitarian actors in this sector is limited", mainly focusing on Idleb and selected areas of Aleppo, Hama and Rural Damascus.[145]

Relatedly, planned interventions require funding, but there are currently many obstacles in this regard. Not only are funding targets not being met,[146] but these targets might be too modest for immediate educational needs.[147] 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.[148] 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[149] and the response plan for assistance from Turkey for mid-2014 to mid-2015 required US$20.1 million.[150] 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."[151] In 2014, the SHARP mid-year report complained that implementation had lagged partly because of insufficient funding.[152] The Syria HRP, by December 2015, was only funded 43 per cent. Other plans made similar observations:

- "The SHARP [all sectors] is funded at US$584 million [as of 22 June 2014], representing 26 per cent of the overall requirements, and below the minimum requirements for the smooth operation of humanitarian response inside Syria".[153]

[137] Annex F.16.
[138] A "no-flight zone" in the civil aviation context indicates an area over which civilian aircraft of a particular country should not fly on account of the danger of attack from the ground or from the air.
[139] Annex F.43.
[140] Annex G.20.
[141] Annex F.43. "Region" appears to refer loosely to the sub-district or area in which the schools to which reference is made are located.
[142] INEE, p.42.
[143] INEE, p.32.
[144] Dynamo 4, p.54.
[145] Dynamo 4, p.24.
[146] Futures under Threat, p.30.
[147] Futures under Threat, p.31.
[148] EFA 2014, p.112.
[149] SHARP, July 2014, p.39.
[150] SHO, p.18.
[151] SHO, p.20.
[152] SHARP, July 2014, p.3.
[153] SHARP, July 2014, p 3.

- Lack of funding was reportedly limiting educational access for 520,000 children because 600 schools were not rehabilitated and 440 pre-fabricated classrooms were not provided.[154]
- Rehabilitating schools and providing alternative learning spaces seriously lagged largely because of underfunding issues.[155]
- "Long-term solutions of the scale needed cannot be implemented at current levels of funding. International appeals for the Syria crisis this year are only 62 per cent funded, leaving a US$2.6 billion gap. Only 67 per cent of UNICEF's 2013 appeal for education needs inside Syria and the sub-region have been met."[156]

Relatedly, tracking expenditures is necessary to ensure progress and continual optimizations. For the No Lost Generation Initiative, which covered Syria and Syrian refugee children in six neighbouring countries, there was apparently no centralized tracking of how funds were spent and best practices, making it difficult to monitor funding gaps.[157]

Recommendations in the literature include:

- Obtain a more accurate cost assessment of needs and better tracking system for spending on education (by development partners).[158]
- Deliver long-term, predictable funding for a comprehensive plan for education in Syria and across the region.[159]
- Fully fund the efforts of host entities to accommodate students in relevant programmes.[160]
- Consider a revolving fund to help schools and look into management modality options.[161]
- Obtain international funding to support the recruitment of additional teachers.[162]
- Allow greater flexibility in the use of aid.[163]

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.[164] Thirty partners were involved in the implementation of the programme.[165]

The Syrian Humanitarian Operations plan numbers the population of children, youth and education personnel in need between 1.7 and 2.3 million; it targets 434,000 children, youth, education personnel and stakeholders in eight governorates and "other areas accessible from Turkey" to receive aid. Implementation was completed by 13 partners.[166] The high number of beneficiaries was possible mainly because of two activities: (1) providing learning spaces through rehabilitating schools and securing 432,000 temporary learning spaces and (2) supplying learning kits to 420,000 students.[167]

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 reasonably provided. 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

[154] SHARP, July 2014, p.17.
[155] SHARP, July 2014, p.42.
[156] Education Interrupted, p.9.
[157] Futures under Threat, p.3.
[158] Futures under Threat, p.36.
[159] Futures under Threat, p.35.
[160] Futures under Threat, p.34.
[161] UNICEF Syria, p.23.
[162] Education Interrupted, p.9.
[163] Futures under Threat, p.36.
[164] SHARP, July 2014, p.39.
[165] SHARP, July 2014, p.39.
[166] SHO, p.18.
[167] SHO, pp.20-21.

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".[168] 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",[169] the difficulty, or impossibility, of accessing some areas of Syria[170] makes it impractical to apply random sampling and thus make more sound analyses. Therefore, the current documents analysing Syria have primarily used purposive sampling, with the exception of the annual school census.

Working from Turkey, the ACU produced an assessment report based on data collected in July 2014 from 1,507 schools inaccessible to the MoE.[171] In Idleb, April 2015, it was noted that collecting information was hampered by security and safety constraints.[172]

Some assessments have been conducted indirectly. Recent refugee arrivals in camps outside Syria were interviewed about the area of Syria from which they left.[173] Some were asked to liaise with contacts still in Syria to provide information through mobile phone or the Internet.[174] Such assessments are limited by their restricted area coverage and the difficulty of gathering large amounts of information through these means.

In the Syrian crisis, 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.[175] To some extent this has been done through the 4Ws. As monthly reports arrive from each partner, a cumulative picture of aid emerges. Data need to be accumulated at a central point and made available in readily understood formats and so that future decisions are better informed.

Measures should ensure information does not fall into the wrong hands. Thus far, the Cluster has established an anonymizing mechanism to prevent schools being identified and possibly targeted. The schools in the present survey have similarly been anonymized. The Cluster might consider designing a simple questionnaire to collect supplementary information about schools identified to receive support.

Initially, the present survey was to be conducted early in the 2014/15 school year, with the report published before the end of the first semester. Delays were caused by partner organization staff being over-stretched, difficulties with hiring suitable consultants, travel restrictions between Syria and Turkey, and poor communication within Syria. In particular, the nearly complete closure of the Turkey-Syrian border (imposed for the June 2015 elections in Turkey) required rethinking plans that had already been made to train enumerators. Additionally, it was sometimes impossible to transport questionnaires out of Syria; some parts were lost in the in electronic scanning and data transmission processes.

[168] INEE, p.21.
[169] INEE, p.38.
[170] The SHARP mid-year review for July 2014 notes the difficulty of conducting assessments and field monitoring because of access constraints (p.3).
[171] Rapid Assessment.
[172] Idleb Report no.1, p.6.
[173] UNICEF Syria, p.8.
[174] HNO.
[175] UNICEF Syria, p.23.

Some of the literature combines a rapid assessment with implementation plans for assistance to affected children and schools.[176] 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"[177] is directly related to the INEE's "response strategies", since it is in part directed at potential donors.

Both SHARP and the Response Plan for Syrian Humanitarian Operations from Turkey include monitoring aspects.

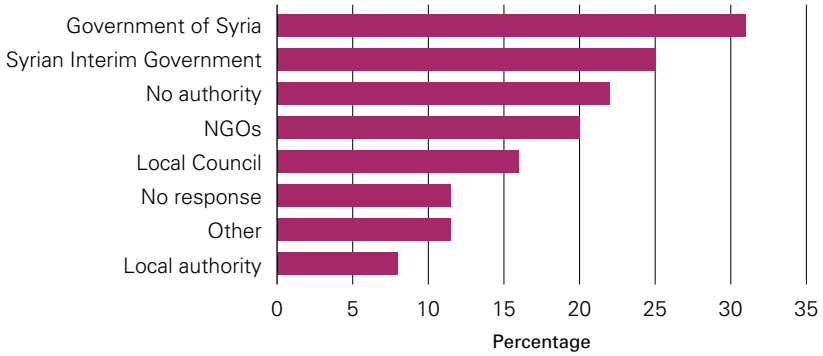
None of the documents reviewed included periodic reviews to evaluate which outcome targets had been achieved.[178] Although, there is a recommendation from December 2012 that "a macro-level analysis of the impact of the crisis on the educational system as a whole" be conducted at a later stage;[179] 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.

The Government's MoE conducts an annual census near the beginning of each new academic year. Up to the 2010/11 school year, these EMIS data are available for all registered, functioning schools in Syria. However, as discussed in Part I, since the conflict began, contact between the Ministry and schools in some sub-districts or governorates has been lost, leaving gaps in the data sets for Deir-ez-Zor, Ar-Raqqa, Dara, Idleb and Quneitra.

Head teachers were asked on whether they have been submitting statistics to authorities during the crisis.[180] Of the 117 schools surveyed, seven did not respond, and in a further seven cases, the head teacher either did not know or was unwilling to answer.[181] Twenty-seven schools were not submitting statistics to any authority or organization. For those submitted figures, recipient bodies included: The Government of Syria, the SIG, local authorities and NGOs. Several schools were submitting statistics to more than one authority. Figure 2.8 shows the proportion of statistical submissions which each authority or category of organizations was receiving.

Figure 2.8 Authorities and organizations receiving statistical returns from schools




[176] HNO, for example.
[177] SHARP, December 2013, p.78.
[178] "Outcomes", as opposed to "outputs". Compare with INEE, p.48.
[179] UNICEF Syria, p.23.
[180] Annex F.9.
[181] It was agreed during the design of the survey that respondents would not be compelled to answer where they feared that their answer might compromise them in some way. The concern might not necessarily be about the discretion of the enumerator, but about colleagues in the group who might be suspected of having different political sympathies.

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# 4 Access and learning environment

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, with 73.4 per cent for secondary.[182]

### BOX 2.1 POTENTIALLY CONFUSING TERMINOLOGY: "PRIMARY" AND "SECONDARY" GRADES

Total enrolments are reported in many documents. However, when reference is made to "primary" and "secondary" enrolments, it is not always clear to which range of grades they refer.

For example, the MoE formally classifies "basic education" (which is compulsory) in two cycles: The "first cycle" (Grades 1 to 4) and the "second cycle" (Grades 5 to 9).

In Dynamo 3, July 2014 (p.44), the terms primary, elementary and secondary are deployed for three consecutive phases of education. The relevant grades are not defined.

Rapid Assessment, Nov. 2014, is inconsistent in its terminology. Table 2 (p.13) classifies the levels as "Primary", "Lower secondary", and "Upper secondary". Figure 7 (p.18) refers to the levels as "Primary", "Secondary", and "High school". Table 5 (p.18) indicates that it is only Grades 1 to 4 that are described as "Primary". The relatively high enrolment at this level (i.e., Grades 1 to 4, as opposed to Grade 5 and beyond) is accounted for by "primary education being compulsory" (p.18). On page 12, however, it is stated that "Primary schools comprise students from Grade 1 to 6" and "primary education is compulsory for all children in Syria (from Grade 1 to Grade 9)."

It is desirable that any document using "primary", "secondary" or other terminology to refer to a range of grades should define in a footnote which grades are intended.

Comparative enrolment data for the 2010/11 and 2014/15 school years are given in Table 2.4, illustrating that nearly four years into the crisis, total national school enrolment, and also enrolment in basic education (Grades 1 to 9) was 56 per cent of what it had been prior to the crisis. General secondary enrolment had dropped by less; vocational secondary by more; while 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 2.4 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** |

If the trend in each governorate is examined, Al-Hasakeh, As-Sweida, Hama, Lattakia, and Tartous showed an increase in enrolment over the four-year period,[183] probably because of internally displaced persons. The most recent year has no enrolment data for Deir-ez-Zor or Ar-Raqqa. For the other governorates, enrolment declined in Aleppo and Dara by more than half. Depending on the nature of planned interventions, data at even lower levels of disaggregation might need to be taken into account.

[182] SINA, p.33.
[183] Annex A.3

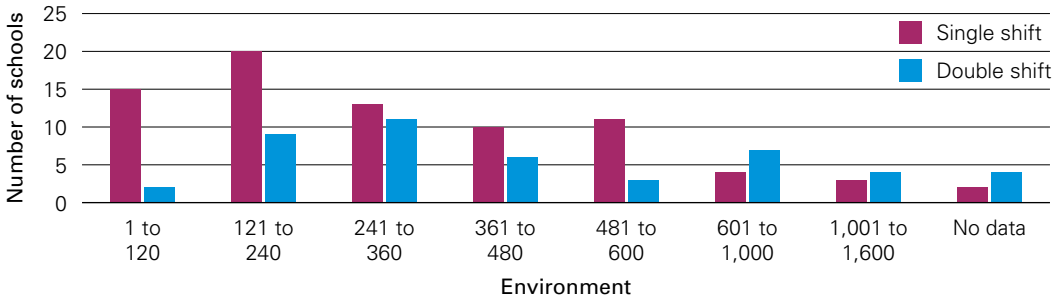
Enrolment may fluctuate during the course of the year due to conflict and/or the influx of internally displaced persons. Consequently, if enrolment figures for the same area from different sources do not align, it is important to know the approximate date of when the data were collected.

The ACU reported 447,210 children were enrolled in basic education and 49,164 in Grades 10 to 12 in mid-2014 at the 1,507 schools it was able to reach in opposition-controlled areas (giving an average enrolment of 330 students per school).[184] The number of schools in the ACU survey that were also covered by the MoE's census is not known.[185]

Sixty primary schools, 40 secondary schools, and 18 combined schools participated in the qualitative survey.[186] The schools varied in size, from one in Idleb with an enrolment of 46 students (girls and boys), all in Grade 10, to one in Rural Damascus accommodating 1,597 male students across two shifts.

In Figure 2.9 the school size is expressed in terms of enrolment, with single shift and double shift schools depicted separately.[187] Seventy schools had enrolments below 360 students (48 out of 78 single shift schools and 22 out of 44 double shift schools).

Figure 2.9 School size by enrolment




Of the 51,735 students enrolled in the surveyed schools, 60 per cent (31,052) were girls.[188] This is higher than the national average percentage for female enrolment in Table 2.4. In the primary grades, 32,975 students were enrolled, of which 58 per cent were girls. Sixty-six per cent of the enrolment in Grades 7 to 9 were female (7,866 of 11,858), while 58 per cent of the 6,902 students enrolled in Grades 10 to 12 were girls.

Twenty-seven schools were single-sex schools, 13 were girls-only and 14 were boys-only. Of the 89 schools accommodating both girls and boys, only 14 had a GPI[189] of 1.0, indicating a gender balance. These schools were all from Aleppo or Idleb (the two governorates, which together, account for 60 per cent of the surveyed schools). Twenty-two schools had a slightly larger proportion of girls than boys, while 26 schools had a slightly larger proportion of boys than girls. Seventy per cent of the schools with mixed enrolment fell in these three categories, as depicted in Table 2.5.[190] Twenty-seven schools fell outside this range, with a larger proportion of girls than boys (21 per cent) or a larger proportion of boys than girls (nine per cent).

[184] Rapid Assessment, p.18 (Calculations of enrolment based on Table 5).

[185] For this to be checked, unique codes allocated to the schools should be compared, but the ACU data do not include the MoE's unique EMIS code. Alternatively, school names would have to be compared, but this would be more susceptible to error.

[186] The other four schools failed to indicate the grades taught.

[187] Annex E.1. Six schools omitted this question.

[188] Annex E.1. Four schools did not provide enrolment numbers; three in Aleppo and one in Idleb.

[189] The GPI is calculated by dividing the female enrolment by the male enrolment. A result of 1.0 indicates parity; a GPI above 1.0 shows that there are more girls than boys enrolled, while an index below 1.0 shows that boys are in the majority. The greater the deviation from 1.0, the greater the gender imbalance in enrolment.

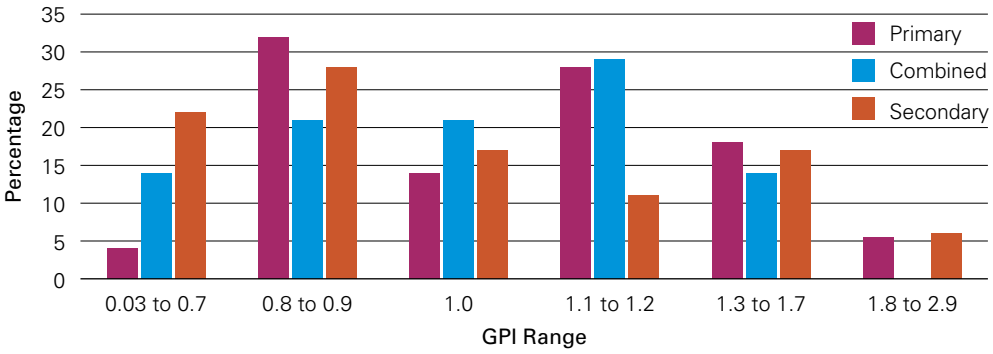
[190] Annex E.1B. Single-sex schools and those for which data were missing are not included in the percentage calculations.

Table 2.5 GPI for students

| GOVERNORATE | GPI RANGE | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 0.03 TO 0.7 | 0.8 TO 0.9 | 1.0 | 1.1 TO 1.2 | 1.3 TO 1.7 | 1.8 TO 2.9 |
| Aleppo | 1 | 8 | 4 | 8 | 4 | 2 |
| Al-Hasakeh | | 1 | | 2 | 2 | |
| Damascus | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | |
| Dara | 1 | 2 | | 4 | 2 | |
| Hama | | 1 | | | | |
| Idleb | 4 | 6 | 10 | 5 | 4 | 2 |
| Lattakia | | 4 | | | 1 | |
| Quneitra | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | |
| Rural Damascus | 1 | 2 | | 1 | 1 | |
| **Total** | **8** | **26** | **14** | **22** | **15** | **4** |
| **Percentage** | **9** | **29** | **16** | **25** | **17** | **4** |

Figure 2.10 illustrates the differences in GPI across the primary, combined and secondary schools (with mixed enrolment) that submitted gender-disaggregated enrolment data. For primary and combined schools, a larger proportion had more girls than boys. While a larger proportion of secondary schools had more boys than girls, the total number of girls in these schools exceeded the number of boys.

Figure 2.10 GPI for students




Only in seven of the 40 sub-districts did the GPI favour boys.[191] In these sub-districts, the GPI ranged between 0.7 and 0.9.

Typical reasons that keep girls out of school do not seem to apply to the surveyed schools. For example, early marriage, mentioned by eight teachers' groups (seven per cent) and 13 parents' groups (11 per cent), apparently does not make an impression on the overall enrolment patterns.[192] In its mid-2014 survey of just over 1,500 schools in opposition-controlled areas, the ACU found that, "Overall, the enrolment of female students in assessed public schools is similar to that of male students across governorates". The report goes on to mention two sub-districts in which the proportion of female students was low, which might be partly explained by "the large presence of armed groups in these two sub-districts".[193]

[191] These are Hajeb in the As-Safira and Suran in the A'zaz districts of Aleppo; Ash-Shajara in the Dara and Jasim in the Izra' districts of Dara; Dana in the Harim district of Idleb; and Raheiba in the Al Qutayfah and Kafr Batna in the Rural Damascus districts of Rural Damascus.

[192] Early marriage was mentioned by teachers' groups in Aleppo (3), Al-Hasakeh (2), Idleb (2), and Lattakia (1), and by parents' groups in Aleppo (4), Al-Hasakeh (2), Idleb (4), Quneitra (2) and Rural Damascus (1). There was overlap between teachers' and parents' groups in six instances.

[193] Rapid Assessment, p.20. The two sub-districts are Al-Thawrah in Ar-Raqqa (13 per cent female students) and Tal Hmis in Al-Hasakeh (28 per cent female students).

Additionally, 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 affects the enrolment of older children, but 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 is 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 refer only to a local area, while others attempt to approximate the WoS, accounting for Syrian refugee children believed to be attending school in neighbouring countries. In addition to what was presented in this study's quantitative analysis, a few additional figures are given on page 89.

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.[194]

The December 2013 SHARP gives the number of out-of-school children as 1.1 million in Syria,[195] with a further 1.26 million at high risk of dropping out.[196] In addition, 20,000 Palestine refugee children in the country were without access to school education.[197] 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[198] able to access education in the period from January – June."[199] Also in July 2014, the Regional Analysis for Syria Quarterly Report, quoting UNRWA, reported that 39,600 Palestine refugee children were attending UNRWA schools and afternoon classes at other schools.[200] The large discrepancy between these two documents, published at the same time, on the number of Palestine refugee children in school, is puzzling.

This study's quantitative analysis, drawing from the MoE's EMIS, reports 26,039 Palestine refugee children enrolled in November 2013 and 66,091 in December 2011.

According to an August 2014 report, almost 79 per cent of children did not attend school in settlements with access to education infrastructure. 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.[201]

ACU, using data from the end of 2014, reports that 733,161 children had been out of school for more than a year in the areas it surveyed, with Aleppo (235,050 out of school), Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor being worst affected.[202]

[194] SINA, p.32.
[195] SHARP, December 2013, p.15.
[196] SHARP, December 2013, p.26.
[197] SHARP, December 2013, p.76.
[198] Approximately 22,350.
[199] SHARP, July 2014, p.40.
[200] RAS, p.13.
[201] Displaced Syrians, p.11.
[202] Dynamo 4, p.49.

The quantitative analysis estimates the number of out-of-school children based on EMIS data, estimating that 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.[203] In the following week, the number grew to an estimated 101,800,[204] and by the end of the fifth week, to 133,831.[205] 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.[206]

### 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.[207] 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".

Parents and teachers were asked why children were either not enrolled or did not attend school regularly. Figure 2.11 compares the most frequent responses of survey respondents.[208, 209] Well over half of groups reported the need to have children earning money for the family and the low priority accorded to education by many families (over a third of the groups). Parents' groups largely were in agreement. More than a quarter of the groups (teachers and parents) identified the costs attached to schooling as another factor keeping children away from school. Twenty-four per cent of parents' groups felt that children were not interested in schooling because of the poor quality of education.[210] Staying home to care for house or family (10 per cent teachers, 14 per cent parents), and marriage[211] (7 per cent teachers, 11 per cent parents) had a smaller influence on keeping children away from school.[212]

Security issues and fear were cited most often, slightly above supplementing the family income. This topic is expanded under the "Protection and well-being" heading, below.

[203] Idleb Report no.1, p.6.
[204] Idleb Report no.2, p.2.
[205] Idleb Report no.4, p.7.
[206] Idleb Report no.3, p.1.
[207] 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.
[208] The figure draws on Annex G.9, H.6.
[209] "Out of school" in the broad sense of not enrolled or frequently absent.
[210] This option was not included on the questionnaire for teachers.
[211] There was no indication of whether this referred only to girls or also to boys.
[212] Annex G.9, H.6.

Figure 2.11 Reasons why children do not attend school

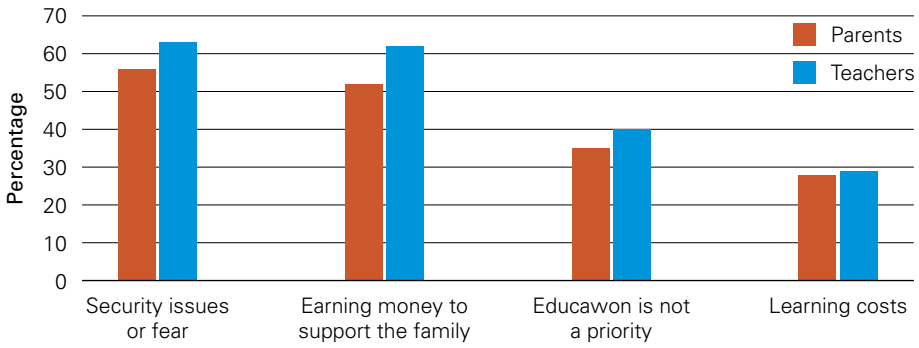
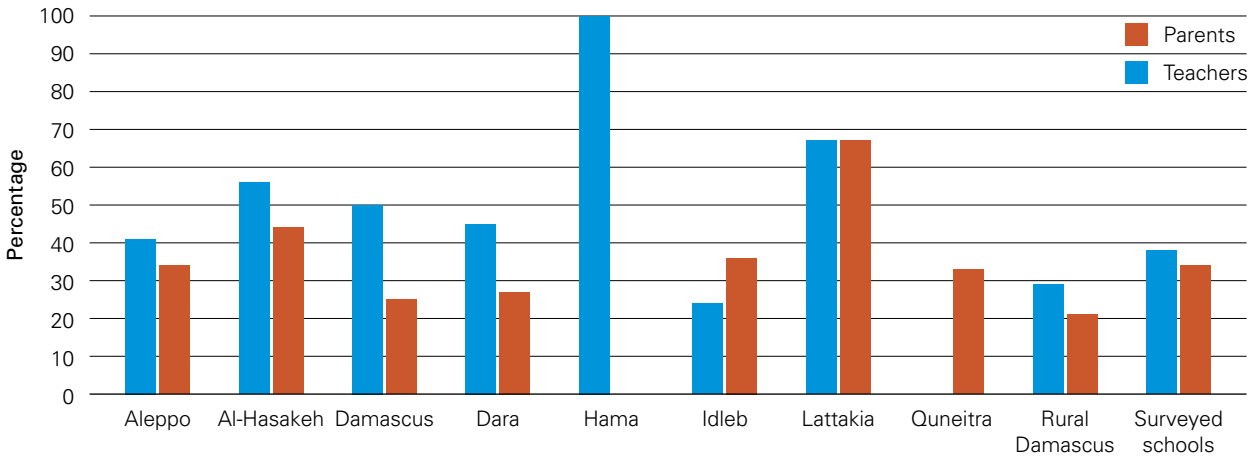



Figure 2.12 shows the geographic distribution of those believing that children do not attend school because education is not a priority. In most areas, more teachers' groups than parents' groups gave this reason, with reasonable consistency in the pattern of responses (with the exceptions of Idleb, Hama and Quneitra). In Idleb, the percentage of parents' groups exceeds that of teachers' groups, while in Hama and Quneitra, either parents or teachers, but not both groups, refer to education not being a priority.

Figure 2.12 Children not attending school because education is not a priority




## 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.[213]

Poverty is also a barrier to accessing education, and this has become more widespread due to displacement. As the crisis progressed during the first three years, 45 per cent of the population had had to flee their homes.[214] 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

[213] Squandering Humanity, p.27. It is not clear how much of this increase was driven by tertiary education.
[214] Squandering Humanity, p.33.
[215] Squandering Humanity, p.5.

poverty.[215] 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.[216] Under such conditions, children's education is likely to fall to the wayside.[217] Children of displaced families are also less likely to attend school than are children of the host community,[218] 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.[219]

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,[220] which is why donors and host countries are encouraged to support measures increasing refugee livelihoods.[221]

At the end of November 2014, "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).[222]

Many families were compelled to rely on their children, particularly older children, to supplement the family income,[223] 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.[224] 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,[225] 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.[226]

National authorities have the ultimate responsibility to ensure that "All individuals have access to quality and relevant education opportunities".[227] 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.[228]

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.

[216] Dynamo 3, p.51.
[217] Squandering Humanity, p.38; and SINA, p.32. Noted as second-most frequently cited reason for children not attending school in SINA, p.34.
[218] SINA, p.34.
[219] UNICEF Syria, p.17.
[220] UNICEF Syria, p.18.
[221] Futures under Threat, p.35.
[222] Dynamo 4, p.53.
[223] UNICEF Syria, p.13.
[224] RAS, p.13.
[225] Idleb Report no.4, p.7.
[226] CP Assessment, p.13.
[227] INEE, p.55.
[228] UNICEF Syria, p.14. Education Interrupted, p.9, calls for an end to the devastation of schools.

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.[229] According to the MoE, schools were used as shelters in 12 out of the 14 governorates in 2012.[230] While this should be a short-term option,[231] 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.[232] (It is not clear whether these buildings immediately become available for schooling when the new term starts.)

The unavailability of school buildings varied across governorates, depending on whether conflict took place there or not. Prior to the conflict, nearly 22,000 schools were available (including 118 UNRWA schools).[233] In December 2012, 2,400 schools were reported as destroyed or severely damaged.[234] 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.[235] Some schools were described as "abandoned".[236] In April 2013, it was reported that 2,963 schools had been destroyed.[237] In June 2013, 20 per cent of the country's schools did not provide instruction because of damage or conversion for other uses.[238] In October 2013, the MoE reported that between 4,100 and 4,500 schools were out of service.[239]

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.[240] 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.[241] In May 2014, 88 schools in Damascus were not functional, with 17 used as evacuation centres.[242]

During April 2015, a number of school buildings were converted to collective shelters: 10 in the Ariha district of Idleb and six in Hama;[243] a week later, the number of affected schools in Hama was reduced to four;[244] 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.[245] By the end of the first week of May 2015, 90 schools in the Idleb were used as shelters "or for other purposes": 69 in Harim, 4 in Idleb, 7 in Al-Ma'ra and 10 in Ariha.[246]

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.[247]

[229] UNICEF Syria, p.7.
[230] UNICEF Syria, p.17.
[231] HNO, p.91.
[232] RAS, p.13.
[233] UNICEF Syria, p.7.
[234] UNICEF Syria, p.7.
[235] UNICEF Syria, p.14.
[236] UNICEF Syria, p.15.
[237] CP Issues, p.19.
[238] CP Issues, p.19.
[239] SHARP, December 2013, p.77.
[240] SINA, pp.32-34.
[241] Dynamo 3, p.39.
[242] RAS, p.30.
[243] Idleb report no.1, p.6.
[244] Idleb report no.2, p.6.
[245] Idleb report no.3, p.5.
[246] Idleb report no.4, p.7.
[247] SINA, p.36.

The ACU reports that in the areas of nine governorates surveyed towards the end of 2014, of 7,118 schools, 3,932 (or 55 per cent) were not functioning, of which 346 were heavily damaged and 273 destroyed.[248] Fifty-eight per cent of primary schools, 53 per cent of lower secondary schools and 48 per cent of upper secondary schools were not functioning.[249]

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, because informal settlements may exist for only a short duration, providing them with facilities might be of low priority.

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 reported a lack of staff.[250] 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.[251] 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 shifts and an almost exclusive focus on primary education.[252]

Some buildings doubled as schools and shelters, placing extra pressure on the water and sanitation facilities.[253]

Local councils referred to using temporary classroom spaces or relocating displaced families who had temporarily taken refuge in school buildings.[254] Respondents also identified that schools repurposed for military use should be reclaimed.[255] Local council members also were open to using prefabricated classrooms to alleviate overcrowding.[256]

Head teachers expressed the need for conventional school classrooms rather than tents,[257] additional rooms to reduce overcrowding and accommodate more students,[258] and separate schools for girls and boys.[259] Teachers identified needing more classrooms to reduce congestion and rehabilitated buildings;[260] they also suggested prefabricated rooms, mobile classrooms, and tents.[261] However, tents should be a short-term solution only, and indeed, both a teachers' group and parents' groups expressed that tents be replaced with conventional classrooms.[262, 263] A local council representative asked for the conversion of camps to buildings.[264] One teachers' group reported that the community had provided a school building.[265]

Survey respondents also drew attention to needing facilities such as libraries, laboratories, computer rooms, art rooms, cafeterias and gymnasiums.[266]

[248] Dynamo 4, p.50.
[249] Dynamo 4, p.51.
[250] Dynamo 3, p.42.
[251] UNICEF Syria, p.16.
[252] SINA, p.32; Situation Report, p.3.
[253] UNICEF Syria, p.17.
[254] Annex D.12.
[255] Annex D.13.
[256] Annex D.17.
[257] Annex F.15 "Make from cement instead of camps"; Annex F.16 "Temporary teaching space to formal school".
[258] Annex F.29, 40.
[259] Annex F.43.
[260] Annex G.19.
[261] Annex G.20.
[262] Annex G.19.
[263] Annex G.38, H.14.
[264] Annex D.13.
[265] Annex G.33.
[266] Annex D.13, F.40, H.14, I.8-9.

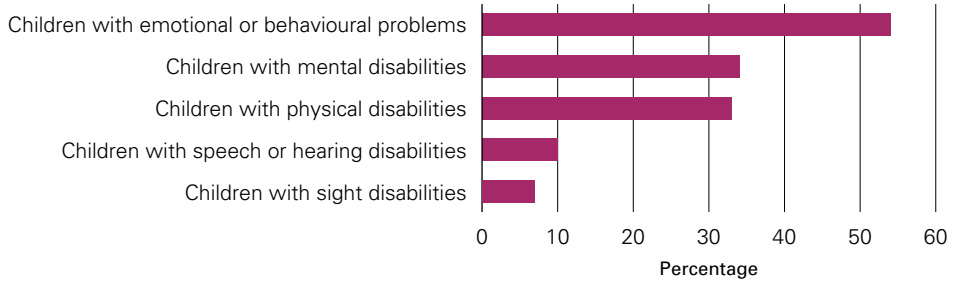
Respondents frequently mentioned needing additional (or repaired) classroom furniture (such as chairs, desks, and writing surfaces) and book cabinets.[267]

Several students' groups suggested painting the school walls in "bright colours" or in colours "that relax the eyes", and decorating them with drawings.[268] This idea occurred to only one adult, a head teacher who suggested that during rehabilitation the walls should be painted "in bright colours that raise the students' spirits".[269] The lack of school cleanliness was also apparently a matter of concern to children more than to adults: "There is too much mess"; "Give the school a better look"; "Clean the walls"; "Keep classrooms clean and cared for"; "Find solutions for cleaning the school perfectly"; "What annoys children is a lack of cleanliness; they hate dirtiness and spend most of their time cleaning the school"; and "Remove the wrecks from the school area".[270] Students went on to ask for gardens with trees and flowers.[271] Some teachers' groups reported that students and teachers worked together to clean the school or plant and care for a school garden.[272]

Children with special needs should be taught in specialized schools, within special classes in regular schools, or in regular, inclusive classes. However, provisions for students with special needs have been eclipsed. In 2008, the country had 32 centres for children with disabilities, just over half of which were run by the Government and the rest operated by NGOs.[273] Refugees in Za'atari, Jordan, indicated that opportunities were very limited for children with disabilities.[274]

Fourteen per cent of the parents' groups believed that children with special needs were kept from attending school because of a lack of appropriate equipment in the schools.[275] While both numbers and proportion of children with special needs were not established, the nature of special needs, as reported by parents' groups, is shown in Figure 2.13.[276] The identification of "emotional and behavioural problems" by over half the groups should probably be understood to mean that a significant proportion of children are in need of psychosocial support as a result of the crisis. Autism and dyslexia were added to the list of special needs by one group.

Figure 2.13 Special needs of children in the community: Parents' perceptions




Further information on meeting the needs of these children is provided in the section on "Facilities and services".

"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.

[267] Annex F.40, G.19-20, 31, 38, I.8.
[268] Annex I.8.
[269] Annex F.40.
[270] Annex I.8-9.
[271] Annex I.8-9.
[272] Annex G.36.
[273] CP Issues, p.19. There is a note that the nature of the services provided by these centres was not known.
[274] UNICEF Syria, p.17.
[275] Annex H.6.
[276] Annex H.11.

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.

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.[277] 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).[278] Although its importance is acknowledged, no clear strategy was proposed by respondents, other than the need for psychosocial support and a school feeding programme for children in pre-primary classes.[279]

## 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.[280] 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,[281] including children who were attending school at the time that they were fatally injured.

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."[282] The "safety and well-being of learners, teachers and other education personnel…" are linked to health, nutrition, psychosocial and protection services.[283]

While the literature identifies that children are at risk both at school and while travelling to and from school,[284] no document makes reference to measures already taken to make schools safe. As aforementioned, safety is a reason why children are not attending school.[285]

Schools have been treated as "easy targets" for attacks.[286] 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.'"[287]

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."[288] Schools have been used as military bases, as barracks, as sniper posts, and as detention centres, sometimes briefly, but some also for extended periods.[289] This turns the school into a "legitimate" military target. Occupying schools has reportedly happened even while classes were in progress,[290] and schools have been shelled while children were inside.[291] Checkpoints very close to schools also put the schools at risk of bombing or shelling.[292]

[277] 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.
[278] Annex A.25.
[279] SHARP, December 2013, p.77.
[280] SINA, p.32.
[281] SINA, p.32.
[282] INEE, p.62.
[283] INEE, p.68.
[284] SINA, p.34; Compare with UNICEF Syria, p.13.
[285] UNICEF Syria, p.13.
[286] HRC, p.7.
[287] CP Issues, p.8.
[288] Untold Atrocities, pp.8-9.
[289] Safe No More, p.25.
[290] Safe No More, p.3.
[291] Safe No More, p.21.
[292] Safe No More, p.26.

In June 2014, an increase in attacks on functioning schools, especially in Aleppo and Damascus, was reported.[293] In the first nine months of 2014, UNICEF reported 35 attacks on schools, with 105 children killed and 293 injured.[294]

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.[295]

Regular appeals by humanitarian actors to combatants to preserve schools as safe havens for children had, by November 2014, not had the desired effect.[296]

Head teachers at surveyed schools reported security problems afflicted the school during the 2014/15 school year.[297] Twenty-five (21 per cent) of head teachers said that there had been security problems at school during the year, while 30 (26 per cent) said security problems had been experienced between home and school. Eighteen per cent reported problems in both categories; 29 per cent in at least one. Fifteen head teachers (13 per cent) who had not answered these two questions in the affirmative went on to give details of problems that had occurred. If these are added to the others, 49 head teachers (42 per cent) acknowledged that there had been security incidents either at school or between home and school.

Figure 2.14 Security problems experienced at school or between home and school

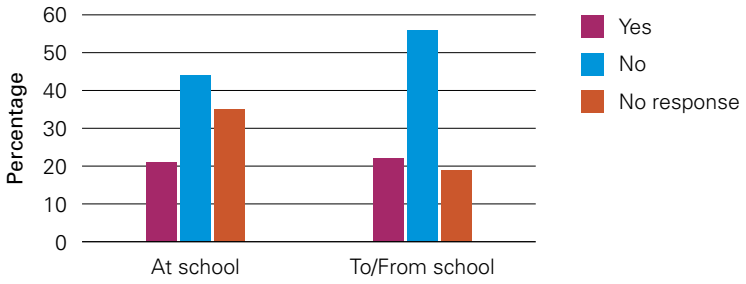


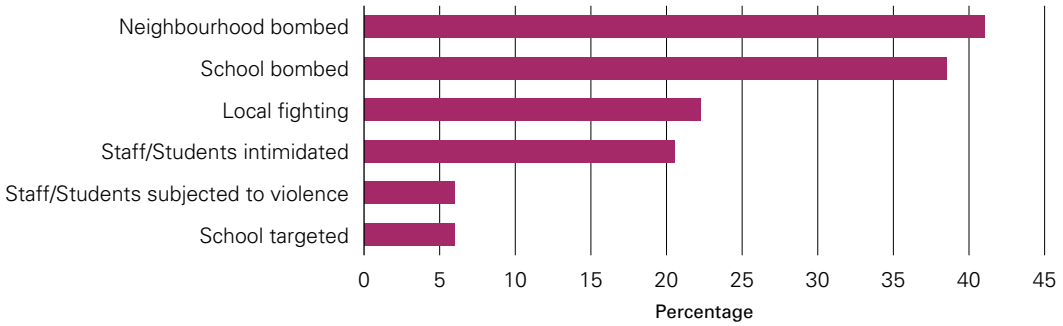

Figure 2.15 summarizes main problems experienced, with neighbourhood and school bombings topping the list. It is important to remember that a school may have been affected by a school bombing, neighbourhood bombing, local fighting, or all three. Fifty-seven per cent of schools were affected by at least one of the three types of incident. Of the 23 districts represented in the survey, only four did not report having been affected by at least one of the three.[298] Respondents were not asked to suggest who was responsible for the incidents.

Some inconsistencies should be noted in the responses of head teachers to the two questions, "Have your staff or your students faced security problems when travelling to or from school or during school?" and "What types of security problems does your school face?" There were, for example, eight heads who answered "No" to the first question in respect of security problems at school, but went on, under the next question, to say that the school had suffered bombardment. This inconsistency can be explained only if the school was bombarded at a time when it was unoccupied.

More than half of the parents' groups stated that "feeling unsafe" was one reason why children disliked going to school.[299] Security issues were mentioned 20 times by 122 parents' groups (16 per cent) in response to the question about changes that would need to be made to get children back into school,[300] and another 20 times when they were asked about realistic solutions to their children's education

[293] RAS, p.61.
[294] Statement of the UNICEF Representative for Syria on 7 November 2014.
[295] SINA, December 2013, p.32.
[296] HNO, pp.29, 91.
[297] Annex F.26-27.
[298] As-Safira in Aleppo, Ras Al Ain in Al-Hasakeh, As-Suqaylabiyah in Hama and Al Qutayfah in Rural Damascus.
[299] Annex H.5. A substantially smaller number of groups chose the lack of proper equipment at the school as the second reason for children's dislike of school.
[300] Annex H.7.

Figure 2.15 Security problems experienced by the school during the current year




challenges.[301] At the end of the discussion, when asked if there was anything else they wished to add, there were a further 11 references to security matters by the parents' groups.[302]

Among the 123 children's groups, although there were fewer references to security, there were requests for security fences, gates and bomb shelters; they also requested schools be relocated from unsafe areas.[303] Some of the contributions are telling:

> "Some students react badly to the sounds of bombing and fighting; is it possible to install windows that will block these sounds?"[304]

> "I love my school but I wish to feel safer."[305]

> "There is always shelling so we must run for our lives from school to home."[306]

One group reported their head teacher as saying that the school was relatively safe from barrel bombs, as it was surrounded by buildings on all sides.[307]

One teachers' group expressed concern that this survey did not reach schools with extremely severe security-related problems.[308] This is true: A number of schools originally included in the survey were excluded because safety in the area was too volatile, while areas which have been unstable were not even considered for inclusion.

Attention was drawn to the need for an emergency plan, for training staff and students on implementing the plan, for having trained emergency response teams on call, and for having a system alerting the school as soon as danger threatened.[309] Head teachers' requests for transportation, such as ambulances, were often related to emergency responses.[310]

In response to an open question on what the community could do to make the school safer, one head teacher responded,

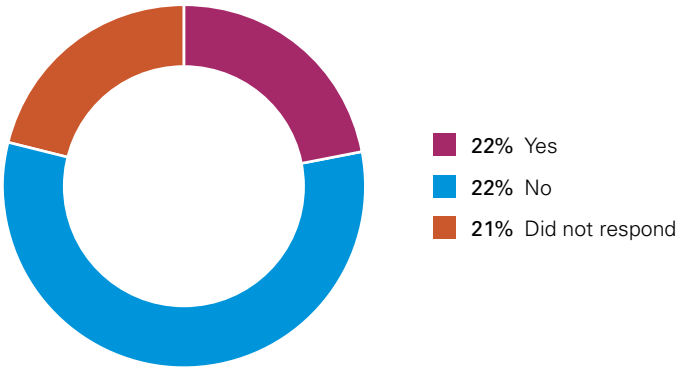
> "If the international and humanitarian community is unable to provide security for my society through stopping killing and destruction …, how can it ask my society which is the victim to provide security for the school? My society is unable to provide security either for itself or for the school."[311]

[301] Annex H.14.
[302] Annex H.18.
[303] Annex I.8.
[304] Annex I.9.
[305] Annex I.8.
[306] Annex I.9.
[307] Annex I.9.
[308] Annex G.38.
[309] Annex F.15.
[310] Annex F.15-16, 29.
[311] Annex F.28. A school in the Izra' district of Dara.

Practical suggestions included providing early warnings to schools of an impending attack, communicating with schools during emergencies, recruiting voluntary teams to protect the school (with "all equipment necessary for survival"), cordoning off roads while students travel to and from school, and training school staff to deal with emergencies.[312] It was not clear in what way a voluntary team would protect a school during an attack; if armed resistance was intended, this would increase the chance of the school's being perceived as a military target. However, civilian response teams to support school staff in firefighting and first aid, or community teams helping schools with their emergency plans, would not be likely to put schools at greater risk.

When asked whether their school had an emergency plan, only 22 per cent of head teachers responded positively. Of these, only one reported that the plan was rehearsed on a monthly basis, nine practised once a semester and eight once a year.[313] This indicates a very low level of preparedness on a matter upon which schools should be taking initiative. If community response teams are to be involved, all schools would have to have standard procedures for emergencies.

Figure 2.16 Surveyed schools having an emergency plan




Apart from the threat of military conflict, concerns were expressed about looting, vandalism and protecting teachers from abuse and armed interference.[314] Head teachers suggested the community assist in protecting schools from robbery, or in guarding schools at night and during holidays. "Strong metal locks" were also needed.[315] It is not clear whether vandalism comes from outside the community or from within.

Discrimination also plays a negative role in the community and the school, affecting senses of well-being. Figure 2.17 compares the students', parents' and teachers' groups' perceptions of discrimination in the school. Teachers were much less conscious of discrimination than either students or parents. Whereas only 16 per cent of teachers' groups acknowledged that there was discrimination in the school, 36 per cent of students' groups and 39 per cent of parents' groups said that they were aware of discriminatory behaviour.

According to Figure 2.18, boy students seemed to perceive more discrimination than girls.

According to Figure 2.19, secondary school students reported more discrimination than did those at primary schools (44 and 39 per cent, respectively), while only 28 per cent of the groups at combined schools responded in the affirmative.[316] It seems strange that combined schools, with older and younger children sharing facilities, should report less discrimination than do primary schools. There should not be any discrimination at schools, but that well over 10 per cent of the groups in each category should report discrimination is a matter of serious concern. The school should provide a safe and nurturing environment if the staff and students are to cope with the pressures of violence outside the school.

[312] Annex F.28-29.
[313] Annex F.13-14.
[314] Annex G.30.
[315] Annex F.28.
[316] Annex I.5.

Figure 2.17 Discrimination at school

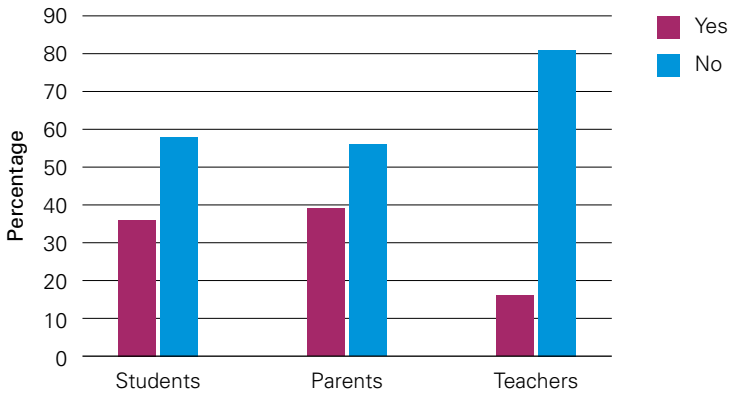



Figure 2.18 Discrimination at school according to the gender of student group members

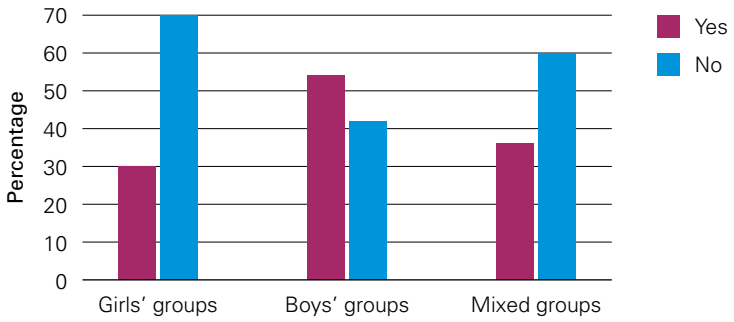



Figure 2.19 Discrimination at school according to the school's grade levels: Students' perceptions

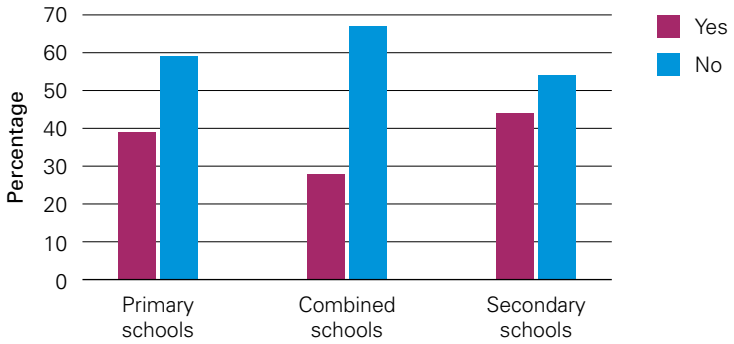



Figure 2.20 identifies the victims of discrimination.[317] The students' perception of the victimization of other students was stronger than that of their parents and much stronger than that of their teachers. Twenty per cent of students' groups reported discrimination against girls, as opposed to 11 per cent of parents' groups and only five per cent of teachers' groups. Parents and teachers tended not to see boys as victims, even though students' groups ranked them second. In aggregate, boys rank eighth, orphans sixth and those with special needs seventh. On the other hand, parents were more conscious of discrimination on the basis of family connections or ethnicity than were either students or teachers. Discrimination against those who were poor was recorded by over 10 per cent of the adult groups, but by fewer than five per cent of the students' groups. There was little perceived discrimination on the basis of religious belief.

[317] The figure draws on Annex G.11, H.9, and I.6. The ranking is according to the aggregate of teachers', parents' and students' groups identifying the particular category of victims. Among "Other responses", "Diligent students" were included by four parents' and one teachers' groups, but not by students' groups. There were a large number of irrelevant or uncommitted responses.

Figure 2.20 Victims of discrimination at school (top five on aggregated rankings)

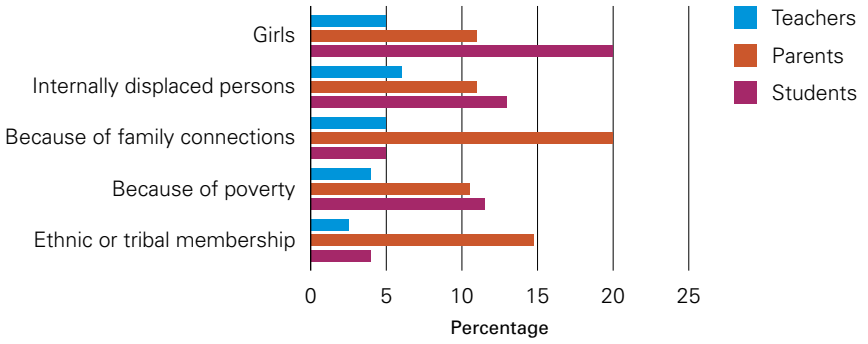
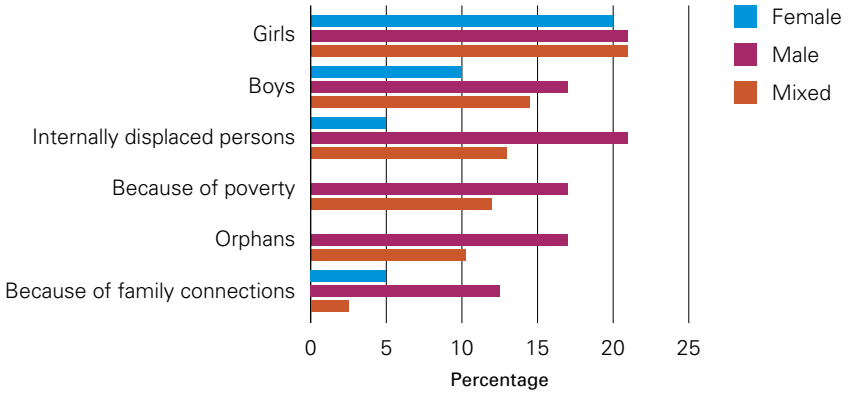


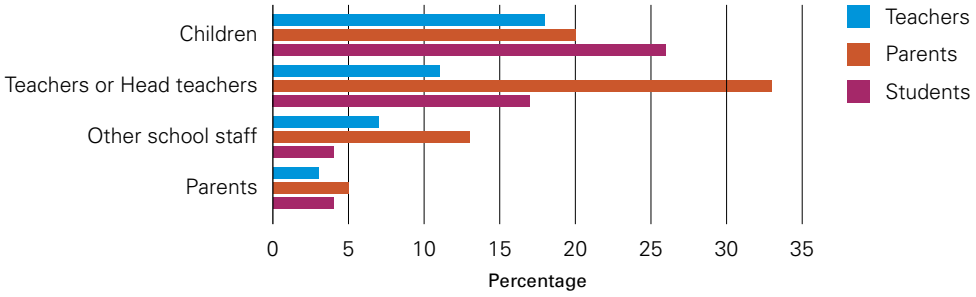

Figure 2.21 shows the variation in responses of students by gender group composition. Girls', boys' and mixed groups almost uniformly perceived girls as victims of discrimination.[318] For other subjects of discrimination, boys consistently showed greater consciousness than did girls or mixed groups.

Figure 2.21 Victims of discrimination by gender of students' group members




Those identified as behaving discriminatorily are shown in Figure 2.22.[319] Children were more aware of other children being discriminatory than parents and teachers. Parents reported much more discrimination from teachers than students.

Figure 2.22 Perpetrators of discrimination at school



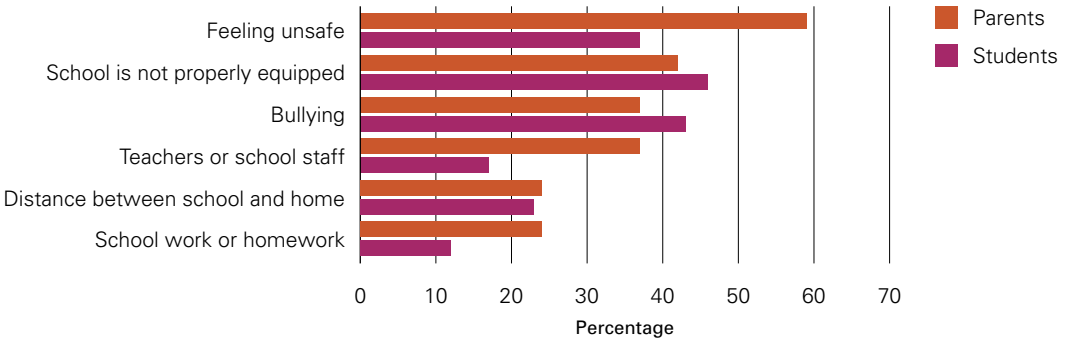

Students were asked to say what they did not like about going to school. Parents were asked the same question about their children. While "feeling unsafe" and "lack of equipment" were, respectively, the most frequent and second-most frequent responses from parents, students placed the lack of equipment first and "bullying" in second place. Feeling unsafe came third for the students. Although more than 40 per cent of the students' groups reported bullying as a major negative factor, with parents also being aware of its prevalence, 27 of the 51 groups identifying prevalent bullying did not identify fellow students or staff as perpetrators. One would expect bullying to be a form of discrimination;

[318] Annex I.6. The discussion groups in mixed schools in 20 instances were single-sex groups. One all-girls group was reported at a school having only male enrolment, and five single-sex groups were held in schools that did not report enrolment by gender. Further disaggregation of the responses would produce doubtful values.

[319] The table draws on Annex G.12, H.10, I.7. There were a large number of irrelevant or uncommitted responses.

however, for many students, they seem to be perceived as totally different. Further investigation is needed. However, regarding what students disliked about school, more students were concerned about the threat from inside the school than about the threat from outside.

Figure 2.23 What students dislike about going to school




Two teachers' groups reported the need to encourage students to respect one another,[320] and a students' group drew attention to students behaving in a way that "harms their friends".[321]

The bullying, assuming its reported prevalence is correct, may, in some schools, be encouraged by the way teachers treat their students. Seven students' groups and two parents' groups specifically referred to physical punishment or verbal abuse from teachers.[322] One group asked for the "removal of the atmosphere of fear and punishment". The group provided examples of verbal abuse as calling students by animal names and using other offensive words, as well as physical abuse such as face-slapping. Another asked that teachers abandon "the hitting strategy". Other comments were less specific, but one group requested training for teachers in behaving towards students in ways that were "not oppressive". The parents' groups asked for the prevention of violence by teachers and for teachers to make an effort to understand the effect of psychosocial stress on the children's behaviour and to treat them "as their own children".

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.[323]

The literature reports school harassment and violence between students of differing political views.[324] It also reports political interrogations, with corporal punishment for giving the "wrong" answer.[325] Some parents kept children out of school, for they feared children would be detained.[326] A safe learning environment cannot be achieved without a "zero tolerance" approach to violence in the schools.[327] 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."[328]

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

[320] Annex G.36.
[321] Annex I.9.
[322] Annex H.14, I.8-9. Only in one instance did the parents' and students' comments come from the same school.
[323] CP Assessment, p.8.
[324] Safe No More, p.14.
[325] Safe No More, p.14.
[326] Safe No More, p.20.
[327] Regional Plan, p.26.
[328] Squandering Humanity, p.38.

It is important to consider respondent views on having girls and boys together in school. Only 27 of the 122 schools surveyed were single-sex schools.[329] One parents' group called for all-girls schools to be established.[330] Another asked to separate girls and boys after the first cycle.[331] Five students' groups also requested separating girls and boys, with one mentioning that conflict would be reduced.[332] One parents' group said, "Don't mix schools",[333] which may refer to classrooms with boys and girls. One teachers' group requested separate schools for girls and boys.[334] Overall, concerns about having girls and boys in the same school or classroom were raised at eight of the 122 schools surveyed. However, no group referred to female teachers for female students.

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.[335] This may imply that there are married girls who have returned to school.

The conflict exposed many children to violence and fear to the extent that their ability to concentrate on their school work was severely impaired.[336] One report states that up to half the children surveyed were unable to concentrate in class.[337] Additionally, the school itself might be a place in which children experience the sound of air raids and other dangers.[338] 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."[339] Parents testified to the signs of emotional stress, such as nightmares, bed-wetting and uncharacteristic aggression and withdrawal shown by their children.[340] 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.[341]

While some children display remarkable resilience,[342] psychosocial problems have affected children's ability not only to participate in education, but also in recreation, which is essential for mental health.[343] "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."[344]

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."[345]

[329] Thirteen for girls and 14 for boys.
[330] Annex H.7. A boys' primary school in Aleppo, the Zarbah sub-district of Jebel Saman.
[331] Annex H.14. Or after primary: "in the second and third stages". The school is in Idleb, in the Dana sub-district of Harim. It is a combined school with presumed mixed enrolment.
[332] Annex I.8-9. All five are mixed gender schools, one primary, two combined, and two secondary. The primary school is in the Kafr Nobol sub-district of Idleb's Al Ma'ra district; the combined schools in Aleppo City and Idleb; and the secondary schools in Aleppo (Ain Al Arab) and Idleb (Darkosh).
[333] Annex H.7. A school in Nashabiyeh, in the Duma district of Rural Damascus. A secondary school with female and male enrolment.
[334] Annex G.38.
[335] 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.
[336] UNICEF Syria, p.17; SINA, pp.35-36.
[337] Futures under Threat, p.11.
[338] SINA, p.36.
[339] Untold Atrocities, p.15.
[340] CP Issues, pp.16-17.
[341] UNICEF Syria, p.17.
[342] "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.
[343] SINA, pp.35-36.
[344] CP Assessment, p.51.
[345] PSS, p.3.

Teachers, themselves subjected to psychosocial strain,[346] 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.[347]

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.[348]

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.[349] 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.[350] It is recommended that psychosocial support "be mainstreamed across all efforts that focus on formal and non-formal education delivery".[351]

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,[352] which further underscores the importance of counselling and recreational activities for students.

Many responses in the survey's open-ended questions called for psychosocial support or recreational opportunities, but not with the frequency one might expect. Proportionately, local councils appeared more aware of the need for psychosocial care (23 per cent of respondents) than were parents' groups (18 per cent) or head teachers (15 per cent).[353] Requests for recreational areas, equipment or opportunities were more frequent, with 32 per cent of students, 26 per cent of parents, 24 per cent of head teachers and 14 per cent of teachers making these suggestions.[354] While recreation and entertainment can play an important role in restoring and maintaining mental health, more structured psychosocial support is also required.

Although most of the references to psychosocial support are quite general, responses indicated some specific manifestations: Not only students, but also staff need such support;[355] psychosocial support should be delivered by specialists;[356] and that students may require additional support as examinations approach.[357] Survey participants largely did not remark on the possibility of teachers needing training to provide psychosocial support. It might be that it was assumed that teachers receiving psychosocial support would be able in turn to support students without undergoing further training.

Parents indicated that they too require psychosocial support.[358] From a parents' group came a request for a psychosocial and behavioural study to be undertaken on each child who had experienced traumatic circumstances.[359] Another request was for a "psychological adviser for female students at

[346] SINA, pp.32, 36; HNO, pp.30, 88.
[347] UNICEF Syria, p.15.
[348] CP Issues, p.16.
[349] CP Issues, p.16, drawing on World Health Organization and Inter-Agency Standing Committee sources.
[350] Recommended in UNICEF Syria, pp.16, 18.
[351] SHARP, December 2013, p.77.
[352] CP Assessment, p.11.
[353] Annex D.13, H.14, 40.
[354] Annex F.41, G.36, H.7, I.8.
[355] Annex F.40-41, G.31.
[356] Annex D.13, F.22.
[357] Annex H.14.
[358] Annex H.7, 12, 18.
[359] Annex H.12.

age 12".[360] A parents' group noted that the homes should play their part by restricting discussion of the horrors of war and allow children "to feel psychologically comfortable and have the momentum to study".[361] There was also a call for psychosocial support courses for mothers, which would teach them how to motivate their children.[362]

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.

Despite this great need, only 14 per cent of head teachers indicated "mental health care" was always available to their students and 17 per cent said it was sometimes available (*see Figure 2.24*). This leaves 69 per cent of schools at which psychosocial support is apparently not available in any systematic way. Seven head teachers (out of 117) and four teachers' groups (out of 122) indicated that they had implemented psychosocial programmes which could serve as an example to other schools.[363] Unfortunately, the nature of the survey did not allow for details of these interventions to be recorded.

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."[364] For adolescents, it was suggested their life skills education cover "civic engagement, reconciliation and tolerance initiatives and training on livelihoods and employment."[365] 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,[366] it is a topic which should be covered during life skills education classes.

Extra-curricular activities might be a way of promoting well-being and of relieving trauma. Catch-up classes would encourage students who had fallen behind in their school work. Head teachers reported offering sports or games (30 per cent of schools), life skills (21 per cent), arts skills (14 per cent), creative skills (21 per cent) and catch-up classes (nine per cent) as extracurricular activities.[367]

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."[368] 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."[369] 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.

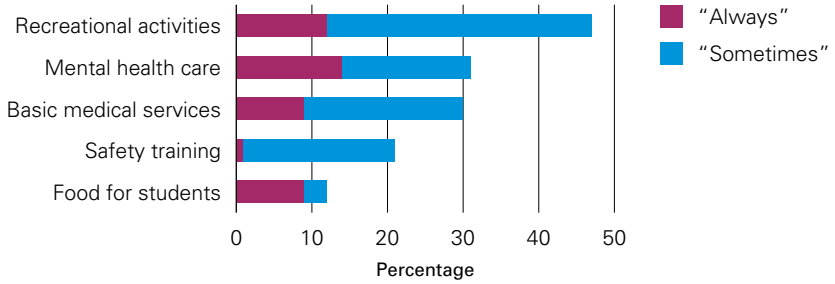
[360] Annex H.18.
[361] Annex H.14.
[362] Annex H.18.
[363] Annex F.41, G.36.
[364] SHARP, December 2013, p.77.
[365] SHARP, July 2014, p.41.
[366] CP Issues, p.7.
[367] Annex F.18-19. There were a number of inconsistencies with data for these tables; see notes below the table. In Annex F.23, 36 per cent of the schools participate in sporting events. This is higher than the 30 per cent in Annex F.19, but the difference might be that some schools participate from time to time in sporting activities without having them as a regular extracurricular offering.
[368] PSS, p.6.
[369] PSS, p.6.

The literature also recommends establishing playgrounds and safe spaces for adolescents.[370] Surveyed students' groups requested play areas, fields and pitches for particular sports, a games hall, and sporting equipment.[371] Teachers also requested recreational facilities.[372] Functions such as shows, concerts, exhibitions and contests, and activities like singing, drawing, music, cultural circles, and puppet theatre were also mentioned,[373] as were outings or journeys.[374] (One wonders about the feasibility of outings or journeys given the prevailing dangers.)

Comments from a parents' group and from a teachers' group specifically linked recreational activities as beneficial to the psychosocial qualities of children, as they "have been able to listen, play and talk [and] are better able to process their experiences and are more optimistic about their prospects".[375]

Head teachers were specifically asked about the frequency with which five services promoting well-being were available to students.[376] The results are illustrated in Figure 2.24. Since 24 per cent of head teachers mentioned recreational activities at their schools as examples from which others could learn,[377] it is surprising that only 12 per cent list them here as being available to students on a frequent basis. It is presumed that by "mental health care", most respondents had psychosocial support in mind. If so, the 13 per cent response here is again low. There are references to its importance in the responses to a number of the open questions, only by a small number of interviewees.[378]

Figure 2.24 "Well-being" services offered by schools




There were few mentions in the open-ended responses of a schools' responsibility for student health.[379] One parents' group asked for a medical or health officer to be available at school.[380] Basic medical services were regularly offered by fewer than 10 per cent of the schools.[381] However, certainly, there were varying interpretations from respondents as to what this meant. For some, it might be the application of first aid to playground cuts and scratches, while for others, it might be the entry point for services by a qualified nurse or doctor. Relatedly, fewer than 10 per cent of head teachers reported that food was provided.

The low level of safety training 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.[382]

[370] UNICEF Syria, p.18.
[371] Annex I.8.
[372] Annex G.31, 38.
[373] Annex F.41, G.31, 36.
[374] Annex H.7, G.19.
[375] Education Interrupted, p.9.
[376] Annex F.17. The response rate for the six services varied between 62 per cent (safety training) and 92 per cent (medical services).
[377] Annex F.41.
[378] For example, Annex D.13, F.22, 29, 40, H.12, 14.
[379] Annex G.20.
[380] Annex H.14.
[381] Annex F.17B. Eighteen per cent of head teachers reported that medical services were "sometimes" available.
[382] Annex I.8. Girls and boys participated in this discussion group at a secondary school.

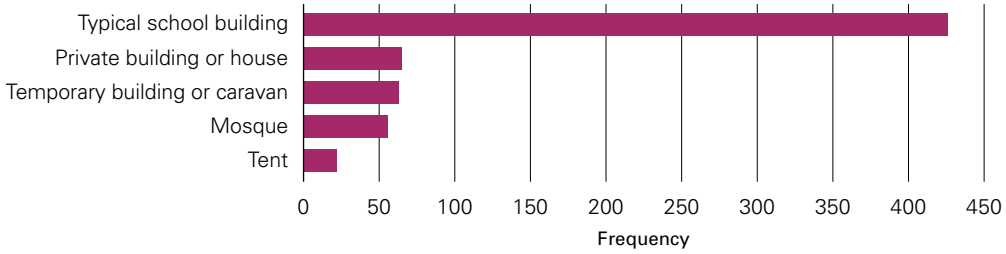
## Facilities and Services

Many respondents called for better security. Schools should be equipped with basements or bomb shelters in which students and teachers might take refuge.[383] Appeals were also made to use of reinforced concrete when constructing schools,[384] for protective walls and fences,[385] and for trenches.[386]

Other suggestions included relocating the school,[387] constructing emergency exits in school buildings,[388] providing guards and a guard room,[389] and providing a range of equipment, including medical kits, fire extinguishers, sirens, two-way radios and protective clothing.[390] Pragmatism should be considered, as funds are unlikely to be available even, in the longer term, to relocate schools.

The 53 local council representatives were asked about the nature of learning spaces in their area.[391] One third of learning spaces were located in buildings which would not normally be used as schools; private buildings, temporary spaces and mosques featured prominently.

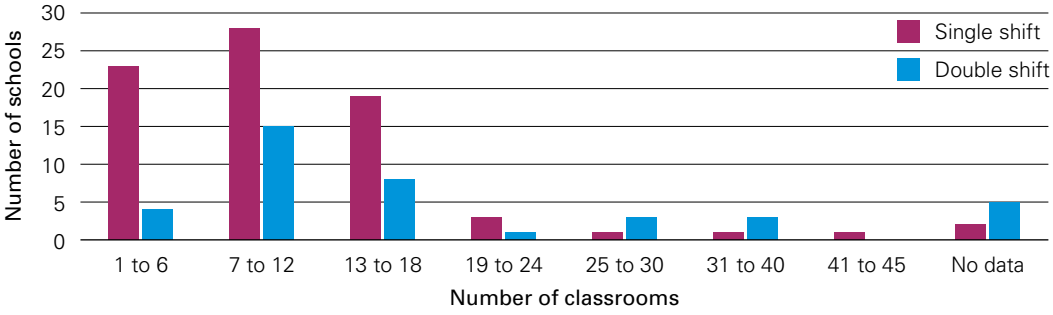
Figure 2.25 Types of learning spaces




Local council members were also asked about regular school buildings not functioning as schools. Forty per cent of responses indicated all school buildings were appropriately used. The other respondents reported a total of 186 school buildings in 24 areas were not used as schools. In one area, as many as 35 schools were affected.[392]

The largest single-shift has 45 classrooms, while the largest double shift school has 40.[393] According to Figure 2.26, the majority of single shift schools surveyed have between one and 18 classrooms; double shift schools between seven and 18. Excluded are five schools for which no indication of the number of shifts was available. Of these five excluded schools, one had 11 classrooms; one had 13; two had 14; and for the fifth, the number of rooms was not given.

Figure 2.26 School size by number of classrooms




[383] Annex D.13, 17, F.15 (33 times). Suggestions such as "securing safer place, like basements", "establishing shelters for bombardment cases", "provide a bunker at school in case of emergency", "prepare special shelter", indicate either that the school has no such facility, or that the facility is inadequate.
[384] Annex F.28.
[385] Annex D.12, 17, G.38, I.8.
[386] Annex F.15, 28, I.9.
[387] Annex F.15, 28-29, G.19, I.8.
[388] Annex F.15.
[389] Annex D.17.
[390] Annex F.15 (54 times).
[391] Annex C.3.
[392] Annex C.4. The local council reporting 35 schools affected has responsibility for a "whole village" in the Tamanaah sub-district of Idleb's Al Ma'ra district.
[393] Annex E.1-2B, F.2-5.

Figure 2.27 describes the student-classroom ratio assuming that students are in attendance at the same time.[394] For double-shift schools, assuming that exactly half the students attended each shift (which is unlikely), the effective student-classroom ratio would be half of that indicated. Thus the 13 double-shift schools having between 31 and 40 students per classroom would actually have had between 16 and 20 students, on average, per classroom per shift. Teachers with more than 30 students in the class might consider the class to be overcrowded.[395] Thirty-two per cent of the single shift schools surveyed fall in this category. It is not known whether these schools had considered double shifts as an option for relieving pressure on the classrooms. Excluded from the figures are five schools for which no indication of the number of shifts was available. For four of these schools, the SCRs were 73, 76, 13 and 59. For the fifth school, calculating its SCR was not possible.

Figure 2.27 Student-classroom ratios

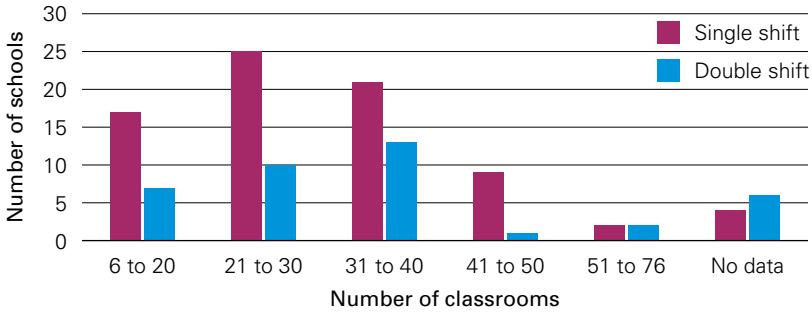
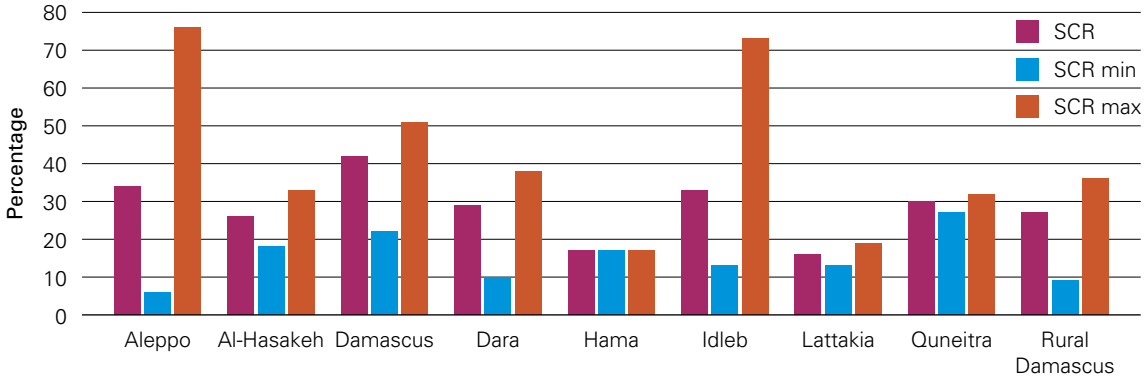



Figure 2.28 shows the average student-classroom ratio for the surveyed schools in each governorate, with minimum and maximum values. The high values may be acceptable if schools are operating two shifts, with half the students attending each shift. In Aleppo's case, the highest value is for a school which did not indicate the number of shifts it runs. Ranked second, at 64, was a school running a double shift; the effective ratio might therefore be 32. Schools with ratios of 50, 45 and 44 indicated that they ran a single shift. Within a school, it is also unlikely that all classes will be the same size. The ratio of 50 would probably mean that some class groups were smaller and some larger than this number. The schools in Idleb with ratios of 73 and 59 did not indicate the number of shifts. Those ranked third and fourth, with ratios of 56 and 46, were single shift schools. For Damascus, the schools with the top ratios (51 and 47) were running a single shift.

Figure 2.28 Average, minimum and maximum student-classroom ratios (depicted as SCR)




Many schools poorly provided basic utilities. Figure 2.29 shows that fewer than 30 per cent of the surveyed schools had adequate potable water, or heating in winter.[396] Forty per cent of the schools did not have potable water at all. Sixty-nine per cent of the schools were totally without electricity, only 13 per cent having a supply that met the needs and 14 per cent an inadequate supply.

[394] Calculated from data in Annex E.1-2B, F.2-5. Included in the "No data" category are two schools in Aleppo City, one a single shift school that apparently had a student/classroom ratio of 187, the other a double shift school with a ratio of 123. It is possible that the number of classrooms has been incorrectly entered for these two schools.

[395] Neither the official Syrian standard for class size nor the norm prior to the crisis is known. INEE, p.97, suggests that up to 40 students in a class should be regarded as acceptable. UNICEF Curriculum, p.31, refers to a classroom designed for 35 students accommodating 70.

[396] Annex F.24-25.

Figure 2.29 Utilities available to schools

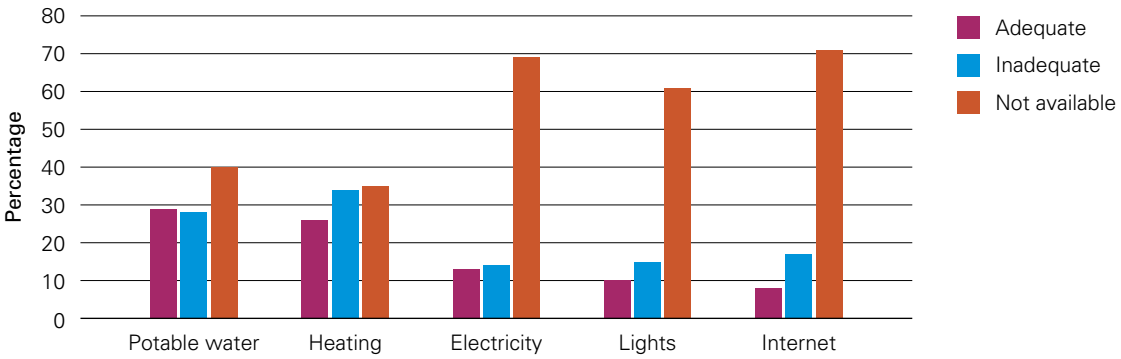
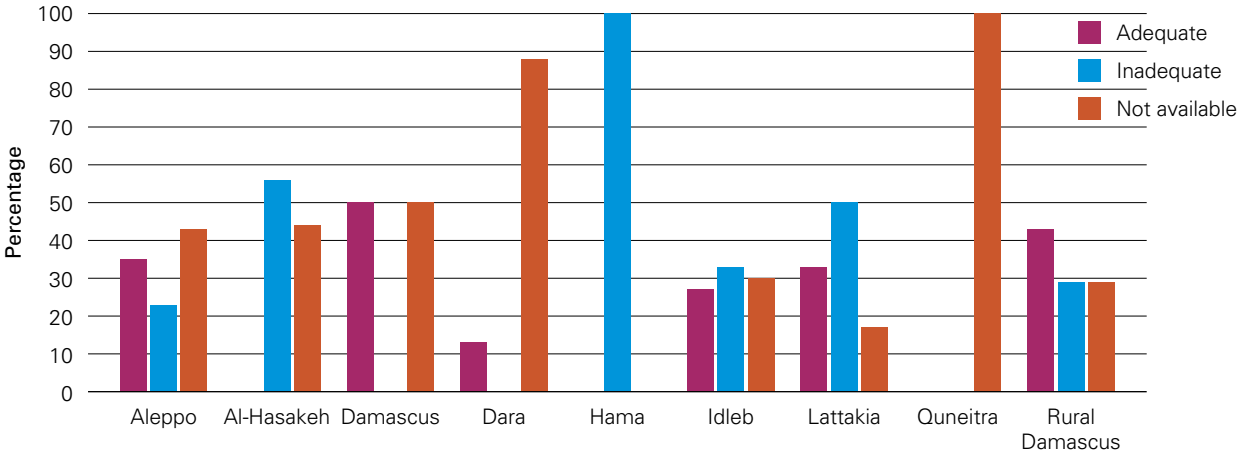


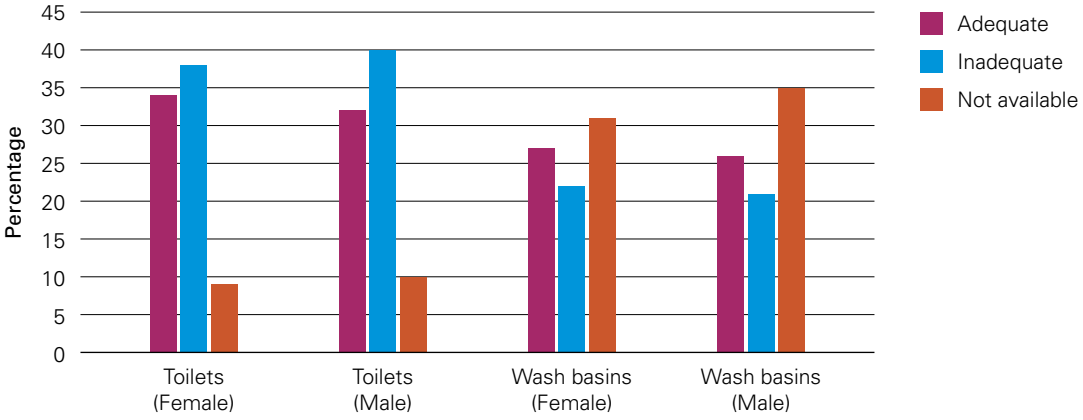

Figure 2.30 displays the availability of potable water according to the governorate in which the surveyed schools were situated.[397]

Figure 2.30 Availability of potable water to surveyed schools by governorate




Eighty-four per cent of schools with female students reported having functional toilet facilities, whether adequate (40 per cent) or inadequate (44 per cent), as depicted in Figure 2.31. These might be toilets exclusively for the use of female students, or shared facilities. For schools with male students, the overall proportion of schools having toilet facilities was marginally lower.[398] Fewer than 60 per cent of the schools had functioning handwashing facilities, whether single-sex or shared.

Figure 2.31 Toilet and handwashing facilities at schools




[397] Annex F.24. Schools that did not respond to the question have been excluded from the calculation.
[398] Annex F.24.

It is expected that a lack of adequate toilet and handwashing facilities will negatively impact female enrolment, particularly at upper primary and at secondary level. The enrolment of the 10 schools reporting mixed enrolment and no toilet facilities, not even shared facilities, for girls was checked, with the result displayed in Table 2.6. The aggregate enrolment for the 10 schools is slightly higher for girls than for boys. For the senior secondary school, the lack of water and sanitation facilities might have an influence of girls' enrolment, but this is no more than speculation. In general, the evidence in this table does not substantiate the belief that girls stay away from school if there is a lack of toilet facilities.

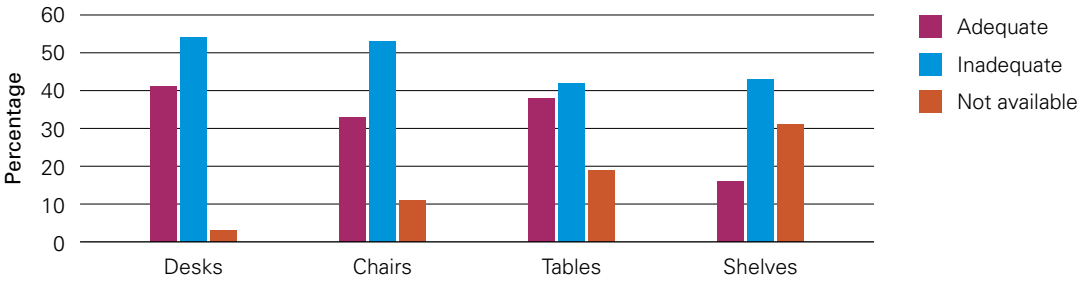
Table 2.6 Enrolment of mixed schools with no toilet facilities for girls

| GOVERNORATE | DISTRICT | GRADES | ENROLMENT | GPI |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aleppo | Ain Al Arab | Primary | 1,366 | 1.19 |
| | As-Safira | Primary | 328 | 0.94 |
| | As-Safira | Combined | 1,102 | 0.91 |
| | A'zaz | Primary | 283 | 1.21 |
| Idleb | Al Ma'ra | Combined | 376 | 1.41 |
| | Harim | Senior secondary | 252 | 0.76 |
| | Jisr-Ash-Shugur | Primary | 111 | 0.91 |
| | Jisr-Ash-Shugur | Primary | 640 | 1.02 |
| | Jisr-Ash-Shugur | Primary | 73 | 0.74 |
| Lattakia | Al-Haffa | Primary | 77 | 1.48 |
| **Aggregate** | | | **4,608** | **1.05** |

The adequacy of classroom furniture is difficult to judge from the head teachers' responses.[399] If, in Figure 2.32, a combination of chairs and tables is an alternative to desks for students' use, as many as 71 per cent of the schools surveyed might have an adequate supply of basic classroom furniture. However, if tables and chairs were intended only for the use of teachers, or only in certain specialist teaching rooms, then just over 40 per cent of schools had an adequate supply of seating with a writing surface for their students. Without suitable furniture, it can be very challenging for students to do written work in an acceptable manner. More time is likely to be needed to cover the curriculum. For displaced children, living in makeshift accommodations, finding a place at home to do written work might also be difficult, making it more important to have access to suitable facilities at school. While it is possible to arrange the school schedule in such a way that students alternate between using a room with sufficient desks, tables and chairs and one that is inadequately furnished, this is not easily done. It also reduces the flexibility of the teacher in deciding when it is appropriate to do written work.

The availability of adequate storage space, at 16 per cent, is very low. Teaching materials are likely to deteriorate more quickly if they cannot be properly stored when not in use.

Figure 2.32 Availability of classroom furniture




[399] Annex F.25.

When it comes to teaching tools, a black board, white board, textbooks, stationery and teaching aids, the proportion of adequately resourced schools is low indeed.[400] This is elaborated in the section on instruction and learning processes. In response to a question about services for children with special needs, only 13 per cent of the schools indicated that they were able to provide relevant assistance, mainly in the form of teaching materials (11 per cent), disabled access to the building or to health services (three per cent each), or through having specialists on the staff (three per cent).[401] Primary, combined and secondary schools are all represented (nine, four and two respectively), all with mixed enrolment except for one girls' primary school. There was no indication that the schools had actually enrolled children with special needs, except in one instance where the head noted that "We were not able to support her with anything".

Head teachers were asked in an open question what services their school ought to offer to students with special needs.[402] One respondent did not know. Six out of 117 responded they did not have special needs students, implying that the question was irrelevant to them.[403] There were suggestions that a separate and properly equipped school should be provided (eight responses)[404] or that separate classes should be established (16 responses).[405] Suggestions relating to the head teacher's school tended to indicate that the school could do little unless it were provided with assistance in the form of building modifications (10 responses), equipment provision (47),[406] receiving specialist teachers (32)[407] or appropriate training for current staff (10).[408] Six respondents drew attention to the need to transport students with special needs between home and school. Twelve expressed a need for psychosocial support and three for a special curriculum.[409] Only two, both male respondents, made reference to inclusive education: "Working on engaging them in all activities and not letting them feel they are with special needs and that they are excluded from most of the activities".[410] Only four schools had a building with access for physically disabled persons, and 13 reported having appropriate teaching materials for students with visual, speech or hearing disabilities.[411] The impression is that respondents, in general, felt they were talking about hypothetical situations, not about real challenges that they would have to address at their schools. They were consequently safe in noting that they could do little for students with special needs without external assistance.

The proportion of schools that claimed to offer transportation appears to be high: 21 per cent of head teachers reported the service was "always" or "sometimes" available.[412] It seems unlikely that, when schools are struggling with shortages of furniture, equipment and materials, they would have vehicles at their disposal. More information on the service would be useful: Does it, for example, refer to a few parents who transport neighbours' children along with their own, with the school's role being to coordinate a lift roster?

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.

[400] Annex F.25. Recall that the survey was conducted at the end of the school year, not in the opening weeks when there might have been delays in the delivery of new materials.
[401] Annex F.20-21.
[402] Twenty-one female heads, 75 male, 10 mixed "teams". In 11 cases gender was not indicated.
[403] Annex F.22. There was an unusually high number of blanks for this question (20), indicating presumably that respondents had nothing to say.
[404] One each from a female and a male respondent, and five from mixed teams. One not indicated.
[405] Nine male respondents, one mixed team. Others not indicated.
[406] Four female, 40 male respondents.
[407] One female, 27 male respondents, and one mixed team.
[408] One female, six male respondents.
[409] Annex F.22.
[410] Annex F.22.
[411] Annex F.21.
[412] Annex F.17. Nine per cent of head teachers reported that the service was "always" available.

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# 5 Teaching and learning

"Access to education is only meaningful if the education programmes offer quality teaching and learning."[413]

## 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,"[414] 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…".[415]

"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, and who may further modify the curriculum accepted by the school through the relative emphasis placed from the teacher, through the omission of elements or through the inability of the teacher to complete the curriculum with the class. Apart from specifying content to be covered, or competencies to be achieved, there may also be expectations about the way in which it is 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.[416] Official adjustments were subsequently made to the Grade 8 curriculum.[417] Evidence shows some teachers being unmotivated to teach the curriculum[418] 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".[419] 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 in opposition to the Government of Syria introduced slight or extensive modifications to the curriculum in schools partly or fully under their control. In some areas, subjects such as history and religion are viewed as politically oriented and were thus removed from the curriculum.[420] 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.[421] In some areas controlled by ISIL, more drastic changes to the curriculum were implemented during the 2014/15 school year.[422] These might include the removal of artistic composition, Islamic Studies, music, sport, and philosophy: "According to the Institute for the Study of War, the [ISIL] educational programme is devoted to training the next generation of [ISIL] members."[423, 424]

[413] INEE, p.76.
[414] INEE, p.76.
[415] INEE, p.79.
[416] UNICEF Syria, p.10; UNICEF Curriculum, pp.28-29.
[417] UNICEF Curriculum, p.31.
[418] UNICEF Syria, p.15.
[419] UNICEF Syria, pp.12, 16.
[420] HNO, p.85; UNICEF Curriculum, p.31.
[421] Squandering Humanity, pp.38-39.
[422] HNO, pp.30, 86.
[423] UNICEF Curriculum, pp.31-32.
[424] HNO, p.84.

For 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 rejected: Refugees living in host communities did not wish their children to be segregated into separate schools.[425] 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 sat for school certificate examinations, the qualifications should be recognized in Syria.

In areas of Syria where the Kurdish language is the medium of instruction, displaced children from other parts of Syria might find it difficult to study.[426]

Questions were addressed to the local councils and head teachers about curricula in use and about preferred curricula. The latter question was also put to parents.[427] According to head teachers, 54 per cent of schools were using the Government of Syria curriculum and 43 per cent used that of the SIG.[428] Six per cent also used the "religious curriculum", in conjunction with that of the SIG.[429] The "religious curriculum" was apparently not a comprehensive curriculum covering all subjects and might exist in various forms. No school in opposition-controlled areas used the Libyan or Jordanian curriculum.[430]

According to head teachers, the local council prefers the SIG curriculum, although the Jordanian curriculum was also perceived as favourable, and, to a lesser extent, the Libyan curriculum. Local council respondents themselves indicated a strong preference for the SIG curriculum (64 per cent), some support the Government of Syria curriculum (17 per cent) and none for the Jordanian curriculum. One local council (two per cent) chose the Libyan curriculum.[431] It is not surprising that head teachers might be mistaken about the local councils' preferences when the weak relationship between some schools and their local councils has already been noted.

Figure 2.33 Curriculum used by school and head teachers' view of local council's preference

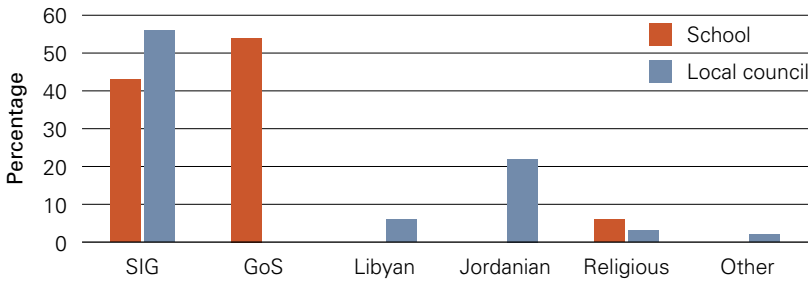
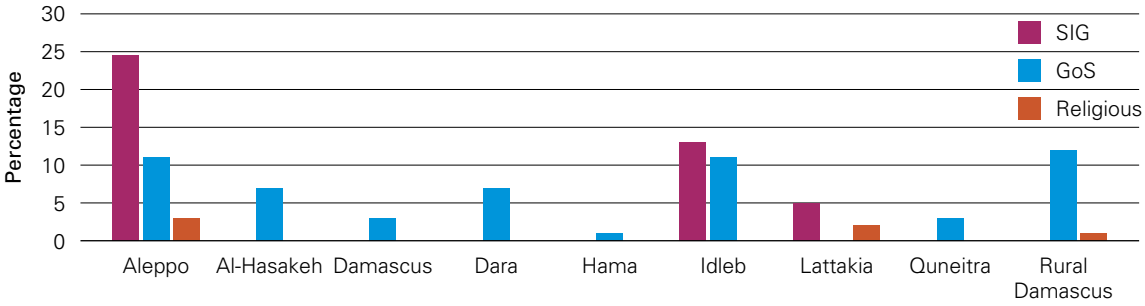



Figure 2.34 shows the geographical distribution of the surveyed schools using the SIG curricula, the Government of Syria, and the "religious curriculum".[432] The SIG curriculum was used within a number of schools in Aleppo, Idleb, and Lattakia; the Government of Syria's curriculum was used in all the governorates surveyed except Lattakia.

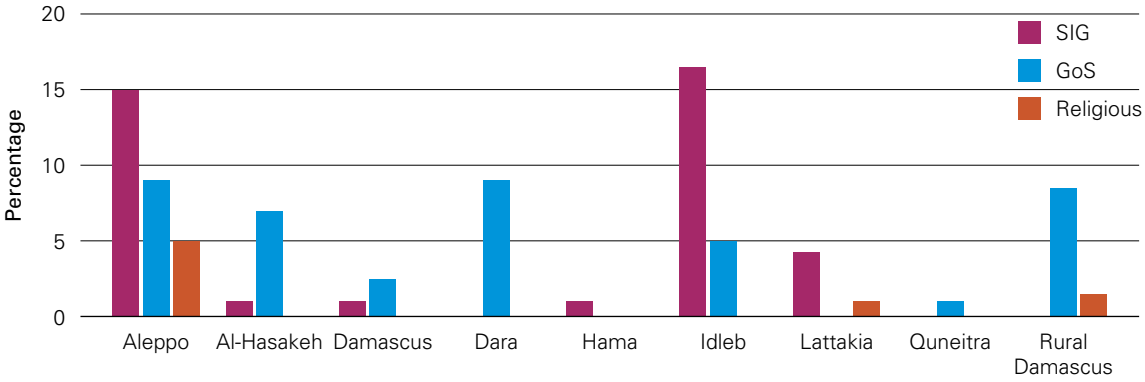
[425] UNICEF Lebanon, pp.5, 12-13.
[426] UNICEF Curriculum, p.30.
[427] The question on preferred curricula, question 8, inexplicably dropped out of the teachers' questionnaire.
[428] Annex F.6-7. Three of these schools reportedly use both the Government and SIG curricula.
[429] And in one instance in conjunction with that of the Government.
[430] The Libyan and Jordanian curricula were included as options in the questionnaires because Education Clusters and ESWG members were already aware of support for these curricula in certain quarters.
[431] Annex D.8. One local council (two per cent) chose the Libyan and one the "religious" curriculum.
[432] Annex F.6-7.

Figure 2.34 Curriculum used by surveyed schools by governorate




There was a slightly stronger preference for the curriculum from the Government of Syria over the SIG among parents' groups, with the "religious curriculum" attracting less support.[433] Parents opting for the "religious curriculum" (except in one instance) regarded it as a stand-alone curriculum, completely different in itself. A comparison of Figure 2.34 and Figure 2.35 indicates that some parents' groups would have preferred their school to be using a different curriculum.[434] No support for the Government's curriculum was shown by parents' groups in Hama or Lattakia, and no support for the SIG curriculum in Dara, Quneitra or Rural Damascus was expressed. Only one school in the Hama governorate was included in the survey. At this school, parents preferred the SIG curriculum, whereas the school was using that of the Government. It is not known whether schools using the Government's curriculum were teaching the full curriculum or a modified version.

Figure 2.35 Parents' preference of curriculum




A large number of comments on the curriculum were received in the open-ended questions from all surveyed groups.[435] All but one comment expressed dissatisfaction with whatever curriculum was implemented in the school. One students' group requested that the Government's curriculum be retained. A local council representative requested a single unified curriculum for all liberated areas. From school staff members, there were requests for a religious curriculum or for the combination of religious and secular elements. Most respondents, representing all categories of interviewees, were seeking something different: "improved", "more modern", "developed by specialists", "appropriate to the community's culture", "standardised", "shorter", and "less complicated". There was one request for "some educational subjects" to be dropped; there were several requests for subjects like foreign languages, crafts, other practical/skilled subjects, information technology, art, music, public health and first aid to be added.

In reporting the lack of jobs for those who had left school without obtaining a Grade 12 certificate, parents mentioned that vocational training courses in subjects such as carpentry, motor mechanics, electricity, blacksmithing, electronics or computers would have put their children in a position to find work.[436]

[433] Annex H.3.

[434] Note that, whereas in Figure 2.34 "religious" has been mentioned by respondents who have also selected another curriculum, in Figure 2.35, "religious" is treated as an alternative to the other curricula.

[435] A summary table of comments on the curriculum in the open questions is included in Annex B.5.

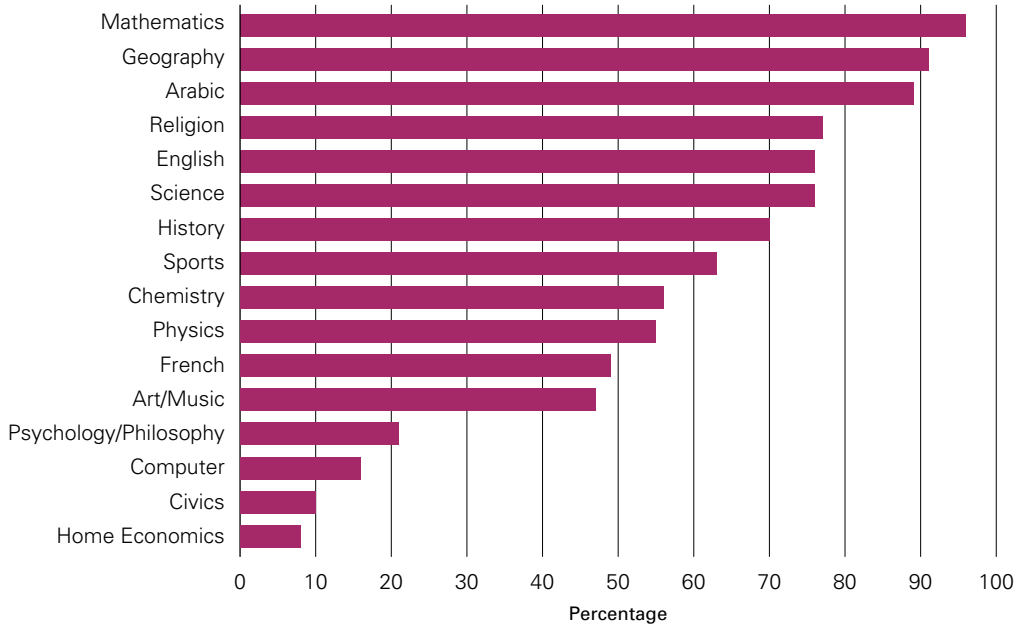
[436] Annex H.16.

Vocational education was referred to approvingly among refugees in the Za'atari camp in Jordan, but less enthusiastically by respondents among the Syrian refugee community in Lebanon. In Lebanon, children aged 15 to 18 indicated a willingness to attend vocational training, but expressed a preference for being able to continue with academic education at the tertiary level. Their response might be partly conditioned by the scarcity of jobs in the communities where they had settled.[437] 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."[438] Boys of secondary school age within Syria also expressed interest in vocational training activities as a form of recreation.[439] However, orienting failing students to vocational education was criticized as neither appropriate nor equitable.[440]

Again, from all categories of respondents, there were comments which seemed directed not at the curriculum itself, but at the way in which it was implemented. Respondents suggested that education should not only be theoretical, but also practical, with appropriate equipment available to the teachers. Similarly, a parents' group called for modern teaching methods and equipment. One students' group asked for shorter lessons and longer breaks, another for an increase in the length of the school day (the latter being echoed by a parents' group). Complaints were voiced about the way in which the Kurdish language had been introduced into the curriculum.

Information was provided on the subjects taught in the schools surveyed. Figure 2.36 shows the percentage of schools offering each of the listed subjects.[441] When explaining why subjects were not offered, home economics, psychology and philosophy were described as irrelevant and no longer needed. Computer studies were affected by a lack of equipment. English, French, history and religion were most affected by a lack of qualified teachers. Civics was not offered because it was either no longer relevant or because the schools were "not allowed" to teach the subject.

Figure 2.36 Percentage of surveyed schools offering subjects of the curriculum



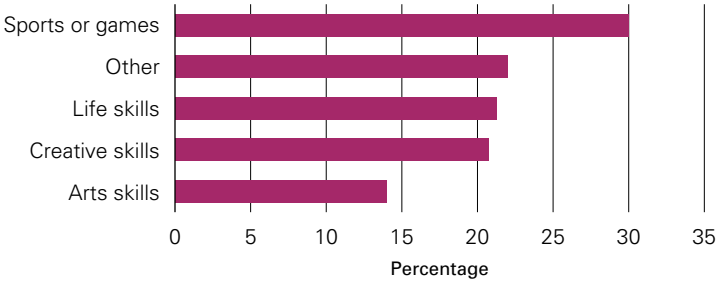

Sixteen head teachers indicated that other subjects were also taught, without specifying what they were. Two reported that the Kurdish language was taught and three that the recitation of the Holy Qur'an was taught. The shortage of teachers, or of qualified teachers, was the main reason given for not teaching subjects. Some of the subjects, such as Arabic, are likely to be compulsory subjects for the certificate examinations. Where these were not taught, for whatever reason, students are likely to be disadvantaged when they sit for the Grade 9 and Grade 12 examinations.

[437] UNICEF Lebanon, p.30.
[438] UNICEF Za'atari, p.3.
[439] UNICEF Za'atari, p.34.
[440] UNICEF Syria, p.16.
[441] Derived from Annex F.8. Six schools did not provide information.

Offering additional subjects for enrichment even though the examining body may not recognize them can do no harm (unless the curriculum is already too full or too difficult to have substance, therefore decreasing employment and tertiary education prospects).

Of 117 responding schools, 37 per cent acknowledged that they offered no extracurricular activities to their students.[442] Among the schools that did offer such activities, one offered five activities, three offered four activities, seven offered three activities, and 16 offered two activities each. Figure 2.37 shows the proportion of schools offering the most frequently mentioned activities. It is surprising that sport and games were offered by only 30 per cent of the schools, considering the importance of recreational activities for children's well-being. Catch-up classes were offered by only nine per cent of the schools. Twenty-six schools indicated offered "other" activities, and 15 provided no details. Three offered another language (Kurdish or Syriac, the latter also known as Syriac Aramaic) and three offered religious activities. The other five schools mentioned trips, scientific and cultural contests, "entertaining celebrations", "children skills", and unspecified additions to the Government's curriculum. It is not known what "life skills", offered by just over 20 per cent of the schools, covers. Nor is it known what proportion of students at these schools opted to participate in the activities.

Figure 2.37 Extracurricular activities offered by surveyed schools




Because education authorities advance students based on examinations, if changes are introduced to core subjects without consultation with the examining body, students may be disadvantaged when they take the examination.

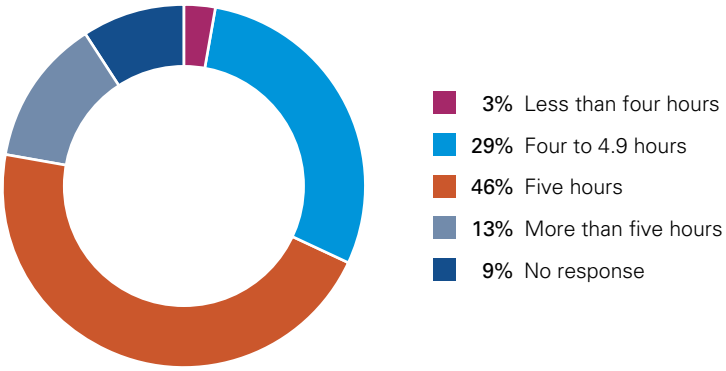
To assist children who have been out of school, remedial courses and self-learning materials have been designed to help them catch up. UNICEF cooperated with the MoE to adapt the UNRWA teaching materials for self-learning.[443] Remedial courses were offered for those living in shelters, and "school clubs", which provide a combination of remedial and recreational activities as a form of psychosocial support, were established at a number of schools.[444]

Effective teaching requires that sufficient time be allocated to each curricular component. Surveyed schools were asked the number of days per week they were open and the duration of their shifts. While 101 schools offered tuition on five days a week, 10 schools operated six or more days a week, and two were open four days a week.[445] Seventy-eight schools ran a single shift and 34 a double shift.[446] The duration of the first shift ranged between 1.15 and 7 hours.[447] The second shift ranged between three and five hours, with nine schools reporting a five-hour shift and 19 a shift of shorter duration.

Combining the length of the school day and the number of school days per week, schools with only primary grades offered between 5.75 and 42 hours a week during the first shift, and between 15 and 25 hours during the second shift.[448] Combined schools were open for 18 to 35 hours a week for the first

[442] Annex F.18-19.
[443] UNICEF Curriculum, p.32.
[444] UNICEF Curriculum, p.32.
[445] Annex F.2-5. Eight schools did not report the number of days per week that they are open.
[446] Annex F.2-5. Five schools reported an arrangement other than single or double, but none of them indicated the duration of a third shift. Five head teachers did not respond to the question.
[447] Eleven schools did not indicate the duration of the first shift.
[448] Those offering less than 20 hours per week were in the Hajeb sub-district of As-Safira (15 hours), and the Daret Azza (both shifts 17.5 hours) and Haritan (first shift 5.75 hours, second shift 15 hours) sub-districts of Jebel Saman, all in the Aleppo governorate.

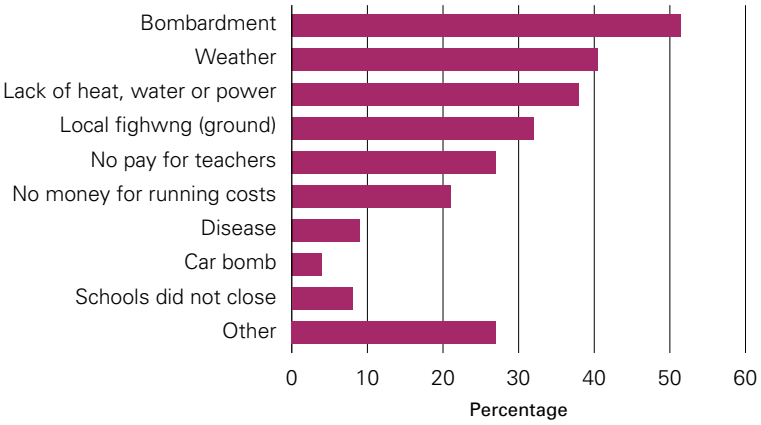
Figure 2.38 Duration of first shift at surveyed schools




shift, and 17.5 to 30 hours for the second shift.[449] The first shift at secondary schools ranged from 20 to 35 hours a week and the second shift from 20 to 25 hours. The majority of schools fell within the range of 20 to 25 hours a week. It is not known what official guidelines have been issued by authorities on teaching hours, but schools that have been instructed to, or have opted to, reduce teaching hours, however good the reason, run the risk of not completing the curriculum.

Opportunities to fully cover the curriculum are also affected by frequent school closures. Figure 2.39 reveals the most common reasons for these closures. Six head teachers failed to report; of those who did, only eight per cent reported that their school programme had not been interrupted. Of those who cited "other" reasons, most were conflict related, while one reported flooding.[450] No question was asked on the number of teaching days lost as a result of school closures.

Figure 2.39 Reasons for unscheduled closing of surveyed schools




Figures 2.38 to 2.41 illustrate the governorates from which responses came.[451] Because the number of schools surveyed in each governorate varied between one (Hama) and 41 (Aleppo), governorates cannot be compared with one another. They show only the number of surveyed schools affected by the particular reason for closure.

Table 2.7 Number of surveyed schools in each governorate

| ALEPPO | AL-HASAKEH | DAMASCUS | DARA | HAMA | IDLEB | LATTAKIA | QUNEITRA | RURAL DAMASCUS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 41 | 9 | 4 | 11 | 1 | 33 | 6 | 3 | 14 |

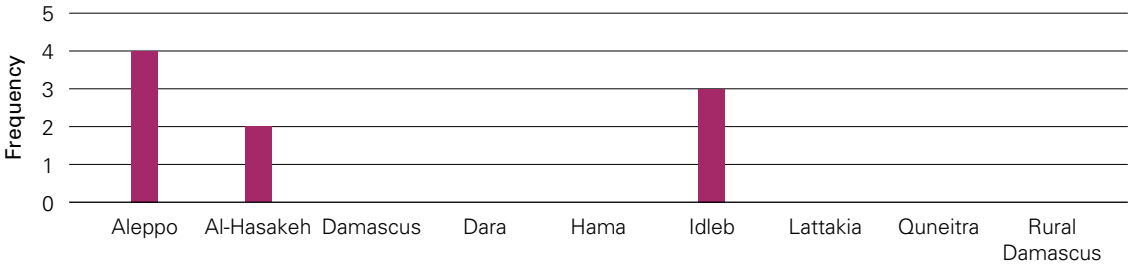
[449] Combined schools open for less than 20 hours per week were in the Jisr-Ash-Shugur sub-district of Idleb (second shift 17.5 hrs) and the Duma sub-district of Rural Damascus (first shift 18 hrs).

[450] Annex F.12.

[451] Note that frequencies (number of surveyed schools providing the response) have been used in these figures. Percentages would have been misleading, as they would have suggested that the response was representative of the governorate as a whole.

In six governorates, all the surveyed schools have experienced temporary closure; in only three governorates were there schools that did not close (*see Figure 2.40*).

Figure 2.40 Location of surveyed schools that did not experience temporary closure




As seen in Figure 2.41, bombardment induced school closures to a greater extent than ground fighting in five of the governorates. In five governorates, a lack of utilities affected schools more than did weather conditions (*see Figure 2.42*). For Dara, unpaid teachers had a larger impact than did insufficient operating costs (*see Figure 2.43*). Yet, schools in Dara closed because utilities were suspended. This raises the question whether water and power were unavailable, or whether "lack of utilities" and "lack of money for running costs" were seen as equivalent statements. The single school surveyed in Hama was not forced to close for security reasons, but was affected both by a lack of utilities and of money to pay for running costs. At the schools in Al-Hasakeh, weather and disease played a larger role than did security considerations in compelling the closure of schools.

Figure 2.41 Location of surveyed schools that closed temporarily for violence-related reasons

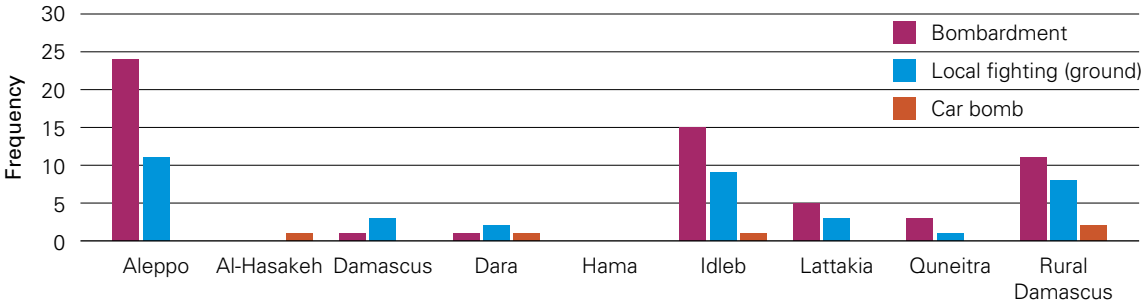



Figure 2.42 Location of surveyed schools that closed for weather, utilities and health-related reasons

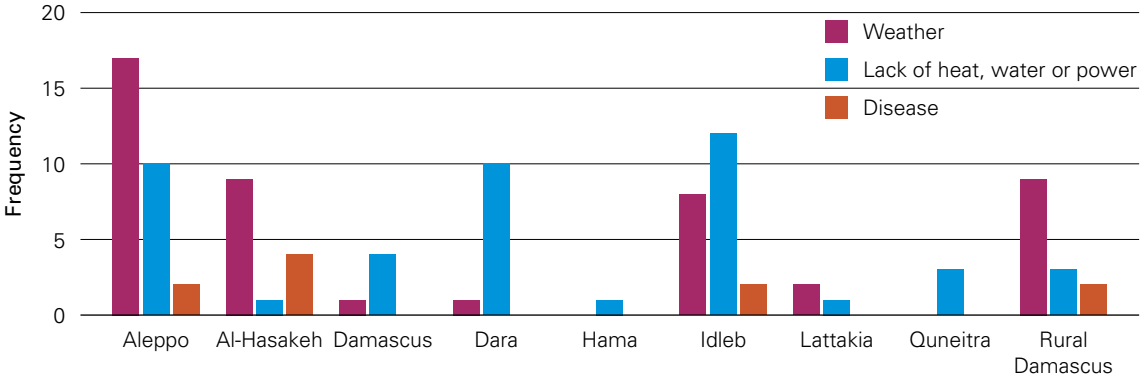
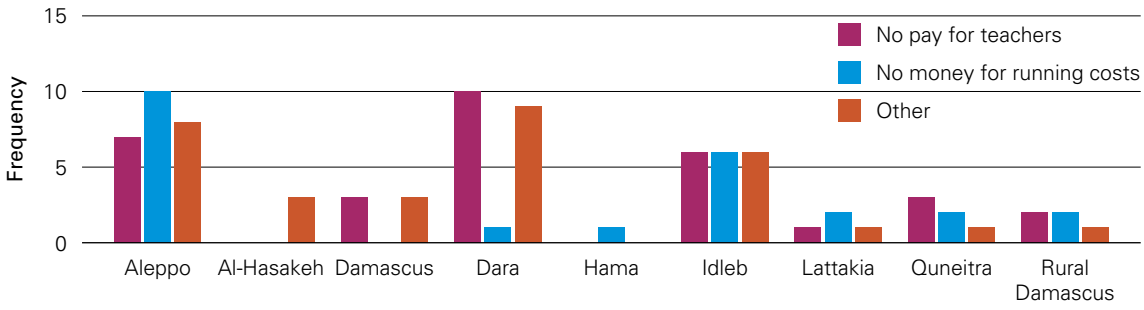


Figure 2.43 Location of surveyed schools that closed temporarily for financial and other reasons




## 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".[452] 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."[453]

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.[454] Thus, many teachers are experiencing difficult teaching the new curriculum.

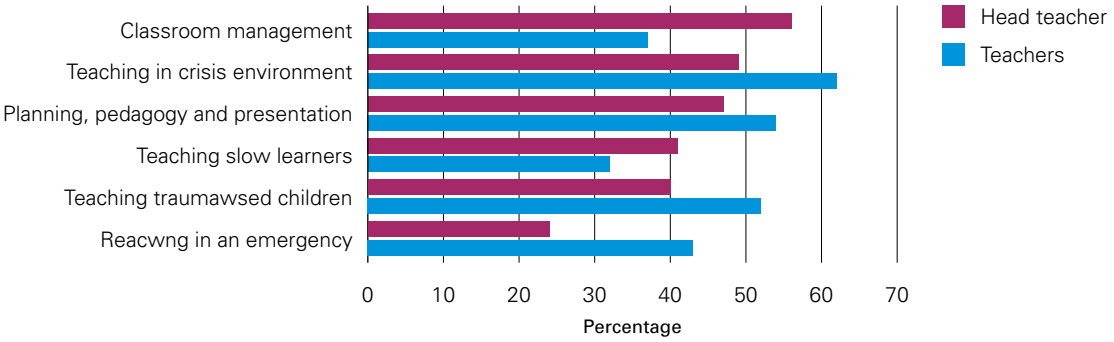
The literature does not describe teacher training or how teacher competence has changed since the crisis begin; the literature only provides recommendations and mentions of initiatives with development partners. Whatever recommendations have been made are likely to be based on some observation of teacher performance, although this is not explicitly mentioned. Recommendations include "training teachers",[455] training on "quality education",[456] training counsellors and teachers on psychosocial support,[457] and "[Early Childhood Development] teachers to engage in activities for children and attend to their psychosocial well-being".[458] Activities planned and implemented include a training of trainers in education in emergencies by UNICEF with an international NGO,[459] also described as training to teachers on "techniques for enhancing the educational process in difficult situations (50 teachers)";[460] and providing psychosocial support training to 60 teachers.[461]

In response to a question about realistic solutions to the surveyed schools' problems, 16 head teachers (out of 117) asked for sufficient teachers who were qualified or experienced, and called for "teachers fired by the regime" to return to teaching; while 30 stressed the need for teacher training. Suggestions included training courses for new teachers, engaging experienced teachers to train the new teachers, conducting qualifying courses for teaching staff, and inviting specialists to run training sessions for teachers.[462] One head teacher mentioned that schools could learn how to make classes interesting from others, and another mentioned making science lessons interesting through the use of everyday objects, while a third reported using "school methodology inspired by the Convention on the Rights of the Child".[463] Only four head teachers reported having training activities for staff which could be a model for others to follow.[464]

[452] INEE, p.83.
[453] INEE, p.76.
[454] Written response from the MoE, 12 January 2015, to questions submitted by the consultant.
[455] SINA, p.32.
[456] SHARP, December 2013, p.80.
[457] UNICEF Syria, p.18.
[458] UNICEF Syria, p.18.
[459] SHARP, December 2013, p.81.
[460] Situation Report, p.3.
[461] Situation Report, p.3. Documents such as the 2015 Strategic Response Plan for Syria, because of space limitations, provide only aggregated information on plans, which does not allow for detail to be extracted.
[462] Annex F.40.
[463] Annex F.41.
[464] Annex F.41.

Figure 2.44 reveals which skills head teachers and teachers' felt were of greatest need.[465] Although some skills management relate to problems caused by the crisis, standard skills such as classroom management and lesson planning and presentation, identified respectively by 57 and 48 per cent of the head teachers, clearly also required strengthening. Teachers were less concerned than their head teachers about classroom management, ranking the stress of teaching in the crisis environment at the top of their list.

Figure 2.44 Skills in which teachers need training




It is concerning that more than half the teachers' groups saw themselves and their colleagues as lacking competence in lesson planning, pedagogy and presentation. This concern may in part be related to changes in the curriculum, but it possibly also points to deficiencies in the college training which they received. It is possible that they would regard lapses in classroom management as being a direct result of the crisis situation and not of a deficit in their skill set.

Three training needs were clearly brought about by the crisis: "teaching in a crisis environment", "teaching traumatised children", and "reacting in an emergency". Teaching slow learners may also belong in this grouping, since it might refer to coping with students who had slipped behind in their work, rather than to students with learning difficulties. That 43 per cent of the teachers believe they need to be trained to react in an emergency again highlights the lack of preparedness on the part of the school to deal with a crisis which directly affects them.

Nine teachers' groups (seven per cent) suggested that the community might play a role in providing training.[466] Thirty-three groups (27 per cent) noted the community could help teachers. The need for training in psychology, language and modern teaching methods were specifically mentioned. Teachers expressed training should be conducted by "high-level experts" and should lead to a recognised certificate.[467]

The attitude, or expectation, that training should be provided by "high-level experts" should be addressed. While experts should help design training courses, cascading knowledge from "top to bottom" is probably the only feasible option for face-to-face training for many teachers.[468] Those providing training at the lowest level would not be "high-level experts". Moreover, an expectation that training comes from experts precludes teachers from being receptive to learning from their peers, some of whom might have valuable skills to share. These perspectives could bar teachers from acquiring the skills they need.

Seven teachers' groups reported that their school had good practices in supporting teachers through training from which other schools could learn, one of which was "training on computers".[469]

[465] Annex F.38, G.34.
[466] Annex G.30.
[467] Annex G.31.
[468] Additionally, courses leading to a "recognized certificate" would require careful design of content, assessment modalities and a degree of administrative competence that would not readily be available in a crisis. Accreditation would also be complicated, as recognition is highly dependent on politics and the entity sponsoring the qualification.
[469] Annex G.36. It would be interesting to know whether the reference was to training in the use of computers, or to training through online courses.

Parents thought that appointing more teachers, suitably qualified, and training teachers on active learning techniques and working with traumatized children would be necessary if out-of-school children were to be drawn back to school.[470] When asked about realistic solutions to their own children's education problems, most mentioned (24 per cent of groups) was "school staff", with emphasis on their being qualified and able to understand children, particularly in a crisis situation.[471]

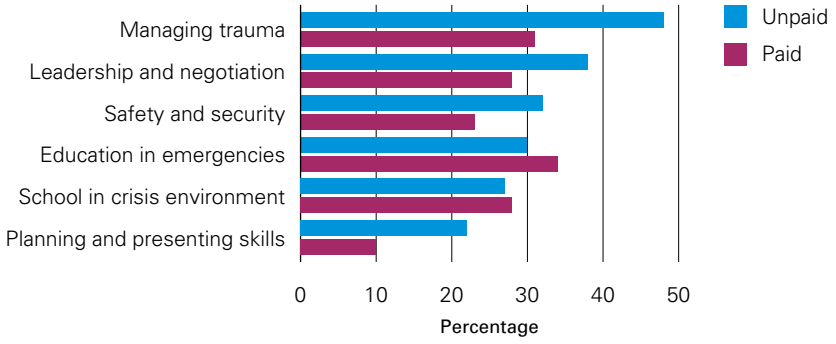
A number of student groups felt that some of their teachers were ineffective: "Replace unqualified teachers with qualified"; "change teachers who are not giving full performance"; "change some teachers because they don't explain enough". Other groups drew attention to teaching methods that are "very traditional" and the need to "train teachers to present lessons in a simple way because of students who have missed schooling". Two groups felt that teachers' attendance should improve.[472] These points were repeated when students were asked if they had anything else to say: "Teachers take too much time off school"; "Train unspecialised teachers"; "Explain more when asked to".[473] While teachers' attendance might not seem directly related to training, a teacher who lacks competence in the classroom is more likely to be absent than one who is interacting well with the students.

When asked about their own training needs, close to 40 per cent of head teachers named managing a school in a crisis environment. However, more than 30 per cent named leadership skill deficiencies, and more than 20 per cent wished to improve their planning and presentation skills.[474] Figure 2.45 illustrates the differences in response between paid and "volunteer" head teachers. In most areas, the volunteers demonstrated a greater awareness of the need for training than did paid staff.

The fact that even 10 per cent of the paid group sought training in planning and presentation should be taken seriously. Since respondents were asked to mention only the top three skills in which they needed training, head teachers who mentioned planning and leadership skills were prioritizing them above skills for running a school in a crisis situation. Had they been asked to list all skills in which they needed training, an even larger demand would be shown.

Managing trauma was ranked first by volunteer and second by paid head teachers. This may refer to trauma which head teachers themselves have experienced, or it may be an acknowledgement that their staff and students had suffered trauma, and they needed to play a role in addressing it.

Figure 2.45 Skills in which head teachers need training




## 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."[475]

[470] Annex H.7.
[471] Annex H.14.
[472] Annex I.8.
[473] Annex I.9.
[474] Annex F.39.
[475] INEE, p.87.

To fully understand the quality of education in opposition-controlled areas, a more thorough investigation than those currently available is required. The literature, however, does touch on two preconditions for quality learning: The availability of instructors and teaching materials.

It was reported that the "quality of education has deteriorated and is constantly compromised even in the safest areas."[476] This was likely to be true of areas where there are teacher shortages, learning materials insufficiencies and where instructional time had been reduced. Indeed, when asked what children disliked about going to school, over a third of parents' groups mentioned teachers. Almost a quarter of parents' groups said education was of poor quality, and that this is why students stayed away.[477]

However, teachers cannot be expected to use suitable techniques if they have not been trained to do so. Overcrowding has frequently been reported,[478] but its link with teaching and learning, particularly if there was also a shortage of classroom furniture, has scarcely been noted in the literature. Only two head teachers and one parents' group drew attention to the link between class size and effective teaching.[479]

One local council representative said that teachers had "antiquated ways" of delivering information,[480] and parents' groups appealed for the use of "modern" teaching methods.[481] Several suggestions were made on improving students' performance. These included "interactive lessons",[482] peer teaching by strong students, the use of everyday objects in science teaching, sound teaching techniques, giving lessons in a systematic way, and learning through play.[483] Parents asked that teachers take students' opinions into account.[484] Students complained teachers discriminated, ignored some children and often failed to explain the work adequately when students raised questions.[485]

Head teachers suggested competition among students might be beneficial, such as holding monthly contests in basic subjects to encourage progress.[486] One head teacher suggested that students might be motivated if head teachers occasionally attended lessons and rewarded students performing well.[487] While these suggestions have merit, they cannot be a substitute for effectively teaching all students, and they might even have a negative effect on the morale of students who had lost weeks of schooling.

One teachers' group suggested having a "standardised teaching plan" for all schools.[488] Although this might go some way to ensuring full coverage of the curriculum, it should not be so rigid that teachers move on irrespective of whether the students are mastering competencies as the work proceeds, nor should it preclude adjustments required by factors such as class size, the age of the students, and the effect of extended periods of absence from school.

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. Figure 2.46 shows the average percentages of single shift and double shift schools with STRs falling within specific intervals.[489] The INEE standard places 40 students as the limit to an acceptable class size. All but three of the schools met the criterion. However, this 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.

[476] Squandering Humanity, p.40.
[477] Annex H.6.
[478] Annex D.13, 17, F.29, G.19-20, 38, H.12, 14.
[479] Annex F.43, H.18.
[480] Annex D.17.
[481] Annex H.7, 18.
[482] Annex F.40.
[483] Annex F.41.
[484] Annex H.14.
[485] Annex I.9.
[486] Annex F.41.
[487] Annex F.41.
[488] Annex G.38.
[489] Calculated from data in Annex E.1-4 and F.2-5.

Figure 2.46 Student-teacher ratios

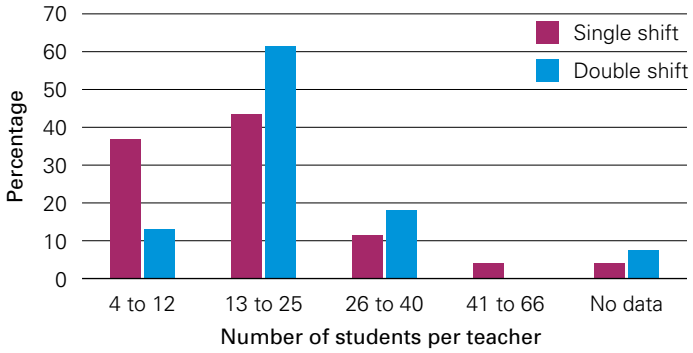
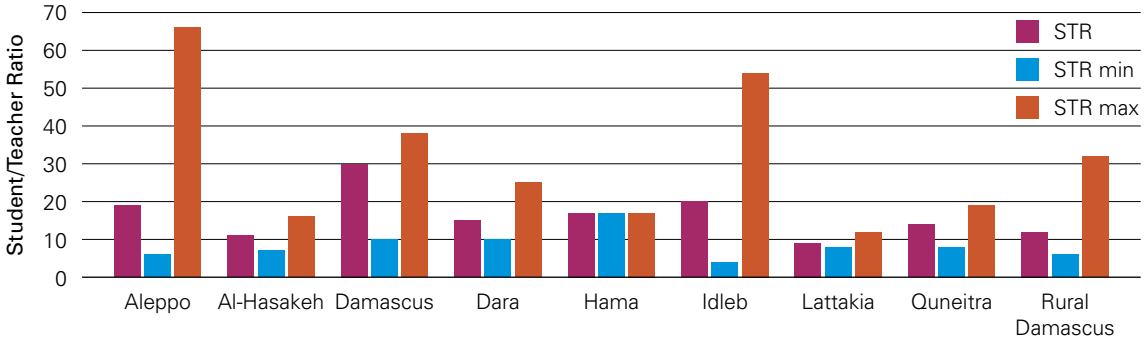



Figure 2.47 illustrates the average STR for surveyed schools in each of the governorates, as well as the minimum and maximum STRs for those schools.[490] For Hama, the three values coincide because a single school was visited. The range between the minimum and maximum values in a particular area, if great, may indicate inefficiencies in the recruitment and allocation of teachers to schools. High STRs indicate understaffing of the school.

Figure 2.47 Average, minimum and maximum STRs at surveyed schools by governorate



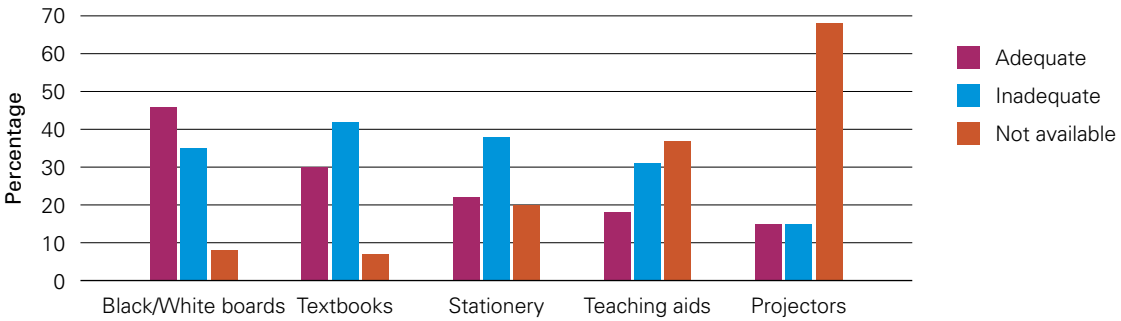

On average, each classroom was shared by two teachers. The ratio of teachers to a classroom varied across governorates from 1.0 in Hama (where only one school was visited) to 2.3 in Al-Hasakeh. Individual schools where classrooms were in short supply included a double-shift school in Aleppo, where each classroom was shared by 6.3 teachers, and a single-shift school, where 5.0 teachers shared a room. Idleb had a single-shift school where 5.5 teachers shared a room, and Rural Damascus had a single-shift school with 4.7 teachers sharing a room.[491] This confirms that all teachers could not be teaching at the same time. Where two teachers are required to share a classroom, each teacher would be out of the classroom for half of the school day. During a 30-hour teaching week, the teacher would have no more than 15 hours' contact with students in the classroom. Where more teachers share a room, their time in class is reduced even further. This may point to an inefficient use of human resources (unless some of the teachers work part-time, or share their time between two or more schools). These aspects require further investigation.

Head teachers were asked about the equipment and supplies that teachers have available in the classroom.[492] Details are shown in Figure 2.48. Because over 40 per cent of schools have adequate boards for teachers, and fewer than 30 per cent have adequate supplies of textbooks and stationery, the teachers' task must be difficult. The textbook and stationery shortages have a negative effect on students' ability to do homework. This is especially so if some parents' complaint about "short school hours and too much homework" is justified.[493]

The proportion of the schools with adequate provision of projectors is roughly the same as the proportion of schools with an adequate supply of electricity.

[490] Calculated from head teacher fact sheet data set.
[491] Calculated from head teacher fact sheet data and head teacher interview data sets.
[492] Annex F.25.
[493] Annex H.18.

Figure 2.48 Availability of teaching equipment at surveyed schools




"Adequate" black or white boards would mean, at the very least, a board about a square metre and sufficient chalk or pens. Without these, it becomes impossible for the teacher to communicate visually with students, since it is unlikely a school without adequate boards would have alternative means for visual communication. In the survey, when boards have been reported as "inadequate", this may mean that there are "adequate" boards in some classrooms but not in all, or it may mean that the surface of the boards is of poor quality. Consideration might be given to applying blackboard paint directly to the wall, but this may not be possible in temporary learning spaces. The need for chalk was mentioned by a head teacher.[494]

Textbooks are a key resource. If every student has one for each subject, the day's lessons in the classroom can be reinforced at home, or preparation may be done for the following day. When books have to be shared, there is a strong possibility that they will not be taken home.

Respondents reported that teaching material shortages occurred due to damage, looting, and the burning of print shops and warehouses.[495] Internally displaced persons might have fled without taking their personal school materials with them.[496] 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.[497] Some schools have attempted to mitigate the shortages by collecting and re-using textbooks that students no longer required.[498]

It has been recommended that the necessary "teaching and learning materials"[499] or "resources"[500] be provided to schools and other learning spaces. International partners have already made learning kits available.[501] Another recommendation was that textbooks, activity books and teachers' guides be printed for distribution with learning kits.[502]

One head stated, "Because of a lack of books, lessons are written on the blackboard".[503] This practice, although necessary given the circumstances, uses class time which should be available for explanation, interaction, developing insight and cultivating understanding. Essentially, it means that more time is needed to cover the same amount of work. If the students, in turn, are expected to copy from the board, there is the possibility of transcription errors, and the slower students, or those who cannot see the board clearly, may not be able to get everything down.

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.

494 Annex F.40.
495 UNICEF Syria, p.15.
496 UNICEF Syria, p.17.
497 UNICEF Curriculum, p.34.
498 UNICEF Curriculum, pp.34-35.
499 UNICEF Syria, p.18.
500 SINA, p.32.
501 Situation Report, p.3.
502 UNICEF Syria, p.16.
503 Annex F.41.

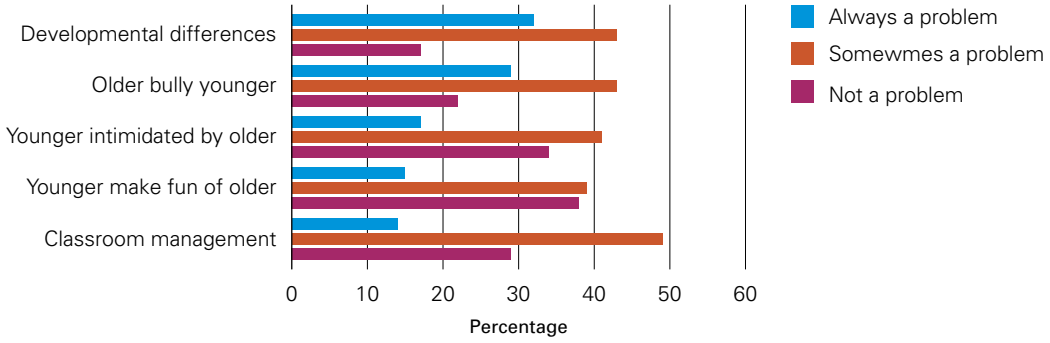
Eighty per cent of the surveyed schools have been presenting lessons without appropriate teaching aids. The grade level and subject would influence the type of teaching aids needed. Without charts, models, maps, and laboratory equipment, teachers would have difficulty presenting lessons in a way that would ensure understanding on the part of the students.

Some of the students' groups hoped to see projectors or computers used in the presentation of lessons, or electronic devices to replace books.[504] Projectors, while useful, might not be essential, but boards, books, stationery and teaching aids are.

Teachers mentioned their motivation to continue teaching was strengthened when the community provided teaching equipment, visual aids, textbooks, stationery and "all the school's requirements".[505] Some teachers gave their school credit for procuring books, stationery and/or required teaching materials in sufficient quantities.[506] More than half the teachers' groups identified supplies for teaching and learning as necessary for improving education, making it the third priority.[507] Students' groups also drew attention to the need for teaching equipment and "motivating teaching tools".[508]

Teachers were asked about difficulties experienced when displaced children who had not been in school for months (or at times, years) had returned to school and placed in classes of younger students. Their responses are displayed in Figure 2.49.[509] The question was not sufficiently differentiated to take account of the number of older children relative to younger children, nor of the difference in ages. It is possible many of the problems mentioned are related to classroom management, which has already been noted as an area of competence in which teachers need training.

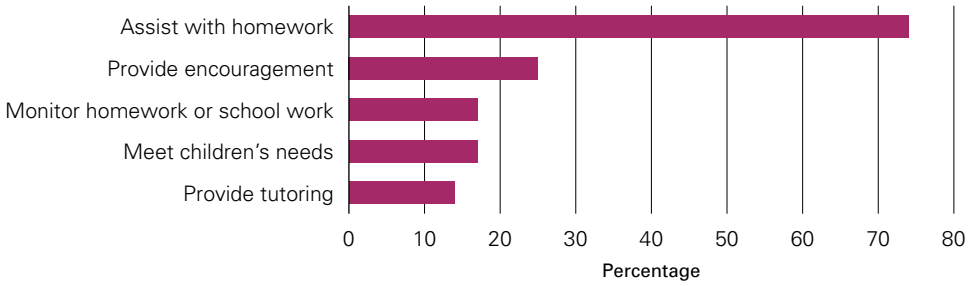
Figure 2.49 Problems of having students of different ages in the same class




Students' learning depends not only on what happens in the classroom or the school. Because of this, students were asked how the adults caring for them helped them in their schooling. Figure 2.50 shows the most frequently mentioned forms of assistance.[510] Eleven groups (10 per cent) reported receiving no assistance, with four of these pointing out that parents could not help because they were uneducated or illiterate. Two-thirds of the groups reported receiving assistance with homework, while 13 per cent of the groups were aware of students receiving private tutoring. Students also acknowledged the creation of a conducive environment in the home and the provision of their basic needs: "Parents do not make their children go out to work; they provide for their needs". Another group reported that "Some requests are met with a 'No'", but this came after the same group had positive things to say about assistance from parents. Four groups reported that parents helped to draw up a study schedule, and 19 groups (16 per cent) reported parents monitored their homework or "what is done at school". A member of one group asserted: "I depend on myself and do not allow anyone to help me".[511]

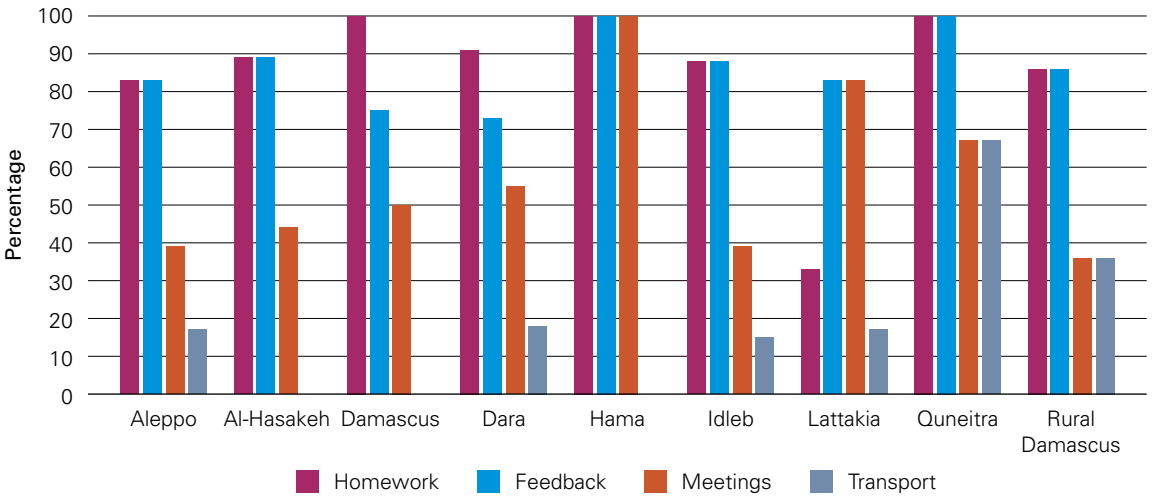
[504] Annex I.9.
[505] Annex G.30-31.
[506] Annex G.36.
[507] Annex G.37. The first and second priorities were salaries for school staff and improved school environment.
[508] Annex I.9.
[509] Annex G.16.
[510] Annex I.4.
[511] Annex I.4.

Figure 2.50 How parents assist their children with their schooling: Students' perspective




Parents were asked on how they supported their children's schooling.[512] Overall, parents were greatly involved in assisting with schoolwork and in following up with teachers on their child's progress. This is a much higher level of participation than teachers report: Figure 2.51 shows that fewer than 30 per cent of teachers' groups believed that "all or the majority" of parents either assisted their children with homework or acted on feedback on their children's work.[513] It is possible that those parents who agreed to participate in the focus group discussions were not typical of the majority of parents of school-going children, thus displaying a higher level of involvement than the majority.

Figure 2.51 How parents assist their children with their schooling: Parents' perspective




All of the parents' groups in Damascus, Hama and Quneitra[514] reported helping their children with homework. Only in Lattakia did this drop below 80 per cent of the groups.

Upwards of 70 per cent of parents reported initiating discussion with the teacher on their child's progress. No information was provided on how often teachers would be likely to take up school matters with parents, or whether this would be by written communication, interview or in general meetings. Teachers with large classes might not have much opportunity for contacting parents, but might find time to respond to parents' enquiries. Moreover, if participation in meetings was low, it might be because gatherings were rarely held.

Information was not requested on the regularity of student attendance. However, a question on school attendance records reveals that only a third of head teachers considered student attendance records adequate (*see Figure 2.52*).[515] There is a possibility that the question was understood differently by different respondents. Some may have been commenting on their completed record of attendance, and others on the availability of official stationery for recording attendance. Whether or not the official stationery is available, an adequate attendance record should be maintained. It should be possible to

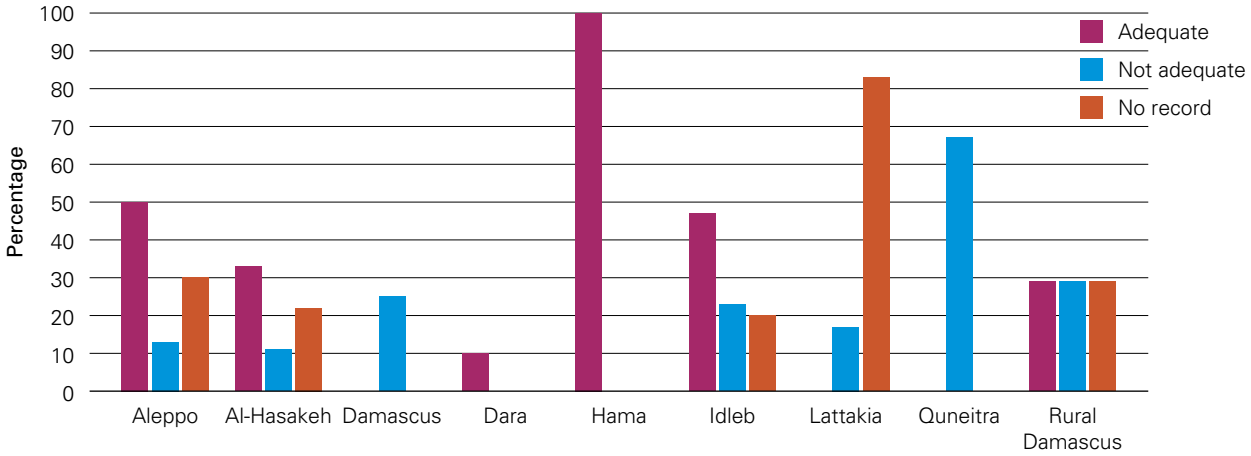
[512] Annex H.13.
[513] Annex G.17.
[514] Four, one and three groups respectively.
[515] Annex F.11.

determine on which days the student had not been at school, which days the student arrived late and which dates the student left early.[516] Twenty-four per cent of head teachers did not respond to the question. If the school fails to keep reliable records of student attendance, it is not possible to know whether a poorly performing student was in class when the work was explained, which makes follow-up more difficult.

In Aleppo, just under half of the surveyed schools had adequate attendance records. This put them in second place, following the single school in Hama, which had adequate records. In Damascus, Lattakia and Quneitra none of the head teachers had adequate records.

In view of the ambiguity of this question, and the importance of attendance records, there should be further investigation to determine whether schools maintain such records even if they do not have the official stationery.

Figure 2.52 Adequacy of students' attendance records at surveyed schools




In December 2012, a recommendation was made for parents to support teacher-guided, home-based schooling[517] and web-based learning.[518]

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.[519] 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.[520] 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.[521] 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. The Ministry of Social Affairs runs accelerated learning courses in clinics, mosques,

[516] A student who regularly arrives late may be losing out on 10 per cent or more of classroom interaction. There is also disruption of the lesson each time someone comes into the room.
[517] UNICEF Syria, p.16.
[518] UNICEF Syria, p.16.
[519] SHARP, December 2013, p.77; UNICEF Briefing, p.5.
[520] UNICEF Curriculum, p.32.
[521] SHARP, July 2014, p.41.

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 Ministry's placement tests, and, if successful, could return to formal school.[522]

## Assessment of learning outcomes

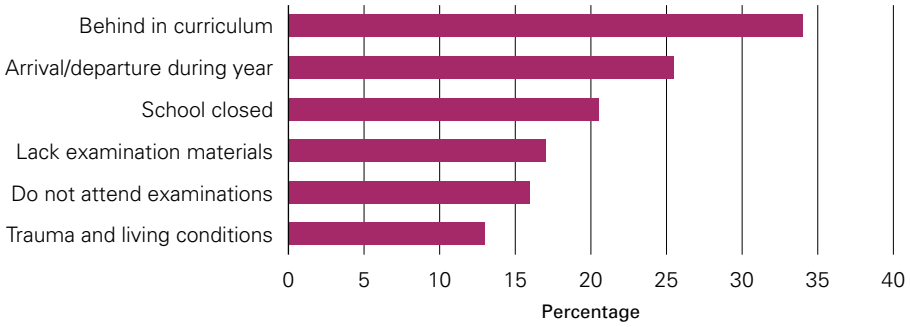
Apart from the certificate examinations taken at the end of Grades 9 and 12, all students are evaluated at the end of the academic year for promotion to the following grade. However, since the crisis began, many students have experienced difficulties with sitting for the examinations.

In Idleb, the volatility in April and May 2015 prompted authorities to allow first and second cycle students to take their year-end examinations earlier than usual for fear of later disruptions. Around 9,000 students in the Ariha district were exempt from final examinations.[523]

When asked about why students experienced difficulties with exams, a third of the teachers' groups answered they were "behind in the curriculum". In some cases, it was not only individual students that were behind, but the entire class. Teachers might have found it impossible to cover the full curriculum due to overcrowded classrooms, lack of materials and equipment, shortened school hours, and/or school closures. Individual students might have been unable to keep up with the class because of frequent absences, late enrolment, insufficient materials and/or trauma. As a result, some might not bother to take the test because they felt they had no chance of doing well.

A lack of examination materials was cited by 17 per cent of the teachers, which suggests that in these circumstances, no students took the exam.

Figure 2.53 Difficulties experienced by students at surveyed schools in taking their tests



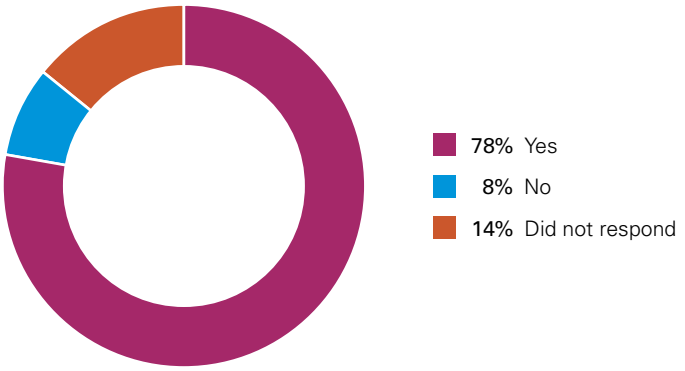

The regular use of report cards was confirmed by 91 out of 117 head teachers, while nine stated that reports were not regularly issued.[524] Seven heads reported that they did not use report cards because they did not have them, while three said they would not be recognized.[525] Four heads gave reasons why report cards may not regularly be used: Not having enough report cards and one of high student turnover.

Certificate examinations at the end of Grades 9 and 12 are normally taken at the students' own schools. As the crisis developed, many students have been displaced. Students in areas affected by conflict were allowed, as a concession from the MoE, to sit for their examinations at other centres. However, it was not always safe or possible for them to make the journey. Many students in opposition-controlled areas are unable to take the official examination.

Students attending schools with a modified curriculum, and displaced children attending schools in neighbouring countries, are concerned that their certificates might not be recognized in Syria, "deepening fears for their careers and futures".[526]

[522] UNICEF Curriculum, pp.33-34.
[523] Idleb Report, no.4, p.7.
[524] Annex F.10-11.
[525] The fact that reports might not be recognized suggests that the report cards are associated with the regime controlling the school.
[526] Under Siege, p.14.

Figure 2.54 Regular use of report cards

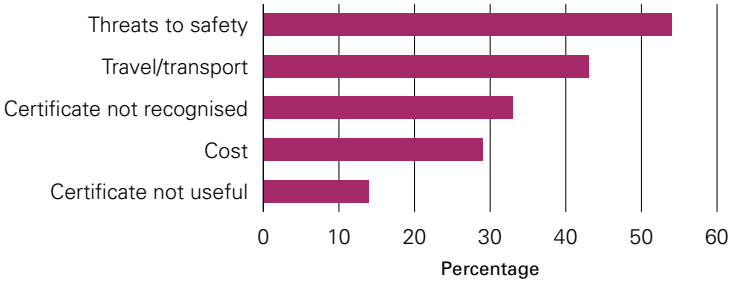



Joint efforts from UNICEF and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) resulted in a decree from the Government of Lebanon allowing Syrian refugee children to sit for the Grade 9 and 12 official examinations on the condition that students submitted the necessary documentation as soon as it was retrievable from Syria.[527] 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 and that their qualifications might not be recognized.[528]

In some areas, since the 2012/13 school year, Grade 9 and Grade 12 examinations were conducted by the SIG, based on a modified version of the Government curriculum. However, certificates are not recognized by the Government of Syria.[529] Overall, the Government of Syria has not extended recognition to any certificate issued by an opposition group.[530]

For students completing Grades 9 or 12, most difficulties relate to travel. Some may have to travel to an area controlled by another authority to sit for the examination.[531] The costs of travelling and accommodation may also be prohibitive.

Figure 2.55 Difficulties faced by students of surveyed schools in taking formal examinations




Local council representatives, teachers and parents corroborated the literature: They are concerned that certificates issued in opposition-controlled areas would not be recognized in other parts of the country or in other countries in which students might wish to further their education.[532] The need to negotiate the recognition of certificates was raised by these groups.[533]

Regarding tertiary education, parents commented that no universities were available in "liberated" areas. Moreover, enrolling at a university in a government-controlled area would not be safe or acceptable, particularly for girls. Furthermore, Grade 12 certificates issued in opposition-controlled areas would not be recognized in government institutions. Studying abroad is financially prohibitive for

[527] Situation Report, p.1.
[528] UNICEF Lebanon, p.34.
[529] HNO, pp.85-86.
[530] UNICEF Curriculum, p.36.
[531] Annex G.20.
[532] Annex D.13, 17, G.20, H.7.
[533] Annex D.13, 17, G.31, 38, H.7, 14.

students, unless a scholarship could be secured.[534] One parents' group commented: "Some students who obtained secondary certificates might risk their lives to go to universities in government-controlled areas, and some doing so had been arrested."[535] Students also referred to the dangers of studying in government-controlled areas.[536]

Local council representatives called for the establishment of tertiary institutions in opposition-controlled areas.[537] This call was also made by 14 per cent of parents' groups.[538] Parents referred to the possibility of study in an institute for "parallel education"[539] or in a recently constructed "middle institute".[540] The possibility of studying at a teacher training institute in an opposition-controlled area was also mentioned, as was the possibility of studying nursing.[541] With reference to the lack of job opportunities for those without a Grade 12 certificate, some parents called for vocational training programmes.[542]

Respondents drew much attention to difficulties secondary education graduates experienced with securing employment.[543] Fifty-seven parents' groups (47 per cent) complained there were no opportunities available to children completing Grade 12 with a certificate, neither for further study nor for securing a job; 10 groups complained that the opportunities were "few".[544] Parents hinting at the possibility of work mentioned freelancing, volunteering, teaching or joining a military group.[545] It was also noted that widespread unemployment leads to early marriage for girls, or just "sitting at home".[546] A teachers' group commented that "marriage at an early age is a growing problem".[547] Similarly, for students completing Grade 12, but without a certificate, 64 parents' groups said there were no work opportunities. Again freelancing, labouring or joining a military group were mentioned, as well as the possibility of repeating Grade 12.[548]

The inability of young people to find a job or to study further can cause frustration, psychosocial problems and a sense of marginalization. Boys might "kill time by playing cards and loafing in the streets", while the girls "wait for a good husband".[549]

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 2.8*).[550] From 2011 to 2012, there was an increase in the number of candidates for each of the three certificates. 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

534 Annex H.15.
535 Annex H.15.
536 Annex I.9.
537 Annex D.17.
538 Annex H.15.
539 "Parallel education" in Syria before the crisis meant the possibility of studying in a public university, paying fees (that were generally exempted or very low for students) and thus obtaining the possibility of entering any faculty regardless of grades obtained in Grade 12 examination.
540 No details were available about the location or capacity of these institutions, or on the recognition of certificates awarded to graduates.
541 Annex H.15.
542 Annex H.16.
543 Annex D.17.
533 Annex H.15.
545 Annex H.15.
546 Annex H.15.
547 Annex G.38. The school is in the Tall Refaat sub-district of A'zaz, Aleppo.
548 Annex H.16.
549 Annex H.16.
550 Data provided by the MoE at the request of the author.

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.

Table 2.8 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."[551] In the literature, school staff include qualified[552] 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, the literature reports that 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.

[551] INEE, p.94

[552] "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.

… Almost 500 educational workers were killed in 2013 according to the Ministry of Education, while many more have been injured, kidnapped or arrested."[553] Security concerns kept some teachers from attending school.[554]

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.[555]

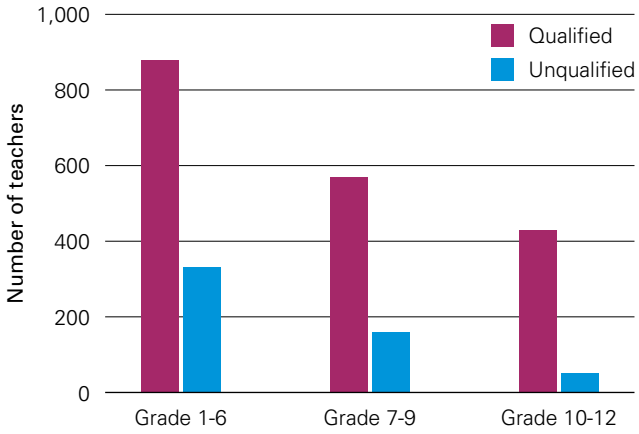
At some schools, tensions developed among staff with different political sympathies. It is not clear whether teachers left the school as a result.[556]

A broad recommendation called for appointing sufficient numbers of well-trained teachers.[557] There were also calls for international funding to allow recruiting additional teachers[558] and for teacher training.[559]

The literature also recommends the MoE maintain a record of teachers' credentials and provide that information to schools wanting to hire displaced teachers.[560] However, schools under opposition-controlled areas would not be able to access this information.

Figure 2.56 illustrates the relative numbers of qualified and unqualified teachers in the surveyed schools.[561]

Figure 2.56 Qualified and unqualified teachers in surveyed schools

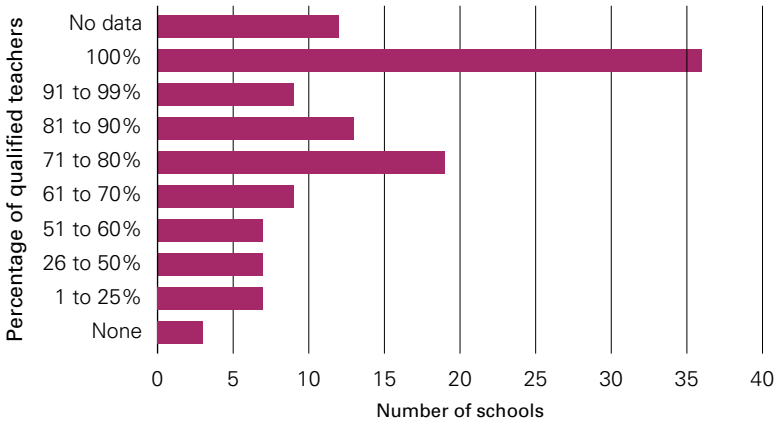



Overall, 78 per cent of teachers were qualified; however, great variations exist. Three schools had no qualified teachers and 36 schools that had a fully qualified staff (*see Figure 2.57*).[562]

Figure 2.58 illustrates the geographical variation in the percentage of qualified teachers.[563] It shows the average proportion of qualified teachers for all the surveyed schools in a governorate, as well as the "minimum" and "maximum", where "minimum" represents the sub-district with the lowest average for surveyed schools and "maximum" the sub-district with the highest proportion of qualified teachers. Hama, where only one school was surveyed, registers a fully qualified staff, while the average proportion of qualified staff in surveyed schools was lowest for Quneitra and Rural Damascus, at 60 per cent. The Ain Al Arab sub-district of Aleppo had the lowest percentage of qualified teachers,

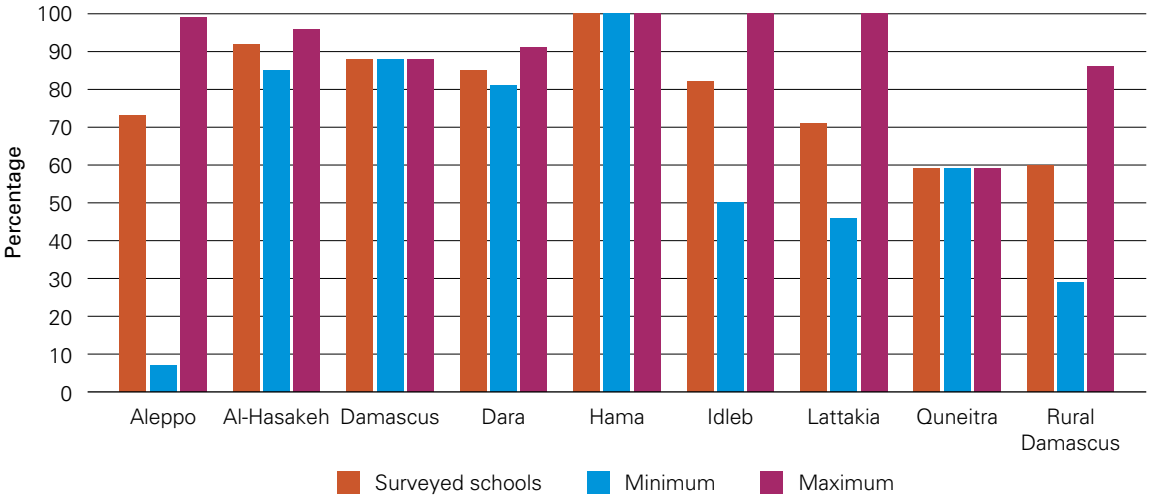
[553] Squandering Humanity, p.40; UNICEF Syria, p.15.
[554] UNICEF Syria, p.15.
[555] UNICEF Syria, pp.17-18.
[556] UNICEF Syria, p.15.
[557] UNICEF Syria, p.18; SINA, p.32.
[558] Education Interrupted, p.9.
[559] SINA, p.32.
[560] UNICEF Syria, p.19.
[561] Annex E.4.
[562] Annex E.4.
[563] Annex E.4.

Figure 2.57 Proportion of qualified teachers in surveyed schools




followed by the Nashabiyeh sub-district of Rural Damascus (Duma district). Six sub-districts had fully-qualified staff (100 or 99 per cent) in all their surveyed schools, three of these sub-districts being in Idleb.

Figure 2.58 Proportion of qualified teachers at surveyed schools in each governorate and in the sub-district with lowest (minimum) and highest (maximum) proportion of qualified teachers



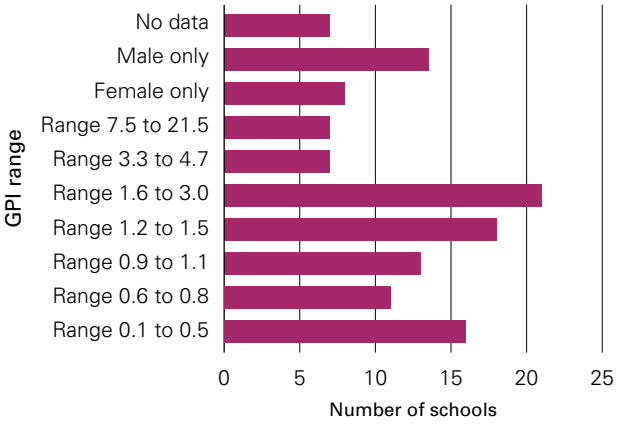

Schools with higher proportions of unqualified teachers will most likely face greater challenges than those with a qualified staff. While crises pose difficulties for which most teachers are not trained, qualified teachers would expectedly have skills that come "naturally" that allow them to manage classes more skilfully.

Fifty-your per cent of teachers in surveyed schools were female and 46 per cent were male.[564] The proportion of female to male teachers varied greatly across the schools (*see Figure 2.59*).[565] Only 13 schools fell within the GPI range of 0.9 to 1.1, with equal or near-equal numbers of female and male teachers. Twenty-seven schools had more male than female teachers, registering a GPI lower than 0.9. In 53 schools, female teachers were in the majority. Twenty-two schools had either an all-female or an all-male teaching staff.

[564] Annex E.3. The school in the Nawa sub-district was excluded because the data were unreliable, and of those remaining 41 teachers were excluded because the gender disaggregation was lacking.

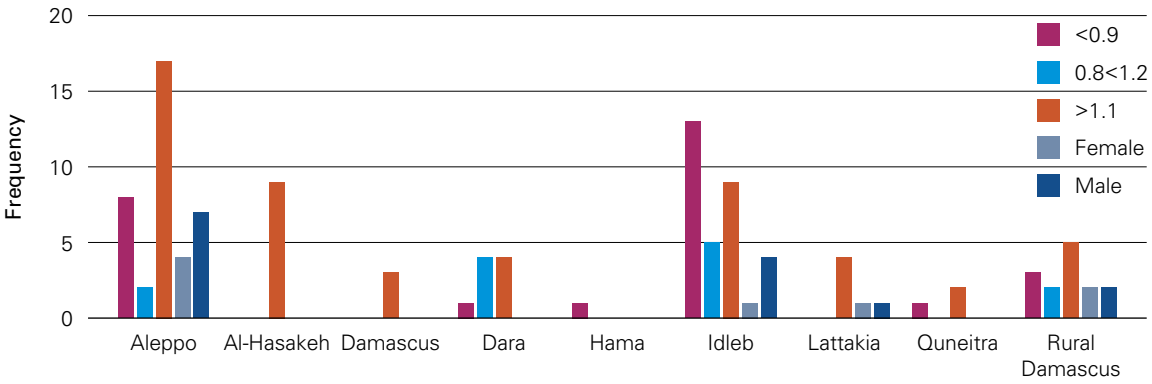
[565] Annex E.3.

Figure 2.59 GPI for teachers at surveyed schools




When examining the geographic distribution of surveyed schools and simplifying the categories apart from all-female and all-male to three categories: Near-parity (GPI in range from 0.8 to 1.2), predominately male (GPI < 0.9) and predominately female (GPI > 1.1), it is noticeable that only in Idleb (and Hama, where only one school was visited) does the GPI favour male teachers, while in seven governorates it favours female teachers.

Figure 2.60 GPI for teachers of surveyed schools by governorate




Head teachers were not included in the count of teachers. With one per school, 122 head teachers were recorded at the surveyed schools. Forty-eight per cent of head teachers were female.[566]

In addition, schools reported having 85 social workers and health workers, 138 administrators, accountants and human resources staff, 93 cleaners, and 18 cooks; a total of 334 ancillary staff members, 57 per cent of whom were female.[567]

Thirteen schools (five primary, five secondary, and three with both primary and secondary levels) had only female students. For one of these schools, no teacher numbers were provided; the other schools were staffed by 226 female and 86 male teachers. Four of the schools had only female teachers. There were 14 schools with only male students (three combined and 11 secondary schools). These schools were staffed by 84 female and 250 male teachers. Five schools had only male teachers.[568] In the questions where respondents had the opportunity to raise any of their concerns, there were few specific references to the gender of teachers. Only one head teacher, at a primary school for girls, asked for female teachers for female students as a solution to problems the school was experiencing.[569] When students were asked what changes they wished to see in their schools, only two groups asked for female teachers: "The female students would like to have only female teachers".[570] The other group

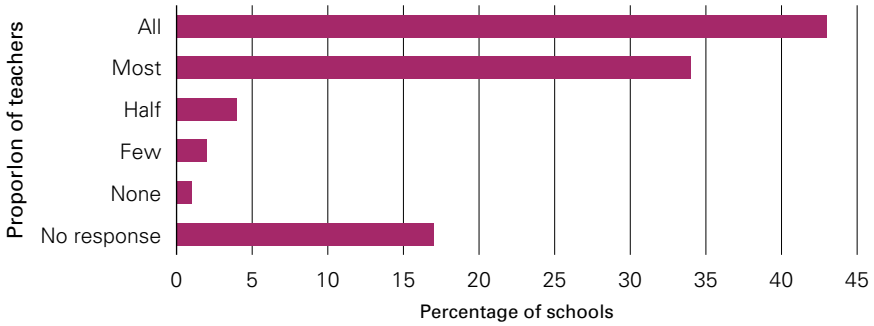
[566] Annex E.5. Data drawn from the "female" and "male" columns, which do not agree with the data in the "total" column.
[567] Annex E.5.
[568] Drawn from the head teacher fact sheet data set. The remaining 95 schools have both female and male students.
[569] Annex F.40. The school is in the Daret Azza sub-district of Aleppo's Jebel Saman district.
[570] Annex I.8. The school is a secondary school for girls in the Haritan sub-district of Jebel Saman district, Aleppo.

said, "There should be female teachers with male teachers, especially for girls' classrooms". The same group, when asked at the end of the discussion whether they had anything to add, repeated this point.[571] The schools raising these concerns were from the Aleppo and Idleb governorates. In no case was the concern raised by more than one group at the school. In total, only at three of the 122 schools did respondents refer to female teachers for female students. Respondents from single-sex schools (or schools with single-sex classrooms) did not make any reference to the gender makeup of the teaching staff.

## Conditions of work

When questioned about their teachers' pattern of attendance, a majority of head teachers (77 per cent) reported that all or most of their teachers were at work when they should be.[572] It is regrettable that information on the average number of days missed by staff members was not collected, which would have given a clearer indication of the teachers' rate of attendance.

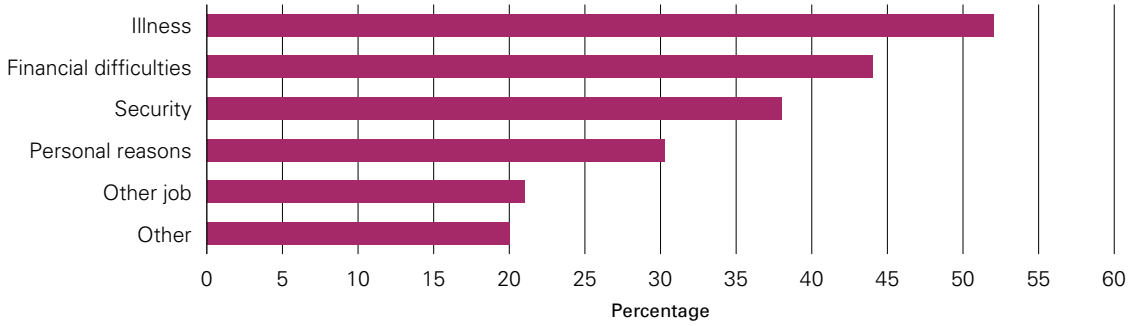
Figure 2.61 Proportion of teachers at school when they should be




When asked what the school does well, some head teachers mentioned the staff being committed to working hours and regular attendance.[573] Because this detail was singled out as a practice from which other schools could learn, it is implied that head teachers were aware of other schools in their area where teachers were apparently not committed to comply with working hours.

Reasons for teacher absences are depicted in Figure 2.62.[574] Here, too, more precise information would have been useful, such as the number of days lost as a result of each of the reasons. However, with more than 40 per cent of head teachers reporting financial difficulties as a reason for absence, and 20 per cent referring to another job, it is clear that there exists a need for substitute teachers "during their extended absences to collect their pay".[575]

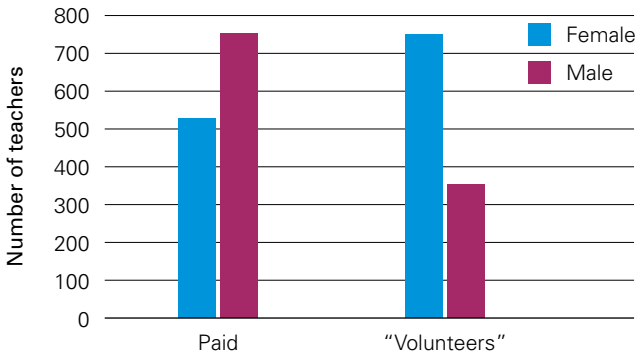
Figure 2.62 Reasons for teachers' absence from surveyed schools




[571] Annex I.8-9. The school is a combined school in the Saraqab sub-district of Idleb with girls and boys enrolled.
[572] Annex F.34. Since the options are mutually exclusive, schools reporting more than one answer have been included in the "Did not respond" category.
[573] Annex F.41.
[574] Annex F.35.
[575] Annex F.43.

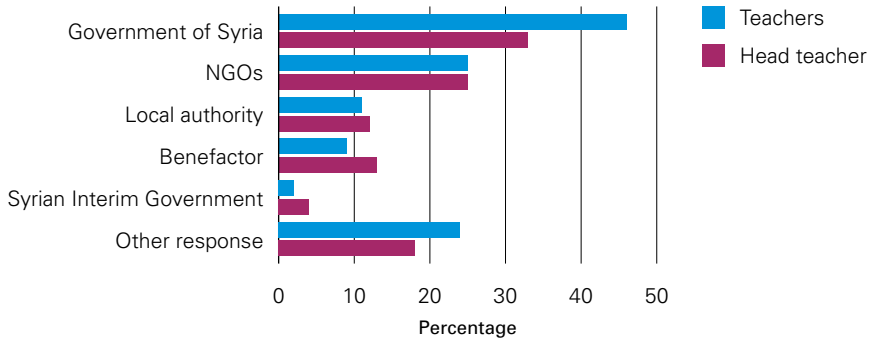
Figure 2.63 shows the relative numbers of teachers receiving remuneration and being compelled by circumstances to work without pay, broken down by gender.[576] While 68 per cent of male teachers were paid, only 41 per cent of female teachers received remuneration. Although not indicated, it is possible that some of the unpaid teachers were indeed volunteers, working for experience or to keep themselves busy. A teachers' group suggested that "university youth" might volunteer to help the teacher, but this would require first that they be offered "an intensive course on teaching methods and how to deal with students."[577] A teachers' group pointed to the need for financial and material support for poor teachers to include "providing their requirements like clothes, notebooks, pens, and school bags".[578] The need for food baskets and health insurance was also mentioned.[579] A community might arrange accommodation and food for teachers from outside the village.[580] One group maintained that teachers were shown less respect than formerly because they had to rely on handouts.[581]

Figure 2.63 Paid and "volunteer" teachers at surveyed schools




Head teachers and teachers' groups gave slightly different accounts of the source of remuneration.[582] Fewer head teachers than teachers' groups seemed to be aware of salaries paid by the Government of Syria. It should be noted that different teachers at the same school might receive remuneration from different sources and that 46 per cent of teachers received no remuneration. According to the teachers, nearly half of the schools surveyed were receiving salaries from the Government of Syria, with a quarter receiving remuneration in some form from NGOs.[583] Two teachers' groups appealed for financial support for teachers "so that they will not leave the school and look for another job, because the majority of them are not paid".[584] Criticism was levelled at entities that provided remuneration "for only a couple of months of the year, but in reporting give the impression that they have provided the support throughout the year."[585]

Figure 2.64 Source of teachers' remuneration as reported by teachers and head teachers

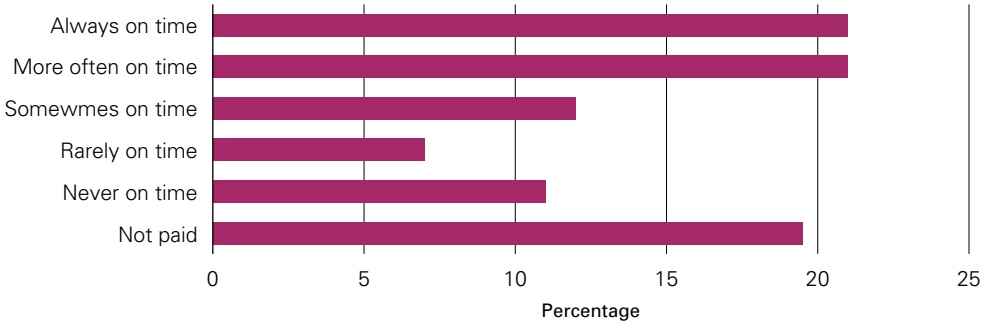



[576] Annex E.5.
[577] Annex G.19.
[578] Annex G.20.
[579] Annex G.30.
[580] Annex G.33.
[581] Annex G.38.
[582] Calculated from data in Annex E.5, G.21.
[583] There is overlap between the two groups.
[584] Annex G.20.
[585] Annex G.38.

In the literature, it was recommended that teachers be paid and on a regular, assured basis.[586] There were teachers in opposition-controlled areas who were still receiving their salaries, although they might have to go monthly to a pay point within a government-controlled area.[587] A representative of an NGO working in a remote area commented that government salaries were paid, even if the payment was delayed.[588]

The financial uncertainty facing teachers affected many, even those receiving salaries. Figure 2.65 shows the head teachers' impression of the regularity of salary payments.[589] The question was supposed to refer only to teachers who should be receiving salaries, but the "not paid" responses suggest that some head teachers might have been reporting on their entire staff.

Figure 2.65 Frequency of salary payments to teachers at surveyed schools



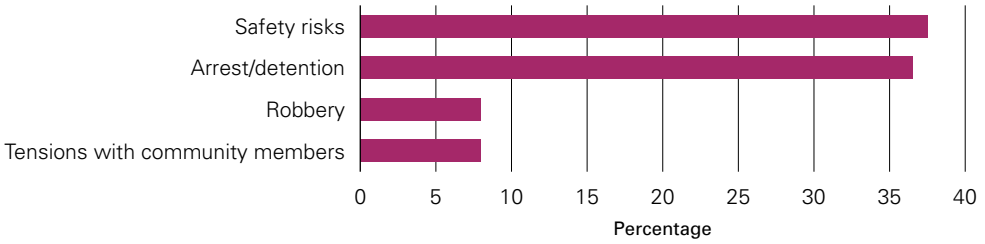

It has also been recommended that, with the cost of essential commodities escalating, additional incentives should be provided to teachers to help maintain their purchasing power.[590] Another report recommended "appropriate remuneration to ensure that they can continue their vital work".[591]

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.[592]

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.[593]

Forty-three per cent of the schools reported that teachers faced risks of one sort or another in collecting their salaries.[594] From respondents, it is clear that safety risks, including the threat of arrest or detention, loomed largest in the teachers' minds (*see Figure 2.66*).[595]

Figure 2.66 Risks faced by teachers of surveyed schools in collecting their salaries

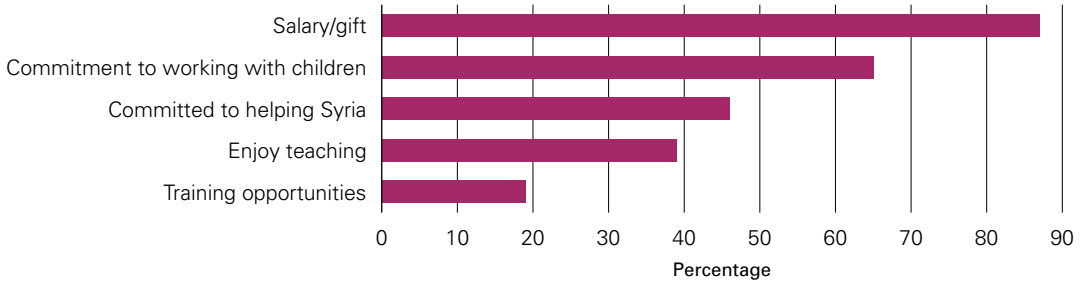



[586] UNICEF Syria, p.18.
[587] Author's interview with a key informant.
[588] Author's interview with a key informant.
[589] Annex E.6.
[590] UNICEF Syria, p.18.
[501] Futures under Threat, p.12.
[592] UNICEF Syria, p.16.
[593] Idleb Report no.3, p.6; Idleb Report no.4, p.7.
[594] Annex G.25.
[595] Annex G.26.

Head teachers were asked whether, in the case of double shifts, teachers covered only one or both of the shifts. Forty-seven (out of 117) responded that all teachers covered both shifts, and 15 reported some teachers covered more than one shift. Since only 34 head teachers reported having double shifts, no reliance can be placed on these figures.[596] However, if it is accepted that some schools were using the same teachers to run a morning and an afternoon shift, the strain on these teachers might be great, depending on the combined length of the two shifts.

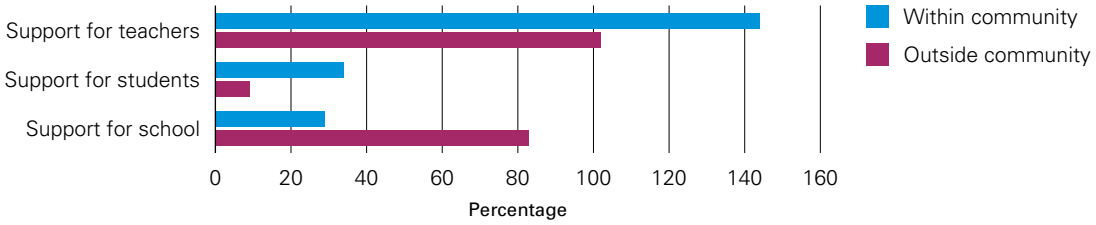
Not unreasonably, the majority of instructors are motivated to teach because of remuneration, but this is not the only factor.[597] Many are motivated by a commitment to children and their country. Nearly 40 per cent of teachers' groups affirmed that they enjoy teaching. The widespread need for in-service training of teachers has already been reported, but fewer than 20 per cent of the teachers state that they are motivated by an expectation of receiving training. Ten per cent have taken up teaching as a last resort.

Figure 2.67 What motivates teachers to teach in the crisis situation




Asked what the community could do to improve teacher motivation, the largest group of responses related to directly supporting the teacher, with support for students and support for the school following. The rationale for supporting students or the school would be that this would improve the teacher's working environment. In looking to the wider community for support, assistance to the school came well ahead of assistance to students.[598]

Figure 2.68 Direct and indirect ways in which the local and wider community can support teachers




Many groups mentioned encouraging student attendance and strengthening student discipline as forms of support for children. They also suggested the community provide financial aid, equipment and assistance with school security as ways to support the school.

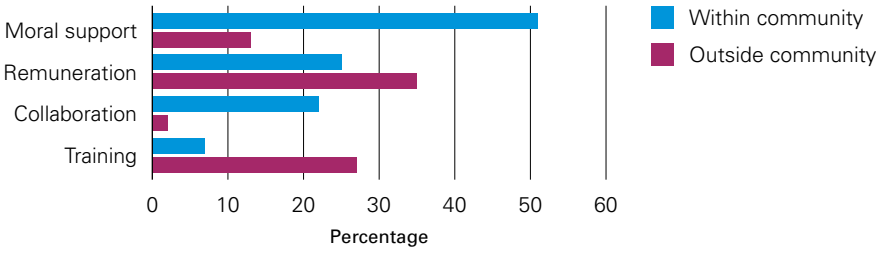
When communities were asked how they can support teachers, moral support was most frequently mentioned for the immediate community and assistance with remuneration for the outside community. There was a strong expectation that the outside community indirectly assist teachers by providing financial, furniture or equipment support. Some expressed hopes that international organizations could pressure belligerents to cease hostilities, stop disrupting schools and no longer target students. Twenty-seven per cent of the groups hoped that the wider community would provide, or support, training.

[596] Annex F.2-5. A further five schools implied that they had more than two shifts, but this information is unreliable.

[597] Annex G.29. Teachers' group members who provided the information were not asked to confine their comments to either paid or volunteer teachers.

[598] Annex G.30-31.

Figure 2.69 Ways in which the community can provide support specifically for teachers




## 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."[599]

No survey questions directly addressed this standard.

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.[600]

# 7 Education policy

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.

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.[601] Despite this, uniforms are still worn. One students' group requested a standardized uniform in liberated areas "to avoid embarrassment for poor students".[602] One parents' group objected to the uniform as being inappropriate for students of certain ages and generally unattractive.[603] No group reported students being denied access to school because they were not wearing uniforms.

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.[604] It is not known whether these tests were used in opposition-controlled areas, or whether similar mechanisms were put in place.

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.[605] 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,

[599] INEE, pp.102-103.
[600] Written response from the Ministry of Education, 12 January 2015, to questions submitted by the author.
[601] UNICEF Syria, p.18; Syrian Arab News Agency, an online news portal. The article was accessed 14 September 2014.
[602] Annex I.9.
[603] Annex H.18.
[604] UNICEF Briefing, p.5.
[605] INEE, p.106.

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.[606]
- 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.[607]

Longer-term recommendations include:

- Conduct a macro-level analysis of the impact of the crisis on the educational system as a whole.[608]

# 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 Education Sector Working Group in Damascus and the Education Cluster in Gaziantep developed separate plans. In both cases, the plans addressed access to, and quality of education, as well as strengthening the sector's human capacity. SHARP[609] required donor funding of US$103 million, while the Response Plan for the Syrian Humanitarian Operations from Turkey[610] (intended to run from mid-2014 to mid-2015) required US$US20.1 million.

In 2015, the planning process was merged, resulting in a single plan under the WoS approach. The funding required for the 2015 Syrian Arab Republic Strategic Response Plan[611] 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".[612]

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 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.

606 UNICEF Syria, p.19.
607 UNICEF Syria, p.19.
608 UNICEF Syria, p.19.
609 pp.76-84.
610 pp.18-23.
611 pp.27-28.
612 p.5.

## Table 2.9 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. | | The Response Plan for the Syrian Humanitarian Operations from Turkey runs from mid-2014 to mid-2015; the partners involved in its development are not mentioned. The main education activities, at an estimated cost of US$20.1 million, are in the green-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 | 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<br>Construction of 440 temporary learning spaces | | Rehabilitation of schools<br>Construction of schools or temporary learning spaces<br>WASH inputs or improvements<br>Provision of furniture or equipment<br>Provision of heating fuel | 424,993 children | Rehabilitation of schools<br>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 | Alternative or accelerated curriculum taught to students | 20,182 students | 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 | Textbooks for students | 257,300 students | | |
| Provision of regular textbooks | 3,000,000 students | Classroom kits for teachers | 2,434 teachers | | |
| School supplies to kindergarten and basic education | 1,163,500 students | School kits for students | 417,700 students | | |

Table 2.9 Education partners' response plan to the Syrian crisis, 2014 and 2015 (continued)

| ACTIVITY | BENEFICIARIES | ACTIVITY | BENEFICIARIES | ACTIVITY | BENEFICIARIES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| OBJECTIVE: Training personnel | | | | | |
| Training on remedial and accelerated learning | 100 teachers | Training in teaching methods and education in emergency (EiE) concepts | 2,100 teachers | Teaching and learning through childcentred, protective and interactive methodologies strengthened | |
| Training on quality education | 3,300 teachers | Personnel trained in psychosocial concepts | 1,567 personnel | | |
| Train trainers on EiE | 50 trainers | Personnel trained in school management | 853 personnel | | |
| OBJECTIVE: Well-being activities | | | | | |
| School feeding | 395,000 students | Psychosocially supportive well-being activities | 20,600 students | | |
| | | Recreational kits available in learning settings | 51,700 students | | |
| | | School-based health activities | 5,750 students | | |
| | | School feeding | 5,750 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 | Training in EiE, INEE minimum standards, and other relevant topics | 1,594 stakeholders and community members | Capacity on INEE and crisis-relevant issues strengthened | 480,000 education actors |
| OBJECTIVE: Teacher incentives | | | | | |
| | | Incentives or remuneration for teachers | 9,081 teachers | Professional development and incentives | |
| OBJECTIVE: Coordination, advocacy and sector capacity | | | | | |
| Advocacy for access to education (5 initiatives) | | Networking among agencies<br>Advocacy on preventing attacks on schools (8 statements)<br>Support development of minimum standards for teacher remuneration, curriculum, certification Liaise on regional options for certification and accreditation of schooling | | Capacities of education stakeholders to advocate for needs and rights of childen to education in crisis contexts develped and sustained | |
| | | Sectoral information management systems for gap identification and monitoring | | Monitoring and evaluation capacities of education actors developed and strengthened (rapid assessments, school-based data collection, EMIS) | |
| | | Inter-sectoral processes (8 processes) | | | |

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.

# 9 Conclusions and recommendations

The findings in this document revealed a series of conclusions and recommendations. However, there are a few points that 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 generally prevalent in a specific locality. Interventions should therefore be contextualized.[613]

## 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 before mobilizing communities in larger senses.

Community support manifests as improving the school's surroundings, the school environment, instituting patrols to protect children moving between their homes and the school, and establishing emergency response teams.

The Education Cluster should prepare template plans to help empower communities. The plan would include ways to identify and approach participants, such as local council representatives or other community leaders, an agenda template, and guidance on record-keeping. The plan should be contextualized in discussion with the head teacher and school management team. Follow-ups at appropriate intervals should be incorporated.

When local NGOs implement programmes in communities, accountability should be demonstrated. Caution should be exercised for promises that cannot be kept and for one-time (or limited) assistance. These should be made clear before programming begins. Capacity building, in addition to providing aid, helps ensure sustainability. The possibilities of scaling up should also be explored at an early stage, in consultation with beneficiaries.

### COORDINATION

The Education Cluster is already playing a coordinating role. Greater face-to-face sharing of lessons learned from implementing activities could improve opportunities for scaling up.

Overall, the Cluster has done excellent work planning for and implementing the survey on which this assessment is based. Group members are encouraged to continue working in this collaborative spirit as they 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. Cluster members should also share their individual insights so that best practices be scaled up and wasted effort be avoided.

The potential for better coordination by, and among, education authorities in opposition-controlled areas has not been explored in the current assessment, although respondents expressed desires for such coordination.

Local NGOs should make readily available their lessons learned.

[613] INEE, p.21.

### ANALYSIS

Schools should keep accurate records of teacher and student attendance (as well as late arrival and early departure). For comparative purposes, an agreed monitoring instrument 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 responses.

Data for which the EMIS gathers should, where possible, be collected from schools in opposition-controlled areas that are not reporting to the MoE. Entities such as the ACU could collect and process these data. Most EMIS questions are politically neutral, asking about what the school has. However, there is an opportunity for questionnaires to identify what schools lack.[614]

It is for the Education Cluster to determine which of the many issues raised in the current assessment require further investigation. What happens in the classroom clearly requires more systematic investigation: This is dealt with in more detail under the "Teaching and learning" domain.

The role of the Education Cluster is acknowledged, but the current assessment has not explored the way in which the Cluster might expand its capabilities. Monitoring and evaluating the cluster have also not been addressed.

Occasional negative comments were made by survey respondents on promises that had not been kept.

## Access and learning environment

### EQUAL ACCESS

There are classroom shortages in a number of areas. Efforts to construct new ones are already underway and should be continued.

Even though double shifts may reduce the length of the school day, they are preferable to using unsuitable buildings. In the long term, double shifts should be phased out.

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.

### PROTECTION AND WELL-BEING

Having an emergency plan that teachers and students can confidently implement, providing first aid training, and creating firefighting and other emergency response procedures can build confidence and reduce fear. Parents should discuss with school staff how, together, they can 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.

Discrimination in schools appears to be more widespread than the teachers are willing to admit. The school community should find ways of minimizing discrimination through awareness raising and discussions. Training on how to mobilize such efforts would need to be provided.

Physical, emotional and verbal abuse in the classroom have been identified by a number of respondents. Head teachers should discover whether this is happening in their school and address it. Teachers responsible for such behaviour may require psychosocial support or guidance on classroom management. Teachers should also be given the confidence to approach another staff member should they find themselves resorting to unacceptable behaviour in the classroom. The school should have a clear code of conduct that is strictly implemented.

[614] Rapid Assessment.

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? 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 outline their programme of psychosocial support activities and services, and discuss these at meetings with parents.

The extent to which Education Cluster partners have provided support for psychosocial support through training courses appears woefully inadequate. This should be standardized across the sector and stepped up.

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. Cluster 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.

### FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Continued efforts should be made to free school buildings currently used for other purposes so that they may be used exclusively for education. The rehabilitation of classrooms should be undertaken where possible. Classroom usage at some of the schools appeared to be low, and infrastructure is not going to be fully utilized should not, at this stage, be repaired. The specific needs of schools in an area should be prioritized before rehabilitation is started. In repairing rooms, attention should also be given to making them weather-proof.[615]

Classrooms in use should have sufficient seating. Students should also have a correctly positioned flat surface for them to be able to maintain a good posture when doing written work.

Water 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.

A significant number of students criticized the school's uncleanliness. 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

Changes to a school curriculum require widespread consultation, thorough planning, and need to be supported with in-service training for teachers. Efforts already being made by the Education Cluster representatives to ensure that curricula in use lead to recognized qualifications should continue.

Schools which attempt to modify the curriculum should ensure that they are not endangering their students' chances of obtaining certificates. Additional material should be introduced with care, since there are already complaints that the curriculum cannot be covered in the available time. Any local reduction in teaching hours should be tested against the requirement that the curriculum should be covered in such a way that students are able to master the content.

[615] Weather-proof buildings refers to facilities constructed such that the infrastructure functions regardless of seasonal weather patterns.

## 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 Education Cluster, in cooperation with those authorities that have some capacity in this regard, could review and adopt training materials which would address some of the more serious needs of teachers. Consultation with practising teachers and classroom observation should inform how training materials are prepared.

Where possible, teachers and head teachers 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 possibilities of 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.

Cluster 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.

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 minimised 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.

Producing materials for self-learning is commendable. Education Cluster partners will have to persevere to ensure students using 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.

Efforts to allow students to write examinations, ensuring that they lead to recognized qualifications (and not travel or cross the line to take such exams), 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.

## 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

The irregular payment or non-payment of salaries has been identified as a problem affecting many teachers in opposition-controlled areas. While the problem cannot be adequately addressed for lack of funds, the Education Cluster should continue its efforts to ensure that allowances paid to teachers are equitable and that the system is transparent.

Each school should keep an accurate record of teachers' attendance, which should include late arrivals, early departure, 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 Education Cluster would be unable to arrange external supervisory visits from authorities. Supervisory visits to staff members by head teachers and meaningful discussion of the challenges teachers face would provide a measure of support.

### EDUCATION POLICY

The Education Cluster 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 their studies.

### 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.

# 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 Education Cluster. Where other implementers are indicated, they are unlikely to react without prompting from Cluster members. Many recommendations have financial implications, and the Cluster will need to decide what can be accommodated in the sector budget. The Cluster will prioritize those activities that it deems feasible.

Table A.1 Summary of main recommendations based on quantitative and qualitative analyses

| | RECOMMENDATION | IMPLEMENTER |
|---|---|---|
| Community participation and resources | | |
| 1 | Initiate meetings to draw community members into more active support of the school | School management |
| Coordination | | |
| 2 | Regular occasions at which Cluster members share qualitative information on activities implemented, with a focus on the possibilities of scaling up interventions that work well. | Education Cluster |
| 3 | Brief annual qualitative reports on assistance to education of each Cluster organization. | Education Cluster |
| 4 | Prepare draft templates on:<br>Activating community support<br>School emergency plans | Education Cluster |
| 5 | Provide training to school management on activating community support. | NGOs |
| 6 | Standardize psychosocial support training material already in use and attempt to scale up training for teachers. | Education Cluster |
| 7 | Non-governmental organizations train their members to act as catalysts in getting school management to:<br>Activate community support.<br>Adapt (contextualize) and implement an emergency plan.<br>Conduct discussions with students, staff and parents on addressing discrimination and bullying in school. | NGOs |
| Analysis | | |
| 8 | EMIS' data collection capabilities should be strengthened by:<br>Creating district and subdistrict codes for each reporting point (school).<br>Using new technology such as mobile phone platforms to collect data from schools. | EMIS/Education Cluster |
| 9 | EMIS' scope should be extended to cover such aspects as running water and sanitation, school governance, and security | EMIS/Education Cluster |
| 10 | Training on the completion of EMIS data collection instruments should be provided to head teachers. | EMIS/Education Cluster |
| 11 | Definitions should where necessary be clarified or simplified (e.g., teachers are represented by multiple variables in the current EMIS questionnaire). | EMIS/Education Cluster |
| 12 | Follow-up surveys of damaged infrastructure should be conducted for targeted investment in reconstruction. | EMIS/Education Cluster |
| 13 | 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. | EMIS/Education Cluster |
| 14 | A follow-up qualitative investigation should be conducted to investigate the further drop in the Gender Parity Index in vocational education (especially in Rural Damascus and Quneitra). | Education Cluster |
| Equal access | | |
| 15 | Schools should keep detailed records of teacher and student attendance. | School management |

Table A.1 Summary of main recommendations based on quantitative and qualitative analyses (continued)

| | RECOMMENDATION | IMPLEMENTER |
|---|---|---|
| **Protection and well-being** | | |
| 16 | Awareness-raising activities among teachers on inclusive approaches to the schooling of children with disabilities. | Education Cluster |
| 17 | Draw up workable emergency plans in collaboration with parents, students and community members, and regularly rehearse plan implementation. | School management |
| 18 | Provide guidance on how training in first aid, firefighting and other relevant emergency procedures may be undertaken by schools. | Education Cluster/School management |
| 19 | Every school should have a code of conduct for staff and students. | School management |
| 20 | Teachers should receive training in staff meetings on implementing the school's code of conduct without resorting to abusive behaviour. | School management |
| 21 | All schools should offer psychosocial support to the students and teachers, at least in the form of group sessions. | School management |
| 22 | All schools should provide a structured programme of recreational and cultural activities for their students. | School management |
| 23 | Encourage education authorities to make schools aware of the procedures they should follow in dealing with seriously stressed staff members or students. | Education Cluster |
| **Facilities and services** | | |
| 24 | Efforts by education authorities and Education Cluster members to supply personnel, educational resources, and school construction should be focused in basic education and districts of governorates which have received displaced children. | Education Cluster |
| 25 | Prepare a prioritized list of rehabilitation and furniture that is required. School management in collaboration with the parents determine what can be done by the school community members (parents and students) in the way of effecting repairs. | School management |
| 26 | The users of school facilities should assume responsibility for keeping the environment clean and attractive. | School management |
| 27 | 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. | Education Cluster |
| **Training, professional development and support** | | |
| 28 | Class observation in a number of schools should be undertaken by competent teacher trainers, who 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 training of trainers undertaken to allow for cascading the training to as many schools as possible. | Education Cluster |
| 29 | 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** | | |
| 30 | Schools should ensure that they are fully covering the curriculum in core subjects and other subjects that will be tested in certificate examinations. | School management |
| 31 | 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 the children. | School management |
| 32 | The use of self-learning materials should be carefully monitored and support mechanisms be adapted in the light of what is learned. | UNICEF |
| **Equal access** | | |
| 33 | Consideration should be given to the introduction of a random sample 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. | Education Cluster |
| 34 | 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. | Education Cluster |

Table A.1 Summary of main recommendations based on quantitative and qualitative analyses (continued)

| | RECOMMENDATION | IMPLEMENTER |
|---|---|---|
| **Teachers: Conditions of work** | | |
| 35 | Allowances paid to teachers should be equitable and the system should be transparent. | Education Cluster |
| 36 | Schools should keep detailed attendance records for teachers. | School management |
| 37 | Greater parental support for teachers should be promoted through routine meetings with parents. | School management |
| **Teachers: Support and supervision** | | |
| 38 | Head teachers should pay regular supervisory visits to classes and follow these with meaningful discussion of the challenges teachers are facing. | School management |
| **Education policy** | | |
| 39 | Efforts to ensure that children have viable alternatives to formal schooling, which will give access to examinations for recognised certificates, should continue. | Education Cluster |
| **Facilities and services** | | |
| 40 | The in-service training components of the sector plan should be expanded. | Education Cluster |
| 41 | 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. | Education Cluster |

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