



INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS IN ALEPPO

RAPID PROFILES OF ALL INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS IN ALEPPO

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PREFACE

This review is the first output of the Informal Settlements* sub-component of the Syrian-German Programme for Sustainable Urban Development (UDP) in Aleppo, which is supported by GTZ, the German Agency for Technical Cooperation. GTZ has been engaged in Syria since 1994, supporting the “Rehabilitation of the Old City of Aleppo”. In 2007, on request of the Syrian Government, GTZ widened its approach to providing technical advice to the Municipality of Aleppo on formulating a City Development Strategy and dealing with informal settlements.

The scope and approach of the Informal Settlements component, together with the other two components†, was agreed and designed by a wide range of public and private sector professionals and other stakeholders in two ‘Start-up Workshops’, held in Aleppo in February and May 2008.

At these workshops it was agreed that the Informal Settlements sub-component should support the Municipality of Aleppo in developing an Informal Settlements Policy and Implementation Strategy, based on the principles of decentralisation and participation that would address the problems of existing informal settlements and minimise their growth in the future. This would be done as an integral part of the Aleppo City Development Strategy (CDS) and the Informal Settlements programme Steering Committee would operate alongside and in close collaboration with the CDS Work Groups. (Many of its members are also members of other CDS Work Groups).

It was agreed that the first activity should be the development of a better understanding of the problems, assets and potentials of informal settlements in order to support the policy formulation and strategy development processes. This activity falls into three categories:

1. an overview of all the informal settlements in the city, giving emphasis to the residents’ own perceptions of their dominant problems and principal assets, that can help in setting priorities for the implementation of policy and might form the start to an accessible city-wide database on low-income housing areas;

2. a detailed study of the informal land markets and prevailing legislation that drive the informal settlements as the only affordable solution to housing the lowest income families in the city, that can help in developing strategic approaches to minimising the growth of informal settlements in the future;
3. a pilot project (or two) to test and demonstrate approaches to engaging informal settlement households and communities in the governance and upgrading of their social, economic and environmental conditions in collaboration with government and the private sector.

This review is the product of the first of these tasks.

We have been assisted in the interview process by Abir Abdelnoor, Yaman Razzouk and Dalia Mokayed who, with Waddah Kadmawi and Mahmoud Ramadan also helped us with the analysis of the findings.

Patrick Wakely, and Razan Abdul Wahab
Aleppo Urban Development Project
January 2009

* The term ‘Informal Settlements’ as used throughout this study and by the Municipality of Aleppo embraces two Palestinian Refugee Camps – Al Neirab and Handerat. This in no way compromises the internationally agreed temporary status of the camps or the ‘right to return’ of their occupants.

† City Development Strategy (CDS) and Old City Development (OCD).

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INTRODUCTION



POPULATION

Aleppo has a population of some 2.4 million of which almost half are estimated to live in 22 informal settlements (IS) of different types and sizes*. The city grew dramatically in the 1970s and early '80s largely through migration from small towns and rural areas mostly in Eastern Syria. This has subsequently slowed down and the city's growth rate is currently estimated to be 2.9% per year with projections for a further drop to 2.6% over the coming decade†.

However, it may be assumed that the greater part of the growth through migration is amongst the lower income groups, the majority of whom populate the city's informal settlements. Thus it is likely that the informal settlements are currently growing at

* This rapid appraisal identifies 26 settlements differentiated by their geographic, historical, social, economic and physical characteristics. Closer scrutiny (a 'finer grain' of analysis) may well reveal a larger number.

† Extrapolated from the 2004 census for the Aleppo Master Plan Revision by the General Company for Engineering and Consulting (GCEC)

some 4.0% per year. That is by some 48,000 people per year or 8,000 households per year‡ - requiring some 150 new dwellings per week in informal settlements.

‡ Assumptions: 75% of population total population growth is in lower income groups. The majority of the migrants to the city are low-income and the greater part of the natural growth (births/deaths) is accounted for by the lower income groups who have lower cultural and technical recourse to birth control.

WHAT ARE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS?

The short formal answer that is given by anyone in Aleppo who is asked "what are informal settlements" is "they are illegal". 'Illegal' basically means one or several characteristics:

- the ownership of the land is in dispute and/or is not legally registered
- the settlement is in contravention of the master-plan land use zoning regulations
- planning standards§ are not met
- dwellings are constructed in contravention of building standards and regulations¶.

§ Residential densities, open space, road widths, service (health, education, amenity) provision, etc.

¶ Structural design, building height, ventilation, daylight, etc.



INFORMAL SETTLEMENT PROCESSES

There are many processes by which low income groups gain access to housing in Aleppo. However, they fall into three main categories:

1. Land grabbing or squatting on undeveloped land
2. The purchase of subdivided peri-urban (agricultural) land
3. Intensification of existing settlements by subdividing properties and adding floors.

Land grabbing or squatting was prevalent in the 1970s and '80s, though it seems to have slowed down more recently. Both public and privately owned land has been squatted, though the most obtrusive impact has been the invasion of government and municipal land destined for public use such as parks or the construction of service and amenity buildings or industrial development. This process has generally been undertaken by 'informal land agents' who subdivide the land into small plots and then sell to

prospective householders, rather than the latter squatting land themselves on an individual basis. Thus there is generally an organized pattern of streets and blocks, which makes the installation of infrastructure at a later stage much easier than in anarchically developed settlements of irregular individually developed plots.

The subdivision of low-cost unproductive or agricultural land on the urban fringes accounts for the majority of informal settlements in Aleppo. In this process landowners either subdivide their land into plots which they then sell to individual householders or, more often, sell it in its entirety or in large parcels to land developers to subdivide and retail it. Although this process continues today, it was stimulated by the pending passing Law 60 of 1979 which set out to control the subdivision of urban land. In anticipation of this law, many landowners hastily subdivided and sold their land while the going was good. The sudden glut on supply brought plot sizes and prices down making land affordable to lower income developers and householders. Subsequently the 'illegality' or 'informality' of the process has kept such development affordable and with a relatively high level of

security provided by national legislation that protects all householders from eviction or demolition without compensation or rehousing. As with the previous category, the process of land subdivision has generally ensured regular grid layouts though often with minimal road widths and virtually no public recreation spaces or sites for service facilities - schools, clinics, etc.

The densification of existing informal settlements by those unable to access new land has led to increased occupancy rates and unhealthy levels of overcrowding. It has also led to both the 'horizontal' division of already small plots in order to build another dwelling and the 'vertical' addition of third, fourth and fifth floors on buildings that were initially intended to have no more than two stories. Though in many settlements plots have been divided and upper floors have been added for family use (i.e. by married children), such subdivisions are increasingly to provide accommodation for rent or to sell in order to supplement incomes, and to satisfy housing demand. Up to 40-50% of households in some informal settlements are now rent-paying tenants.

However, the term 'informal settlement' also tends to convey overtones of pejorative social stigma, such as: 'criminality', 'social deprivation', 'unhealthy and disease ridden', 'uneducated', 'lack of civic awareness and anti-social behavior'. Whilst such attributes exist in some informal settlements (as well as some formal settlements) in Aleppo, in no way can they be attributed as inherent characteristics of all informal settlements. On the contrary, there is significant evidence of law-abiding, upwardly mobile, socially cohesive communities in many informal settlements in the city, also of well laid-out and safely constructed neighborhoods. There are, of course, others that are not.



PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The objective of the Rapid Profiles is to provide a qualitative overview of conditions, problems and opportunities in informal settlements in Aleppo.

The Profiles are targeted at decision-makers and opinion leaders who may not be familiar with the extent and range of different characteristics of informal settlements in the city. They are intended to provide a basic understanding of the diversity, problems, assets and potentials of informal settlements that will be used in the development of a municipal Policy and Implementation Strategy that will address municipal supports to the social, economic, legal and physical aspects of informal settlements, building on their strengths.

SCOPE

The Profiles do not in any way attempt to be comprehensive. They are based on observation and key-informant discussions in each informal settlement. No more than three or four hours were spent on information gathering in any settlement or part of a settlement. Some larger settlements, notably Ashrafeyeh-Sheikh Maqsood and Sheikh Seied, have very distinct communities (ethnic origin, levels of solidarity, organization, etc) or neighborhoods (age, type of layout, level of servicing, quality of construction, etc) and were treated separately.

Secondary information and data was used where it was easily accessible, for instance from the studies by the Municipality of Aleppo that have been completed in six settlements.

METHOD

'Transect walks' were done through all parts of each settlement to observe indicators such as building heights, standards of construction, condition of roads and streets, 'demeanour' of people, etc.

Discussions were held with as many different people or groups of people as possible, ensuring that women and young people were included or talked to separately.

Photographs were taken in order to record a visual impression of the physical characteristics of each IS and to illustrate particular interesting aspects and problems.



VALUE AND LIMITATIONS

The Profiles will be produced on a website (in Arabic and English) in a format that will allow them to be updated and expanded as more information and more accurate data become available. It is the start to an informal settlements database, that in time could be a significant component of the Aleppo Urban Observatory.

It must be stressed that the study was intentionally undertaken at high speed in order to enable the process of policy and strategy design to start. It does not pretend to provide sufficient accurate information on which detailed development decisions can be made. But, for the first time, it does describe the major social, economic and environmental conditions and dynamics of all the informal settlements in Aleppo, highlighting their differences and similarities. It underlines the heterogeneity of informal settlements and that, although many of them have similar problems, no single approach can address the problems or stimulate the potentials of all of them.

There is, of course, a bias to the study. It is to demonstrate that informal settlements are the solution to peoples housing and livelihoods. They are affordable and many of them are amenable. However, they do have problems many of which could be solved with minimal supportive intervention or assistance by the state.

PRODUCT

The Rapid Profiles are presented in four levels of detail:

1. Summary Table that broadly divides the settlements into three categories of population and building density: high, medium and low. Broadly the high density settlements are the inner city areas to the south and south-east of the Old City plus Sheikh Maqsour, a large, basically two-story settlement of small plots to the north of the city, and Al Neirab Palestinian refugee camp in the south-east. The low density areas tend to be the expanding semi-rural villages on the fringes of the city.

The table indicates the status of land title and those settlements that have above average social, economic and environmental assets and/or potentials and those in which social indicators, access to infrastructure and services and environmental conditions are below average and present

significant problems. (The blank squares on the matrix indicate that conditions are neither very good nor very bad).

2. Profile Summaries that give a 'quick glance' one-paragraph summary of the main characteristics -good, bad and potential- of each informal settlement.
3. Informal Settlement Profiles that give a two-page illustrated briefing on each settlement under the headings of: History; Society, Economy; Infrastructure, Services, and Environment. A common format and account has been maintained as far as possible in order to help make comparisons.
4. Guide Notes used as a checklist for discussions and observation in each settlement.

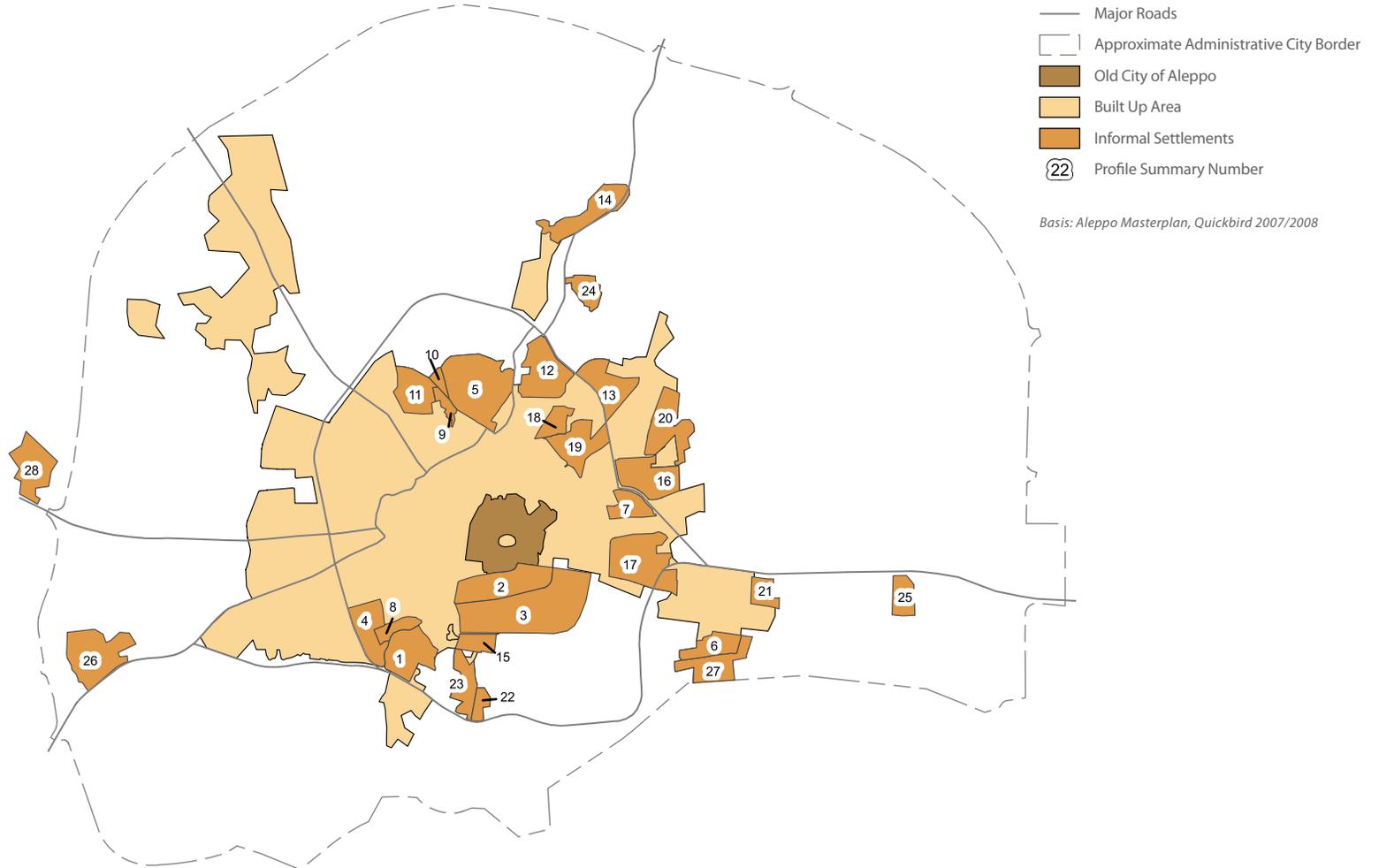
These different 'levels' are presented together here, but in reality each will be used by a different stakeholder group, depending upon its level of interest and engagement in the policy and strategy development process.

ALEPPO INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS RAPID PROFILE SUMMARIES

MAP LEGEND

1. TAL AL ZARAZEIR
2. AL AHIAA AL JANOUBEYEH
3. AL AHIAA AL JANOUBEYEH (EXTENSION)
4. ANSARI GHARBI
5. SHEIKH MAQSUD
6. AL NEIRAB CAMP
7. AL MAASARANYEH
8. ANSARI VILLAGE
9. ASHRAFEYEH 1
10. ASHRAFEYEH 2
11. ASHRAFEYEH BENI-ZEID
12. EIN AL TAL
13. HAIDAREYEH
14. HANDERAT (CAMP)
15. HARET AL SHAHHADIN
16. JABAL BADRO
17. KARM AL JAZMATI
18. SHEIKH FARES
19. SHEIKH KHODR
20. SHEIKH NAJJAR
21. AL MALKEYEH
22. SHEIKH SEIED EAST
23. SHEIKH SEIED WEST
24. AWEJA
25. DWERENEH
26. KHAN AL-ASSAL
27. AL NEIRAB VILLAGE
28. KAFAR DAEL

ALEPPO INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS MAP





DENSITY

- High: high-rise buildings + very densely populated low-rise
- Medium: 2-3 storey buildings on 75-150m² plots (mostly inner city)
- Low: 1-2 storey and large plots (mostly new settlements on the peri-urban fringe)

ASSETS & POTENTIALS SOCIAL

- Clear leadership: traditional governance structures; good communication between different social sub-groups (different streets/alleys)
- Community cohesion: sense of community solidarity; willing to work together; have done collective activities (e.g. street paving, laying sewers)
- Women active: communicate socially; have savings groups; employed or have earnings from home-based piecework

ECONOMIC

- Employment: majority of men (and/or women) are employed; good public transport; no apparent abject poverty
- Local enterprise: workshops in or close to the neighbourhood;
- Home ownership: majority own their dwellings; few rent-paying tenants

ENVIRONMENT

- Good planning: adequate street layout; relatively easy access; (potential) recreation space; no serious traffic problems
- Good building: good (safe) standard of construction;
- Open space: land potentially available for public open space (children's play); land potentially available for rehousing families in the same area

LAND

- Private purchased: by developer or individual households
- Public squatted: purchased from squatter-developer
- Private squatted: purchased from squatter-developer

PROBLEMS & CONSTRAINTS SOCIAL

- Community conflict: ethnic-based violence; non-cooperation between different social groups
- Insecurity: more than average incidence of robbery; women cannot move about safely
- Poverty: obvious abject poverty; many men unemployed and/or inability to work
- Disability: high incidence of physically and mentally handicapped; extensive intermarriage



SERVICES

- Infrastructure: seriously deficient water supply, sewerage, electricity, solid waste disposal
- Education: serious difficulty of access to schools (particularly for girls); reported low quality of teaching
- Health: serious difficulty of access to clinics; reported low quality of service

ENVIRONMENT

- Planning: total lack of access to for emergency (fire) vehicles (not just inconvenience); soil conditions so bad that affordable housing cannot be safely built
- Building: majority of structures that are physically unsafe; current and likely rate of construction of additional floors will lead to unsafe structures
- Pollution: dangerously high levels of environmental pollution



TAL AL ZARAZEIR

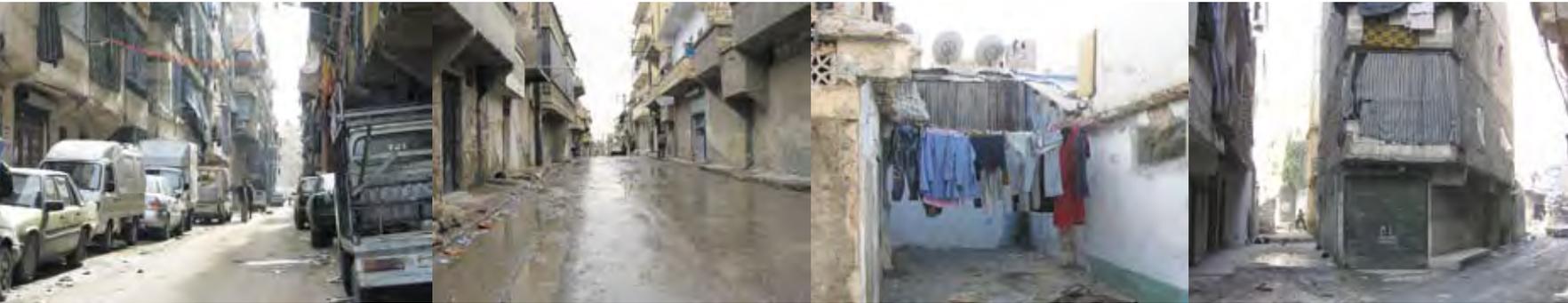
Located in the southwest of Aleppo, the residents of Tal al Zarazeir live in very poor conditions. The area is dominated by high rise blocks of flats built illegally by developers or incrementally by individuals adding floors. The ground is not stable (much of it on reclaimed marshland) and foundations are weak and buildings are in danger of collapse. The quality of the plot subdivisions is very poor and streets are narrow. Local educational and health services are bad and the area lacks recreation facilities. Children play in streets where there are sewage leaks and piles of solid waste. Unemployment is high and residents have very low income levels. The area is socially disparate, drug dealing is common and there is conflict between different groups and gangs. Self-help activities are on a small scale.

ALAHIAAL-JANOUBIYEH (SOUTH ZONE)

Located to the south of the old city and next to Southern Area, the settlement has a prime central location. The area is a mix of traditional dwellings, high-rise blocks of flats, ancient monuments and open spaces. The population density is very high and this puts a strain on the inadequate sewerage system and on the local schools. The accumulation of solid waste is a potential health hazard. The sub-division is chaotic, with narrow streets that are poorly paved and badly lit at night. Unemployment is high and those who work are on very low incomes. Although most residents know each other and there are strong social ties, the area is made up of diverse groups and there is some conflict between them. Self-help activities to improve the settlement are limited in scale and most people look to the municipality for environmental improvements.

ALAHIAAL-JANOUBIYEH EXPANSION

Built outside the old city, extending the Southern Zone, this is an overcrowded settlement with most residents living in high rise blocks of flats. The southern most part of the settlement is poorly subdivided and access along narrow alleyways is a problem. Sewerage, electricity, school and health services are all inadequate; roads and alleyways have poor quality paving and there are no open spaces for recreational use. Residents are of diverse ethnic and geographical origin and there is considerable conflict with the settlement and some crime. Good relations and self-help activities occur within small coherent social groups. Unemployment is a problem though the area has many workshops and a vibrant food retail sector.



ANSARI GHARBI

Ansari Gharbi is a socially fragmented community that has grown to house a wide array of social groups, sometimes resulting in conflict. Part of it has been planned and legally developed, while the remainder has developed informally. Most people own flats built and sold by developers and the area resembles a fully planned neighbourhood that has attracted some high-income residents. However, there are also very poor groups. Safety is a problem due to criminal activities and ethnic-based street gang conflicts. Unemployment does not seem to be a major problem. There are employment opportunities in the many workshops in Ansari Gharbi and in the neighbouring areas. School and health services are inadequate and other community facilities present problems. There is no coherent sense of community or local leadership.

SHEIKH MAQSOU D

Western Sheikh Maqsoud is a cohesive community, with residents sharing the same ethnic origins. Community activities are informally organised and have focused on street cleaning and the extension of water and sewerage networks. The area is generally safe and criminality is low. Income levels are low and most men only have part-time jobs. Unemployment is also a problem. The area was originally informally subdivided by squatters. Most people live in two-storey houses and the limited availability of empty plots favours vertical expansion. Water and sewerage provision is substandard and there is a lack of recreation space. Housing standards are poor, roads are narrow, badly lit and in a bad state, and education and health services are inadequate.

AL NEIRAB CAMP

Located close to Aleppo airport to the southeast of the city, Al Neirab camp, originally a second world war Allied army barracks, was ceded to UNWRA in 1948 for the temporary accommodation of refugees from northern Palestine. In the subsequent 60 years the original accommodation in a series of barrack blocks in which each family had a single 12m² room with access to shared sanitary facilities, has been extended by the occupants through the appropriation of the land between the blocks. Thus the camp, which is jointly administered by UNWRA and GAPAR, is a dense settlement of badly constructed single and two storey dwellings accessed through narrow, winding alleys with virtually no open recreation space. The tight knit refugee community has high levels of poverty and unemployment but it is well serviced by UNWRA. It is necessary to 'decant' families from the camp in order to reduce the overcrowding and allow space for public facilities, a process that has been started through voluntary relocation to Handarat Camp.



AL MAASRANEYEH

The settlement originated on agricultural land close to the centre of Aleppo and is the access point for Al Bab. It is a linear settlement that stretches along the sides of the airport road. Most of the houses are self-built low-rise dwellings and not in good condition. However, the subdivision is well planned and laid out and the roads are wide. There is no empty land left for further development and no open spaces. Traffic is a major problem with lorries posing a threat to pedestrians and polluting the air. The roads are in a bad state and are inadequately lit. The local school offers a poor quality service and there is no health clinic in the area. Residents share similar geographic and ethnic origins though there is some conflict between them. Some self-help activities are organised informally to improve the environment but there is no coordinated action throughout the settlement. There are few job opportunities in the settlement.

ANSARI VILLAGE

Ansari Village is part of the bigger settlement of Ansari but still retains some of its original village character with some narrow alleyways and a high percentage of original village residents. The area now has a diverse population leading to occasional conflict but still retains some community cohesion and solidarity, especially within kinship and ethnic groups. Although there are no formal community organisations, self-help activities are planned informally. The settlement is well provided by schools and basic infrastructure and health services are adequate. Employment is mainly local and informal. The area lacks open space for recreational use and the original narrow alleyways of the village make access to some dwellings difficult and unsafe.

ASHRAFEYEH 1

Located in the north-east of Asrafeyeh, this area has been assigned for demolition to make way for the construction of 'Youth Housing' apartments and the residents have been served with eviction notices by the Ministry of Housing. Residents have been told that they will be re-housed in phases in government-built flats at unspecified locations over the next five years. Although residents have low income levels and employment among men is mainly part time, housing standards are good. Many dwellings have been extended and there is a high percentage of tenants in the area. Community cohesion is strong, with most residents sharing the same geographical origins and ethnicity. Informal self-help activities have improved living conditions but the quality of roads, pavements, water and sewerage, schools and health services remains problematic. Residents have stopped investing in their homes and neighbourhoods since they were issued with eviction orders.



ASHRAFEYEH 2

This part of Ashrafeyeh is located between the officially recognised settlement of Ashrafeyeh and Sheik Maqsoud. Unsubstantiated rumour has it that its residents are to be evicted by the Ministry of Housing to make way for a 'Youth Housing' project as in Ashrafeyeh 1. This is highly demoralising and is undermining an otherwise strong and stable community. Most residents share the same geographical and ethnic origins. Men provide formal and informal leadership and self-help activities include street cleaning and paving. Health and educational facilities are inadequate and distant from the settlement. Roads are poorly lit and poorly paved, though they are wide and well laid out. Most people live in single or two-storey houses, many of which have been extended to obtain extra income from tenants. Many people are unemployed or can only find part-time or seasonal work. The illiteracy rate is high among both men and women.

ASHRAFEYEH - BANI ZEID

The Bani Zeid area of Ashrafeyeh is a stable and safe community that is highly organised and well managed by a traditional leadership and governance structure. It is well located close to industrial employment with good transport links to the centre of the city. The majority of men are in full-time employment. Households own their dwellings, many of which are officially recognised (licensed). Houses are generally well built single or two storey structures with all services. The area is well planned with wide streets that are well maintained. However, there is no public open or recreation space, which is of particular importance to women and young children. The lack of adequate and accessible schools and clinics are deemed major problems by the community.

EIN EL TAL

Ein Al-Tal is a poor settlement in a largely industrial area. Residents have varied geographical and ethnic origins that has led to a lack of social cohesion and community solidarity, with some conflict between different groups. Although most people know each other, few have the time or money to engage in self-help activities. The area lacks a clinic, good schools and open spaces for recreational use. Streets are poorly paved and dirty. Most residents work in nearby factories and local furniture workshops. These provide poorly paid work but also lead to high levels of air pollution. The settlement has an irregular layout and streets in the north of the area are especially narrow and poorly planned.

HDAIDAREYEH

Haidareyeh is a stable low-income community of widely mixed geographic and cultural origin that has developed through the purchase of land half from its original owners and half from informal agents who illegally subdivided government land. There is a strong sense of community solidarity and a tradition of local self-help in actions such as the provision of a waterborne sewerage system (that seriously needs upgrading), the paving of roads and petitioning government. The settlement is predominantly well built two storey houses. It has some narrow streets and the road surfaces are in a bad condition but they are not dangerous. It has two primary schools that provide a good standard of teaching, though one is overcrowded and in temporary buildings. The residents give high priority to the need for a local clinic.



HANDARAT (CAMP)

Handarat is composed for an informal settlement occupied by Syrians and a Palestinian refugee camp. This profile concentrates the latter, which, though being administered by UNRWA, has been classified by the municipality as an informal settlement. The camp is well serviced with good quality schools and a clinic. Most infrastructure is in place and a sewerage system is being installed, after which the roads will be resurfaced. The camp has many voluntary committees and organisations that attest to the unity and aspirations of residents and also to the work of UNWRA and GAPAR. Men, women, older people, young people and children are actively engaged in community affairs. Most people work outside the camp as skilled and unskilled workers. Income levels are low but housing standards and service levels in the camp are good.

HARET EL SHAHHADIN

The settlement has grown slowly and in a disorganised fashion on largely agricultural land. Residents are from diverse backgrounds but they know each other and there is a good sense of community. Income levels vary from the well off to the very poor. In general housing conditions are not good with weak foundations being a threat to the stability of some buildings. Unemployment and part-time employment is prevalent among men, and many women in the community work. Most leave the settlement to find employment. Service standards are low, with no local health facilities, a poor quality primary school and no recreational facilities. The sewerage system was installed by residents and floods when it rains, causing the spread of waterborne disease. There are empty plots of relatively cheap land that could be developed to improve the area.

JABAL BADRO

Located in the northeast of the city, Jabal Badro is a settlement that is still growing. It is located near an industrial area and many men in the settlement work in local factories and workshops. Few women work as the community is very conservative and they are not active in community affairs. Any self-help activities are arranged informally by men. Residents have installed their sewerage system and clean their streets. However, the sewerage system is of poor quality, roads are in a state of disrepair and the water and public lighting networks are incomplete. There is no local clinic and schools are overcrowded. The area is also polluted by nearby factories and solid waste and the roads are made unsafe by heavy lorry traffic. Most residents are owner-occupiers of two-storey houses and live on very low incomes. Though most people are from diverse backgrounds and there is some conflict between them, overall there is a sense of community and solidarity.

KARM AL JAZMATI

Located to the east of the city centre, most residents of the area live on very low incomes and work as unskilled labourers. Unemployment is high and very few women work as this is a somewhat conservative community. Most households, who are of mixed geographical and ethnic origins, are owner occupiers of one or two story houses. Kinship groups live in semi-closed communities and streets with occasional conflict between them that sometimes makes the area unsafe. Self-help activities are on a small scale and there is no leadership that could unite the settlement as a whole. There is some large-scale public sector development in the area, for example, military housing projects and a new school is planned. The area needs a clinic and the roads are in a bad state of repair. Heavy traffic puts pedestrians at risk.



SHEIKH FARES

Sheikh Fares is a vibrant, cohesive economically active community almost entirely engaged in the manufacture, wholesale and retailing of shoes that are produced as a semi-craft local industry. Poverty is not a major problem, though the community is not wealthy. The neighbourhood is almost entirely comprised of single and two storey, well constructed buildings in owner occupation. The settlement is built on a hill and many of its streets, some of which are relatively have steep gradients. It has adequate infrastructure in reasonable condition. However, access to schools and the nearest clinic in Huluk is difficult and the quality of service is not considered to be good.

SHEIKH KHODER

Sheik Khoder has a central location and is a cohesive and safe community whose residents are relatively well off and who mostly own their own homes. Although residents have varied geographical and ethnic origins, strong community leaders and organisations unite them and they actively work to improve the neighbourhood. Employment is mainly in nearby factories, workshops and houses but proximity to good schools and health clinics is poor. People complain about the level of pollution. Many streets are poorly paved and the sewerage network is inadequate. Most of Sheik Khoder is well planned, though there is a poorer area that was developed by squatters on Awqaf land that has not been developed on a grid and has narrow alleys and small plot sizes.

SHEIKH NAJJAR

Sheikh Najjar is a mixed residential and industrial area. Thus there are job opportunities within the area and its surroundings, but also heavy traffic and air pollution. There are also many small informal workshops and most men and women work. Despite this, around half of the residents are very poor. The area is not well planned and access is often a problem. Many buildings have more than two floors and although the sub-soil is stable, construction standards are not good. Education facilities are poor quality and difficult to access and there are no recreation facilities. The sewerage system and roads are in a state of disrepair and solid waste collection and street lighting are inadequate. Despite being from diverse backgrounds, social relations are harmonious and groups of residents are well organised and work together to improve their environment through self-help.



AL MAKEYEH

Al Malkeyeh is a poor settlement in the east of Aleppo, surrounded by the major industrial area of Jebreen. Jebreen provides some job opportunities, especially for local women, but education and skill levels among men are low, rendering them unemployable in formal industrial jobs. Although the residents have diverse geographical and ethnic origins, there is a high level of social solidarity and community spirit. Strong community relations and a functioning neighbourhood committee have brought about street cleaning and the installation of a partial water supply network. The principal problems include the bad state of the roads, poor quality local schooling and the absence of any health or recreational facilities.

SHEIKH SEIED WEST

Sheikh Seied is divided into two main areas. This profile concerns the area settled in the 1960s and that has strong social unity, with residents sharing the same geographical and ethnic origins. Local leaders organise self-help activities and social ties between neighbours and kin are strong. However, there is much hostility toward the other part of Sheikh Seied and fights between their rival gangs. The area suffers from high levels of industrial pollution, poor health and educational services and lacks open spaces for recreational use. Unemployment is very high and many people lost their agricultural livelihoods when the government expropriated their land. The main street is wide and well paved, but most secondary roads are narrow and winding. Plot sizes are large and most houses are low rise. The area is fully developed and no new residents are settling in this part of Sheikh Seied.

SHEIKH SEIED EAST

The eastern part of Sheikh Seied is populated by a disparate group of families, some with ethnic ties, largely from the southern provinces. It is a relatively violent community with a high level of poverty, unemployment and sporadic criminal incidents. The area is predominantly owner occupied (few tenants) with a relatively well planned layout, though there are parts with narrow streets. The most significant infrastructure and environmental problem is the sewerage system, laid by self-help, that does not reach all dwellings, is badly installed and in a very poor state of repair - a significant health hazard. However, there has been a reasonable level of communal activity, including the construction of a mosque, and an awareness of the need for improvements in the neighbourhood and an apparent willingness to participate in it.



AL AWEJA

Al Aweja is a settlement to the north of Aleppo in two areas: an old village with a traditional layout and good quality houses, and an area that is still developing where squatters have subdivided the land and sold plots to people who have hastily built their own houses. Some plot sizes are very large, most houses are single or two-story dwellings and there are no tenants. Most residents live on very low incomes and belong to two main tribal groups that are frequently in conflict with each other. Although there are some community leaders, there is no community organisation to unite residents or organise self-help activities. Employment opportunities are in local factories and workshops and as garbage pickers. Youth unemployment is high. There is no clinic or secondary school in the area. The sewerage, water and domestic electricity systems are inadequate and secondary roads are in a bad state. The area is also polluted by local factory emissions and by a garbage dump in the settlement.

DWERENEH

Dwereneh is an old agricultural settlement, populated by a single ethnic group and has a strong tribal structure. Although residents have strong social ties, self-help activities are rare and tribal and religious committees and leaders manage the village. Although sheep rearing remains an important activity for both men and women, most people also work in surrounding factories. These offer only low-paid employment as educational levels in the village are very low. Most residents of Dwereneh are poor. Streets have an irregular layout, are narrow and most are un-surfaced. The sewerage system is inadequate, as are health care services. Housing standards are low. The factories also create high levels of air pollution.

KHAN AL ASSAL

Located about 10km to the west of Aleppo city, Khan Al Assal has recently been incorporated within the city boundaries and classified as an informal settlement. In addition to original villagers, the settlement houses squatters who have self-built their houses and the exclusive weekend villas of wealthy families from Aleppo. Most residents have medium levels of income and work outside of the settlement, though some work in local workshops and some in agriculture; the area is known for its honey and melons. Many people are unemployed or can only find seasonal or part-time work. Residents are united and well organised, with a neighbourhood committee and leadership provided by the local Mukhtar. The area's infrastructure is now being upgraded with new water and sewerage systems being installed. Roads will also be upgraded. However, the settlement has no health facilities or secondary school. There are still plots of undeveloped land and prices have been rising as the area becomes more developed. Construction standards are good and the environment is clean.

AL NAIRAB VILLAGE

Al Nairab Village has a diverse population but there is little conflict between its residents. People are well organised and have improved the area through self-help activities, including establishing a kindergarten. They campaign for better government services, including a cultural centre but the area also needs recreational facilities, an improved health clinic, more school places, better road surfaces, cleaner air and an improved sewerage network. Residents have relatively good standards of living yet employment opportunities tend to be part-time or seasonal. The area is known for the high quality of its agricultural produce and there are also local workshops in the neighbourhood, but most residents have to travel out of the settlement to find employment. The settlement has an irregular layout but construction standards are good.



KAFAR DA'EL

Kafar Dael covers an area of 280 hectares on the north-east fringes of the city that have been included within the 2008 master plan for Aleppo. Its origins are an old village and many residents still work in agriculture. There are many workshops in the area and some nearby industry, but youth unemployment is high. The area is conservative and women play a very limited role in public life. Men provide informal leadership and many aspects of the area have been improved thorough self-help activities. Such activities are waning as the municipality of Aleppo becomes more involved. The area still lacks proper paving, recreational facilities, a secondary school and quality health care. The settlement contains empty plots and is becoming increasingly attractive to outsiders and to developers. A part of it retains its original village character while another part has been illegally subdivided with a more regular layout.

ALEPPO INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS DETAILED PROFILES



HIGH DENSITY SETTLEMENTS

TAL AL ZARAZEIR

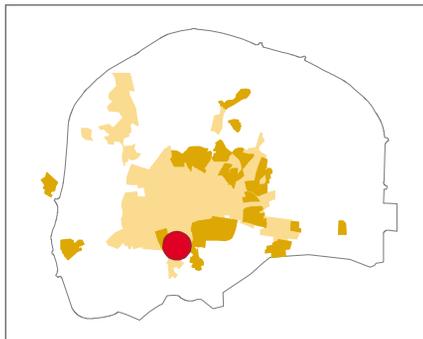
AL AHIAA AL-JANOUBEYEH

AL AHIAA AL-JANOUBEYEH EXPANSION

ANSARI GHARBI

SHEIKH MAQSUD

AL NAIRAB CAMP



First settled: 1970
Population: 39,000

SUMMARY

Located in the southwest of Aleppo, the residents of Tal aAl Zrazzeir live in very poor conditions. The area is dominated by high rise blocks of flats buildt illegally by developers or incrementally by individuals adding floors. The ground is not stable (much of it on reclaimed marsh land) and foundations are weak and buildings are in danger of collapse. The quality of the plot subdivisions is very poor and streets are narrow. Local educational and health services are bad and the area lacks recreational facilities. Children play in streets where there are sewage leaks and piles of solid waste. Unemployment is high and residents have very low income levels. The area is socially disparate, drug dealing is common and there is conflict between different groups and gangs. Self-help activities are on a small scale.

HISTORY

Originally this area was privately owned agricultural land where olive and pistachio trees were grown. Around half of the land area was subsequently expropriated by the government, with Awqaf also owning some land and private sector businesses owning the area in the eastern part of the neighbourhood. The area has long been used as a solid waste dump for Aleppo and also contained a repair yard for buses. The settlement began to develop when much of the area was squatted by developers who built high-rise blocks of flats which they and sold these on to very poor people. In the southern part of the settlement, individuals bought plots of land and built their own houses (often on foundations of loosely compacted garbage) that in some places reach 20m in depth). The area is very poorly subdivided with narrow streets, especially in the south of the settlement furthest from the city centre.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: residents have varied geographical origins (many from the north and northwest) and ethnic backgrounds (Arabs, Kurds and other tribes). There is a lack of social cohesion in the settlement and little sense of community. Conflicts between different groups are common.

Class and income: residents are all poor and some are very poor and depend on handouts and charities to survive. There are some influential groups but influence reflects social or tribal identity rather than income level.

Safety and crime: particularly the southern part of Tal al Zarazeir suffers from gang and drug related violence and conflict between different social groups, though only on a very limited scale. There are also a low degree of smuggling, robberies and alcohol-related problems. Crime is limited to some areas of the settlement and on the whole it is a reasonably safe place for ordinary people. Women feel \that they can move around freely.



Community organisation: there are no formal or informal community organisations or leaders. Any collective activities to improve the neighbourhood operate at the level of the street or alley, where some neighbours have organised street cleaning, (clearing away mud after heavy rain) and even street paving. There is an understanding of 'self-help' as the people feel that the municipality will never do anything for them. The Mukhtar is not well known.

Women's engagement: women have no specific organisations but meet informally as neighbours, friends and kin. Women's savings organisations operate on a very small scale and contribute little to household income levels. Around 50% of women are in some form of paid work, mostly in factories, sewing workshops, in the public sector or in domestic service.

Dominant social problems: high rates of school drop-outs, physical and mental disability, illiteracy and child labour are prominent problems. Residents also lack civic awareness, tolerating the poor environmental conditions and the build up of solid waste in the streets.

Principal social assets: the limited strong social ties within groups of people, especially long-term residents, are an asset.

ECONOMY

Employment: over 50% of men are unemployed, with the remainder, at best, only able to find part-time employment. Most of those who do have jobs work outside of the settlement. Occupations include construction labour, public sector employees and factory workers.

Industry and commerce: there are many ground floor sewing workshops in the area, many of which are run by people who live outside Tal al Zarzeir.

Household assets: around 50% of residents live in apartments that they have bought, the remainder are tenants. A 60m² flat in a five or six storey building costs c.SP500,000. Land, when it is available costs between SP5,000 and SP10,000 per m². A 20m² room costs c.SP10,000 to build. Many people in houses have constructed additional stories to their homes at a cost of c.SP250,000. Informal loans are the only sources of housing finance available.

Property: the property market is largely stagnant, though there is some flats are being bought and sold in the area closest to the city centre. Currently construction activity is confined to houses along the narrowest streets and alleyways.

Dominant economic problems: child labour and low salary wage levels, the high rate of employment and prevalence of poverty are the main problems.

Principal economic assets: the potential for new job opportunities in the area and the willingness of residents to work are perceived as economic assets.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: all buildings have metered municipal water connections.

Sewerage: the original sewerage system was laid by the municipality but has since been repaired and extended by residents. It does not meet the settlement's needs. There are no storm water drains and during the rains the sewers flood overflow.

Electricity: although each house has an official metered connection, illegal connections to the network are common.

Access: streets are narrow and poorly paved or un-surfaced. They become very muddy and flooded when it rains.

Street lighting: street lighting is inadequate.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the main perceived problems are the absence of pavements, the poor condition of roads & the inadequate sewerage system that floods; also the lack of solid waste disposal service, all of which are causes of disease, particularly among children.

SERVICES

Schools: there is a primary school that is close by but difficult to access. The school is overcrowded and the service education that it offers is of very poor quality.

Clinics: there is no clinic in the area and residents have to travel to the neighbouring area of Al Sekari where the service on offer is considered to be substandard.

Open space: there are some open spaces in the area but they are used for solid waste collection dumping, storage and as lorry parks. The undeveloped land is partly owned by the government and partly by a single family.

Dominant service problems: the poor quality of educational and health services and the absence of a playground (that would keep children off the dirty streets), a bakery and a centre for the disabled are perceived as the main problems.

ENVIRONMENT

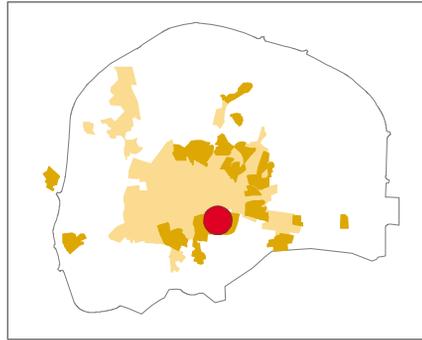
Streets: the narrow alleyways are perceived to be dangerous and where crime is most likely to happen. Traffic speeds in the wider streets can be high. There is no parking problem in the area.

Buildings: plots are c.120m² in size and there are usually two flats on each floor of the blocks. About 60% of properties have five or more stories, 20% have three or four and 20% are single or two storied. The sub-soil is not stable and construction standards are generally of very low quality, especially in the south of the area where the land is sloping and/or reclaimed.

Environment: pollution in the area is caused by sewage leaks. The area is nearly fully developed though there are a few publicly and privately owned empty plots that could be used for recreation or to site public facilities.

Dominant environmental problems: weak foundations and buildings in danger of collapse are the main problems.

Principal environmental assets: the proximity of the settlement to the city centre, markets and industrial areas is the main asset.



First settled: current settlement dates from 1950s
Population: 70,000

SUMMARY

Located to the south of the old city and next to Southern Area 1, the settlement has a prime central location. The area is a mix of traditional dwellings, high-rise blocks of flats, ancient monuments and open spaces. The population density is very high and this puts a strain on the inadequate sewerage system and on the local schools. The accumulation of solid waste is a potential health hazard. The sub-division is chaotic, with narrow streets that are poorly paved and badly lit at night. Unemployment is high and those who work are on very low incomes. Although most residents know each other and there are strong social ties, the area is made up of diverse groups and there is some conflict between them. Self-help activities to improve the settlement are limited in scale and most people look to the municipality for environmental improvements.

HISTORY

The origins of this settlement are ancient however though most of the traditional dwellings on the site were replaced in the 1950s. Originally an agricultural area, largely owned by one family, parts were expropriated by the government for service provision, and Awqaf also has some land in the area. In the northern part of the settlement there are caves that were once lived in by the Aleppin. There is also the ancient 11th century mosque of Al Fardous in the area and two cemeteries. Most of the area land was sold by its original owners to informal developers who built high-rise blocks of flats for resale. Although there remain some traditional houses, high-rise blocks predominate. The subdivision follows the traditional pattern of the old city with narrow streets (6m) and high buildings. Some streets are wider but there are also some very narrow alleyways.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: the residents are from diverse origins, including the south, the old city and some that have settled here after being evicted from other areas. Most people have lived here for a very long time and know each other, yet there are also some conflicts between the different groups.

Class and income: most residents have low or middle income levels and the area in general appears poor, dirty and overcrowded. There are some influential groups by virtue of their higher income level or religious role within the community.

Safety and crime: the area is generally safe and crime free. Women can move about freely.

Community organisation: although there are no community organisations in the area, some self-help activities are organised informally such as cleaning or paving individual streets. There are no community leaders (the Mukhtar is not



ECONOMY

well known though the Imam is active) and most residents regard the poor state of the area as to be the responsibility of the municipality. Self-help activities to improve the local environment are not common.

Women's engagement: women do not have any formal organisations and their savings activities are very limited in scale. Around 20% of women work, for example as teachers and public sector employees. Some work at home as hairdressers or doing piece work.

Dominant social problems: illiteracy, low levels of civic awareness and the large size of families (often many women have 12 children or more) are perceived as the main problems.

Principal social assets: strong social relationships and solidarity are the main assets, plus the religious significance of the area.

Employment: this is a traditional area in which the number of working women is low. Among men, c.30% are in permanent full-time employment, c.20% have part-time work and c.50% are unemployed. Many men work as lorry and taxi drivers. Around half of the working population is employed within the settlement while the remainder travel to other areas such as Salheen.

Industry and commerce: there are some ground-floor workshops (for example shoemaking and bread baking) in the area, though the inner part of the settlement is entirely residential. Some people work in the recycling industry that has a base in the area.

Household assets: only about 10% of residents are tenants, though others rent shops and workshops. A traditional 200m² house costs c.SP7 million. A 70m² flat costs SP1.5 million in a high-rise block. To develop a block of flats on a 200m² area plot

with legal permits costs SP15 million. Few buildings have added floors second stories as most were built as high-rise blocks, however, there are also some courtyard houses, caves, open space and monuments in this mixed area. Some buildings are fully legalised whereas others have been served with eviction notices. There are few sources of finance available; women save on a very small scale, including through a women teachers' association.

Property: the property market is largely stagnant, though property prices show a slight increase. No plots have been developed recently with any construction work confined to the narrow side streets. Some traditional houses could be raised demolished and high-rise blocks erected in their place. There are some empty plots; these are owned by Awqaf or private families.

Dominant economic problems: child labour, poverty, overcrowding and unemployment are the main problems.

Principal economic assets: proximity to the city centre and access to some services are the main economic assets.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: each house has a metered municipal connection.

Sewerage: the sewerage system was installed by the municipality but has been extended by the community. Much of it has narrow diameter pipes and in are inadequate for the high population density of the settlement.

Electricity: each house has an official metered connection.

Access: the street layout is confusing and badly numbered; streets lack pavements and the surfaces of narrow alleys and main streets are all in a poor state.

Street lighting: this is only adequate in some streets; repairs are needed.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the absence of pavements, the poor state of roads and the build up of solid waste are the main problems.

SERVICES

Schools: there is a primary school in the area and a secondary school is also close by. Schools are easily and safely accessed but the quality of the education provided is poor.

Clinics: there is health clinic in the area that offers a good quality service, especially for children.

Open space: there are open spaces in the area, for example land surrounding the Al Fardous mosque owned by Awqaf and the antiquities department. Land near the caves is also open but cannot be built on. There are other open spaces whose ownership is unclear. There are plans to establish a large 17 hectare park to the north of the settlement.

Dominant service problems: the lack of social services, such as a centre for the disabled, is are seen as the main problem.

ENVIRONMENT

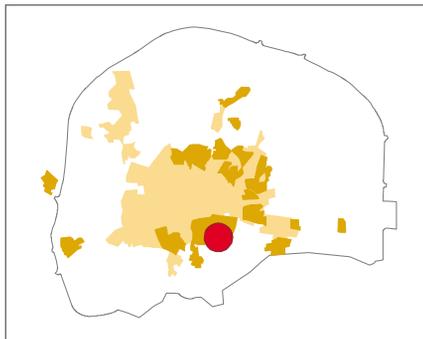
Streets: the narrowest streets are inaccessible to emergency service vehicles. There are congestion and parking problems in most roads.

Buildings: plot sizes vary depending on the type of building. Over 50% of buildings have five or six stories, 20% have one or two and 30% have three or four stories. In the south the sub-soil is strong and construction standards are good. To the north, especially in the area of the caves, the sub-soil is weak and some buildings have subsided or collapsed. Residents have been evicted from the most precarious buildings.

Environment: pollution is predominantly due to the build up of solid waste. Some open spaces could potentially be used to site additional public facilities.

Dominant environmental problems: the quality of solid waste on the streets, the dangerous state of some buildings and the narrow width of streets are perceived as the main problems.

Principal environmental assets: the proximity of the area to the city centre and its markets, plus the prospect of a new park are considered the main assets.



First settled: 1965-1970
Population: 80,000

SUMMARY

Built outside the old city, extending the southern area Zone of Aleppo, this is an overcrowded settlement with most residents living in high rise blocks of flats. The southern most part of the settlement is poorly subdivided and access along narrow alleyways is a problem. Sewerage, electricity, school and health services are all inadequate; roads and alleyways have poor quality paving and there are no open spaces for recreational use. Residents are of diverse ethnic and geographical origin and there is considerable conflict within the settlement and some crime. Good relations and self-help activities occur within small coherent social groups. Unemployment is a problem though the area has many workshops and a vibrant food retail sector.

HISTORY

Close to the city centre and outside of the city walls in to the south, this settlement is an expansion of the original Southern Area 1 Zone. The land was mostly owned by one family and used for growing pistachios, olives and other crops, but as the city expanded the land was sold to developers, some was expropriated by the government for service provision and some is owned by Awqaf. The developers built five to six storey apartment blocks with the area closest to the city centre being better planned, while in the south the streets are very narrow. Some houses remain but most have been replaced by the buildings are high rise blocks. and street widths are 4-6m.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: residents were originally villagers from southern, eastern and western Syria, as well as people from Aleppo who moved out of the old city or who were evicted from other settlements. As a result, the settlement is not one coherent community but a varied mix of groups, often in conflict with each other.

Class and income: residents are from poor and middle-income groups, with most being on low incomes. Living conditions are poor and there is overcrowding in the apartment blocks and narrow streets. Those with the most power and influence in the community come from specific ethnic or tribal groups.

Safety and crime: although not acute, there is some criminal activity (smuggling and robberies), with gang and drug-related crime in some areas. Women can move about freely, but the area is very conservative. The police have recently acted in the area to reduce conflict in the community.



ECONOMY

Community organisation: there are no community organisations or leaders. The local Mukhtar is not well known and there is no local Imam. Some self-help activities take place, for example, street cleaning, sewerage maintenance or paving, but these tend to be organised among small groups of neighbours.

Women's engagement: there are no formal organisations for women & any saving groups are very small scale, with women receiving their income from work or male family members. Only c.5% of women work, some in the public sector & in seasonal agriculture, but mostly in hairdressing, food preparation, etc.

Dominant social problems: the high incidence of illiteracy, high rate of disability and low levels of civic awareness are perceived to be the main social problems.

Principal social assets: strong ties within some social groups are an asset, for example among long-term residents and young men.

Employment: among men, c.30% of men are in permanent employment, some are in part-time employment jobs and around 50% are unemployed. Both men and women do seasonal agricultural work.

Industry and commerce: around half the residents have jobs within the area, with the rest working in neighbouring areas such as Salheen and in other parts of the city. There are many ground-floor workshops (mostly sewing and garment production), many of which are owned by people outside of the area. Local food commerce is thriving and includes grocers, butchers and bakeries on the main as well as side streets. There are no wholesale enterprises.

Household assets: 80% of residents own their homes and c.20% are tenants, though many local shops and workshops are also rented.

Property: a 70m² flat cost around SP700,000 in a building of five or six stories. Traditional courtyard houses are rare and mostly purchased by developers who demolish them and erect high rise blocks of flats. Construction costs c.SP1 million for 100m². There are no empty building plots left in the area.

Dominant economic problems: poverty, unemployment and child labour are the main problems.

Principal economic assets: job opportunities within the area, and a highly youthful and dynamic local population are perceived to be the main assets.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: all dwellings have water connections, officially installed by the municipality and paid for by individual householders.

Sewerage: the original sewerage system was laid by the municipality but is now inadequate for the current development pattern and high population density. The network has been extended and maintained by residents but sewage leaks are frequent and there is no rainwater drainage, leading to flooding. Sewage pipe diameters are suitable for low-density courtyard housing and not high rise blocks of flats.

Electricity: the municipality installed a domestic electricity supply and each house has a meter, however, there are many illegal connections.

Access: primary and secondary roads and narrow alleyways are all poorly paved. The pavements of main roads are fully occupied by street traders.



Street lighting: provided by the municipality - the area is adequately lit.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the absence of pavements and the poor state of roads are the dominant problems, while the poor quality of the sewerage network leads to sewage leaks and disease, especially among children.

SERVICES

Schools: there is a local primary school but this is overcrowded and the quality of education provided is poor. This school can be accessed easily and safely but there are no nearby secondary schools.

Clinics: there are no nearby health facilities. Residents only undertake the long journey to the nearest clinic when it is absolutely essential.

Open space: there are few open spaces; one (owned by Awqaf) is fenced off and planted with trees but its main use is as a rubbish collection point, while another is owned by the education department and was earmarked for the building of a school a long time ago, however, it has never been built.

Dominant service problems: there is a need for more schools, a clinic, a small park and a centre for the disabled.

ENVIRONMENT

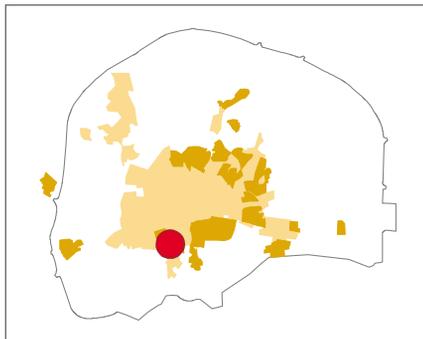
Streets: streets are often very narrow and unsafe, while on the main roads the speed of vehicles is too high. Parking is also a problem.

Buildings: plots are around 140m², with 80% of buildings having five or six stories and just 20% having one or two floors.

Environment: the sub-soil is stable and suitable for high rise construction. Construction standards are good. Pollution in the area is caused by sewage leaks and the build up of solid waste. Nearly all the area is developed and there is little undeveloped land or very few areas that could be used to provide services.

Dominant environmental problems: leaking sewage, the build up of solid waste and overcrowding are the main problems.

Principal environmental assets: proximity to the city centre, to markets and industrial areas with jobs, the good standard of construction and strong sub-soil are the main assets.



First settled: 1970-1972
Population: 47,000

SUMMARY

Ansari Gharbi is a socially fragmented community that has grown to house a wide array of social groups, sometimes resulting in conflict. Part of it has been planned and legally developed, while the remainder has developed informally. Most people own flats built and sold by developers and the area resembles a fully planned neighbourhood that has attracted some high-income residents. However, there are also very poor groups. Safety is a problem due to criminal activities and ethnic-based street gang conflicts. Unemployment does not seem to be a major problem. There are employment opportunities in the many workshops in Ansari Gharbi and in the neighbouring areas. School and health services are inadequate and other community facilities present problems. There is no coherent sense of community or local leadership.

HISTORY

Located in the northsouth-west of Aleppo, Ansari Sharqi is very close to one of the main roads leading into the city. The land was originally privately owned by a small number of families and in agricultural use, though one area was owned by Awqaf and another by the government. The private land was sold to developers who subdivided it into plots, laying out streets that are mostly 6-8m in width, though some are considerably narrower as plot owners have built up to the kerb, without leaving foot-path space. The government designed the layout of the main streets in the settlement providing a 12m road width.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: occupants of Ansari Sharqi Gharbi are from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds and areas (especially from the north and north-west, from Al-Raqqa and Edlib and from parts of Aleppo Old City that were demolished), leading to a lack of social cohesion and occasional violent conflict.

Class and income: long-established residents tend to be better off than the more recent migrants. Most people own their own homes though property is not cheap as the settlement is well planned and informal development continues.

Safety and crime: the area is not considered to be safe. There is some violent crime, robberies, smuggling and drug use, with rival ethnic-based gangs which occasionally clash resorting to the use of firearms.

Community organisation: community solidarity is weak and there are no collective activities or events that involve groups



of residents. Social ties exist only among family groups. Few residents know who is the Mukhtar and there are no community committees, organisations or informal leaders, reflecting the pronounced social fragmentation of the settlement community. Some residents along the main street have contributed money and labour to the paving of the street, but the diverse social groups and low incomes of some deter other self-help activities.

Women's engagement: as there are no formal women's or community organisations. Some women gather socially but there are no women's savings groups. Women rely upon men or employment for income, with around 10% working, mostly as hairdressers, seamstresses or in the public sector.

Dominant social problems: illiteracy, the school drop-out rate and child labour are perceived to be the main social problems along with social conflict, the lack of community cohesion, and the dominance

of the area by some families that do not respect the law or other residents. In addition the young age at which many youth marry, a lack of social awareness and social services are also recognised as problems

Principal social assets: extended families that provide social support to their members are considered to be the only social asset.

ECONOMY

Employment: The area suffers less from unemployment than many other informal settlements. Some 20% of those in work are in permanent employment in the public sector; the remainder are daily workers and informal sector traders. Half of those who are employed work within Ansari Sharqi Gharbi or in the neighbouring area of al-Ramouseh, where there are jobs in car sales & car repairs.

Industry and commerce: there are many ground-floor workshops, the majority engaged in tailoring and clothes finishing as well as blacksmiths and food retailing. Most of these enterprises seem to be run by people who live elsewhere who rent the space.

Household assets: 90% of households own their homes, mainly apartments, whereas 10% are tenants.

Property: most people live in flats built by developers. The majority of buildings have 6-7 stories with four flats on each floor, ranging from 60 to 150m². A 60m² flat close the

main street costs SP1.3 million. There are only very few single- or two-story houses. The addition of new stories cost about SP7000 per square metre, plus around SP140,000 in 'informal fees' when done illegally and some 30% less if the property is legally licenced. Very little construction work is currently underway, with no sources of finance available (except informal loans). The property market is currently stagnant, with the prospects for further development limited to properties in minor narrow backstreets and plots the few plots that have official planning permission.

Dominant economic problems: low-income levels, smuggling & illegal employment are considered to be the main problems.

Principal economic assets: the settlement is close to sources of employment, the main stadium in Aleppo and a main line of transportation. Ansari Gharbi looks like a planned settlement and is thus attractive to higher income groups.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: 100% of houses are connected to the municipal supply.

Sewerage: the municipal government has connected virtually all buildings to the network with some people doing work to improve their household connection.

Electricity: all houses have official connections and meters.

Access: the main street is paved with secondary roads in poor condition, especially those that are narrow.

Street lighting: provided by the municipality and adequate in the main roads, but not in the backstreets.

Dominant infrastructure problems: a sewerage system, which is in need of maintenance.

SERVICES

Schools: there are primary schools nearby though with insufficient places, but there are no secondary schools for girls near the area & the quality of the education on offer is generally considered to be inadequate. Access to schools is not easy nor safe due street gangs & the fear of criminals in the area.

Clinics: there is a clinic in the neighbouring area but this is difficult to reach, with the service it offers only being adequate only for children.

Open space: there are two open spaces owned by the authorities, one of which is used as a rubbish collection area. Open spaces are also used by smugglers for raising animals and for storage. Due to the close proximity of the stadium and forested areas by the ring road, residents feel no need for additional open spaces.

Dominant service problems: the lack of community facilities are considered to be the main problem.

ENVIRONMENT

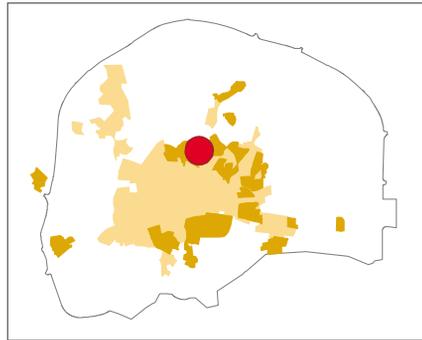
Streets: some streets are very narrow. On the main streets, vehicle speeds are high and are considered a danger to pedestrians, particularly children. As the area includes the intersection roads connecting many parts of the city there is a high level of traffic congestion, especially during Ramadan. Vehicle parking is only a problem in some of the narrow side streets.

Buildings: plots are between 60m² and 200m², with 70% of dwellings having six or seven stories, 30% four stories and 10% two stories. The land is suitable for construction, with the capacity to support high buildings. However, many buildings are poorly constructed with poor foundations.

Environment: the area is not overly polluted, with most air pollution caused by vehicles. There are some empty plots, mostly in municipal ownership, that are currently underused and could be developed to house public facilities.

Dominant environmental problems: poor building standards are considered to be the main problem.

Principal environmental assets: good location within the city, solid and stable soils, proximity to markets and the industrial area of Ramouseh are perceived to be the main assets of the area



First settled: 1975
Population: 40,000

SUMMARY

Western Sheikh Maqsoud is a cohesive community, with residents sharing the same ethnic origins. Community activities are informally organised and have focused on street cleaning and the extension of water and sewerage networks. The area is generally safe and criminality is low. Income levels are low and most men only have part-time employment jobs. Unemployment is also a problem. The area was originally informally subdivided by squatters and residents do not have legal tenure. Most people live in two-storey houses and the limited availability of empty plots favours vertical expansion. Water and sewerage provision is substandard and there is a lack of recreation space. Housing standards are poor, roads are narrow, badly lit and in a bad state, and education and health services are inadequate.

HISTORY

The western part of Sheikh Maqsoud is a high density settlement of two story dwellings (contrasting with the eastern settlement of higher rise buildings). Originally the land was used for raising pigs and stone was quarried in the area, but then a group of squatters took possession and informally sold plots, with no regularly planned subdivision, to people who built their own houses. The layout of the area is irregular, with narrow streets and difficult topography. Residents still do not have any legal tenure.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: the majority of residents belong to the same ethnic group, though they originate from different areas. This shared identity contributes to the high level of social cohesion and lack of conflict, though there are occasional disputes with neighbouring areas.

Class and income: income levels of the vast majority are low, as reflected by the housing and living standards in contrast to neighbouring areas that are seemingly better off.

Safety and crime: the area is safe and free of crime and women and girls can move about freely. There is some drug use (though no dealing) and gambling. Recent police activities in the area have reduced petty crime and the presence of criminals.

Community organisation: social solidarity is evident in the communal self-help activities that residents undertake, for example, cleaning and paving streets and informally



extending the water and sewage network, with each household making a financial contribution. Such activities are organised informally by men as there are no formal community organisations or informal leaders. The Mukhtar is not well known in the community

Women's engagement: women play traditional domestic and child caring roles, though there is a strong support network between women neighbours who help each other in times of need. Any women's organisations are very small in size and remit. Around 50% of women work, but mostly in temporary jobs. Some work in domestic service and some of the younger women are employed in neighbouring workshops.

Dominant social problems: the main problems are perceived to be high levels of illiteracy among both men and women and social isolation of women, many of whom do not speak Arabic.

Principal social assets: the main assets are perceived to be the strong community cohesion and stability, with men providing strong direction within the community.

ECONOMY

Employment: most men only have part-time jobs, c.10% of them in local workshops in the neighbourhood, the rest having to travel to other parts of the city where they work as manual labourers in construction, as drivers, etc. Only 10% are employed in the public sector.

Industry and commerce: ground-floor workshops are used by tailors and blacksmiths for clothes finishing (particularly jeans) many of which employ local women and car repairs, with the sewing workshops, many of which employ local women. The local economy is dominated by small-scale retail with just one wholesale diesel storage and distribution operation.

Household assets: people have expanded their houses vertically by adding a second story, with around 20% of people renting out their upper floor for additional income, where possible building external staircases for tenants. Property is privately owned but without legal tenure.

Property: A 75m² house costs c.SP600,000, while a 150m² house costs c.SP1.5 million. Construction costs for 100m² are c.SP300,000 plus SP150,000 in 'informal fees'. Because of the density of development with small plot sizes, the only option for expansion is the construction of additional floors. Finance for construction comes from informal loans among men in the community, with no formal facilities available.

Dominant economic problems: high unemployment, the irregularity of seasonal earnings and overcrowding as families cannot afford houses for their children upon marriage, are the main problems.

Principal economic assets: affordable houses, location near the city, good transport links and availability of cheap labour are seen as the main assets.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: houses have connections to metered 'water cabins' installed by the Water Authority. Because of the high rate of water loss through informally made connections, the area has been designated for upgrading to full household supply by a KfW (German aid) project to upgrade the water network in various parts of Aleppo.

Sewerage: houses have connections to the sewerage system informally made by themselves through community self-help.

Electricity: all houses have official connections and meters.

Access: access is poor due to the narrow width of streets and due to the very bad condition of the road surfaces.

Street lighting: some streets are adequately lit by the municipality but many are not.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the very poor condition of roads, inadequate street lighting and the substandard water system were perceived as the main problems.

SERVICES

Schools: schools are distant from the area, with girls having to walk a long way to secondary school. Schools are overcrowded and the quality of education is low, with some families paying extra for private tuition.

Clinics: the nearest clinic takes 30 minutes to walk to and is overcrowded.

Open space: there is a large open space in the west of the area with unclear ownership, but residents feel the need for a small park that could be used by women and children.

Dominant service problems: poor schools, poor health care facilities and the absence of community organisations and NGOs were identified as the main problems.

ENVIRONMENT

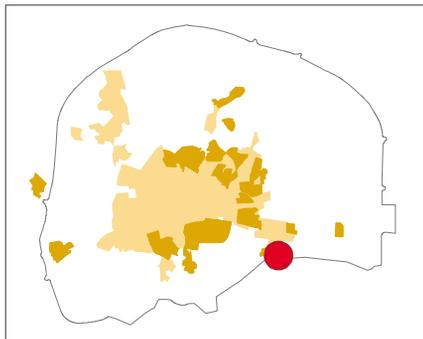
Streets: streets are narrow and topography is dangerous in some areas, though there are no traffic or parking problems.

Buildings: the majority of plots are 75m² in size, with 70% having two stories, 20% one storey and 10% three stories. The sub-soil is stable and suitable for construction but construction standards are low.

Environment: there is no industrial air pollution in the area but solid waste, especially from a nearby collection area is highly polluting. Some plots in the west of the area are empty, some owned by Christian groups and others are privately owned.

Dominant environmental problems: the poor quality of streets, the high number of potholes and occasional open sewage are considered to be the main problems.

Principal environmental assets: the stable sub-soil is the main environmental asset.



Arrival of Refugees: 1948
Population: 18,500

SUMMARY

Located close to Aleppo airport to the south-east of the city, Al Neirab camp, originally a second world war Allied army barracks, was ceded to UNWRA in 1948 for the temporary accommodation of refugees from northern Palestine (see footnote 1). In the subsequent 60 years the original accommodation in a series of barrack blocks in which each family had a single 12m² room with access to shared sanitary facilities, has been extended by the occupants through the appropriation of the land between the blocks. Thus the camp, which is jointly administered by UNWRA and GAPAR, is a dense settlement of badly constructed single and two storey dwellings accessed through narrow, winding alleys with virtually no open recreation space. The tight knit refugee community has high levels of poverty and unemployment but it is well served by UNWRA in terms of basic education and health services. It is necessary to 'decant' families from the camp in order to reduce the overcrowding and allow space for public facilities, a process that has been started through voluntary relocation to Handerat Camp.

HISTORY

In 1948 the camp, formally second world war Allied army barracks comprising of a series of 20m x 8m blocks each with sixteen rooms with common sanitary facilities, was ceded to UNRWA by the Syrian government for the temporary housing of Palestinian refugees. Each 12m² room housed a refugee family which also had the use of the open space outside their room. Over time this space has been built on, reducing the access ways between the blocks to less than a metre wide in many situations. In addition to this extremely dense plot coverage, vertical extensions have been made by adding second and some third storeys. The camp is jointly run by UNWRA and GAPAR (General Authority of Palestine Arab Refugees) who manage the physical infrastructure and primary education and health care. They are currently embarking on a project for the physical upgrading of the housing.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: the original refugees all came from villages in northern Palestine and have maintained close kinship ties ever since, ensuring a close community, strengthened by their refugee status.

Class and income: 30% of the households are classified as 'poor' by the UN (<\$2/day) and a further 6% as 'very poor'. Most of those who have made money have moved out of the camp, though some (particularly those working in the Gulf) still remit funds to their relatives.

Safety and crime: because of the close social relations, the camp is considered safe with only marginal incidents of petty crime. Women and girls can move about freely and without fear.

Community organisation: the residents are well organised, both formally through a Camp Committee which represents the residents in negotiations with UNWRA and GAPAR and informally to discuss



local social issues and manage voluntary activities such as street cleaning, painting and maintenance. Local leaders tend to be the better educated and with political connections. The Mukhtar for the area has little influence, though the Imam is widely respected.

Women's engagement: women have only a very limited role in public affairs and there are no prominent women's organisations or savings groups. Some 40% of women work, either in jobs outside the camp or in home-based piece-work.

Dominant social problems: the high rate of illiteracy amongst women is considered a problem. There is a general feeling of being distinct from the rest of the city's population, though not marginalised. Those working in the city say that they are relieved to be able to return to the social security of the camp

Principal social assets: the sense of solidarity of common ethnic and social bonds between camp families is seen as the principal social asset of the camp community.

ECONOMY

Employment: UNWRA estimates that between 35-40 percent of the adult men in the camp are unemployed, amongst whom are several university graduates. Many of those who are employed work in the construction industry in Aleppo.

Industry and commerce: Apart from petty retail trading in the main street, there are few job opportunities in the camp. The camp has virtually no small scale workshops that characterise other informal settlements.

Household assets: households have secure tenure to the barrack rooms and extensions to them that they have built but they cannot be regarded as a tradable asset. Assets are largely confined to consumer durables.

Property: there is virtually no property market in the camp, though dwellings do occasionally change hands. A 60m² dwelling is reported to cost in the region of

SP400,000. There is now no space within the camp for ground level extensions to dwellings and households are adding floors vertically. The current cost of construction is estimated at SP1,500/m².

Dominant economic problems: the high and rising level of unemployment and low incomes are clearly the dominant economic problems.

Principal economic assets: the relatively high level of graduates is considered the camp's greatest economic potential.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: all dwellings have safe water connections.

Sewerage: all are also connected to a central waterborne sewerage network, maintained by UNWRA.

Electricity: all dwellings have metered electricity connections.

Access: the main roads in the camp are paved, though they lack maintenance. The narrow alleyways between houses, many of which are less than a metre wide present a serious safety hazard in the event of an emergency.

Street lighting: adequate street lighting has been installed, but is need of maintenance.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the condition of the roads and the narrow alleys are the major infrastructure problems.

SERVICES

Schools: primary and preparatory schooling is provided by UNWRA and the standard of teaching is considered to be good, though “not as good as it used to be” and the schools are overcrowded and double-shifted. The government secondary school, which also serves Neairab village, is also considered good with easy and safe access for girls and boys.

Clinics: the UNWRA clinic that serves the camp is in the process of being enlarged and rebuilt.

Open space: there is no public open space left in the camp. There is privately owned open land adjoining the camp that could be developed for recreational use but the cost is high.

Dominant service problems: the need for open space for children’s play is seen to be the main service problem.

ENVIRONMENT

Streets: the informal appropriation of public land for the extension of dwellings has reduced the access to all houses other than those facing the main streets to twisting narrow alleys that curtail even pedestrian access, let alone that of emergency vehicles or escape in the case of fire. UNWRA is in the process of re-planning the camp, which will address this problem if acceptable implementation of reconstruction can be financed. Traffic and vehicle parking does not present a problem.

Buildings: the original barrack blocks are in a bad state of repair and many of the extensions to them have been badly built and are structurally unsafe. Some 50% of the dwellings are now of two stories and c.10% have three floors. Those dwellings incorporating the original barrack rooms average 30m², whilst those built on land between the barrack blocks range between 100-400m².

Environment: there are no serious problems of environmental pollution. Some cases of leishmania are recorded annually.

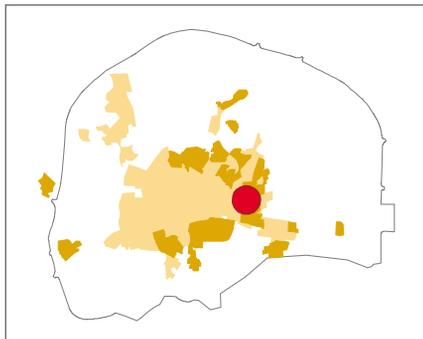
Dominant environmental problems: very high building density, lack of open space and overcrowding are the predominant environmental problems.

Principal environmental assets: there are no obvious environmental assets within the confines of the camp.



MEDIUM DENSITY SETTLEMENTS

AL MAASRANEYEH
ANSARI VILLAGE
ASHRAFEYEH 1
ASHRAFEYEH 2
ASHRAFEYEH - BANI ZEID
EIN EL TAL
HAIDAREYEH
HANDERAT (CAMP)
HARET EL SHAHHADIN
JABAL BADRO
KARM AL JAZMATI
SHEIKH FARES
SHEIKH KHODR
SHEIKH NAJJAR



First settled: 1972
Population: 13,000

SUMMARY

The settlement originated on agricultural land close to the centre of Aleppo and is the access point for Al Bab. It is a linear settlement that stretches along the airport road. Most of the houses are self-built low-rise dwellings and not in good condition. However, the subdivision is well planned and laid out and the roads are wide. There is no empty land left for further development and no open spaces. Traffic is a major problem with lorries posing a threat to pedestrians and polluting the air. The roads are in a bad state and are inadequately lit. The local school offers a poor quality service and there is no health clinic in the area. Residents share similar geographic and ethnic origins though there is some conflict between them. Some self-help activities are organised informally to improve the environment but there is no coordinated action throughout the settlement. There are few job opportunities in the settlement and few men or women are in full-time work.

HISTORY

Al Maasraneyeh is on land that was originally used for agriculture and animal husbandry and owned by wealthy Aleppian families. These owners subsequently subdivided the area and sold the plots to individuals who built their own houses, most of whom have legally certified receipts of purchase for their land but no legal title. Very little of the area was squatted and the subdivision was well planned and laid out.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: most of the residents came from neighbouring villages in the east of Aleppo province and some from Aleppo itself. A large number of people share the same tribal identity (Battoush), though there is some conflict between different groups of residents.

Class and income: those residents who have lived longest in the settlement appear to be the richest and most influential. In general the area has a diversity of income levels in which around 30% could be classified as very poor but the majority are not poor and some households are relatively wealthy. Those with most influence are those with money and those who hold important tribal positions.

Safety and crime: there are occasional incidents of violent crime involving firearms, some smuggling and a limited drugs problem, this is not on a large scale and women can move about the neighbourhood freely.



Community organisation: there is a sense of community solidarity and neighbours, families and tribal groups organise themselves to undertake self-help activities such as street cleaning and paving. This is done informally on the scale of individual streets but there is a lack of communication and coordination at the settlement level. There are no formal organisations and leaders and the local Mukhtar (of Al Halwaneyeh) is not well known and the Imam has no recognised role in the community.

Women's engagement: women meet informally as friends, family and neighbours but have no organisations of their own. Although they undertake some savings activities, these contribute little to their income. 20-30% of women work in temporary jobs, with married women tending to do embroidery and sewing on a piecework basis at home. Some younger women work in workshops in neighbouring areas.

Dominant social problems: the young age at which women marry, polygamy, child labour and the high rate of disability are the main problems.

Principal social assets: most residents know each other and there is a sense of social solidarity.

ECONOMY

Employment: most men work in temporary jobs, such as lorry drivers and loaders, though there are some public sector employees. Most people have to leave the neighbourhood in order to find work.

Industry and commerce: there are no workshops, factories or job opportunities within the settlement.

Household assets: around 90% of people live in owner-occupied houses and just 10% are tenants. A 180m² house is worth c.SP1.5 million with legally recognised land tenure. A 150m² house would cost SP1.5 million to build but there is no empty land available for new development. Some people have added extra floors to their homes but such work is now limited and confined to side streets.

Property: the property market is stagnant and no new development is underway. Construction work is limited to expanding houses vertically and renovating properties.

Dominant economic problems: the high unemployment rate, child labour and low percentage of working women are perceived to be the main problems.

Principal economic assets: affordable housing in a good location is the main asset.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: all houses have an official metered connection.

Sewerage: all houses are connection to the official water-borne network.

Electricity: each house has an official metered connection.

Access: although roads are wide they are in a poor condition owing to their use by large numbers of heavy goods vehicles. They are muddy in the winter and dusty in the summer. Some local maintenance is undertaken by community self-help.

Street lighting: only the main streets are lit.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the area is poorly lit and there are no pavements.

SERVICES

Schools: schools are some distance from the settlement and not easy to access, especially due to speeding lorries driven by “crazy drivers” on the main roads. Girls have to walk a long way to school. The quality of education available is considered to be bad, contributing to the high drop-out rates. Many households also take their children out of school for economic reasons.

Clinics: there are no government clinics in the area though there is a mobile clinic run by an NGO.

Open space: there are no open spaces or empty plots, though Awqaf owns some land nearby.

Dominant service problems: the main demand of residents is for a permanent clinic. The lack of recreational space and a kindergarten are also regarded as major problems.

ENVIRONMENT

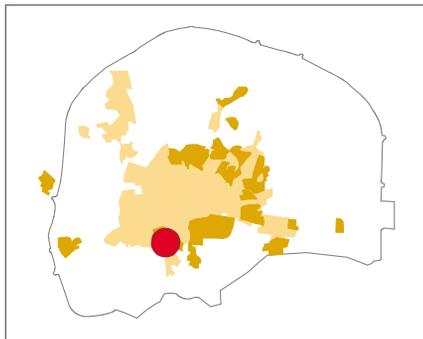
Streets: streets are wide but are heavily used by lorries and other commercial and inter-city traffic, creating congestion and danger. There is also insufficient space for parking.

Buildings: plot sizes vary from c.120-180m², with larger plots having been subdivided. Most buildings have just one or two stories, with only a few extending to three floors. Construction standards are poor but buildings are not in danger of collapse.

Environment: air pollution is caused by road traffic rather than industry.

Dominant problems: the poor state of pavements and heavy traffic are the main problems.

Principal assets: the stable sub-soil and proximity to the city centre and markets are the main environmental assets.



First settled: 1975
Population: [to be checked]

SUMMARY

Ansari Village is part of the bigger settlement of Ansari but still retains some of its original village character with some narrow alleyways and a high percentage of original village residents. The area now has a diverse population leading to occasional conflict but still retains some community cohesion and solidarity, especially within kinship and ethnic groups. Although there are no formal community organisations, self-help activities are planned informally. The settlement is well provided by schools and basic infrastructure and health services are adequate. Employment is mainly local and informal. The area lacks open space for recreational use and the original narrow alleyways of the village make access to some dwellings difficult and unsafe.

HISTORY

This part of Ansari was originally a distinct village where land was privately owned by the villagers and where crops were grown and animals raised. Subsequently roughly half the land outside the village was sold as single plots to individuals who built their own houses, while the rest was bought by developers who subdivided it and sold plots. A significant proportion of the current residents are the original villagers or their decedents. The newly developed areas were well planned and laid out, leaving the original heart of the old village with no roads but just narrow alleys.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: residents are of mixed origin and background, from the north and north-west of Syria and from Al Raqqa and Edlib, with a wide range of different ethnic groups, including Kurds. Although there is some social conflict, this is not pronounced.

Class and income: longer term residents appear to be the most wealthy, and while most residents live on low levels of income, housing and living standards are not poor.

Safety and crime: although there is some limited crime, mostly robberies, the area is generally considered safe and women can move about freely. Organised crime in the area includes some smuggling but there is very limited drug-related crime.

Community organisation: despite the varied social and ethnic backgrounds of people, there is a sense of social solidarity and people work together to clean streets, petition the authorities, etc, though such



actions are strongest within kinship of tribal groupings. There are no formal community organisations or leaders, but the men of each alley and street organise themselves informally. The Mukhtar is not well known but the Imam plays an active role in the community, especially in religious education. An understanding of 'self-help' exists but community organisation and collective activities are hindered by the varied social make-up of the area.

Women's engagement: women play a traditional domestic and childcare role and are not engaged in community management. Some work in local shops and in agriculture, and while there are some savings groups, these are limited and most women receive money from male household members and from their employment. Some 30% of women work (as hairdressers, teachers, nurses, etc) and are better educated than women in many other informal settlements because, for some reason, girls are allowed to stay at school for longer.

Dominant social problems: illiteracy, especially among men, the young age at which people marry, school drop-outs and child labour are perceived to be problems, as well as the tendency to social conflict among the diverse social groups.

Principal social assets: the main assets are seen to be the limited incidence of polygamy and the prevalence of large extended families that provide social support.

ECONOMY

Employment: most of those who work are employed only part-time, with only 20% of men being permanently employed or in the public sector.

Industry and commerce: 50% of those who work have employment within the area, especially in local ground-floor workshops where activities include car repairs and sales, painting, carpentry and sewing.

Household assets: 90% of residents own their homes while 10% are tenants. A single-storey 150m² house costs SP1.5 million, rising to SP4 million for larger and better located houses. A 20m² room costs c.SP60,000 to build and many people have added additional stories to their houses at a cost of SP75,000-100,000. Although there are no formal sources of finance available for house purchase, upon marriage, couples in the area usually receive gifts of money that help toward housing costs.

Property: the property market in the area is currently quiet but with some sales occurring, for example a 75m² apartment currently costs c.SP75,000. House prices are not rising as the market is not buoyant. Some properties have been extended to four or five stories but currently any further developments are confined to narrow alleys and back streets.

Dominant economic problems: child labour and low income levels are perceived as the main problems.

Principal economic assets: job opportunities for men and women are considered as the main assets, despite the apparent rate of under-employment in the area.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: all dwellings have water connections, officially installed by the Water Authority.

Sewerage: a basic sewage system was installed by the municipality which individuals have extended and improved.

Electricity: all houses have official connections and meters.

Access: roads are paved but to a poor standard, especially in the narrow alleyways.

Street lighting: provided by the municipality - the area is well lit.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the absence and poor standard of street and alley paving is the main problem.

SERVICES

Schools: the area has good or adequate schools that are easily and safely accessible. The local Imam also provides religious education and literacy classes that are attended by many children.

Clinics: there are three clinics but only one is considered to offer a good quality service.

Open space: there are two open spaces, one of which is used for rubbish collection while the other is planted with trees and houses an electricity sub-station. One of the open areas is privately owned while the other is government land. Local people feel the absence of a recreational space or park that could be used by women and children.

Dominant service problems: the lack of community centres and public open spaces are seen as the main problems.

ENVIRONMENT

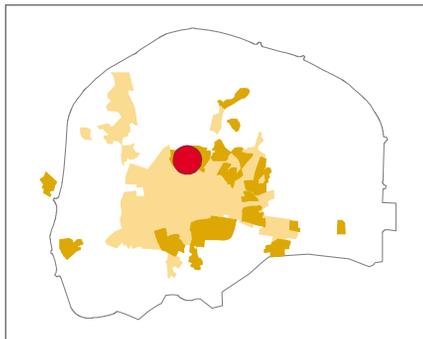
Streets: the main streets are busy with relatively fast-moving traffic, while narrow alleys, particularly in the area of the original village, are considered to be dangerous owing to criminal activity, though they provide adequate access. There are no parking problems.

Buildings: plots vary between 120m² and 200m², with some subdivision into smaller plot sizes. About 50% of buildings are of two floors, 40% having four stories and 10% three stories. The soil conditions are good and suitable for construction, however, existing construction standards are poor. Some privately owned and some government owned empty plots remain that could be used for community facilities.

Environment: pollution is at an acceptable level, with no major polluting industries or local workshops in the area.

Dominant environmental problems: poor construction standards, including building foundations.

Principal environmental assets: stable and solid soils suitable for building, good location in the city, proximity to markets and to industrial the area of Ramouseh are all considered to be assets.



First settled: 1980
Population: 10,000

SUMMARY

Located in the north-east of Asrafeyeh, this area has been assigned for demolition to make way for the construction of 'Youth Housing' apartments and the residents have been served with eviction notices by the Ministry of Housing. Residents have been told that they will be re-housed in phases in government-built flats at unspecified locations over the next five years. Although residents have low income levels and employment among men is mainly part time, housing standards are good. Many dwellings have been expanded extended and there is a high percentage of tenants in the area. Community cohesion is strong, with most residents sharing the same geographical origins and ethnicity. Informal self-help activities have improved living conditions but the quality of roads, pavements, water and sewerage, schools and health services remains problematic. Residents have stopped investing in their homes and neighbourhoods since when they were issued with eviction orders.

HISTORY

This part of Asrafeyeh was originally owned by an absentee individual and the site was used for quarrying. The land was squatted by a group of people from outside of Aleppo who subdivided the area in a regular and well planned fashion and sold plots to other migrants. One part of the area that has been developed more recently is not well planned. Residents do not have legal tenure and are currently under threat of eviction by the Ministry of Housing.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: the majority of the residents have migrated from the same area and share the same ethnicity. Relations between them are good, with little conflict and a strong sense of community.

Class and income: although there are some higher income groups within the settlement, most have low incomes but housing and living standards are relatively good.

Safety and crime: there is very little crime or drug use in the area and women and girls can move about freely.

Community organisation: there is a strong level of community cohesion with residents organising themselves to improve the neighbourhood, for example by petitioning the government, cleaning the streets and laying water and sewage connections at their own expense (SP14,000-18,000). This has been achieved informally by the men, with those who are better educated



and employed in the public sector providing direction. Although there is a Mukhtar, he is largely unknown to residents. Due to the threat of eviction, community self-help activities have now stopped.

Women's engagement: women play traditional predominantly domestic and child caring roles, though there is a strong support network between women neighbours who help each other in times of need. There are a few women's organisations that are very small in size and remit, and women rely upon their own employment or men for income. Around 50% of women work in temporary jobs, with married women engaged in home-based piece-work and younger women working in local workshops.

Dominant social problems: the main social problems are considered to be social isolation, especially among women who do not speak Arabic, illiteracy among both women and men, the young age at which women marry and the high birth rate among young women.

Principal social assets: recognised assets include strong community cohesion, stability and unity, the direction provided by men in the community, and the common traditions and aims shared by residents.

ECONOMY

Employment: most men are only in part-time employment with 10% working in the public sector. Only 10% work locally, the majority having to travel long distances by minibus to work.

Industry and commerce: there are many workshops in the ground floors of houses, often rented by people who live outside the neighbourhood. Most of these informal workshops are engaged in sewing and garment finishing, car repairs and blacksmith work, with women often employed in the garment workshops.

Household assets: the area was predominantly owner occupied, however, over time the number of tenants has increased to c.40% as owners have extended their houses vertically or subdivided them horizontally in order to sublet space to generate income.

Property: very little land remains vacant in the area and a 150m² house used to cost SP1.5 million, with construction costs being SP6,000 per square meter. Since the eviction notices were served, property has lost its value but many residents have sold their eviction papers for between SP800,000 falling to and SP350,000 (depending upon their place position in the proposed five phases of eviction with the earlier phases commanding the highest prices). Owing to the threat of eviction, no further construction work is underway.

Dominant economic problems: high unemployment, the irregularity of seasonal earnings and overcrowding are perceived to be the main problems.

Principal economic assets: affordable houses, a relatively central location and good transport links are the main assets.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: all dwellings have water connections but the quality of the connections and service is poor.

Sewerage: all dwellings are connected to a waterborne sewerage system installed by the municipality.

Electricity: all houses have official connections and meters.

Access: roads were last paved 10 years ago and are now in a bad state of repair. Residents are unwilling to improve them because of the threat of the eviction order.

Street lighting: provided by the municipality - the area is well lit.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the poor quality of roads and pavements is the main problem, and also the sewerage system is too shallow, leading to frequent breakages and leaks.

SERVICES

Schools: schools are distant from the area, with girls having to walk a long way to school (especially secondary schools). Schools are overcrowded and the quality of education is low, with some families paying extra for private tuition.

Clinics: the nearest clinic takes 30 minutes to walk to and is overcrowded, though the quality of the service is good.

Open space: open space that was previously used for recreation has now been taken over for the construction of Youth Housing apartments by the Ministry of Housing. Thus there are no open spaces available for recreational use.

Dominant service problems: the absence of community organisations and centres and NGOs is perceived to be a problem, and people are worried by the threat of eviction and whether the community will be able to stay together.

ENVIRONMENT

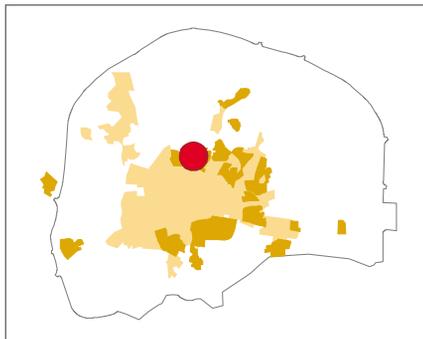
Streets: some streets in the area are narrow, though there are no traffic and parking problems.

Buildings: plots used to range between 140m² and 150m² but most have been divided into 75m² plots. 50% of dwellings have two stories, 40% have one floor and 10% have three stories, with one building of four floors.

Environment: The sub-soil is stable and construction standards are good, indeed, the area is generally clean and quiet, with little pollution.

Dominant environmental problems: the poor standards of streets and pavements and sewage leaks are the dominant problems, compounded by the withdrawal of voluntary maintenance pending eviction.

Principal environmental assets: assets include good construction standards, stable sub-soils and the area's location close to the city, markets and the industrial area of Billiramoun.



First settled: 1980
Population: [to be checked]

SUMMARY

This part of Ashrafeyeh is located between the officially recognised settlement of Ashrafeyeh and the settlement of Sheik Maqsoud. Unsubstantiated rumour has it that its residents are to be evicted by the Ministry of Housing to make way for a 'Youth Housing' project as in Ashrafeyeh 1. This is highly demoralising and is undermining an otherwise strong and stable community. Most residents share the same geographical and ethnic origins. Men provide formal and informal leadership and self-help activities include street cleaning and paving. Health and educational facilities are inadequate and distant from the settlement. Roads are poorly lit and poorly paved, though they are wide and well laid out. Most people live in single or two-storey houses, many of which have been extended to obtain extra income from tenants. Many people are unemployed or can only find part-time or seasonal work. The illiteracy rate is high among both men and women.

HISTORY

This part of Ashrafeyeh was developed by squatters who subdivided mainly publicly-owned land (private land belonged to unknown absentee owners). The area used to be quarried for stone. The initial squatters belonged to an influential gang who subdivided the area in an orderly way and sold on the plots. Plot sizes vary from 140-160m² and street widths vary from 6-8m. Residents do not have legal land tenure or permits for their homes.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: almost all residents share the same geographical and ethnic (Kurdish) origins and social ties between them are strong. This has been strengthened by rumours of eviction following the demolition of the major part of Ashrafeyeh 1. The community would be prepared to move but only if they can stay together as a community and move nearby.

Class and income: there are some groups that are better off than others but in general people in the area have a medium level of income as reflected in their good living and housing standards.

Safety and crime: the area is safe and relatively crime free. It is also free of drugs owing to strong social action by residents. Women can move about freely.

Community organisation: there is a strong sense of social solidarity and people organise self-help activities to clean and pave streets and install sewerage in some



alleyways at the cost to each household of c.SP14,000-18,000. Most community organisation is achieved informally by the men of each street or alley. Some residents who are better educated and public sector employees act as informal leaders, and there are also active party members in the community; also the local Mukhtar is known and well respected as a community representative.

Women's engagement: women are active in social affairs and neighbouring women have strong social ties and support networks. Around 50% of women work in temporary jobs, with married women tending to do piecework at home and younger women working in local workshops. Any saving activities among women are on a very small scale.

Dominant social problems: the high rate of illiteracy among women and men, the young age at which women marry and the failure of some women to speak any Arabic are perceived as problems.

Principal social assets: the shared goals and strong social ties between residents are the main assets, plus the leadership provided by local men.

ECONOMY

Employment: most workers are in part-time employment, and c.10% are in the public sector employees. Around 50% work in agriculture outside the settlement, travelling to work by public minibuses, and 20% work locally in sewing workshops and neighbouring factories.

Industry and commerce: there are many ground-floor workshops in the area. Some are rented by people who live outside the settlement. Most workshops are engaged in sewing and garment finishing.

Household assets: many households have extended their homes (illegally) either horizontally or vertically to gain extra income from renting. Around 40% of residents are now tenants. A 55m² house costs c.SP500,000. There is no empty land left to purchase. Adding a second floor to a house costs c.SP200,000 (plus fees of c.SP100,000). Construction is funded by savings and informal loans within families.

Property: the property market is stagnant after Ashrafeyeh 1 was served with eviction notices and rumours began to circulate that residents in this part of Ashrafeyeh would also be evicted on the promise of re-housing elsewhere.

Dominant economic problems: the high unemployment rate, reliance on seasonal work, low income levels and the inability of newly married couples to afford to buy houses are the main economic problems.

Principal economic assets: relatively cheap houses, proximity to the city, good transport links and jobs in local workshops are the main assets.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: all houses have an official water connection.

Sewerage: households made their own connections to the official sewerage network through self-help.

Electricity: each house has an official metered connection.

Access: the primary and secondary streets in the settlement are in a relatively poor state, with dangerous pavements and roads full of potholes.

Street lighting: street lighting is adequate in the principal streets and some alleyways but is poor maintained.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the poor state of the roads is the main problem.

SERVICES

Schools: there are no nearby schools and boys and girls have to walk long distances to school. Access to secondary school is especially difficult. Schools are overcrowded and the quality of teaching is considered poor. Those who can afford it pay for extra private tuition for their children (especially to help them with Arabic as their first language is Kurdish).

Clinics: the nearest clinic is a half-hour walk and is very overcrowded. Although the quality of its service is good, it serves a population of c.100,000.

Open space: there are no open spaces in the settlement.

Dominant service problems: the absence of any recreational facilities or open spaces, of a nearby clinic and secondary school (especially for girls) and of NGOs are all widely recognised as the main problems.

ENVIRONMENT

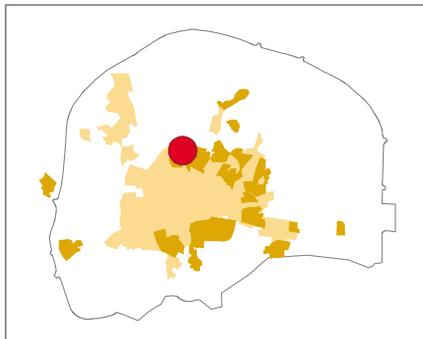
Streets: street widths are adequate and there are no serious traffic or parking problems.

Buildings: original plot sizes were 140-150m² but further subdivision has reduced this to 75m². 50% of houses have two stories, 40% have one and 10% have three stories. Buildings are stable and well constructed.

Environment: the area is generally clean and unpolluted. There are no empty plots that could be used to house public facilities.

Dominant environmental problems: the poor state of the roads in the main problem.

Principal environmental assets: the good quality of houses and strong subsoils, proximity to the city, markets and job opportunities in the industrial area of Billiramoun, and good transport links are the main assets.



First settled: 1976
Population: c.100,000 (c.15,000 households)

SUMMARY

The Bani Zeid area of Ashrafeyeh is a stable and safe community that is highly organised and well managed by a traditional leadership and governance structure. It is well located close to industrial employment with good transport links to the centre of the city. The majority of men are in full-time employment. Households own their dwellings, many of which are officially recognised (licensed). Houses are generally well built single or two storey structures with all services. The area is well planned with wide streets that are well maintained. However, there is no public open or recreation space, which is of particular importance to women and young children. The lack of adequate and accessible schools and clinics are deemed major problems by the community.

HISTORY

The first settlers of this part of Ashrafeyeh were migrants, from the north-east of Syria. The area was originally stone quarries and derelict land owned by two families, one of which had not lived in Syria for a long time. Some 70% of the land was sold by the owners as 150-200m² plots to individual households who still have legally recognised receipts and ownership records. The remaining 30% was illegally appropriated by influential people with the same ethnic origins (Bedouin) who it sold it on as individual plots to their compatriots. In both cases the land was professionally subdivided with wide main streets and adequate secondary access roads.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: because of the common ethnic origin of the great majority of the population there is a strong sense of community.

Class and income: though the great majority of the population are in the lower income groups there are wealthy and influential residents, some of whom own more than one property in the area.

Safety and crime: the strong social cohesion ensures a high degree of safety and security. Women move about freely in the neighbourhood, stand around chatting in the streets and even prepare food in front of their houses. Teenage girls travel to secondary school without fear of being molested. The incidence of robbery is low; as is the use of drugs; drug dealing does not occur as a result of tight community controls.



Community organisation: ethnic solidarity ensures the maintenance of traditional social organisation with a representative committee headed by customary elders and leaders, who tend to be relatively wealthy and influential. Collective action, such as street cleaning, petitioning the authorities etc is common. The Mukhtar is recognised but has less influence than the local leaders who are well connected and negotiate directly with governorate and municipal officials.

Women's engagement: women play a traditional domestic and childcare role and are not engaged in community management. Many households are polygamous. Women's savings groups exist but are small as are the quotas of savings as women are dependent on money given to them by their husbands. Some 20% of women are engaged in employed work, the majority in very intermittent home-based piecework

such as embroidery. A few young women are employed in neighbourhooding (informal sector) workshops.

Dominant problems: illiteracy among both men and women and the drop-out rate of school children caused by the inadequacy of school places and the quality of schooling, are perceived to be the most significant social problems.

Principal assets: solidarity stemming from a common ethnic origin is considered the greatest social asset of the community.

ECONOMY

Employment: most men seem to be employed; many in semi-skilled occupations in the construction industry, microbus and lorry driving etc. Increasingly men and some young women are finding jobs in the textile factories of the adjoining Belleramoun industrial area.

Industry and commerce: there are many small-scale (informal) motor repair and joinery workshops within the area that employ local residents. Commercial enterprises are confined to local 'corner shop' retail.

Household assets: the majority of householders own their dwellings, some of which are officially licensed. However, increasingly households are subdividing (horizontally) or extending (by adding floors) their properties in order to rent out accommodation to generate additional income. Thus some 10% of households are now rent-paying tenants.

Property: the average sale price of a 200m² house is SP5 million, depending on its location. The cost of construction is estimated to average SP100,000 per room in addition to which developers of unlicensed (informal) plots have to pay a 'levy' of c.SP200,000 to avoid official demolition. Many householders are constructing second and some third floors, usually to accommodate married children rather than to sub-let. There is no vacant land left for new development in the area.

Dominant problems: the Bani Zeid community considers that they do not have any significant economic problems.

Principal assets: the proximity to the city centre and industrial areas, good transport connections and high value of their land and property are seen as the community's most valuable economic assets.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: all dwellings have water connections, officially installed by the municipality and paid for by individual householders, though many are only connected through water cabins, leading to water loss through leakage.

Sewerage: all dwellings are connected to a waterborne sewerage system, installed by the municipality and paid for by the householders.

Electricity: all houses have official connections and meters.

Access: all the main streets have been paved by the municipality and are in good condition. Secondary roads tend to be unsurfaced, though some have been paved by the householders community.

Street lighting: provided by the municipality the area is well lit.

SERVICES

Schools: there is easy access to an elementary school though it is very overcrowded and the standard of teaching is regarded as very low. The nearest secondary school is far away, though within walking distance.

Clinics: the closest clinic, which is more than a 30-minute walk from the neighbourhood, is severely overcrowded.

Open space: there is a perceived need for public open spaces in the neighbourhood, particularly for the use of women and small children. Previously there were undeveloped plots that were used by the community, but these have been built on. There is an unused quarry, unsuitable for building that could be landscaped for community use.

Dominant problems: the lack of a neighbourhood clinic and the size of the elementary school are seen as the greatest need for the improvement of services; also the lack of a local bakery.

ENVIRONMENT

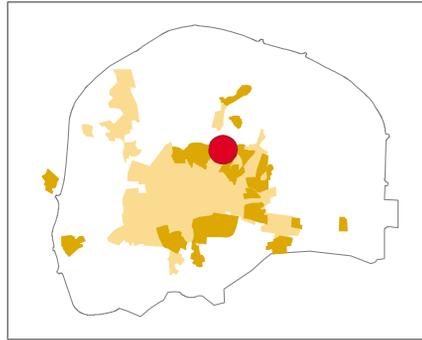
Streets: the street widths (main streets c.20m) and layout pose no problem to health or safety. There is no problem of traffic congestion or vehicle parking.

Buildings: plot sizes are reducing as they become subdivided increasing the number of plots of 100m² or less. Some 60% of buildings are single storey, 40% two stories and c.10% have three floors. The standard of construction is generally of high quality, seemingly with adequate foundations.

Environment: the whole area is clean and well maintained by residents who manage the local collection and disposal of solid waste. Air pollution from the textile dyeing factories in neighbouring Belleramoun industrial area presents a problem for many households.

Dominant problems: the only perceived environmental problem is the pollution from the neighbouring dye factories.

Principal assets: the bearing quality (bearing capacity) of the soil, allowing for safe high-rise construction is perceived to be a major environmental asset.



First settled: 1970
Population: 18,000

SUMMARY

Ein Al-Tal is a poor settlement in a largely industrial area. Residents have The varied geographical and ethnic origins of the residents that has led to a lack of social cohesion and community solidarity, with some conflict between different groups. Although most people know each other, few have the time or money to engage in self-help activities. The area lacks a clinic, good schools and open spaces for recreational use. Streets are poorly paved and dirty. Most residents work in nearby factories and local furniture workshops; t. These provide poorly paid work but also lead to high levels of air pollution. The settlement has an irregular layout and streets, especially in the north of the area, are especially narrow and poorly planned.

HISTORY

Located in the north of the city, this settlement is in an industrial area that was important from the 1950s to the 1980s but has subsequently declined. Originally used for growing pistachio, olives and other crops, the area became a site for factories and industry and also a dump for solid waste from Aleppo. Under private, government and Awqaf ownership, the settlement developed in an unplanned and gradual fashion with some people buying plots, some squatting and subdividing the land themselves with little input from developers. The area is poorly planned with a chaotic pattern of streets and pathways, especially in the north of the settlement.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: residents have widely differing ethnic and geographical origins, including Arabic tribal groups and Kurds, coming from the north and northwest of Aleppo and from Al-Raqqa. Conflict between the varying groups is common and there is little social cohesion.

Class and income: some long-standing residents have relatively good income levels but a the majority of residents have very low income levels with poor housing and living standards. Influential groups are not necessarily the richer residents but groups that share the same ethnic or tribal identity.

Safety and crime: the area suffers from some crime (smuggling and a limited drugs problem) and conflict, but this is not at a serious level. Conflict is intermittent and between distinct social groups vying for power. Women can move about freely.



Community organisation: although most people in the settlement know each other, there are no community groups or organisations and no formal or informal leadership. The Mukhtar is not well known. Residents do not unite to undertake self-help activities as most are too poor and the settlement is too socially disparate.

Women's engagement: women gather informally but as groups of neighbours rather than community movements. Any savings organisations are very small scale and women derive their income from paid employment or from male household members. Around 50% of women work, some in the public sector but most in nearby factories and industry.

Dominant social problems: illiteracy, school drop-outs and child labour are considered to be problems, as is the lack of social cohesion or any traditional social structures. People seem to have little respect or fear of the law.

Principal social assets: the familiarity of residents with each other is perceived to be the only social asset.

ECONOMY

Employment: most men in the settlement are permanently employed but have only part-time work, with most working in privately and publicly owned industry in the same area or the neighbouring area of Al-Shade.

Industry and commerce: in addition to the surrounding factories (mostly textiles and tobacco), there are many workshops within the settlement, most of which involve furniture polishing and spraying. Many of these ground floor workshops are owned by people who live in the area.

Household assets: 80% of residents own their own homes, with 20% being tenants, mostly renting a room in a family house for c.SP3,000 per month.

Property: there are not empty building plots left in the settlement. and a A one-storey 70m² house costs c.SP500,000-700,000. Houses in good condition and in good locations (on the wider streets) fetch

higher prices. A 20m² room costs around SP100,000 to build. Many homeowners have added an additional storey to their homes and there seems to be little municipal control over illegal building activity. Most construction activity is now centred on the narrow back streets and alleyways.

Dominant economic problems: child labour and low salaries are considered to be the main problems.

Principal economic assets: the proximity of industry with jobs for men and women is considered to be the main asset.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: all houses have a municipal water supply.

Sewerage: the municipal sewerage system in the settlement has been extended by residents to cover all houses.

Electricity: each house has an official connection and meter.

Access: the standard of paving, especially in the narrow streets and alleyways, is very poor.

Street lighting: streets are lit by the municipality but the level of lighting is inadequate.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the absence of pavements and the bad state of the streets are the main problems.

SERVICES

Schools: there is a local primary school but access to it is difficult and the standard of education provided is very low.

Clinics: there is no primary healthcare clinic in the area and residents have to travel to the neighbouring area of Al Hulluk.

Open space: while there are some open spaces, some privately owned and some owned by government, these are used for solid waste collection, or by local industries for storage or parking. Some are empty.

Dominant service problems: the lack of a local clinic, the need for more and better schools and the lack of a local mosque are perceived to be the main perceived problems.

ENVIRONMENT

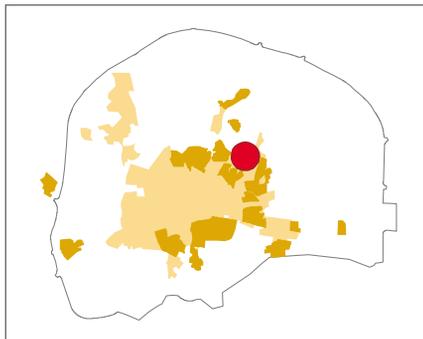
Streets: there are some very narrow streets and alleyways that are considered unsafe. Some of the wider streets suffer from speeding traffic but there are no parking problems.

Buildings: plots vary between 70m² and 100m². Some 90% of buildings have one or two stories and 10% have three floors. The sub-soil is not sufficiently stable to support high rise buildings but foundations are good enough to support current building heights. The quality of construction is generally not good.

Environment: the local workshops and factories result in high levels of air pollution, for example, furniture workshops emit chemical pollution. There are some empty plots in public ownership in the settlement and the surrounding area that could be used for service development.

Dominant environmental problems: weak building foundations and high pollution levels are the main problems.

Principal environmental assets: proximity to the city centre markets, industrial areas and local sources of employment are the main assets.



First settled: 1970
Population: 32,000

SUMMARY

Haidareyeh is a stable low-income community of widely mixed geographic and cultural origin that has developed through the purchase of land half from its original owners and half from informal agents who illegally subdivided government land. There is a strong sense of community solidarity and a tradition of local self-help in actions such as the provision of a waterborne sewerage system (that seriously needs upgrading), the paving of roads and petitioning government. The settlement is predominantly well built two storey houses. It has some narrow streets and the road surfaces are in a bad condition but they are not dangerous. It has two primary schools that provide a good standard of teaching, though one is overcrowded and in temporary buildings. The residents give high priority to the need for a local clinic.

HISTORY

Haiderieh is one of the larger informal settlements located in the north-east of the city. The land was originally privately owned pasture used for grazing. Government appropriated part of the land in the 1970s for development but it was squatted by informal developers who subdivided it and sold the plots. The rest was sold by its owners to informal developers. The area is largely well laid out, though there are some narrow streets.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: most households came from the north and east of Syria, though at different times and from different ethnic and cultural groupings, including Kurds. Each group tended to settle together in the same streets/alleys. Nevertheless, there is no conflict between people of different origin and Haidareyeh is a generally coherent multi-cultural community

Class and income: all but a very few households are poor with no discernable class differences.

Safety and crime: the area is one of the safest in Aleppo with no organised crime.

Community organisation: there is a strong sense of solidarity throughout the community which has seen collective self-help in paving and maintaining streets, the construction and maintenance of sewers and petitioning the municipality and different government departments. Such activities are coordinated by the men informally



representing different streets and areas with no formal organisation or leadership structure. The Mukhtar is hardly known, unlike the Imam who plays an active role in religious education in the community.

Women's engagement: women communicate between themselves extensively. Some 50% of married women undertake sewing, embroidery and some shoe making as home-based piecework as well as seasonal agriculture outside the city; some younger women are employed in workshops.

Dominant social problems: poverty and illiteracy, particularly amongst women are seen as the gravest social problems, aggravated by the relatively closed society (some women cannot speak Arabic)

Principal social assets: strong communal solidarity and awareness of the importance of collective action is seen as the greatest community asset, together with a strong emphasis on the importance of children's education.

ECONOMY

Employment: most men work in low-paid private sector jobs, such as shoe manufacturing, textiles, and the construction industry, more than half of them in the vicinity. Others travel to outlying areas to work as agricultural labourers.

Industry and commerce: Haidareyeh is a wholesale centre for the footwear industries with many small-scale ground floor shoe workshops and showrooms, mostly owned and run by people from outside the community, serving national and export markets.

Household assets: the area was formally almost entirely under owner-occupation, but the need for additional income and low-cost housing market demand led to many households subdividing their dwellings (vertically and horizontally) for rent. Thus, now some 40% of the residents are tenants.

Property: until recently a 130m² plot cost SP1million. However, in response to market demand 65m² houses are now selling for SP1.2million, though the market is now almost stagnant as a result of some households have receiving eviction warning notices promising relocation to the Ministry of Housing Youth Housing scheme in other parts of Aleppo - very unwelcome news. (The warning notices are selling at a good price).

Dominant economic problems: the principal problems are perceived to be the rising rate of unemployment, the instability of seasonal agricultural employment and overcrowding caused by families' inability to provide dwellings for newly married children.

Principal economic assets: opportunities for employment, affordable housing and the good location of Haidareyeh with good transport links to all parts of the city.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: only some 80% of houses have connections, many of them in bad condition. 20% are dependant on tanker deliveries.

Sewerage: all dwellings are connected to sewers installed by the community, many of which were badly constructed and/or not properly maintained.

Electricity: all houses have official metered connections.

Street lighting: available only in some streets.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the very bad state of the sewerage network, road surfaces, solid waste and the lack of telephone lines are considered the most serious problems.

SERVICES

Schools: there are two elementary schools, one of which is in a very bad physical condition, overcrowded in temporary buildings on two sites divided by a street. Access is not difficult except for the danger of having to cross a main road with heavy traffic to reach one school. The quality of education is regarded as good.

Clinics: the nearest clinic is in Hanao, half an hour's walk away. The service is rated as good, though it is very crowded, as it has to serve a large catchment area.

Open space: apart from a few vacant plots in private ownership, there is no public open space, except for a strip along the main road with very heavy traffic. There is a perceived need for small open spaces for women to meet and small children to play.

Dominant service problems: the bad condition of one of the schools, and the lack of a clinic and bakeries, are ranked as the main problems.

ENVIRONMENT

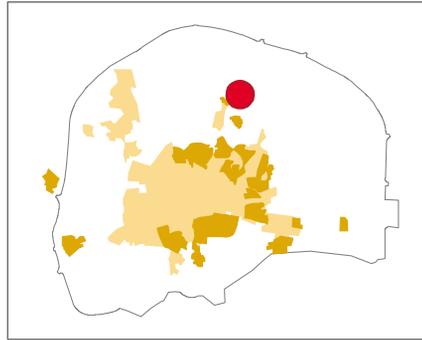
Streets: there are some narrow streets and some with heavy traffic, but none dangerously so. Vehicle parking is not a problem.

Buildings: plots were originally 130m² but many have been divided for subletting resulting in 65m² plots. 80% of the houses are have two floors and some 10% have three. The standard of construction is generally sound.

Environment: general environmental conditions are good with the exception of solid waste. Air pollution is not a problem.

Dominant environmental problems: the state of the streets aggravated by the seepage of sewage are seen as the principal physical problems.

Principal environmental assets: the main physical assets are the good soil conditions, solid construction and the good strategic location of Haidareyeh in the city.



First Settled: Arrival of refugees 1962
Population: [to be checked] 5,710 as of Dec 2008 (not including approximately 550 refugees to be relocated from Neirab camp in 2009)

SUMMARY

Handarat is composed for an informal settlement occupied by Syrians and a Palestinian refugee camp. This profile concentrates the latter, which, though being administered by GAPAR and serviced by UNRWA, has been classified by the municipality as an informal settlement (see Footnote 1). The camp is well serviced with good quality schools and a clinic. Most infrastructure is in place and a complete sewerage system has been finalized in 2009 is being installed, after which the roads will be resurfaced. The camp has many voluntary committees and organisations that attest to the unity and aspirations of residents and also to the work of UNRWA and GAPAR. Men, women, older people, young people and children are actively engaged in community affairs. Most people work outside the camp as skilled and unskilled workers. Income levels are low but housing standards and service levels in the camp are good.

HISTORY

Handarat refugee camp is located on what was once privately owned pasture and agricultural land. Much of the land was expropriated by the government in the 1960s and part of it leased to UNRWA for its installations for the camp and plots were offered to urban Palestinian refugees. The remainder of the government-owned land was settled by squatters, while the rest of the land was subdivided by its private owners and partially sold as individual plots to people who built their own houses. The area, including the camp, is poorly laid out; in some parts access is adequate but in other parts alleyways are narrow. The land slopes steeply in places which has made good planning difficult.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: the camp is occupied by people who left Northern Palestine in 1948. Around half of the population were previously housed in temporary shelters but were later re-housed by UNRWA at Handarat. The common origin of the residents has resulted in good social relationships in the camp and little conflict. Indeed, early residents from the same Palestinian villages and towns tended to group together but the more recent occupants have settled anywhere.

Class and income: most residents survive on very low incomes, with only a few households being better off. Some groups are more influential by virtue of their higher income levels or the leadership role they play in the community

Safety and crime: the area is safe and largely free of crime.



Community organisation: there are many several organisations, associations, clubs and committees within the camp, for example, a camp committee, a youth group, women's group and a socio-cultural group and, a sports club among others. UNRWA and GAPAR also organise summer classes, summer clubs for children, training events and workshops, and assist the poorest residents of the camp. UNWRA and GAPAR also have administrative committees that involve residents and each street has one or two representatives who take part. These groups and committees have led to the emergence of many formal and informal leaders in the community, including highly educated older people. The local Mukhtar and Imam also play active roles in the community. Self-help activities in the settlement include street cleaning. While there is a strong organisational network and motivated residents, UNRWA still plays a major role in the social and governance aspects of the camp's management.

Women's engagement: women play an active role in the community and participate in the camp's social activities, in its educational programmes and as wage earners. Around 60% of women work; married women often undertake work as pieceworkers at home, younger women work in local workshops and some women are well educated and have public sector jobs, especially in teaching. Saving groups among the women are limited in scale.

Dominant social problems: the closed or confined nature of a refugee camp, poverty and marriage within extended family groups are perceived as the main social problems.

Principal social assets: the stability and unity of the community, its shared goals and identity, and the value that people attach to education (and relatively low levels of child labour) are the main assets.

ECONOMY

Employment: c.20% of workers are in the public sector, and many also work in blacksmiths' workshops and as skilled construction workers. Over 70% work outside the camp and use public transport to get to their employment.

Industry and commerce: There are just a few ground-floor workshops in the area and no manufacturing activities. Local commerce is also limited.

Household assets: to earn extra money some people have extended and subdivided their houses and tenants make up 10% of the population. At the eastern edge of the camp, UNRWA has built an additional 300 houses to resettle relocate people from the overcrowded camp of Al Nairab in the south-east of the city; one of these 100m² houses is estimated to be worth SP800,000. A 100m² plot of land in the main camp is worth SP400,000. Construction costs c.SP4,000 per m², plus SP50,000 for a permit. Many people have

added second floors to their houses and UNWRA in many cases provides loans for this purpose.

Property: there is no property market activity but the estimated prices of land and houses are increasing. Some empty plots are being developed. The remaining free plots inside the camp are privately owned by Syrians (6 such parcels cut through the camp and are at best partially developed).

Dominant economic problems: the increasing price of houses and land is the main problem.

Principal economic assets: the affordability of houses, the work ethos of residents and the proximity to job opportunities are the main assets.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: there is a water supply to all houses.

Sewerage: UNRWA and the municipal government are currently installing a sewerage system connected to the municipal main line on the border of the camp.

Electricity: each house has a metered connection.

Access: road surfaces are in poor state but are expected to be repaved after the sewerage network has been completed.

Street lighting: this is adequate throughout the camp.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the poor state of roads, the build up of solid waste and the absence of telephone lines are the main problems.

SERVICES

Schools: there are UNRWA-run schools in the area that are easily accessible and provide good-quality education.

Clinics: there is a clinic in the camp that provides a good service though it can be overcrowded.

Open space: there are significant stretches of open spaces which are privately owned lands. In the newly built extension of the camp, UNRWA built there are open spaces which are now that are under the custodianship of GAPAR (with the exception of the sports grounds which are attached to UNRWA schools) owned by UNRWA. One is a small wooded area and another is a playground.

Dominant service problems: the lack of local market or an alternative central shopping facility centre and, most importantly, a government subsidized bakery.

ENVIRONMENT

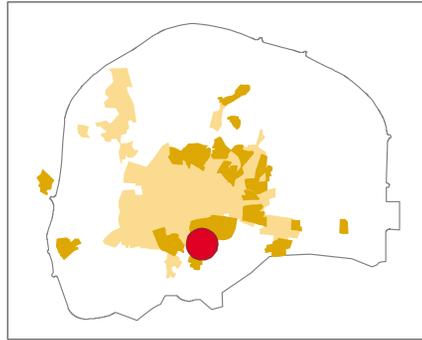
Streets: the most problematic streets are those in the steeply sloping area of the camp. There are no parking problems but large lorries in the area which drive along the camp's border to reach the nearby quarry can cause congestion.

Buildings: plots tend to be 100-120m² in size. 80% of houses have one or two stories; 20% have three stories.

Environment: the sub-soil is stable (rock) and most houses are well built but some are of a poor standard. Solid waste is the main source of environmental pollution and a catalyst for high prevalence of leishmania. There is both publicly and privately owned land that could be used to house facilities.

Dominant environmental problems: the temporary poor state of roads due to the laying of the sewerage system is the only significant problem and pollution as well as traffic from the quarry behind the camp are the predominant problems.

Principal environmental assets: the good quality of most houses and the proximity of the camp to the city, markets and job opportunities in industrial areas are the main assets.



First settled: 1970
Population: [to be checked]

SUMMARY

The settlement has grown slowly and in a disorganised fashion on largely agricultural land. Residents are from diverse backgrounds but residents they know each other and there is a good sense of community. Income levels vary from the well off to the very poor, and in general housing conditions are not good with weak foundations being a threat to the stability of some buildings. Unemployment and part-time employment is prevalent among men, and many women in the community also work. Most leave the settlement to find employment. Service standards are poor, with no local health facilities, a poor quality primary school and no recreational facilities. The sewerage system was installed by residents and floods when it rains, aggravating causing the spread of waterborne disease. There are empty plots of relatively cheap land that could be developed to improve the area.

HISTORY

The settlement has grown on agricultural land that was originally owned by only a few families. Currently Awqaf owns part of the area and the private sector also owns land in the south of the neighbourhood. Part of the area remains in agricultural use, though gradually people have subdivided and sold plots of land on an individual basis rather than to informal developers. So the area has grown slowly with no clear pattern of subdivision or street hierarchy, nevertheless the road network is adequate.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: the residents of the settlement have diverse geographical and ethnic origins, many attracted from other parts of the city by the low price of land. Despite the varied social mix, there is no conflict between residents.

Class and income: the residents have mixed income levels. Some are very poor and depend upon charities to survive and have very poor living conditions. Others are better off, notably the descendants of the original owners who have agricultural land on the edge of the settlement, and those who built and live above stores and workshops on the main streets. These residents tend not to mix with the very poor households.

Safety and crime: the area is not very safe but crime tends to be confined to small scale petty theft, etc. Women feel that they can move about freely.



Community organisation: there are no formal organisations or community leaders and collective activity organisation tends to occur between neighbours at the scale of the alley or street, for example to organise street cleaning, paving and sewerage maintenance. The organisation of self-help activities on a wider scale is prevented by the mixed tenure of residents and the number of very poor people in the area. Nevertheless, parents collectively rented space in a house to provide additional accommodation for an overcrowded school, the cost of which was later taken over by the Education Authority. People do not know if there is a Mukhtar.

Women's engagement: women engage with each other on an informal basis and any savings activities are very limited in scale. Around 50% of women work, mostly in factories, in sewing workshops, as public employees and as cleaners and housemaids.

Dominant social problems: the high levels of illiteracy, school drop-outs and child labour are the main problems in addition to low levels of civic awareness and the high levels rate of poverty. Residents feel that their neighbourhood has been neglected.

Principal social assets: the strong social ties and stable community relations are the main assets.

ECONOMY

Employment: around 50% of men are unemployed and many of the rest can only find part-time employment. Some work in the construction sector and some in the public sector. Most people work outside the neighbourhood

Industry and commerce: There are many sewing workshops in the area, usually mostly on the ground floor of houses, many of which are owned and run by people from other areas.

Household assets: 75% of residents are owner-occupiers and 25% are tenants. The cost of a 60m² house ranges from SP300,000 to SP500,000, and undeveloped land costs SP5,000-10,000/m². A 60m² room as an additional floor to an existing house costs c.SP150,000 to build. There are no sources of formal housing finance available or informal saving schemes for housing.

Property: the property market is largely stagnant, though there is some market activity in the area closest to the city. Construction activities declined are also minimal after the municipality made a demonstration of demolishing some illegal house extensions.

Dominant economic problems: child labour and low salary levels, the high rates of unemployment, illiteracy and poverty are perceived to be the main problems.

Principal economic assets: the relatively cheap price of land, the willingness of residents to work hard and the potential for new jobs in the area are seen as the main assets.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: all dwellings have water connections, installed by the Water Authority and paid for by individual householders.

Sewerage: the sewerage system was installed by residents and is inadequate. There is no storm water drainage and the streets and sewers flood when it rains.

Electricity: the area has an official network and households have meters but many highly dangerous illegal connections have also been made.

Access: all primary and secondary roads and alleyways are poorly paved or un-surfaced.

Street lighting: the area is lit by the municipality but the service is inadequate.

Dominant infrastructure problems: poor vehicular access, the inadequate sewerage & drainage network that cause flooding & the spread of disease, the poor state of roads & absence of paving are the principle problems.

SERVICES

Schools: there is a local primary school but it is not easily accessible, is overcrowded and provides poor quality education. Residents have rented a house for the school, which and the school has agreed to use it as an annex. There is no local secondary school.

Clinics: there is no local clinic and people must travel some distance to the nearest hospital that is some distance away even for primary health care.

Open space: there are no open spaces for recreational use but there is open land used for agriculture or owned by the government. The private owners are 'hoarding' undeveloped land for speculation.

Dominant problems: the absence of a local clinic and centre for the disabled, the poor state of the local school and lack of a park or playgrounds to prevent children from playing in the flooded roads streets are perceived to be the main problems.

ENVIRONMENT

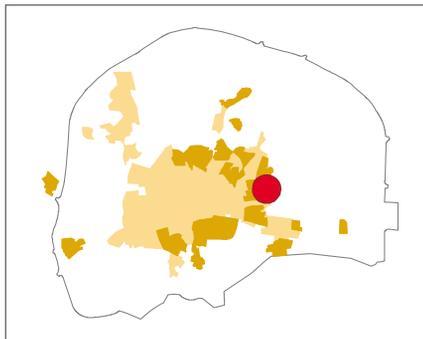
Streets: there are some narrow streets that cause traffic congestion problems. Parking is not a problem.

Buildings: plot sizes vary between 60m² and 120m². 60% of houses have two stories, 20% have three and 20% have only one storey floor. The sub-soil is not stable enough to support high rise buildings and many houses are in a precarious state, especially those in the south of the settlement.

Environment: pollution is caused by flooded sewers, with some air pollution coming from stone cutting workshops and nearby industries. There are some empty plots that could be used for recreation, but many of these are next to a railway line, which is not considered safe.

Dominant problems: the weak foundations of houses and the precarious state of many buildings are the main problems, not just because of the weak sub-soil but also because of rushed and poor quality construction (to avoid demolition by the municipality).

Principal assets: proximity to the city centre, to markets and industrial areas.



First settled: pre-1980
Population: 38,000

SUMMARY

Located in the northeast of the city, Jabal Badro is a settlement that is still growing. It is located near an industrial area and many men in the settlement work in local factories and workshops. Few women work as the area community is conservative and they are also not active in community affairs. Any self-help activities are arranged informally by men. Residents have installed their sewerage system and clean their streets. However, the sewerage system is of poor quality, roads are in a state of disrepair and the water and public lighting networks are incomplete. There is no local clinic and schools are overcrowded. The area is also polluted by nearby factories and solid waste and the roads are made unsafe by heavy lorry traffic. Most residents are owner-occupiers of two-storey houses and live on very low incomes. Though most people are from diverse backgrounds and there is some conflict between them, overall there is a sense of community and solidarity.

HISTORY

Jabal Badro is on privately owned agricultural land for agriculture and animal husbandry, that was subdivided and sold by its original Aleppo owners to individual families who have built their own homes (only 15% of the area is under public ownership). The oldest part of the subdivision has wide streets and a main road, whereas the eastern part of the settlement has many narrow roads. Very little of the settlement was developed by squatters.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: most residents came from neighbouring villages to the east of Aleppo and some from Aleppo itself. A high percentage of residents come from Bedouin tribes.

Class and income: there are some slightly better off residents in the settlement but c.70% can be classified as very poor.

Safety and crime: there is some conflict (especially between youths) and crime (e.g. smuggling and robberies) in the area but not at serious levels. Women can move about freely.

Community organisation: there is a sense of community and groups of residents informally organise self-help activities such as street cleaning and sewerage maintenance. The local Mukhar and Imam do not play leadership roles and there are no formal community organisations in the area. Community work takes place within small groups and often at the level of individual streets. The



ECONOMY

capacity of the community to organise and improve the environment is hindered by poverty, the mixed social fabric of the settlement and a lack of technical skills.

Women's engagement: women play a traditional domestic role and are not engaged in community affairs. The area is generally very conservative, though some unified social groups are more liberal. The women have some savings groups but these operate on a very small scale. Less than 5% of women work, with married women working from home as pieceworkers and some younger women in neighbouring workshops.

Dominant social problems: the young age at which women marry, polygamy, the high rate of disability, poverty, child labour and the low level of civic awareness are the main problems.

Principal social assets: residents live together peacefully, they know each other (many of them are related), leading to a sense of social unity.

Employment: around 50% of men are unemployed. Many of those in work are employed mainly part time in neighbouring factories and some have their own workshops. Most work locally, though some travel outside the area further for work.

Industry and commerce: there are some blacksmiths and sewing workshops in the area. Nearby factories include textile manufacturers among others. There are also many wholesale businesses and storage depots, with heavy goods vehicles crossing the settlement to load and transport products around Syria and abroad.

Household assets: 25% of residents are tenants and many of the local workshops and factory premises there are also let to long-term tenants in the local workshops and factory premises. The majority of residents, however, are in owner-occupied properties. A 120m² house with legal land tenure but without a building permit is

worth c.SP2 million with legal land tenure but without a building permit. Land is very expensive, costing c.SP6,000 per m². A building of 100m² costs SP1 million to build (with 'fees' on top). Few households are expanding their homes, with only those on side streets undertaking construction work. Housing and construction costs are covered by loans raised within families.

Property: the property market is currently stagnant though prices have increased. House extensions and renovations are most common in the eastern part of the settlement.

Dominant economic problems: unemployment, low salary levels and poverty are the main problems.

Principal economic assets: the affordability of houses and proximity to the city and the industrial area of Sheikh Najjar are the main assets, and the area also has good transport links.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: around 50% of the area has recently received a municipal household water system, with residents paying for their connections after having also paid for the water cabins that previously served the area. The remainder of the settlement relies on water cabins, boreholes and water vendors. The wastewater system suffers from a high rate of leakage and many of the pipes are badly laid.

Sewerage: in the older western part of the settlement all houses have been connected by residents to the municipal network, however in the eastern part residents are only now installing a sewage system and its quality is not good.

Electricity: each house has an official municipal metered connection.

Access: road surfaces are very poor quality and in a state of disrepair owing to continuous use by lorries. Few streets are paved, especially in the east of the settlement.



Street lighting: only the main streets are adequately lit.

Dominant infrastructure problems: insufficient street lighting, poor road surfaces and lack of pavements and the inadequate sewerage and water networks are the main problems.

SERVICES

Schools: there are schools in the area but these are overcrowded and many children have to walk long distances to schools in neighbouring areas (Al Sakhour or Hanano). Access is not easy and the quality of education is poor, contributing to high drop-out rates.

Clinics: there is no local clinic and residents must travel to the government clinics in either Al Sakhour or Hanano. These provide an acceptable quality of service but are overcrowded.

Open space: there are some open spaces. Land near the cemetery in the east of the settlement is owned by Awqaf. Some privately owned open land is used for agriculture and empty plots in the settlement are used for dumping solid waste.

Dominant service problems: the absence of a park, clinic, kindergarten and NGOs working in the area are the main problems. Also schools offer a poor quality service and there are no facilities for disabled people.

ENVIRONMENT

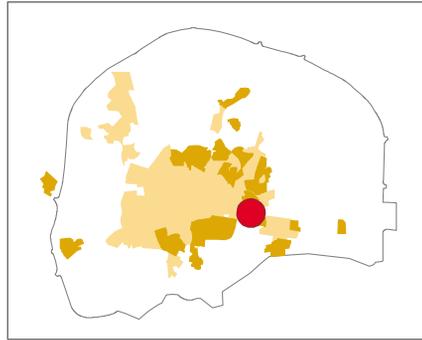
Streets: in parts of the settlement there are many narrow un-surfaced streets. There are congestion and parking problems caused by the settlement's mixed residential and industrial use and the flow of heavy goods vehicles.

Buildings: plot sizes range from 60-130m², with the average being 75m². 60% of houses have two stories and there are also many with three stories and a small number with four. Construction standards are poor but buildings are not in danger of collapse.

Environment: air pollution is caused mainly by factories in the area. There are many empty plots in the east of the settlement that could house public facilities.

Dominant environmental problems: the poor state of roads, leaking sewers, heavy traffic, air pollution and the build up of solid waste are the main problems.

Principal environmental assets: stable sub-soils and the settlement's proximity to the city and to factories that provide jobs are the main assets.



First settled: 1973
Population: 37,000

SUMMARY

Located to the east of the city centre, most residents of the area live on very low incomes and work as unskilled labourers. Unemployment is high and very few women work as this is a somewhat conservative community. Most households, who are of mixed geographical and ethnic origins, are owner occupiers of one or two story houses. Kinship groups live in semi-closed communities and streets with occasional conflict between them that sometimes makes the area unsafe. Self-help activities are on a small scale and there is no leadership that could unite the settlement as a whole. There is some large-scale public sector development in the area, for example, military housing projects and a new school is planned. The area needs a clinic and the roads are in a bad state of repair. Heavy traffic puts pedestrians at risk.

HISTORY

The Al Jazmati family used to own and farm (mainly olive trees) much of the land on which the settlement is located. Some land was expropriated by the government for service provision and some is owned by Awqaf. Over time, most of the land was subdivided by its owners and sold with certified receipts to people who built their own houses (though without no building permits). This subdivision is mostly well organised, but some land was also squatted and there the subdivisions have not been well laid out.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: the population is of mixed geographical and ethnic origin. Many are from villages to the east and west of Aleppo, some are from Al Bab province and some are Bedouins. This mix of people results in occasional conflict between different groups.

Class and income: virtually all residents have very low incomes and living conditions are poor. There are some influential groups with their status determined by wealth and group identity.

Safety and crime: the area is not safe, with each social group establishing itself as a semi-closed unit. Crime is the result of conflict and cycles of revenge between tribal groups. Young women cannot move about safely.

Community organisation: there are no formal organisations or leaders in the area, however, most people know each other and informally organise some limited self-



help activities (street cleaning and paving) within their own groups. There is no capacity for community mobilisation at the scale of the entire settlement. Some tribe members group leaders are more active than others and act as informal community representatives. There is also an informal land dealer who advises residents and speaks on their behalf. The Mukhtar is not well known but the local Imam provides religious education to the settlement's children.

Women's engagement: very few women in the area work and there are no women's organisations. Women have no role in community affairs. Any savings activities they undertake are very small scale. The community is very conservative and women play a traditional domestic role.

Dominant social problems: the high rate of illiteracy and low level of civic awareness are perceived as problems. Women will often have up to 12 children as they are considered an economic asset to be, sent out to work at an early age.

Principal social assets: no social or community assets could be identified.

ECONOMY

Employment: some 30% of men are in full-time employment, c.20% have part-time work and c.50% are unemployed. Many work as daily labourers or as porters in the city's wholesale markets. Many are taxi drivers and lorry drivers. Some people collect waste products to sell to the recycling industry. There are few skilled workers in the area.

Industry and commerce: there are some ground-floor workshops in the outer areas of the settlement, with the inner part being almost entirely residential. To the south the settlement is bounded by a main road where there are many wholesale market activities.

Household assets: about 70% live in owner-occupied houses and c.30% are tenants, though local workshops and shops (especially along the main street) are also rented out. A 70m² house cost SP1-1.5 million. Most houses have one or two stories and a courtyard. Construction costs are c.SP10,000 per m², with additional payments in 'informal fees' of c.SP15,000 and for the land. Some properties

have been extended vertically, and some streets in the settlement are entirely dominated by a single individual extended families who do that does not allow non-family members to settle in their immediate vicinity. These families are in positions of power in the settlement. There are no sources of housing finance except informal family loans.

Property: the property market in and area is nearly stagnant, though there has been a slight increase in prices recently. Development is now confined to the back streets and narrow alleyways. The future of the area is the subject of speculation as the military has a large housing scheme nearby and there are rumours that people in the area will be evicted to make way for a youth housing project.

Dominant economic problems: child labour, unemployment and poverty are the main problems.

Principal economic assets: the cheap price of land is the settlement's only economic asset.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: all houses have official metered connections.

Sewerage: all houses are connected to a water-borne system that was installed by residents.

Electricity: all houses have official metered connections.

Access: most of the streets are paved but are in a state of disrepair, especially in the narrow streets. Alleyways are in a very bad state.

Street lighting: there is adequate street lighting throughout the settlement.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the absence of pavements and poor state of the roads are the main problems.

SERVICES

Schools: there is a primary school in the area and secondary schools are within a reasonable distance. Access is not safe due to heavy traffic in the area around the schools. A new government housing project is resulting in heavy construction traffic in front of one of the schools. The quality of schooling is considered to be good.

Clinics: there is no clinic in the area.

Open space: there are open spaces surrounding the area that are owned by government and by private owners. Some are used for lorry parking. Some open spaces within the settlement are being developed as housing projects. A new school is planned for the public square in front of the existing school.

Dominant service problems: the lack of services such as a park, playgrounds and clinic are the main problem. There is also a need for a women's association and literacy programmes.

ENVIRONMENT

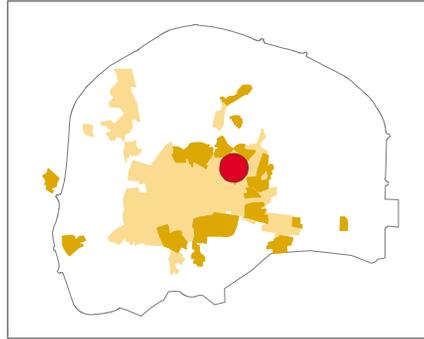
Streets: some streets are narrow and dead-end alleys. There is a serious traffic problem caused by the high number of lorries that park in the area, some of which are driven by very young and unqualified drivers. The lorries also cause parking problems.

Buildings: plots sizes vary, for example 70m² for traditional houses, but some plots are 100-110m². Around 70% of houses have one or two stories, while 30% have three or four. Construction standards are not good but are not dangerous.

Environment: pollution is caused by the build up of domestic solid waste, rather than by industry. Some open spaces in the settlement are planned to be developed to improve public facilities.

Dominant environmental problems: heavy traffic is the main problem.

Principal environmental assets: proximity to the city and to its markets is an asset. The sub-soil is also sufficiently stable for building.



First settled: 1980
Population: 50,000

SUMMARY

Sheikh Fares is a vibrant, cohesive economically active community almost entirely engaged in the manufacture, wholesale and retailing of shoes that are produced as a semi-craft local industry. Poverty is not a major problem, though the community is not wealthy. The neighbourhood is almost entirely comprised of single and two storey, well constructed buildings in owner occupation. The settlement is built on a hill and many of its streets, some of which are relatively have steep gradients. It has adequate infrastructure in reasonable condition. However, access to schools and the nearest clinic in Huluk is difficult and the quality of service is not considered to be good.

HISTORY

Sheikh Fares is a relatively small area to the north of Sheikh Khoder and west of Hydareyeh. It was agricultural land under pistachio plantation that was sold by its owner, a prominent Aleppo, family to informal property developers who subdivided it and retailed the plots. The whole settlement is on a steep conical hill and, though the roads are planned in a conventional grid with adequate widths, etc, no concessions were made to the topography when they were laid out, so streets run across the contours, making many of them extremely steep in places.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: all households come from the villages of the northern province and have the same ethnic origin. This ensures that there is considerable social cohesion throughout the settlement.

Class and income: the community is not poverty stricken and those who have lived there for longest seem to be the better off and the most influential.

Safety and crime: the area is considered very safe with no organised crime or drugs dealing and only occasional petty theft.

Community organisation: there is no formal community organisation or leadership, though the popularly recognised leaders of each street do collaborate. The Mukhtar is responsible for Huluk as well as Sheikh Fares and is not well known in the area. Households collaborate in local maintenance (street paving and cleaning)



ECONOMY

Employment: nearly all men in the economically active age group seem to be employed, mostly locally in the shoe industry, though some 10% are employed in the public sector outside the area.

Industry and commerce: the whole of Sheikh Fares seems to be engaged in the manufacture, wholesale and retailing of shoes. Much of this activity takes place in ground floor workshops, though several whole buildings (3-4 storeys) are given over to workshop, show room and warehousing space.

Household assets: 90% of the dwellings are owner-occupied, though most of the workshop and other commercial space is rented.

Property: land, where it is available, costs c.SP10,000/m² and a fully developed plot of 120m² sells for c.SP2.5million. Construction costs SP4,500/m² with 'fees' in addition. The

area is almost fully developed and people are extending their houses vertically with an additional floor.

Dominant economic problems: the 'informal settlement' status of the area and lack of government support to its development is seen as the greatest threat to its vibrant economy.

Principal economic assets: the vibrant mix of manufacturing, commerce and residential activities is rated Sheikh Fares', greatest economic asset.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: all properties have connections.

Sewerage: all properties are connected to an officially installed water-born network

Electricity: all properties have official metered connections.

Street lighting: adequate provision, though it is need of maintenance.

Dominant infrastructure problems: there are no identified infrastructure problems.

and have undertaken self-help work on the installation of waterborne sewerage. There is a clear sense of collective identity.

Women's engagement: some 40% of women work, mainly home-based piecework in connection with the shoe industry, though some have jobs in workshops. There are strong social ties between women, but no formal organisation or savings societies.

Dominant social problems: illiteracy is perceived to be the dominant social problem.

Principal social assets: strong social cohesion and mutual respect and an ability to work together are the community's main assets.



SERVICES

Schools: there are no local schools and children have to travel long distances. The level of education offered is considered to be of low quality and parents tend to take their children out of school early.

Clinics: the nearest clinic in Huluk is more than half an hour's walk and it is very crowded as it has a large catchment area.

Open space: there is no public open space in the area.

Dominant service problems: the lack of local schools and a clinic are clearly seen as the dominant service problem.

ENVIRONMENT

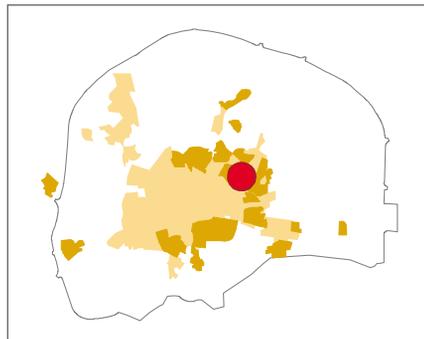
Streets: there are some narrow streets and road maintenance is not good, resulting in the poor quality of road surfaces and potholes, aggravated by steep gradients and lorries servicing the wholesale activities in the area. Traffic and parking does not seem to be a problem.

Buildings: the original 120/m² plot sizes are tending to be subdivided. 50% of construction is single story, 40% two storeys and the remaining 10% has three floors. Soil conditions are stable and construction standards are generally good.

Environment: the general layout of the area is well planned, apart from the steep gradients of some streets. Solid waste is managed well and there is no serious environmental pollution.

Dominant environmental problems: the state of street paving and maintenance is the main problem.

Principal environmental assets: good soil\conditions and the generally high standard of construction are the area's assets.



First settled: 1960-1964
Population: 40,000

SUMMARY

Sheik Khoder has a central location and is a cohesive and safe community whose residents are relatively well off and who mostly own their own homes. Although residents have varied geographical and ethnic origins, strong community leaders and organisations unite them and they actively work to improve the neighbourhood. Employment is mainly in nearby factories, workshops and houses but proximity to good schools and health clinics is poor. People complain about the level of pollution, m. Many streets are poorly paved and the sewerage network is inadequate. Most of Sheik Khoder is well planned, though there is a poorer area that was developed by squatters on Awqaf land that has not been developed on a grid and has narrow alleys and small plot sizes.

HISTORY

Located to the northeast of Aleppo city centre and surrounded by formal settlements and development, the larger part of this area was formally agricultural land owned by wealthy farming families, while another part is owned by Awqaf. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, some factories were set up in the area and some of the land was subdivided and sold (via agents) to individuals who subsequently built and their own houses. The Awqaf land that was squatted is poorly subdivided, with an irregular layout, narrow streets and small plots.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: residents come from different geographical and ethnic origins, however, long-standing residents provide social cohesion and promote good relations between the different groups. There is no evidence of social tensions or conflict.

Class and income: around 30% of the population is poor, with the remainder being better off (class 2). Those settled on Awqaf land appear to be among the least well off. Influential groups include those with higher incomes and better houses and those who have been in the settlement for a long time.

Safety and crime: the area is very safe with little crime or conflict. Community leaders resolve disputes locally and a nearby police station promotes safety in the area. Women can move around freely and fearlessly.



Community organisation: there is a strong sense of community resulting in self-help activities among residents that include the communal cleaning of alleys and streets, maintenance of water and sewerage networks, and the establishment and maintenance of a community meeting place and garden on undeveloped land in the south-west of the area where the men meet. Some wealthier residents are known to assist those who are least well off. There is a neighbourhood committee that is active, a Mukhta who is well known and an Imam who plays an active role and is from the community rather than Awqaf.

Women's engagement: women have strong social ties among themselves, especially those in the same street or who are kin. Women frequently gather socially and undertake collective activities such as street cleaning and organising social and family events. Over 60% of women work, mostly for public and private employers

in seasonal farming outside Aleppo and as domestic employees in upper-income areas.

Dominant social problems: the main problems are considered to be high rates of illiteracy and school drop-outs, the high number of working children, overcrowding, the low age at which people marry and the incidence of birth defects due to inter-marriage.

Principal social assets: social cohesion and good community organisations and leaders are the main assets, making the residents open to new development initiatives and capable of forming partnerships.

ECONOMY

Employment: most male workers do not have permanent jobs but work casually in the construction sector and in shoe factories.

Industry and commerce: there are many workshops (for example blacksmiths, shoe makers and sewing) and small factories in the area but only around 50% of residents work in Sheik Khoder or neighbouring areas. Most of the local workshops are on the ground floor of houses and many such enterprises are owned by people who do not live in the area.

Household assets: c.90% of residents own their own homes and some rent out rooms, with c.10% of the population being tenants.

Property: a 150m² house is worth c.SP6 million if it is in good condition. The average value of a 100m² house is SP1.7 million and a plot of undeveloped land of 125m² is worth c.SP4 million. A 20m² room costs

c.SP50,000 to build and many families are adding additional stories to their houses at a cost of c.SP100,000. No housing finance is available but people make informal loans to each other. Currently the property market is stagnant with most development and construction confined to the interior narrow alleys of the settlement.

Dominant economic problems: child labour and low salaries are perceived to be the main problems.

Principal economic assets: assets include nearby jobs for both men and women in local industry and the area is has the reputation of being a source of good quality workers.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: each house has a municipal connection for which residents paid the installation cost of SP11,000 per household.

Sewerage: the sewerage network has largely been laid and maintained by residents. However, it is in a poor state and needs renovating.

Electricity: all houses have official connections and meters.

Access: most roads and alleys are very narrow and paving is in a very poor state or repair.

Street lighting: street lighting has been installed by the residents and is inadequate.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the poor state of streets and pavements and the inadequate sewerage network are perceived to be the main problems.

SERVICES

Schools: there is a local primary school but this is overcrowded. Secondary schools are distant and a local secondary school for girls is especially needed. The standard of local educational facilities is considered as average.

Clinics: there is no local clinic and residents have to travel to the neighbouring area, which is especially a problem when children need vaccinations and healthcare.

Open space: there are some privately and Awqaf owned empty plots but these are mostly used for storage, raising domestic animals and for parking. There is no open space for recreational use. However, there is a large area in the south-west of Sheik Khoder, owned by an influential Aleppo family that has not been developed & is used for market gardening & could be acquired by the municipality for recreational purposes.

Dominant service problems: the lack of a local clinic and nearby schools, poor transport links, the absence of open spaces & community centres are considered to be the main problems.

ENVIRONMENT

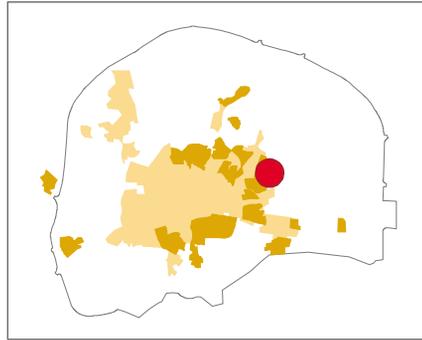
Streets: some streets are very narrow and are dead ends cul-de-sacs but safety is not a problem, neither is traffic flow or parking.

Buildings: the size of plots ranges from 60-300m² and 80% of buildings have one or two stories, while 20% have three. Construction standards are not good as dwellings have been built, extended and occupied fast in order to avoid demolition by the authorities, but they are generally safe as buildings are not high. The sub-soil is not very stable and foundations tend to be minimal.

Environment: air and noise pollution levels are high owing to local industry. Textile and dyeing factories to the south of the area were listed for relocation 20 years ago but this has yet to happen.

Dominant environmental problems: high pollution levels, a decayed and badly constructed sewerage system and weak building foundations are the main problems.

Principal environmental assets: proximity to the city centre, markets and industrial areas for jobs are considered to be the main assets and they make the area attractive to developers.



First settled: 1980
Population: 130,000

SUMMARY

Sheikh Najjar is a mixed residential and industrial area. Thus there are job opportunities within the area and its surroundings, but also heavy traffic and air pollution. There are also many small informal workshops and most men and women work. Despite this around half of the residents are very poor. The area is not well planned and access is often a problem. Many buildings have more than two floors and although the sub-soil is stable, construction standards are not good. Education facilities are poor quality and difficult to access and there are no recreation facilities. The sewerage system and roads are in a state of disrepair and solid waste collection and street lighting are inadequate. Despite being from diverse backgrounds, social relations are harmonious and groups of residents are well organised and work together to improve their environment through self-help.

HISTORY

Sheikh Najjar is to the east of Aleppo and is surrounded by industrial development. It has grown very rapidly over the last three decades. The land was originally in agricultural use and mostly in private ownership, though some of the area is owned by Awqaf. Around half the land was bought from the original owners by individuals who built their own houses, as well as some factories. The rest was bought by developers who subdivided it and sold plots. Little land has been squatted. Several households from the Old City have moved to Sheikh Najjar in order to expand their premises, building two story houses with workshops on the ground floor and their dwelling space above. The area is not well laid out, with just one main road leading to the industrial area flanked by winding secondary streets and cul-de-sacs. The subdivision is especially poor in the east of the settlement.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: the residents have diverse geographical and ethnic origins, including people from eastern Syria, Al-Raqqa, and Kurdish areas. People from the old city in Aleppo also moved to Sheikh Najjar so that they could expand their business premises, building two-storey properties with workshops on the ground floor. There is some tension between the different social groups but conflict is not significant.

Class and income: residents have a range of income levels with the better off being long-established residents and those with workshops and small factories. Around 50% of the residents are very poor.

Safety and crime: there is some crime (smuggling and drugs) in the area but safety issues are not serious and women can move about freely.

Community organisation: there is a strong sense of community solidarity among those who belong to the same



tribal or kinship groups. Self-help activities are organised informally by the men for actions such as cleaning and paving streets, and The residents built the mosque themselves. Such self-help activities tend to be piecemeal and uncoordinated as the population is varied and there is not coherent organisational structure. The Mukhtar is not well known though the local Imam plays an active role in the community, particularly in religious education.

Women's engagement: women do not participate directly in community affairs and tend to be traditionally conservative. They gather informally as neighbours or kin. Savings groups among women are very small scale. Around 50% of women work, mostly in home-based garment finishing and embroidery piecework, though some younger women have jobs in local workshops.

Dominant social problems: the young age of marriage, the high incidence of disability, child labour and polygamy are perceived as the main problems.

Principal social assets: the main assets are the peaceful nature of the neighbourhood and the sense of social solidarity.

ECONOMY

Employment: most men work in neighbouring factories and in local workshops; most are in part-time employment and c.25% are unemployed. Around 30% work in the settlement but most work in the surrounding industrial areas, many as drivers.

Industry and commerce: there are many ground-floor blacksmiths, motor repair and sewing workshops in the area, many of them rented by outsiders. Large factories in the area include cloth dyeing, textile production and clothes manufacture, operating on a national scale, supplying Syria.

Household assets: as residents have expanded their homes (both vertically and horizontally) the rental market has grown and c.40% of residents are now tenants. Most of the workshops and factories are also let out. A 120m² house costs c.SP3 million if the land is owned legally but the building is unregistered. Untitled land costs SP2,000/m² but SP6,000/m² if it has legal title documents. To construct a building of

100m² costs c.SP1 million. Formal finance is available through the banks for workshops and factories but not for housing. Construction activity is currently stagnant and confined to side streets.

Property: the area is nearly fully developed and property prices are increasing. Construction activity is confined to adding additional stories and to property renovation.

Dominant economic problems: unemployment, low salary levels and poverty are perceived as the main problems.

Principal economic assets: the affordability of houses and proximity to the city and to jobs, as well as good transport links, are the main assets.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: the municipality Water Authority has recently installed household metered connections, with residents paying for the installation, having previously paid for the installation of a water cabin system.

Sewerage: all houses are connected to the official network but it is in a very bad condition.

Electricity: each house is served with an official metered supply.

Access: main roads are in a poor state, that is made worse by their use by heavy lorries. They are muddy in winter and dusty in summer. Solid waste collection is inadequate.

Street lighting: only the main streets are lit.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the lack of street lighting, poor state of roads and absence of pavements, substandard sewerage network and proximity to overhead high voltage electricity cables are the main problems.

SERVICES

Schools: there are schools in the area but they are overcrowded and access is difficult. Girls have to walk a long way to school. Some parents collectively hire a minibus to transport their children to and from school. The quality of education is poor but most parents cannot afford extra private tuition, hence the school drop-out rate is high.

Clinics: there are clinics in the neighbouring area of Hanano that offer a good quality service, though they are crowded, but they are not easy to reach.

Open space: some open spaces remain and are owned privately and by Awqaf, but there are no open spaces for recreational use.

Dominant service problems: poor education facilities and teaching standards, the lack of a local park and bakery, poor levels of civic awareness and the lack of facilities for the disabled are the main problems.

ENVIRONMENT

Streets: streets are narrow in some parts of the settlement and parking is problematic. The main traffic problem is caused by heavy goods lorries vehicles as the area is both residential and industrial.

Buildings: residential plots vary between 60m² and 120m², while industrial plots range from 500-1000m². 50% of buildings have two stories while there are a number of three- and four-storey constructions and some with five stories. The buildings are not in good condition but are not at risk of collapse.

Environment: air pollution levels are high and caused by factories in and around the settlement. Empty plots that could be used for public facilities are at the crossing of Sheikh Kroush.

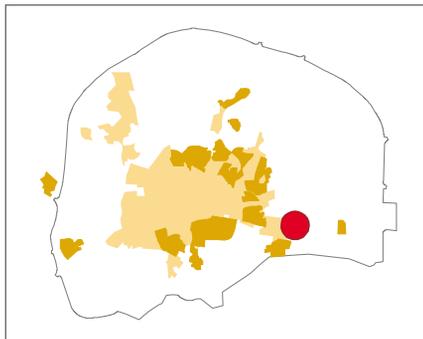
Dominant environmental problems: air pollution levels, dangerous traffic, sewage leaks and solid waste build up are the main problems.

Principal environmental assets: strong sub-soils for building and the proximity to the city, to markets and industrial jobs are the main assets.



LOW DENSITY SETTLEMENTS

AL MAKEYEH
SHEIKH SEIED WEST
SHEIKH SEIED EAST
AL AWEJA DWERENEH
KHAN AL ASSAL
AL NAIRAB VILLAGE
KAFAR DA'EL



First settled: 1958
Population: 3000

SUMMARY

Al Malkeyeh is a poor settlement in the east of Aleppo, surrounded by the major industrial area of Jebreen. Jebreen provides some job opportunities, especially for local women, but education and skill levels among men are low, rendering them unemployable in formal industrial jobs. Although the residents have diverse geographical and ethnic origins, there is a high level of social solidarity and community spirit. Strong community relations and a functioning neighbourhood committee have brought about street cleaning and the installation of a partial water supply network. The principal problems include the bad state of the roads, poor quality local schooling and the lack of health or recreational facilities.

HISTORY

Al Malkeyeh has a complex history. Located in the east of Aleppo, close to the industrial area of Jebreen, close to the airport. Its land use category remains unclassified by the Aleppo master plan. Originally the area was largely privately owned and under agricultural use, though there was also some small-scale industry and some factories. Part the area was expropriated by the government for industrial and other development, and Awqaf also owns some land. The original residents were from Al Nairab village and Sfeereh. These people subdivided and sold some of the privately owned land as plots, while other areas were squatted by individual households. The layout and subdivision allowed for narrow but adequate streets in most of the area, though plots are less well demarcated in the north where the settlement borders the main Aleppo-Al-Raqqa road.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: despite the residents having diverse ethnic and geographical origins, mainly in the east of Aleppo province and Al-Raqqa, there is a strong sense of community cohesion and solidarity. Everyone knows each other and there is no evident conflict between people.

Class and income: residents are very poor and have poor living standards. Those with influence owe it to political party membership rather than high income levels.

Safety and crime: the area is deemed to be very safe and there is no organised crime. Women and girls can move about freely.

Community organisation: there is an active neighbourhood committee with all its members coming from the area, including the party members, thus there are no informal leaders as in most other informal settlements. The Mukhtar and Imam are not active or widely recognised. The strong



sense of community solidarity is reflected in self-help activities such as street cleaning and the maintenance of infrastructure.

Women's engagement: while women have no formal organisations of their own they do meet and organise informally. Many work in nearby factories, sewing workshops and in the public sector, and some have assumed the main wage-earning role within their families.

Dominant social problems: the high rate of school drop-outs and illiteracy, the prevalence of child labour and low levels of civic awareness are the main problems.

Principal social assets: solidarity among residents and social stability of the neighbourhood are considered to be its main assets.

ECONOMY

Employment: apparently more women than men are in full-time employment, with over 50% of men unemployed and a majority only with temporary work as porters or day labourers. Some residents work within Al Malkeyeh but many work in the industrial area of Jebreen. Some commute to the city centre.

Industry and commerce: publicly and privately owned factories in Jebreen produce a range of products for the national domestic market (industrial batteries, sugar and textiles, wool and cotton processing, etc). Despite their location, the residents of Al Malkeyeh find it hard to get well-paid work in Jebreen owing to their poor education and skill levels. There are only a few informal workshops within Al Malkeyeh itself.

Household assets: all residents own their own houses, there are no tenants. The current price of a 200m² plot of land is SP1 million. A 20m² room costs c.SP100,000 to build with a fee of only SP5,000 payable to

the authorities. Many people have extended their houses by adding a second floor at a cost of c.SP10,000. The municipal authorities appear to exert few controls over building activities. New house construction and extension is financed by informal loans from family and friends.

Property: the property market is largely stagnant, though the area of the settlement closest to the city shows some activity, with property prices increasing. Some empty plots are still being developed.

Dominant economic problems: child labour, low salary levels and unemployment among men are the main problems.

Principal economic assets: the potential of job opportunities for men and women in Jebreen are considered as the main asset.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: households obtain water from water cabins installed by the water authority and financed by self-help. The system does not meet the community's needs.

Sewerage: there is an inadequate water-borne system that was installed by the municipality.

Electricity: all houses have official connections and meters.

Access: there is no 'main street' and all secondary streets are poorly surfaced and unpaved. Even the area around the school is not surfaced.

Street lighting: there is some street lighting but this is insufficient and not well maintained.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the absence of paving, the poor state of roads and the inadequate water network are the main problems.



SERVICES

Schools: there is a nearby primary school but access to it is not easy, the school building is in a bad condition and the standard of education provided is considered to be poor. There is a private kindergarten in the area, run by a local teacher.

Clinics: there is no public health clinic in the area and no private doctors available locally.

Open space: there are some open spaces in both public and private ownership awaiting new industrial development but these tend to be used for parking lorries or holding sheep. There are no recreational open spaces in use.

Dominant service problems: the lack of local health facilities and poor state of educational services are the main problems.

ENVIRONMENT

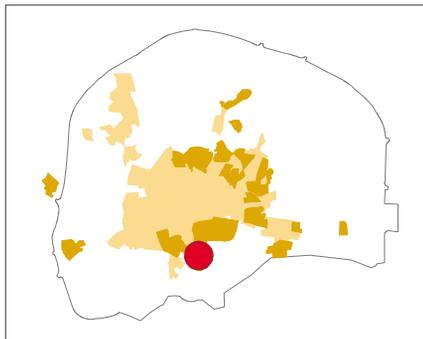
Streets: the street layout and widths are adequate though un-surfaced and un-maintained. There are no parking or other traffic problems.

Buildings: plot sizes vary from 70-100m². 90% of houses are one or two stories in height. The sub-soil is strong and stable and construction standards are adequate, with no high rise buildings.

Environment: although the area is surrounded by factories, air pollution levels are not high and not a source of complaint among residents. There are many empty plots that could be developed, especially on the perimeter of the settlement.

Dominant environmental problems: none.

Principal environmental assets: the proximity to the city centre, with good transport links, markets and industry are seen as the main assets of the area.



First settled: 1960
 Population: [to be checked]

SUMMARY

Sheikh Seied is divided into two main areas. This profile concerns the area settled in the 1960s and that has strong social unity, with residents sharing the same geographical and tribal ethnic origins. Local leaders organise self-help activities and social ties between neighbours and kin are strong. However, there is much hostility toward the other part of Sheikh Seied and fights between their rival gangs. The area suffers from high levels of industrial pollution, poor health and educational services and lacks open spaces for recreational use. Unemployment is very high and many people lost their agricultural livelihoods when the government expropriated their land. The main street is wide and well paved, but most secondary roads are narrow and winding. Plot sizes are large and most houses are low rise. The area is fully developed and no new residents are settling in this part of Sheikh Seied.

HISTORY

Sheikh Seied was originally a small agricultural village to the south of Aleppo, with a few families owning the land. Most of the area was subsequently expropriated by the government for various development purposes, amongst them the cement factory and main sewerage line. However, because development was delayed, the area was squatted and subdivided by the settlers. Plots are large to accommodate small-scale the livestock rearing. There are two main parts to the area, with this profile concerned with the area that was developed in the 1960s; the other part was settled later. Parts of Sheikh Seied 1 are still known by the names of the original farms that were on the site.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: residents share the same geographical and tribal ethnic origins and the area has a strong sense of community. There is no conflict evident within the area but conflict and hostility exist between the two main parts of Sheikh Seied.

Class and income: most residents have a medium level of income though around 25% are poor. Influence within the community is a reflection not just of wealth but also tribal/traditional social position.

Safety and crime: the area is generally safe, though there is some petty crime (smuggling and robbery) and very limited gang and drug related activities in pockets within the settlement. Women can move around freely though the area is very conservative. Violence in the area centres on conflict between the two main subdivisions of Sheikh Seied, which have different geographical origins and length of history in the area. The police have recently taken action to reduce crime in the area.



Community organisation: there is a neighbourhood committee but residents regard informal leaders more highly. Residents know each other and organise self-help activities such as street cleaning, sewerage maintenance and paving. Poorer residents who live furthest from the main street engage less in self-help activities. There is a local Mukhtar who belongs to the same tribe, but most people approach informal leaders rather than him to resolve problems. The local Imam is active, especially in children's religious education.

Women's engagement: there are no formal committees or organisations for women but they gather informally as neighbours and kin. Savings groups are very small in scale and women rely upon their earnings or male family members for income. Around 15% work as teachers or in agriculture with their husbands.

Dominant social problems: the large number of illiterate people and low levels of civic awareness are perceived to be the main problems.

Principal social assets: strong solidarity and social ties between neighbours, as well as the presence of some highly educated men and women in the settlement, are the main assets.

ECONOMY

Employment: some 50% of men are unemployed and most of those with jobs are not in permanent employment. Both men and women engage in seasonal agricultural work and many men also work in their own homes illegally manufacturing car batteries. Half of those who work do so within the neighbourhood, with the remainder travelling to other areas, for example Salheen. When much of the area was expropriated, many families lost their agricultural land and still have not found urban or industrial work.

Industry and commerce: there are some workshops in the area and people also use the courtyards of their houses for manufacturing car batteries and rearing animals. Some households still have agricultural land in the neighbouring areas. There is also a food market in the area in which some people sell produce.

Household assets: the majority own their own homes with just 10% paying rent as tenants. The local property market is stagnant with virtually no land or houses changing hands. Construction costs are high at c. SP5,000/m²

(plus SP50,000-150,000 per floor in 'informal fees'). New construction is mainly to build homes for grown-up children, involving the construction of second floors or new buildings on the larger plots (some plots are 1,000m²). There are no formal sources of finance available for house construction or purchase.

Property: the current market is stagnant and there are no new settlers into this part of Sheikh Seied. There are no empty plots and new construction activity is very limited and confined to the settlement's narrow alleyways. Some traditional large plots have the potential for more intensive development.

Dominant economic problems: problems are the high rate of unemployment in the area, child labour and household poverty.

Principal economic assets: the area is perceived as the gateway to the villages to the south of Aleppo and has specialist small-scale industrial activities, notably vehicle repairs.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: all dwellings have water connections, officially installed by the Water Authority and paid for by individual householders.

Sewerage: a basic water-borne network was installed by the municipality but this has been extended and repaired by residents through informally organised self help.

Electricity: all houses have official metered connections. However the system is overloaded due to the informal industrial activities that take place on some premises.

Access: the settlement's wide roads are well paved but its many narrow alleyways are in a very bad condition, while those roads near the cemetery are un-surfaced.

Street lighting: provided by the municipality; the area is well lit.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the lack of pavements, the poor condition of secondary roads & alleyways are the main problems.

SERVICES

Schools: there are primary schools nearby but no neighbouring secondary schools. Access to schools is safe and easy, but the quality of education is poor, with better-off families sending children to private schools or employing private tutors.

Clinics: there is a health clinic in the area but the standard of its services, with the exception of children's vaccinations, is not good.

Open space: There is one a fenced open area with trees and a fence that is owned Awqaf. However, it is used as a solid waste collection area. Residents would like there to be a small local park.

Dominant service problems: better quality health and educational services and social services for the disabled are considered to be the main needs.

ENVIRONMENT

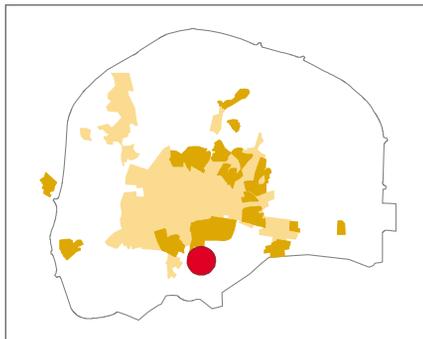
Streets: some streets are narrow and winding, and these are perceived to be more dangerous than the wider main streets. There are also parking problems and traffic speeds on the main street tend to be dangerously high.

Buildings: plot sizes range from 200m² to 1,000m², with c.80% of buildings having one or two stories and only 20% three or four floors. The sub-soil is stable and construction standards are good.

Environment: Air pollution levels are high, caused particularly by the cement factory and workshops in the neighbourhood that produce toxic fumes, including lead oxide from the recycling of car batteries. The area is nearly fully developed and finding space for additional services would be difficult.

Dominant problems: poor health due to high pollution levels is the main problem.

Principal assets: the main asset is the settlement's good location near to the city, its markets and industrial areas, as well as the stability of the sub-soil.



First settled: 1965
Population: [to be checked]

SUMMARY

The eastern part of Sheikh Seied is populated by a disparate group of families, some with ethnic ties, largely from the southern provinces. It is a relatively violent community with a high level of poverty, unemployment and sporadic criminal incidents. The area is predominantly owner occupied (few tenants) with a relatively well planned layout, though there are parts with narrow streets. The most significant infrastructure and environmental problem is the sewerage system, laid by self-help, that does not reach all dwellings, is badly installed and in a very poor state of repair - a significant health hazard. However, there has been a reasonable level of communal activity, including the construction of a mosque, and an awareness of the need for improvements in the neighbourhood and an apparent willingness to participate in it.

HISTORY

Sheikh used to be a village to the south-east of Aleppo whose land was appropriated by government for industrial and infrastructure development. The residents kept themselves together as a community and moved to the present site, then agricultural land, of which about half the families bought as individual plots, the other half squatted. The eastern part, considered here, differs significantly from the western settlement and has grown with the arrival of rural immigrants mainly from the villages of the southern provinces. Despite its original settlement process, the plots are well laid out and street widths are adequate.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: there is little social cohesion outside the immediate family and violent conflict within the neighbourhood is common. Conflict also becomes violent between the residents of East and West Sheikh Seied.

Class and income: half the population can be classified as the poorest of the poor, though there are a few rich (and powerful) people as the area is still attractive to business people.

Safety and crime: the area cannot be classified as safe. Many people are armed and robberies occur. Smuggling seems to be endemic and there is a limited drugs problem.

Community organisation: there seem to be a good willingness to collaborate within family and tribal groups. This is manifest in collective activities such as street cleaning, paving and the installation of sewerage and a mosque was built in the neighbourhood



ECONOMY

by collective community action. These activities are coordinated informally by the men in times of crisis or when there is a strong need; there is no regular community organisation. The Mukhtar plays no significant role and is hardly known.

Women's engagement: women communicate socially and freely but do not participate in wider community affairs. There are small women's savings groups but they have marginal economic or social impact. Some 10% of women work in very temporary seasonal agricultural activities and a few have jobs in local workshops.

Dominant social problems: the young age of marriage, polygamy, high birth rate and the high number of disabled are considered the main social problems together with a high incidence of child labour.

Principal social assets: recognition of the need to improve the area.

Employment: half the male population is unemployed. Of the rest, several are hawkers and vegetable sellers and some have jobs in local workshops or neighbouring industries. However, 30% travel to other parts of the city for work.

Industry and commerce: there are many local small workshops in the area, mostly engaged in blacksmithing and motor repairs. Large factories, such as the cement plant, are close as are many heavy goods warehouses, but these do not seem to have a significant impact on the employment opportunities of Shekh Seid.

Household assets: almost all families own their own dwellings. It is estimated that less than 10% are tenants.

Property: legally registered land with official ownership papers sells for c.SP7,000/m². Without title deeds it sells for SP2,000/m². Thus, a house on a 150m² plot with official title to the land but no official building

permit is currently worth c.SP1.5million. The cost of constructing a 100m² building costs in the region of SP1million with an additional SP100-150,000 in 'informal fees'. Some new houses and some extensions are being built but the rate of investment in the area has slowed down considerably in recent months.

Dominant economic problems: the high rate of unemployment, endemic poverty and high level of illiteracy are seen as the main economic problems.

Principal economic assets: affordable houses, good location in the city and good transport connections are the main assets.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: all houses have a water connection.

Sewerage: most, but not all, are connected to a waterborne system installed by self-help which is in a very bad state of repair and in need of renewal.

Electricity: all houses have an official metered connection.

Street lighting: is only available on the main roads (adding to the insecurity at night).

Dominant infrastructure problems: the limited extent and bad state of the sewerage system and the un-surfaced roads are the worst problems.



SERVICES

Schools: there are several schools in the area with easy access, though they tend to be overcrowded. The standard of teaching is reported not to be very good, but the residents of Sheikh Seied East seem to have little interest in education and get their children out of school and into the job market as soon as they can. This is in part a reflection of their level of poverty.

Clinics: there are good public clinics in the area with a reportedly good standard of service, though inevitably overcrowded.

Open space: there is some privately owned undeveloped land in the neighbourhood and some Awqaf land. Nevertheless, there is a demand for small parks and playgrounds.

Dominant service problems: the perceived service problems are the need for a police station and better access to daily services such as bakeries.

ENVIRONMENT

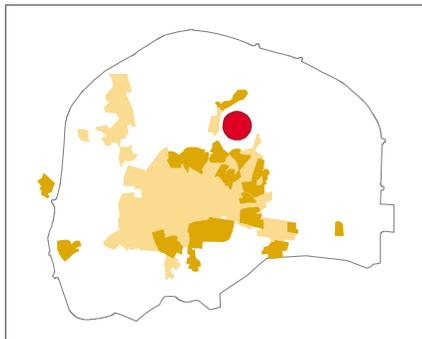
Streets: despite the generally good street layout, there are some narrow streets. There is no serious traffic or parking problem, partly because the bad state of the un-surfaced roads discourages vehicles.

Buildings: plots are small, some under 50m² and the majority between 150-200m². c.80% of the houses are single storey with a few rising to three floors. The general standard of construction is not good but is not dangerous because of the low-rise development.

Environment: the whole area is polluted by the cement factory in addition to the local air pollution caused by small-scale lead working and car battery recycling.

Dominant environmental problems: air pollution and the inadequate sewerage system, also the bad state of the roads.

Principal environmental assets: a relatively good layout plan and a good location in the city.



First settled: 1955
Population: 7,000

SUMMARY

Al Aweja is a settlement to the north of Aleppo that can be divided into two areas: an old village with a traditional layout and good quality houses, and an area that is still developing where squatters have subdivided the land and sold plots to people who have hastily built their own houses. Some plot sizes are very large, most houses are single or two-story dwellings and there are no tenants. Most residents live on very low incomes and belong to two main tribal groups that are frequently in conflict with each other. Although there are some community leaders, there is no overarching community organisation to unite residents or organise self-help activities. Women play a traditional domestic role, though some also work. Employment opportunities are in local factories and workshops and as garbage pickers. Youth unemployment is high. There is no clinic or secondary school in the area. T, the sewerage, water and domestic electricity systems are inadequate and secondary roads are in a bad state. The area is also polluted by local factory emissions and by a solid waste dump located in the settlement.

HISTORY

Al Aweja used to be a small village to the north of Aleppo that was incorporated within the city's boundaries in 1975. It is located between Ein Al Tal and Handarat. The area has a history of mixed use, with part of it used for agriculture (wheat and animals) and owned by two people, part of it used as a solid waste dump (recently closed) and part used for industry, including textile factories and a brewery that the government nationalised in the 1950s. Part of the land has been expropriated by the government. Al Aweja can be divided into two main parts: the original village with old privately owned houses, and an area subdivided and sold on by squatters. Those who bought these plots have no legal title deeds. The old village has a traditional layout with narrow streets and alleyways, while the newer area is adequately subdivided. Over time, the settlement has spread through construction on new land, though the boundaries of the area are unclear.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: the residents come from a range of ethnic and geographical origins, but the majority are from two tribal groups from the north & south of Aleppo. There is considerable conflict between these two groups.

Class and income: in general, most residents have very low income levels & those in the squatted part of the settlement live in very poor conditions, though their plots of land are large. Those who have grabbed the most land & the original squatters who protect the area & its residents are influential in their communities and appear to be better off.

Safety and crime: the area suffers from robberies, tribal and social conflict and other problems. In general it is not safe and young women cannot move about freely.

Community organisation: within distinct tribal groupings there is a sense of community solidarity. Within these groups, the men organise emergency improvements when essential but self-help activities among



ECONOMY

residents are not common. Instead residents expect the municipality government to undertake maintenance and make the improvements. There are some local leaders amongst the tribal elders and people who are Ba'ath party or government workers. The Mukhtar is active, well known and respected.

Women's engagement: women do not play a role in community organisation and are confined to domestic activities, and work raising animals or as wage earners. Around 30% work in agriculture with their husbands; the poorest work in the local factories or as garbage pickers. Any savings activities among the women are very small in scale.

Dominant social problems: the young age at which women marry, marriage within family groups and the high rates of illiteracy and disability are the main problems.

Principal social assets: the leadership provided by some local men is the main social asset.

Employment: c.30% of men (mostly the young) are unemployed, c.20% in full-time jobs and c.50% have only temporary work. Some people work in the local factories, in agriculture, in clothing workshops and in the sorting and selling of solid waste. Some residents work outside the area and travel by minibus to work.

Industry and commerce: there are some workshops in the area, many of them stone-washing denim for jeans. Animal husbandry and garbage picking are the other main economic activities. Local factories produce baking powder and textiles (in a one very large factory) and the brewery.

Household assets: virtually all resident are owner occupiers. A 200m² house costs c.SP2.5 million, while construction costs SP10,000 per m² (plus 'additional fees'). Many people have added second floors

to their homes, using informal loans from within family and social groups to fund construction work.

Property: squatting of vacant land is still in progress, and a commercial property market for finished houses has yet to be established. The value of land is increasing and construction activity is widespread and uncontrolled.

Dominant economic problems: poverty and youth unemployment are the main problems.

Principal economic assets: the area's potential for future development, the affordability of houses, its proximity to the city and good transport links and services are the main assets. The settlement is also close to a large area that is to be developed as a Friday market site.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: not all houses have individual official connections. Those on higher ground are supplied by water cabins, while in newly developed (squatted) areas households have to buy or steal water.

Sewerage: the oldest part of the settlement has an official sewerage system while the remainder of the settlement has a piecemeal system of piped and open-air uncovered sewers installed by residents.

Electricity: most houses have an official metered connections, apart from those most recently developed on the western edge of the settlement.

Access: the main roads in the settlement are paved, whereas secondary roads (especially in the east of the settlement) are in a bad state and are unpaved have no pavements.



SERVICES

Street lighting: all streets have adequate lighting installed by the municipality but the system is not maintained.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the poor quality of the subdivision and its narrow streets, and the absence of services and infrastructure in the east of the settlement are the main problems.

Schools: there are easily accessible local primary schools but they are overcrowded and the quality of their service is not good. There is no local secondary school.

Clinics: there are no local clinics and the residents have to use the hospital in an adjacent neighbourhood.

Open space: the settlement is surrounded by vacant land and within it there are open spaces in the west (between the main road and houses) and the old waste dump in the east. The empty land in the west is owned by wealthy families who own factories and other land in the settlement. The open land is currently in agricultural use though one area is designated for the new premises of the exclusive Aleppo Club. The land owners will not sell any more of their land.

Dominant problems: the lack absence of services for the disabled, of a clinic, and a bakery, social organisations and NGOs are perceived as the main problems.

ENVIRONMENT

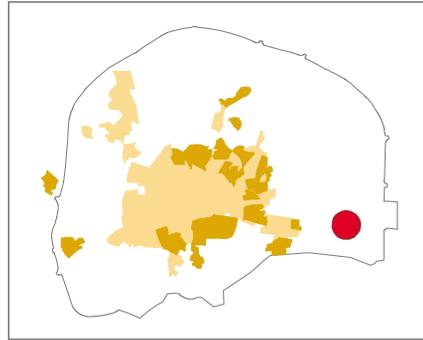
Streets: some streets are narrow but not dangerously so. There are few traffic and parking problems, though large lorries lack a parking area.

Buildings: plot sizes range from 100m² to 500m², depending on the influence and wealth of the owners. Only those houses in the old village and those on the main road have building permits. Around 50% of houses are single storey, c.40% have two and c.10% have three or more stories. Buildings in the old village are in good condition but those in the squatted area where built rapidly and poorly. Many are still in an unfinished state.

Environment: the area is polluted by local industry and by the waste dump. There are open spaces on the edge of the settlement that could be developed to house public facilities.

Dominant environmental problems: pollution from the neighbouring factories and the illegal sorting of solid waste (often much of it by children) are the main problems.

Principal environmental assets: the area has stable sub-soils suitable for construction; it is close to the city and its services and has potential for future development and job opportunities in nearby factories.



First settled: mid-19th century
Population: 7,000

SUMMARY

Dwereneh is an old agricultural settlement, populated by a single ethnic group. Although residents have strong social ties, self-help activities are rare and traditional and religious committees and leaders manage the village. Although sheep rearing remains an important activity for both men and women, most people also work in surrounding factories. These offer only low-paid employment as educational levels in the village are very low. Most residents of Dwereneh are poor. Streets have an irregular layout, are narrow and most are un-surfaced. The sewerage system is inadequate, as are health care services. Housing standards are low. The factories create high levels of air pollution.

HISTORY

Dwereneh is in a desert area to the east of Aleppo, far from the city but surrounded by the industrial area of Jebreen. It was declared an informal settlement by the municipality in 2000. Under mixed (private, government and Awqaf) ownership, this area was originally agricultural (livestock) but has since become predominantly industrial. Dwereneh is made up of privately owned and squatted land, developed organically over the last century as a village, with people sharing the same ethnicity. It has an irregular layout, with some large plots embracing courtyards for animals. Iben Khaldoun hospital for the mentally ill abuts the settlement.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: the original settlers were a family banished to this area some 150 years ago by the Osmanian authority in Aleppo. Later settlers were from the same tribal group and the settlement has a tight, traditional Bedouin social structure.

Class and income: most people in the community have low-incomes, with c.25% being better-off. The majority work in nearby factories and also raise sheep. Some people in the community are influential, owing to their traditional social positions.

Safety and crime: the area is very safe and largely free from crime (with only some smuggling). Women can move about freely. Disputes are mediated locally by the elders.

Community organisation: there is a strong sense of community and people know each other. Tribal committees play an active role in managing the settlement, including entering into legal negotiations



with the government over land expropriation and values. The Mukhtar is well known and respected and the Imam who is from the same ethnic group plays an important leadership role. Community self-help activities are limited to emergency maintenance such as clearing drainage channels.

Women's engagement: women have their own informal groups and often gather while caring for the livestock or producing fuel cakes from animal dung for burning in the winter. Over half of women also work in the surrounding factories, as well as with their husbands on rearing sheep.

Dominant social problems: the high rate of illiteracy and school drop-outs, child labour (including by very young children), intermarriage among cousins and a widespread feeling of neglect by the authorities are perceived to be the main problems.

Principal social assets: strong community cohesion and leadership are the community's main social asset.

ECONOMY

Employment: in addition to raising sheep, most men have jobs as unskilled workers (porters, drivers) in nearby factories, as well as in more distant industrial locations.

Industry and commerce: the settlement itself produces sheep for the market and organic fuel for domestic consumption.

Household assets: almost every family owns its own house and there are very few tenants.

Property: A 300m² house costs SP1million if located near a main road, but houses in less accessible parts cost around SP500,000. A 20m² room costs c.SP100,000 to build, plus SP50,000 in 'informal fees'. Many households have added second stories and despite current legislation those in the best locations continue to extend their houses. Municipal control seems to be weak. Money for building and buying homes comes from informal loans within the community. The current property

market is stagnant, with any development taking place only along the main roads. The strong tribal links in the area make it unattractive to outsiders so there is virtually no buying and selling of property.

Dominant economic problems: child labour, low salary levels and limited opportunities for well-paid employment owing to low levels of education and the poor social standing of the community at large are perceived to be the main problems.

Principal economic assets: job opportunities for men and women in nearby factories and the potential to become a centre for sheep farming and trading are the perceived assets.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: all houses are connected to the municipal supply.

Sewerage: installed by the municipality, the sewerage system is in a state of disrepair. It also needs to be extended.

Electricity: all houses have official connections and meters.

Access: there is just one main street in the settlement and side streets are in a very bad condition.

Street lighting: street lighting is inadequate.

Dominant infrastructure problems: the poor state of the sewerage system is the most urgent problem, with the bad state of roads and lack of paving also being concerns.

SERVICES

Schools: only primary schools are located nearby with easy and safe access. The parents, most of whom are illiterate, have no view on the quality of education.

Clinics: the nearest clinic is in a neighbouring village and the service there is of a very poor quality. The local hospital is only for those with mental illnesses, serving the whole of Aleppo.

Open space: there are some open spaces in the settlement but these are used for as sheep pounds and by factories for storage or lorry parking. There is vacant government-owned land.

Dominant service problems: the lack of a clinic and services for women are considered to be the main problems.

ENVIRONMENT

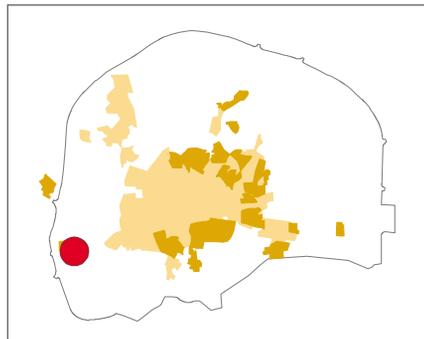
Streets: most of the narrow streets do not permit vehicular access. On the main street, parking is not a problem but traffic speed is high.

Buildings: plot sizes tend to be 300-500m² and buildings are of one or two stories. The sub-soil is not particularly stable and unable to support buildings of more than two stories without extensive foundations. Construction standards are generally poor.

Environment: air pollution levels are high, caused by the nearby factories and the burning of clinical waste at the hospital. A large amount of land surrounding the settlement is vacant and owned by the government with a view to industrial development. Some plots in the village are also vacant and owned by the government.

Dominant environmental problems: weak building foundations and high pollution levels are the main problems.

Principal environmental assets: assets include proximity to markets and industrial areas, and good road access to the area after the opening of the Aleppo ring road.



First settled: 1900s
Population: 15,000

SUMMARY

Located about 10km to the west of Aleppo city, Khan Al Assal has recently been incorporated within the city boundaries and classified as an informal settlement. In addition to original villagers, the settlement houses squatters who have self-built their houses and the exclusive weekend villas of wealthy families from Aleppo. Most residents have medium levels of income and work outside of the settlement, though some work in local workshops and some in agriculture; the area is known for its honey and melons. Many people are unemployed or can only find seasonal or part-time work. Residents are united and well organised, with a neighbourhood committee and leadership provided by the local Mukhtar. The area's infrastructure is now being upgraded with new water and sewerage systems being installed. Roads will also be upgraded, however, the settlement has no health facilities or secondary school. There are still plots of undeveloped land and prices have been rising as the area becomes more developed. Construction standards are good and the environment is clean and attractive.

HISTORY

Khan Al Assal was originally a village whose residents grew crops and raised animals. The villagers owned their land, though some was common land and the some was owned by people from Aleppo. The area is crossed by roads to and from Aleppo and over time land near the roads and much of the common land has been expropriated by government. Squatters also laid claim to large plots on which to build their own houses and raise animals. Wealthy families from Aleppo have also bought land here and built large weekend villas, many with swimming pools. Although the area has not been professionally subdivided, primary and secondary roads are adequately laid out. Houses range from the old village houses to those built by squatters to exclusive villas.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: in addition to the original villagers, many people fled here from Kafar Da'el after disputes with neighbouring families. Most residents share the same cultural characteristics and there is little conflict between them.

Class and income: most residents have middle-income levels, large houses and good standards of living. Some groups, notably such as the better off, are more influential than others.

Safety and crime: crime levels are very low and women can move about freely.

Community organisation: there is a sense of community in the settlement and residents undertake activities such as street cleaning and writing to petition the authorities. Residents also installed their own sewerage network that is now being replaced by the municipality. There is an active neighbourhood committee and



the Mukhtar also plays a leadership role, with and the Imam is also active and well known.

Women's engagement: women are engaged in social events in the community and also work in agriculture with their husbands. Women have savings groups but these operate on a very small scale. Around 20% of women work, mostly in agriculture and temporary jobs. Some are teachers and nurses and some work in sewing workshops.

Dominant social problems: there are no significant social problems.

Principal social assets: the strong social fabric is an asset and extended family structures that house newly married children are considered important. The settlement also has good relations with neighbouring areas.

ECONOMY

Employment: most men in the settlement work part time in agriculture, animal husbandry and other jobs. Some have also benefited from land price rises and have become real estate traders. Most people work outside the settlement and use public transport to reach their employment.

Industry and commerce: there are workshops in the area located in the large houses or their courtyards, for example carpentry workshops. There are no polluting activities. The main streets also house restaurants and vehicle maintenance services. The area is well known for its agricultural products, especially honey and melons. The local economy is increasingly buoyed by land trading.

Household assets: some people have divided their homes either vertically or horizontally and rented out rooms for additional income. Tenants number c.15% of the population. A 500m² houses costs c.SP15 million but most trade is in land, which

costs SP7,000-15,000 per m², depending on its location and legal status. A 20m² area construction costs SP100,000 to build (plus SP50,000 in fees). Most residents have added second floors and finished their houses over recent years. Construction is financed by informal family loans.

Property: the buying and selling of houses is stagnant and even the land market is now quiet. Recently buildings have been demolished by the authorities in this area because they were constructed illegally.

Dominant economic problems: the high unemployment rate, seasonal nature of agricultural work and diminishing profits in agriculture are the main problems.

Principal economic assets: the affordability of houses, rising price of land, proximity to the city and good transport links are the main assets.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: this area used to rely on springs and boreholes for water but now most houses are connected to the newly installed municipal network. Only new houses and some tenants are not connected.

Sewerage: previously only the main streets had an adequate system installed by the residents and secondary roads had no proper network. The municipality is now installing a new sewerage network.

Electricity: each house has an official metered connection.

Access: roads are poorly paved and there is no storm water drainage. Roads are due to be upgraded by the municipality.

Street lighting: there is no street lighting in the area but it is believed that it is due to be installed by the municipality.



Dominant infrastructure problems: poor infrastructure, poor road quality and blocked sewers have been the prominent problems but the area's infrastructure is now being upgraded.

SERVICES

Schools: there are local primary schools but no secondary school and many children, especially girls, leave school at an early age. The primary schools are safe and easy to reach and quality of teaching is good.

Clinics: there are no public clinics in the area, only private doctors.

Open space: there are some open spaces near the main street, which and these are under public and private ownership.

Dominant service problems: the absence of a clinic and secondary school is the main problem.

ENVIRONMENT

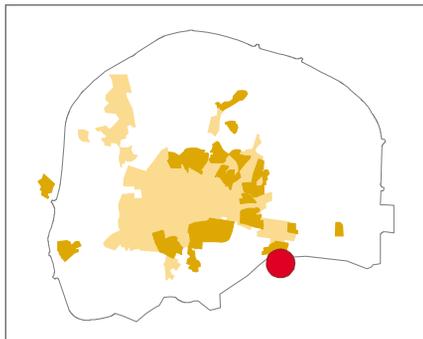
Streets: there are no dangerously narrow streets and on the whole, traffic & parking in the area is good. The exception is the main road that is very busy and has a high traffic accident rate.

Buildings: plot sizes vary from 500-1,500m², but many have been divided into smaller plots. 80% of houses are single have just one story, 20% have two stories and just a few have three. The sub-soil is stable and construction standards are good.

Environment: the environment is clean and attractive. There is some land that could be developed to house public facilities.

Dominant environmental problems: the potential for future over development is the only perceived problem.

Principal environmental assets: the settlement's proximity to the city & good transport links, the quality of its housing & the productivity of local agriculture (especially if there was government support) are the main assets.



First settled: 1980-1985
Population: [to be checked]

SUMMARY

Al Nairab Village has a diverse population but there is little conflict between its residents. People are well organised and have improved the area through self-help activities, including establishing a kindergarten. They campaign for better government services, including a cultural centre but the area also needs recreational facilities, an improved health clinic, more school places, better road surfaces, cleaner air and an improved sewerage network. Residents have relatively good standards of living yet employment opportunities tend to be part-time or seasonal. The area is known for the high quality of its agricultural produce and there are also local workshops in the neighbourhood, but most residents have to travel out of the settlement to find employment. The settlement has an irregular layout but construction standards are good.

HISTORY

In the area of the airport, this settlement is adjacent to the biggest Palestinian refugee camp in Aleppo. The area was originally agricultural land and a village, and was known for its fertile soils and for vegetable growing. The land was privately owned by those settled in the villagers and by others who farmed the land but lived in Aleppo. Gradually land has been subdivided and parcels sold to individuals who have built their own houses. Very little has been squatted. The subdivision is irregular though roads are sufficiently wide and the old village layout remains. Some of the better houses, built with diaspora remittances from the Gulf, are owned by Palestinians.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: residents have diverse origins, including the original villagers and landowners and families who have moved out from the Old City of Aleppo and Palestinians from the neighbouring camp. There are some occasional minor conflicts between different groups of residents but it is not pronounced and social relations are generally good.

Class and income: residents generally have middle-income levels and their living standards are not poor. Those who are better off and with higher levels of education have influence and take on leadership roles in the community.

Safety and crime: there are no serious crime or safety problems and women can move about freely.

Community organisation: there is an active neighbourhood committee that helps to organise self-help activities such as cleaning and petitioning the government.



Also neighbours at the level of the street or alley organise such activities among themselves. There are informal leaders in the community, some of whom are highly educated and active, and the Imam plays a prominent role in religious education. The Mukhtar is new and not well-known. The residents have set up a kindergarten and a teacher voluntarily conducts adult literacy classes in the local school.

Women's engagement: women are actively engaged in the community affairs, but their own savings groups contribute very little to their incomes. Around 50% of women work, mostly in temporary jobs that include animal husbandry and seasonal agriculture but also in teaching, nursing and in sewing workshops.

Dominant social problems: overcrowding and the continuation of traditional rural living habits such as raising animals in the home are perceived as the main problems.

Principal social assets: the desire of residents to be better educated and their level of social organisation (they have petitioned the government to build them a cultural centre) are the main assets, as well as their good relationship with the neighbouring refugee camp.

ECONOMY

Employment: most men are in part-time employment, mostly working in agriculture and animal husbandry, with only 10% employed in the public sector. A minority of those in employment work within the settlement but the rest travel some distance to work in the city by public transport.

Industry and commerce: economic activities within the settlement include sewing workshops and the raising of animals at home (houses are large and many have courtyards). The area is still known for the quality of its agricultural produce.

Household assets: c.85% of houses are solely owner occupied, though over time people have extended their houses vertically or horizontally in order to rent accommodation. There are currently no houses for sale in the settlement, though 400m² of land is worth c.SP4 million. A 20m² room costs SP100,000 to build plus SP50,000 in 'informal fees'. Although some residents have added an additional floor to their

houses, many have yet to do so but would like to. There are locally organised savings and loans organisations for housing purposes but they are very limited in scale.

Property: the land and property markets are currently stagnant. Little building work is ongoing though it is clear that most many people have only recently finished building their houses.

Dominant economic problems: the main problems are the high rate of unemployment, the seasonality of work and falling profit levels in agriculture due to recent increases in the price of oil needed for irrigation pumps.

Principal economic assets: the affordability of houses, good transport links to the city are seen as assets, along with the many people experienced in agricultural work and some skilled youth.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: the municipality has recently installed a metered connection to all dwellings.

Sewerage: the official system in the main streets is adequate but secondary streets suffer from sewage blockages and flooding, especially in the area near the mosque.

Electricity: each house has an official and metered connection.

Access: roads are poorly surfaced and tend to flood due to a lack of drainage.

Street lighting: the area is well lit by the municipality.

Dominant infrastructure problems: lack of maintenance, the poor sewerage system and the bad quality road surfaces are the main problems.

SERVICES

Schools: there are local schools but they are overcrowded and lack basic amenities. Access is easy and safe and the quality of teaching is good. The secondary school also serves the Palestinian refugee camp.

Clinics: there is local health clinic but it offers a poor quality service.

Open space: there are no open spaces for recreation.

Dominant service problems: the overcrowded schools, poor quality health clinic and lack of a playground for young people are the main problems.

ENVIRONMENT

Streets: some streets in the area are narrow but vehicular access is not problematic and there are no parking problems.

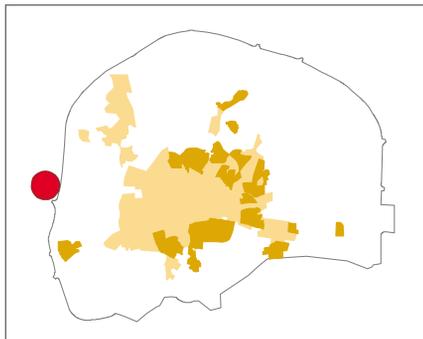
Buildings: plots vary from 400-500m², but these are beginning to be subdivided. 80% of houses have just one storey and 20% have two, with just only a handful of three-storey buildings. The sub-soil is stable and construction standards are good.

Environment: neighbouring cement and oil industries cause air pollution in the settlement. There are some empty plots that could be used for public facilities.

Dominant environmental problems: the high level of air pollution is the main problem.

Principal environmental assets: good house construction standards, proximity to the city and to industrial areas with jobs,

and the quality of local agricultural production (especially if given government support) are the main assets.



First settled: early 20th century
Population: 9,000

SUMMARY

Kafar Dael covers an area of 280 hectares on the north-east fringes of the city that have been included within the 2008 master plan for Aleppo. Its origins are an old village and many residents still work in agriculture. There are many workshops in the area and some nearby industry, but youth unemployment is high. The area is conservative and women play a very limited role in public life. Men provide informal leadership and many aspects of the area have been improved thorough self-help activities. Such activities have been waning as the municipality of Aleppo becomes more involved. The area still lacks proper paving, recreational facilities, a secondary school and quality health care. The settlement contains empty plots and is becoming increasingly attractive to outsiders and to developers. A part of it retains its original village character while another part has been illegally subdivided with a more regular layout.

HISTORY

Located on the road to San Simon, Kafar Da'el was originally an agricultural village where wheat and olives were grown and livestock was reared. The small settlement was owned by the villagers, with some land owned by people living in Aleppo, but later the government expropriated almost half the land in the area. The settlement consists of the original village where houses are privately owned, and an extension area that was developed latter by squatters who subdivided the land and sold plots where to which householders have no legal tenure.

SOCIETY

Social cohesion: most residents are the families of the original villagers or from the neighbouring areas and of the same ethnic group. However, the recent inclusion of Kafar Da'el with the Aleppo administrative boundary has encouraged people from outside of the area to move to there. Originally the residents of the village belonged to two tribal groups who where frequently in violent conflict, however, such conflicts are rare today.

Class and income: there are distinct class groups such as the long-term residents, those with large land holdings and the better-off. However, even the poorer households have relatively good living standards.

Safety and crime: the area is largely safe but it is conservative, which prevents (especially young) women from moving around on their own. Crime is very limited, though there are occasional acts of violence based on revenge related to tribal conflict.



Community organisation: the community is well organised and has participated in street cleaning, petitioning the authorities and building a clinic and five mosques. It is organised through kinship and neighbourhood ties with no formal organisations. Since the inclusion of the settlement within the Aleppo boundary, residents have begun to petition the municipality to improve and area and self-help activities have declined.

Women's engagement: women are not engaged in community affairs (either directly or indirectly) and only participate in social events. Around 50% of women work on the land with their husbands. A few are teachers. Only very poorly few women work in neighbouring factories.

Dominant social problems: the main problems are the young age at which many women marry. There is also a high incidence in inter-marriage within fami-

lies leading to a high rate of children, with disabilities. Illiteracy is also a recognised social problem.

Principal social assets: strong community ties, shared identity, community stability and the leadership provided by men are the main perceived assets.

ECONOMY

Employment: many young men (c.30%) are unemployed, with this number rising due to recent global economic trends. Many men work in local workshops as carpenters or stone cutters, and some work in the industries (dairy, food processing, marble cutting and construction materials) of the neighbouring area of Al Mansoura.

Industry and commerce: within Kafar Da'el, workshops are mostly engaged in carpentry and stone cutting, as well as food processing and construction materials production. Some of these workshops hire women as well as men.

Household assets: the majority (c.90%) of residents are homeowners but as the area has become more attractive to outsiders, the number of tenants has begun to grow. Property near the main roads is the most expensive though there is little market in houses, most new residents preferring to buy land to develop themselves. A 100m² plot with legal title costs SP1 million (half that without legal title documents)

though it has decreased recently from SP1,000 to around SP700 per m². The cost of construction is SP2,500, per m² with an additional informal 'fee' of SP100,000 per 'roof' if the property is not legally registered.

Property: many residents have added second floors to their properties. Construction costs are covered by informal loans among neighbours and families rather than from official sources of finance. The area is still very attractive to developers and plots are still being developed. The absence of legal permission to build has not deterred construction activities.

Dominant economic problems: unemployment, exacerbated by the recession and the slow-down of construction in Aleppo upon which many people in Kafar Da'el depend is currently the main economic problem.

Principal economic assets: the area has good potential for future development owing to its location, affordable property, good transport links to the city and a high level of services.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Water: all houses are connected to the water supply network.

Sewerage: a water-borne system is currently being installed in the area by the authorities.

Electricity: each house has a metered supply.

Access: primary roads are paved but current sewerage works have led to deteriorating conditions. Secondary roads tend to be un-surfaced.

Street lighting: although streets are well lit, the municipality does not undertake regular maintenance of the system.

Dominant infrastructure problems: poor layout and narrow streets are a problem and the neighbouring valley is polluted with standing waste water that causes disease in Kafar Da'el.

SERVICES

Schools: there is a primary school in the area and access to it is safe. However the quality of its teaching is poor so many families pay for additional private tuition for their children. There is no secondary school in the area.

Clinics: there is a local clinic but it is only open for two hours a day and offers a very limited service, for example with there are no services for the elderly or disabled.

Open space: there are some family-owned open areas but these are linked to factories or under cultivation.

Dominant service problems: the main complaints are the lack of access to secondary schools, help for the disabled, and the absence of social support groups or NGOs in the area.

ENVIRONMENT

Streets: though streets are narrow they are not considered to be dangerous. There are no traffic or parking problems.

Buildings: plots used to be 140-150m² but are now being subdivided to average at 75m². 50% of houses have just one storey, 40% have two and 10% have three floors.

Environment: the sub-soil is stable and could support higher rise buildings. Construction standards are good and the oldest part of the village is well preserved. Some plots remain empty and the landscape is attractive. The area is clean and does not suffer from industrial air pollution.

Dominant environmental problems: air pollution caused by stagnant waste water in the neighbouring valley is perceived to be a problem.

Principal environmental assets: good construction standards and a stable sub-soil, proximity to the city and its markets and to the industrial area of Al Mansoura (with the potential for future jobs), and good transport links are perceived as the principal physical and geographical assets.

NOTES

			NOTES & INDICATORS	
			D= from discussion O= from observation	
1	Location	Location on map		
2	Area	Layout map, if available, showing sub-areas, if needed		The IS may have sub-areas for different indicators - e.g. quality of planning & construction; social organisation or ethnic origin; land use; etc.
3	Population	Census (or from study)		
4	Gross density			
5	History			
	5.1	Dates of first settlement		
	5.2	Development process	a. Who were the owners (public, private)	D
			b. Original land use (agricultural, waste, public use, etc)	D
			c. Was the land bought or squatted (by developers/occupants)	D
			d. Was the land professionally subdivided	D, O
6	Social profile			
	6.1	Ethnic / origin mix	a. Are there distinct social groups or organisations	D
			b. Is there any significant group conflict	D
	6.2	Social class / income	a. Rank apparent wealth (1-3) compared to other IS	O
			b. Are there any significantly richer or more influential groups	D, O
	6.3	Personal safety & crime	a. Is the area generally safe	D
			b. Is there organised crime in the area	D
	6.4	Community organisation	a. Is there a sense of common solidarity / community	D, O
			b. Are there any organised community groups / associations	D
			c. Importance and influence of the Mukhtar, Imam, officials	D
			d. Informal leaders	D
	6.5	Voluntary work	a. What collective voluntary work has been undertaken	D
			b. Is there a general sense of self-help or "MoA should do it"	D
	6.6	Women's engagement	a. Are any women engaged in community affairs	D
			b. Do women have collective groups / associations	D
			c. Do many women work	D

	Biggest social problems		D	
	Greatest social assets / potentials		D	
7	Economic Profile			
	7.1	Employment	a. Are most men regularly employed	D Regularly employed; part-time; self employed; unemployed
			b. Do most people work locally or work elsewhere in the city	D Work in the IS; in neighbouring areas; take transport to work
	7.2	Industry & commerce	a. Extent of manufacturing in IS	O Workshops & small factories; polluting industries
			b. Specialist wholesale & retail trade	O Supplying markets outside the IS
	7.3	Household assets	a. Owners / tenants	D
			b. Value of houses	D
			c. Cost of construction	D
			d. Are many households extending their houses	D, O Do they pay for permission or risk it; how much has to be paid
			e. Savings & loans organisations	D Small or large membership; weekly saving quota; men or women
	7.4	Property turnover	a. Are many houses being sold and bought	D
			b. Are house prices increasing / decreasing	D
			c. Are new plots being developed	D, O Who by; cost of 'licence' to build; other strategies
	Biggest economic problems		D, O	
	Greatest economic assets / potentials		D, O	
8	Infrastructure			
	8.1	Water	Proportion of houses with connections	D Official connections or done by households
	8.2	Sewerage	Proportion of households with waterborne sanitation	D Official connections or done by communities
	8.3	Electricity	Proportion of households with official metered connections	D
	8.4	Roads	Extent of paving	D, O Done by MoA or by communities
	8.5	Street lighting	Extent	O
	Biggest infrastructure problems		D, O	
9	Services			
	9.1	Schools	a. Are there adequate school places in the IS & surroundings	D
			b. Is access to school safe for small children, girls	D
			c. Is the quality of education adequate	D

	9.2	Clinics	a. Is there easy access to clinics	D	
			b. Is the service adequate	D	
	9.3	Other social services	?		
	9.4	Open space	a. Extent, condition and how is it used	O	[photos]
			b. Who owns it; is it likely to be sold for development	D	
			c. Is there a perceived need for (more) public open space	D	For what uses, by whom (children, youth, elderly)
	Biggest social services problems			D, O	
10	Planning & Development Control				
	10.1	Streets	a. Are there any/many dangerously narrow streets	O	Danger in escape from fire; seriously non-bylaw compliant [photos]
			b. Is traffic congestion a serious problem	D, O	[photos]
			c. Is vehicle parking a serious problem	O	
	10.2	Buildings	a. Predominant plot sizes	D, O	
			b. Distribution of building heights (incl. walls without roofs)	O	[photos]
			c. Standard of construction	O	General view; incidence of obviously unsafe buildings [photos]
	10.3	Land use	a. Polluting and socially unacceptable industries, etc.	D, O	Degree of seriousness (urgent relocation because of health, safety) [photos]
			b. Undeveloped land that could be used for public facilities	D, O	Who owns it; why has it not been developed already [photos]
	Major physical/environmental problems			D, O	
	Main physical assets / potentials			D, O	

