



SARAQIB LOCAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS MONITORING

RMTeam
International

2017



The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of RMTeam concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

This publication has not been formally edited.

Acknowledgment: RMTeam would like to extend special thanks to The International Foundation for Electoral Systems for their help provided throughout the process.

1 Summary

In light of an agreement amongst political and civil actors in Saraqib to give the local council a people-based legitimacy as well as to make it representative of the people it serves, an election for the head of the Local Council along with eight members of the Executive Office was held on July 18th, 2017 following a consultative and preparatory period that started in February 2017.

The elections, which was publicly announced in May 2017, were conducted under regulations issued by the Election Organizing Committee, which was appointed by the council of notables in consultation with civil society and key political groups. The Election Organizing Committee appointed a 3-person polling center committee for each of the polling centers which oversaw voter authentication, polling and vote-counting. The Committee also appointed an appeal committee - consisting of three judges and two lawyers and chaired by a judge - to review any submitted complaints and appeals. The Regulation, albeit more advanced than the regulations issued by the Syrian Interim Government in the other local elections, still has room for improvement as key procedures of the electoral process are not or are insufficiently described and some of the principles are not aligned with the electoral standards. Moreover, while eligibility requirements to be considered as candidates are in line with international electoral standards, some restrictions which are not reasonable and cannot be implemented in objective manner were included.

All people whose civil registrar is in Saraqib, who are over 18 years old and have legal capacity were eligible to register for voting upon providing official proof of personal identification. The voting took place in five locations across the city were suitable for the purpose, protected by the police, and easy to monitor during the election. Registered voters were issued electoral cards and were distributed to vote at the different centers based on the numbers of these cards.

Voters were required to show a proof of identification along with their electoral cards along with their electoral cards before they were given a write-in ballot paper to cast their votes. The voting process

was transparent and clear as all monitors, observers as well as representatives of candidates and media outlets had a clear view of the process taking place; and voters could vote in peace and secrecy with no interference or pressure from any parties.

By the end of the voting time, 53.1 % of the 4499 registered voters had casted their votes. The counting of votes in each center was done by the electoral center committee in the presence of monitors, observers, representatives of candidates and media outlets, before the results from each center were sent to the Election Committee headquarter where the final election results were announced at 3:15 in the following morning; and to which no objections nor appeals have been made.

2 Political and Electoral Environment

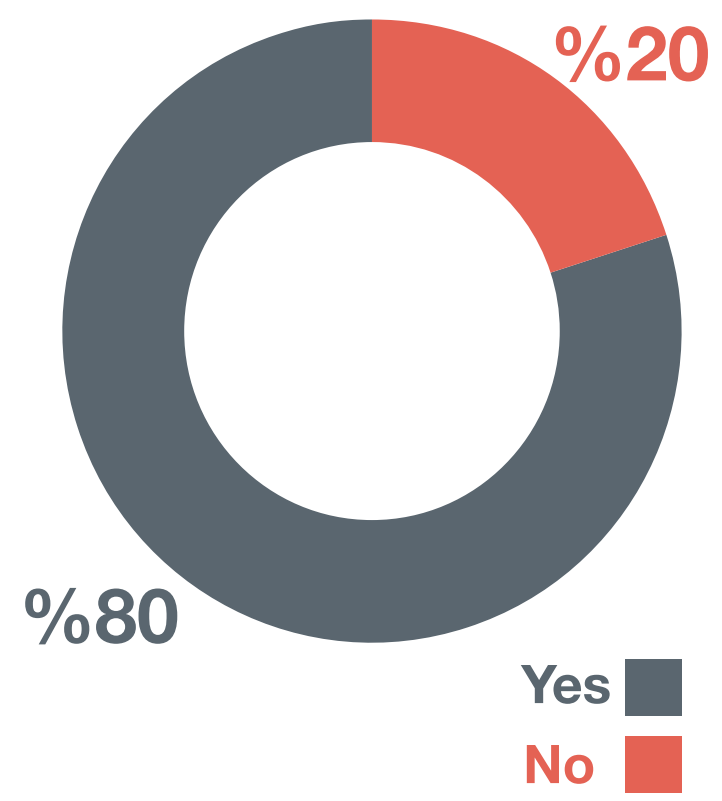
CALL TO ELECTIONS

The elections had been called to by all civil and political entities in the city including: The Syrian Revolutionary Assembly, Nidaa Syria Movement, Local council, Popular neighborhoods Union and the Free Engineers and Lawyers Unions in addition to residents and independent activists. Moreover, this call was made according to an agreement amongst these parties on the importance of elections to activate democratic practices in the city, and to give the local council a people-based legitimacy as well as to make it representative of the people it serves.

The discussions about the election and its preparations were carried out during consultative meetings between the main civils actors and the council of the notables from February 20th to May 1st, 2017, after which the council of the notables issued an official letter on May 20th calling for the elections to be held on July 18th, 2017 and an election committee was appointed to devise the regulations for the election.

The council of the notables is a civil entity that represents all neighborhoods in the city to fill in the legislative vacuum created by the absence of the central authority. It was appointed in consensus by civilians for one year according to its bylaws. Moreover, the members of the council meet once every three months to discuss and address people's complaints and grievances and other city affairs, although emergency meetings could be called for by either the head of the council or two third of its members.

Community Survey:
Are you aware of the LC's
upcoming election?



Graph 1 - Community Survey:
Are you aware of the elections? -
20 respondents (10 women and
10 men).

POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

In addition to the local council, the city has several political groups including the Syrian Revolutionary Assembly, Nidaa Syria Movement, Popular Neighborhoods Union and the Free Engineers and Lawyers Unions, all of which participated in the election's consultative meetings.

The area is under the control of two armed groups: Saraqib Revolutionaries Front and Ahrar AlSham - of which the later issued a statement supporting an electoral process in the city without interference from any military groups. Moreover, there was no reports of violence during the entire electoral process and the elections.

GOVERNANCE

The local council is the highest administrative authority and the only executive authority in the city. It was established in 2012 after the liberation of the area, although its role as an administrative authority for services in the city was activated at the beginning of 2013; whereas in the period between 2011 and the establishment of the council, revolutionary coordination committees were formed to manage services such as water, bread and fuel in the city.

3 Regulatory Framework

OVERVIEW

Elections were conducted under regulations titled “The Electoral System for Selecting the Head of the Local Council, along with the Members of the Executive Office” (the Regulation) issued by the Election Organizing Committee on June 15th, 2017.

Regulation is more advanced than the previous Syrian Interim Government (SIG) regulations, however, there is a lot of room for improvement. Some of the key procedures of the electoral process are not or are insufficiently described in the Regulation such as schedule and timelines of the electoral process. Further, some of the principles are not aligned with the electoral standards and several articles have unclear meanings¹.

1. In particular article 15i, 16c, 17a, 19a, 26b

DEVELOPMENT

The Regulation was developed by the Election Organizing Committee, which included representatives of key political groups as well as independent citizens. It was published on June 15th, 2017 and was made public on city billboards and various media outlets (TV and radio), and through mosques' loudspeakers in addition to social media networks including the Facebook page of the local council. However, of the 20 surveyed residents in the area, only four said they had read the Regulation even though most of them were aware of the election (80%) and wanted to vote (70%)².

2. Sample size of the survey was 20 individuals, 10 women and 10 men, including two IDPs.

STRUCTURE

Regulations include provisions for most of the key phases and institutions of the electoral process. This includes:

- Appointment of the election management body (EMB)
- Terms of reference, duties and responsibilities of the EMB, including polling committee
- Definition of the term of the elected local council, the council president and the executive office
- Criteria for eligibility of voters and protection of the voting rights
- Issuance of electoral cards to voters and requirement for voters to register
- Criteria for eligibility of candidates
- Polling procedure, including the right of assistance for voters with disabilities
- Representation and observation of candidates' agents
- Procedures for counting and publication of results
- Electoral offences
- Role of the police
- Financing of election

Regulations however did not include some of the key issues:

- Basic schedule and timelines of the whole electoral process
- Description of the electoral system which includes number of elected members of the council and allocation of seats
- Voter registration procedures
- Voting method
- The right of citizens' organization to observe the process
- Effective appeals process
- Cases where there are less candidates than seats in the council

RECOMMENDATIONS

The regulations to be reviewed to include topics, which are missing in the current regulation. The process of the review to include consultations with all of the competing candidates and key political actors.

4 Election Administration

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The main election management body (EMB) appointed through the Regulation is so called Election Organizing Committee (the Committee). The Committee consists of nine members, headed by Muhammad Ayyan. Its role is described in the Regulation, which effectively assigns all responsibilities and powers - except voter registration and polling, where it plays supervisory role - to the Committee.

The Committee appoints 2nd level “electoral center committee”, which is in charge of implementing voter registration and polling. Each electoral center appoints “ballot box committee” with a chairperson who is given status of “judicial officer” through the polling period.

APPOINTMENT OF THE ELECTION COMMITTEE

The Committee was appointed by the council of notables in consultation with civil society and key political groups. The appointment was made consensually and based on the background, reputation and the biography of its prospective members whose names had been publicly announced prior to their appointment to allow for public's contestation on any of the proposed individuals.

In addition to independent members, the Committee - consisting of eight members - had members representing key political groups in the city such as the Syrian Revolutionary Assembly, Nidaa Syria Movement, and the Free Engineers and Lawyers Unions to ensure neutrality. The Committee carried out its duties and made its decisions independently without involvement of any organizations, individuals and authorities that were not defined in the regulation, although civil society organizations, the media and a number of activists were invited to oversee the electoral process along with the Committee.

Moreover, each electoral center had a 3-person polling center committee which was selected by the Committee based on their university education and experience after publicly announcing about their need to form these committees and inviting interested and qualified people to apply.

OPERATION OF THE ELECTION COMMITTEE

During its appointment period and prior to the release of the election's regulation, the Committee had conducted daily meetings where detailed minutes were created accordingly.

Decisions concerning the electoral process including the regulation's articles were made by consensus; and when consensus was not reached, the members were more given time to review and study the debated article over night before it would be put for majority voting the next day where it had to get 50%+1 to be adopted.

APPEALS

An appeal committee was appointed by the Committee - consisting of three judges and two lawyers and chaired by a judge - to review complaints and appeals submitted by citizens and electoral candidates during a set period as defined in the Regulation. However, there been no complaints or appeals on the work and the decisions of the committee at this point of the process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Regulation to describe process and criteria for appointment of the Election Organizing Committee, the Election Center Committee and the Appeals Committee.



Graph 2 - at an electoral center

5 Electoral System

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The regulation does not describe sufficiently the electoral system. From vague references to ballot design, it may be deducted that the system is made of a single constituency, with direct vote for the Head of the Executive office and a separate vote for the Members of the Executive Office. However, the regulation is not clear about how many votes each voter has when electing the Executive Office nor what is the method of voting - i.e whether voters will vote with a write-in ballot or printed ballot where the voters mark the candidates. There is no description of distribution of seats - how the winners are selected. The Regulation does not refer on number of seats to be elected nor is it mentioning council elections and structure.

SYSTEM IN PRACTICE

The electoral system had a single constituency consisting of a head of local council and eight executive members elected for the city of Saraqib. Voters were given a write-in ballot papers with nine fields in which the names of the chosen candidates to be filled in by the voters. In case the written names were not illegible, the electoral center committee would cancel the ballot paper unless some names were clear in which case only the legible names would be counted after consulting with representatives of the candidates present at the centers.

The winners were selected based on the highest numbers of votes they received in descending orders. There were no quotas for any groups i.e. women since the election was open for all those who qualify, which by default excluded IDPs residing in the area whose civil registrar was somewhere else.

RECOMMENDATION

Amend the Regulation with the key outline of the electoral system and method of voting. Consider using printed ballot papers to eliminate illegibility issues.



Graph 3 - at an electoral center

6 Voters

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The regulation provides universal franchise for all residents of Saraqib over 18 years old. While this provision is in line with international standards³, the regulation adds the condition that the prospective voter must have legal capacity. Yet, the regulation does not define what is the legal capacity. There are no other restrictions apart from residence on eligibility of voters.

To vote, residents need to be registered for voting and in possession of the electoral card. The responsibility for registration of prospective voters is given to the so called “election center committee” but the regulations provide no guidance on timelines and procedures for registration, distribution of voter’s cards, management and publication of the voters list or the dispute resolution mechanism. The regulations make vague reference to opening of the registration centers, but provide no details on how these registration centers should operate.

3. UDHR and ICCPR

VOTER REGISTRATION OPERATION

Voter registration was started on the 17th of June 2017 and concluded at end of business day on the 17th of July 2017. Two centers were initially opened for the registration in the city during the first week and were later merged into one which remained open until the 17th of July.

The process required prospective voters to provide a piece of personal identification including ID card, passport, civil registry record or the likes, which would additionally prove that their civil registration was in Saraqib – an eligibility criterion for registration - as well as their age. Once the committee confirmed the authenticity of the provided document and matched the information with various records, a voting card is issued after the information of the voters were recorded in a master list of registered voters up to one day before the election.

The exclusion of individuals whose civil registrar was not in Saraqib (IDPs) had mixed reactions among the people. While several people who were interviewed by RMTeam prior to the election including two IDPS stated that excluding IDPs from voting was fair since they would leave back to their hometowns eventually, in contrast two of the twenty interviewed considered the exclusion to be unjust since the local council provides services to all residents, local and IDPs alike.

Each electoral card included the full name of the voter, date of birth, mother's name, gender, civil registrar's name and number as well as the number of the identification document used to obtain the card. The card also had a serial number matching the corresponding number on the master list of registered voters in addition to the seal of the committee and the signature of the head of the committee to ensure that only citizens of Saraqib can register and vote.

To facilitate the process of obtaining electoral cards and to reduce crowdedness at the registration center, the committee accepted registration for multiple applications from individuals provided the proper documentations were presented. Similarly, people with special needs, elderlies and women could apply for electoral cards through their relatives/family members.

The registration process reportedly went smoothly and lacked any complaints or incidents of violence except for a few cases where some individuals attempted to register for multiple cards under the same name using different types of identification documents in which cases they were banned from obtaining the card and thus could not vote.

However, the Committee did find approximately 45 individuals who successfully obtained a second electoral card during the registration period. The names of these individuals were highlighted in the voters' lists sent to the electoral centers, where they were asked during the election to hand in the two cards together otherwise they would not be allowed to vote. Additionally, some individuals, who were not eligible to vote as their civil registry was not in Saraqib were able to register for and receive electoral cards using identification documents issued by the court or authorities other than the civil registrar.

Overall, the process of obtaining electoral cards was easy according to all the interviewed individuals who had obtained one (8 out of 20 interviewees⁴) and were interviewed by RMTeam. By the end of the registration period, a total of 4499 electoral cards had been issued to residents in Saraqib.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Electoral regulation to describe voter registration process, including timelines, management of the records, establishment of the registration centers and rules for publication of the voters list. The registration procedures should be reviewed to avoid issuing more than one card per voter.

4. The remaining either were not eligible for voting or had not got their electoral card as of the time of the interviews.



Graph 4 - An electoral card

7 Candidacy

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The regulation sets a high age limit - only those over 25 years of age are eligible to be considered as candidates. Besides the age, the candidates should be residents of Saraqib and be registered to vote. While the age requirement is high, both the age and the residency requirements are in line with international electoral standards under ICCPR. Another reasonable restriction is exclusion of election committee members and employees of the local councils (unless they resign) from the candidacy.

However, the regulation introduces unacceptable restrictions which are not reasonable and cannot be implemented in objective manner. The candidates should have “good biography”, be “supporter of the revolution and its objective” and “to work for the revolution”. Also, the candidate “cannot be affiliated with the regime in any form”. The regulation does not elaborate on how are these criteria determined and allows the EMB to arbitrarily decide whether the candidate conforms to the criteria or not.

The appeal process indicates that If candidates are rejected on the basis of this criteria, it is their burden to prove that they have “good biography” etc. Another criterion against the international standards is the required level of education.

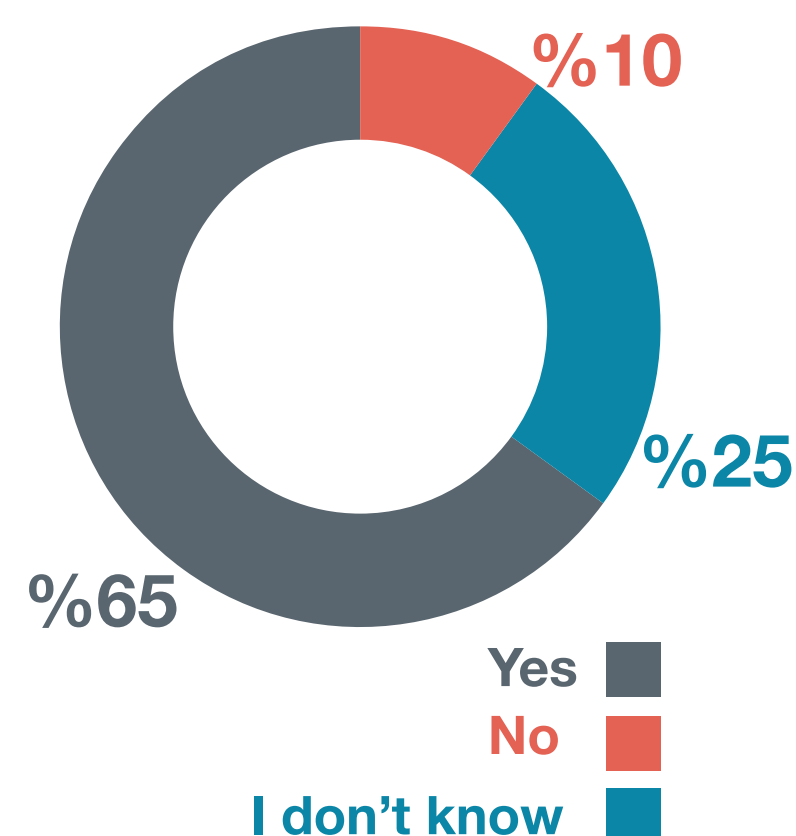
The regulation requires candidates to poses high school diploma. Similarly, to the voter registration, the regulation does not provide any details on the candidacy registration process.

REGISTRATION OF CANDIDATES

The call for candidacy applications was made public through various media outlets. Candidacy registration was kicked off on the 17th of June 2017 and was concluded at the end of business day on the 24th June 2017, giving prospective applicants one week to register.

Campaigning was allowed up until 24 hours before the election. Seminars were organized by the Committee in cooperation with the Free Engineers Union during which candidates presented their plans and visions.

Community Survey:
Was the nomination process fair?



Graph 5 - Community Survey:
Was the nomination process
fair? - 20 respondents (10 women
and 10 men).

Candidates additionally held public meetings and rallies while awareness teams were formed to encourage the public on voting and on choosing the most suitable qualified candidates for the city.

The candidacy registration process was seen by the interviewed candidates as “good and open for all - who qualify”, “excellent” and as a very good experience that should be replicated in other liberated areas.

One of the eligibility criterion for candidacy was having a “good biography” and “not being affiliated with the regime”, which were determined by the Committee based on the reputation of the candidates and the “previous actions” and “known sayings” within the community in addition to information collected privately by the Committee. Other eligibility criteria which were described as “very acceptable” and “reasonable” by the interviewed candidates included age, being local to the city (civil registrar in Saraqib) and a minimum level of education, although the latter is against international electoral standards.

To apply, individuals were required to fill in the candidacy application form and submit it along with a copy of an identification document and a proof of education. A total of 22 individuals initially submitted their candidacy applications, five for the presidency of the council and the remaining 17 for the executive office membership in addition to two individuals whose applications were rejected.

The first was male and his civil registrar was not in the city of Saraqib; the second was the only female applicant however she was rejected as her submission was made past the deadline for candidacy submissions. Moreover, none of the applicants applied under the name or with the association of any political or armed groups.

Throughout this process, two appeals were made; the first was by an applicant concerning the rejection of his candidacy based on the criterion of “being local, which was accepted in form but rejected in substance by the appeal committee that consisted of three judges and two lawyers. The second was an objection to the candidacy of one of the candidates, however the claim was not substantiated with any evidence by the complainer thus dismissed by the appeal committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Regulation to describe the candidacy registration process and the process should not include subjective criteria such as “good biography” whereas criterion such as “Affiliation with regime” should be defined in the Regulation. Moreover, if any due diligence data is to be collected about applicants, the process should be clearly described in the Regulation.

8 Polling and Rresults

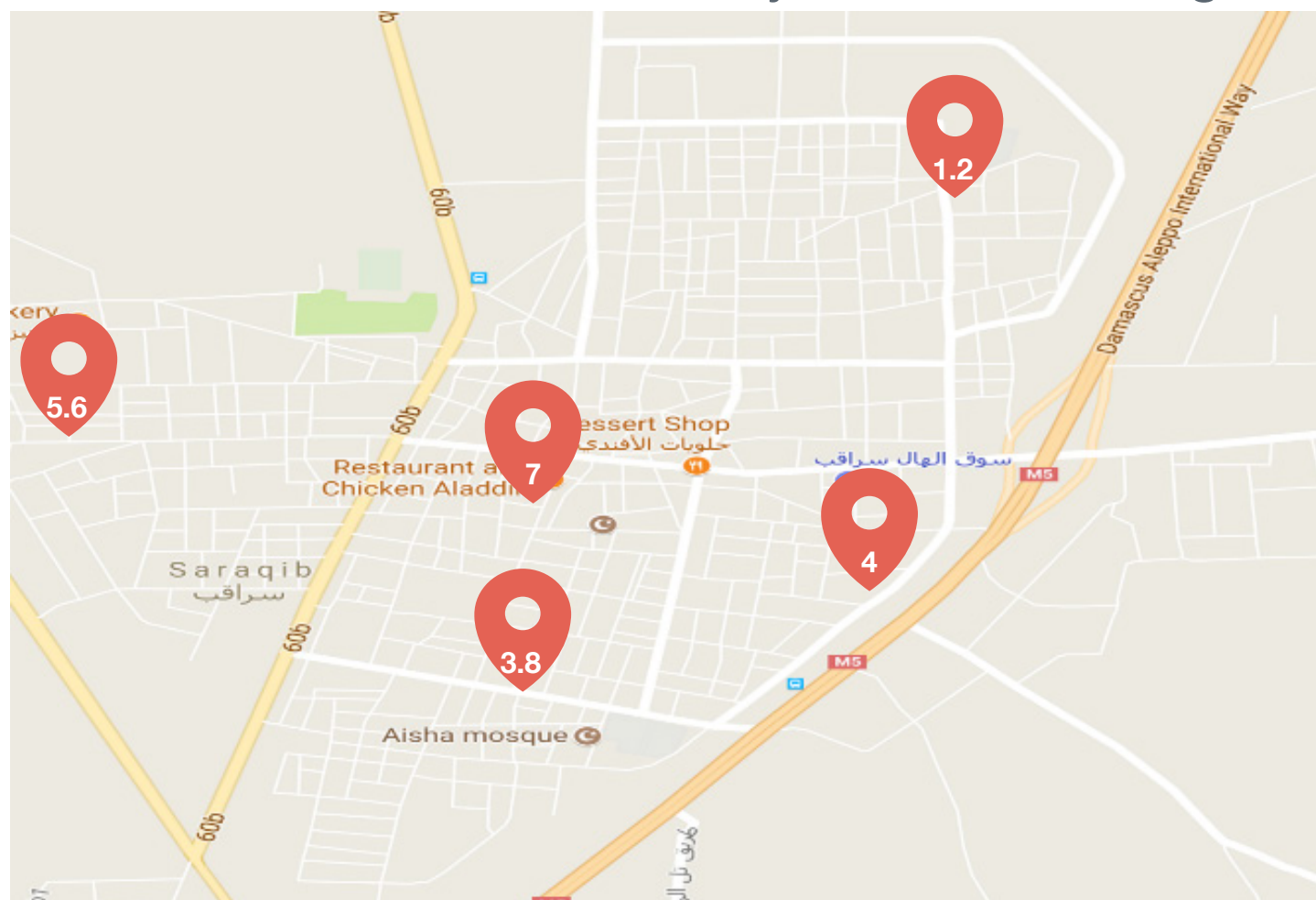
LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Regulation specifies the voting time from 8am to 8pm on the Election Day, extendable for two hours by a decision of the head of the Committee if voters' turnout was high at the time of ballot box closure. Additionally, the voting may be extended to the next day if voters quorum has not been reached, in which case the ballot box would be kept with the free police at a location to be determined by the Committee in coordination with the police. Voters should show a proof of identification along with their electoral cards to be eligible for voting. The Regulation specifies an acceptable discrepancy rate of 2% above which the results from the specific center would be invalid and the voting to be repeated the day after though only at the same center. Moreover, if the count of ballot papers in a given box is more than 2% of the number of voters who casted their votes according to the voters' registry book, a similar percentage of ballot papers would be canceled without being opened. The Regulation also states that individuals who obtain more than one electoral cards are to be sent to the court.

POLLING CENTERS

The voting took place in five locations across the city, three of which had two centers, one for males and one for females. The centers were suitable for the purpose and were easy to monitor during the election according to the monitors, however, none of the centers had any signage or indicators about being a polling center, which was explained by a committee member as a security precaution. Additionally, the polling centers were only made public one day before the elections during a meeting between the Committee and the candidates after which the details about the centers were published on social media i.e. Facebook page of the Committee.

The centers were distributed across the city as the following:



Graph 6 – Distribution of voting centers across Saraqib

Members of the Free Police provided protection for the centers which were opened at 8:00am by members of the Committee who brought in the ballot boxes which were examined in front of monitors and representatives of the candidates and media outlets to ensure they were untampered with and empty before they were sealed with red wax. Moreover, members of the civil defense units were available outside the center in case of emergency.



Graph 7 – a full ballot box

The centers were set up by the Committee on the day before the election, and each was equipped with:

- Polling box made of an aluminum frame and transparent plastic sides with name and number of polling center written on top.
- Two private voting booths made of brown textile each had a chair, a pen and the list of candidates.
- List of voters eligible to vote in the center.
- Voters registry book.
- Two tables (one for the committees and one for the ballot box)
- Chairs for monitors, representatives and visitors



Graph 8 – preparing ballot boxes

AUTHENTICATION OF VOTERS

Voters were required to show a proof of identification along with their electoral cards to the polling center committee, who would compare the information on the card with against the eligible list of voters for the respective center. If a match was found, the name was marked down as "voted" in the list and recorded in the center's voters' registry while the card was kept⁵ with the committee for count and comparison with the number of casted ballot papers in the box after the voting was concluded. In cases where no matches of the data on the electoral cards were found in the center's voters list, the voters were guided and asked to go to the centers where they were assigned to vote at.

Each center had a list of registered voters (Center's voters list) who are eligible to cast their votes in ballot box. Electoral cards were allocated amongst the centers, so voters could only vote in the centers where their card numbers were assigned to, which is contrary to the Regulation which stated that registered voters would be able to vote at any center they wanted. This change however was justified by a Committee member as to reduce voters' fraud in the election.

5. Cards had not been returned to voters as of the time RMT team monitors left the election center the morning after at around 4am.

The distribution had been randomly determined by the Committee by drawing lots - while in the presence of the candidates - to maintain the integrity and transparency of the process, according to a member of the committee. The voters were distributed as the following:

#	School Name	# of centers	Voters Gender	Gender / Electoral Cards Distribution per Center	Monitored by
1,2	Al Salam	2	M/F	Males: 1-632 / Females: 1566-2717	Azzam S.
3,8	Ahmad Hussein	2	M/F	Males: 2353-3279 / Females: 1-1565	Abdulkarim A.
4	Maysaloun	1	M	Males only: 3280- 4499	Abdulkarim A.
5,6	Baneen	2	M/F	Males: 1441- 2352 / Females: 2718-4499	Mariam H.
7	Najdat Khaled	1	M	Males only: 633 - 1440	Abdulkarim A.

VOTING

The voting started at 8am at all the centers and was suspended at 8pm pending the decision of the Committee on whether to conclude or extend the voting process based on reaching voters' quorum of 50%+1 or not, as stated by the Regulation. Once their eligibility for voting had been established



Graph 9 – voter putting her ballot paper inside the ballot box

by the polling center committees, voters were then given a voting paper stamped with the committee's seal, after which they proceeded to the ballot booths to vote and were given an envelope to cast their votes in the ballot box.

The process was transparent and clear where all monitors, observers as well as representatives of candidates and media outlets had a clear view of the process taking place. Voters could vote in peace and secrecy with no interference or pressure from any parties. Moreover, the general atmosphere was described by the monitors as friendly and civilized although the monitor present at center#1,2 said the place lacked proper organization and that voters rushed to the voting room all at once creating a chaos.

However, there has been a few incidents observed by the monitors during their presence at the electoral centers:

Center #3:

- One of the candidates contested that a representative of another candidate was secretly speaking to one of the voters inside the center, which is against the Regulation. The head of the Committee gave a warning to the representative in question not to speak to any voters otherwise he would be kicked out of the center.

Center #8:

- The center's voters list did not match the master list of registered voters. At least in one incident, a woman who although was eligible to vote at the center based on the number of her electoral card, her name was not available on the center's list. However, after checking her information in the master list by a member of the Committee, she was allowed to proceed. Similar incidents also happened in **center #3** and **#4** where the voters had to get a written and stamped letter from the Committee as their names were not on the center's list. When asked about these incidents, the head of the Committee explained that some names had been dropped from the lists by mistake.
- It was claimed that the head of the center was biased toward one of the candidates. When asked about the claim, the head of the center said that although she had previously worked with that candidate, she was under oath and she stood at equal distance from all candidates as a head of a polling center.

Center #4:

- It was discovered that some voters who had registered for, and received electoral cards using identification documents issued by the court or authorities other than the civil registrar, were not eligible to vote as their civil registry was not in Saraqib. Consequently, their cards were canceled, and their names were removed from the voters list.
- One of the candidate representatives was speaking loud inside the center and was following voters to the voting booth before he was warned by the head of the polling center committee.

Center #2:

- One of the candidate's representatives claimed that the head of the polling center committee had allowed six women to cast their votes even though they had not introduced proof of identification along with their electoral cards as required by the Regulation. The head of polling center allowed these voters because she said that she knew them personally. This issue was contested in writing by one of the candidates after which the head of the Committee came to the center and asserted to the head of the center not to allow any voters without proper proof of identification regardless of how much she knew them.
- A voter came, and her name was misspelled on the electoral card, which was promptly mitigated by a member of the Committee and she was allowed to vote.
- Representatives of the candidates were distributing list of the candidates inside the center before a member of the Committee permitted them to do so but only in the yard of the center but not inside.

Voters' turnout was slow during the first hours of the process however it picked up significantly between 10am- 11am and during the last few hours with high participation rate for women, according to the monitors present at the centers. The decision of concluding the voting was made at 9pm and the electoral center committees were prompted by the Committee to start counting the votes since the quorum had been reached at 53.1% (2474 of 4499).

COUNTING AND RESULTS

Counting the votes was done by the polling center in the presence of monitors, observers, representatives of candidates and media outlets. The process, described as well-organized and transparent by the monitors, went as the following:

1. Ballot box was opened by the head of the committee; number of casted envelopes counted and compared to the number of voters in the center's voter registry and the list of eligible voters.
2. Head of the polling center opened the envelopes one by one while reading the names aloud.
3. Other committee members were writing down the names as they were read by the head of the committee on a large board visible to everyone in the room as well as on papers.
4. Once all votes were counted, between 12am and 2am, the ballot papers were stamped and returned to the box along with the results before the box was locked and taken to the election's main center at Idlib's gate by the head of the polling center and a Committee member escorted by two members of the Free Police.

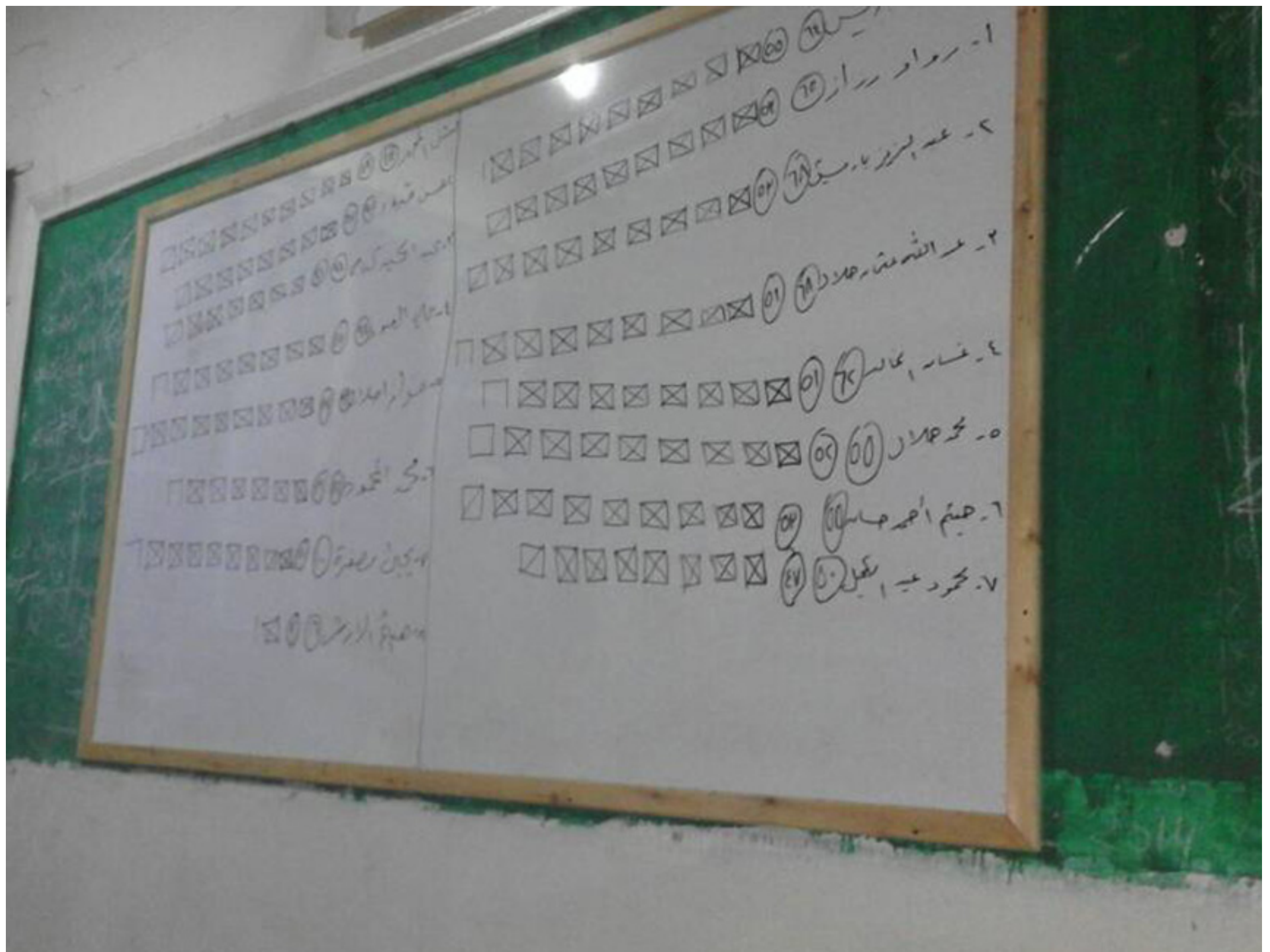
Moreover, during the counting process, several votes were discounted as shown in the table below, however they did not add up to 2% of the total votes thus results from all electoral centers were valid.

# of discounted votes	Polling Center	Reason
3	6	Candidates' names written in the wrong field i.e. candidates of executive office written in the field for head of LC
2	6, 1	Ballot paper not stamped by the polling center committee
1	1	Ballot paper used was not the same as the one issued by the Committee

The ballot boxes were all brought to the main center at Idlib’s gate by 3am where the Committee combined the results of the ballots and announced the results at 3:15am to the candidates and their representatives in addition to reporters, observers and monitors. The results were accepted by all candidates who congratulated each other. No objections or appeals to the results have been made and no reports have been issued by the Committee or any involved party.

The results were as the following:

Candidates		Affiliation	Votes	%	Elected
Head of Local Council					
1	Muthana Al Mohamad	Independent	1265	51.9%	Y
2	Ibrahim Barish	Syrian Revolutionary Assembly	1174	48.1%	N
Members of the Local Council's Executive Office					
1	Fawaz Aslan Al Hamoud	Nidaa Syria Assembly	1114	45.7%	Y
2	Abdul Hilal	Syrian Revolutionary Assembly	1104	45.3%	Y
3	Abdul Azziz Barish	Independent	1101	45.1%	Y
4	Yahya Musafara	Independent	1087	44.6%	Y
5	Rod Razaz	Independent	1083	44.4%	Y
6	Hasan Kadour	Free Engineers Union	1061	43.5%	Y
7	Haitham Hassan	Syrian Revolutionary Assembly	1051	43.1%	Y
8	Ali A Aboud	Nidaa Syria Assembly	1001	41.0%	Y
9	Ghassan Al Khaled	-	988	40.5%	N
10	Mohammad Hilal	-	941	38.6%	N
11	Abdulhamid Kanas	-	921	37.8%	N
12	Mohammad Al Mahmoud	-	895	36.7%	N
13	Mahmoud Kahil	-	887	36.4%	N
14	Haitham Al Abrash	-	142	5.8%	N



Graph 10 – counting the votes



www.rmteam.org