



# Access to Housing and Tensions in Jordanian Communities Hosting Syrian Refugees

## Thematic Assessment Report

# Introduction

- Supported by the **British Embassy in Amman**.
- Data collection took place between December 2013 and March 2014 across the six northern Jordanian governorates of **Ajloun, Balqa, Irbid, Jarash, Al Mafraq and Zarqa**.
- Exploring refugee-host community relations > specifically factors influencing tension and destabilization relating to **Education, Employment, External Support, Health, Shelter and Water**.
- **Housing** was the **most commonly cited sector** linked to **community tensions** by respondents, with a total of 81%.
- The thematic assessment report focuses on **perceptions** of access to housing, and **tensions** in accessing housing.

# Methodology

- **Mixed-methods approach** using focus group discussions (FGDs) and individual questionnaires using **Open Data Kit (ODK)** uploaded onto smart phones.
- **FGDs** were held with the following demographic groups: Jordanian women, Jordanian men, young Jordanian women, young Jordanian men, Syrian women, Syrian men, young Syrian women, and young Syrian men.
- Findings from a **key informant assessment** were used to identify the 160 host communities estimated to be most at risk of **high tension** and **low levels of social cohesion and resilience**.
- A **purposive sampling approach** did not allow for generalisable findings but provided a more nuanced understanding of Syrian and Jordanian perceptions of the sectors assessed.

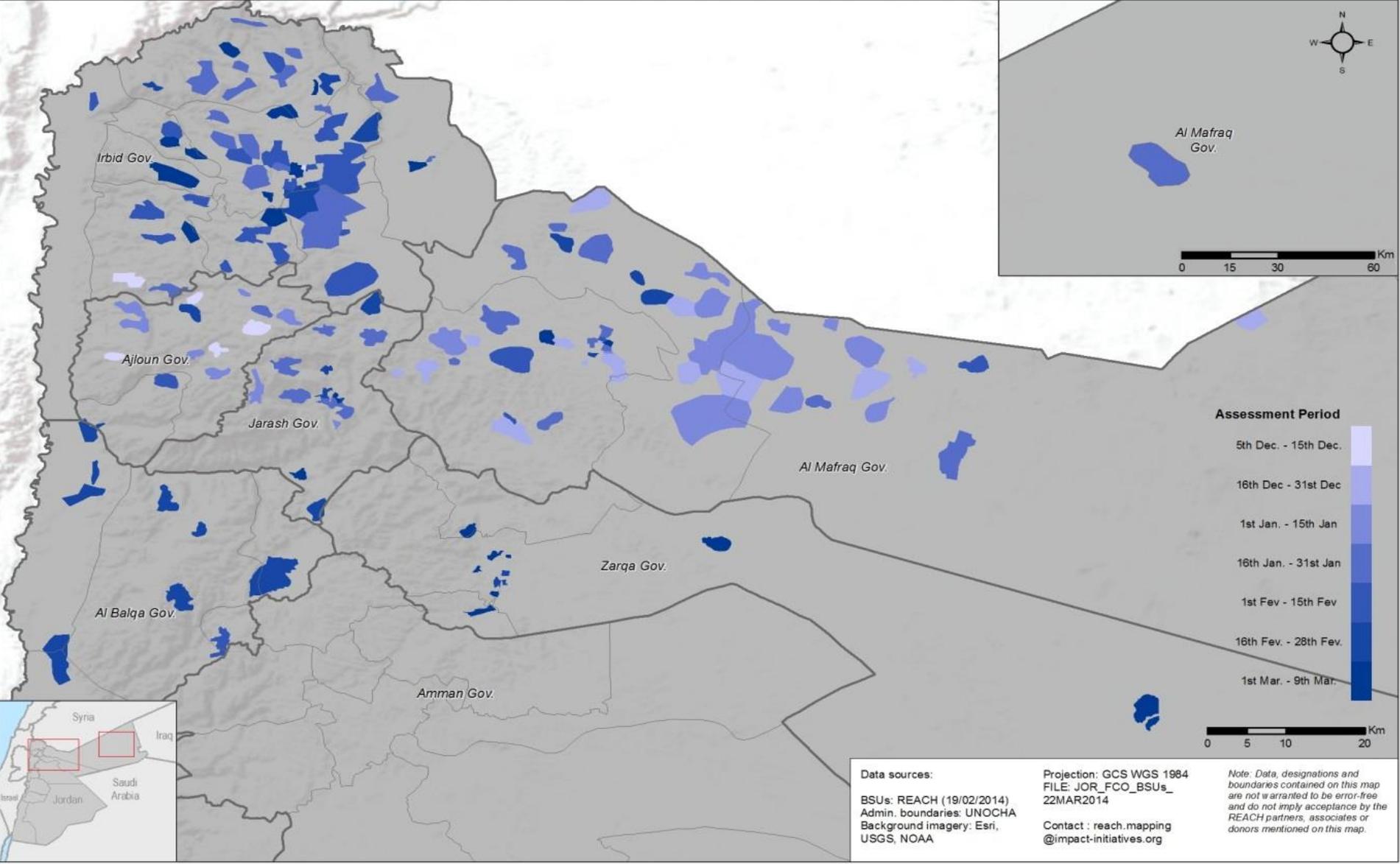


British Embassy  
Amman

# JORDAN - Northern Governorates

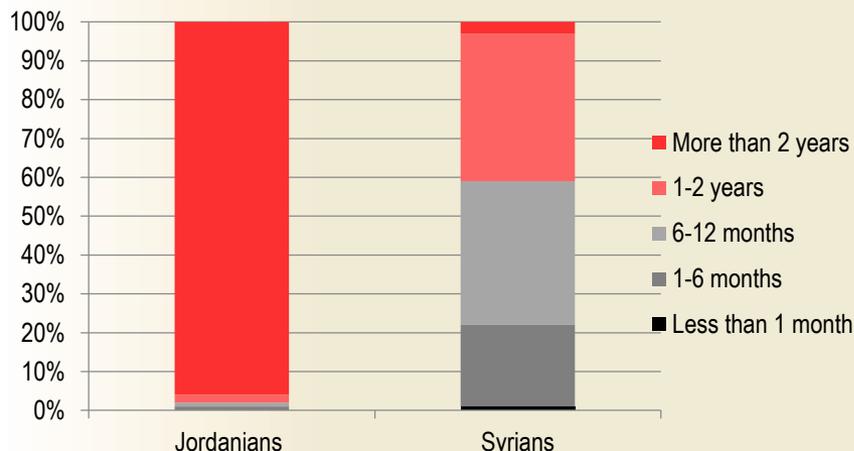
## Community Assessment Timeframe

For humanitarian purposes only  
Production date: 4/1/2014

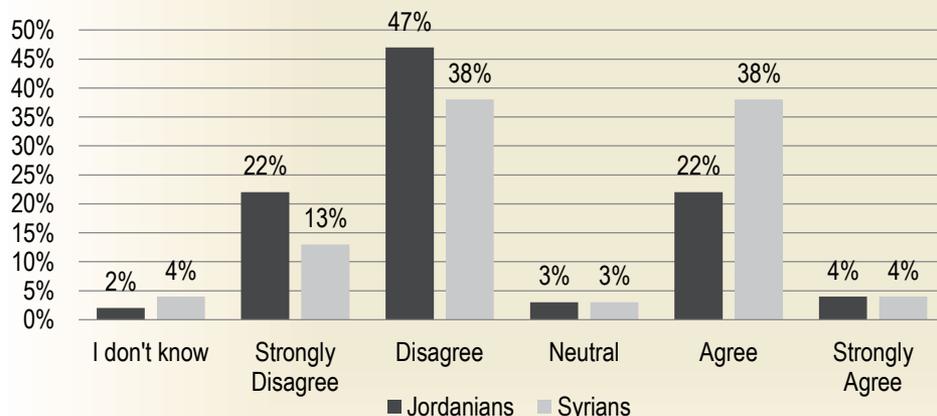


# Perceptions of access to housing

## How long have you been living in this community?



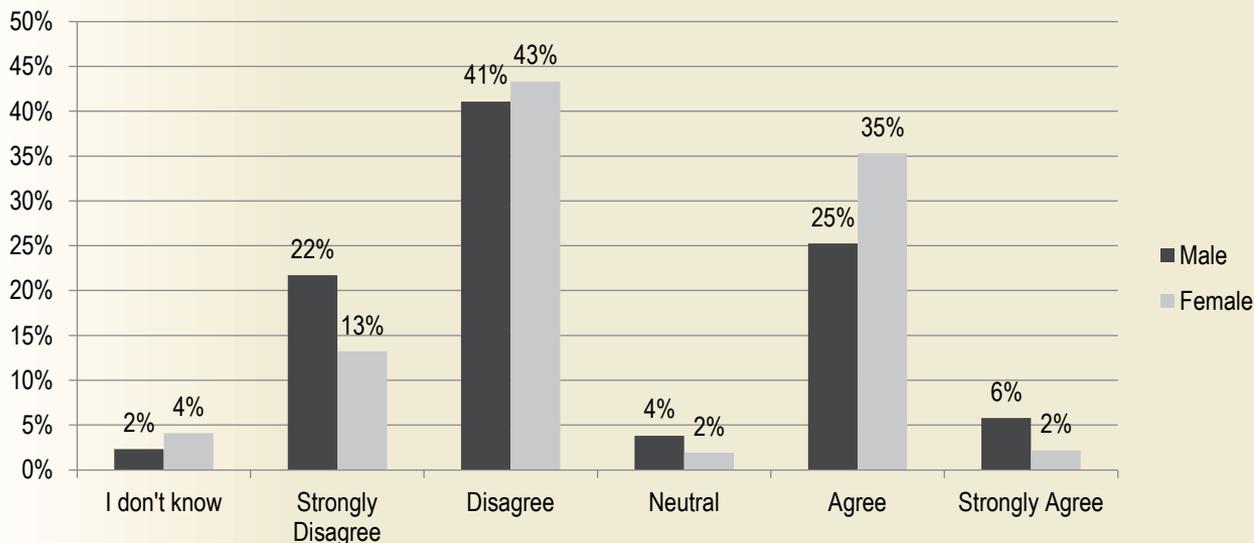
## There is adequate access to housing in your community (by nationality)



- The vast majority of Jordanian respondents indicated a **longer period of residency** than their Syrian counterparts. **96%** of Jordanians had lived in their community for **more than two years**, as opposed to a mere **3%** of Syrians.
- Only **1%** of Syrians and **0%** of Jordanians had been living in their community for **less than one month**, indicating that a minority of respondents were new arrivals.
- **69%** of Jordanian respondents considered access to housing in their community to be inadequate, as did **51%** of Syrians.
- One narrative arising in **FGDs** maintains that **some Syrians have displaced Jordanians in the housing market** due to their willingness to pay higher rents.
- Jordanian respondents who have lived in their community for longer may base their **perceptions of access to housing** on the **steady decline** in housing availability subsequent to the influx of Syrian refugees.

# Perceptions of access to housing

## There is adequate access to housing in this community (by sex)

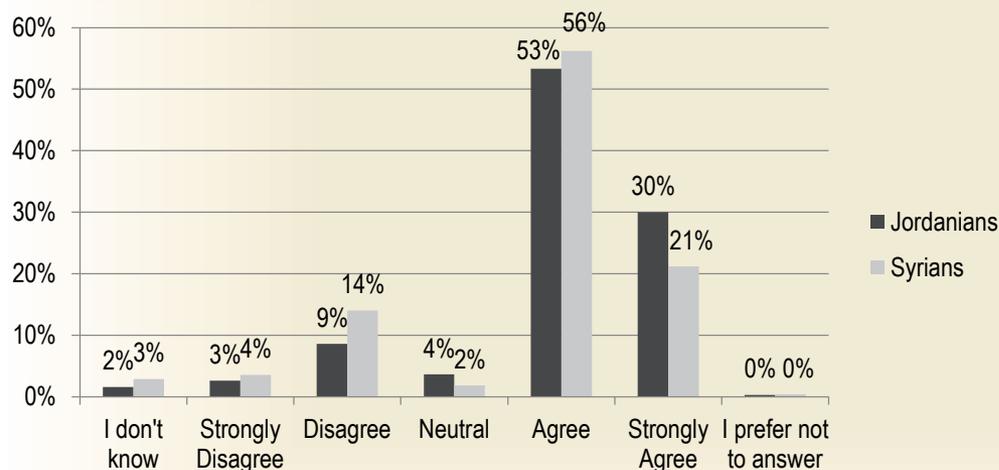


- There was a notable difference in reported **access to housing** between male and female respondents.
- When disaggregated by sex the findings showed that more male (**63%**) than female (**56%**) respondents perceived there to be inadequate access to shelter in their community.
- In **Jordanian host communities** a limited capacity to secure housing arrangements and concerns over **rising rental costs** may have contributed to more acutely **negative male perceptions** of access to housing in the community.

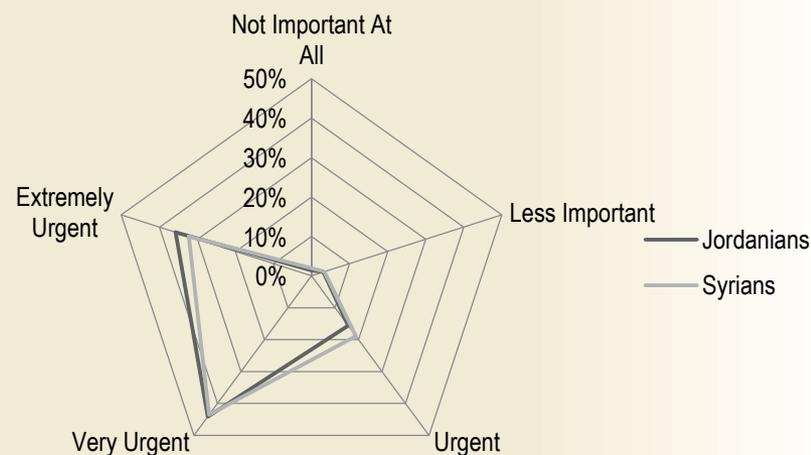
# Perceptions of tensions in accessing housing

- **83%** of Jordanians and **77%** Syrians identified access to housing as a cause of **tension** in their community (81% overall).
- FGDs in Ajloun, Jarash, Al Mafrqa and Zarqa revealed a narrative of Jordanians being **displaced by Syrian tenants** in the housing market.
- An equal proportion of Jordanians and Syrians (**44%**) rated challenges to housing in their community as **'very urgent'**, with a further **36%** of Jordanians and **32%** of Syrians considering these **'extremely urgent'**.

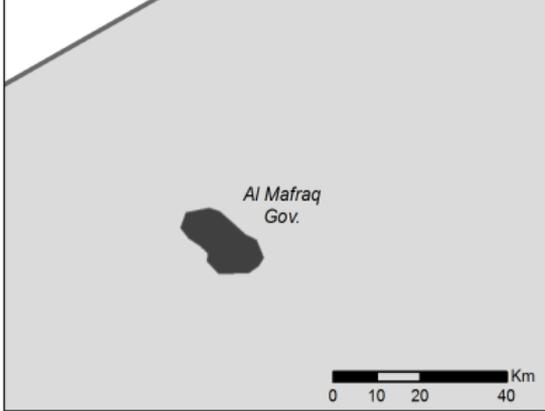
Access to housing causes tension in your community (by nationality)



Rate challenges to housing in your community (all respondents)

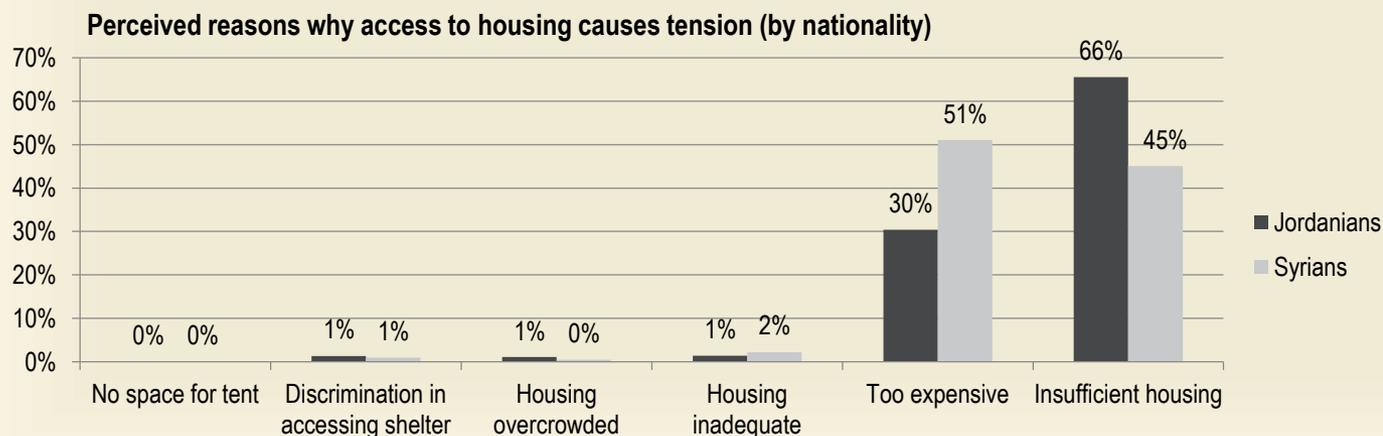


**Access to Shelter causes Tension in the Community**



# Reasons behind housing-related tensions

- When asked to indicate key reasons behind housing-related tension, **the majority of Jordanian respondents (66%) cited a lack of housing.**
- FGD outcomes provided evidence to support this finding. **Example:** In Downtown, Ajloun Jordanian and Syrian families reported coping with the increase in population and **lack of available housing** by living in **shared accommodation.**
- **Syrians** most commonly cited **the high cost of housing** as a reason behind tension, with **51%** selecting this response, compared to **30%** of Jordanians.
- This finding is corroborated by evidence that Jordanians in host communities **spend considerably less on rent and utilities** than Syrians, on average JOD 107 per month compared to JOD 193. Furthermore, in FGDs Syrian participants expressed acute concerns that they were unable to afford housing prices.



# Conclusion

- Findings indicate that a **lack of adequate housing** and **high rental costs** represented the two most discernible reasons for housing-related tension perceived by both Jordanian and Syrian respondents.
- According to anecdotal evidence some Jordanians and Syrians face near insurmountable obstacles in securing housing that is both adequate and affordable. Challenging circumstances have reportedly led many to resort to a range of **negative coping strategies**, which many entail harmful effects.
- FGD findings suggest that access to housing not only represents a **basic need** but also a **social issue**, which may have a direct influence on social norms by impeding the ability of young people to marry, and encouraging more communal living.
- While some Jordanians have profited from **charging Syrian refugees lucrative rents**, others are purportedly being **replaced by Syrians** in the rental market leading to a **decline in social cohesion** between the two groups.

# Thank you

For more information please contact **REACH**

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