

## Background

Since March 2011, the humanitarian situation in Syria has further deteriorated with increasing needs and number of people affected in all 14 governorates. Therefore, continuous identification of humanitarian needs to inform a scale-up of response is critical both at sectoral and multi-sectoral level;. Although broad humanitarian needs in Syria have been identified, there is a need for more disaggregated data and to have an overview of needs and vulnerability nationwide, in particular to monitor the evolving severity of the humanitarian crisis.

This document provides an overview on needs assessment work in Syria Crisis with following components:

1. Assessment Products
2. Profiling of refugees in neighboring countries to assess area of origin
3. Joint Humanitarian Assessment within Syria
4. Coordination Structures

### 1. Assessment Products

There are two assessment products currently produced for the Syria Crisis: the Humanitarian Dashboard and the Humanitarian Needs Overview.

#### **a. Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO)**

- First version (18<sup>th</sup> January 2013): OCHA collected inputs from sectors / agencies in Amman and produced a first version of the HNO on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2013. In this regard, a number of meetings were held with UN agencies in Amman to collect information on priority sector needs, response and situational overview. The final version of the HNO was shared during Emergency Directors meeting in Amman (Jan 2013). Second version (26<sup>th</sup> April 2013): The second version of the HNO was published on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2013, after extensive consultations and input of UN sector lead agencies both in Amman and in Damascus. The second version of the HNO created the basis for the needs analysis included in the 2013 Revised SHARP. This HNO version was published and circulated to wider audience.

#### **b. Humanitarian Dashboard**

Since November 2012, the Syria Dashboard is being updated on monthly basis with contributions from respective sectors. It covers key figures on SHARP funding, people in need, people targeted and reached for every sector

2. Lack of access within Syria led OCHA and its partners to seek alternative means of generating information on needs. One effort was focused on expanding the Jordan refugee profiling exercise to include data gathering from other countries in the region. OCHA, with UNHCR, organized a planning meeting to design an approach for expanding the Jordan refugee profiling exercise, in Amman, Jordan on 14-15 January 2013. Additional partners were asked to participate to provide technical expertise and input into the planning. These included UNICEF, WFP, including the VAM unit, the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS) and ACTED- the NGO providing profiling services on behalf of UNICEF and UNHCR in Jordan and Iraq. The objective of the meeting was to agree on a way forward to conduct place of origin assessments with refugee communities in Turkey, Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan in order to collect detailed information on humanitarian needs within Syria. The recommendation of the group was to refer to the project as “Refugee Place of Origin Perception Assessments”. UNHCR decided not to pursue this assessment approach due to other priorities at the time and the high cost of implementation.

### 3. Joint Humanitarian Assessment within Syria

Following the declaration of the Level 3 emergency, OCHA led the development of a joint assessment approach for Syria. The Syria Crisis Joint Humanitarian Assessment (JHA) provides a common methodology (and questionnaire) for identifying humanitarian needs within Syria. The objective of the initiative is to organise a countrywide assessment, providing common picture of humanitarian needs, priority geographical areas and affected groups within Syria.

**JHA Planning:** On 11-13 March 2013, OCHA convened Damascus based partners (UN agencies, international organisations, NGOs and SARC representatives) to Beirut for a Coordinated Assessment workshop. The objective was to build consensus, fine tune the JHA tool and plan concrete steps for implementation. Sixteen trainers were also trained on last day of the workshop to support the training of data collectors trainings inside Syria. Following the Beirut workshop, the methodology and questionnaire for the assessment was translated into Arabic on 17 March 2013.

FINAL (Training Package) - V6 - 08-05-2013

ملاحظات هامة	
1.	الرجاء قراءة دليل ميدان المقابلة قبل بدء المقابلة.
2.	في موقع التقييم، ينقسم أعضاء الفريق ليتحدثوا إلى المجتمع وإلى النازحين لتحديد مصادر المعلومات وتشكيل مجموعة منهم.
3.	يتطلب استبيان التقييم المشترك مصادر معلومات يمكنها تقديم المجتمع الأصلي في المنطقة والنازحين إليها كالمختار، البلدية، إمام المسجد، ممثل المجموعة والذين يمكنهم إجابة الأسئلة المتعلقة بالوضع بوضع البنية التحتية. وكذلك الأطباء، القابلات والطواقم الصحي الذين يمكنهم الإجابة على الأسئلة المتعلقة بالصحة. الاستاذة/مدرء المدارس الذين يمكنهم الإجابة عن أسئلة الحالة التعليمية في المنطقة.
4.	قد لا تجد مصادر المعلومات تماماً كما هو مذكور أعلاه، لكن حاول جمع مجموعة من 5-7 أشخاص من المنطقة والتي تملك فهماً للمجتمع المحلي ويستطيع الإجابة عن الأسئلة لتشكيل تصور كامل عن الوضع.
5.	هناك سؤال واحد يجب طرحه في كل موقع، لمعرفة الناس الذين يسكنون في الموقع والنازحين إليه. هذه الأسئلة تلتصق على نوع مصدر المعلومات المطلوب للإجابة على الأسئلة.
6.	الاستبيان يغطي معلومات الموقع الذي تزوره فقط. يجب على النازحين أن يركزوا اجاباتهم عن الموقع الذي يستضيفهم الآن (المجتمع المضيف).
القسم الأول - معلومات عامة	
GI.1	التوقيت (ساعة/دقيقة)
GI.2	تاريخ إجراء الاستبيان (يوم-شهر-سنة)
GI.3	رقم فريق التقييم
GI.4	رقم تعريف الاستبيان (التاريخ/المحافظة/رقم المنظمة/رقم الموقع)
بيانات الموقع	
GI.5	الرجاء إدخال بيانات الموقع حسب التسميات الإدارية الرسمية. لرجاء استعمل القائمة المرفقة لوضع الأسماء الصحيحة ورموز الأماكن.
المحافظة	المنطقة
التاحية	القرية/البلدة
الحي	

GI.6	ما هو تقدير سكان الموقع الذي تقوم بتقييمه؟ قسمهم حسب نسبة الناس المقيمين في الموقع والنازحين إليه؟ الرجاء تم تقدير الأرقام التي لا تعرفها بدقة.
	النازحين
	عدد المآلات
	عدد الأشخاص
	عدد المآلات
	عدد الأشخاص
GI.7	نوع السكان ونوع موقع التقييم (خيارات متعددة):
	مركز إيواء مسجل رسمياً <input type="checkbox"/>
	مركز إيواء غير رسمي <input type="checkbox"/>
	مجتمع مقيم <input type="checkbox"/>
	بيت آجرة <input type="checkbox"/>
	النازحين المقيمين في مناطق ساخنة أو مكان الإقامة الأصلي (الناس المقيمين أصلاً في المنطقة) <input type="checkbox"/>
	ريف <input type="checkbox"/>
	مدينة <input type="checkbox"/>
	معلومات أخرى: (يرجى ذكرها) <input type="checkbox"/>
GI.8	هل تعرف نسبة المآلات التي تحملها نساء في هذه المنطقة؟
معلومات عن مصدر البيانات (الشخص الذي تتم معه المقابلة)	
GI.9	الرجاء إدخال نوع مصدر المعلومات وحسبه (الرجاء جمع مصادر المعلومات في مجموعات نقاش وأوصافه من القائمة)
	نوع مصدر المعلومات (GI.14) أدخله بشكل منفصل
	هذا إضافة للاختيار من القائمة اللاحقة
GI.10	نوع مصدر المعلومات (اختر من القائمة)

Screen 0-1 JHA Questionnaire Arabic

On 25 March, the JHA methodology and questionnaire were submitted to the SARC and shared with the Higher Relief Committee of Government of Syria for approval. The next step is to follow up with the High Relief Committee for approval and for initiating the primary data collection. The implementation of the JHA is a key component of the humanitarian strategy in the revised SHARP that was launched on 7 June 2013.

**The JHA Methodology** is designed and based on the principles of the MIRA methodology. The assessment aims to collect data from Syria's 14 Governorates, assessing 496 sites through key informant community based interviews and an observation checklist covering all 62 districts of Syria. OCHA's Assessment Coordinator arrived in Syria on **8 April** to support the JHA implementation.

#### Field Testing (Questionnaire)

The JHA questionnaire and methodology was tested from **16 April to 5 May** in Rural Damascus and Lattakia with active involvement of IOM and WFP field teams. Interviews were conducted at six sites including IDPs site in "16 Tishreen Collective Center" in the Zahira Neighborhood south of Damascus City and IDP's and the host-community site of Dimas district west of Damascus (27 Km north-west of Damascus.)

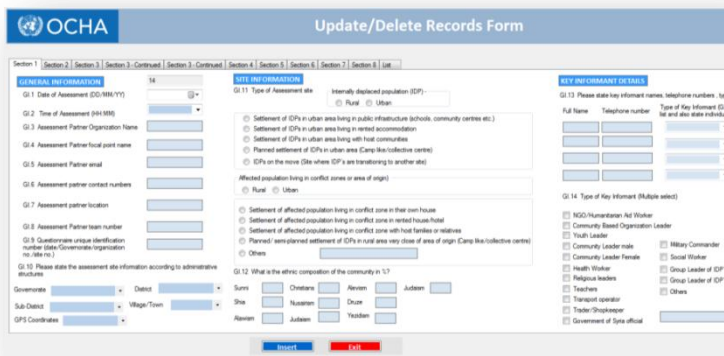
The primary focus of the exercise was to test the JHA tool with real key informants and review the data analysis and language of the tool. Based on learning from comprehensive 6 sites testing, the tool was revised accordingly and further improved.

Key humanitarian findings from JHA Field testing sites:

- **Poor infrastructure:** huge mass of illegal urban sprawl buildings
- **Gaps in humanitarian assistance:** registered families numbers increased three folds in last six months.
- **Internal resources of community solidarity schemes** (i.e. Zakat, Sadaqa, etc.) **have been shrunk** to minimum
- **Extra social pressure and physical burden on the housing facilities:** 3-4 families are living in each “house”.
- **Main needs** vary between shelter, basic food, baby milk, utensils, medicines, personal hygiene items.

### JHA Software

JHA Data entry and reporting software was designed and developed by the OCHA CASS team in Geneva to support the data consolidation needs of the JHA initiative. The software is a desktop application specifically designed after consultation with field partners in Syria.



Software provides remote field based data entry options which are not dependent on internet connectivity. The software also consolidates all field data into a central location in Damascus and Amman. The software also provides a reporting module that generates custom reports from the database reducing

Screen 0-2: JHA Data Entry and Reporting Software

dependency on information management staff members. Software is key feature of JHA and greatly appreciated by field partners in Syria.

### Training of Data Collectors



Photo 1: JHA Data Collectors in Tartous Syria

The training of data collectors consisted of two trainings funded and facilitated by OCHA and supported by FAO, WFP, IOM and UNHCR.

A two-day training for JHA data collectors was conducted in Damascus on **9-10 May 2013** with the participation of 54 SARC volunteers from all districts of Syria and 7 UN staff. The second training took place on 14-15 May in Tartous with the participation from over 50 NGO/Charities staff members from across the country. In

total the training was attended by 104 data collectors. During the training, the JHA Interview Guidelines were also shared in Arabic and several exercises were conducted to train the data collectors on the JHA tool and interview techniques.

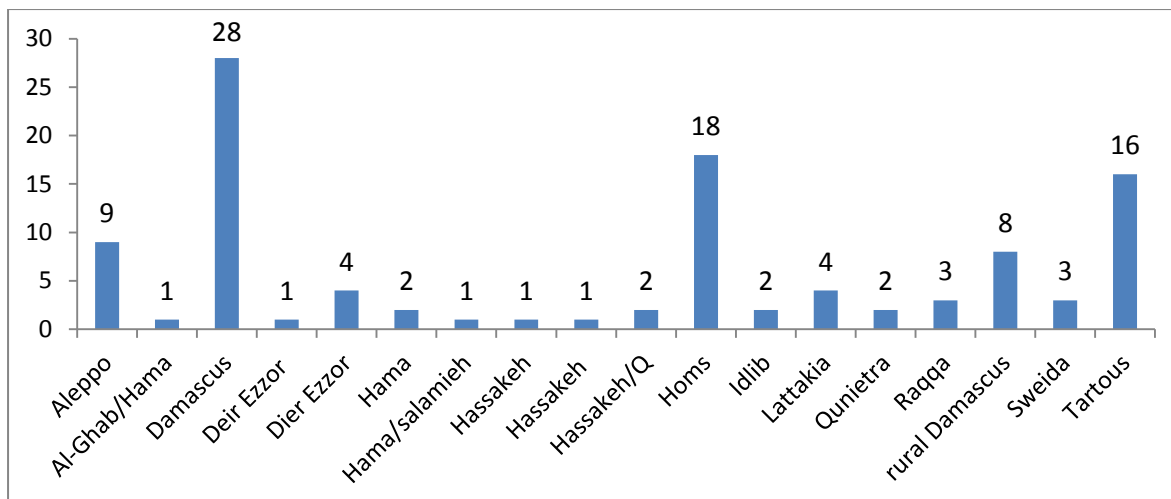


Figure 1: No of Data Collectors trained by Governorates of Syria

During the trainings 800 assessment sites were categorised into a database along with access information. These 800 sites also represent areas where the majority of the population are either displaced or at their area of origin requiring urgent humanitarian assistance. 496 sites will be selected from these potential sites during the JHA primary data collection exercise.



Photo 2 : JHA Data Collectors in Damascus Syria

Potential assessment sites are currently being mapped by OCHA IAU Amman.

### Primary Data Collection

Primary Data Collection will be initiated once approval is granted by the Government.

### 4. Assessment Coordination Structures

**There are currently different coordination structures in the region focused on planning and initiating or otherwise supporting assessments in Syria.**

**Amman (Jordan):** Syria Information Management and Assessment (SIMA) Working group based in Amman was setup by OCHA IAU Amman and OCHA CASS team members in **January 2013**.

**Damascus (Syria):** On **15 April SIMA TF** was established in Damascus ensuring support and operational coordination linkage with SIMA WG in Amman. SIMA TF is a time-bound task force of Inter-Sector Group in Damascus

## Annex A- Chronology on OCHA's Need Assessment work in Syria (Amman & Damascus)

Date	Activity	Participation /Support /Responsibility
<b>14-15 January 2013</b>	<p><b>Refugee Area of Origin Profiling</b></p> <p>OCHA, with UNHCR, organized a planning meeting to design an approach for expanding the Jordan refugee planning exercise, in Amman, Jordan on 14-15 January 2013. Additional partners were asked to participate to provide technical expertise and input into the planning. These include UNICEF, WFP, including the VAM unit, the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS) and ACTED- the NGO currently providing profiling services on behalf of UNICEF and UNHCR in Jordan and Iraq. The objective of the meeting was to agree on a way forward to conduct place of origin assessments with refugee communities in Turkey, Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan in order to collect detailed information on humanitarian needs within Syria. The recommendation of the group is to refer to the project as "Refugee Place of Origin Perception Assessments".</p> <p><b>Key outputs:</b> Coordinated Assessment Approach, detailed methodology for profiling, questionnaire and agreement to initiate project</p>	<p>Loretta HG (OCHA CASS) Fawad H (OCHA CASS) UNHCR GVA, REACH-ACTED, JIP Project, UNICEF, WFP (VAM), WFP</p>
<b>18 January</b>	<p><b>First Humanitarian Needs Overview produced</b></p> <p>CASS team members held active consultations with Sectors lead agencies and UN agencies in Amman to collect information for first HNO document.</p>	<p>Loretta HG (OCHA CASS) Kashif Rehman (OCHA CASS)</p>
<b>16-31 January</b>	<p><b>Syria Information Management and Assessment (SIMA) working Group Amman</b></p> <p>On 16<sup>th</sup> January 2013, SIMA WG in Amman was established by CASS and IAU. Three meetings were conducted during the period to finalise questionnaire for inside and outside Syria along with the indicators and to reach agreement on Refugee Profiling project (UNOCHA-UNHCR).</p> <p><b>Key outputs:</b> Finalize Questionnaire for JHA and Refugee profiling , seek agreement on Assessment Registry</p>	<p>Chair: Loretta HG (OCHA CASS) 16 Jan 2013</p> <p>Chair: Fawad Hussain (OCHA CASS) and Majed Abu Kubi (OCHA IAU Amman)</p>
<b>18 February</b>	<p><b>Dashboard Produced</b></p> <p>Syria Dashboard produced which was presented in Syria Humanitarian Forum</p>	<p>Fawad H CASS , OCHA IAU and OCHA AVMU team</p>
<b>28 February</b>	<p><b>JHA Field Package produced and shared with Damascus</b></p> <p>JHA field package was produced after several consultations with sector lead agencies and UN agencies in Amman.</p>	<p>Fawad H (OCHA CASS) shared with UNOCHA Damascus and SIMA WG Amman</p>
<b>11-12 March 2013</b>	<p><b>Coordinated Assessment Workshop in Beirut</b></p> <p>37 Participants from Damascus representing all sectors including SARC attended the workshop to plan and finalize the questionnaire and the methodology of JHA initiative.</p> <p><b>Key Outputs:</b> Agreement from Damascus based Inter-Sector agencies, International NGOs and Syrian Arab Red Crescent on JHA concept, detailed methodology, comprehensive all sector questionnaire for the assessment and next steps.</p> <p><b>Sector Representation:</b></p>	<p>Facilitation: Loretta H-G (OCHA CASS) Fawad H (OCHA CASS) Maria Rosario B (OCHA Syria) Craig Williams (OCHA Amman/ISS GVA)</p> <p>UNOCHA: Raul Rosende (OCHA Syria) Rawia Al-Taweel (OCHA Syria) Tarek Elgebely (OCHA Amman)</p> <p>Participants (37): ACF(2),DRC(2),FAO(1),</p>

	Community Services (1), Food Security(4), Health(4), Inter-sector(6),Livelihoods(2),Multi-sector (6), NFIs/Shelter(7), Palestinian refugees in Syria(3), WASH(4)	GRC/NRC(1), IMC(2), IOM(4), Mercy corps(2),OCHA(3), SARC(2), UNDP(2), UNFPA(2), UNHCR(3), UNICEF(2), UNMAS(1), UNRWA(3), WFP(3), WHO(2)
<b>13 March 2013</b>	<b>Training of Trainers for Joint Humanitarian Assessment</b> 16 Inter-agency team of trainers were trained in one day training to replicate the training within Syria for Data collectors	Facilitation: Fawad H (OCHA CASS) Rawia- Al-Taweel (OCHA Syria) – Coordination Support  Participation (16)
<b>17 March 2013</b>	<b>Translation of Questionnaire into Arabic</b>	Rawia-Al Taweel OCHA Damascus
<b>25 March 2013</b>	<b>Letter written to SARC</b> A letter was written to SARC requesting Syrian government approval on Needs Assessment inside Syria. The Questionnaire and Methodology was also shared.	OCHA Damascus
<b>29 March 2013</b>	<b>Meeting with SARC</b> Follow up meeting with SARC to expedite Government approval through Higher Relief Committee	OCHA Damascus, Fawad H (OCHA CASS)
<b>8 April 2013</b>	<b>Assessment Coordinator deployment to Damascus</b> After waiting two months for visa, UNOCHA CASS deploy an Assessment Coordinator to Damascus	Fawad H (OCHA CASS)
<b>9 April 2013</b>	<b>Assessment Coordinators meeting with SARC</b> Assessment Coordinator meets SARC to initiate training of JHA Data Collectors. SARC agrees to nominate SARC volunteers from all SARC Branches of Syria.	Fawad H (OCHA CASS) , Rawia A , Mohammad B (OCHA Damascus), SARC Team
<b>10-14 April 2013</b>	<b>Meetings with UN Agencies and NGOs</b> Assessment Coordinator conducts bilateral meetings with UN agencies and NGOs in Damascus to buy in their support and expertise for the needs assessment.	Fawad H (OCHA CASS) , Rawia A (OCHA Damascus)
<b>15 April 2013</b>	<b>Second Letter to SARC was sent by UN OCHA to nominate Data Collectors for the exercise and also expedite the Government approval for the assessment.</b>	OCHA Damascus
<b>15 April 2013</b>	<b>Syria Information Management and Assessment (SIMA) Taskforce established</b> Syria Information Management and Assessment (SIMA) Taskforce was established in Damascus to coordinate IM and Assessment work. Inter-sector lead agencies approved the data collectors training for JHA and decided to actively participate in facilitation and nomination of data collectors.	OCHA Damascus, Fawad H (OCHA CASS), ISC
<b>16 April – 5 May 2013</b>	<b>Field test of Syria JHA Questionnaire</b> IOM and WFP under take field testing of JHA tool in the field. IOM completes 6 site field testing in Lattakia and WFP complete 6 site field testing in Rural Damascus. IDP settlements and population affected in area of origin where interviewed to test the questionnaire.	WFP, IOM, OCHA Damascus, Fawad H (OCHA CASS)
<b>26 April 2013</b>	<b>Second Humanitarian Needs Overview produced</b> Second HNO was produced supporting the production of SHARP.	Sector lead agencies OCHA Damascus IAU Amman OCHA CASS Support
<b>6 May 2013</b>	<b>Revision of Questionnaire</b> Questionnaire is revised based on field testing of JHA Questionnaire by WFP and IOM.	OCHA Damascus, ISC
<b>7 May 2013</b>	<b>Syria JHA Software</b>	Kashif Rehman (OCHA

	JHA Software developed by CASS ready to roll out: Software has the capacity to work off line providing easy to use data entry option from remote locations providing unification of data into central database managed by OCHA; SIMA TF met in Damascus to review final preparations for Data Collectors training and review field testing results.	CASS), Fawad H (OCHA CASS)
<b>9-10 May 2013</b>	<p><b>SARC Data Collectors Training for JHA</b></p> <p>54 volunteers and staff of SARC attended two days training for JHA data collection and planning in Damascus. Volunteers and staff represented geographically all Governorates of Syria. During the training around 600 sites were categorized according to assessment methodology and consolidated in a list as potential assessment sites.</p>	<p>Facilitation: Fawad H (OCHA CASS) Rawia- Al-Taweel (OCHA Syria) – Coordination Support Lina Khoussa – IOM Bashar Akkad – WFP</p> <p>Participation (54): SARC staff and volunteers</p>
<b>14 – 15 May 2013</b>	<p><b>Second Data Collectors Training for JHA (NGOs/Charities) in Tartous</b></p> <p>50 participants representing NGOs and charities in Syria from all over the country attended two days training in Tartous. During the training the data collectors focused on data collection techniques, JHA questionnaire, methodology, data entry software, humanitarian principles and code of conduct, security consideration and consolidation of assessment sites. Another list of 300 sites was proposed by data collectors for JHA.</p>	<p>Facilitation: Fawad H (OCHA CASS) Rawia- Al-Taweel (OCHA Syria) – Coordination Support Lina Khoussa – IOM Bashar Akkad – WFP</p> <p>Participation (50): NGOs/ Charities</p>
<b>16 May 2013</b>	<p><b>800 potential sites for Needs Assessment</b></p> <p>List of 800 potential assessment sites shared with IAU Amman for mapping. Out 800 sites 496 assessment sites will be selected representing 8 sites per district covering all Governorates of Syria. Sites also provide a snap shot of specific locations where humanitarian situation is critical in the country.</p>	Fawad H (OCHA CASS), IAU Amman. Bashar Akkad WFP, Rawia Al Taweel OCHA, Lina Khoussa – IOM
<b>19 May 2013</b>	<p><b>End of Assessment Coordinator Mission</b></p> <p>Assessment Coordinator completes 6 weeks of deployment. As Government approval to initiate Assessment has not been formalized.</p>	Fawad H (OCHA CASS)

### Annex B- JHA Syria Timeline

Timeline of support to Syria JHA	March				April				May		
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
1. Software development of a database tool for Syria JHA; First proto type rolled out for Beirut training	█	█	█								
2. Coordinated Assessment Beirut Workshop and ToT		█	█								
3. Questionnaire translated to Arabic			█								
4. Letter written to SARC along with Questionnaire and Methodology for Syrian government approval and a follow up meeting with SARC to expedite Government approval through Higher Relief Committee				█	█						
5. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Humanitarian Needs Overview		█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
6. UNOCHA CASS deploys an Assessment Coordinator to Damascus; Assessment Coordinator meets SARC to initiate training of JHA Data Collectors; Bilateral meetings with UN Agencies and NGOs on Assessment						█	█				



