



On the road between Damascus and Homs lies our ancient village of Qara. The name “Qara” comes from Syriac which means “very cold”. This mountainous village (1250 m above sea level) lies in the Qalamoun mountain range bordering Lebanon. An old carpet factory is in the middle of the village where they once made carpets by hand. At its height the factory employed 115 people. During the present crises it was used as a refugee center. In the interest of rehabilitating Qara, we would like to reopen the factory to give work to the villagers since unemployment rates here are very high.

There are 20 machines in the building, 17 of them are ready to use (but all of them need simple repairs). They don't need electricity; they are worked by hand. A person sits in front of a vertical frame with ropes; a picture is projected in the frame which indicates what colors are to be used. The worker then makes little knots with colored strings of cotton and wool on the places indicated by the photo.

On each machine you can make one carpet, so in sum we could be producing 20 carpets at the same time; but on each carpet several people can work. There is one woman in Qara who has professional experience. We aim to organize a formation period for 30 people for 3 months where she would teach this trade; these trainees should receive a symbolic salary with some gifts, such as food and health boxes.

Once they will be professional the workers should receive a salary depending on how much they produce. The employees have the possibility to take their work home and continue at night. At average we calculated that an employee would make around 22 000 SP per month.

### Carpet types

There are 4 carpet types (the more knots per m<sup>2</sup> the higher the price):

- Lowest quality: 90000 knots per m<sup>2</sup>. At average a worker can produce 2,5 m<sup>2</sup> per month. Thickness of the carpet is 1 cm. Cost per m<sup>2</sup> = 12500 Syrian Pounds (salary of worker, colored strings, ...)
- Good quality: 160000 knots per m<sup>2</sup>. At average a worker produces 1.4 m<sup>2</sup> per month. Thickness of the carpet is 0.7 cm. Cost per m<sup>2</sup> = 21500 Syrian Pounds (salary of worker, colored strings, ...)
- Better quality. 250000 knots per m<sup>2</sup>. At average a worker produces 0,9 m<sup>2</sup> per month. Thickness of the carpet is 0.6 cm. Cost per m<sup>2</sup> = 32500 Syrian Pounds (salary of worker, colored strings, ...)

- 600: best quality. 360000 knots per  $m^2$  . At average a worker produces  $0.6 m^2$  per month. Thickness of the carpet is 0.5 cm. Cost per  $m^2 = 47500$  Syrian Pounds (salary of worker, colored strings, ...)

**Cost in Syrian Pounds per  $m^2$**

Type	Cost of wool and cotton per $m^2$	Salary of worker per $m^2$	Extra costs per $m^2$	Total sum
Lowest	1210	8800	2490	12500
Good	1518	15700	4282	21500
Better	1628	24000	6372	32000
Best	1999	36000	9501	47500



On these pictures you can see the vertical machines behind which the workers would sit.



This is a photo of a frame indicating where the knots have to be made and in which color



This is their biggest machine: here they can make carpets of with width of seven meters. For the presidential palace this factory boasts to have made a carpet on this machine of 25m long.