The SEF is an innovative think tank dedicated to building a free, pluralistic, and independent homeland that rests on a strong economy to ensure a life of freedom and dignity for all Syrians. The organization will serve as an information resource for all matters relating to the Syrian economy, and its members will conduct economic research and publish scholarly reports. Beyond those attributes typically associated with a traditional think tank, the SEF will organize the private sector to advocate for the economic reforms needed in post-Assad Syria. The organization will develop policy proposals necessary for the birth of a free market economy that upholds equal opportunities of access for the welfare and prosperity of all Syrians. The days are coming when a free Syria will be governed by laws and not men, and the SEF will be at the forefront of economic restructuring that will restore the status, dignity, and rights of the Syrian homeland and people.
About Lattakia Province

The province of Lattakia is the fifth most populous province in Syria. It is located in the northwest of Syria within a peninsula on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, about 385 km northwest of the capital, Damascus. Lattakia is the number one port for Syria on the Mediterranean Sea, where all the largest ports are located. Most of Lattakia is covered with forests and agricultural spaces. Lattakia has borders with Turkey at Kasab Border Crossing. Lattakia province is divided into four administrative units: the City of Lattakia, Jableh, Haffeh, and Qardahah. It has a surface area of 2,297 km². The population of Lattakia province is approximately 943,000 people, according government statistics in 2007.

Economy of Lattakia

The economy of Lattakia depends mainly on the tourism sector and on import and export activities. It is the largest Syrian port on the Mediterranean with a storage capacity of about 620,000 containers distributed on 23 piers. Lattakia province is also famous for agriculture, as it is surrounded by lands for the growing of olives and citrus. In addition, Lattakia is famous for the growing of tobacco, winning global fame as the "Tobacco of Lattakia." There is also an establishment that has sponsored tobacco production since 1774, which is currently monopolized by the government.

Industry in the province is distributed between the public and private sectors. Important industries include asphalt, yarn and textiles, marble, and foodstuffs, as well as traditional handicrafts and industries.

Most of Lattakia’s residents work in agriculture, especially in rural areas. In the city, residents work in industry and trade. The existence of a port in Lattakia led to the establishment of many customs clearance offices and import-export companies, which add to the great importance of the city.

Lattakia province in light of the Syrian Revolution

LATTAKIA PROVINCE IS THE MAIN STRONGHOLD OF AL ASSAD FAMILY, AS IT CONTAINS THE FAMILY’S HOMETOWN, QARDAHAH. MOST OF BASHAR AL ASSAD’S FAMILY MEMBERS RESIDE IN LATTAKIA, IN ADDITION TO PERSONNEL CLOSE TO THE ASSAD FAMILY. THE RESIDENTS OF THE SUNNI MAJORITY IN THE PROVINCE WERE EXPOSED TO PERSISTENT INJUSTICE BECAUSE OF THE DOMINATION OF ASSAD FAMILY. DIFFERENT TYPES OF INJUSTICE URGED RESIDENTS OF LATTAKIA TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS OPPOSED TO THE REGIME. THE PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS SPREAD TO A NUMBER OF THE CITY’S NEIGHBORHOODS, IN ADDITION TO MANY RURAL AREAS. THIS PROVOKED THE SYRIAN REGIME, WHICH DREW A LARGE NUMBER OF SYRIAN ARMY TROOPS—BACKED UP WITH TANKS, ARMORED VEHICLES, AND GUNBOATS—TO STORM THE REBELLIOUS NEIGHBORHOODS IN AUGUST 2011. THIS INTRUSION LEFT BEHIND A LARGE NUMBER OF MARTYRS IN THESE NEIGHBORHOODS.

A LARGE NUMBER OF SECURITY FORCES REMAINED TO BLOCK ANY ANTI-REGIME MOVEMENT. MEANWHILE, SUCCESSIVE CAMPAIGNS OF SYRIAN REGIME FORCES ON THE COUNTRYSIDE OF LATTAKIA CONTINUED. THE BATTLES WERE CONCENTRATED IN THE HAFFEH AREA, ESPECIALLY IN THE VILLAGES OF THE SUNNI MAJORITY IN THE PROVINCE. THE VILLAGES IN JABAL TURKUMAN AND JABAL AKRAD. CONTROLLED THE STRATEGIC TOWN OF KASAB AND ITS BORDER CROSSING WITH TURKEY.

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The Syrian Economic Forum (SEF) trained several Syrian people as liaisons inside Syria in the liberated areas to collect data on the economic and social reality in Syria, in the following governorates: Aleppo, Idlib, Lattakia countryside, Deir Ezzor, Raqqa, Hama, Homs, and Damascus Countryside. Data was collected from these governorates.

The people who were selected as liaisons were trained in Gaziantep on collecting data to fill out the questionnaire. The IT staff at SEF prepared a special program for the liaisons and uploaded it to the SEF website. This allowed the liaisons to mobilize data in an easy and efficient manner, so that data arrives daily to SEF and is placed in the database suitable to their nature.

We have one contact point in the province of Lattakia. Data collection is concentrated in rural Lattakia, especially in Jabal Turkuman and Jabal Akrad. Below is an overview of the data collected from the province of Lattakia.

**Lattakia Governorate Data:**

The prices of basic materials in Lattakia:

1. **U.S. dollar exchange rate:**

   Figure (1) shows changes in the U.S. dollar exchange rate between December 2014 and February 2015.

   One can note the acute deterioration in the value of the Syrian pound from 201 to 239 SP during these months. Meanwhile, the Central Bank fixed the official exchange rate of the U.S. dollar at 199.8 SP per dollar, and the rate averaged 245 SP in the regime-controlled areas.

2. **Gas cylinder prices:**

   Gas cylinder prices fluctuated from December 2014 to February 2015. One can note from Figure (2) below that the value of a gas cylinder rose from 5500 SP to 6300 SP and then decreased to 3600 SP. Although prices declined, the price of a gas cylinder is still very high when compared to its official price, which is 1,250 SP. In the regime-controlled areas, a gas cylinder is sold at a price of 5,000 SP.

3. **Diesel prices (per liter):**

   Between December 2014 and February 2015, the price of a liter of diesel decreased from 150 to 130 SP, and finally settled at the price of 135 SP, as shown in Figure (2).

   In the regime-controlled areas, the price of a liter of diesel is 140 SP. The price of diesel is higher than its official rate, which is 85 SP.
4. Petrol Prices (per liter):

As shown in Figure (4), the price of a liter of petrol fluctuated between a high of 425 SP and a low of 250 SP during December 2014. The prices then continued to decline through February 2015 to reach 275 SP. The official rate of a liter of petrol is 125 SP, but the price in the regime-controlled areas reached 300 SP.

5. Chicken meat prices (per kilogram):

As shown in Figure (5), from December 2014 to February 2015, the price of 1 kg of chicken meat increased from 450 SP to 550 SP, then rose again to 625 SP.

In the regime-controlled areas, chicken meat is sold for 700 SP per kilo, while the official price is 450 SP.

6. Egg carton prices (30 eggs):

Figure (6) shows that the price of a pack of eggs increased from 550 SP to 600 SP between December 2014 and February 2015. In the regime-controlled areas, a carton of eggs is sold for 700 SP, while the official price is 525 SP.

7. Burgul prices (per kilogram):

Figure (7) shows that the price of 1 kg of burgul was relatively stable around 75 to 80 SP between December 2014 and February 2015. Its selling price in the regime-controlled areas is 130 SP, while the official price is 85 SP.
8. Rice prices (per kilogram):

Figure (8) shows that the price of 1 kg of rice increased from 125 SP to 155 SP, followed by a decrease to 140 SP between December 2014 and February 2015.

In the regime-controlled areas, a kilo of rice is sold for 130 SP, while the official price is 170 SP.

9. Sugar prices (per kilogram):

Figure (9) shows that the price of 1 kg of sugar rose from 125 SP to 140 SP between December 2014 and February 2015. The price of 1 kg of sugar in the regime-controlled areas is 120 SP.

10. Tea prices (per kilogram):

Figure (10) shows that the price of 1 kg of tea increased from 1,200 SP to 1,400 SP.

In the regime-controlled areas, one kilo of tea is sold for 1450 SP, while the official price is 950 SP.
Livelihood conditions of families in the province of Lattakia

1- Availability of electricity

Our liaisons collected data on electricity resources and average usage hours per day. The average usage of electricity in the province of Lattakia is 4.25 hours per day. Electricity is available from three sources: the public network, private generators, or by buying Amperes (large generators sold by the private sector). Figure (11) shows the sources of electricity, irrespective of consumption hours.

All the surveyed households in the province of Lattakia responded that they never receive electricity through the public network. 60% of households buy Amperes for power, and the average use depends on demand. 40% of households have private generators as a source of electricity. The average monthly cost to get four hours of daily electricity exceeds 3,900 SP.

2- Availability of diesel:
Households consume an average of 36 liters of diesel fuel per month, with an average monthly cost of 4,071 SP. Diesel fuel is generally available in markets.

3- Availability of petrol:
Households consume an average of 8 liters of petrol per month, with an average monthly cost of 3,000 SP. Petrol is 90% available in local markets and is mostly used as fuel for generators.

4- Availability of gas:
Households consume an average of 10 liters of gas per month, which is almost equal to one gas cylinder, with an average monthly cost of 4,647 SP. Gas is 67% available in markets at a high cost.

5- Availability of firewood:
Households consume an average of 1,190 kg per month, with an average monthly cost of 8,650 SP. Firewood is generally available in markets and is specifically used for heating.

6- Availability of water:
As shown in Figure (12), the main water sources in Lattakia are the public network, private wells, or by buying water from water tankers. We can note from Figure (12) that households in the province of Lattakia never get water from the public network. 25% of households buy water from tankers, and 33% of households own a private well, with an average monthly cost of 700 SP.

7- Housing conditions:
Data collected by our contact point Basic services are available in 100% of surveyed households, and 80% of respondents described their area as safe.

Approximately 60% of residents live in apartment-style housing and 40% in Arab-style housing.

Household ownership statistics show that 40% of residences are owned by their residents, while 60% are rented.

8- Availability of humanitarian assistance:
40% of families confirmed that humanitarian assistance is sufficient, while 60% of families found that humanitarian assistance is insufficient.

According to the surveyed families, there are no obstacles that hinder the delivery of aid.

The most important organizations that provide humanitarian assistance in the province of Lattakia are Sham Organization (80%) and other organizations (20%).

9- Security status of residential areas:
80% of surveyed families found their area of residence to be safe and 20% unsafe. This security is relative, because despite the absence of hostile actions in the region, 100% of residents confirmed that there are airstrikes and bomb shelling over the area.
Recommendations

Based on the above findings, the Syrian Economic Forum recommends Local Councils to do the following:

1. Provide street lighting and home electricity through projects that use old car batteries and generators in order to reduce the costs of using electricity.
2. Provide training sessions in coordination with supporting organizations on domestic agricultural economy projects, especially those related to growing crops and raising livestock and poultry to secure meat, eggs, bulgur, and other essential materials.
3. Because of the acute deterioration in the value of the Syrian pound, Local Councils in coordination with supporting organizations should spread awareness among citizens about the need to replace the Syrian pounds with a more stable currency (such as the U.S. dollar or the Turkish lira) in the liberated areas.
4. Lattakia is known for its rich agricultural lands and animal resources, upon which residents depend. Thus, the Syrian Economic Forum recommends communicating with local and international organizations involved in the support and development of agriculture and animal resources. This can be done through the formation of committees comprising experts and agronomists in the region. The committees would issue regular reports on the situation on the ground and undertake initiatives to ensure the continuity and quality of agricultural and livestock products. Specific initiatives may include fighting pests and securing material and financial support to ensure the achievement of self-sufficiency for farmers.
5. The Syrian Economic Forum also recommends that all civil society organizations should support the Local Councils to undertake infrastructure projects, such as the pavement of roads, and to support small enterprises.

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