

Challenges of Refugee and IDP Return in Relation to Housing, Land, and Property Rights in Syria



06 May 2025

Thematic Report

Global Organisation for Civil society Advancement (GLOCA)

GLOCA is a non-profit organization registered in Turkey (2022), Switzerland (2024), and officially licensed in Syria by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (No. 1368 of 2025). It is headquartered in the city of Aleppo. It works to promote the roles of youth and women, and defend human rights, through education, community participation, urban planning, reliance on technology and achieving sustainable development.



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Executive Summary

The return of refugee populations is a fundamental component of peace processes in war-torn societies, with the restitution of housing and property regarded as a prerequisite for successful repatriation efforts.

This report unveils the challenges faced by returnees in reclaiming their housing, land, and property (HLP) rights. It is based on a collection of reports and studies related to refugee return, as well as roundtables held with representatives from local authorities (Aleppo Governorate, Political Administration), international organisations (UN-Habitat, UNDP), and a range of experts in housing and property rights, along with civil society activists and a group of returnees and internally displaced people.

The study highlighted multiple problems, including destruction caused by regime and Russian forces, particularly in informal housing areas where protests first emerged, and the complexities of reconstruction, restoration, and rehabilitation—alongside the associated financial needs. The report also addresses violations of the HLP rights of refugees and IDPs, enacted through systematic methodologies adopted by the former regime involving fraud, corruption, and unlawful property transfers. It further evaluates the suitability of the current legislative and institutional frameworks to address these violations and calls for a reassessment of zoning plans and databases.

Findings from the study emphasise the urgent need for both national and international coordination and funding. They also point to the necessity of an initial institutional response through the establishment of a national body dedicated to addressing HLP-related return challenges, with subcommittees in each governorate.

The report further reinforces the importance of establishing coherent legislative and institutional frameworks to address legal complications and the systemic violations of HLP rights perpetrated by the former regime, especially against its opponents.

This study constitutes a preliminary step towards untangling one of the most complex post-conflict challenges in Syria and towards devising a realistic approach for the restoration of property justice and social equity in the country's future.

Introduction

The paper reaffirmed the necessity of establishing both institutional and legislative frameworks to address legal complications and violations of housing, land, and property (HLP) rights perpetrated by the former regime, particularly against its political opponents.

Under International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights law,¹ the protection of property and land rights is a core element in safeguarding civilians during conflicts and is crucial for accelerating post-conflict recovery and reconstruction efforts. Numerous international conventions and treaties affirm the illegality of arbitrary seizure or destruction of private property and condemn forced displacement as a grave violation of human rights.

Throughout the crisis, HLP rights have been violated in various forms, including, but not limited to: property confiscation and seizure, forced evictions, looting, and the prevention of civilians from returning to their homes.² A lack of adequate housing and concerns over the status of homes and properties are among the main factors influencing refugees' intentions to return. These issues are further exacerbated by the widespread destruction.³

Women are particularly affected and face additional challenges in asserting their rights to property and inheritance, including administrative and procedural barriers, customary norms and practices, as well as threats of violence, exploitation, and social exclusion by their families and communities.⁴ In the long term, failure to address these issues will severely hinder refugees' access to sustainable solutions and will negatively impact future recovery efforts.

¹ [International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights law](#)

² The World Bank (2019). The Mobility of Displaced Syrians: An Economic and Social Analysis.

³ UNHCR (March 2021)

⁴ The World Bank (2019). Page12 The Mobility of Displaced Syrians: An Economic and Social Analysis.

Nevertheless, there are tangible opportunities for stakeholders to take action that would improve Syrian refugees' access to legal identity and civil documentation and ensure more robust protection of their HLP rights. Sustained and comprehensive support, responsive to the principal challenges faced by Syrian refugees, is essential to enhancing the protection environment and achieving sustainable solutions.

This paper seeks to address the legal challenges associated with HLP rights in Syria and aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Highlight the main legal and structural issues that returning refugees and IDPs face in reclaiming their property and housing rights.
2. Analyse the impact of laws and policies enacted by the former regime during the conflict, some of which were employed as tools to exclude and punish segments of the population opposing the regime.
3. Identify deficiencies in the current legal and institutional infrastructure and outline the gaps impeding the redress of violations and the restitution of rights.
4. Propose practical solutions to enhance HLP rights through legal reform, the updating of property and civil registries, and the establishment of effective implementation frameworks.
5. Promote the role of civil society in advocating for equitable structural reforms that restore rights to rightful owners, in collaboration with governmental and international actors.
6. Recommend sustainable follow-up and evaluation mechanisms to ensure continuity of action and measurable impact on the ground.

Theoretical framework

Historical and Legislative Context of Property and Housing Issues in Syria

Property and housing issues have long constituted a cornerstone of social and economic stability in Syria. However, for decades, these matters have lacked substantive reform that aligns with the evolving needs of society. Instead, reliance has persisted on an outdated legal framework—much of it dating back to the 1950s and 1960s—that is ill–

equipped to accommodate demographic and urban transformations. This has been exacerbated by weak oversight and a lack of transparency within state institutions.

Since the outbreak of the Syrian uprising in 2011, property and housing laws shifted from being tools of regulation to instruments of control and punishment—particularly targeting the supportive societal base that opposed the former regime. Dozens of laws and decrees were enacted, including Law No. 10 of 2018,⁵ Law No. 66 of 2012,⁶ and Article 1 of Law No. 63 of 2012,⁷ which granted security agencies—dominant in decision-making—broad powers to confiscate the properties of dissidents. Additionally, security directives were issued to the Housing Cooperative Union to annul property rights of opponents under the pretext of unpaid instalments and to transfer ownership to regime loyalists or members of security services.

As a result, during the years of the uprising, the relationship between the citizen and the state was redefined in a manner that jeopardised the property and land rights of millions of people, including revolution participants, their families, and opposition supporters.

In many cases, these laws facilitated the expropriation or redistribution of property under ostensibly administrative or planning justifications, while in reality serving political objectives—namely the depopulation of targeted areas or the dispossession of regime opponents.

International Principles Concerning Housing and Property Rights of the Forcibly Displaced

These principles are vital in establishing standards that the Syrian government is obligated to uphold, while also providing a framework for holding authorities accountable when violations occur. According to these standards, all governing entities across Syria can be held responsible for their compliance:

⁵ Law No. 10 of 2018, allowing for the establishment of regulatory zones within urban master plans.

⁶ Law No. 66 of 2012.

⁷ Law No. 66 of 2012.

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights⁸ – Article 17: Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of their property.
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights⁹ – Article 11: Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their family, including adequate food, clothing, and housing.
- Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 – Article 53:¹⁰ Private property, whether movable or immovable, must be protected during armed conflict and occupation. The occupying power is bound by these obligations.
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965) – Article 5:¹¹ States must guarantee the right of everyone, without discrimination based on race, colour, national or ethnic origin, or religion, to own property and enjoy housing rights.
- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998) – Article 8(2):¹² The extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly, constitutes a war crime—particularly when part of a widespread or systematic policy during international or internal armed conflict, as seen in Syria.
- Arab Charter on Human Rights (2004) – Article 31:¹³ The right to private property is guaranteed to every individual. The arbitrary or unlawful confiscation of all or part of one's property is strictly prohibited.
- Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (1998):¹⁴
- Principle 6.1: Everyone has the right to be protected against being arbitrarily displaced from their home or habitual residence.

⁸ Universal Declaration of Human Rights

⁹ International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

¹⁰ Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 – Article 53

¹¹ International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965) – Article 5:

¹² Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998) – Article 8(2)

¹³ Arab Charter on Human Rights (2004) – Article 31

¹⁴ Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (1998)

- Principle 21: No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of property or possessions. Property must not be used for military purposes, nor be the object of reprisals.
- UN Principles on Housing and Property Restitution for Refugees and Displaced Persons (Pinheiro Principles, 2005): These principles form a crucial basis for affirming the right to restitution of property. They call for protection, under all circumstances, of displaced persons' property left behind from pillage, destruction, unlawful and arbitrary seizure.

Analytical Methodology

Data sources

This paper is based on a qualitative analysis of the outcomes of a workshop organised by the Global Organisation for the Advancement of Civil Society (GLOCA) on 12 February 2025 in the city of Aleppo. The data sources utilised include:

- Working papers submitted by participants in the focused workshop sessions, presented by the GLOCA team, addressing the legal and regulatory frameworks of housing and property issues.
- Oral contributions from representatives of government and local authorities, as well as international organisations—including officials from Aleppo Governorate, members of Aleppo's political administration, stakeholders, a former director of real estate affairs, housing and property rights experts, civil society activists, UN–Habitat, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- Summaries of interactive discussions between civil society participants and experts in housing and property.
- Internal documentation reports of affected areas, minutes of sessions, and data sheets issued by the organisational team.
- A community-based survey of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in northwest Syria on housing and property issues.

Challenges of the return of refugees and displaced persons in their rights Ownership, land and housing



Figure 1: Photographs from the focused legal workshop organised by GLOCA in Aleppo (12 February 2025), featuring participants from local authorities, civil society, and international organisations discussing housing, land, and property rights in Syria.

Analytical Tools

The report employed an Inductive Analytical Approach to examine and deconstruct the data, in order to uncover recurring patterns and central themes in the presented material. A Thematic Analysis method was also used to identify key ideas and meanings within the content of sessions and working papers, and to systematically categorise them.

Classification Axes

The extracted data were classified under four principal axes, which framed the analytical structure of this paper:

- Legislative and legal axis
- Institutional and procedural axis
- Urban and regulatory axis
- Social and humanitarian axis

This classification facilitated the organisation of findings in a manner that highlights the link between problems and potential solutions, and integrates the legal, political, and field-based contexts.

Methodological Limitations

By nature, this report is a qualitative study with temporal and geographical limitations, as it relies primarily on data from a single workshop and does not include direct fieldwork or external data sources.

Additionally, the analysis reflects the views of the workshop participants at the time of the session and may not represent the full scope of the situation across all Syrian regions. Nevertheless, the methodology provides a credible analytical perspective, grounded in the contributions of directly involved stakeholders, offering a solid foundation for future research.

To enhance the analytical perspective with additional field data, a digital survey was conducted targeting a sample of displaced and returning residents in northwest Syria. The survey aimed to explore their lived experiences concerning housing, property, and land disputes. A total of 47 individuals from diverse social and geographic backgrounds participated.

The detailed findings are presented in the results section, highlighting strong alignment with the workshop's recommendations, including:

- ✓ Establishment of an independent national authority to oversee property-related issues.
- ✓ Strengthening of community-based documentation mechanisms to safeguard property rights.
- ✓ Development of a centralised digital land registry to ensure transparency.
- ✓ Revision of the legal framework to align with principles of transitional justice.

Results and Analysis

Working Papers and Inputs

The interventions highlighted critical deficiencies in the housing and property file and presented preliminary proposals for restructuring it in a way that guarantees the rights of returnees.

The working papers reviewed legal violations affecting the property of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) during the years of conflict. These violations were facilitated through the issuance of numerous laws and decrees that deprived opposition members and civilians of their property under administrative or security pretexts. The papers strongly emphasised the need to reassess the current legislative and institutional frameworks, deeming them incapable of responding to post-conflict challenges.

Urban planning issues were also addressed—particularly the prevalence of informal and unregulated housing in Aleppo, and the inadequacy of outdated zoning plans relative to the city's current needs. The papers called for updating urban databases to reflect actual demand and to prevent infringements on owners' rights.

Representatives of political bodies and civil society organisations expressed a preliminary willingness to cooperate on addressing property issues, with a clear emphasis on involving local communities in solution-making. Representatives from international organisations—particularly UN-Habitat and UNDP—provided briefings on their ongoing programmes to rehabilitate infrastructure and protect property rights (including sanitation, water networks, electricity, schools, hospitals, and medical points in neighbourhoods). They also expressed interest in technical cooperation with official institutions.

Challenges of the return of refugees and displaced persons in their rights Ownership, land and housing

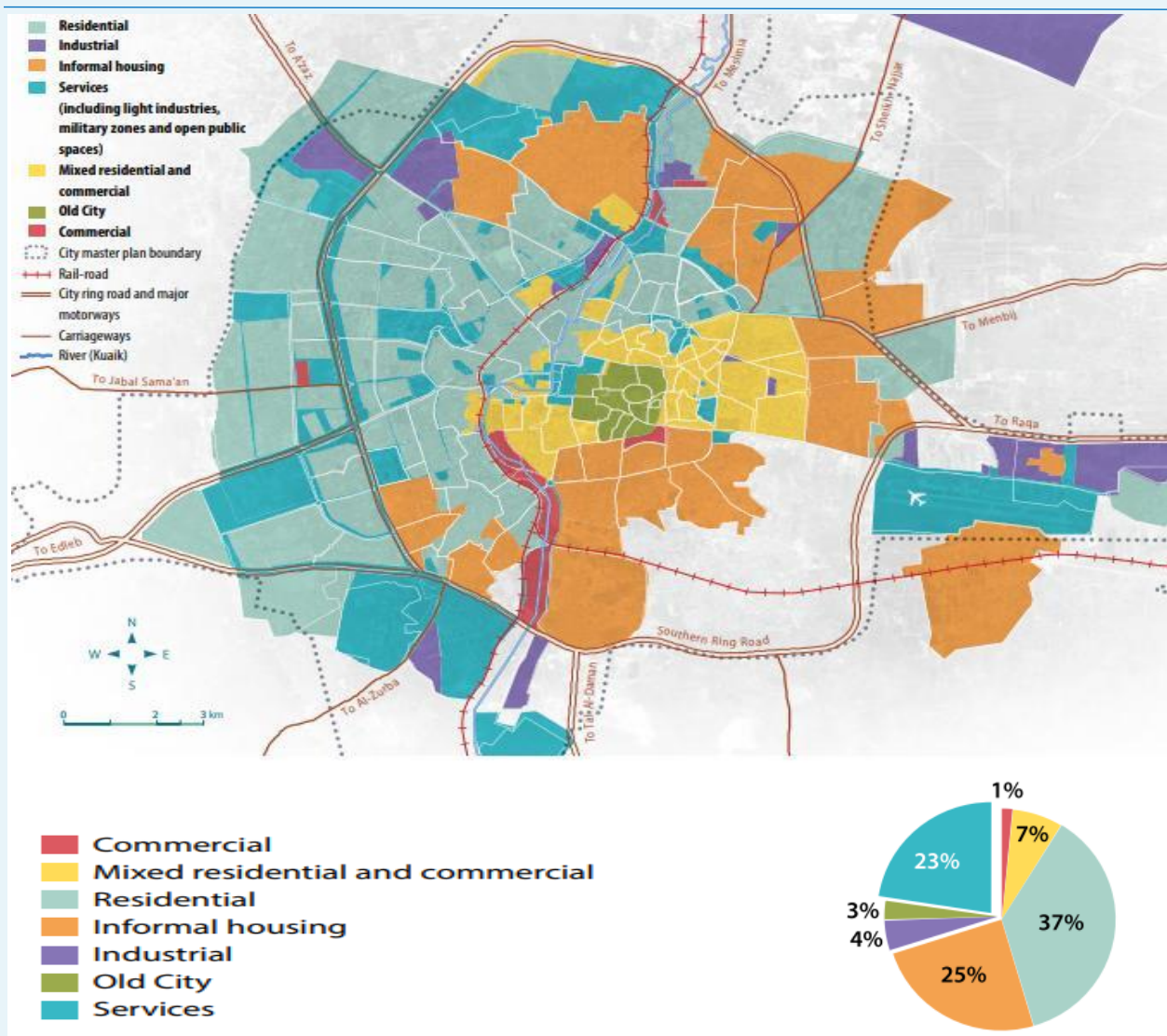


Figure 2 An image illustrating land use in Aleppo in 2024, sourced from the UN-Habitat assessment

Identified Challenges

The challenges were categorized under the following thematic axes:

Legislative Challenges

- ✓ Use of legislation enacted during the revolution as a tool of conflict.
- ✓ Deployment of legal frameworks as instruments of political dominance.
- ✓ Legal frameworks lagging behind current realities.
- ✓ Absence of a legal framework suitable for the current phase and transitional justice requirements.

Documentation and Procedural Challenges

- ✓ Damage to property records and loss of official documents by many refugees and IDPs.
- ✓ Widespread forgery of contracts and powers of attorney during the absence of property owners.
- ✓ Lack of digital archiving and failure to implement legal safeguards for property data.

Urban and Planning Challenges

- ✓ Incompatibility of zoning plans with actual on-the-ground conditions.
- ✓ Implementation of urban projects without community participation or consideration of residents' rights.
- ✓ Distortion of urban and social fabric due to informal or systematic demolition and unregulated construction.

Institutional and Judicial Challenges

- ✓ Weak institutional and administrative structures dealing with property.
- ✓ Absence of an independent judiciary capable of ensuring justice for affected individuals.

Financial and Technical Challenges

- ✓ Insufficient funding for restructuring property records and legal infrastructure.
- ✓ Limited local expertise in modernising digital land administration systems.
- ✓ Weak international technical support and irregular coordination mechanisms.

These overlapping challenges clearly demonstrate that the property file in Syria cannot be treated merely as an administrative issue; rather, it is a deeply political, legal, societal, and security matter requiring comprehensive solutions that go beyond superficial fixes.

Key Problems

Several critical issues were discussed and analysed in the study:

Legal Gaps

The gap between existing legal texts and practical application represents one of the most significant obstacles to restoring housing and property rights in Syria. Most of the current legislation is outdated, making it ill-suited to the complex realities of the post-conflict phase. Moreover, many laws enacted during the war—such as those mentioned earlier—effectively legalised expropriation under the guise of urban planning, creating what many victims perceive as a form of "legitimised injustice". The absence of a fair legal reference framework deepens the sense of legal insecurity and hinders investment in reconstruction or voluntary return.

Record-Keeping and Documentation Problems

The land registry system suffered significant damage due to bombing, fires, and chronic neglect. Estimates suggest that thousands of property records in Aleppo alone were affected, undermining the ability to prove ownership. During the displacement of opposition-aligned social groups, widespread forgery of documents, including contracts and powers of attorney, took place, often exploiting legal loopholes and the absence of rightful owners—resulting in illegal property transfers. Furthermore, no unified digital registry has yet been adopted, increasing legal vulnerability.

Urban and Social Planning Failures

Urban planning policies in some areas resulted in layouts that neither reflect the needs of residents nor respect their rights. In many instances, new zoning plans were introduced without community consultation or field assessments, leading to the forced displacement of entire neighbourhoods or confinement of residents in poorly serviced areas. The lack of a comprehensive urban vision has also distorted the cities' identity and dismantled their social cohesion, further widening the gap between the state and the citizenry.

Judicial Institutional Weakness

Years of armed conflict have eroded the capacity of Syria's judicial institutions. The judiciary now lacks the structural independence required to address the unprecedented

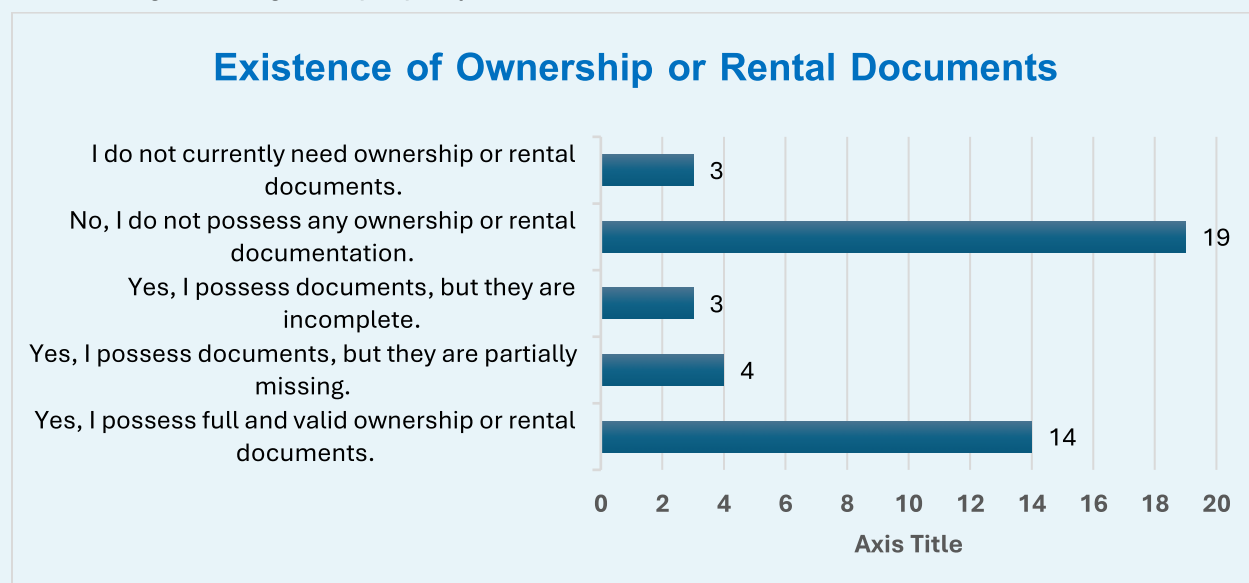
scale of HLP rights violations faced by millions of returnees. The absence of impartial and independent courts has diminished public trust in the legal system and led many to resort to informal settlements, which may result in further injustice and legal chaos.

Corruption and Property Transfers in Absence of Owners

The war and mass displacement created fertile ground for unlawful property transfers—whether through exploiting the absence of owners, collusion with corrupt state bodies (e.g., fictitious housing cooperatives), or outright seizure by regime affiliates. Human rights organisations such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights have documented credible reports and testimonies of such violations. Networks of fictitious sales proliferated during this period, relying on document forgery and legal loopholes, taking advantage of the collapse of oversight mechanisms and the absence of secure digital documentation systems. These actions led to the dispossession of thousands of citizens—often without their knowledge or legal recourse. Such violations represent one of the gravest forms of corruption, as they undermine one of the most sacred human rights: the right to one's home and land.

Survey Results Analysis

The following charts represent the results of a survey conducted in northwest Syria concerning housing and property issues:



Challenges of the return of refugees and displaced persons in their rights Ownership, land and housing

Figure 3 Survey responses regarding the availability of ownership or rental documentation among displaced persons in northwest Syria.

The first chart indicates the status of ownership documents among respondents:

- 32.7% possess complete ownership or rental documents.
- 9.3% possess documents that are partially missing.
- 0.7% possess incomplete documents.
- 44.0% have no ownership or rental documents at all.
- 0.7% reported not needing ownership or rental documents.
- These findings reveal that approximately 60% of participants either lack documentation altogether or possess invalid/incomplete records, indicating a serious documentation crisis. This significantly increases the risk of property rights loss—particularly in the context of armed conflict and displacement.

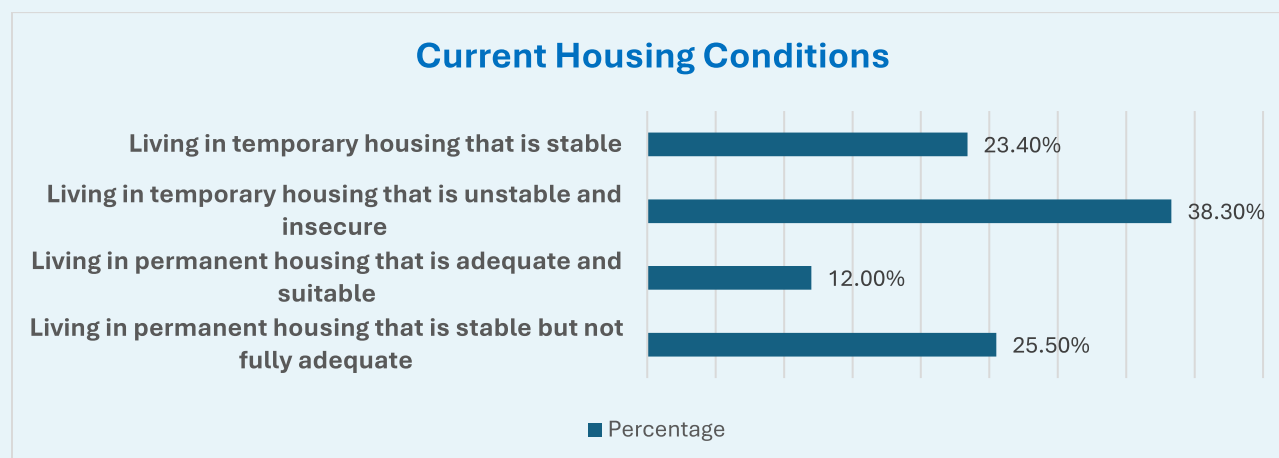


Figure 4 Distribution of respondents by current housing condition, reflecting the degree of housing stability and adequacy.

The second chart illustrates current housing conditions. A large portion of respondents live in unstable and unsafe housing environments, highlighting the failure of emergency housing policies. Moreover, the high percentage of people residing in unsuitable permanent housing raises alarms about potential public health issues and social risks such as disease outbreaks and family disintegration.

*Challenges of the return of refugees and displaced persons in their rights
Ownership, land and housing*

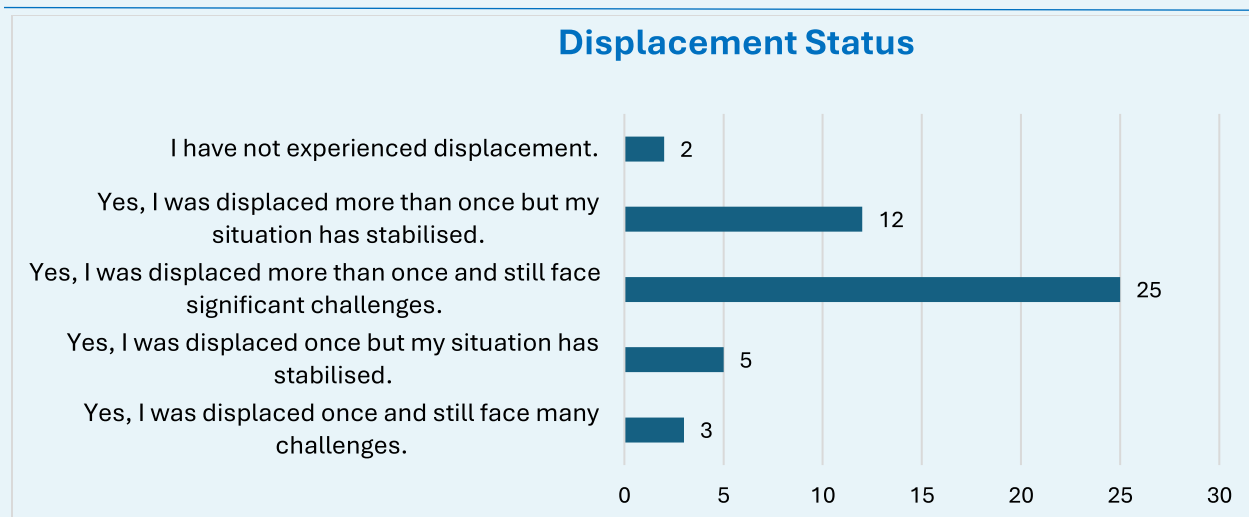


Figure 5 Respondents' displacement history and current situation, highlighting the frequency and impact of displacement.

The data also shows that approximately 78.7% of displaced individuals have been displaced more than once. This repeated displacement intensifies psychological trauma and deepens poverty levels. The high frequency of repeat displacement signals the failure of both local and international protection mechanisms to break the cycle of displacement.

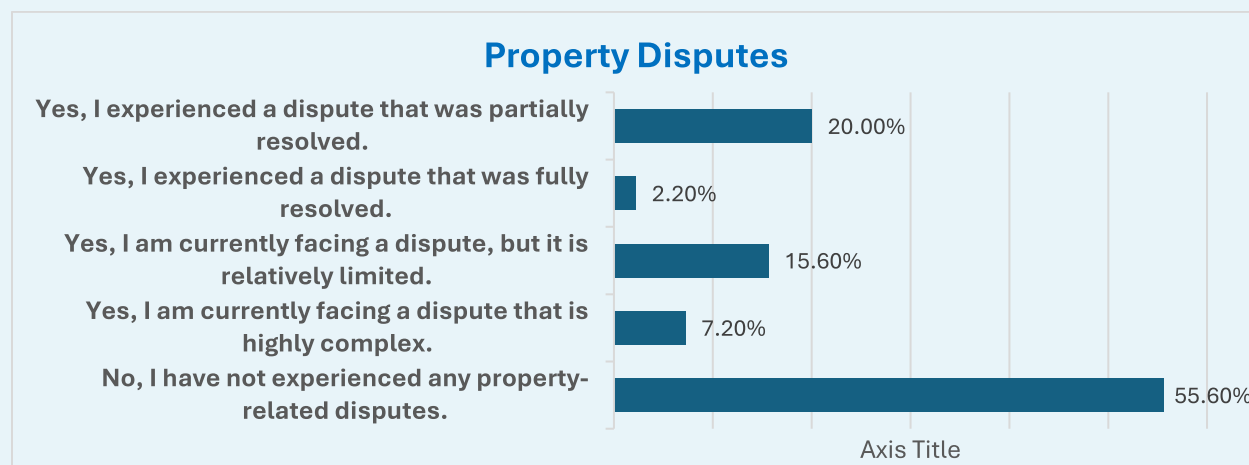


Figure 6 Respondents' experiences with property disputes, indicating the prevalence and resolution status of such cases.

The fourth chart shows property disputes, where the high percentage of outstanding disputes indicates the inability of the judicial system to provide fair or quick solutions, and the low percentage of people who fully resolved the dispute confirms the existence of a trust gap in judicial institutions, even among those who do not face disputes (55.6%), as the absence of title documents leaves them vulnerable to future disputes.

Practical Recommendations and Proposals

In light of the numerous challenges confronting the housing and property file in Syria, this paper puts forward a series of practical recommendations distributed across three interrelated levels, forming a roadmap for restoring rights and achieving housing and land justice.

At the National level

- ✓ Establish an independent national authority on property and housing matters, comprising judges, legal and real estate experts, and civil society representatives. This body would review disputes, provide legal support, and monitor urban planning activities.
- ✓ Reform the property legislative framework through a comprehensive review of laws and decrees issued during the conflict, and the adoption of new legislation aligned with transitional justice principles and international human rights standards.
- ✓ Launch a nationwide property digitisation initiative, including the restoration of damaged property records, the unification of databases, and their integration with judicial and legal institutions to ensure transparency.
- ✓ Strengthen judicial independence by creating specialised courts for property disputes and providing targeted training for judicial personnel in this field.

At the International level

- ✓ Call upon the international community to provide the technical and financial support necessary for rebuilding property documentation institutions and updating the legal infrastructure in line with global standards.
- ✓ Initiate partnership programmes with UN agencies such as UN–Habitat and UNDP, focusing on the rehabilitation of housing and property rights infrastructure (legal, administrative, and regulatory foundations).
- ✓ Engage in diplomatic efforts to halt coercive property policies in certain areas and advocate for unrestricted access by human rights organisations to document housing and property rights violations.

At the Local level

- ✓ Establish local follow-up committees in each governorate, composed of local authority representatives and civil society organisations, to monitor violations, collect complaints, and offer legal counselling.
- ✓ Organise legal awareness campaigns to educate citizens on their property rights, how to claim them, and the importance of preserving essential documents.
- ✓ Support community-based documentation initiatives aimed at building local databases of housing and property, serving as references in cases of disputes or document loss.
- ✓ Enhance transparency within cooperative housing associations and oversee property transfer processes to ensure original owners are involved in any decisions affecting their rights.

Proposed Follow-Up Plan

To ensure the practical implementation of the proposed recommendations, a strategic follow-up plan is suggested. This plan is based on mechanisms that ensure effective coordination, accountability, and adaptability in facing challenges, while promoting collaboration among local and international stakeholders. The plan includes two main pillars:

1. Scheduling Future Workshops and Dialogues:

- Organise a series of periodic specialised workshops to track developments in the property and housing file, and to assess progress in legislation and implementation.
- Conduct workshops on reforming zoning plans from legal and rights-based perspectives, with the participation of urban planners and local community representatives.
- Hold sessions addressing informal housing and its implications for tenure rights, presenting alternative solutions.

- Facilitate discussions on the establishment of the national property authority, including its mandate and operational scope.
- Conduct workshops linking housing, land, and property rights with transitional justice, fairness, and reconciliation frameworks.

2. Strengthening Partnerships and Resource Mobilisation

- Create a joint coordination platform involving representatives from official entities, civil society organisations, and international bodies working in Syria, to exchange information and consolidate efforts.
- Establish permanent contact points between judicial, administrative, and non-governmental institutions to streamline dispute resolution and facilitate secure data sharing.
- Prepare regular evaluation reports that track the implementation of recommendations, assess the tangible impact of efforts made, and submit them to relevant stakeholders both locally and internationally.
- Promote community participation in follow-up mechanisms through surveys, public hearings, and focus groups to ensure affected individuals are meaningfully represented at all stages.

Conclusion

This report demonstrates that housing and property issues lie at the core of Syria's humanitarian and legal crisis, and that resolving them is fundamental to enabling the safe and genuine return of millions of Syrians forcibly displaced from their homes and lands. The scale and complexity of the challenges—both political and administrative—necessitate a fundamental solution that goes beyond partial technical fixes. Such a solution must be rooted in genuine national will, reinforced by effective international support and inclusive community participation.

participation.

Responsibility for resolution lies in the coordination of efforts across all key actors:

- The State: through reforming legislation, ensuring judicial independence, and holding perpetrators of property rights violations accountable.
- The International Community: by supporting transitional justice mechanisms, funding community-based documentation initiatives, and monitoring the implementation of durable solutions.
- Local communities and victims: by documenting violations, participating in the formulation of reconstruction policies, and rejecting short-term or unjust solutions.

A just future cannot be built without acknowledging past violations, working to redress them, and ensuring non-repetition. Achieving housing and property justice is a cornerstone for establishing social peace, rebuilding trust between citizens and institutions, and laying the legal and societal groundwork for reconstruction.

The recommendations presented in this report constitute an initial roadmap; however, their implementation requires political will that prioritises justice over narrow interests, and international cooperation that moves beyond rhetoric to tangible mechanisms. The path ahead is long and complex—but this work aspires to be a practical step toward restoring rights, achieving dignity, and building a more just and equitable Syria.

Annexes

Annexed Tables:

Table 1: Summary of Key Laws and Decrees Impacting Property Issues (2011–2024)

DESCRIPTION	LAW/DECREE NUMBER	YEAR
REGULATES INFORMAL AND UNLICENSED HOUSING AREAS IN DAMASCUS; WIDELY SEEN AS A GATEWAY TO PROPERTY EXPROPRIATION WITHOUT ADEQUATE COMPENSATION.	Law No. 66	2012
INTRODUCED AMENDMENTS TO THE PENAL CODE REGARDING TRESPASSING ON STATE PROPERTY; USED TO CRIMINALISE CERTAIN INFORMAL LANDHOLDINGS.	Law No. 20	2015
ENABLED THE GOVERNMENT TO REORGANISE DESTROYED AREAS AND TRANSFER PROPERTY OWNERSHIP WITHOUT THE CONSENT OF OWNERS RESIDING ABROAD.	Law No. 10	2018
REGULATES THE REACTIVATION OF ZONING PLANS IN AFFECTED AREAS, AMID LEGAL AMBIGUITY THREATENING ORIGINAL OWNERS' RIGHTS.	Decree No. 237	2021

Table 2: Comparison Between Current Property Legislation and International Human Rights Standards

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD	CURRENT STATUS IN SYRIAN LEGISLATION	PRINCIPLE
UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS – ARTICLE 17	While laws do not formally discriminate, implementation often reflects bias based on political or geographic affiliation.	Right to property without discrimination
INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS – ARTICLES 2 & 26	Expropriation for public interest is allowed, often without fair or timely compensation.	Right to fair compensation upon expropriation
UN-HABITAT: BASIC PRINCIPLES ON EXPROPRIATION AND COMPENSATION	Judicial independence is weak and lack of accountability undermines effective legal appeal.	Access to an independent judiciary to contest confiscation
UN GUIDELINES ON THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE HOUSING	Urban planning measures are often taken without sufficient notice or genuine community participation.	Transparency in planning and reconstruction processes
LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION FRAMEWORKS	Absence of formal mechanisms for public involvement; residents are frequently excluded from planning decisions.	Community participation in urban planning

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