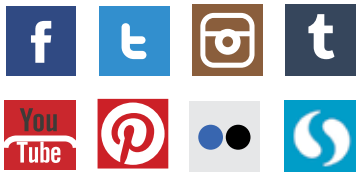


Highlights

- UNHCR Mission to Daraa led by Representative
- Celebrating International Women's Day
- UNHCR distributes Aid in Hard to Reach Areas
- Winterization Programme 2015/2016 Concludes with Great Success
- Shelter Upgrade in Tartous Met with Great Satisfaction

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UNHCR Representative Heads Mission to Daraa



On 14 March, UNHCR headed by its Representative conducted a mission to the Daraa governorate. The main purpose of the mission was to review ongoing Protection and Assistance activities and explore the possibility of opening a UNHCR field office in Daraa as well identifying needs and areas where UNHCR can provide assistance. For this purpose, meetings were held with the Daraa governor, the SARC president, the GOPA Head of office, the DoSA manager as well as Al Bir Charity and social service society organization in Daraa. A collective shelter in the area was also visited in order to listen to IDP concerns. In all these meetings, the Representative highlighted UNHCR's interest in working closely with partners on the ground as well as requesting proposals for potential projects in preparation for UNHCR's upcoming presence in the area.

International Women's Day Celebrated by UNHCR and its Partners throughout Syria

International Women's Day is held annually on 08 March to celebrate women's social, economic, cultural and political achievements, as well as recognize challenges and focus greater attention on women's rights and gender equality. This year's theme was "*Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step it Up for Gender Equality*" where an international campaign was launched to pledge for parity.



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In Syria, from 08 to 21 March, UNHCR celebrated the day by organizing various activities with its partners throughout the country.

In Sweida, awareness sessions on gender equality and women's legal rights were conducted by UNHCR in cooperation with GOPA at the Community Center. In Daraa, awareness sessions on women's empowerment were organized with many women participating. In all sessions, women received bracelets celebrating the day as well as brochures about gender equality. In Hassakeh, UNHCR's implementing partner SSSD carried out various activities including lectures and videos honoring successful women in the community.

In Aleppo, activities focusing on gender equality in education, job opportunities and freedom of speech in the form of awareness sessions, focus group discussions and theatre shows, were organized in collaboration with UNHCR partners Al Namaa and Al Talouf associations with over 500 IDPs participating. In Homs, UNHCR and Al Birr conducted 14 sessions for nearly 400 women in the various community centers to raise awareness on sexual and gender-based violence and enhance resilience.

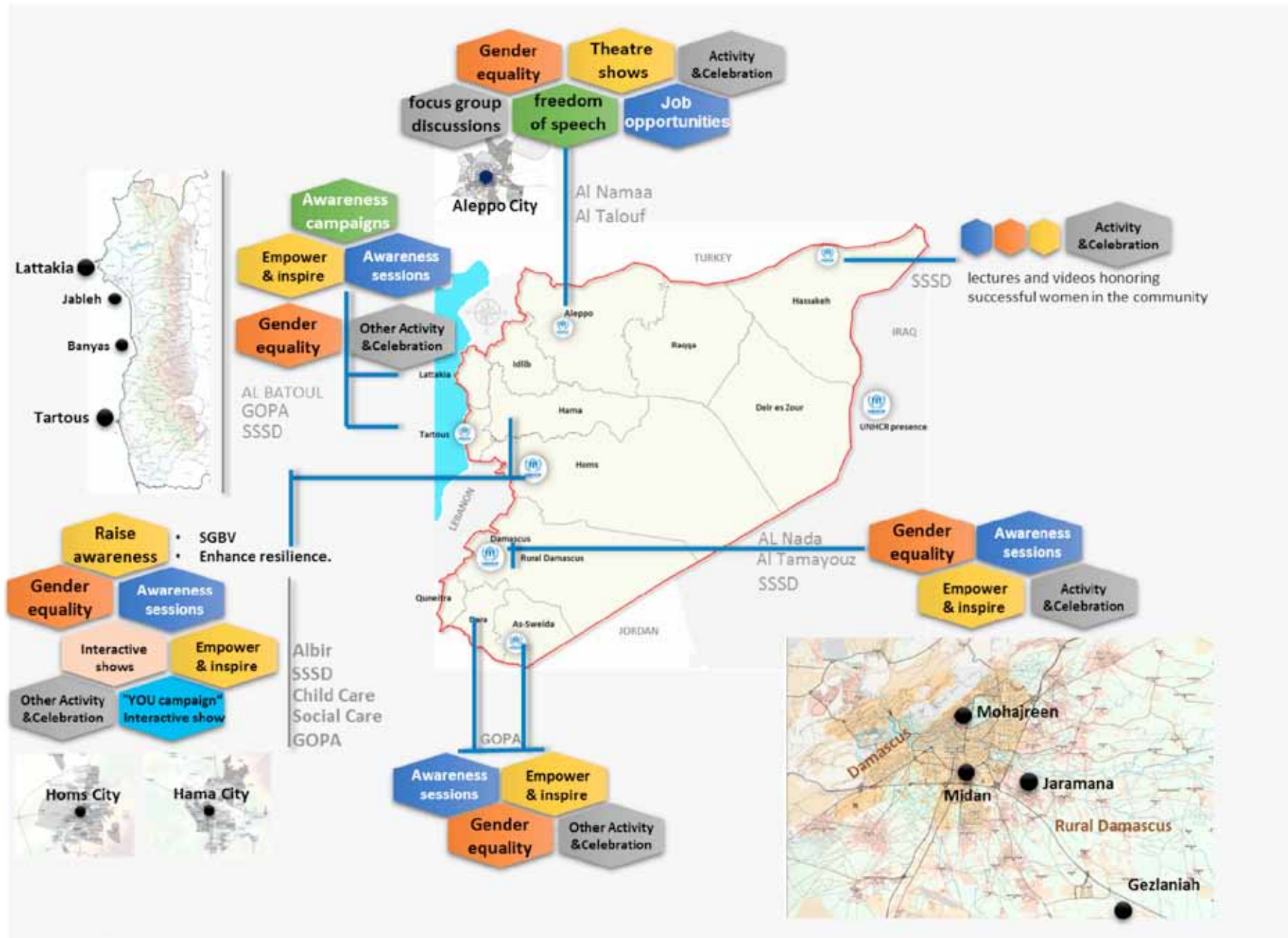
UNHCR with its partners in Tartous and Lattakia launched awareness campaigns in community centers and advocated for gender equality through media, brochures and activities in public locations such as the Tartous Cornish through short plays on gender roles and equality. Moreover, 14 awareness sessions for over 300 beneficiaries were conducted there by partner Al Batoul. In Lattakia, GOPA organized several activities in Lattakia city Jableh and Banyas celebrating women renowned in the community due to their achievements and three specialized vocational training courses were launched for 75 women to empower and inspire them.



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UNHCR Continues to Deliver Assistance Throughout Syria

In March 2016, UNHCR Syria reached a total of 235,029 individuals with CRIs. Of these 103,800 were in hard to reach and besieged areas. These include:

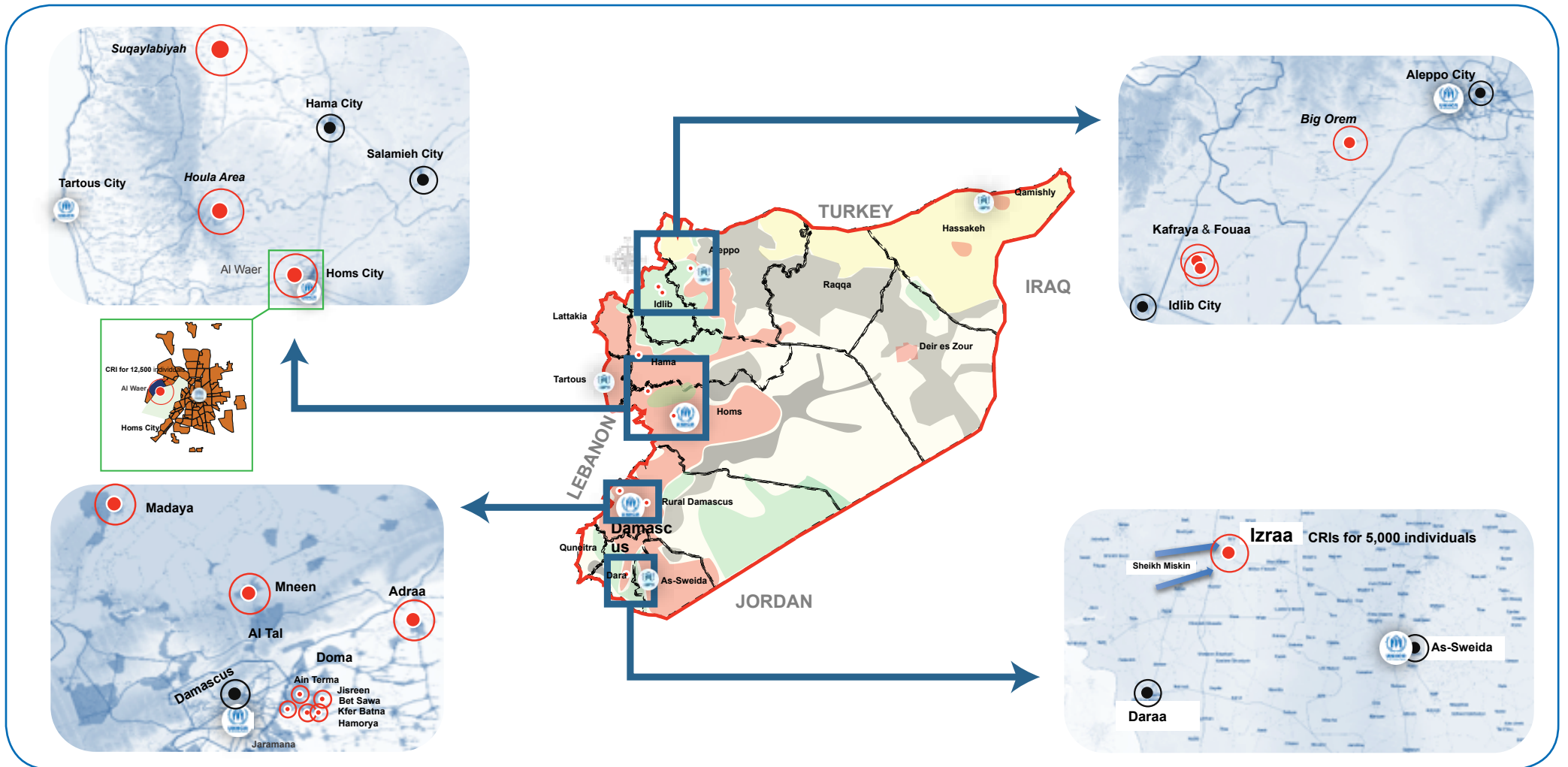
- On 02 March, UNHCR provided an emergency response to Izraa in the Daraa governorate through the delivery of CRIs for 5,000 individuals who were displaced mainly from Sheikh Miskine due to fighting.
- On 03 March, UNHCR participated in a UN interagency convoy to besieged Al Waer in Homs. UNHCR's contribution was clothing kits and plastic sheets for more than 12,500 individuals.
- Also on 03 March, UNHCR's emergency response delivered CRIs to 5,000 in Adra in Rural Damascus.
- On 4 March, the UNHCR Syria Representative led an inter-agency convoy to Ain Tarma and Kafr Batna sub-districts, part of a convoy carrying food and nutrition assistance to 20,000 people in the district of Eastern Ghouta. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, partners also delivered 21,000 vaccine treatments to Duma for use in Eastern Ghouta.
- On 07 March UNHCR participated in an inter-agency convoy with food, nutrition and health supplies for the three towns of Beit Sawa, Jisreen, and Hamoryah in Kafr Batna in Rural Damascus.
- On 16 March UNHCR participated in an inter-agency crossline mission to the hard-to-reach Kafraya and Fouaa towns of Idlib Governorate delivering mainly baby and adult diapers to 20,000 individuals while simultaneously delivering the same type of assistance to the besieged Madaya in Rural Damascus for 40,000 individuals.
- On 19 March UNHCR reached Mneen in Rural Damascus and delivered CRIs for the benefit of 2,500 individuals.
- On 21 March UNHCR delivered winterized CRIs to 12,500 individuals in Big Orem which is under NSAG control as well as 75 villages nearby. In the absence of OCHA personnel in Aleppo, UNHCR took the lead in coordinating the mission with the UN humanitarian team, SARC and the governor office in Aleppo.



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- On 22 and 24 March two inter-agency convoys accessed the hard-to-reach Al Houla in Homs governorate which has not been reached since September 2015. UNHCR's contribution sleeping mats, kitchen sets, blankets, mattresses, hygiene kits, plastic sheets and elderly diapers for the benefit of 15,000 individuals.
- On 27 March, UNHCR delivered CRIs for the benefit of 13,000 individuals in the hard-to-reach Suqaylabiyah in Hama.

On all these missions UNHCR, in addition to delivering aid also monitored protection issues



UNHCR Assists Mostafa and his Family

Four years ago Mostafa Abdullah lived in a modest house in Douma in Rural Damascus and his income was adequate to support and his family. However in the last few months due to escalating conflict they were forced to flee multiple times leaving their without their personal belongings behind. Mostafa and his family ended up in Al Ghezlaniah in Rural Damascus but were unable to afford to rent a house, instead sheltering with his wife and three children in a tiny six meter room which was not intended for accommodation and had no kitchen or toilet. “Each time we need to use a toilet we go to the neighbors, not to mention the damp walls with no natural lighting”, expressed Mostafa’s wife sadly.



When the UNHCR team became aware of this family’s plight they worked together with its implementing partner SIF to provide support to the family through the closure of the living spaces, installation of doors and windows, construction of a new kitchen block unit as well as installing electrical water heaters, supplying water mixers and maintaining a preexisted toilet and its sewage system.

With a little help the situation of this family has been greatly improved but with 6.5 million people like them displaced throughout Syria, so much more work needs to be done.

UNHCR 2015/2016 Winterization Programme Concludes after Smashing Target

In March the UNHCR 2015/2016 Winterization Programme which began in the second week of October 2015 with a prioritized target of 750,000 people concluded. The standard winterized kit is composed of winter clothes, high thermal blankets and plastic sheets. The programme prioritized newly displaced individuals, people in hard-to-reach areas, people with specific needs and vulnerabilities, such as unaccompanied minors or elders, single women as well as people with disability, mental health problems or serious medical conditions and chronic diseases.

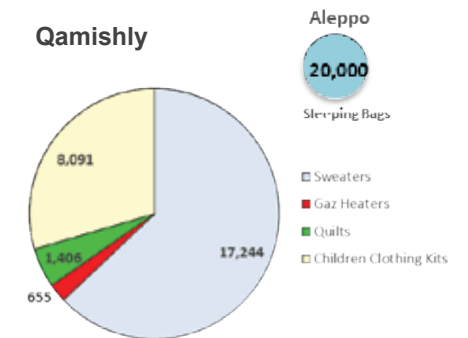
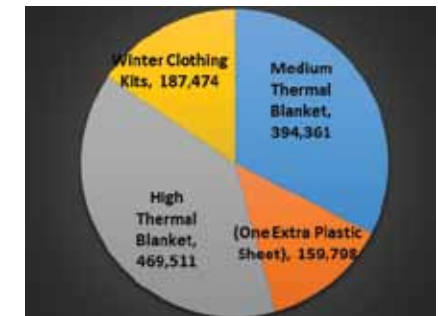
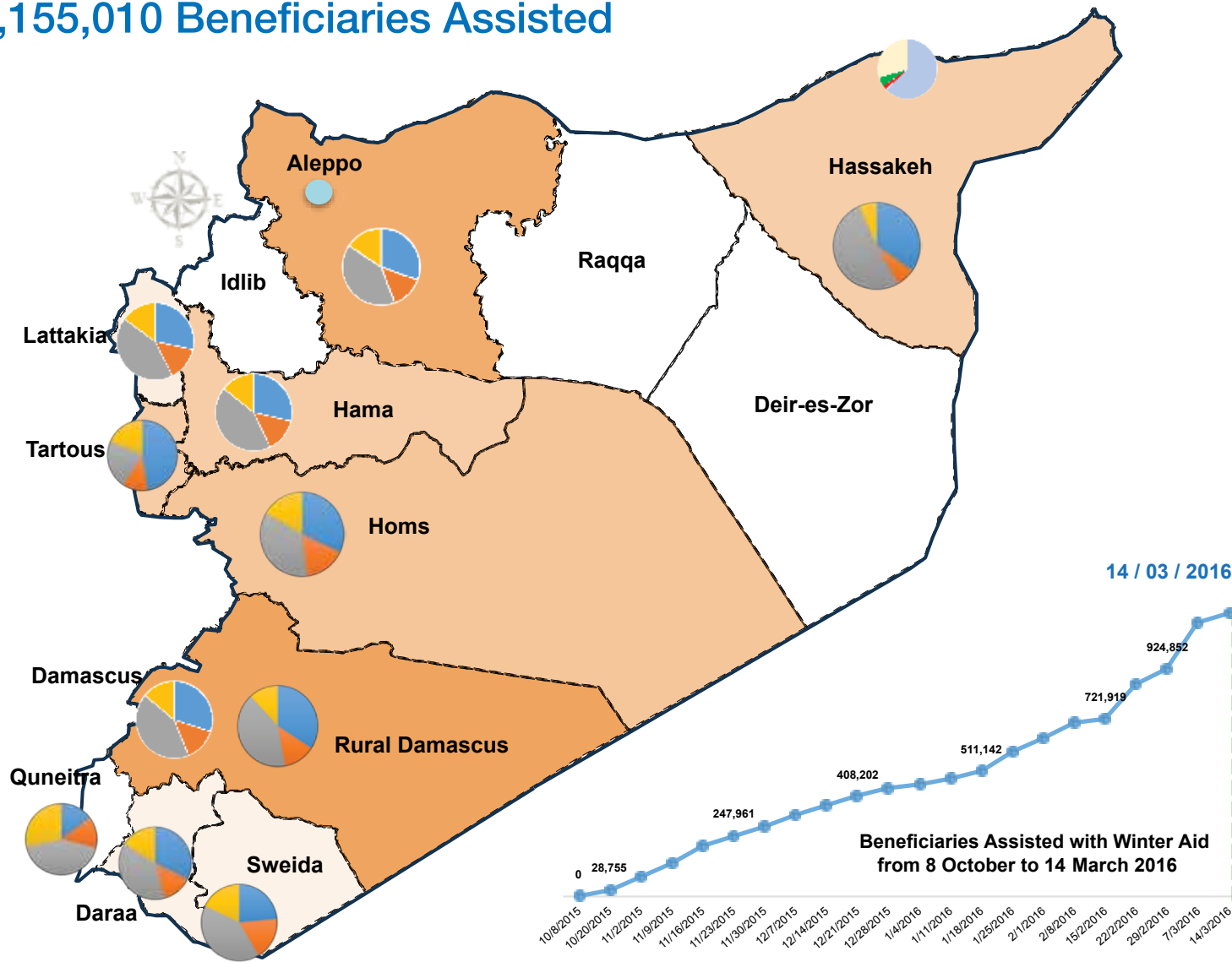
In addition, in Aleppo a supplementary winter package was agreed upon to cover 20,000 individuals residing in skeleton and unfinished buildings with sleeping bags which were sourced and manufactured locally as well as shelter kits consisting of timber, plywood and a tool kit which enabled the residents to reinforce and adjust their shelters to changing climate conditions. Shelter sector partners assisted with the distribution of the kits and provided technical support on its usage.

This programme was a great success with UNHCR surpassing its winterization target of 750,000 beneficiaries by 64%, instead reaching 1,155,010 individuals with 1,258,540 winter items.



Winterization Programme 2015 - 2016

1,155,010 Beneficiaries Assisted



Location	beneficiaries (Individuals)
Swieda	5,300
Quneitra	6,100
Lattakia	10,530
Daraa	12,650
Tartous	46,165
Damascus	51,250
Hama	56,825
Hassakeh	78,015
Homs	201,353
Aleppo	328,582
Rural Damascus	358,240
Grand Total	1,155,010

UNHCR Concludes Construction Works in Tartous

The construction works in the GCBC IDP camp in Tartous were finalized in March by UNHCR and its partner SARC. The work included casting concrete bases, installing tents and the building four layers of hollow blocks for the 55 tents in addition to the complementary work of cleaning, levelling between tents, fixing the dowels and all finishing. All 55 tents are finalized and currently occupied with residents reporting to UNHCR staff on the site that they were delighted with the recent improvements. In addition, they participated actively in the cleaning campaign conducted on the last day. One resilient young man, Mohammed, even showed UNHCR planting basins he had built in front of his tent for him to plant flowers and vegetables.



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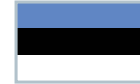
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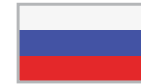
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