AR-RAQQA IN NUMBERS

AL-Ameen for Humanitarian Support
Data & Need Assessment unit
AR-RAQQAA IN NUMBERS

Summary

Raqqa has been outside the regime control since March 2013, and considered to be the first governorate that is completely liberated from the regime forces after a fierce battles with the Free Syrian Army (FSA) which held the city for 9 months during which there were attempts to constitute a civil adminstration that provide and adminstarte basic services for the residents. These attempts succeeded in carrying on many service sectors such as health, education, agriculture..etc. However, the battles again halted them, until eventually IS managed to seize the city and make changes to this adminstration and the existing regulations. IS attempted to establish various basic services institutions but all attempts failed due to the very strict regulations they applied by force in addition to that the main focus of the group was on the military aspect which led to lack of support to the other sectors as agriculture or trade for instance, on the contrary the IS imposed more taxes and restrictions on these sectors. Concerning the agriculture sector for example, there was a real absence of development projects of any realted field i.e irrigation, livestock, seeds and fertilizers as well as the inability to maintain the agricultural machinery and the inreasing prices of fuel; all this resulted in lesser invested lands and sharp production decrease expecially in the strategic crops such as whea, cotton and sugarbeet.

The industrial sector also suffered from the lack of support and the increasing fuel costs let alone the closed borders of the governorate.

Education was the most affected sector, that –attempting to restructure it– IS has imposed a new curriculum adapted from thier extreme ideology, this prevented most parents from sending thier children to schools and made most teachers quit which resuled in a collapse in education sector.

The health sector was also very negatively affected by the status quo, there was a severe lack of health facilities, most of them were targeted and bombed, the majority of the people with chronical illness couldn’t secure thier medicine, many others couldn’t access health services. This report aims at reaching a more profound comprehension of the real situation in Arqaqah, depending on various resources of information such as the Central Statistics Office, different ministries and goverment bodies in addition to results of workshops and research concerend with the subject matter.
Foreword

Arraqah governorate has been under IS control since the beginning of 2014 and considered to be the capital of IS in Syria, and now is being targeted in an operation called (Gadab Alfurat) by the so-called “Democratic Syria Forces” who already seized the northern areas (Tal Abyad) and now marching towards the western countryside to reach the city of Tabqa and the Furat dam.

The other opponent is the Free Syrian Army (FSA), which is slowly advancing towards Albab city and the west of Arraqqah later. However, there is an important obstacle that is the city of Manbej which is under “Democratic Syria Forces” DSF. In this complicated situation, there is a strong need for an independent third party that can provide information and the-day-after plans so that Arraqqah can gain back its substantial value in Syria.
ECONOMIC SECTOR

Customarily, Ar-Raqqah is considered to be an agricultural governorate that depends mainly on strategic crops (wheat, cotton and sugarbeet) in addition to livestock products. Not long ago, oil and gas was discovered and contributed to the local economy. Industry, on the other hand, was limited to simple food and agricultural products.
Arraqkah has rich and fertile lands, AlFurat River, AlFurat dam and Tishreen dam. These lands are divided either irrigated or rainfed lands which are invested to produce cotton, wheat, sugarbeet and vegetables. 42% of Arraqkah land is arable.

The reclamation projects contributed to more invested lands, Arraqkah is considered to be a main source of strategic crops of Syria. The methods that are used in the agriculture are more traditional than modern. There is a lack of basic services in the rural agricultural areas.

Below are crops quantities in 2011:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop name</th>
<th>Cultivated square area /Hectare</th>
<th>production/Tons</th>
<th>Percentage of total Syria production</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maize</td>
<td>41829</td>
<td>15257</td>
<td>32,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>61807</td>
<td>273072</td>
<td>38,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar Beet</td>
<td>6417</td>
<td>246238</td>
<td>42,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soya Beans</td>
<td>888</td>
<td>1169</td>
<td>56,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>175007</td>
<td>559805</td>
<td>13,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>317497</td>
<td>32710</td>
<td>42,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grazing barley</td>
<td>9051</td>
<td>169565</td>
<td>42,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomegranates</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>1189</td>
<td>48,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olives</td>
<td>10079</td>
<td>10168</td>
<td>15,8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Arraqah also has livestock resource since there are enormous pastures and also famous for animal products. The livestock also was affected by the crisis. There is no accurate current statistics for the livestock but the last one is from 2011 shown below. Livestock wealth is considered an important resource of farm income resources in the province of Raqqa. Here are the top available animals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livestock</th>
<th>Total numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cows</td>
<td>17964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>2860343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goats</td>
<td>198958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry</td>
<td>277000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camels</td>
<td>2328</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fish wealth in Raqqa province is also available but is not invested on a large scale and only covers the domestic market.
Agriculture under IS Control

IS doesn’t depend on agriculture as a main source of funding, consequently they didn’t support it and the sector has suffered from many hardships, mostly the following:

- The absence of financial and technical support for the farmers who were not able to provide their needs.
- The absence of development projects as irrigation systems.
- Imposing taxes on crops.
- Weakness in marketing the products to areas beyond IS controlled territories.
- The deteriorating security situation which made many farmers leave their lands.

All the above mentioned reasons in addition to years of drought contributed to a dramatic decrease in production:

1. Wheat: The total land used for wheat crops were approximately 30000 hectares in 2015, that is 20% of the land used in 2011. 2015 production reached only 132000 ton.
2. Cotton: The total lands 32000 hectares in 2015 which is 50% of the used lands in 2011. 2015 Production reached 140000 tons.

Agriculture sector is very essential in Arraqqah governorate and should be recovered as soon as possible that it helps in the process of Syria reconstruction by providing sufficient strategic crops and large number of development projects and vacancies.
INDUSTRY

Most of heavy industry in Arraqqa is related to agriculture products as the sugar factory, wheat mills, corn mills in addition to construction materials factories as bricks, gypsum, glass, butane gas. As well as many private industrial services and local textiles workshops.

Below is a table of main food industries:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Number of Facilities</th>
<th>Productive Capacity Ton</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Storing and refrigerating vegetables and fruits</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sesame products</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forages</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive oil</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grains mills</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton gins</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COMMERCCE

Most of heavy industry in Arraqqa is related to agriculture products as the sugar factory, wheat mills, corn mills in addition to construction materials factories as bricks, gypsum, glass, butane gas. As well as many private industrial services and local textiles workshops.

However, after the set back of agriculture, the trading activities declined drastically. In the southern east of the city lies the main market of agriculture products, it consists of 63 shops with a daily trading capacity of 300 tons. In the northern east of the city lies the other main market for livestock products. These markets are still functioning but as they used to be.

OIL

Many oil and gas fields are under IS control, there is no accurate figures about the production capacity especially that the used methods are primitive ones, yet, after crossing information from mutiple sources, the production capacity is estimated from 40000 to 50000 barrels per day. Part is refrained locally the rest is exported to other terreritories.

40000 to 50000 barrels per day
1. Shrink of Local Production
Due to the set back of agriculture, trade and industry that are dependent on agriculture products, which made many factories shut down, as well as higher rates of inflation and increasing prices. According to studies, gross domestic product had a 28.2% decline in 2013 and expected to reach 42% in 2015.

2. Unemployment
The economic slide led to large unemployment wave that reached 67.2% which is directly reflected on the living conditions of people. The employed people constituted only 18% of the total population after banning women from working. The youth 15-24- are the most affected slice who make up 30% of the labors, it is estimated that 67% of this slice is unemployed which indictae how much damage the economy has.

3. Poverty
As a result of the decline in domestic product and the collapse of the agriculture which is the spine of economy to Arraqqah, and the large unemployment crisis that followed, inflation, increasing prices, displacement, all this led to high poverty rates, that increased from 12.3% in 2011 to reach 43.2% in 2013, estimations refer to 68.9% of population spend less than 2 USD a day in 2015. This percentage increase in the rural areas that mainly depend on agriculture.
Health Sector

The health sectors, as well, suffers from a great set back whether on infrastructure or human resources level, which negatively reflected on the level of health services provided for the people, the following facts might shed more light
• The children (under 5) death rate has increased to reach 25.1 per 1000 in 2013 and estimated to reach 29.7 per 1000 in 2015.
• The children (under 5) underweight rate, because many parents can not provide the adequate nutrition for their children, furthermore, the outbreak of many diseases and lack of purified water. The rate increased from 8.3% in 2011 to reach 14.8 in 2013 and it is still increasing.
• Mother death rate: 62.8 per 100,000 in 2013 increased to reach 93 in 2015 due to lack of services in reproductive health.
• The contagious diseases rates: with the collapse of health facilities, awareness-raising projects, preventive healthcare, lack of medicine and human resources, there has been a dramatic increase in diseases rates such as diarrhea, hepatitis and measles, in addition to dangerous epidemical disease such as polio, leishmaniasis and tuberculosis.
• Tuberculosis rates for example raised from 34 per 100,000 in 2011 to reach 72 in 2015.

**Vaccinations**

96% of children received vaccinations in 2011, while only 57% of children received vaccinations in 2013 which make children more exposed to dangerous epidemics.
Healthcare services in Ar-Raqqah

The healthcare services are provided in the few facilities left in the city, 9 hospitals in total, 2 of which are public and almost free. 7 are private but with very small capacities, not all the specialities are available such as neurosurgery. Primary health care is not better that only 15 dispensaries with very basic and simple equipment. The people in Arraqqah can not receive the adequate healthcare services so many people have to travel to regime or opposirion territories for medical purposes.

15 dispensaries  
2 public hospital  
7 private hospital

Medical Personnel

There is a severe loss in medical personnel, specialised doctors specifically, for the majority have fled to safer places, currently there is only 42 doctors covering major specialties.

42 Doctors
Education Sector

The education sector is considered to be the most affected sector in territories under IS control, the education process is almost absent, schools have been closed for more than 2 years, the following details and facts might give a more keen awareness about education sector in Ar-Raqqah
There is 1547 schools in Arraqah governorate, these schools of various levels and majors with capacity of 271330 students. Arraqah also had 6160 teachers, 1700 in 2104 and estimations refer to only 780 teachers currently. Many schools have been completely destroyed 32%, or partially destroyed 46% while most of intact schools have turned to collective shelters for IDPs. The majority of the damaged schools are in main cities.

Examples of schools that are destroyed by regime or coalliation air force are: The higher school of commerce, Ammar bin Yassir Highschool, Hiteen School, Al-Amin school, Almamoun school, Muawia school. Examples of schools that are used as collective shelter now: Abu Al- Alaa Alma’arry school, Hamida Tahir highschool, Sultan Basha school and Omar bin Abdulaziz school.

The education process have underwent through different stages after IS control:

- First stage: IS allowed education process to continue but they omitted the following subjects: Music, philosophy and Al-Ba’th Party history.

- Second stage: They halted the education process completely, banned all the teachers from teaching unless they fulfill a special course and changed the whole curriculum, but most of the parents thought it is not a good idea to send their children to schools, so they did not.

- Third stage: since the schools were almost empty, IS has closed most of them and established smaller private teaching centers that teaches most of the scientific subjects in addition to the study of Quran and Sharia with 7 USD monthly fees per student.
Education in Tal Abyad under The Control of PYD Militia

PYD has taken over the northern districts of Arraqqah governorate, this area has more than 400 schools.

In the beginning, these militia committed the largest forced displacement for people in Syria, consequently all the students were deprived from education, then PYD has forced a new curriculum in Kurdish language and made. Teachers were also forced to take kurdish courses to be eligible to apply to any vacancy, and appointed one member of the party, who holds only a highschool degree, as the director of education in the area.

In some other villages, the coordination between PYD militia and the regime helped the education process, nevertheless the regime did not allow the final exams for both elementary and highschool levels to take in these areas. Students had to travel to either Al-Hasakeh or Qamishli to do the exams.

Later, the so-called “self-rule” has issued a decree that abolishes the curriculum of the Minstry of Education, and replaced it with a curriculum in kurdish for the first three grades, and with Arabic for the rest of primary schools, while they kept the Minstry of Education curriculum for elementary and highschools. Subjects that teaches the ideology of the PYD are also taught in the Tal Abyad area. PYD has borrowed books that are taught in Kurdish Iraqi region.

However, both teachers and students of these areas abstained from going to schools in a protest against the imposed curriculum and language. Only 20 teachers, who attended the compulsory course, worked in schools, however the education process broke off in Tal Abyad which made the Ministry of Education issue two decrees, one is to dismiss all the teachers who teach other than the regime curriculum and the other is to close all the schools in Tal Abyad district.

As an alternative, PYD hired a temporary teachers who are not necessarily qualified to operate few schools in Tal Abyad.
Illiteracy is a very catastrophic invisible side effect of wars. It even hinders the recovery of the society after the war is over. The most affected areas are rural and remote ones that even before the crisis suffered from relatively high rate of illiteracy specially among females due to several economic and cultural reasons, furthermore, there was not sufficient support to defeat this dilemma.

War-torn Syrian areas is suffering from a catastrophic rates of illiteracy due to various reasons, most importantly the hazards that students are exposed to when going to schools, children labor, poverty, destruction of infra-structure including schools.

Arraqqah is the most affected governorate with the higher rates of illiteracy: 19% in 2011 increased to reach 26% in cities and 31% in rural areas after the crisis took place. Now and after three years of stopage of the eduaction process rates are expeted to be much more higher.

**Three indicators can give an analysis to the education in Ar-Raquqah:**

- Children who attended first grade has dropped fro, 89% in 2011 to 70% in 2013, this is a serious indicator about the how dangerous the threat is. This fact will also make it more difficult to apply recovery plans as the rates vary between males and females, cities and rural.

- The rates of children who attended school constantly from first grade to the fifth grade are considered an important indicator, according to the latest accurate statistics 95% of the students didn’t drop school before fifth grade in 2011, but this rate is estimated to be dropped into 52%.

- Interest in reading and writing among youths (15 - 24).
The rate of the youth who are interested in reading and writing declined from 94.6% in 2011 to 85.5% in 2013, this rate is expected to decline sharply in the coming years, since today’s children -who already didn’t receive proper education- will be the subject matter.

The tragic reality of education in Syria, and in Ar-Raqqah in particular requires special strategies that respond to the size and nature of this catastrophe, strategies that help education sector to recover as soon as possible.