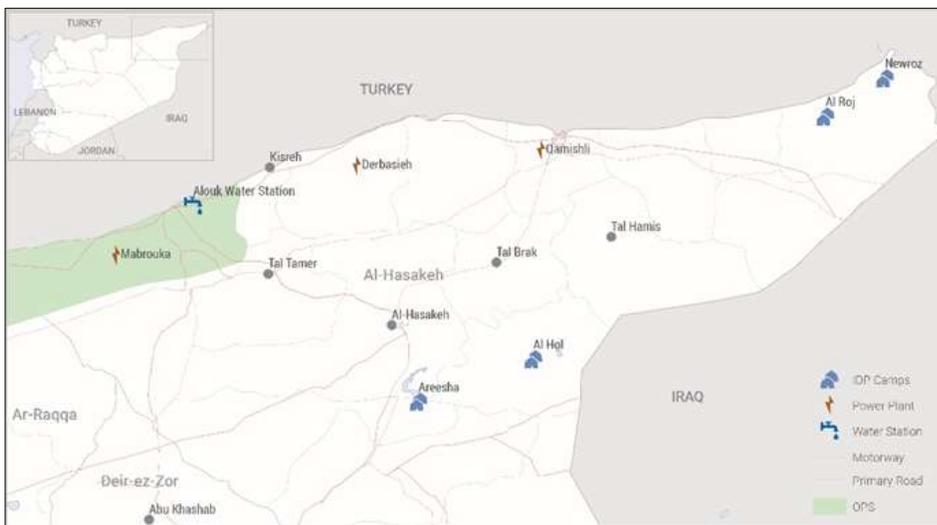


HIGHLIGHTS

- On 12 April, the Alouk water station in Al-Hasakeh Governorate stopped functioning, reportedly due to a fire at the Derbasiyah electricity substation which serves as the main source of electricity for Alouk.
- While the situation remains fluid and efforts are ongoing to restore supply, at the time of writing, access to water has been disrupted for over two weeks affecting up to one million people, including directly impacting water supply to approximately 460,000 people in Al-Hasakeh and Tal Tamer cities, in addition to over 70,000 people in Al Hol and other camps and settlements in the area.
- The current disruption at Alouk is the 23rd incident OCHA has recorded since November 2019.
- On 13 April, General Electricity Company of Al-Hasakeh technical teams commenced repairs at Derbasiyah electricity substation. The power station resumed operations albeit at a lower capacity which, in addition to illegal power connections on the Derbasiyah line, did not provide adequate power for the water station.
- On 18 April, General Electricity Company technicians were reportedly unable to access the power station.
- Later, on 24 April, following repairs on the electrical grid, Alouk water station started operating at a lower capacity, restoring supply to Tel Tamer sub-district, however, as of 27 April pumping remains insufficient to reach the majority of the population the station ordinarily serves, including Al-Hasakeh city.
- WASH partners have activated emergency water trucking deliveries of approximately 3,231m³/day. This is however insufficient to cover needs; at full production capacity, Alouk water station supplies approximately 4,000m³/hour.
- Humanitarian partners continue to advocate for qualified technical teams, including those from the Department of Water Resources, to have regular, unhindered and safe access to Alouk water station and Derbasiyah electricity substation for necessary repairs and maintenance to enable civilians to have sufficient and reliable access to clean, safe water. Work is also ongoing to identify alternative, sustainable solutions to address Al-Hasakeh's chronic water shortages.



SITUATION OVERVIEW

Alouk water station is a critical source of water in north-east Syria. While this latest disruption is the second recorded by OCHA in 2021, it is the 23rd recorded time the station has had operations suspended since November 2019. These disruptions have ranged from a few days to over a few weeks; directly or indirectly affecting approximately one million civilians in Al-Hasakeh Governorate, including over 70,000 people living in camps and informal settlements, including Al Hol, Areesha, Al-Tala'e' and Tweina. It is estimated that these disruptions cumulatively amount to over 100 days where



SYRIA

FLASH UPDATE #01

Disruption to Alouk Water Station

As of 28 April 2021

residents received no water from Alouk and were forced to rely on emergency water trucking and/or other sources of potentially unsafe water, including local wells.

HUMANITARIAN IMPACT

An estimated over 460,000 people directly rely on Alouk water station for their daily needs, with an additional 500,000 people indirectly affected by the loss of water supply. Of note, vulnerable communities, such as those living in camps and IDP settlements including Al Hol, are disproportionately affected by disruptions to essential services, including for reasons due to dependence on camp services, lack of resources to pay for safe alternatives, and other factors including overcrowded environments.

At the time of writing, much of north-east Syria, including Al-Hasakeh Governorate, remains in a COVID-19 preventive lockdown in response to a reported significant and concerning increase of COVID-19 cases, including at Al Hol and Areesha camps. Currently, there are no alternative safe sources of water, except for limited private water sold at a prohibitively high cost. Reports indicate that when Alouk station is out of service, local communities are forced to resort to unsafe water sources or reduce daily use. An ongoing fuel crisis across Syria has exacerbated lack of access to alternative sources, such as water trucking. It is imperative for the safety and wellbeing of civilians that Alouk water station operates consistently and at full capacity, particularly during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AND COORDINATION

At present, WASH sector partners across all response modalities are delivering approximately 3,231m³/day to neighbourhoods in Al-Hasakeh city on a rotational basis. Partners are further exploring means to increase this capacity, including through provision of water storage tanks. However, this is not a sustainable solution, and far below the approximate 4000m³/hour Alouk water station supplies when operating at full production capacity. While humanitarian partners have initiated emergency stop-gap measures during all reported disruptions to Alouk, such as water trucking, this remains infeasible in the long term, for reasons including: limited water available at the required volume; insufficient availability of water trucking contractors and sector partners who can conduct emergency activities; and limited funding, which is not always readily available to cover the emergency response.

High-level advocacy is ongoing with all relevant stakeholders to ensure rapid and sustained access for technical teams and relevant humanitarian partners to Alouk water station and Derbasiyah electricity substation. In addition, humanitarian partners continue to explore sustainable and long-term solutions to address the ongoing water shortages in Al-Hasakeh and the broader area.