



# LIVELIHOODS, EMPLOYMENT AND TENSIONS IN JORDANIAN COMMUNITIES HOSTING SYRIAN REFUGEES

## THEMATIC ASSESSMENT REPORT

JUNE 2014



British Embassy  
Amman

**REACH** Informing  
more effective  
humanitarian action

## SUMMARY

With the protracted Syrian crisis extending into its fourth year, the conflict continues to force millions of Syrians to seek refuge in the neighbouring countries of Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon and Turkey. These host countries are bearing the brunt of the crisis, which represents the largest refugee exodus in recent history with a total of 2,863,595 registered refugees now living outside of Syria.<sup>1</sup> Since 2011, approximately 600,000 Syrians have crossed the border into Jordan, putting immense strain on already scarce resources, and intensifying competition for basic services. The vast majority of these refugees do not reside in camps, but are hosted by Jordanian communities,<sup>2</sup> where limited opportunities, a lack of resources and inadequate living space present a challenge to social cohesion and community resilience.

In Jordan, few comprehensive studies have been conducted to provide an in-depth understanding of the key drivers of host community tensions. To address this information gap, this multi-sectoral REACH assessment aimed at identifying where tensions have emerged across northern Jordan as a result of the Syrian refugee crisis, and how they could be mitigated through social cohesion and resilience programming. In the shift from humanitarian relief to long-term development, the assessment aims to promote and inform the mainstreaming of a 'Do No Harm' approach in the response provided to conflict-affected populations residing in Jordanian host communities. Sectors assessed included: education, external support, healthcare, livelihoods, municipal services, shelter and water.

With support from the British Embassy in Amman, REACH carried out the assessment between August 2013 and March 2014 across the six northern Jordanian governorates of Ajloun, Balqa, Irbid, Jarash, Al Mafraq and Zarqa. The main coordination mechanism for the assessment was a steering committee comprised of government officials and representatives from the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC), the Ministry of Interior (MoI), and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MoMA). In addition to these government ministries, key stakeholders included the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), UN agencies, and other humanitarian and development actors from the international community.

REACH found livelihoods and employment to be a major source of tension in Jordanian host communities that were estimated to be at relatively high risk of tension at the time of assessment. Key findings include:

- 84% of all Jordanian and Syrian respondents reported that there were insufficient employment opportunities in their community.
- 78% of respondents assessed rated challenges to livelihoods as 'very' or 'extremely' urgent.
- The majority of Jordanian respondents (59%) cited uneven access as a reason for tension surrounding employment, compared to 27% of Syrians.
- 43% of Syrians reported that security issues at work caused tension, compared to only 3% of Jordanians.
- More male (56%) than female (30%) respondents cited uneven access to jobs between Jordanians and Syrians as a reason for tension, while more female (31%) than male (15%) respondents identified security issues at work as a causing tension in the community.
- Focus group discussions (FGDs) with Jordanians and Syrians highlighted a dominant narrative of Syrians displacing Jordanians in the labour market, and Syrian concerns over exploitation by Jordanian employers.

Social cohesion appears to have deteriorated in Jordanian host communities as increased competition for jobs and negative perceptions between Jordanians and Syrians in the labour market have been linked to rising tensions. Sampled respondents expressed acute concerns over a lack of employment opportunities, rating challenges confronting livelihoods in their communities as highly urgent. Anecdotal evidence gathered during FGDs indicated that Jordanians and Syrians alike have been forced to adopt negative coping mechanisms such as selling personal belongings, incurring debt and working for low wages as they struggle to meet rising living costs. Assessment findings underscored a need to further investigate the possible existence of discrimination in the work place and how livelihood opportunities could be improved in the host communities.

<sup>1</sup> UNHCR, <[www.data.unhcr.org](http://www.data.unhcr.org)>, [last checked 10 July 2014].

<sup>2</sup> UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP, Joint Assessment Review of the Syrian Refugee Response in Jordan, (January 2014).

## CONTENTS

<b>SUMMARY</b> .....	1
Abbreviations and Acronyms .....	3
Geographical Classifications.....	3
List of Figures .....	3
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	4
<b>METHODOLOGY</b> .....	5
Focus group discussion methodology .....	5
Challenges and Limitations .....	5
<b>FINDINGS</b> .....	6
Perceptions of access to employment .....	6
Challenges to livelihoods and employment.....	7
Tensions and employment.....	8
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	10
Annex I: Map of communities assessed and assessment timeframe.....	12
Annex II: Map of satisfaction with employment opportunities in host communities .....	13
Annex III: Map of access to livelihoods as a challenge to social cohesion.....	14

### About REACH

REACH is a joint initiative of two international non-governmental organizations - ACTED and IMPACT Initiatives - and the UN Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT). REACH works to strengthen evidence-based decision making by aid actors through efficient data collection, management and analysis before, during and after an emergency. By doing so, REACH contributes to ensuring that communities affected by emergencies receive the support they need. All REACH activities are conducted in support to and within the framework of inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms.

For more information about REACH and to access our information products, please visit: [www.reach-initiative.org](http://www.reach-initiative.org). You can also write to us at: [jordan@reach-initiative.org](mailto:jordan@reach-initiative.org) and follow us @REACH\_info.

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>CBOs</b>	Community-Based Organisations
<b>FCO</b>	British Foreign and Commonwealth Office
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>GoJ</b>	Government of Jordan
<b>HCSP</b>	Host Community Support Platform
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organisation
<b>Mol</b>	Ministry of Interior
<b>MoMA</b>	Ministry of Municipal Affairs
<b>MoPIC</b>	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
<b>NGO</b>	Non Governmental Organisation
<b>ODK</b>	Open Data Kit
<b>UN</b>	United Nations

## GEOGRAPHICAL CLASSIFICATIONS

<b>Governorate</b>	In Jordan this is the highest administrative boundary below the national level.
<b>District</b>	Governorates are divided into districts.
<b>Municipality</b>	Districts are divided into municipalities.
<b>Sub-Municipality</b>	Municipalities are divided into sub-municipalities.
<b>Community</b>	Sub-municipalities are divided into communities.

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 1:</b> There are sufficient opportunities in your community to make a living (all respondents) .....	6
<b>Figure 2:</b> There are sufficient opportunities in your community to make a living (by nationality).....	7
<b>Figure 3:</b> Rate challenges to livelihoods in your community (by nationality) .....	7
<b>Figure 4:</b> Rate challenges to livelihoods in your community (by governorate) .....	8
<b>Figure 5:</b> Access to gainful employment causes tension in your community (by nationality) .....	8
<b>Figure 6:</b> Access to gainful employment causes tension in your community (by sex).....	9
<b>Figure 7:</b> Perceived reasons access to gainful employment causes tension in the community (by nationality).....	9
<b>Figure 8:</b> Perceived reasons access to gainful employment causes tension in the community (by sex) .....	10
<b>Map 1:</b> Communities assessed and assessment timeframe.....	12
<b>Map 2:</b> Satisfaction with employment opportunities in host communities .....	13
<b>Map 3:</b> Access to livelihoods as a challenge to social cohesion.....	14

## INTRODUCTION

Subsequent to the onset of the Syrian refugee crisis Jordan's labour market has come under increased strain, resulting in the deterioration of working conditions, downward pressure on wages and the expansion of the informal economy.<sup>3</sup> Even prior to the Syrian crisis, Jordan's labour market was confronted by a plethora of challenges including high rates of youth unemployment, gender inequality, and weak regulation of labour laws.<sup>4</sup> Between 2010 and 2013 the number of unemployed persons in Jordan increased as the labour market failed to generate sufficient job opportunities to keep pace with population growth, raising the average unemployment rate from 12.7% in 2010 to 13.1% in 2013, with women particularly affected.<sup>5</sup>

The Syrian refugee crisis has taken a heavy toll on Jordan's labour market, compounding these economic problems and threatening the livelihoods of the most vulnerable groups residing in the host communities.<sup>6</sup> Across northern Jordan, government austerity measures, depleting natural resources and a lack of investment have led to scarce employment opportunities as well as increased vulnerability to external shocks. Against this backdrop, rapid population increase in the host communities has led to intensified competition for jobs between Jordanians and Syrians, resulting in mounting tensions and deteriorating social cohesion.<sup>7</sup>

There has been seasonal economic migration between Syria and Jordan for many years. However, the protracted Syrian refugee crisis has challenged the capacity of Jordan's economy to absorb the sharp increase in numbers entering the country. In order to work legally Syrian refugees must have legal residency and a valid passport. In addition, they must obtain a work permit from the Ministry of Labour showing that the job they are undertaking requires experience or skills unavailable among Jordanians.<sup>8</sup> In 2013, the Ministry of Labour estimated that around 160,000 Syrians were working illegally in Jordan.<sup>9</sup> According to REACH assessment findings, those who are not entitled to hold work permits often resort to negative coping mechanisms such as accepting lower wages and enduring sub-standard or unsafe working environments. Furthermore, anecdotal evidence suggests that some Syrian refugees are being discriminated against and exploited by employers due to their destitute situation and willingness to accept work conditions others refuse.

A large proportion of Syrian refugees work in informal sectors, such as agriculture, construction, and retail trade. These are industries that do not typically appeal to Jordanians and are often filled by other migrant workers. However, in spite of this, REACH's assessment highlighted a dominant narrative among Jordanians living in the host communities maintaining that Syrian refugees were usurping Jordanians' jobs. Additionally, findings pointed to growing resentment and hostility between these two groups, with heightened perceptions of urgency surrounding livelihoods and employment.

This study, which is one in a series of thematic reports, follows two previous papers released based on assessment findings where sector-specific needs of self-settled Syrian refugees living in northern Jordan were mapped and identified.<sup>10</sup> The overall assessment, conducted from August 2013 to March 2014, concentrated on the dynamics of refugee-host community relations and explored the factors influencing tension and destabilization. This report has a special focus on tensions relating to employment and livelihoods in the 160 host communities assessed across the governorates of Ajloun, Balqa, Irbid, Jarash, Al Mafraq, and Zarqa in northern Jordan. The report examines access to employment, challenges to livelihoods, and tensions surrounding employment and livelihoods in these host communities.

---

<sup>3</sup> ILO, The Impact of the Syrian Crisis on the Labour Market in Jordan: A Preliminary Analysis, (April 2014).

<sup>4</sup> World Bank, <<http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/jordan/overview>> [Last checked 10 June 2014].

<sup>5</sup> ILO, The Impact of the Syrian Crisis on the Labour Market in Jordan: A Preliminary Analysis', (April 2014).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Mercy Corps, Analysis of Host Community – Refugee Tensions in Al Mafraq Jordan, (October 2012).

<sup>8</sup> Syria Needs Analysis Project, Legal status of individuals fleeing Syria, (June 2013).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> REACH, Syrian Refugees in Host Communities – Key Informant Interviews/District Profiling, (January 2014), and, Evaluating the Effect of the Syrian Refugee Crisis on Stability and Resilience in Jordanian Host Communities, (January 2014).



## METHODOLOGY

REACH, with support from the British Embassy in Amman, undertook a large assessment in Jordanian host communities focusing on prioritization of needs, vulnerabilities and tensions that have emerged as a result of the Syrian refugee crisis. The assessment was undertaken over a six month time period between August and March 2014 and included a series of data collection and analysis exercises. First, a desk review was conducted to outline the broad challenges, needs and priorities in Jordan as a result of the Syrian refugee crisis. The findings from this desk review informed the methodology for a **key informant assessment** in 446 communities in the six northern governorates of Ajloun, Balqa, Irbid, Jarash, Al Mafraq and Zarqa.<sup>11</sup>

Findings from the key informant assessment were then used to select the 160 host communities most at risk of high tension and insecurity, which were identified based on having the lowest level of resilience.<sup>12</sup> REACH then undertook a **community-level assessment** of Jordanians and Syrians living in these 160 communities from December 2013 until early March 2014. Administration of questionnaires and eight focus group discussions (FGDs) with on average 6 participants per group were undertaken in each of these communities. During the targeted assessment phase 7,158 individual questionnaires were completed and 1,280 FGDs with Jordanians and Syrians.

In addition, REACH hosted six **participatory workshops with local government representatives** from the six sampled governorates during January and February 2014. The aim of these workshops was to gain a better understanding of perceptions, challenges and needs of local government institutions in providing support to host communities and incoming refugees. In particular, these workshops sought to identify the priority sectors in each governorate to inform programming around social cohesion and resilience. They thereby complemented the community-level data collection to illustrate a comprehensive and nuanced perspective of vulnerabilities and challenges to resilience in Jordanian host communities.

### FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION METHODOLOGY

In each of the 160 communities a FGD was held with each of 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. The upper-age threshold determining whether individuals were placed in the younger FGD was 30 years of age. The groups were divided in this manner to allow for different types of discussions to surface in the FGD setting. Previous assessments had already indicated the importance of separating Jordanian and Syrian FGDs<sup>13</sup> but it was also deemed necessary to separate according to sex and age groups to allow for a more nuanced discussion.

Prior to each FGD, participants were asked to fill out a survey questionnaire using Open Data Kit (ODK) which was uploaded onto smart phones. The questionnaires were filled out individually with the enumerators' guidance, and served the purpose of gauging the individual challenges, priorities, and perceptions held by participants in the FGDs. The ODK survey was completed before the FGDs so as not to have the group dynamics of the FGD influence the responses.

### CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

A purposive sampling approach was adopted for the community-level assessment to clarify the specific challenges to social cohesion and resilience within different demographic groups in Jordanian host communities. Furthermore, the selection of respondents and participants in these communities was also purposive, and the sampling approach therefore is not intended to generate statistically significant findings, generalisable to the

<sup>11</sup> REACH, 'Syrian Refugees in Host Communities – Key Informant Interviews/District Profiling', (January 2014).

<sup>12</sup> REACH, Evaluating the Effect of the Syrian Refugee Crisis on Stability and Resilience in Jordanian Host Communities: Preliminary Impact Assessment, (January 2014).

<sup>13</sup> Mercy Corps, Mapping of Host Community – Refugee Tensions in Al Mafraq and Ramtha, Jordan, (May 2013).

assessed communities or to northern Jordan. Instead, it allows for a more nuanced thematic understanding of the challenges to social cohesion and resilience facing people living in tension-prone Jordanian host communities.

In some communities, there were occasions when both Jordanians and Syrians were reluctant to participate in the assessment. On the whole, this was not a major challenge, but it complicated operational planning as certain FGDs had to be rescheduled and moved around in order to achieve an acceptable level of participation in the assessment. Furthermore, in some communities it highlighted growing assessment fatigue; some Jordanians and Syrians felt that too many assessments are being conducted without being followed by action.

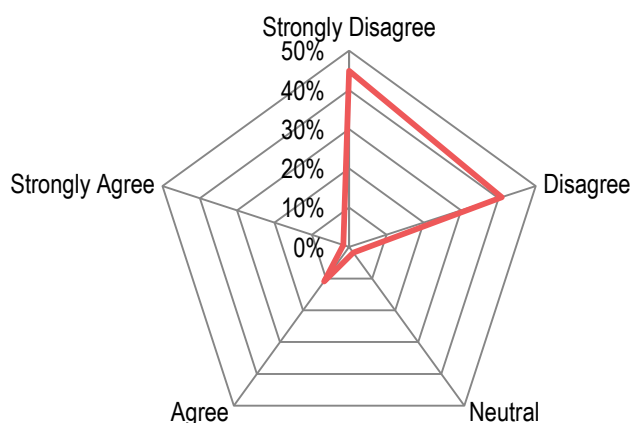
## FINDINGS

This section of the report presents the main findings related to employment and livelihoods that were generated through the assessment of Jordanian host communities. It outlines perceptions of access to employment; challenges to livelihoods; tensions; and employment in the Jordanian host communities assessed.

### PERCEPTIONS OF ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT

Findings from individual questionnaires and FGDs across the six northern governorates indicated that both Jordanians and Syrians had considerable concerns about unemployment and increasing competition for jobs in northern Jordan. **The vast majority of Jordanian and Syrian respondents conceded that there were insufficient employment opportunities in their community** (see Figure 1). Some 86% of respondents selected the responses 'Disagree' or 'Strongly Disagree', with only 13% satisfied that there were an adequate number of jobs opportunities available. Results were analogous across northern Jordan, though most pronounced in Jarash, with almost half of all sampled respondents in this governorate (48%) reporting that they 'Strongly Disagreed' that there were sufficient employment opportunities in their community [see Annex II for a geographical representation of satisfaction with employment opportunities in host communities].

Figure 1: There are sufficient opportunities in your community to make living (all respondents)

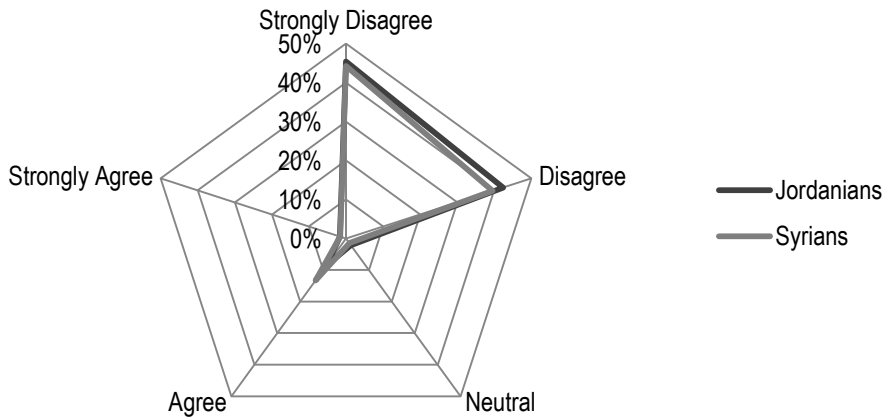


These findings were reflected in FGDs, for instance in Ketteh, Jarash, where Jordanians and Syrians reported accepting low wages, borrowing money and selling vouchers due to a lack of job opportunities. Jordanian men and women who participated in FGDs in the community of Al-A'mereyah, Zarqa, expressed frustration over increasing competition with Syrian refugees in the labour market. In Johfiyyeh, Irbid, a lack of investment was said to have led people to call for charitable organisations to invest in the community in a bid to generate more jobs.

The employment situation was perceived as being the least concerning in Balqa where a quarter (25%) of respondents stated that there were sufficient opportunities to make a living, which was expressed by on average less than half (12%) as many respondents in the five other northern governorates. A breakdown by nationality showed that some 42% of Jordanians and 39% of Syrians disagreed that there were sufficient employment opportunities, and a further 45% of Jordanians and 43% of Syrians strongly disagreed that this was the case

(see Figure 2). These findings indicate that Jordan's labour market lacks the capacity to absorb the significant increase in population in sampled host communities.

Figure 2: There are sufficient opportunities in your community to make living (by nationality)



### CHALLENGES TO LIVELIHOODS AND EMPLOYMENT

A large number of those assessed rated challenges to livelihoods in their community as 'Very Urgent', with 40% of Jordanians and 41% of Syrians selecting this response (see Figure 3). Furthermore, some 37% of all respondents stated that challenges confronting the sector were 'Extremely Urgent'. Findings were largely equivalent across the six northern governorates sampled (see Figure 4), but most pronounced in Jarash, where 43% of respondents rated challenges to livelihoods in their community as the most urgent and a further 38% felt they were 'Extremely Urgent'. **Only 1% of respondents overall rated challenges to livelihoods as unimportant.** Perceptions of urgency imply that populations in the host communities may have been exposed to job insecurity and other burgeoning concerns such as increased competition for jobs and growing informalisation of the workforce.

Figure 3: Rate challenges to livelihoods in your community (by nationality)

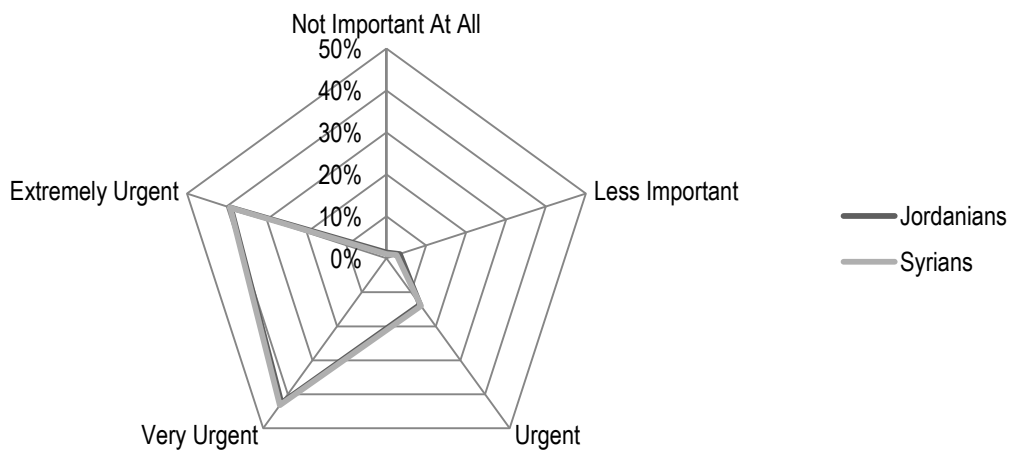
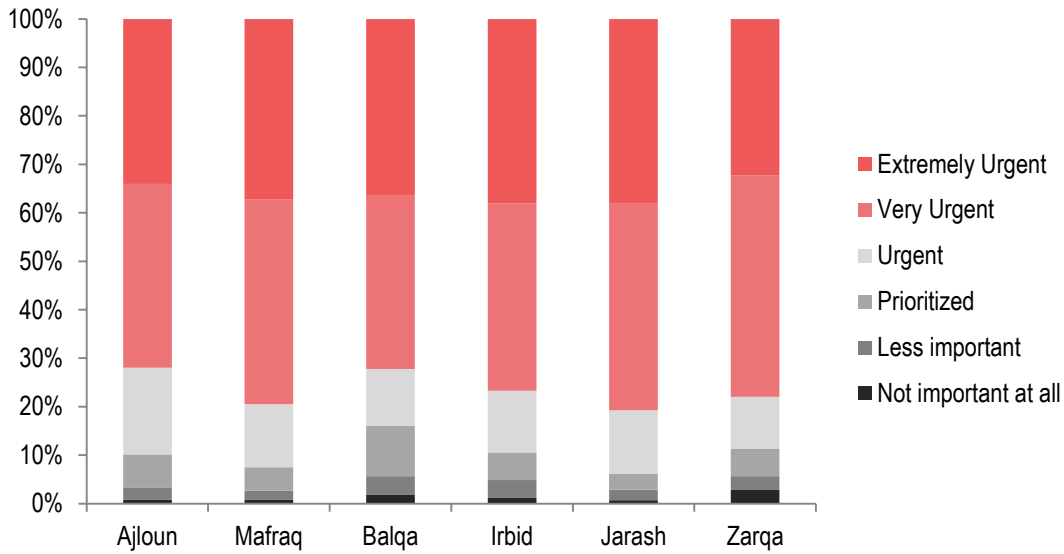




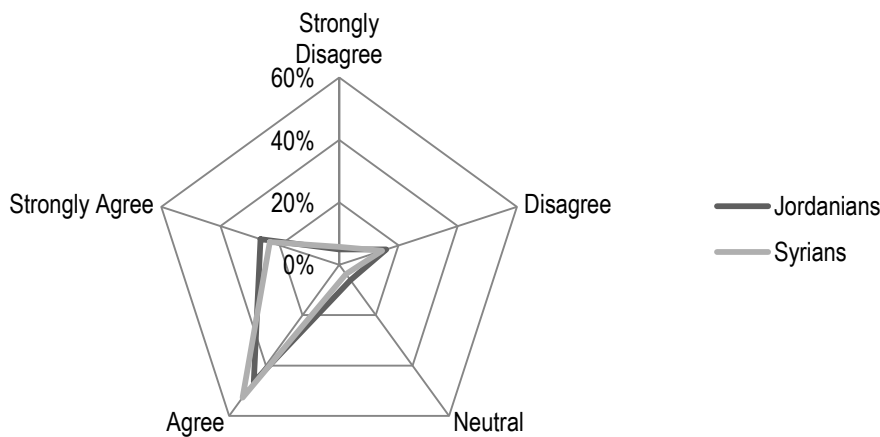
Figure 4: Rate challenges to livelihoods in your community (by governorate)



## TENSIONS AND EMPLOYMENT

The main findings of this section indicate that the vast majority of sampled respondents perceived access to employment as causing tension in their community, with uneven access to employment between Jordanians and Syrians, insufficient pay, and security issues at work rated as the top three reasons for tension [see Annex III for a geographical representation of access to livelihoods as a challenge to social cohesion]. Importantly, **69% of Jordanians and 71% of Syrians sampled cited access to gainful employment as a driver of tension in their community** making it a contentious issue for most respondents (see Figure 5). Some 20% of Jordanians and 18% of Syrians disagreed that this was the case. The remaining respondents were neutral, did not know or preferred not to answer.

Figure 5: Access to gainful employment causes tension in your community (by nationality)

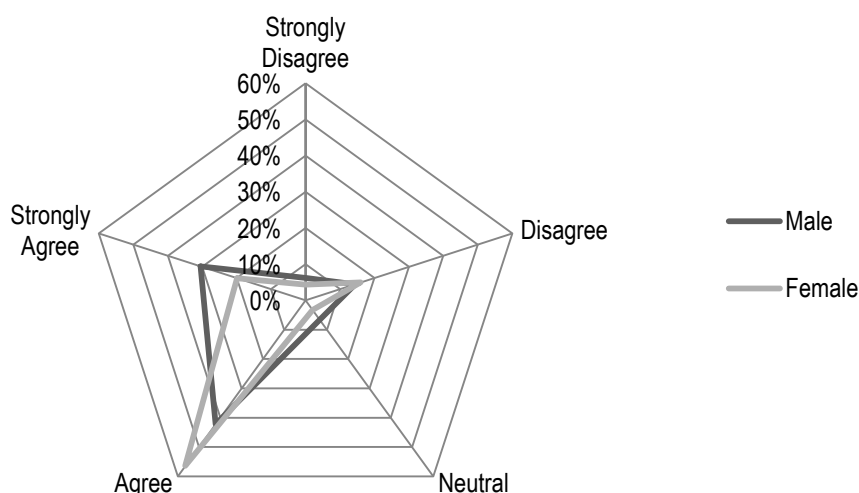


**When disaggregated by sex there were some disparities across the sampled population, with more male than female respondents expressing a strong opinion that access to gainful employment caused tension (see Figure 6).**

Given that female economic participation was only 22% in Jordan in 2013,<sup>14</sup> these findings are unlikely to be representative of the female workforce, but may be attributable to the tension that women experience in relation to male household members struggling to find and sustain livelihoods.

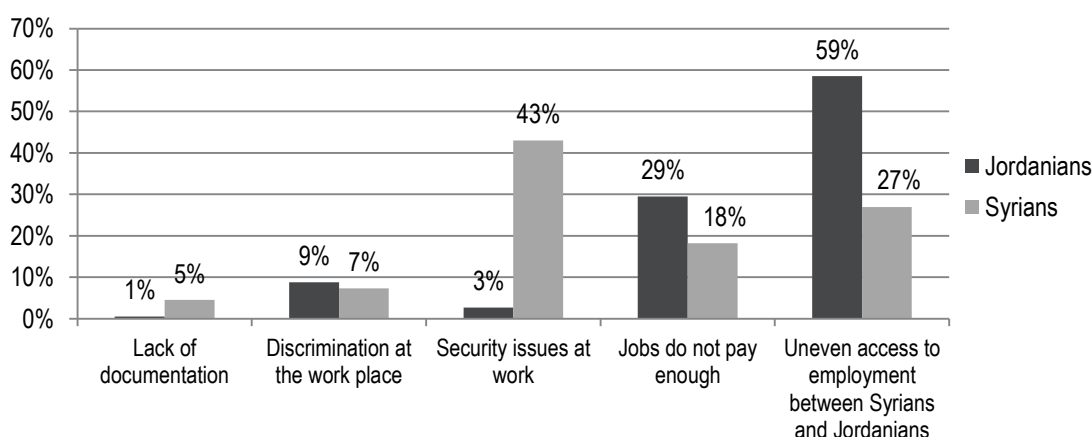
<sup>14</sup> World Bank, Country Gender Assessment: Economic Participation, Agency and Access to Justice in Jordan, (October 2013).

Figure 6: Access to gainful employment causes tension in your community (by sex)



Respondents were asked to indicate why access to employment caused tension in their community. **Jordanian respondents most commonly cited uneven access between Syrians and Jordanians as a reason for tension surrounding employment, with 59% selecting this response** compared to 27% of Syrians (see Figure 7). Although a large proportion of Syrians cannot legally access work, some Jordanians still view them as posing competition in the job market. These findings were reflected in FGDs in which **Jordanians frequently expressed concerns about Syrians replacing them in the labour force.**

Figure 7: Perceived reasons access to gainful employment causes tension in the community (by nationality)



FGDs linked heightened perceptions of tension to increased competition for employment. Jordanian FGD participants in Al-Barkh, Zarqa, reported that Syrians were taking job opportunities from them by accepting lower wages. In Kofor Khall, Jarash, Jordanian participants were concerned that Syrians employed illegally in local shops and farms meant that there were less job opportunities for Jordanians. Similarly, according to Syrian and Jordanian FGD participants in Ain Janna, Ajloun a high percentage of Jordanian youths were unemployed, and many of them had reportedly lost their jobs to Syrians. In Ras Moneef, Ajloun FGD participants stated that the increasing population had intensified competition over income-generating activities, and had resulted in significant community-level tensions.

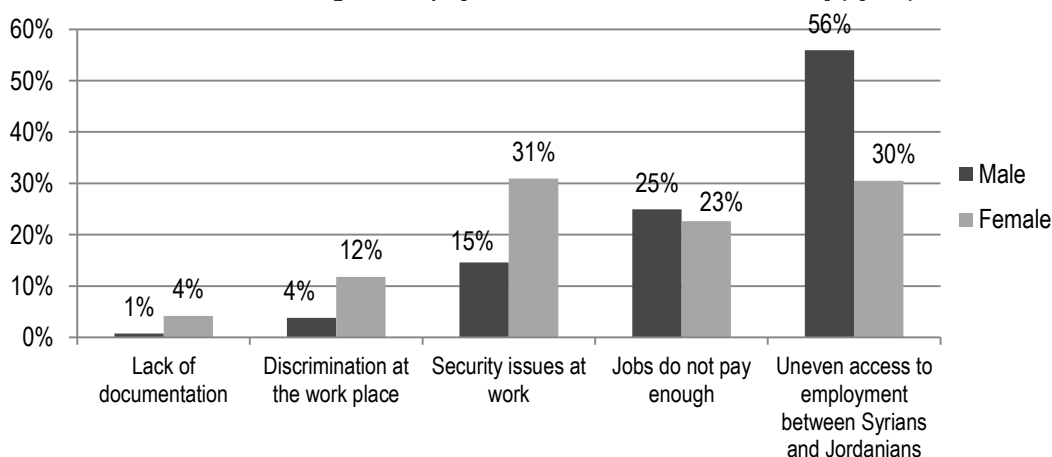
However, it is important to note that across the governorates of Al Mafraq, Irbid, and Zarqa unemployment rates are significantly higher among the Syrian population at 64.8% as compared to 13.1% for Jordanians.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, Jordanians are earning 123% of the income of Syrian households on average, and generally have access to more stable and frequent jobs in skilled and professional employment, skilled self-employment and

<sup>15</sup> ILO, The Impact of the Syrian Crisis on the Labour Market in Jordan: A Preliminary Analysis, (April 2014).

social security funds. This serves to highlight the contrast between perceptions and the employment context in northern Jordan.<sup>16</sup> **The perceptions expressed in FGDs are not corroborated by International Labour Organisation (ILO) findings that outline the limited extent to which Syrians have displaced Jordanian workers in the formal labour market.**<sup>17</sup> Further, they highlight that unemployment has not increased in the governorates hosting the majority of Syrian refugees, and that male Syrian refugees are working informally in sectors often occupied by other migrant workers (ie. Egyptians and Iraqis) rather than Jordanians.<sup>18</sup>

Contrastingly, **a large % of Syrians (43%) reported that security issues at work were causing tension, compared to Jordanians (3%).** This is most likely linked to the inability of most Syrian refugees to attain work permits, compounded by negative ramifications in being arrested by the police. It may also be attributable to discrimination in the workplace and the dangerous conditions that Syrians working illegally must sometimes endure. In Jana'ah, Zarqa, FGD participants reported that Syrian refugees were being exploited by employers. In Downtown, Jarash city it was stated that Syrians were being forced to work long hours in stressful low paid jobs due to their lack of work permits. Similarly, in Al Janubi, Irbid Syrians were concerned about undertaking illegal work at the risk of being identified by the Jordanian security forces.

Figure 8: Perceived reasons access to gainful employment causes tension in the community (by sex)



A breakdown by sex shows that women and men perceived different causes of tension as linked to employment (see Figure 8). **The majority of male respondents (56%) cited uneven access to employment between Syrians and Jordanians as a reason for tension in their community.** Contrastingly, **female respondents were most likely to cite security issues at work (31%),** suggesting that there may be a need to investigate gender-based discrimination and protection issues in the workplace.

**Across the six governorates assessed, uneven access to employment was most often identified as a reason for tension in accessing employment.** At 26%, Zarqa had the highest proportion of Jordanian and Syrian respondents that identified security issues at work as causing tension in their community, as well as the highest proportion of respondents reporting that wages earned were too low (30%). Ajloun had the highest reported levels of discrimination in the workplace, with 17% of all respondents identifying this as a reason for tension in accessing gainful employment.

<sup>16</sup> UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP, Joint Assessment Review of the Syrian Refugee Response in Jordan, (January 2014).

<sup>17</sup> ILO, The Impact of the Syrian Crisis on the Labour Market in Jordan: A Preliminary Analysis, (April 2014).

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

## CONCLUSION

Gainful employment represents a lifeline and without it supporting a family and meeting basic needs becomes a daily struggle. Jordan's labour market is currently confronting high rates of unemployment, gender inequality and a rise in child labour, among other issues.<sup>19</sup> In addition, the unprecedented number of Syrian refugees entering northern Jordan has led to a visible rise in competition for jobs in host communities. Correspondingly, sampled respondents indicated acute perceptions of uneven access to employment opportunities, insufficient pay, and a general lack of jobs as major points of contention. Heightened perceptions of urgency regarding challenges to employment and the reports of those resorting to negative coping mechanisms mirrored these findings, suggesting that the majority of respondents viewed their livelihoods as under threat.

According to anecdotal evidence gathered during this assessment, the inability of those in the host communities to access and sustain livelihoods may have led to increased hostility and allocations of blame between Jordanian and Syrian groups. Widespread perceptions that Syrians are replacing Jordanians in the workforce do not necessarily reflect the reality, but are conducive to deteriorating social cohesion. Furthermore, it appears that a lack of jobs and limited labour market regulation have led to diminishing community resilience and a higher degree of job insecurity. In the current environment many Syrian refugees are living in challenging conditions and are therefore willing to accept substandard work situations. This may purportedly encourage some employers to exploit their situation by paying lower wages and providing poor working conditions.

It should be noted that for some groups within the host communities the influx of refugees has contributed to economic activity through increased consumption, providing increased access to cheap labour, and allowing business owners to fix higher prices for goods.<sup>20</sup> However, for the majority of sampled respondents it seems that the detrimental effects of the Syrian refugee crisis on the labour market continue to outweigh the positive ones.

Creating more employment opportunities and enforcing closer regulation of the labour market may help to mitigate tensions, bolster community resilience and avoid entrenching divides between Syrian and Jordanian groups. Prominent perceptions of livelihoods and employment arising from this report, such as uneven access to jobs, security issues in the workplace, and low rates of pay merit further investigation in order to enhance programmatic responses aimed at improving the livelihoods of those residing in Jordanian host communities.

This assessment has provided a broad understanding of tensions related to livelihood and employment in communities hosting Syrian refugees across northern Jordan in order to help humanitarian and development actors inform, design and target strategic responses for Jordanian and Syrian populations.

---

<sup>19</sup> ILO, The Impact of the Syrian Crisis on the Labour Market in Jordan: A Preliminary Analysis, (April 2014).

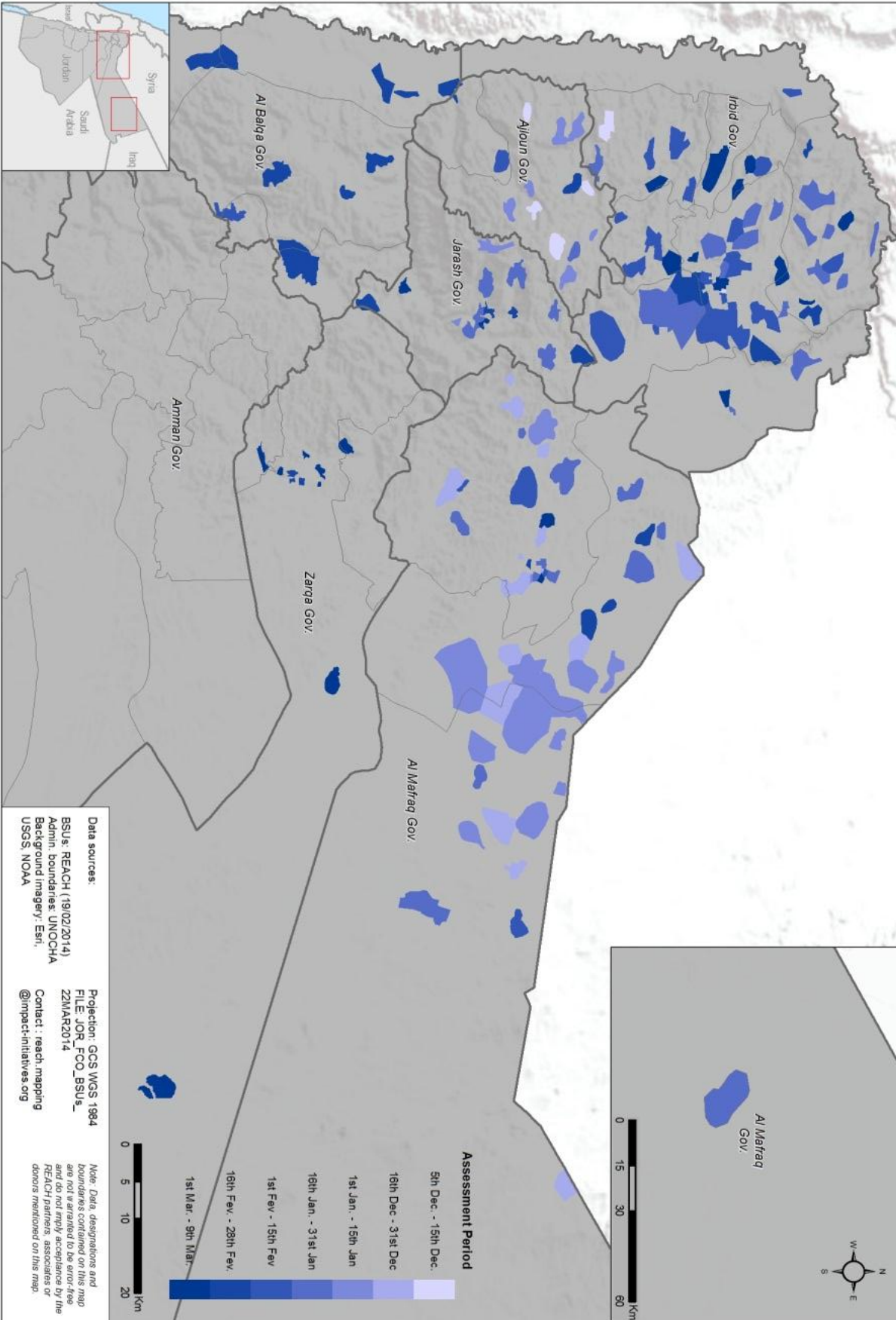
<sup>20</sup> IMF, Jordan Country Report No.13/368, (December 2013).

**ANNEX I: MAP OF COMMUNITIES ASSESSED AND ASSESSMENT TIMEFRAME**



**JORDAN - Northern Governorates**  
Community Assessment Timeframe

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

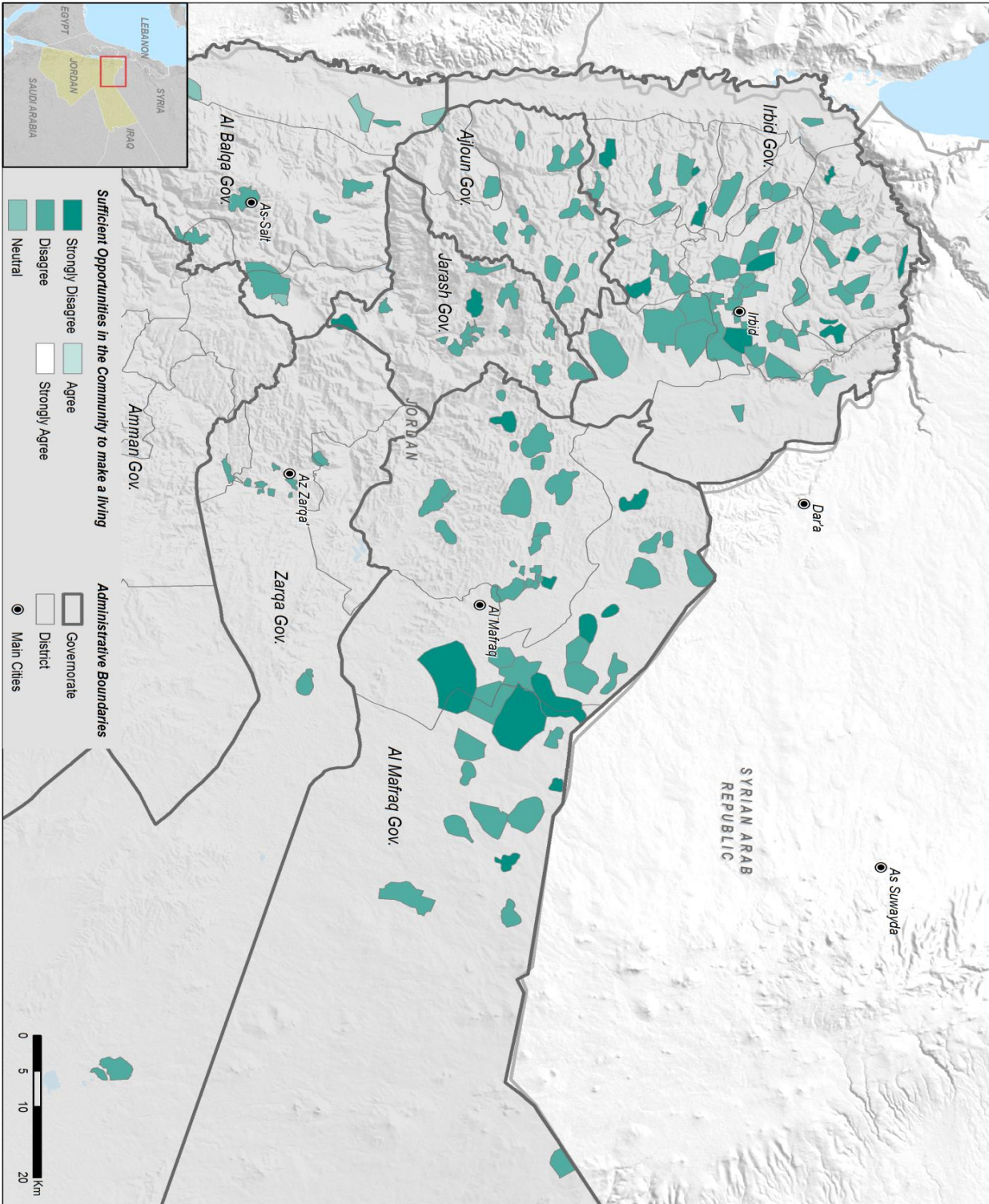




**ANNEX II: MAP OF SATISFACTION WITH EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN HOST COMMUNITIES**

British Embassy  
Amman  
**JORDAN: NORTHERN GOVERNORATES**  
Satisfaction with Employment Opportunities in Host Communities

For humanitarian relief purposes only  
Production date: 03-Jun-14



**REACH** An initiative of ACTED, IMPACT Initiatives and UNSAT

**ANNEX III: MAP OF ACCESS TO LIVELIHOODS AS A CHALLENGE TO SOCIAL COHESION**

