

## The Civilians in Ghouta after the Syrian Regime's Control

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This report gives a brief overview of the reality in Ghouta after the recent military campaign that began in early 2018. This resulted in the displacement of more than half of the inhabitants of Ghouta to either Syrian regime controlled areas or to Idlib.

Basic services situation:

- The process of removing rubble and rehabilitating water, electricity, and infrastructure is being carried out slowly by the municipalities. However, there is a lot of destruction in many of the properties, and most of the buildings were destroyed by shelling.
- No state institutions have started to work in Ghouta except the municipalities and security centers.
- All food and medical aid, water and sanitation assistance are provided by the Red Crescent.
- There are no government schools except in Kafr - Batna and Saqba. These two areas had not been subjected to heavy shelling. There is only one secondary school in al-Mleha, which had been destroyed and was partially repaired to receive returning students.

Regarding return of IDPs to their areas in Ghouta:

- Monitoring has revealed that some families have returned to several areas in Ghouta, such as al-Nashabiya, Hittite, Turkman, Kafar Batna, Saqba, and Hamouriya. Most of these families were in the Adra Shelter Centers of al Fayhaa, al Duwair, Adra, and al Sawaqah.
- All families that have returned have settled their situation regarding military service and participation in the military reserve force. Some young men were deployed to the province of Daraa to fight on the front which was opened by the Syrian regime recently.
- No arrests were recorded after the IDPs returned to their areas in Ghouta. Most of the arrests took place in the shelters after the initial exit of the families from Ghouta.
- Families who have a member detained by the Syrian regime, fleeing from military service or armed with the factions were not allowed to return to their areas in Ghouta.
  - o A case was recorded of a family that was allowed to return but without the wife who has three brothers out of the country fleeing from the military.
- Tens of families have returned, but many people have fears about the security in the area and their access to their pensions as the security checkpoints deployed in Gouta check all identity cards when entering and exiting the towns.