

December 2017



## Eastern Ghouta Children Die from Malnutrition Resulted by Tight Siege

"150" Children, On Death from Malnutrition during 2017 Alone



## About Syrians for Truth and Justice/STJ

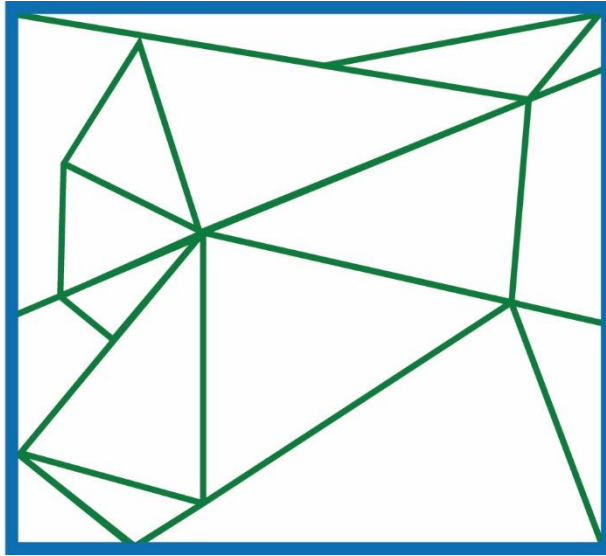
[Syrians for Truth and Justice /STJ](#) is a nonprofit, nongovernmental, independent Syrian organization. STJ includes many defenders and human rights defenders from Syria and from different backgrounds and affiliations, including academics of other nationalities.

The organization works for Syria, where all Syrians, without discrimination, should be accorded dignity, justice and equal human rights.

سوريون  
من أجل  
الحقيقة  
والعدالة  

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Syrians  
For Truth  
& Justice





## Preface:

The siege imposed on Eastern Ghouta several years ago continues to threaten the lives of thousands of civilians trapped by Syrian regular forces, especially children and women. Numbers of the malnourished<sup>1</sup> children have doubled, since 2017 as the blockade has intensified after all tunnels, which connect the capital, Damascus, with cities and towns of Eastern Ghouta, got out of service as a result of heavy military battles, besides the block of the entry of all foodstuffs and medical supplies.

According to many testimonies obtained by [Syrians for Truth and Justice \(STJ\)](#) in November 2017, around 150 children were diagnosed with Malnutrition during 2017 alone, while no accurate information is available to date on the number of children who died from the disease. However, STJ reporter referred to the death of four children from Malnutrition during October and November 2017, including the girl children Sahar Difda'a and Sarah from Hamoryah city and the boy child Mohammed Abdul Salam.

## "I Just Stood There Helpless Watching My Child Dying"

The girl child "Sahar Difda'a" from [Kafr Batna](#) town, died only after 34 days of her birth, specifically on October 22, 2017, after she was diagnosed with Malnutrition, caused by the severity of the siege on Eastern Ghouta, in addition to the bad financial situation of the girl's family, which was confirmed by Sahar's father, Mohammed who spoke to STJ saying:

**"My daughter was born with a weak constitution, as a result of shortage of food her mother had already suffered from. It is my daughter's fate to be born under the severe blockade we are subjected to. We tried by various means to save her life but to no avail, we were not even able to find food for her mother so that she could breastfeed her. My daughter's life could have been saved if she had got a little bit of care, but I couldn't do anything since I don't have enough money, and I cannot afford my wife and my daughter's needs. I stood helpless watching my daughter dying in front of my eyes."**

Sahar's father said that his daughter stayed at Al-Hakeem Medical Centre, in Kafr Batna town, for 15 days to receive treatment, where the medical staff made every effort to save her life, but she was breathing heavily, in her short days, her body was scrawny, and her bones were clearly visible, she weighed less than 2 kg, he continued:

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<sup>1</sup> According to a doctor from Eastern Ghouta interviewed by Syrians for Truth and Justice/STJ reporter in November 2017, Malnutrition commonly occurs when someone does not eat enough food and it can result from the lack of balanced food.



**"All I pray for is that no other children go through the suffering my daughter had endured and resulted to the loss of her life, there are no words that can describe the tragedy we have experienced."**

A [video footage](#) published by the Syrian Media Organization on October 22, 2017 showed the girl child Sahar Difda'a in scrawny body and clear bones, suffering from Malnutrition and Dyspnea.



Image shows the girl child "Sahar Difda'a" prior her death, on October 22, 2017, from severe malnutrition resulted from the siege imposed on Eastern Ghouta,

Photo credit: [Syrian Media Organization](#).



Image shows the girl child Sahar Difda'a prior to her death on October.22.2017, as a result of severe malnutrition under the intensified siege on Eastern Ghouta,

Photo credit: [Syrian Media Organization](#).

In turn, Al-Hakeem Medical Centre located in Kafr Batna town, as it oversaw her treatment, published a statement on October 24, 2017, in which it explained the situation of the girl child, Sahar Difda'a and her death from Malnutrition, it also indicated the poor financial situation and poverty her family suffers, which exacerbated by the blockade imposed on Eastern Ghouta.

### تقرير يوضح حالة الطفلة مسحر ضفدع

الطفلة ولادة طبيعية، عمر الحمل يقدر حوالي 36-37 اسبوع حملي ووزن الولادة 2200 غ الام خروس زمرة دم الام+o  
راجعت الطفلة العيادة في منطقة كرفيطنا بتاريخ 2017/10/2 بحالة نقص وزن مع علامات سوء تغذية تلجئة عن غياب  
الارضاع الوالدي عدم وجود ادراك عند الام منذ الولادة ناجم عن سوء تغذية لدى الام اضافة للوضع النفسي التي تعيشه  
الام والعلة من سوء الحالة الاجتماعية والفقر المنقح الذي تفكك بسبب شدة الحصار المضروب على القوطة منذ اربع  
سنوات وتكفي المستوى المعيشي حيث تتناول الام وجبة واحدة وهذا الوجبة لا تعطي الوارد الحروي الكافي لاحتياجات  
الام المرضع

منذ الولادة كانت الام تعتمد على الحليب الصناعي في تغذيتها ونظرا لعدم توفر الحليب وغيام ثمنه اضطرت الى ادخال  
ماء السكر في التغذية.

كان عمر الطفلة عند القبول 16 يوم، تم صرف الحليب الصناعي لها بمعدل عالية اسبوعيا (لحم توفره وغيام ثمنه الفاحش)  
علما ان الحاجة الاسبوعية منه حسب العمر والوزن تقدر بعالية 400 غ كل 2 - 3 ايام، اضافة لكميات المغذيات الدقيقة

بتاريخ 2017/10/7 راجعتي الطفلة في قسم العيادات بقصة وجود نز دموي من منطقة الحفاض وعند الفحص كان لدى  
الطفلة علامات سوء تغذية واضحة - مظاهر سقل - شوية جلدية - غزور بالوخ - تكرحات جلدية بمنطقة الحفاض مع  
وهن عام

الفحص السريري عند القبول: القلب منتظم لا نفخات 125/د الصدر صاف متناظر لا وزيز/ RR 45 د البطن لين  
متفلس لا ضخامات حشوية - لا تشوهات خلقية واضحة.

تم تحويل الطفلة الى المستشفى لاجراء تقييم ومراقبة التغذية لديها وحساب كمية الحليب اللازمة للطفلة

ووضعت التوصيات التالية:

مراقبة العلامات الحيوية

1. ارضاع حليب كيمي وحساب كمية الحليب
2. مراقبة الوزن كل 12 ساعة
3. كيدي فيت ملتي 1\*1
4. ميكونزول + فوسيدات دهن منطقة الحفاض بعد تجفيفها
5. Vit.k 2 ملغ جرعة وحيدة
6. روزيلاكس 50 ملغ /كغ 1\*1

وتم تخريج الطفلة بتاريخ 2017/10/10 بحالة عامة جيدة وتحسن بالوزن: وزن التخريج 2050 غ على ان تتابع العلاج  
الخارجي في مركز الحكيم بمعدل زيارة اسبوعية لتقييم الوضع التغذي

بتاريخ 2017/10/17 كان لدى الطفلة مراجعة في مركز الحكيم لكن تخلت الطفلة عن الزيارة

وراجعتي مرة اخرى بتاريخ 2017/10/21 بقصة اسهالات من يومين مع ترقع حروي خفيف وضغط رضاعة ورخوة  
مع زلة تنفسية



**SDI** المؤسسة الدولية للتنمية الاجتماعية  
Social Development International

كانت حالة الطفلة سينة تبدو عليها مظاهر سوء تغذية شديدة مع تجفاف شديد غور عينين مع غور بالفوخ – جفاف جلد  
واغشية مخاطية – سحنة سفل واضحة – تقرحات جلدية بمنطقة الحفاض – سلاق قموي – تنفس حمضي الشكل ( نمط  
تنفس كوسماول الذي يترافق عادة مع حمض استقلابي شديد) القلب : لانفخات/HR : 120 د الصدر : مبادلات مقبولة  
لا وزيز – تسرع تنفس/RR : 70 د الوزن 1900 غ

تم قبول الطفلة مباشرة وتم النض الفوري للسوائل الوريدية 20 مل / كغ / N.S وتم البدء بمعالجة تخيرية لحالة الحمض  
لعدم توفر تحاليل مخبرية في الخوطة (غزات دم شريانية – شوارد وغيرها )

تم وضع انبوب تغذية عبر الالف والبدء بإعطاء محلول املاح (ريزومال) لتعويض التجفاف مع اذخال حليب صناعي  
مرحلة I ( 130 ) مل/كغ 24 ساعة مقسمة على 12 وجبة )

تم إيقاف الوارد القموي نتيجة استمرار وجود الزلة التنفسية وتدهور الحالة وتسريب السوائل الوريدية مع شوارد  
بيكربونات الصوديوم حاجة يومية وتم الاعتماد في المعالجة على التظاهرات السريرية ومراقبة العلامات الحيوية فقط لعدم  
وجود وسائل استقصائية (تحاليل مخبرية)

بعد عدة ساعات من القبول تطور لدى الطفلة زيادة بمعدل التنفس تلاء تباطؤ نبض مع انخفاض نسبة اشباع الاوكسجين  
في الدم مع زرقة وتوقف تنفس

تم اجراء محاولة الاتماتش القلبي الرنوي حسب الاصول دون جدوى وتوفيت الطفلة .

وتم وضع التشخيص النهائي: سوء تغذية (سقل) مختلط بإقتان معوي مع حمض استقلابي.

الدكتور المشرف: بشير (اختصاصي أطفال – مركز الحكيم , دار الشفاء)  
الدكتور: يحيى أبو يحيى (اختصاصي أطفال – مركز الحكيم , دار الشفاء)  
الدكتور إسماعيل: مدير مركز الحكيم

23/10/2017

مركز الحكيم  
للعناية الصحية الأولية  
Al-Hakeem Center  
Primary Health care

الإدارة  
مستشفى دار الشفاء

SDI المؤسسة الدولية للتنمية الاجتماعية Social Development International  
+90 553 362 03 44 info@sdi.ngo www.sdi.ngo /sdiorg

Image shows the statement issued by Al-Hakeem Medical Centre, where the child Sahar had been treated prior her death on October 22, 2017, in which it explained the situation of the girl child and the causes leading to her death

Photo credit: [Ghouta Media Centre's Facebook page](#).



## "She is Still Struggling to Survive with her Scrawny Body and Weak Structure"

The girl child "Rahaf Hawwa" who has not yet exceeded eight years, from [Douma](#) city, has also been diagnosed with Malnutrition since 2016. All attempts to treat her in and outside Eastern Ghouta failed which has caused her health situation to deteriorate, and still until this moment she is struggling to survive with a scrawny body and a weak structure. In this regard, Ali Hawwa, grandfather of the child, has spoken to STJ, saying:

**"Several years ago, Rahaf was a normal child, but she has suffered several tragedies in 2016, as a missile landed on her family's house in Douma city, fired by Syrian regime forces, which resulted in the death of her younger sister, grandmother and her uncle. That led to a deterioration in her psychological state, besides that her father had died when she was only two years old, she tasted the bitterness of early orphanhood. When Rahaf was diagnosed with Malnutrition, her family tried by various means to secure treatment and feed her properly, they also tried to take her out to receive treatment in Damascus hospitals, but all their attempts failed as a result of the siege imposed on Eastern Ghouta. Suffering of my granddaughter Rahaf increased with the intensification of the blockade, specifically seven months ago, due to the block of the entry of food and medicine. Now we can do nothing but pray, I am afraid of that day in which we will bid farewell Rahaf doing nothing to help her survive."**

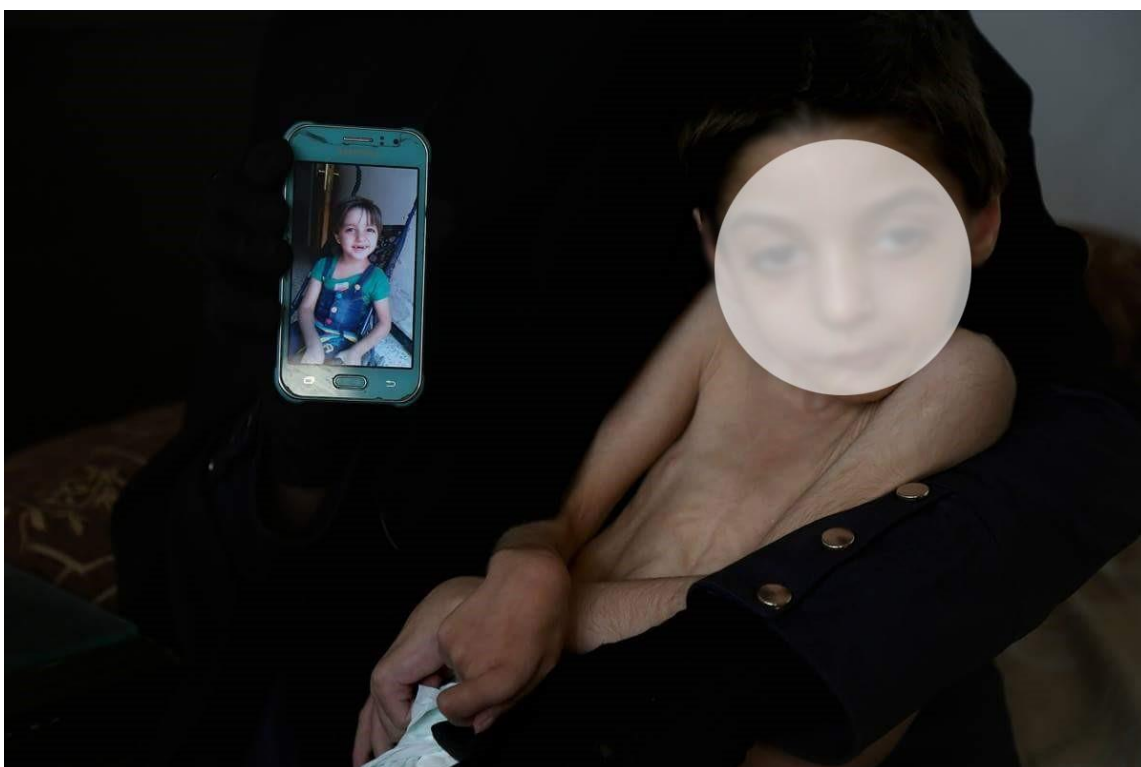






Image shows the child Rahaf Hawa, one of the children diagnosed with Malnutrition in Eastern Ghouta, in a scrawny body and clear bones

Photo credit: [Douma Coordination's Facebook page](#).

## **"150" Children Diagnosed with Malnutrition in 2017 Alone**

According to STJ reporter, several medical centres in Eastern Ghouta have conducted statistics showing the proportion of children with Malnutrition, including Al-Hakeem Centre for primary health care, which published statistics showing the increase in the proportion of children with Malnutrition from March to September 2017. The number of borderline Malnutrition cases (on Risk table) (approx. 2623) case, and the number of cases of children with moderate Malnutrition (on Man table) (approx.1328) case, while children suffering from severe Malnutrition (on Sam table) (approx.370) child.



**مسح حالات سوء التغذية في عيادات مركز الحكيم  
من بداية شهر أذار لنهاية شهر أيلول من عام 2017**

طبيعي	RISK	MAM	SAM	العدد الإجمالي	الشهر
1523	362	84	17	1986	أذار
1887	336	180	50	2453	نيسان
1947	336	182	71	2536	أيار
1678	312	131	47	2168	حزيران
2365	422	254	74	3115	تموز
2473	450	202	62	3187	آب
1910	405	295	49	2659	أيلول
13783	2623	1328	370	18104	الإجمالي

Image shows statistic conducted by Al-Hakeem Centre for primary health care in Eastern Ghouta, on the proportions of malnourished children from March to September 2017

Photo credit: [Al-Hakeem Medical Centre's Facebook page](#)

The population of Eastern Ghouta is about 400 thousand civilians, consist of 90 thousand families, and about 25 thousand children under two years of age. Most of whom are under suffocating siege and the spectre of hunger. That was confirmed by Mohammed al-Dalati, a board member of Charity Health Society in Douma city, who spoke to STJ saying:

"A large proportion, which may reach 70%, of Eastern Ghouta's children likely to be malnourished or have borderline malnutrition. Our health care centre counted about (150) cases of children suffering from severe Malnutrition during 2017 alone. However, there are no accurate statistics, at the level of Ghouta, estimate the number of children suffering from Malnutrition or even ones who died from it, due to the constant displacement of people from one place to another. It is important to point out that Malnutrition often accompanies with other factors, such as the lack of medication and the poor psychological condition of children as a result of war and siege, as well as the severe contamination of water which has spread in Eastern Ghouta recently. Let alone the high prices of food items, the price of one-bread bundle exceeded four dollars, which is an essential food for Eastern Ghouta people, who most of them cannot find a job."



Al-Dalati noted that Malnutrition is not only affecting children, but also many mothers, especially in pregnancy, explaining that many children died as soon as they were born, because their mothers were unable to breastfeed them as a result of their suffering from the severe Malnutrition caused by the siege on Eastern Ghouta.

It is worth mentioning that on May 4, 2017, sponsor states of Astana Talks (Russia, Turkey and Iran) signed a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) for establishment of de-escalation zones in Syria. It included Eastern Ghouta in Damascus countryside, Idlib province and some parts of northern Homs, as well as some parts of adjacent provinces (Latakia, Hama, and Aleppo) and some parts of southern Syria. One of the most prominent items is cessation of hostilities between conflicting parties and creation conditions for access medical aids.

The last aid convoy entered Eastern Ghouta was on November 12, 2017, according to STJ reporter.

On July 22, 2017, the Army of Islam participated in [signing](#) de-Escalation Agreement in Syria, [followed](#) by Failaq al-Rahman, on August 18, 2017.

STJ, had earlier prepared a [report](#) highlighting the suffering of many patients trapped in Eastern Ghouta waiting to be evacuated and taken out to Damascus hospitals for treatment. And it has also prepared another [report](#) on the suffering of the chronically ill persons during four years of siege on Eastern Ghouta.