

Stabilization Committee: Attaining Stability in N E Rural Aleppo

 dlockyer.wordpress.com/2017/11/18/stabilization-committee-attaining-stability-in-rural-n-and-e-aleppo

18 novembre
2017



In Syria there is a place where children can go to school safely without constantly scrutinizing the sky – a place where trees are planted and not land mines and where a de facto No Fly Zone exists.

Graffiti on a school wall in Jarabulus greets children on their way to school – a StabCommittee project. [Further images below]



This area is situated in the northern and eastern countryside of Aleppo where daily life is slowly coming into its own once again thanks to Syrian organisations such as the **Stabilization Committee**.



As the year 2017 nears its term and Stabilization Committee enters its third year of existence, let's take a closer look at its main objective of achieving stability at its inception in Newly Liberated Areas by providing basic essentials to a civilian population, its evolution over these last two years and its accomplishments up until today.

The Stabilization Committee of Aleppo Provincial Council Syria

StabCommittee's Twitter profile notes it "is in charge of running services in the newly liberated areas" <https://twitter.com/StabCommittee>



Since the Stabilization Committee was created in November, 2015, by an Aleppo Provincial Council resolution, **one of its main goals was to encourage civilians to return to towns and villages that had recently been liberated from Daesh**, and to a lesser degree from Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and the regime, in the northern and eastern Aleppo countryside and **restore civil activities thereby restoring stability to the region**.



Schools systematically destroyed by Daesh in northern Aleppo countryside.

Considering Daesh had been in control of most of the towns and villages near the Turkish border for over the last two years and had systematically destroyed all form of civic activity and utilities, it was indeed an ambitious undertaking.

StabCommittee has two main offices in northern Syria, in **Azaz** and **Jarabulus**, and a third in **Gaziantep** in Turkey. **Munser Al Sallal** is the young dynamic Head of StabCommittee with **Mohammad Al Najjouma** by his side as Deputy Head. They can both be seen participating tirelessly and full of enthusiasm in meetings and various workshops providing information and advice to those present.

The Stabilization Committee is made up of seven offices

Demographics; Education; Engineering; Legal; Media; Medical and Studies. Their task is to evaluate needs assessments for civilians in towns, villages and residential areas recently liberated from Daesh in Aleppo's northern and eastern countryside in terms of demographics and infrastructure.

So as civilians returned to newly liberated areas, **StabCommittee's objective was to improve their situation by restoring basic infrastructure such as bakeries, water and electricity services, sanitation and waste management and removing rubble as rapidly as possible.** For each project, studies were carried out on their **actual needs and the situation of essential infrastructure** in the zones concerned. Projects were launched in co-ordination with local councils for a 3 month period, or exceptionally for 6 months. Once the three months over, it was then up to the local council to assume the entire management of the project in its town or village.

"Aleppo Provincial Council: The Stabilization Committee in a Year: 2016."

In **"The Stabilization Committee in a Year"** publication dating December 2015, shortly after SC's inception, to November, 2016, one of the key elements is the emphasis on **"anticipation"** – planning ahead with its post-liberation studies for the day when towns and villages would be liberated from Daesh, SDF and the regime.

Prior to the liberation of Al Bab from Daesh, for example, a Timely Rapid Response Plan was under study at the time where roles and responsibilities for both donor and local bodies were determined.

61 concept notes for service based projects for 85 residential areas prepared.

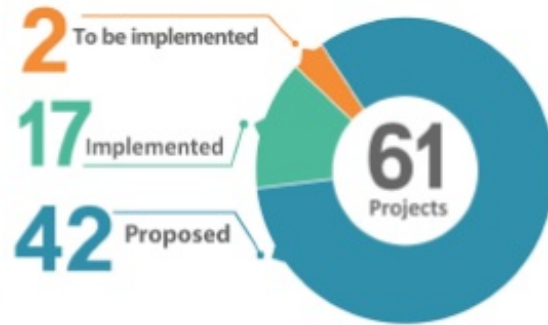
The Activities of the Stabilization Committee
since December 1st, 2015
until November 30th, 2016

infographics

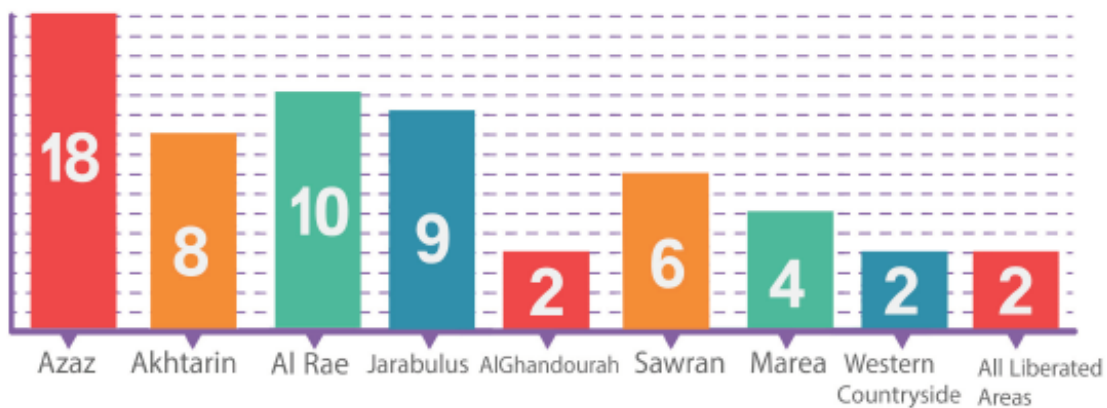
Types of Projects



The Projects of Stabilization Committee

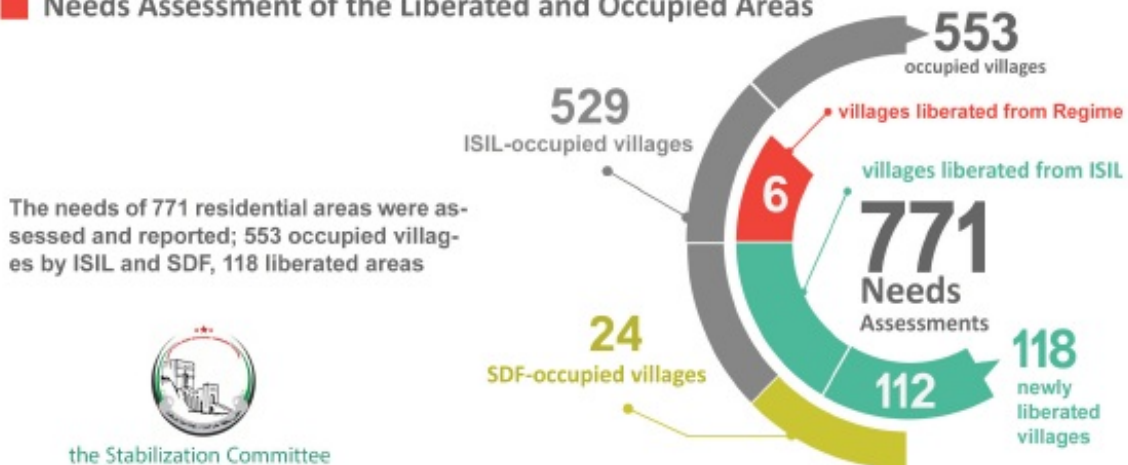


Projects per Residential Area



Studies prepared for 553 cities, towns and villages prior to their liberation.

Needs Assessment of the Liberated and Occupied Areas



StabCommittee Diversifies Its Activities.

As more areas were liberated and demands in these areas grew, StabCommittee began providing much more than bread, water and electricity. Here are some of the different activities mentioned in the **“Stabilization Committee in a Year”** document and carried out in 2016.



Hawar Kilis: an ambulance, a water tanker, an electricity generator and a mobile caravan as a school.



SC made 265 mobile toilets for makeshift IDP camps



Bab Laymoun: Health Directorate a mobile clinic and medical equipment



Azaz: A summer school was set up for children recently displaced from Manbij, Sawran and Akhtarin.

Jarabulus received an automated bakery and 450 food parcels when the town was liberated

Other activities included a tractor and trailer for garbage management in Kaljibreen; Al Suwaida Janoubi received an electricity generator for pumping water, rubble and all traces of Daesh were removed from Al Rae town and campaigns for: « **Our Streets are Coloured** »





<https://youtu.be/FUmUwCjldpI>

Local Councils' Role Vital for Implementing StabCommittee's Projects

StabCommittee began planning well ahead as the possible chaos of an administrative vacuum would have made providing essential infrastructure and basic services to civilians particularly difficult. With this in mind, Stabcommittee set out to reform governance bodies and local councils already present in the areas to become the representatives of society as a whole – all the area's social and religious groups. Where no local councils existed, they were established and obliged to adhere to the Aleppo Provincial Council's legal concepts.

The local councils then became representatives of the regions previously held by Daesh, SDF or the regime. Stab Committee was counting on the local councils' capacity to implement projects intended to achieve a return to stability in the most efficient manner possible in their areas and then take over the management of these same projects following the initial three month period during which they were accompanied by StabCommittee. Today, November, 2017, there are about 44 local councils working in the Newly Liberated Areas (NLA)

Dialogue Consensus and Cooperation

Prior to the launching of any project, StabCommittee holds lengthy meetings not only with members of local councils but also with local dignitaries and members of local communities to explain in detail exactly how the future project is to be implemented. These meetings are intended to promote co-operation and consensus among participants and guarantee the sustainability of the project over the long term. At the same time, discussion is encouraged on the feasibility of the project and obstacles that might eventually be encountered.

Kick Off Meetings with Local Councils.



Meetings are held on a regular basis where StabCommittee representatives come to listen to the problems the town is encountering and the best way they can formulate a policy to meet the town's needs. Here in **Htaimlat** town,, the discussion concerns garbage management and support for operating tractors.

A meeting was held in the **Jarabulus Local Council** office where **Moetaz Abo Ryad**, from the StabCommittee Engineering Department, was holding a discussion on a new project with local council members in July, 2017.



A Return to Jarabulus and its Surroundings.

Jarabulus was liberated on 24 August 2016, by the Free Syrian Army and the Euphrates Shield Intervention. By 7 September, 2016, the director of the Gaziantep Administration for Migration, indicated that Syrians were already on their way back to Jarabulus.



https://youtu.be/HjoVm3_Gl3M

Hundreds of Syrians return to Jarabulus after ISIS is ousted. Civilians were happy to be home but indicated their need for **“electricity, water, bread and cleaning services.”**

By July, 2017, 44,600 Syrians had chosen to cross back into their country from Turkey, with about 200 civilians crossing the border every day. And as more Syrians returned to the NLAs, so their demands increased.

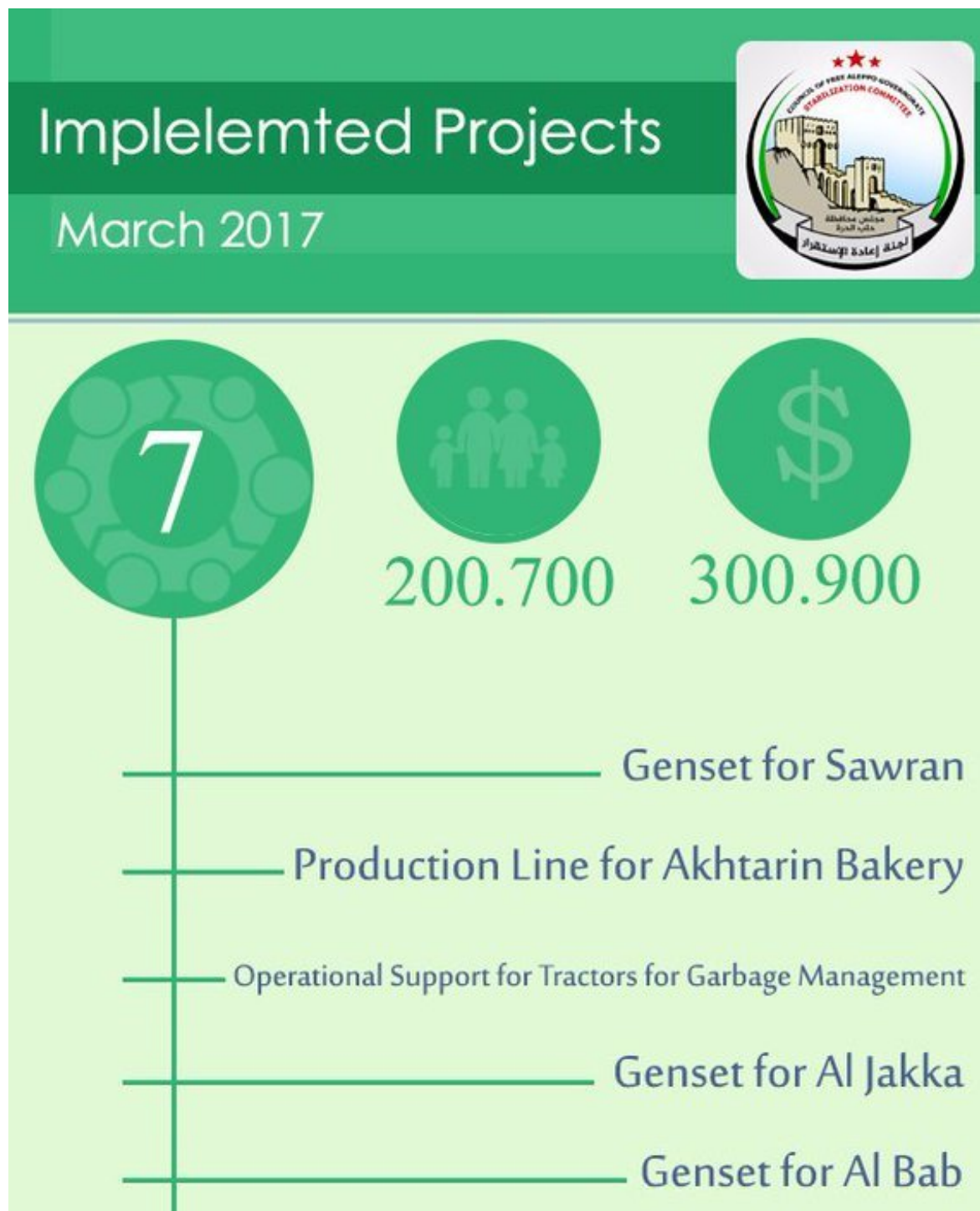
Some of StabCommittee's Projects Implemented in February 2017

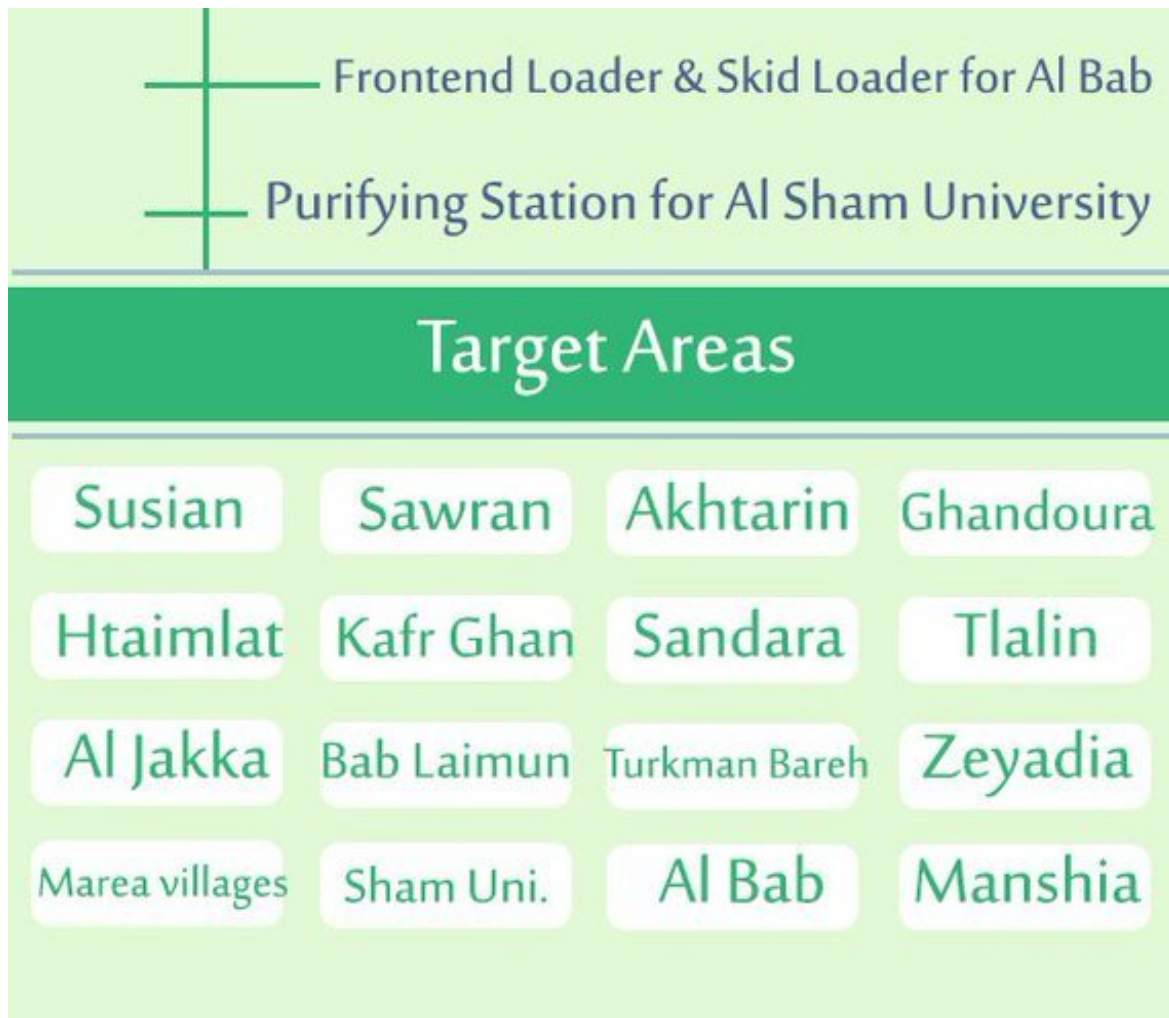


An automated bakery to **Jarabulus** and a water tanker to local councils to serve villages that had no water networks. An electricity generator for the **Al Suwaida** pumping station and refuse trucks and a skid loader for the following villages – **Dabiq, Sawran, Akhtarín, and Htaímlat**

100 mobile and fixed bins for garbage management along with tools and outfits for waste collector and tractors and trailers to local councils for garbage management to the above villages. A 275 KVA electricity generator to **Al Grou** village, a 35 KVA electricity generator to **Al Fursan** village and a truck mounted with a crane and spare parts.

StabCommittee Projects Implemented in March 2017.





Topping SC's Agenda: Civilians' Basic Daily Needs – Bread Water Electricity.

SC: Providing a city with an automated bakery means food security.

In the context of achieving stabilization in the newly liberated areas, the Stabilization Committee provided four automated bakeries to Jarabulus, Akhtarín, and Al Bab.

The support includes the operational costs for three months.

The bakeries provided the local communities with 111 job opportunities, with a total beneficiaries of 65k people.

The devoted efforts aim at ensuring food security and consequently the stabilization in those areas.

The Stabilization Committee plans to provide more bakeries in order to meet the populations needs.



Stabilization Committee



Akhtarín Bakery

Daily Capacity: 10 tons
Beneficiaries : 15k
Job Opportunities: 23

Jarabulus Bakery

Daily Capacity: 12.5 tons
Beneficiaries : 18.750
Job Opportunities: 38

Al Bab Bakery

Daily Capacity: 10 tons
Beneficiaries : 15k
Job Opportunities: 25

Al Bab Bakery

Daily Capacity: 10 tons
Beneficiaries : 15k
Job Opportunities: 25





StabCommittee aims to achieve stability in NLAs by providing basic essentials such as **bread, a basic staple in Syria**. With that in mind, StabCommittee provided **Jarabulus, Akhtarin and Al Bab** with four automated bakeries creating 111 jobs and allowing 65K people to have bread at their disposal..

The Akhtarin Bakery

When **Akhtarin** was liberated, people discovered that Daesh had destroyed the automated bakery in place and had stolen all the equipment. StabCommittee set out



<https://youtu.be/RWEUml8igSQ>

to provide Akhtarin with an automated bakery as a priority with an electricity generator producing 10 tons of bread on a daily basis to meet the needs of 25K persons in Akhtarin and its 66 surrounding villages and farms as well as providing jobs for 23 people. For the following 3 months, the operational costs and salaries were also covered by StabCommittee.

However, over the first three months, the bakery encountered certain difficulties so into its fourth month, StabCommittee extended its grant to six months.



<https://youtu.be/F3ZUaOyDYF0>

It was reassuring indeed to see, at the end of October 2017, StabCommittee announced that the Akhtarin Local Council had taken over the entire management of the bakery following the end of the supervision period.

For the Bread of People: Al Bab



<https://youtu.be/BqmiMjhkEPI>

When **Al Bab** was liberated, the situation was similar to Akhtarín – Daesh had stolen all the bakery equipment and bread was difficult to find. A building was allocated and renovated and a grocery store was opened when StabCommittee provided the necessary bakery equipment – the daily capacity has reached between 18,000 to 20,000 bread packets meeting the needs of 60k people in Al Bab and its surrounding villages. As capacity rises and more bread is available, the price has dropped as a result. **Jamal Othman, Head of the Al Bab Local Council**, indicated that the population of Al Bab is around 110K – 186,000 families. And he then added: **one of the basic factors of stability is to provide essential services – water, electricity and bread.**

Drinking Water in Newly Liberated Areas.

Sadly, waterborne diseases such as hepatitis, typhoid, cholera and dysentery are rife in Syria. When Al Bab was liberated, the Assad Regime controlled Al Bab's major source of running water so some people resorted to digging makeshift wells, many directly over the city's ancient sewage system, leading to an outbreak of typhoid fever from drinking contaminated water.

It is absolutely vital for a civilian population to have access to drinking water – a priority for StabCommittee.



StabCommittee provided drinking water to 61 villages for 170,000 civilians and 76 jobs when it implemented three projects providing them with electricity generators, operational support and purification stations.

For the UN : Access to Drinking Water is a Fundamental Right

Video: Ghour Pumping Station

The video dates 28 April 2017 but it is particularly interesting to see how StabCommittee deals with each project – here it provided a 275 KVA genset, operational support and maintenance expenses to Ghrou village.



<https://youtu.be/fIUbaPoOLD8>

At the time the station had been operating for 6 weeks pumping drinking water every two days for 24 hours at a time to five villages – **Akhtarin, Ghrou, Qubtan, Al Masoudia** and **Khirbat Ali** – meeting the needs of more than 25K people and providing jobs for 10 men.



StabCommittee provided this IDP camp with a water pump, a generator and a tank in September 2017. It is one of the many small IDP camps strung out along the **Al Bab Jarabulus road near Al Ghandoura village – a random camp** nobody really cares about in a desolate landscape whose residents are refugees evacuated from South Aleppo.

Digging Wells For Drinking Water in Northern Aleppo Countryside.



<https://youtu.be/-tvtwRZoYV8>

StabCommittee in collaboration with Damascus House Forum dug wells for drinking water in Al Kinnawi, Al Fairzeya, Tlail Al Sham providing 35,000 people with drinking water.

The video shows images of the **Al Kinnawi IDP** camp where more than 2,000 residents have been living in an area which suffers from a serious lack of water. They will no longer have to walk 2 km to get water with their newly dug wells.

3. Electricity. : Essential for water pumping stations to work.

StabCommittee provided a 110KVA genset to the Jarabulus Local Council for the **Al Ghandoura** water pumping station allowing them to provide drinking water to the population.



StabCommittee also provided electricity generators to **Hazwan, Talar Gharbi, Kaibah, Bza'a, Dabiq...**

StabCommittee provided the **Jarabulus Local Council** with a crane and spare parts for the maintenance of its electrical system – May 2017.



Al Bab Local Council received a solar energy water purification system from SC.

Among the towns/villages to have received gensets recently in September 2017 to operate water pumping stations are: **Sawran, Dabiq, Arshaf, Raael and Htaimlat**. A reminder – SC provides operational support too.

Health and Medical Services in the Newly Liberated Areas.

Many fighters and their families from the Al Waer neighbourhood in Homs were forcibly evacuated to IDP camps near Jarabulus – Al Jabal, Ain Al Baidha and the **Zoughra camp** to the west of Jarabulus.

StabCommittee received Al Waer families upon their arrival at Zoughra at the end of March 2017.

In June, 2017 the Jarabulus Local Council with StabCommittee's support installed a mobile clinic at Zoughra IDP Camp.







<https://youtu.be/qUC3A-HJOT4>

Zoughra Camp provides shelter to 8K IDPs from Al Waer at the moment. As the camp was suffering from a grave shortage of medical and health services, StabCommittee provided it with a mobile medical clinic to aid IDPs in their dire need for basic services.

The clinic offers an emergency service, services for women and internal illnesses. There are specialized doctors, a gynecologist, a pediatrician and a qualified staff where the clinic receives more than 200 cases per day. Laser tests, X-ray devices and laboratory analysis requirements are available.

Thanks to the mobile clinic, medical treatment for IDPs has improved with first aid and medicine free and the number of transfers to Jarabulus Hospital, which is 20 km away, considerably reduced.

If you wish to go further, StabCommittee compiled a **Humanitarian Report on the IDPs from Al Waer Homs**, check this link:

Bza'a Public Clinic Aug 17 2017 reactivated following the liberation of Bza'a.



<https://youtu.be/Jmgdr8RHgSk>

StabCommittee's support to the Bza'a Public Clinic includes modern medical requirements such as an ambulance, a defibrillator... to this public clinic which offers emergency and first aid services. It has both a gynecology service as well as a pediatrics one. Critical cases are transferred to specialist clinics. The Clinic's doctors, midwives and its ambulance service provide health care for about 50K people.

The **Bza'a Local Council** received an ambulance and medical equipment from StabCommittee in July 2017.

Other local councils that received ambulances from SC included **Jarabulus, Al Rae, Akhatrin and Howar Kilis.**

Stab Committee lists its Post Liberation Activities in NLAs from ISIS in this video dating July 27, 2017.

Numerous StabCommittee projects that were launched in collaboration with local councils included here. Thanks to its initiatives, SC has enabled local communities to create 586 jobs.





https://youtu.be/Daam8l_3DIA

5 automated bakeries were launched in **Jarabulus, Akhtarin, Al Bab and Bza'a**. 19 pumping stations were equipped to provide drinking water. Rubble removal was undertaken in 15 different areas including **Al Bab, Bza'a and Qabassin** and ramparts removed enabling roads to be opened. 19 different waste management projects were undertaken thus creating 339 jobs.

Campaigns **"Our Streets are Colorful"** were launched to remove Daesh slogans in **Jarabulus, Dabiq, Sawran, Akhtarin and Htaimlat**. Campaigns continue at **Al Bab, Bza'a and Qabassin**.

In addition, StabCommittee was accorded a core grant, while periodic meetings continued with local councils, local actors and communities and recently, a monthly magazine, « **Istikrar** » – “Stability” was published to highlight the projects put in place with local councils.



A second edition appeared in mid-September, 2017. Here is the link for the soft copy – in Arabic – but worth checking out.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B0dpVqcB8JSma1gwbUIYd2dGSIU/view>

A third edition has appeared in November, 2017 – in Arabic – dealing with subjects like « Prospects of Mutual Work » « New Departments in Free Aleppo University » and « The Four Guests »- and some wonderful photos too.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B6axQF4c92r7YjZVV3BGU20tbWs/view>

A Field Visit to Al Bab



<https://youtu.be/I-KuYbReY-g>

Al Bab was in fact one of the last towns to be liberated – in February 2017 along with Bza'a and Qabassin compared with Jarabulus in August, 2016. However, the video allows us to see the various problems StabCommittee encounters once a town is newly liberated from Daesh.

As quoted in the video: Al Bab is liberated yet the price is high as the town's needs are multiple – in services and infrastructure. The list as indicated in the video is as follows:

- Priorities – removing landmines and IEDs placed by Daesh
- Removal and disposal of rubble
- Facilitate movement of returnees
- Provide bread and drinking water
- Provide education facilities and resources
- Remove Daesh slogans

In its campaign to combat terrorism, StabCommittee has erased traces of Daesh in **Al Bab, Bza'a and Qabassin** – 22 August 2017



ISIS Landmines in the Northern Country of Aleppo

Removing Landmines Placed by Daesh in northern Rural Aleppo.



<https://youtu.be/H5dO6mngNYw>

As one can well imagine, before a single project can be launched, given the environment, StabCommittee has to determine that all landmines or IEDs have been dismantled. Too many civilians were not adequately protected and had been victim to landmines and IEDs before the liberation of the area. **Al Bab, Bza'a and Qabassin** were officially declared free of mines and safe areas end of March 2017.

Rubble Removal from Al Bab July 2017.



<https://youtu.be/27irxnF3WuQ>

Al Bab Local Council with the support of StabCommittee led a project to remove rubble from the remnants of houses destroyed during the war that hindered the movements of civilians. Rubble was removed to landfills in several phases due to large-scale destruction and continued in neighbouring Qabassin and Bza'a.

Waste Management

Waste Management rates high on StabCommittee's agenda too. Not only did Daesh paint everything black and cover walls with its slogans, it also let garbage accumulate for weeks on end. SC multiplied its efforts to supply towns and villages with tractors and trailers, fixed and mobile bins, refuse trucks and skid loaders.

Garbage Management March 2017



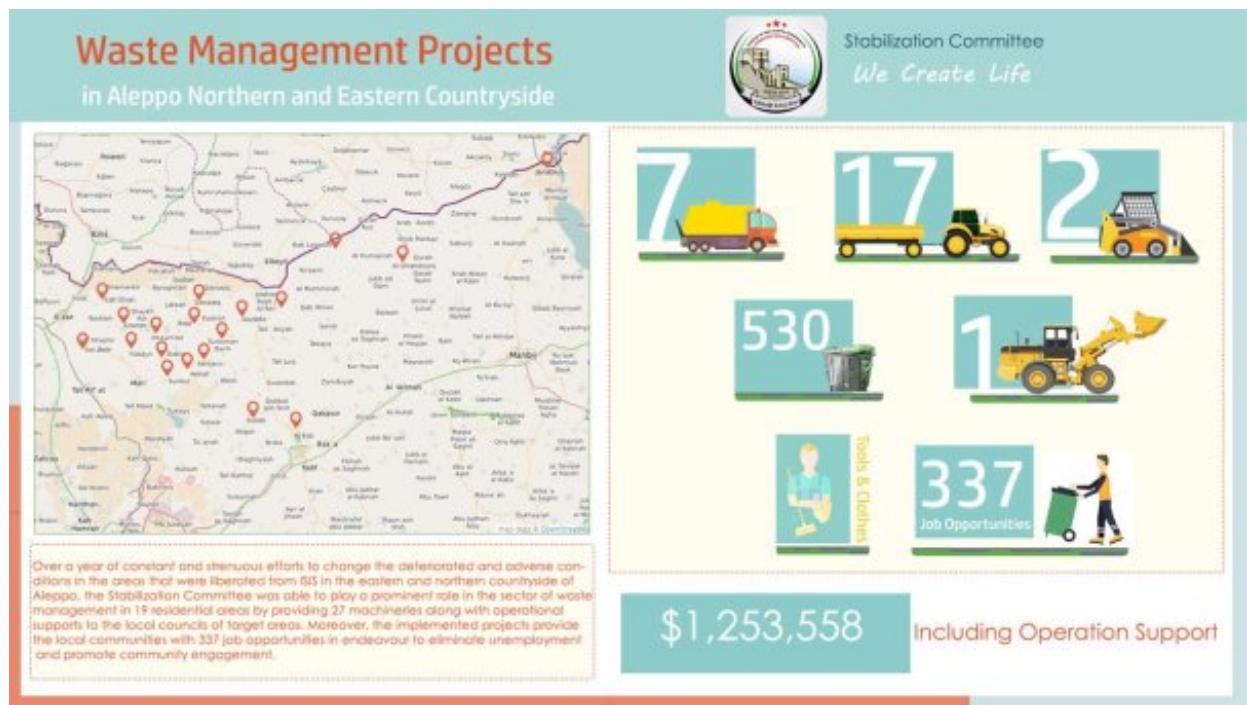
<https://youtu.be/QVN9YPj8ufQ>

Thanks to StabCommittee, the villages of **Dabiq, Htaimlat, Sawran and Akhtar** have been able to remove all traces of ISIL and its slogans which had a very negative effect. There was also garbage everywhere. As seen here in **Dabiq**, StabCommittee's visit had a significant impact on cleaning up the town after they provided a refuse truck and a skid loader.



<https://youtu.be/3SnJvuFLA>

As can be seen here in **Marea Tialin Kal Jibreen**, priority is given to removing ramparts on roads and streets to facilitate the movement of tractors which are vital for cleaning village streets. SC provided a tractor to each local council and as each one includes several villages, the tractor's use is not limited to one town. Marea local council for example includes 9 villages.



This info graphic provides a summary dating September 2017 of over a year's particularly difficult work by SC, in collaboration with local councils, providing waste management and garbage disposal in 19 residential areas in rural N and E Aleppo, areas liberated from Daesh and in dire need of aid. Not only 27 kinds of machinery were provided but also fixed and mobile bins, tools and appropriate clothes and operational support. By creating 337 jobs, the unemployment rate in the area dropped – and stability strengthened.

Sophisticated garbage trucks are provided to local councils by SC as well as tools that include humble brooms spades and barrows as in Jarabulus Cleanliness Project.

Bza'a local council received 45 bins and Qabassin 35 in September 2017.

11 tractors with trailers in NE rural Aleppo creating 36 jobs in October 2017.

People with Special Needs.







<https://youtu.be/LIKN9AFKTgo>

A very moving appeal from a StabCommittee member to local councils and civil society organisations urging them to hire people with special needs – in this case he was referring to deaf-mutes. When offers for jobs in **Al Bab, Bza'a, Qabassin and Jarabulus** were made public, 12 persons with special needs were hired. Yasser Al Zuair who has 6 children hadn't worked for 12 years – he refused to steal or sell his daughter in marriage to a member of Daesh as he wanted to “eat the fruits of his own labour.” He is now working as a waste collector in Bza'a Waste Management's Project which is supported by SC.

The SC representative insisted on how these people would be able to once again “engage with the community” and no longer feel inferior. He added they often work harder too – all that was needed was to “use signs to show him how to work” – as they want to show they work like any other worker.

Recruitment for StabCommittee's Projects.

As StabCommittee launched more projects in co-ordination with local councils, the number of employees required to carry out the jobs increased – and unemployment dropped.



Moetaz (lower left) and his colleagues travelled from Jarabulus to Al Bab on 29 July 2017 in order to recruit workers for a cleaning/rubble removal project in Al Bab – a « round trip » that takes about 4 hours. Members of local councils also participate when workers are hired. By the end of the day, 155 workers were recruited at Al Bab.

The following two days they travelled to Bza'a and Qabassin, villages not far from Al Bab, for the same purpose – hiring workers for a cleaning/rubble removing project in the two towns both heavily damaged too – where 18 workers were engaged in Bza'a and 11 in Qabassin.





Of course, project studies entail more than simply demographics, the state of infrastructure and taking on new workers. A StabCommittee team can be seen here examining different bids for fuel prices in Al Bab in August, 2017.

« Cleanliness and Waste Management in Jarabulus »

In early August 2017, the project “Cleanliness and Waste Management” in Jarabulus supported by StabCommittee in co-ordination with the Jarabulus Local Council and directed by **Moetaz Abo Ryad** was launched. 70 workers were taken on.

Ramparts and military fortifications are remnants of the war that remain an obstruction to free circulation. Opening up roads and removing ramparts of the war facilitate the movement of the population in liberated areas.

Overseeing the evolution of the destruction of ramparts in Jarabulus.



Removing rubble from Cultural Centre hit by International Coalition airstrike.

Cleanliness – the keyword in this Jarabulus project.

Renovation of parks in Jarabulus with a tree planting campaign



StabCommittee provides equipment, fuel and maintenance support to all vehicles participating in the Jarabulus Cleanliness and Waste Management Project.

On 30 August 2017, members of the **Jarabulus Local Council** and its director, **Abd Kahlil**, in the middle of the group, participated in the inauguration of a square created in the centre of Jarabulus, which was part of the project.

The tree planting campaign that is part of the project continued throughout the city.

StabCommittee's Motto: We Create Life
How appropriate in this striking image!











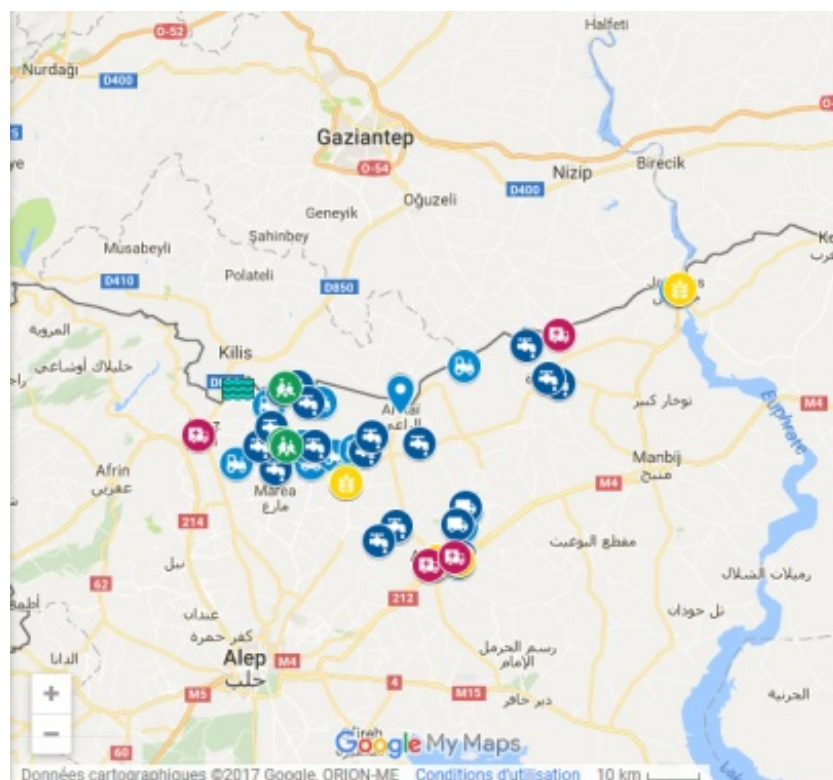
Some of the workers participating in the « **Cleanliness Waste Management Project** »

Raising the Flag – a moment of respect.





An excellent interactive map compiled by StabCommittee showing all projects implemented or being implemented in N and E rural Aleppo.



Please click on the following link for the interactive map.

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1O16LVvAoyTnbLu8AQndNsx9qEzs&ll=36.71055549427864%2C37.50382664375002&z=9>

Education: The Children of Syria are the Future of Syria

Children's Activity in Hawar Kilis Oct 25 2016.



<https://youtu.be/xY1lhHrGIJU>

In an interview with **Monzar Alsallal, Head of StabCommittee**, explained how SC's aim was to stabilize newly liberated cities and villages and to encourage civilians to return to these same villages.

He described the situation in **Hawar Kilis**, the first safe village liberated from Daesh. The first activity that StabCommittee undertook was to erase Daesh's impact on the town while encouraging students to return to schools.

The school had been completely destroyed by Daesh, so StabCommittee was preparing a mobile school instead and would provide electricity to the school too. Ahmad Khoja, head of the Hawar Kilis Local Council, then opened the mobile school unit and hoped for better schools and to encourage children to return to school too.

"Education is the Cornerstone of the People's Renaissance" StabCommittee

StabCommittee's insistence on the importance of sending children back to school is intended to make sure they get a proper education. It is also one of the best means to counter the extremism and violence many of these children have been exposed to.



On the one hand, Stabcommittee is faced with an infrastructure problem – schools were either destroyed or taken over as detention centres by Daesh. Yet schools can be rebuilt even if it takes time and money.

To date, there are 104 schools in the newly liberated areas in the Aleppo northern and eastern countryside that are supported by StabCommittee. The support includes school furniture – desks, whiteboards, tables and so on; heating fuel required for winter; documents closets and benches. In **Sawran**, teachers' salaries were paid for 3 months for 25 schools and in **Akhtar** for 52 schools.

On the other hand, StabCommittee is confronted with the much more delicate question of how to help Syrian children overcome the traumatic experiences of these long years of war.

First of all, some of these children remained in the Aleppo region and were subjected to the atrocities carried out by Daesh – and it is a well-known fact that children were not spared...Secondly, others have arrived in the northern and eastern Aleppo countryside more recently having lived through years of war, in Al Waer for example, or elsewhere, followed by a forced evacuation and the need to adapt once again. A third category exists – children who fled in haste across the border to Turkey with their family to escape the horrendous bombings who sadly, once saved from bombs, were often exploited despite their young age.

Above all, surroundings must be convivial for these children so any visual representation of Daesh or military destruction is removed.

The school is put in order to welcome the children as soon as possible.

Dabiq – Dabiq had a strong symbolic value in Daesh's propaganda so its liberation was a significant victory for a free Syria restoring civic activities – and education.





https://youtu.be/qleM8yR_cPU

The video is intended to stress the importance StabCommittee accords to education especially in areas where children were deprived of schooling during the years of Daesh presence, which was the case in most of the newly-liberated towns in rural northern and eastern Aleppo.



<https://youtu.be/F-0Gj3gxk4U>

Yusra I Love Maths is a 10 year old pupil at Sawran School for Girls.

She is originally from Homs where her school and home was shelled. When her mother passed away, she moved to Al-Raqqa with her grandmother where there were no maths lessons nor science nor reading but rather only Islamic lessons. Fortunately, after over two years the family managed to escape from Al Raqqa and came to Sawran. Within 5 days she was already registered at the Sawran School for Girls, and a week later she was given a bag and books. She was delighted as she could now learn maths, science and reading. As it turns out, she has proved to be very talented in maths – and loves drawing geometric shapes.



We can only wish her good luck – the future Syria!

May 2017. **A ceremony in honour of the most outstanding pupils in Jarabulus** was held by the Jarabulus Local Council in StabCommittee's presence.



« Education” is not just confined to a school room. It also implies learning to respect others as well as the environment. StabCommittee’s “cleanliness” campaigns are intended to teach children that they too have duties as young citizens. SC’s animated bins are designed to appeal to young minds.

*Banana skins into the bin
and not on the ground!*

The construction of a university – a new step is taken at **Htaimlat**.





A meeting took place at Htaimlat at the end of August 2017 between StabCommittee, the Syrian Interim Government and the Aleppo University Administration to talk about the place where the new university would be built.

I recommend you check StabCommittee's very detailed **Study on Education** in northern and eastern Aleppo countryside and how providing an education to children will encourage stability. **Just click on this link.**

StabCommittee Recruiting Staff.

StabCommittee with Munzer Al Sallal and Dr Jawad Abu Hatab, President of SIG, (in the middle) interviewing candidates who had applied to work with StabCommittee in August 2017.



Workshops – Working with Local Councils Towards a United Policy.

Tax Collecting Workshop.



<https://youtu.be/g-BbT95PYXg>

Munzer Al Sallal, Head of StabCommittee and Mohammad Al Najjouma, Deputy Head of SC, hosted a meeting on tax collecting with members of local councils. They explained that tax collecting permitted local councils to provide sustainable services that had

already been implemented if they set up the right administrative and financial systems. They could then depend on their own resources to provide services such as making sure bread was available, waste management and water. As a result, civilians would renew their trust in their local councils.

Fee Collecting Workshop.



As concerns the Fee Collecting Workshop, which was attended by finance offices representing 25 local councils, the emphasis was on how essential fee collecting was to achieve sustainability for a project. Information was provided on the required financial regulations and basics to be activated.



In October 2017, StabCommittee members visited different local councils in northern and eastern rural Aleppo to raise awareness on the importance of fee collecting for services to be sustainable.

A Media Workshop to Unify StabCommittee's Media Policy.



The Media workshop was attended by media offices from Local Councils in the northern and eastern countryside of rural Aleppo. The aim was to unify the media policy of Local Councils and to enhance their media performance.

Workshop: "Prospects of Joint Unified Work and Mechanisms of Activation"



https://youtu.be/vi_QquNxgzA

A workshop attended by Heads of Local Councils from Northern and Eastern Aleppo countryside, from Jarabulus to Azaz, was held in September 2017 in the presence of Dr Jawad Abo Hatab, Head of the Syrian Interim Government (SIG).

Agreement was reached to unify the visual identity of local councils' logo in the area as well as stamps, official documents and reports issued by these same Local Councils. Emphasis was also given to SIG's position concerning local councils in the area as their Referral Authority as from that date – their political and administrative umbrella.



Munzer al Sallal explained that StabCommittee had already held regular workshops in order to unify local councils' work mechanisms – on taxes, fee collection and media policy. He added that the workshop would be followed by many others dealing with financial and human resources procedures that unify work mechanisms.

FRAME Sessions

Beginning November, 2017, StabCommittee held 5 different FRAME sessions for local communities in Marea, AlBab, Bza'a, Qabbasin and Jarabulus.

FRAME – Fragility Resilience Assessment Method – sessions are designed to develop institutions and to overcome weak points.

Syrian Interim Government Workshop with Local Councils

Considering the vital role local councils play in StabCommittee's projects for stability since the very beginning, it is interesting to mention the **Syrian Interim Government's** workshop with local councils from northern and eastern Aleppo in coordination with the Aleppo Provincial Council.





Discussions concerned SIG's role in supporting local councils, their activities, projects and challenges and their future in building the state.

Role of Local Councils in Countering Terrorism and Extremism

StabCommittee held a workshop on the above topic attended by SIG's Service Minister, the APC and LCs from N and E rural Aleppo. Discussions included LCs' roles and services provided and how these services improved the areas concerned. They also discussed how important it was to take care of schools, children's development, engaging communities in making decisions and encouraging the role of women.

Street Art In Jarabulus Embellishes a School Wall.

It is perhaps fitting at this stage to draw attention to a project initiated by **Moetaz Abo Ryad** – on a much smaller scale and a far cry from other projects of bakeries and bulldozers – namely **a school wall in the streets of Jarabulus devoted to street art** or graffiti if you prefer and so inspiring.

For the last few weeks, two young talented Syrian artists have been painting artworks for all to see for which they receive \$20 for each creation. Some are devoted to the aspirations of Syrians for freedom – and the pain it entails.

Others decidedly carry very strong messages:



A Syrian Day of Rage.



Solidarity with Detainees in Central Homs Prison.



On the way to school with a « lesson » on cleanliness...

And once inside the school these children, many probably traumatized by the years under Daesh, can find a welcoming atmosphere – so essential for their well-being.

A young nation striving to exist yearning for peace ...as StabCommittee's employees add the last touches on this wall in Jarabulus





A young olive tree – a symbol of peace, strength, long life – and stability.



Put a Smile on a Child's Face

A StabCommittee team organised drawing and painting activities for children in Jarabulus in groups with other children this mid-November 2017. The idea behind the project was to bring joy to these children in the newly liberated areas and not let them fall prey to terrorism or radicalism.





Employment Goes a Long Way on the Road to Stability.

It is impossible to conclude without referring to one of the very « human » aspects of StabCommittee's activities (or other similar organisations too) – there are those who conceive projects in StabCommittee and there are the workers hired to implement them. As I have noted throughout, « **Stability** » is the key word for StabCommittee so when it gives work to local people, given the ongoing circumstances in Syria today, stability will inevitably be obtained as a result as StabCommittee has enabled this worker to regain his pride – just as he will have regained a form of autonomy because he will be able to feed his family once again and hold his head high. He will also be able to participate in the reconstruction of the Syria that he wants and not the Syria that the world is trying to impose on him.

Besides, as often as not, as you may have remarked, StabCommittee provides a description of the project, the number of beneficiaries and the number of persons hired – provide bread and water, remove the rubble, add schools and hospitals and a job and you have taken enormous steps towards stability.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, StabCommittee set out to achieve stability and restore civic activities in the newly liberated areas in the eastern and northern Aleppo countryside and, at the same time, to erase all traces of Daesh. StabCommittee had been preparing for such eventualities since its formation in 2015 working in collaboration with local councils in order to be able to put in place long-discussed projects. The whole region had suffered damage due to the systematic destruction of any infrastructure by Daesh especially anything that could represent civic activity such as schools as well as destruction by military activities in the region. Priority was given to providing basic daily essentials to civilians returning to their towns and villages followed by health, education, sanitation and today embellishing Jarabulus and other towns in the region. As demands increased, so did StabCommittee diversify its response even undertaking workshops to unify local councils' policies and activities in their participation now under SIG's umbrella.

On August 24, 2017, a cheering crowd celebrated the first anniversary of the liberation of Jarabulus in a transformed city thanks in part to the dedication of StabCommittee and its team. One could not help but think of the state of the city a year earlier after more than two years of occupation by Daesh and one can only hope to soon see other crowds cheering elsewhere in Syria in similar circumstances.

On a personal note, I have read a great deal on Syria but I would especially like to recommend « **Burning Country: Syrians in Revolution and War** » by Robin Yassin-Kassab <https://twitter.com/qunfuz> and Leila Al-Shami <https://twitter.com/LeilaShami> not only for its detailed historical background and its covering of the Syrian uprising but, given my interest in StabCommittee, and efforts made by Syrians to build a free society despite all the obstacles they are confronted with, the chapter concerning “The Grassroots” of a Syrian civil society.

As a tragedy evolves before our eyes, I am amazed to see how a Syrian civil society is flourishing wherever it can – I cannot help but compare Syrians to rubber balls in a tub of water while Assad, Putin and their allies may try and “keep their heads under water” with all sorts of illegal weapons, Syrians resurface, spluttering and gasping for breath and then get on with their task of providing bread, water and electricity, or holding free elections, rebuilding the Syria THEY want, not the one the world wants to impose on them and demonstrating proudly with their flags on Fridays.

If you are not already following Stabilization Committee on Twitter you can find them here: <https://twitter.com/StabCommittee>

My thanks to Moetaz <https://twitter.com/moetaz89> without whose help I would never have been able to understand exactly how StabCommittee works and for all those wonderful photos. My thanks too to the StabCommittee team who so kindly answered my questions. Good luck for the future to all.

A reminder : Following the FSA and Euphrates Shield Operation, Jarabulus was liberated from Daesh 24 August 2016; Akhtarin and Dabiq in October, 2016; Al Bab at the end of February, 2017 and Qabassin and Baz’a just after Al Bab.

Just in case:

APC: Aleppo Provincial Council

FSA: Free Syrian Army

IDP: Internally Displaced Persons

IED: Improvised Explosive Device

LC: Local Council

NLA: Newly Liberated Area

SC: Stabilization Committee

SDF: Syrian Democratic Forces