

ENHANCING RESILIENCE AND SELF-RELIANCE IN COMMUNITIES

End of Year Report 2017



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Glossary

ACF	Action Contre la Faim	PHC	Primary Health Care
CBI	Community-Based Initiative	PoC	Person of Concern
CBO	Community-Based Organization	PSS	Psychological Social Support
CFS	Child Friendly Space	PUI	Première Urgence Internationale
CRI	Core Relief Item	SARC	Syrian Arab Red Crescent
DRC	Danish Refugee Council	SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization	SIF	Secours Islamique France
FO	Field Office	SO	Sub Office
GBV	Gender-Based Violence	SSBG	Small Start-up Business Grant
GOPA	Greek Orthodox Patriarchy and all the East	SSSD	Syrian Society for Social Development
HRL	Human Rights Law	UN	United Nations
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan	UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
IDP	Internally Displaced Person	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
IHL	International Humanitarian Law	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
IMC	International Medical Corps	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
IOM	International Organization of Migration	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Al Sham	UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support	UNSC	United Nations Security Council
MoLA	Ministry of Local Administration	WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
NFI	Non-Food Item	WFP	World Food Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization		
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council		
PCSS	Protection and Community Services Sector		

Foreword From the UNHCR Representative

Marking its 7th year in 2017, the Syria crisis has, unfortunately, continued to be the world's largest displacement crisis. Last year, some 6.1 million people were internally displaced, many for multiple times, while 13.1 million people remained in need of humanitarian assistance. Additionally, more than five million Syrian refugees were registered with UNHCR and governments in the region. Causing immense suffering, large-scale destruction, and continuing to drive people out of their homes, the crisis has taken a severe toll on the Syrian people. UNHCR teams in Syria stayed the course during the country's most difficult years and extended their support to the most vulnerable. UNHCR expanded its operations as new areas opened up for humanitarian access, starting with eastern Aleppo at the start of the year and continuing to the east with the opening of a road linking Aleppo with Hassakeh Governorate, boosting the delivery of aid supplies to Raqqa and Deir Ez-Zor, as these emergencies unfolded. Playing a major role in interagency coordination, UNHCR continued to lead three sectors out of eleven activated in Damascus (Protection and Community Services, NFIs and Shelter), thereby contributing to the objectives of the UN-coordinated Humanitarian Response Plan, namely to save lives, protect civilians and increase the resilience of the Syrian people.



In 2017, UNHCR delivered 2.6 million protection and community services interventions, distributed core relief items to 3.5 million beneficiaries, and improved shelter living conditions to over 482,340 people. Notably, as part of its emergency response, UNHCR participated in 16 cross-line interagency convoys bringing much-needed aid supplies to thousands of people living in very precarious conditions with little or no access at all to food, medicines and other basic commodities. These lifeline missions were conducted in exceptionally difficult circumstances to alleviate the suffering of civilians trapped in hard-to-reach and besieged areas.

Where it had regular access, and with a view to promote resilience through its humanitarian response, UNHCR mainstreamed community mobilization and self-reliance as key protection components to reduce vulnerabilities and protection risks. Alongside providing life-saving assistance, UNHCR as the main relief agency for protection and community services, pursued its community-based protection strategy and expansion of its community centers' network. From 15 in 2015 to 74 in 2016, their number reached 92 by the end of 2017. As formerly besieged areas opened up for access, UNHCR's teams also launched the concept of satellite centres in 2017 – a small scale version of the community centre, in order to rapidly reach populations who have suffered long-term trauma and deprivation with a prioritised basket of key protection-related

services. Our package of services increasingly included activities supporting livelihoods and self-reliance (life skills training, vocational training, small start-up business grants and community-based initiatives), in addition to education programmes, child protection services, SGBV prevention and response, individual and group psychosocial support interventions, assistance for persons with special needs, including the disabled and elderly, primary health care, legal counselling and legal aid including on civil documentation and housing, land and property (HLP) issues. Last year, our legal aid project implemented mainly in community centers and legal clinics across the country had benefitted some 120,000 individuals including for the provision of vital civil documents. Outreach programmes were augmented with 17 satellite centres, 58 mobile units, 2,190 community outreach volunteers and 648 community-based initiatives. Notably thanks to a community-based approach to healthcare, UNHCR has been able to provide 545,680 people with access to health care including through health points inside community centers.

UNHCR was also able to deliver a winter-specific assistance consisting of winter clothes and other supplemental items to its regular CRI kits. From September 2017 and up to March 2018, it exceeded its initial target of one million people, and helped a total of 1.2 million people across Syria withstand the cold temperatures.

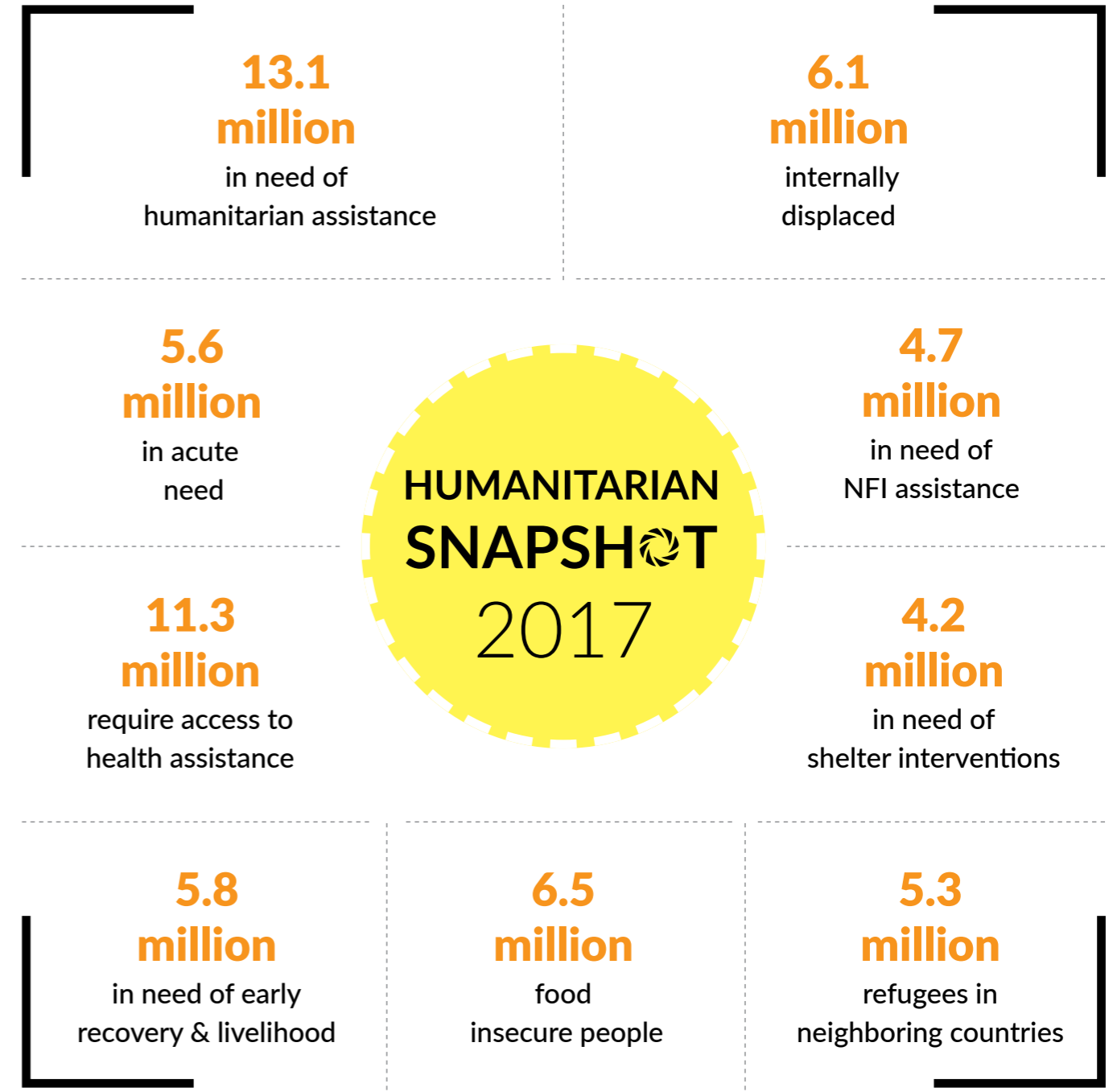
Developments in Syria in 2017 also translated with the spontaneous return of some 841,000 people in areas where fighting has receded, including some 77,000 refugees and 764,000 IDPs who returned spontaneously in a self-organized manner. While the humanitarian situation in some areas remains dire and conditions are not in place for facilitated or organized returns, UNHCR responds in the meantime to the returnees' immediate and urgent needs through their inclusion in ongoing humanitarian programmes, encompassing humanitarian assistance and community-based protection services. UNHCR also engaged in projects benefitting the communities at large such as the establishment of community centres in return areas, the rehabilitation of some priority schools, clinics, bakeries, solar street lights, civil registries in coordination with sister agencies and within the inter-agency coordination framework.

The challenges ahead of us are still important but as we present to you this end-of-year report, it is time to acknowledge the tremendous amount of work that has been accomplished so far despite many constraints. For this, I would like to thank all our partners from the UN system, local and international NGOs, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent as well as the relevant local authorities, governorates and departments in the line ministries.

I would also like to pay tribute to the extraordinary resilience of some 50,000 refugees and asylum seekers who have remained in Syria in the past years and to the remarkable generosity of the Syrian people and the relevant authorities for continuing to host them under exceptionally difficult circumstances. Refugee protection is at the core of UNHCR's mandate, and UNHCR will continue to stand and advocate for refugees until a durable solution can be found to their situation.

Looking ahead to 2018 and beyond, I would like to renew my heartfelt thanks to UNHCR's partners for the joint team efforts and for the common determination to achieve more. Year after year, I have been deeply impressed by the strength and resilience of the Syrian people themselves, who strive to rebuild their lives and their future and who have been a source of inspiration and encouragement for us all.

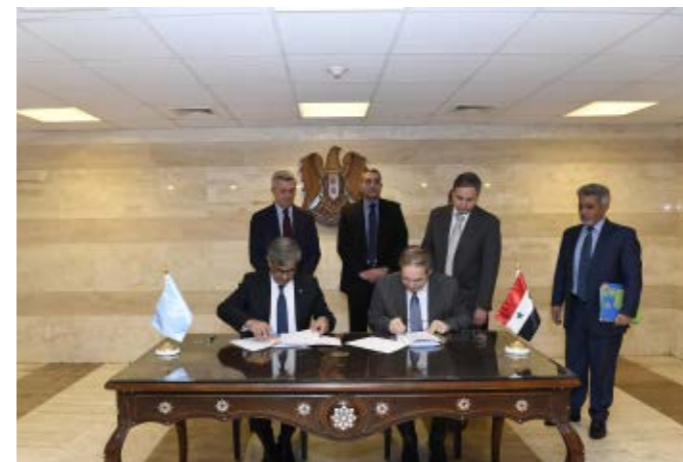
Sajjad Malik
UNHCR Syria Representative



High Profile Visits



Visit of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to Syria



In January 2017, the High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi conducted a three-day visit to Syria where he met with high-ranking Government officials, including the Minister and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Deputy Prime-Minister, Minister of Local Administration and Head of the High Relief Committee, and the Minister of Social Affairs and Labor. The High Commissioner's mission programme also included meetings with the UN Heads of Agencies, NGOs and UNHCR staff where he was warmly received.

In addition, accompanied by the UNHCR Syria representative, he visited Homs, where he met and discussed with the Governor a wide range of relevant humanitarian and operational issues, in addition to visiting a community centre and a UNHCR-rehabilitated IDP shelter in the Old City of Homs.



After his visit in Homs, the High Commissioner travelled to Aleppo where he visited the damaged neighborhoods of east Aleppo and acquainted himself with the services provided to the affected population. These included the distribution of core relief items, shelter and winterization assistance in the Jibreen IDP collective shelter as well as legal aid services, distribution of core relief items and shelter support in the returnee area of Hanano, the polyclinic for refugees in Sakhour and the livelihood and community services in the Martini Community Centre.

After visiting these areas he was shocked by the scale of the devastation in Aleppo, and called for accelerated and immediate humanitarian assistance for millions of people trying to rebuild their lives across Syria by stressing “There are people here, some of them are returning to these ruins, who need help, immediate help. They are cold, they are hungry and they need to work to earn some money. They need the elementary things in life. We need resources, irrespective of all the politics around this crisis. This is absolutely necessary and urgent for millions of people in Syria. We saw it in Damascus, we saw it in Homs, and we see it in Aleppo ... All the Syrian people need help. We cannot abandon them because the crisis is not over”.

Visit of UNHCR MENA Director to Syria

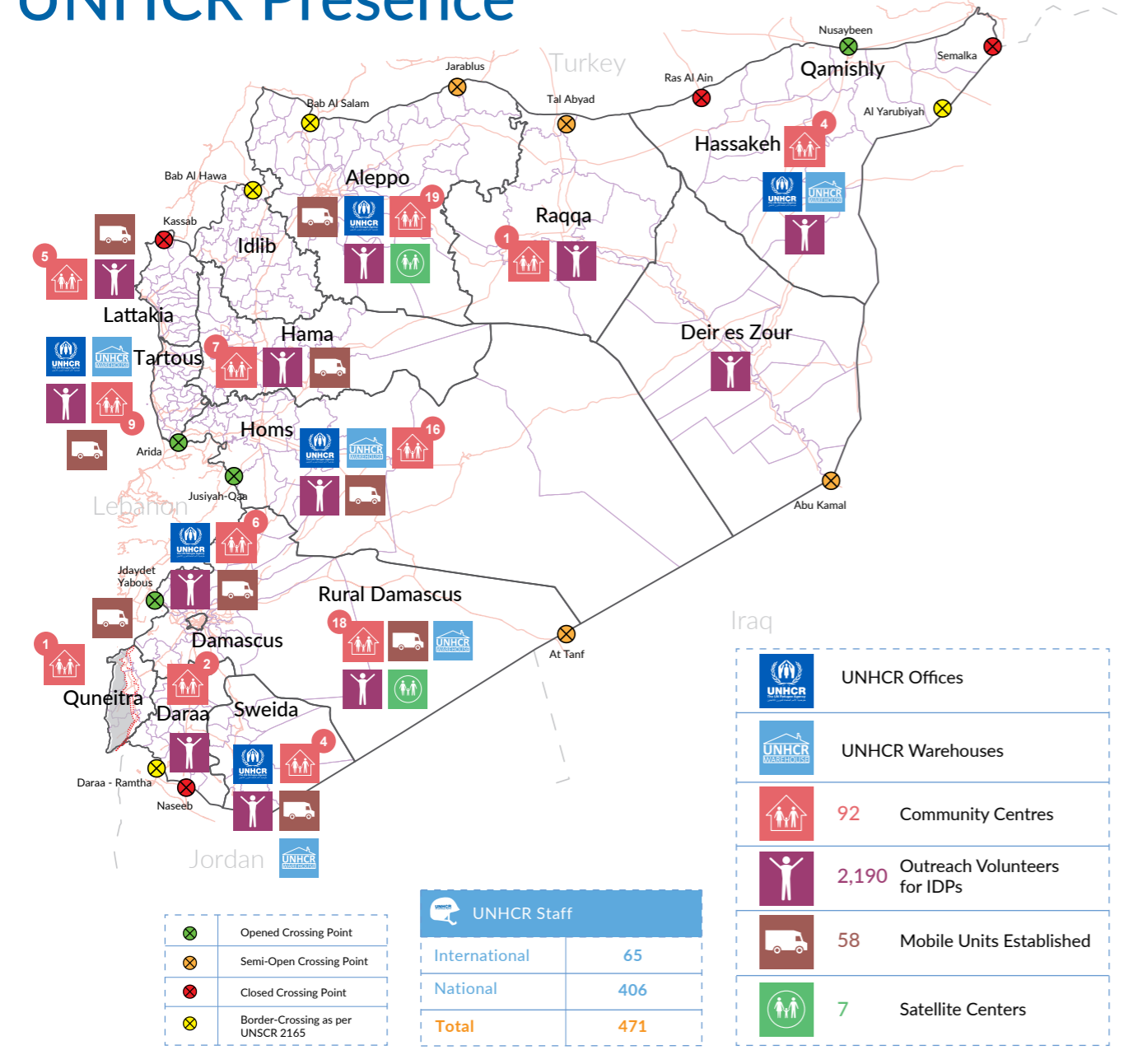


In April, Amin Awad, the Director of UNHCR Middle East and North Africa (MENA) bureau and the Regional Refugee Coordinator for the Syria crisis visited Syria to review the needs on the ground and UNHCR’s response.

During his mission, in Damascus, Mr Awad met with UNHCR national and international staff, the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and Local Administration and Environment, Social Affairs and Labour as well as the UN Resident / Humanitarian Coordinator in Syria Ali Al-Za’tari. In addition, he visited Homs and Aleppo to see at first-hand not only the scale of the challenges ahead, but how people are coping and struggling to resume a normal life. In Homs he met the deputy governor of Homs, head of international cooperation and the director of the civil affairs department.

While in Aleppo, he witnessed the scale of destruction and remarked “I know this city well and I visited it several times before the crisis. The destruction is devastating, I am sad to see this but at the same time people are still restarting life against all odds and amidst immense challenges. A demonstration of their admirable resilience”.

UNHCR Presence



Aleppo Sub Office

Covering north-western Syria

Many developments occurred in Aleppo especially in the eastern neighbourhoods which came under control of the Government this year. As soon as the eastern neighbourhoods were cleared from mines, many IDPs started to return to their houses despite the damage of houses and infrastructure.

From 01 January to 31 December 2017, UNHCR Sub Office Aleppo:

- Supported 19 community centres and 16 mobile teams, in addition to seven satellite centres established in the accessible rural Aleppo/eastern city.
- Worked with 38 lawyers to provide legal counselling and other protection services to the affected communities.
- Provided Community-Based Protection through a range of interventions conducted by 418 Outreach Volunteers, 12 Women's Committees and 19 Child Protection Committees.
- Supported 211 Community-Based Initiatives (CBIs), seven Group CBIs and one Community-Based Organization (CBO) to respond to a range of local-level protection issues.
- Assisted 921,865 IDPs/184,373 families with CRIs in the eastern neighbourhoods of Aleppo City and the accessible rural areas.
- Delivered 123 start-up small business grants to support vulnerable and unemployed skilled IDPs and returnees to become self-dependent.
- Established two new productive units in Kallaseh and Sukkari neighbourhoods to create local job opportunities.
- Distributed 2,450 toolkits of diverse types in different areas of Aleppo city and villages.
- Installed shelter kits to allow 18,661 individuals/4,024 families in different neighbourhoods and slums to have a dignified place to stay in.
- Rehabilitated 20 schools in eastern Aleppo city and eastern rural Aleppo for the benefit of more than 36,000 students.
- Lifted 50,000 M³ of debris in Aleppo city, specifically in Qadi Asker and Al Shiekh Saeed. Nearly 62,500 individuals / 12,500 families were living in the streets from where the debris was removed.
- Rehabilitated a public health facility in the newly accessible Al Khafsa, where the health system was completely impaired.

► Maysoun is Independent despite Her Disability



Maysoun is a young woman from Aleppo who suffers from scoliosis. She kept trying to get employed but always in vain. "Over the years I have applied for many jobs but my application was always rejected due to my disability", says Maysoun sadly when meeting with UNHCR team in the centre.

When Maysoun heard about the vocational training available in the UNHCR funded Martini Community centre managed by UNHCR partner Namaa she enrolled in the training on Tricot production. "In five weeks, Maysoun's skills improved dramatically. Her work is very neat and she is fast in the production of pieces", said one of the trainers in the centre. Once Maysoun completed the course, the trainers were so impressed that she was offered a job in the productive unit. "You cannot imagine how happy I am with this step in my life. I am now fully independent, however, my ambition does not stop here as I am dreaming of becoming a trainer in the unit", says Maysoun full of joy.

Homs Sub Office

Covering Central Syria

From 01 January to 31 December 2017, UNHCR Sub office Homs:

- Increased shelter services by 250 % including owner-oriented shelter support, private shelter upgrade and collective shelter rehabilitation.
- Supported seven new community centres in the urban and rural parts of Homs and Hama governorates bringing the total number of community centres to 24.
- Provided winter assistance such as winter clothing, extra high terminal blankets and other essential household items in the Homs and Hama governorates for 160,900 beneficiaries from 01 September to 31 December.
- Recruited seven additional lawyers with SARC and DRC to provide legal services to persons of concern in Homs and Hama.
- Recruited 699 new Outreach Volunteers trained on PSS, Child Protection and SGBV.
- Helped 161,660 beneficiaries get access to primary health care including radiology, laboratory services through UNHCR partners SARC, the Social Care Association and Premiere Urgence in Homs and Hama.
- Allocated 20 child friendly spaces inside community centres and five outside community centres to provide a safe, child friendly and stimulating environment, mobilize the communities on the protection and well-being of children and provide opportunities for children to acquire contextually relevant skills.
- Coordinated with the Civil Affairs Department to deploy a registration/documentation unit in Al Waer in order to respond to the IDPs needs of lack of civil documentation.
- Helped 2,600 families generate income through distributing toolkits including plumbing, carpenter, electrical, sewing and painting kits.



► Abou Maher Neshewati's Historical House



Abou Maher Neshewati's used to live in Old Homs, due to the crisis he was displaced with his family to Talbiseh where he stayed for eight months. When the security situation deteriorated in Talbiseh he was forced to flee again. When Old Homs became accessible and safe he returned to assess the damage to his home. "When we returned to our house we found it in a very bad condition. A rocket had landed in the middle of the living room destroying a big part of the house", said Abou Maher.

UNHCR and its partner Al Birr assisted with the rehabilitation of Abou Maher's house including electrical, WASH and carpentry works. While showing the UNHCR team the rehabilitation works Abou Maher also began explaining the rich history of his family in fighting against the French in Syria during the Great Syrian Revolt of 1925. "This house means a lot to us, not only was it our family home for generations but also was the home of one of the leaders of the Great Syrian Revolt, Nazeer Neshewati", said Abou Maher proudly.

Qamishly Sub Office

Covering north-eastern Syria

Between 01 January and 31 December 2017, UNHCR SO Qamishly:

- Supported five community centres, opened six new child friendly spaces in Hassakeh and Qamishly, trained 259 staff and volunteers in Hassakeh and Raqqa including 165 ORVs, and established eight child protection committees and six women committees.
- Monitored the spontaneous return of 18,530 persons of concern to Iraq as well as monitored the spontaneous returns of IDPs to Raqqa and Deir-es-Zour, ensuring that potential returnees are well aware of the conditions prevailing in their intended areas of return.
- Supported the reunification of 23 unaccompanied and separated children with their families.
- Reached 12,348 PoCs in Hassakeh Governorate and 4,363 PoCs in Al-Hol Camp with awareness raising activities on SGBV.
- Gave priority to education services in the community centres, through the provision of remedial classes and accelerated learning programmes to 8,962 students, including 1,222 drop-outs, in addition to the provision of school supplies.
- Provided Cash for Work in Tent Repair Workshop in Hol Camp for 57 IDPs and asylum seekers, providing a regular source of income. 1,675 tents were repaired by women, sheltering at least 8,370 individuals.
- Reached 1,693 individuals involved in vocational training in Hassakeh including on-the-job training in workshops and life skills in community centres.
- Distributed 66 livelihood toolkits in Raqqa, and 275 kits in Hassakeh through partners.
- Supported 33 vulnerable families with start-up small business grants in Hassakeh governorate.
- Rehabilitated two bakeries in Hassakeh and Qamishly cities in order to support food security and provide better quality and quantity of bread.
- Supported four Primary Health Centres (one in Qamishly, two in Al-Hol refugee camp, and one in Newroz and Roj refugee camps) and provided health services to 136,830 IDPs, refugees and asylum seekers.

► Abu Ahmad Brings his Art to Ain Issa

In the midst of crisis and destruction, painters always have a way of bringing color back to their lives and the lives of those around them. Abu Ahmad is one of those painters. He's a 47 year old father of seven from Aleppo who was born with a talent for painting. Ten years ago, he moved with his family to a farm a few kilometers north of Raqqa City where he used to work as a vendor driving his car around all day selling kitchen supplies and other household items.

"The merchants in Aleppo knew me. I used to buy the materials on loan until I sold them. When the road was closed, however, I was left unemployed. Living under the conditions that we were living under, people tend to prioritize food and other basic needs. They no longer spend money on secondary needs such as the household items that I sold," he explained.

He was working with his family in their corn farm when ISIS invaded their area and took his 20 year old son and his nephew. The only news he heard of them was when one of the prisoners detained with them was released and he said that they were safe. That was two years ago, but Abu Ahmad and his wife never gave up hope and kept asking about their son, staying in their home despite of everything waiting for his return.

Until one day, the hostilities got so bad that they had no other choice but to flee to Ain Issa Camp for safety. When they reached the camp, they heard that ISIS had burnt their house down in retaliation for their escape, and even prevented the neighbors from putting out the fire. "We have our lives, let them burn the whole place down with everything in it, UNHCR gave us everything we needed here, blankets, mattresses and rugs," his wife tells the UNHCR team.

The only thing that Abu Ahmad was missing was painting supplies, but that never stopped him. He used cigarette filters and created a paint brush using pillow filling, and since Ain Issa camp used to be a cotton factory, he used the old papers from the factory's registry to paint on. He used his talent for teaching the children about the importance of hygiene and maintaining the camp by painting awareness posters.

As the apple does not fall far from the tree, his 10 year daughter Hala is now teaching the other children in the camp how to paint. "Every day, she gathers all the children and teaches them how to paint and sew clothes for their dolls," he said.

UNHCR has now provided Abu Ahmad with painting supplies so he can continue to share his talent with others in the camp. "I only hope to return one day to my home town with my son back in my arms where we can find peace and safety," he tells UNHCR about his hopes for the future.



► UNHCR Response in north-eastern Syria

The ongoing hostilities continued during the year to result in large and numerous displacements taking place throughout north-eastern Syria, with an estimated hundred thousands people displaced by hostilities in Raqqa alone. UNHCR's operation in this region was both complex and challenging as it encompassed response to both IDP and refugee displacements in a number of camps spread throughout north-eastern Syria.

During May an escalation of hostilities in the north east and north west of Raqqa caused the displacement of thousands of people to a number of different camps and informal settlements. Large numbers of people were displaced from the north - western side of Raqqa which resulted in thousands of IDPs arriving to Ain Issa, Maskana and Aleppo. In response, UNHCR scaled up its operations in the north of Syria, while continuing its response to both refugees and IDPs in the Al-Hol, Newroz, Mabruka and Roj camps in the Hassakeh governorate.

Tens of thousands of displaced individuals from Raqqa and Tabqa arrived in the Ain Issa camp, some of whom were then transported to Manbij, Azaz, Hisha, Jerniyah, and to safer areas in rural Raqqa.

Following a needs assessment in Manbij, UNHCR sent tents and Core Relief Items (CRIs) to the camp of Rasm Al Akhdar as an emergency response to the influx there. UNHCR also facilitated a WHO medicines shipment to Hassakeh Directorate of Health in order to respond to the medical needs of the IDPs and the local community there.

Moreover, on 19 May Hassakeh Governorate was hit by a strong sandstorm causing considerable damage throughout the various camps, particularly in Al-Hol, Mabruka and Roj. UNHCR and its partners responded to the needs in the camps and supported hundreds of families in repairing their tents and by replacing CRIs. In Al-Hol, new arrivals continued to receive tents and CRIs, including solar lamps. A number of rapid needs assessments were also conducted jointly with partners, and subsequent protection interventions were undertaken which included recreational activities aiming to strengthen teamwork, SGBV and Child Protection awareness sessions, individual counselling sessions and the setting up of a children's committee.



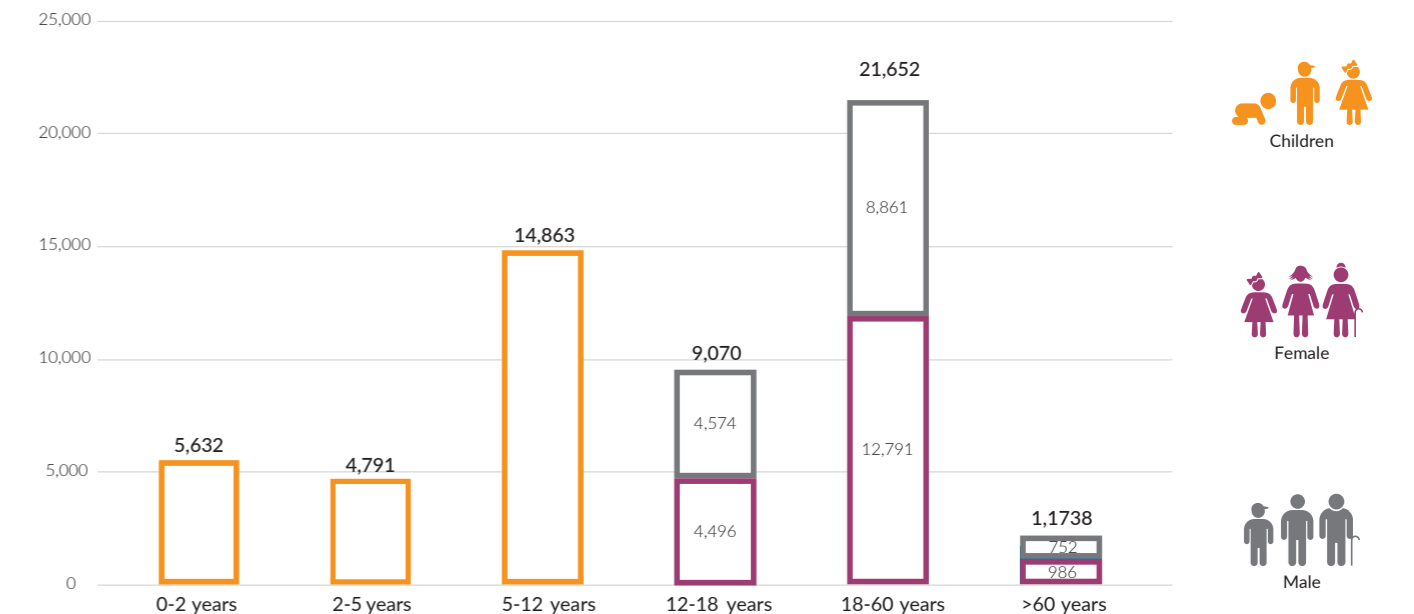
In September, as the hostilities continued in the Deir- ez-Zour governorate, both north and south of the Euphrates River, more displacement took place mainly towards Hassakeh and Raqqa Governorates. Some 27,000 individuals arrived in the three camps of Areesha, Mabruka and Ain Issa only in 20 days, and some 20,000 individuals were standing at Malha and Abu Khashab checkpoints waiting for transfer to the camps.



On 13 September a UNHCR convoy headed towards the newly accessible Deir-es-Zour, carrying core relief items for 30,000 individuals/6,000 families. An inter-agency mission followed on 27 September, with 21 trucks covering the needs of 50,000 individuals/10,000 families. When the trucks were unloading, they came under a mortar attack that resulted in damage to one UNHCR truck, and caused leg injury of a UNICEF driver. The driver was brought to a local hospital and was treated.

On 20 October, it was announced that ISIS had left Raqqa city. Meanwhile, the hostilities in Deir-es-Zour continued after heavy clashes with ISIS. The Syrian Armed Forces managed to establish control over Deir-es-Zour city on 03 November 2017.

Demographics in Areesha, Mabruka, Ain Issa, Al-Hol, Roj and Newroz Camps



Damascus Field Office

Covering Capital and Surroundings

From 01 January to 31 December UNHCR FO Damascus:

- Advocated with the authorities to facilitate the issuing of critical documents to IDPs and other crisis-affected people. Through partners' lawyers 58,280 individuals were assisted in obtaining, renewing and restoring their civil documents. This legal assistance was provided to IDPs mainly from Kafraya and Fouaa, and to the population in newly opened and accessible areas such as Al Tal, Zakia, Al Mouadamyah, Sayda Zainab, Qudsaya and Eastern Ghouta, Al Nabek and Qutaifeh.
- Supported 2,548 children mainly in newly reopened areas like Al Hameh and Wadi Barada with child protection case management services, conducted with its partners 2,934 different types of activities for children with their care givers and established 24 child welfare committees and Children clubs in the shelters and schools of Damascus and Rural Damascus.
- Enhanced the provision of SGBV case management for 279 cases through its partners within Community Centres in Jaramana, Hameh, Deir Ali, Dummar, Bab Sharqi, Mazzeh, Ghizalnyeh, Jdydet Artouz, Sahnaya, Sabboura and Al Qalamoun as well as conducted 1,363 SGBV activities benefiting 34,044 individuals.
- Reached more than 94,490 families with CRIs in Damascus and Rural Damascus as well as conducted 189 field visits to different areas in Damascus and Rural Damascus to monitor, assess and distribute assistance to the most vulnerable.
- Provided MHPSS case management, care plans and special referrals through its partners in the community centres and polyclinics. 10,768 persons benefited from the MHPSS case management services. In addition, 7,675 MHPSS recreational activities were provided to 170,560 beneficiaries.
- Added the General and Medical In-Kind Assistance components to services provided by partners targeting the most vulnerable persons who cannot afford to buy these items and therefore are not able to mitigate and reduce the protection risks. 5,325 items were distributed with the support of UNHCR partners.
- Established 24 new community centres, of which four were in newly accessible areas like Moadamiyah, Al Tal, Buqain and Adra serving the effected population. In addition, the outreach volunteer network expanded to 473 volunteers supporting 100,625 families.
- Provided 5,709 beneficiaries with vocational training, and distributed 2,696 toolkits to replace lost assets. 230 beneficiaries received Small Start-Up Business Grants.
- Benefited 54,500 individuals from shelter interventions; 20,400 from emergency responses, 3,460 from long-term shelter assistance, 30,000 from Herjalleh Borehole, 650 from maintenance works in collective shelters. In addition to the rehabilitation of 13 schools in Rural Damascus.

► Samah Can Move Freely Again

Samah is a 25 year-old mother who lost her personal documents when she fled her hometown in Ghouta to Qutaifeh, Rural Damascus. After Samah's husband passed away she became responsible for her four children and without a family card, Samah or the children were not able to travel within the country nor have access to social services including hospitals and schools.

After Samah attended one legal awareness raising session conducted by UNHCR and its partner SARC at the Community Centre in Qutaifeh, Rural Damascus she asked a lawyer's assistance to obtain a family card and register the birth of her children.

After advocacy and a legal intervention, the lawyers finally succeeded in obtaining the required documents for Samah and her children, which enabled them to get a family card and access many services including education for the children. "Thank you SARC and thank you UNHCR, this card is already making a huge difference for me and my children" Samah says smiling.

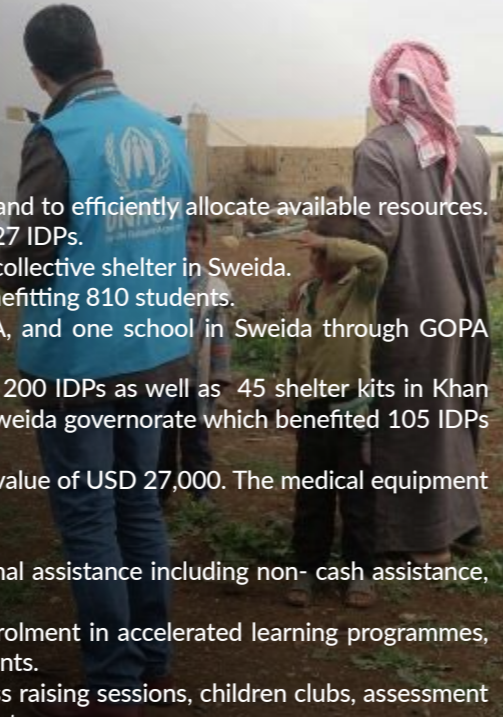


Sweida Field Office

Covering south-western Syria

From 01 January to 31 December 2017, UNHCR FO Sweida:

- Reached 115,000 individuals/23,000 families in Sweida, Daraa and Quneitra with CRIs for winter and emergency response. Supplementary items were dispatched to cover the needs of 6,500 IDP families including winter jackets for adults, under-pants for adults, sleeping bags and carpets.
- Conducted three missions to Daraa, Izra'a and As-sanamayn cities as well as within Sweida governorate to assess the situation on the ground there, follow up and discuss joint projects with local authorities and partners.
- Established the NFI working Group in Sweida, to enhance the NFI distribution mechanism between partners, to avoid potential overlapping and to efficiently allocate available resources.
- Rehabilitated the school building inside Rassas collective shelter hosting 727 IDPs.
- Provided 18 precast cement units and 60 tents to host IDPs in the Rassas collective shelter in Sweida.
- Provided 18 prefab classrooms for seven schools in Daraa governorate benefitting 810 students.
- Rehabilitated eight schools in Daraa through its partners SIF, and GOPA, and one school in Sweida through GOPA benefitting around 4,500 students.
- Distributed through its partners 40 shelter kits in Daraa which benefited 200 IDPs as well as 45 shelter kits in Khan Arnaba in Quneitra for the benefit of 225 IDPs in addition to 21 kits in Sweida governorate which benefited 105 IDPs living in private shelters and unfinished buildings.
- Provided in June medical equipment to its partner Ein Al Zaman of a total value of USD 27,000. The medical equipment was delivered to the newly built clinic located in Sweida city.
- Supported 653 individuals through vocational training courses.
- Supported 29,130 people of concern to receive different social/recreational assistance including non-cash assistance, awareness sessions and special intervention for special cases.
- Provided 6,955 persons of concern with access to education through enrolment in accelerated learning programmes, summer camps, remedial classes and programmes for dropped-out students.
- Provided child protection services to 17,784 children, including awareness raising sessions, children clubs, assessment and analysis undertaken and specialized support through case management.
- Supported 20,652 individuals to get access to legal assistance and legal remedies through 17 local lawyers working with its partners.
- Provided different SGBV services to 9,755 individuals, including awareness, case management and receiving risk-reduction kits.
- Covered seven community centres with services and one child friendly space, supported six community-based initiatives and assisted three group community-based initiatives and three community-based organizations.



► Hameed Self-Employed Again



Hameed and his family were displaced from Aleppo to Sweida city in 2014. In Aleppo, Hameed owned his own workshop and worked as an electrician. "I was self-employed for many years, when I moved to Sweida, I had to always work for workshop owners and barely earned enough to survive", said Hameed to the UNHCR team.

Hameed was interviewed by UNHCR and SARC like many other displaced tradesmen and women and was found eligible to receive an electrician toolkit. "I'm so happy and thankful to UNHCR as now I can finally open my own workshop. It wasn't easy for me depending on small jobs all along, however, I had to accept this fact because I couldn't afford to buy my own equipment", said Hameed quickly as he opened his toolkit for the first time.

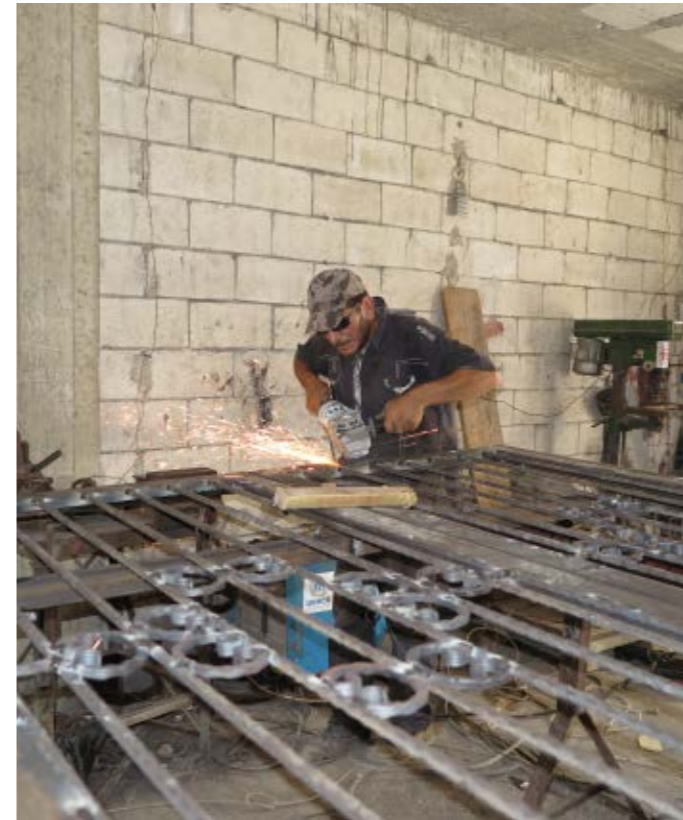
Tartous Field Office

Covering western Syria

From 01 January to 31 December 2017, UNHCR FO Tartous:

- Responded to the displacement of 10,000 individuals/1,940 families from Mehardeh and Sqelbieh in rural Hama to the coastal area. Two inter-agency missions were conducted to Mashta Helou and to Al Khrab to assist these families with CRIs and protection interventions.
- As part of the four-town agreement Zabadani and Madaya in Rural Damascus and Kafraya and Fuoa in Idleb, around 830 families from Kafraya and Fua moved to Lattakia and Tartous who were supported with urgent CRIs, and immediate health support. Three inter-agency missions were also conducted to Lattakia, Ras AL-Baseet, and Bseireh to assess the needs on the ground.
- Supported spontaneous returnees to 35 new return locations.
- Rehabilitated 300 houses in eight villages within its owner-oriented response through partners.
- Responded immediately to the Al Hamedieh shelter where 85 families were directly affected by a storm which caused damage to 48 tents as well as the campsite, nearby properties and livestock. UNHCR distributed CRIs to the affected families and assisted with tent replacement and site enhancement.
- Assisted vulnerable IDPs and host community farmers through the beehives project with the delivery of 375 equipped beehives to 75 individuals in 34 of the most affected villages in Lattakia and Tartous countryside. Also, provided basic household items through recycling wooden pallets used in humanitarian assistance shipments and utilizing IDPs expertise in carpentry for the benefit of 2,080 individuals/416 families.
- Supported 239 IDPs, returnees and local community members through livelihood activities including Start-up Small Business Grants (SSBG) delivered by partners. Besides, UNHCR supported the greenhouse project for the benefit of 3,000 vulnerable producers. The poultry project also kicked off supporting 450 families in Tartous and Lattakia.
- Provided experienced vulnerable IDPs and affected community members with 1,774 toolkits to help them re-establish their businesses.
- Rehabilitated with its partners four schools hosting around 40 % of IDP students in Lattakia governorate. 62 classrooms were habilitated in addition to 39 WASH facilities for the benefit of 3,024 students.
- Organized activities marking the World Day against the Child Labor on 22 June, during which 65 awareness raising activities for 1,629 beneficiaries were conducted, as well as the World Day against Child Labour where more than 65 activities were organized for 1,629 beneficiaries, and the Universal Children's Day on 20 November outreaching 5,323 individuals.
- Re-upgraded six collective shelters hosting 1,562 individuals/312 families.
- Supported lawyers in Tartous and Lattakia in providing legal assistance to new arrivals. In 2017, 19,371 individuals benefited from the legal programme in the coastal area.
- Opened three new community centres, supported three community-based organizations working with disabilities, and assisted four group community-based initiatives for the benefit of 1,135 individuals.

► Abdul's Incredible Journey to a New Beginning



Abdul Al Wahabdeb is a father of four from Deir-es-Zour now living in Qadmous, Lattakia. One of Abdul's daughters suffers from diabetes and after ISIS occupied the city her medicines became hard to find. He therefore left the city to try to get the medicine and ISIS arrested all his children to ensure that he returns. After his return he feared for his family's safety so he decided to escape the city. Leaving all the family's possessions and in order not to raise suspicion they set off walking across the desert carrying only a bottle of water. Then began their four month flight which brought them from Deir-es-Zour to Raqqa then to rural Raqqa on to Hassakeh to Qamishly, then to Damascus and finally onto Qadmous in Lattakia.

Having worked for over 30 years as a welder, Abdul applied for one of the UNHCR blacksmith livelihood kits and after assessment was successful, he then opened a workshop and business is booming. 'Despite all the hardship in the past, our life is much better now, with the income from the business I can even afford to get the best medicines for my daughter Abdul says. "We are now looking to the future and my wife is going to start doing training courses soon, thanks for everything UNHCR".



In 2017, UNHCR along with its partners reached **2.6 Million** individuals with protection services in Syria

In 2017, protection activities reached out to 2.6 million affected populations in 13 governorates, including Raqqa where a new community centre was opened. UNHCR together with its partners established 27 new community centres and 30 mobile units in newly accessible areas and areas of return, including in Deir-es-Zour where legal assistance was provided through UNHCR's legal partner. The interventions increased between 2016 and 2017, with a 17 %, 60 % and 9 % increase in the number of individuals reached with SGBV prevention and response activities, general protection activities and child protection interventions respectively.

In 2017, UNHCR continued to rely on its community-based protection strategy implemented primarily through community centres, mobile units and outreach volunteers to ensure that a maximum of individuals in need are reached. The community centres function as 'one-stop shops' offering a wide range of integrated protection-related services and programmes for people of diverse profiles and with diverse needs. Community centres are particularly important for displaced people, whose mobility may be hampered by distance, transportation costs or security concerns and/or living in remote areas where availability of services is scarce. Moreover, community centres cooperate with other facilities and service providers to ensure complementarity in service provision.

Protection

Community-Based Protection

Community Centres

The community centres have proven to be an effective approach to reach and assist crisis-affected populations in the most challenging contexts and to promote community participation. Despite the challenging operating conditions, UNHCR expanded this year the number of community centres across the country to target a larger number of beneficiaries with protection services. To this End, 27 new community centres were opened or re-established in 2017.

All interventions in the community centres were designed in line with UNHCR's Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) and rights-based approaches, with particular attention given to persons with specific needs in the IDP and affected host communities. These communities participate throughout the development and further refinement of programmes through focus group discussions and information collected by the outreach volunteers within the concerned communities.

Mobile units also reached the vulnerable population lacking access to the community centres for a variety of reasons, including volatile security and residence in remote and hard-to-reach locations. The mobile units played a fundamental role in spreading information about the available services, identifying needs and providing response. As of December 2017, the total number of functioning community centres supported by UNHCR reached 92 operating in 12 governorates, including a new centre in Raqqa.

► UNHCR Community Centre in Misyaf, Rural Hama



The UNHCR-funded community centre managed by partner SSSD in Misyaf, rural Hama opened in 2017, provides Protection services, including psycho-social support, services for persons with specific needs including medical and non-medical material assistance, legal aid, in particular in relation to birth registration and civil documentation, education services for children who dropped out of school, SGBV prevention and response, child protection services, activities supporting livelihoods including vocational training with a view to improve skills and opportunities to generate income and support to community-based initiatives as well as awareness raising around thematic issues and available services.

This community centre prides itself in particular on their simple projects to assist people with disabilities and special needs such as weaving carpets, puppetry and sewing as well as the success of local businesses set up under the startup small business grants (SSBG) programme.

Three Grants, Three Businesses, Three Lives Changed in Misyaf



Joumana, Malek and Armaz

Joumana



Joumana is a woman from Idlib who was displaced to Damascus and then to Misyaf in Hama due to the deteriorating security situation in her home town. When she heard about the startup small business grants that UNHCR is providing with its partner SSSD, Joumana submitted a project about selling towels and linens in one of the well-known shopping streets of Misyaf.

"I'm so happy that my project proposal was approved. I have two daughters, one of them is 21 years old and has psychological problems. This project is helping me generate income so I can afford her medicines. She also stays with me in the shop so her communication skills have improved dramatically", said Joumana happily.

Malek



Malek was a clothes wholesaler from Aleppo. When the security situation there became life-threatening, he closed his business and left to Misyaf. He explained "I tried to work in Misyaf as a vegetable trader but my earnings were very small. Meanwhile I was volunteering with SSSD when I heard about the startup small business grants programme supported by UNHCR".

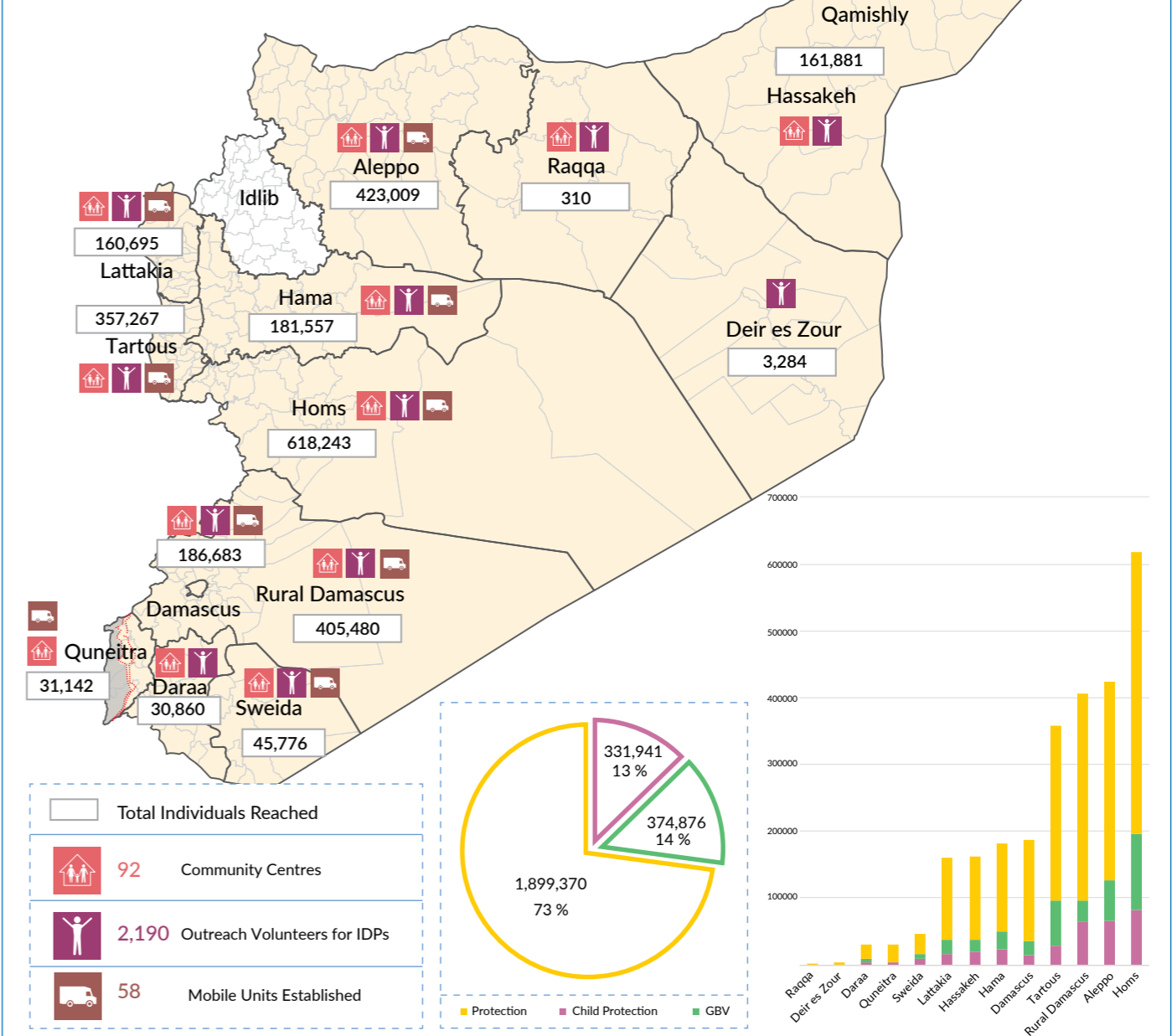
Malek followed a one-week business course and then applied for a grant to open a supermarket. "Every day, my situation becomes better. I recently managed to take the franchise of Comet tissues and Lamerada detergents. I'm the only one in Misyaf who is distributing these products to retailers here", said Malek proudly.



Armaz used to live in Akraba in rural Hama and had to flee to Misyaf with her family due to the hostilities. She studied sewing in a vocational training centre and it was there she heard about the UNHCR Start-up Small Business Grant (SSBG) "I applied to get the grant because the financial situation of my family is not good as I have a sister who is paralyzed", said Armaz.

When UNHCR and its partner SSSD approved Armaz's project proposal, she received all needed sewing equipment "I managed to rent a shop in addition to getting all necessary tools to tailor clothes and sew school uniforms and bags. I'm so thankful to UNHCR and SSSD for this assistance which has changed my life", said Armaz who was delighted to have her picture taken in her new shop.

2,606,187 Individuals Reached by Protection & Community Service Interventions in 2017



Outreach Volunteers (ORVs)

The outreach volunteers' programme is essential as it empowers persons of concern and enables them to have an active role in their communities. The outreach volunteers, is an effective tool in mobilizing and outreaching communities, identifying protection risks and providing the needed support.

They are selected from within the concerned communities according to the Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) principles. Their role is not only limited to reaching the IDP population, but also to ensure their participation, identify their vulnerabilities, advocate for their right in having access to the humanitarian services, explore local capacities, provide support to persons with specific needs, disseminate information and raise awareness.

All ORVs are trained on basic protection concepts and about their particular role in the community, while the ORVs with relevant qualifications are selected and trained in order to function as focal points and first responders on PSS, SGBV, child protection and legal aid. They also play an essential role in capturing any new trends and/or protection risks among the various communities such as school drop-out, SGBV, and displacement patterns, which in turn helps UNHCR to design its prevention and response activities.

The total number of ORVs stands at 2,190 volunteers in 13 governorates by the end of the year. Many of these volunteers often get professional opportunities in the humanitarian field after they become equipped with the needed skills and knowledge that are being provided during their experience as ORVs.



Community-Based Initiatives (CBIs) and Group Community-Based Initiatives (GCBIs)

UNHCR Syria recognizes the important role of CBIs in mobilizing communities to participate in responding to some of the needs identified by them. The communities involved in these initiatives are in charge of designing, managing, implementing and monitoring their own initiatives. UNHCR supports these CBIs through the provision of materials, guidance and tools to facilitate the implementation of small projects designed by displaced communities themselves within an agreed timeframe.

In 2017, UNHCR supported 619 community-based initiatives (CBIs) and 29 Youth group CBIs in 11 governorates benefiting about 401,040 persons from the different age groups, genders and backgrounds. Through these programs, UNHCR helped communities to identify particular protection concerns and to develop and implement activities in order to address them, thereby empowering communities to take an active role in sharing responsibility. The CBIs included among other activities the creation of self-managed kindergartens, collective farming projects, home-based schooling, producing schools uniform, renovating public gardens and conducting basic rehabilitation. The Group CBIs focused more on youth participation and engagement, and entailed projects such as job fair targeting university students from the IDPs, empowerment workshops, WASH, medical services offered by young doctors, advocacy through media about child protection and SGBV, support to young inventors, in addition to activities promoting dialogue and social cohesion.

► Ziad's Football Initiative Engaging Displaced Youth



Ziad Katroun, 45, fled his home- town in Rural Damascus five years ago eventually ending up staying in the Pioneer Shelter in Sweida City. When he noticed that many of the children in the shelter were doing nothing he talked to a UNHCR outreach volunteer about what could be done. Subsequently, after getting advice he decided to propose a community-based initiative in the shelter to train youth on football. "I used to be a football player and a coach in many clubs in Damascus. I noticed that youth in the shelter were sitting bored all summer. So I thought the best way to keep them busy in a healthy manner is to establish football teams for teenage boys and girls", said Ziad.

Two-hour sessions were organized three times a week for 80 displaced adolescent girls and boys mainly from Rural Damascus, Daraa and Idlib. UNHCR through its partner the Syria Trust for Development provided the uniforms, football materials and the preparation of the site while Ziad provided the coaching and organising. "I'm very happy about the results. These youth recently participated in an important game with a well-known football team in Syria and won the game six goals to two. These youth are facing the crisis with love", said Ziad with enthusiasm.

Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)

UNHCR supports small local organizations through the Community-Based Organizations programme (CBOs) which aims at funding and building the capacity of local organizations to provide protection related services to UNHCR persons of concern. In 2017, UNHCR through its partners, trained 44 local organizations and funded 18 CBOs located in nine governorates, including areas not covered by protection services.

The funded projects were about establishing vocational training centres by linking vulnerable members to the job market covering: food industry, agriculture and farming and skills development. Other CBOs were about establishing a physiotherapy centre, PSS and family counselling centre, learning centre to persons with visual disability, education centre for children dropouts, a specialized centre for children with specific needs, and development and community mobilization centres. Through these, the CBOs were able to support 5,815 members from the IDPs and the most affected populations.

Prevention and Response to Sexual and Gender Based Violence

Due to the crisis and large-scale displacement in Syria, many norms regulating social behavior have been weakened as were traditional community protection systems. This has led to increased levels of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), in many parts of the country which, however, remains largely underreported due to stigmatization, shame or fear, lack of specialized services including safe houses, social acceptance and impunity of perpetrators. The majority of SGBV survivors were identified through awareness sessions and outreach volunteers. Each Community Centre is supported by one staff fully dedicated to SGBV prevention and response services to ensure timely identification and proper follow-up for survivors of SGBV, including referral to services provided outside the Community Centres.



UNHCR and its partners identified and supported 7,139 survivors of SGBV through case management in the Community Centres and built the capacity of 813 frontline workers, social workers and gynecologists through workshops and sessions on the basics of SGBV, case management, clinical management of rape, and facilitation of awareness activities. Furthermore, 8,832 awareness sessions addressing 215,419 IDPs were conducted in collective shelters or through the Community Centres in different governorates. UNHCR partners also established women committees to enhance the role of women in the decision making process and in designing activities to address their needs, with 70 women committees established during 2017.

Child Protection

Children in Syria continue to be exposed to a wide range of protection risks including family separation (resulting in unaccompanied and separated children), school drop-out, child marriage, child labour, exploitation, physical and emotional abuse, injuries and mutilation by the effects of hostilities resulting in disabilities and child recruitment by armed groups. As a response, UNHCR along with 19 national and international NGO partners working in 11 governorates, provided a package of child protection activities through 92 community centres. The bulk of the child protection activities included case management of children at risk, awareness raising activities on child protection concerns, child-friendly spaces and recreational activities, as well as community-based child protection activities. In terms of recreational services, 464,275 children benefited from social and recreational activities conducted in community centres, child-friendly spaces, schools and other outreach activities. In addition, 12,882 awareness raising sessions were conducted targeting children, caregivers and community members. Through these interventions, children exposed to protection risks were identified from among the IDPs, returnees and host communities, and referred to a comprehensive case management process conducted by trained child protection case workers/managers. A total of 15,222 children exposed to various types of protection risks were assessed and assisted through case management. Regular counselling and assessments were conducted for children at risk to ensure their well-being and to respond to their specific needs directly or through referrals.



In order to increase community involvement and ownership in mitigating child protection risks and increasing protection provision for children, UNHCR along with its partners, and in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, has established and continues to support 138 community-based child protection structures in various locations across the country (shelters, schools and community centres in 11 governorate), namely children clubs and child welfare committees. By the end of 2017, 92 children clubs and 42 child welfare committees were established.

To improve the response to child protection concerns, UNHCR and its partner IMC conducted 30 training sessions for 748 partner and governmental staff in various governorates. The training sessions focused on the basics of child protection and PSS, child protection in emergencies, case management, community-based child protection approaches, interviewing techniques, the inclusion of children with disability and awareness campaign methodologies.

Education

In Syria thousands of schools have been damaged or destroyed or have been used as shelters for displaced persons. It is estimated that 6.1 million children and adolescents are in need of education assistance, including 1.75 million children who dropped out of school.

Education activities remain high on UNHCR's protection agenda to promote access to education and to prevent children from resorting to harmful coping mechanisms such as child labor, early marriage and recruitment into armed groups. The approach of UNHCR continues to be closely linked to the community participation and mobilization activities, and the education interventions were in line with the "No Lost Generation" initiative which was launched by a consortium of partners in 2013, placing education at the centre of the response in Syria and articulating concerns about the possible 'loss' of a whole generation of children, adolescents and youth as a result of the effects of displacement. UNHCR activities include remedial education programs, catch-up classes and other accelerated learning programs as well as the rehabilitation of schools and the provision of training for teachers in public schools on child protection and PSS.

In 2017, UNHCR partners conducted technical assessments of the selected schools for rehabilitation. Moreover, through the network of Community Centres, 168,053 vulnerable students benefited from remedial and catch-up classes, accelerated learning programs and supported the re-integration into the public education system, in addition to summer camps.



Legal Aid

With 6.1 million displaced in Syria, large numbers of people have lost their personal documents such as identity cards and family booklets. In addition, many children are being born in areas where they are not registered due to lack of services, access constraints or insecurity. The lack of personal documentation has serious protection implications as it impacts on freedom of movement, access to safety, basic services (such as health and education), humanitarian aid and livelihoods, and may result in statelessness, harassment, extortion, exploitation and detention.

UNHCR in cooperation with its legal partners SARC, The Syria Trust and DRC provided the affected populations with legal counselling, assistance and representation before the competent authorities and courts to facilitate the



re-issuance of critical documents that have been lost or damaged as well as on other legal matters including HLP, SGBV and child protection. In 2017, UNHCR provided legal aid with the assistance of 169 trained lawyers and 62 legal ORVs to 125,542 IDPs and affected host community members. In addition, 79,824 persons benefited from awareness raising sessions on different legal matters.

Furthermore, three training activities were conducted by UNHCR on issues related to international protection, legal framework for refugees' and IDPs' protection, UNHCR legal aid programme, core principles for humanitarian actions and the code of conduct. The trainings were attended by 151 newly recruited lawyers and ORVs as well as partners' administrative staff and coordinators from all governorates.

► UNHCR Organizes First ever Inter-Agency Workshop on Civil Registration and Civil Documentation Support in Syria



In November, UNHCR organized the first inter-agency workshop on civil registration and civil documentation support in Damascus for humanitarian actors involved in relevant activities, since this is a key issue affecting fundamental rights of the IDPs. During the workshop, UN agencies (including UNHCR staff from neighboring countries) and international and national NGOs took stock of the Government of Syria initiatives and support provided by various actors. Participants considered the relevance of civil documentation issues in a range of areas, since the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) had identified lack or loss of civil documentation as a major protection issue reported by 83 % of communities surveyed. Participants examined the international and domestic legal frameworks; the impact of civil registration/documentation issues on IDPs, Syrian refugees abroad and returnees, as well as the need for action in this regard.

In this regard, the humanitarian actors started formulating a draft action plan covering wide ranging issues – advocacy and support to enhancing civil registration/documentation procedures (including accessibility and affordability), ensuring legal status and confirmation of nationality, upholding key return principles (voluntariness, safety, dignity, non-discrimination, sustainability); facilitating housing, land and property and access to services, assistance and livelihoods; focusing attention on issues of family unity, women, children and youth; and looking at specific issues in contested areas. With a view to enhancing coordination, the workshop agreed on the need to establish a civil documentation working group, which UNHCR and NRC offered to co-lead. A separate half-day workshop was held with the 16 member Government delegation led by the Assistant Minister of Interior for Civil Affairs and including also the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, Interior, Justice, Social Affairs and Labour, and National Reconciliation to further enhance cooperation and coordination.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS)

The psychological needs of population in Syria are still on the rise due to the prevailing extensive stress factors linked to the extended crisis and its effects having a serious impact on the psychological well-being of the majority of people, and resulting in the insistent need for sustainable services of mental health and psychosocial support. UNHCR provided these services through 15 partners in 11 governorates through community centres, mobile teams and team of thematic outreach volunteers, as well as through its six primary health care services in Damascus and Rural Damascus governorates.



In total, 68,351 IDPs were provided with PSS case management services, and/or group counselling sessions in 2017. A total of 8,202 IDPs who suffer from severe mental disorders were referred to specialized MHPSS services carried out by psychotherapists and/or psychiatrists. In addition, 773,793 persons of concern participated in 48,257 social and recreational events and awareness sessions such as art, drawing, dancing, interactive theatre, and psychodrama. These social and recreational events exceeded the target (336,541) by 176 %. In addition, 1,616 school teachers have been trained on the basis of PSS ToT training, they also received training about MHGAP, and life skills.

There were also several capacity-building activities that took place during 2017, including specific rehabilitation trainings for 74 rehabilitation focal points in the community centres, and three PSS training on narrative exposure therapy, family based intervention and PSS case management for 61 PSS case managers. UNHCR worked on enhancing the coordination and standardization of MHPSS programs through the active participation in the technical working group for the MHPSS. In 2017, UNHCR's partners provided different types of medical and general in-kind assistance to address identified needs. Eligibility was based on vulnerability criteria and/or medical conditions. 68,862 individuals with specific needs benefited from this programme with the aim of reducing the risks they were facing and preventing their resort to harmful coping mechanisms.

UNHCR continued to support 654 children with developmental delays through its partners by implementing the special home-based rehabilitation programme. In addition, the specific needs of 4,502 older persons were addressed through the home-based care attendants' programme in Homs and Hama governorates.

► Behavior Therapy Changes Karam's Attitude



Em Salem is a widow with two children aged seven and five from Sweida, having just lost her husband few months ago. "My husband was playing with the children at night and we were all happy. In the morning, he felt pressure on his chest and passed away before we even managed to reach the hospital", said Em Salem sadly. She continued "Salem, the eldest boy became very aggressive after the death of his father. He started to swear all the time and hit his brother, never once apologizing. Even his exam marks went down".

A relative of hers who is a volunteer with UNHCR partner Baraem advised the mother to enroll her son in the activities supported by UNHCR. Subsequently, he had behavior therapy sessions, sometimes in the presence of his mother as well as group sessions, SGBV awareness and participated in the child friendly space activities in the Baraem community centre. After four months participating in PSS activities Karam's attitude changed. "He even received an appreciation certificate from his school and he has stopped bullying his brother. I'm sure that his father will be proud of him now", said Em Salem with a smile on her face.

CRIs



In 2017 UNHCR in Syria reached more than **3,500,000** vulnerable people with at least one Core Relief Item in 14 governorates

Core Relief Items (CRIs) sometimes known as Non Food items (NFIs) are items other than food used in humanitarian contexts, when providing assistance to those affected by natural disasters or crisis. When people are displaced they become vulnerable, often fleeing and losing everything, including their homes and supportive social networks. In addition due to the cyclical nature of displacement in Syria the loss of CRIs means that the affected population often need repeated assistance. Thus distributed items often need to be replaced because they have been lost, damaged, have exceeded their life-span or were left behind during displacement.

UNHCR contributes to the protection of the displaced populations through the provision of Core Relief Items (CRIs) which assist maintaining their dignity and providing for some of their basic needs. In Syria, UNHCR's CRI kits include essential household items such as mattresses, blankets, plastic sheets, containers for water, cooking utensils and hygiene kits. In addition, UNHCR and its partners can add other items to the kits during times of extra hardship, such as rechargeable fans in very hot summers and portable heaters, rubber boots, sleeping bags and winter clothes during the harsh winters in Syria.

To fulfil the growing needs of the displaced throughout Syria who often flee their homes with nothing but the clothes on their backs and ensure that UNHCR distributes lifesaving



CRIs to as many of the 6.1 million IDPs as possible, UNHCR manages a huge logistical operation involving everything from forecasting, planning, and budgeting to local, regional or even global procurement. UNHCR tries to support the local economy and source and procure some CRIs in Syria, such as sleeping bags and winter clothing sourced, manufactured and distributed in Aleppo. However, despite this, many goods remain unavailable because of limited production capacity due to the crisis.



CRI Kits

CRI Family kit

1 Kit = \$116

- 5 High thermal blankets
- 3 Sleeping mats
- 3 Mattresses
- 2 Jerry cans
- 1 Plastic sheet
- 1 Kitchen set

Winterized CRI Family kit

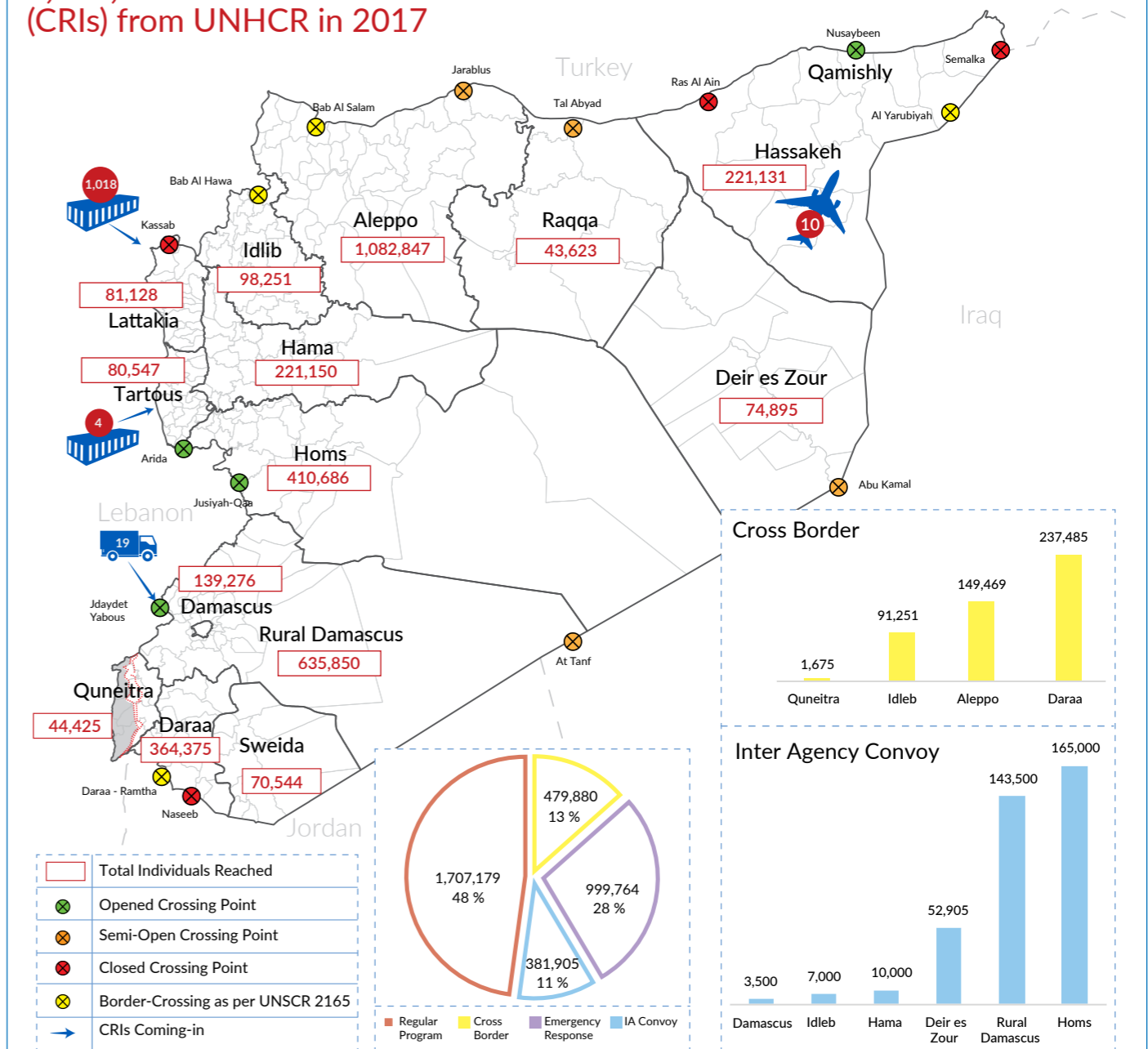
1 Kit = \$141

- Family winter clothing kit
- 5 High thermal blankets
- 3 Sleeping mats
- 3 Mattresses
- 2 Jerry cans
- 2 Plastic sheets
- 1 Kitchen set

+ Supplementary Items Targeting Those Most in Need

Solar lamps, sleeping bags, winter jackets, rechargeable fans, hygiene kits, family tents.

3,568,728 Individuals Received Core Relief Items (CRIs) from UNHCR in 2017



UNHCR Syria CRI Response 2017



In 2017, UNHCR assisted 2,359,235 individuals whose needs for CRIs items were met from inside Syria. 1,146,580 individuals were assisted with emergency core relief items, 1,212,655 individuals were assisted with winterization response out of whom 381,905 individuals assisted by inter-agency convoys cross-line missions. Additionally 479,880 individuals were assisted through cross border operations (240,720 individuals from Turkey and 239,160 individuals from Jordan 482,172 individuals with emergency response). However, in 2017, 3,088,848 individuals / 617,768 families were assisted with at least one CRI from inside Syria

UNHCR participated in 16 inter-agency convoys through 29 rounds, delivering multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance to

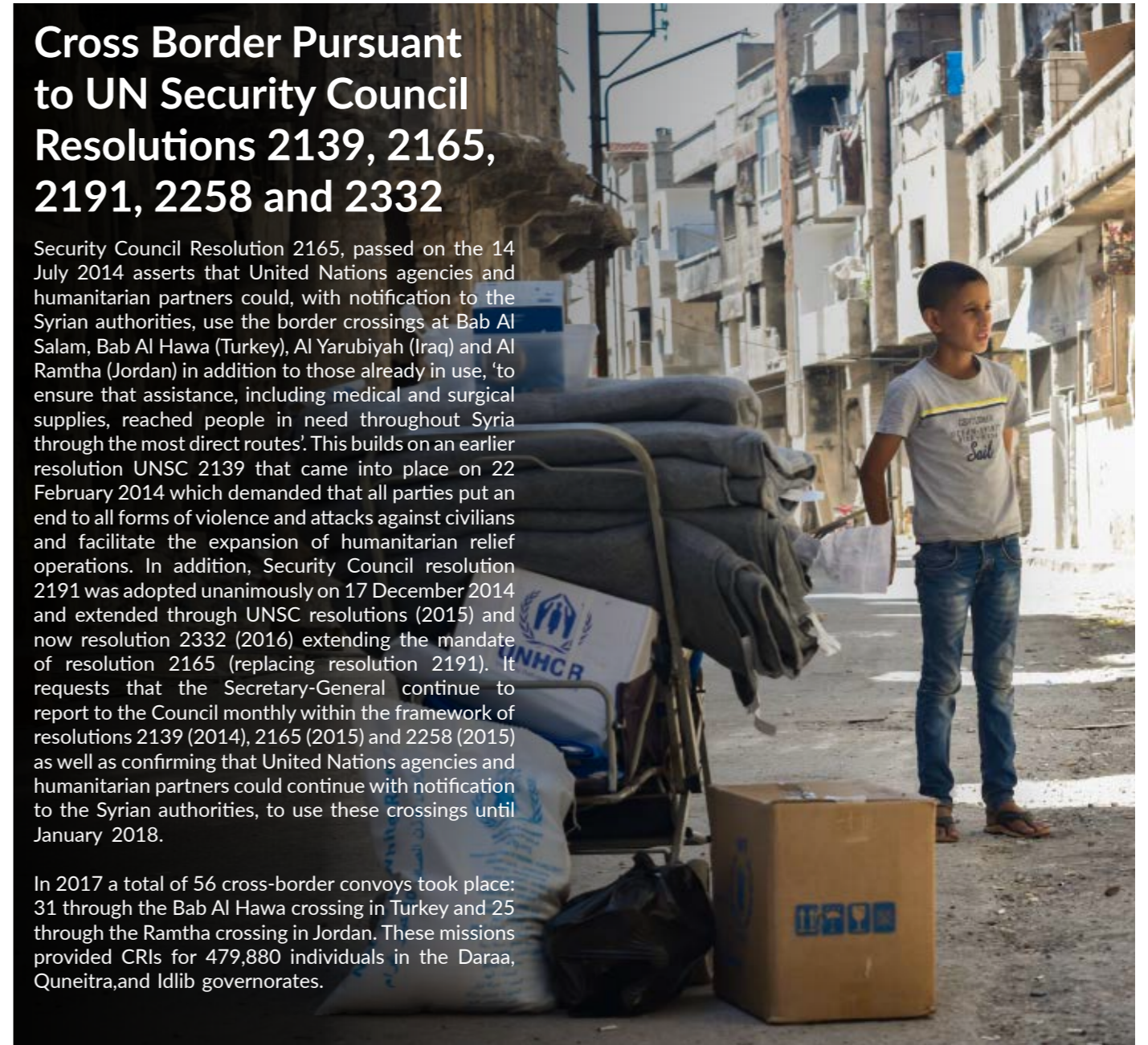
IDPs in 21 locations in five governorates (Rural Damascus, Damascus, Homs, Idleb, Deir-es-Zour). Through cross-line missions to hard-to-reach areas, 381,905 individuals were assisted. These convoys consisted of 51 trucks carrying humanitarian assistance such as food, nutrition, medicines and NFIs. UNHCR's contribution was blankets, kitchen sets, and plastic sheets, mattresses, sleeping mats, jerry cans and solar lamps.

In addition UNHCR imported 1,022 containers through Lattakia port with CRIs; tents, medicines and vehicles as well as 19 trucks through Lebanon with generators and ICT items. These were organized as part of UNHCR regular programmes and do not include the cross border operations taking place pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2165.

Cross Border Pursuant to UN Security Council Resolutions 2139, 2165, 2191, 2258 and 2332

Security Council Resolution 2165, passed on the 14 July 2014 asserts that United Nations agencies and humanitarian partners could, with notification to the Syrian authorities, use the border crossings at Bab Al Salam, Bab Al Hawa (Turkey), Al Yarubiyah (Iraq) and Al Ramtha (Jordan) in addition to those already in use, 'to ensure that assistance, including medical and surgical supplies, reached people in need throughout Syria through the most direct routes'. This builds on an earlier resolution UNSC 2139 that came into place on 22 February 2014 which demanded that all parties put an end to all forms of violence and attacks against civilians and facilitate the expansion of humanitarian relief operations. In addition, Security Council resolution 2191 was adopted unanimously on 17 December 2014 and extended through UNSC resolutions (2015) and now resolution 2332 (2016) extending the mandate of resolution 2165 (replacing resolution 2191). It requests that the Secretary-General continue to report to the Council monthly within the framework of resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2015) and 2258 (2015) as well as confirming that United Nations agencies and humanitarian partners could continue with notification to the Syrian authorities, to use these crossings until January 2018.

In 2017 a total of 56 cross-border convoys took place: 31 through the Bab Al Hawa crossing in Turkey and 25 through the Ramtha crossing in Jordan. These missions provided CRIs for 479,880 individuals in the Daraa, Quneitra, and Idleb governorates.



UNHCR Breakthrough: First Test Convoy Reaches Qamishly from Damascus



With the closure of the Nusaybeen crossing with Turkey due to insecurity and up until recently the inaccessibility of the Hassakeh governorate by road, UNHCR emergency stocks there were dangerously low. As a result, in 2017 UNHCR had to carry out 10 humanitarian airlifts from Damascus through the WFP Logistics Cluster to Qamishly carrying hundreds of tons of aid.

However, a breakthrough came on 29 June, when UNHCR's first test convoy of three trucks carrying CRIs arrived by road



to Qamishly from Damascus through Aleppo. This comes as part of the UNHCR response to the thousands recently displaced from the Raqqa governorate. Despite many challenges and delays, UNHCR reached Qamishly in the Hassakeh governorate by road that had been inaccessible for years due to the crisis. The convoy delivered family tents, sleeping mats, high thermal blankets and jerry cans for the thousands of families fleeing the hostilities in and around Raqqa city as fighting intensified in the area.

UNHCR Concludes 2017/ 2018 Winterization Programme Exceeding its Target by 10%

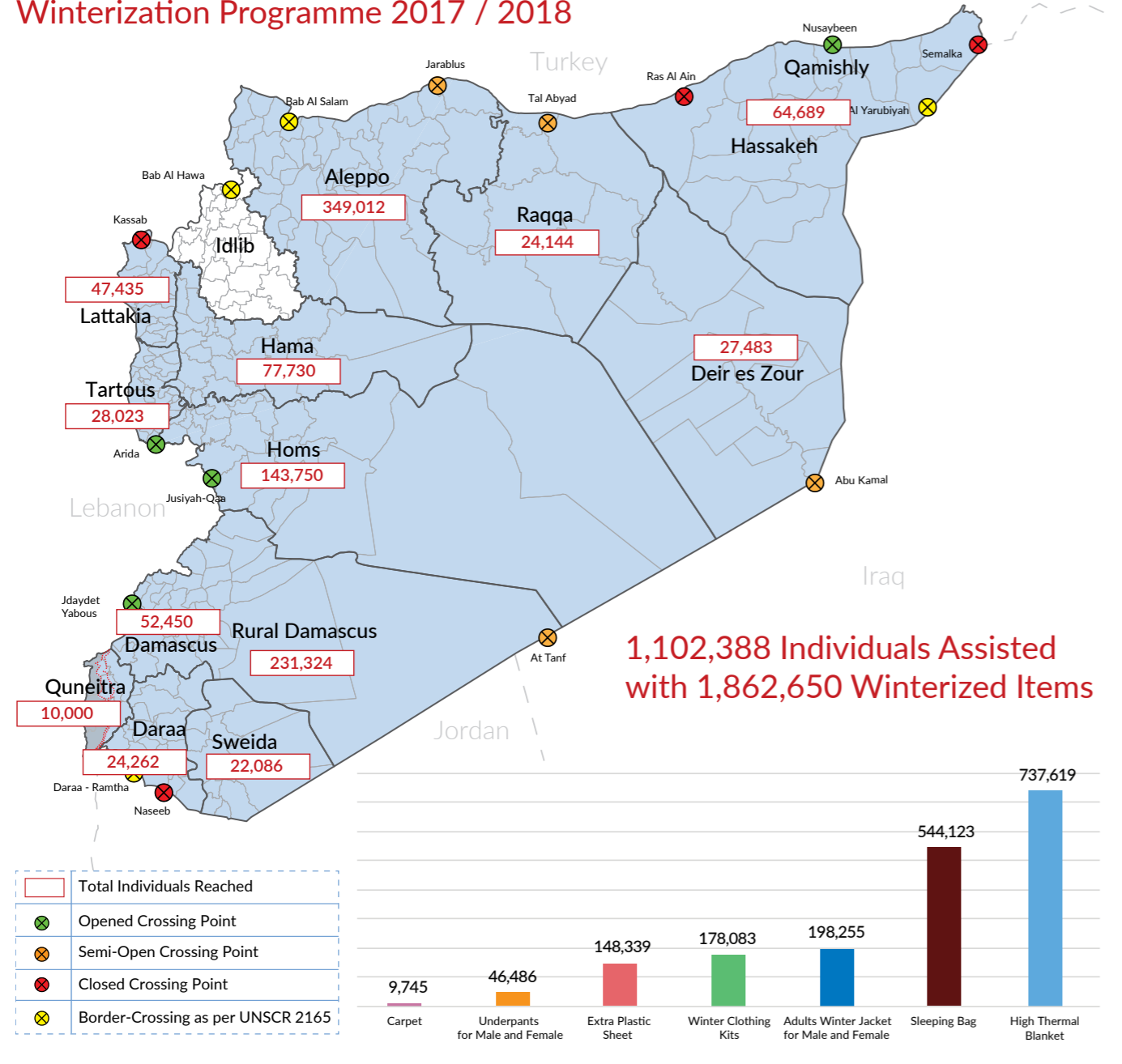


On 28 February 2018, UNHCR concluded its Winterization Programme. Since it started in September 2017, UNHCR supported 1,102,388 individuals, exceeding its target by 10 % reaching this year new governorates, namely Deir-es-Zour. Despite the fact that UNHCR initially reached its target of one million for the winterization programme, it continued providing humanitarian assistance for the winter season with the aim to reach out those who are still in urgent needs and affected by the crisis. Priority was given to the newly displaced, people in hard-to-reach areas and people with specific needs and vulnerabilities such as unaccompanied minors, the older person, female headed households, persons with disabilities or mental health problems, and individuals suffering from serious health conditions and chronic diseases.



The composition of a standard winterization kit per family was five thermal blankets, one additional plastic sheet and one winter clothing kit. However, in addition to the standard kit, there were supplementary winter items distributed based on needs, targeting mainly IDPs in skeleton and unfinished buildings which only provide little protection from weather elements. Those items included sleeping bags, stoves carpets, rubber boots, winter jackets and other items as deemed necessary. While the winterization assistance programme covered the vulnerable in most parts of the country, the focus remained on the emergency response in Aleppo and Hassakeh, where degrading displacement circumstances have been combined with unhealthy living conditions.

Winterization Programme 2017 / 2018



Shelter

During the protracted crisis in Syria 1.2 million houses have been damaged, out of which 400,000 have been totally destroyed causing millions of people to flee to official collective shelters such as schools, public buildings, tower buildings, unfinished buildings, hospitals, basements and mosques or to host families mostly from the local communities in other areas. UNHCR's Shelter Strategy was developed and finalized, in line with the Shelter Sector and in collaboration with the Ministry of Local Administration (MoLA) and aimed to design and implement adequate shelter solutions beneficiaries in the framework of a comprehensive national response and recovery plan, based on inclusive stakeholder interaction, directed to ensure response to emergency needs as well as sustainability oriented recovery of communities.

Despite challenges such as security, lack of access in hard-to-reach areas, difficulties gaining approvals for projects and increased cost of shelter materials, in 2017 UNHCR together with its eight shelter partners reached 482,342 individuals throughout Syria.



During 2017, UNHCR's shelter intervention projects were broadly categorized under three main areas:

1. Provide emergency shelter response

Addressing immediate shelter needs of the affected population. This response includes the upgrade and rehabilitation of public and private collective shelters, distribution and installation of shelter kits and provision of infrastructure in IDPs camps including UNHCR family tents. Some of these included:

- 309,869 individuals benefiting from camp construction activities.
- 9,497 individuals benefiting from collective shelter rehabilitation.
- 11,192 individuals benefiting from the private shelter upgrade.
- 39,034 individuals benefiting from shelter kits.

Till end of December, UNHCR has reached a total of 369,592 individuals in Hassakeh, Raqqa, Sweida, Daraa, Hama, Homs, Lattakia, Quneitra, Rural Damascus and Tartous.

2. Transitional shelter and infrastructure upgrade

UNHCR is funding the drilling of strategic wells to provide clean drinkable water to IDPs and the host communities in Herjelah, Rural Damascus. The project is ongoing and the contractor has reached 600m depth. Once the project is completed the well will cover for the daily water needs of 30,000 individuals. In total 92,500 individuals have benefited from the infrastructure rehabilitation activity.

3. Provide long- term, sustainable shelter response

This form of shelter assistance is to strengthen the living environment for those returning to their homes. This solution is considered to be most adequate in situations where environments and contexts are stable. It includes all necessary rehabilitation to make the damaged house livable and safe and aims at helping families to settle back in their home. The damage level of the apartment/ house varies from slightly, moderate and severely damaged. Till end of December, 20,105 individuals received owner shelter support assistance to enhance the current status of their houses or apartments and allow for their return back home. The growing demand of this type of response due to the increasing numbers of IDPs returning to their homes, coupled with the vision of UNHCR to enforce the sustainable approach of its shelter programme led to the expansion of the project in other governorates such as north Lattakia, Rural Damascus and Daraa.



Challenges:

Access and safety continues to be one of the key challenges across all locations as well as limited partner capacities and the long timeframe for shelter projects.

► Afaf's Home Brought Back to Life

Afaf Al Tahli is a 45 year old woman who with her mother and sister, used to live in a small house in Bab Al Turkman neighborhood in the old city of Homs.

"I was forced to flee my home in the beginning of the crisis and traveled south to the capital where I stayed in a relative's house in Al Gizlania a small city near Damascus. However, we couldn't stay long because it was so crowded so we moved back to Homs and I rented a small house in Al Ghouta neighborhood", she tells us. Unfortunately, every few months the rent went up and her work as a seamstress was not enough to keep up with the rent, so they had to move out and go back to the family home. "The house was a wreck, everything was gone, doors, windows, even the electrical wiring was stolen" she adds. After UNHCR and its partner the Child Care Society (CCS) surveyed Bab Al Turkman neighborhood for returnees, they met Afaf and her family who were having a very difficult time without electricity or running water. "We had to walk down the street to the big water tank every time we had to cook or take a shower or even go to the bathroom" she adds.

Child Care Society in association with UNHCR started the rehabilitation work in Afaf's house, installing wooden doors and windows as well as providing the house with electricity, water and sanitation. "I would like to thank UNHCR and Child Care Society for all the work they have done, they brought my house back to life" Afaf says with a huge smile.



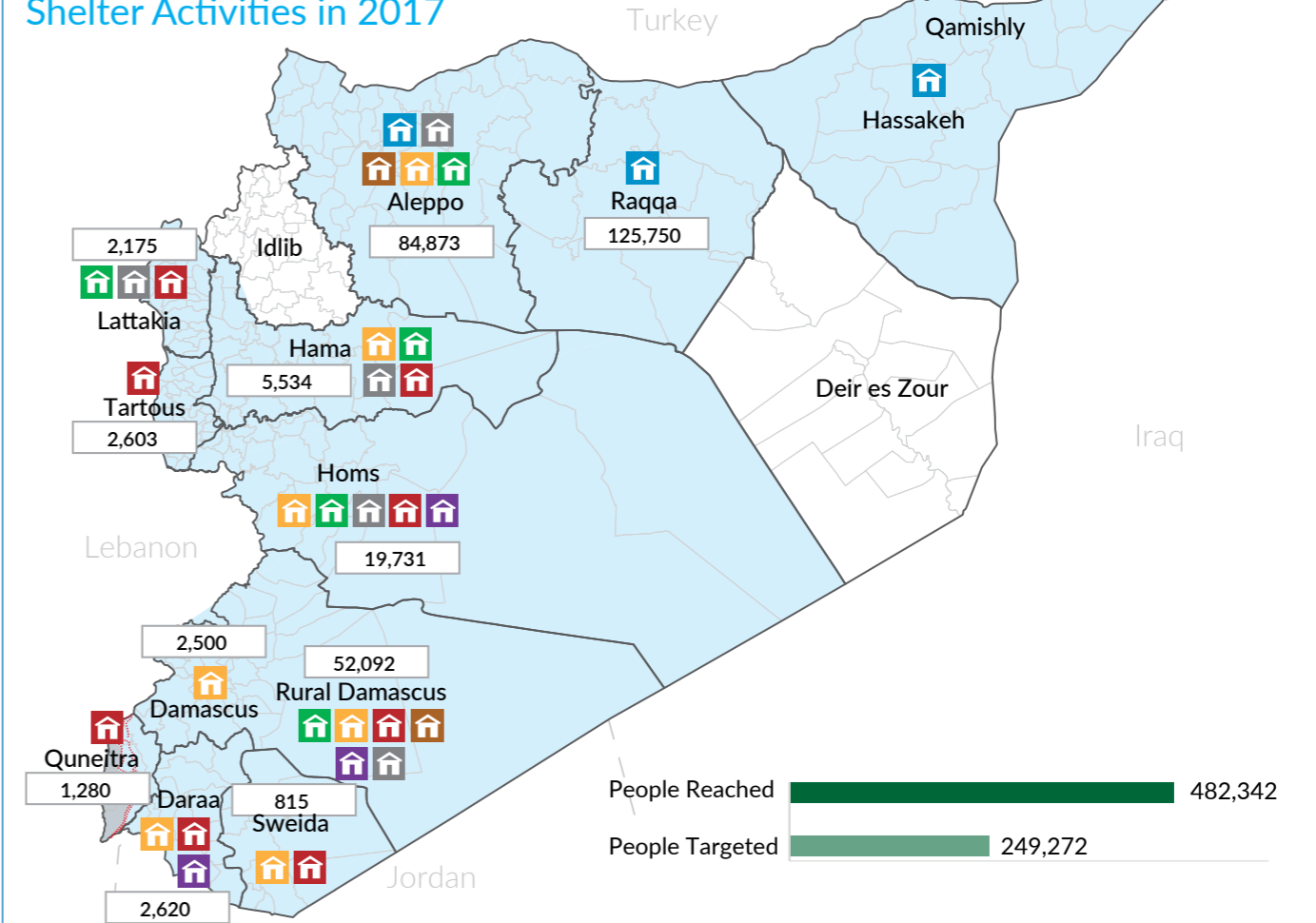
► After Years of Displacement Mohammad and Family Back Home in Homs



Mohammad, 74, and his daughter and three grandchildren were forced to flee their home in Bab Al Sibaa, old city Homs in 2014. They ended up spending most of their savings on rent and had to move a number of times when the rent became unaffordable. When the security situation improved in Bab Al Sibaa, the whole family decided to return to the area. "When we were back we found our place burnt with most items destroyed", said Mohammad to the UNHCR team.

UNHCR and its partner the Child Care Society helped the family rehabilitate their house covering the restoration of doors, windows, the floor, bathroom and kitchen as well as connecting the water and electricity supplies. "I feel so secure now with my three kids Yousra, Qosai and Baraa. We are finally back to our neighborhood and house after years of displacement. This is the best feeling a person can have", said Mohammad's daughter Yousra while breathing a sigh of relief. 'There's no place like home!'

482,342 Individuals Reached by UNHCR Shelter Activities in 2017



	145	Capacity Building: Training		39,034	Emergency : Shelter Kits Distribution
	9,497	Emergency : Public Shelter		92,500	Durable : Associated Infrastructures
	11,192	Emergency : Private Shelter		309,869	Emergency : Settlement
	20,105	Durable : Damaged Houses			Total Individuals Reached

Health



Displacement in Syria has impacted hugely on the health and well-being of both individuals and communities. Displacement, combined with the lack of access to adequate shelter, sanitation, food and safe water have undermined people's ability to prevent and respond to health-related risks. After over six years of the continuous crisis in Syria, healthcare services have deteriorated dramatically due to damaged health facilities, power outages as well as shortages of lifesaving medicines, qualified healthcare professionals, specialized medical staff, skilled-birth attendants, ambulances, equipment and medical supplies. 28 per cent of the public hospitals in Syria were reported as not functioning, and 22 per cent were reported as partially functioning, while 31 per cent of the public health centres are reported completely out of service and 22 per cent were reported partially functioning. Moreover, 11.3 million people require health assistance. The number of people seeking mental health care is also increasing especially with the increased exposure of IDPs and the affected community to traumatic events such as violence, loss of, or separation from family members and friends. Post-traumatic stress disorders, psychosomatic illness, depression and anxiety are widely spread.



UNHCR Response

In 2017, UNHCR continued to support primary health care services and emergency life-saving medical and surgical interventions to fill the gaps in the response to the population's health needs through its implementing partners including SARC, Hama Social Care and Al Tamayouz as well as national authorities, national associations and international partners to reduce suffering and minimize mortality rate in Syria. UNHCR approach to health aims mainly to protect affected communities from risks to their health and well-being. Therefore, UNHCR provides free access mainly to Primary Health Care (PHC) as most affected communities cannot afford paying for health care and medication. 545,686 individuals benefited in 2017 from the following UNHCR health services:

Outreach services

Many IDPs are unable to access available health care services due to insecure environments, long distances, and lack of affordable transport, disability or fear of stigmatization.

Through its outreach volunteers, UNHCR conducts regular checks on the well-being of affected individuals who are housed in their communities. Outreach services were provided through a team of refugees medical doctors for both refugees and IDPs. 4,488 different outreach health services were offered during 2017 which included phone counseling, home visits for assessment, assistance and follow up, individual counseling in the community centres and in shelters, as well as follow up in hospitals.



Medicines

During 2017 locally procured medicines by UNHCR valued at around 697,169 USD to treat the most common acute and chronic diseases. The medicines were donated to UNHCR implementing partners in Damascus, Rural Damascus, Hama, Homs, Aleppo, and Hassakeh. Both refugees and IDPs benefited from these essential medicines through the PHC supported clinics. Also this year UNHCR donated medical equipment to two PHC facilities of local NGOs in the south (Daraa and Sweida) which helped bridge the gaps in primary health care services for IDPs.



Emergency Referral

UNHCR provided support to life-saving medical and surgical interventions through its partners in Damascus, Aleppo and Hama. Over 4,000 individuals benefited from emergency interventions.



Primary Health Care (PHC) Clinics

UNHCR supported eight health points established in eight community centres and 14 primary health care clinics of four partners in six governorates. Since the beginning of the year, 545,686 individuals benefited from PHC services.



Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)

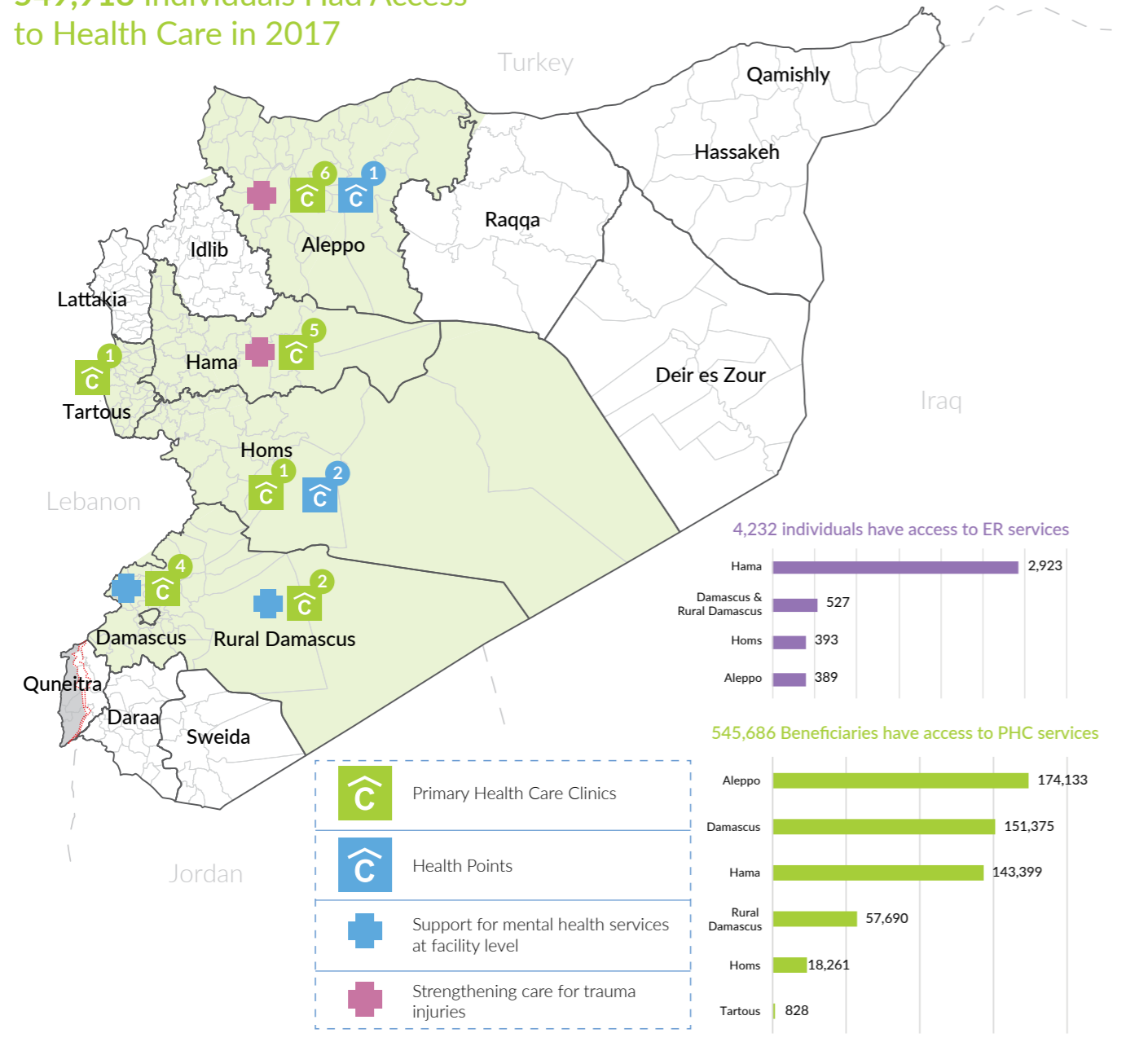
MHPSS Services included 5,983 visits to the MHPSS multidisciplinary of SARC located in the primary health care facilities supported by UNHCR. In addition an average of 1,775 IDPs were referred to specialized MHPSS services by MHPSS case managers through more than 74 community centres.



Other Health Interventions

25,421 IDPs with disabilities in 11 governorates were assisted with medical devices for permanent or transient disability such as crutches and wheel chairs.

549,918 Individuals Had Access to Health Care in 2017



Livelihood Activities

The opportunity for displaced people to work and earn a living is one of the most effective ways for people to rebuild their lives in dignity. UNHCR works to promote protection and economic inclusion of those forced to flee their homes by building their livelihoods through various market-oriented programmes.

In the context where more than 3.7 million Syrians are unemployed, of whom 2.9 million lost their jobs during the crisis, the needs for livelihoods support are huge among both skilled and unskilled IDPs. At the same time, many skilled people have either left the country, died or were compelled to engage in other professions as a source of income.

UNHCR's livelihoods and self-reliance activities aim at increasing the level of people's self-reliance and reducing their dependency on assistance by building their skills and knowledge, as well as providing access to the resources, training, assets, inputs, services and markets they need to meet their basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, social support and most importantly provide a sufficient source of income. UNHCR livelihood activities are linked to the Network of Community Centres where IDPs, refugees and host communities benefited from life skills and vocational training with the topics being determined based on focus group discussions with IDPs and on market assessments. Priority is given to female-headed households, older person persons, persons with disabilities and to other persons with specific needs. Tailored tool kits were distributed following the courses to allow participants to generate income on the basis of their newly acquired skills. Furthermore, internship programmes and on-the-job training were offered to 2,235 IDPs to complement their theoretical knowledge with practical experience.



In addition, UNHCR supported 1,069 individuals by providing families and communities with business start-up grants and training, targeting the most vulnerable profiles who have become unemployed due to the crisis, and aiming at reducing their dependency on aid, avoiding exploitative economic practices, reducing vulnerabilities and building the resilience of the community.

Livelihood Toolkits

During displacement people have to flee leaving many of their possessions behind and for tradesmen this often includes their tools which has a disastrous effect on their ability to earn a living and support their families. In order to support the protection and resilience of affected communities in Syria, in 2016, UNHCR therefore decided to procure 2,000 livelihood toolkits for plumbers and carpenters, which were distributed to tradesmen previously identified throughout Syria.

After monitoring the impact of these kits, it became clear that due to their great success in improving the income of the beneficiaries and their families, more of this type of practical assistance was needed. Subsequently IDPs assisted UNHCR in the needs identification of nine other types of livelihood kits.

Livelihood Kits

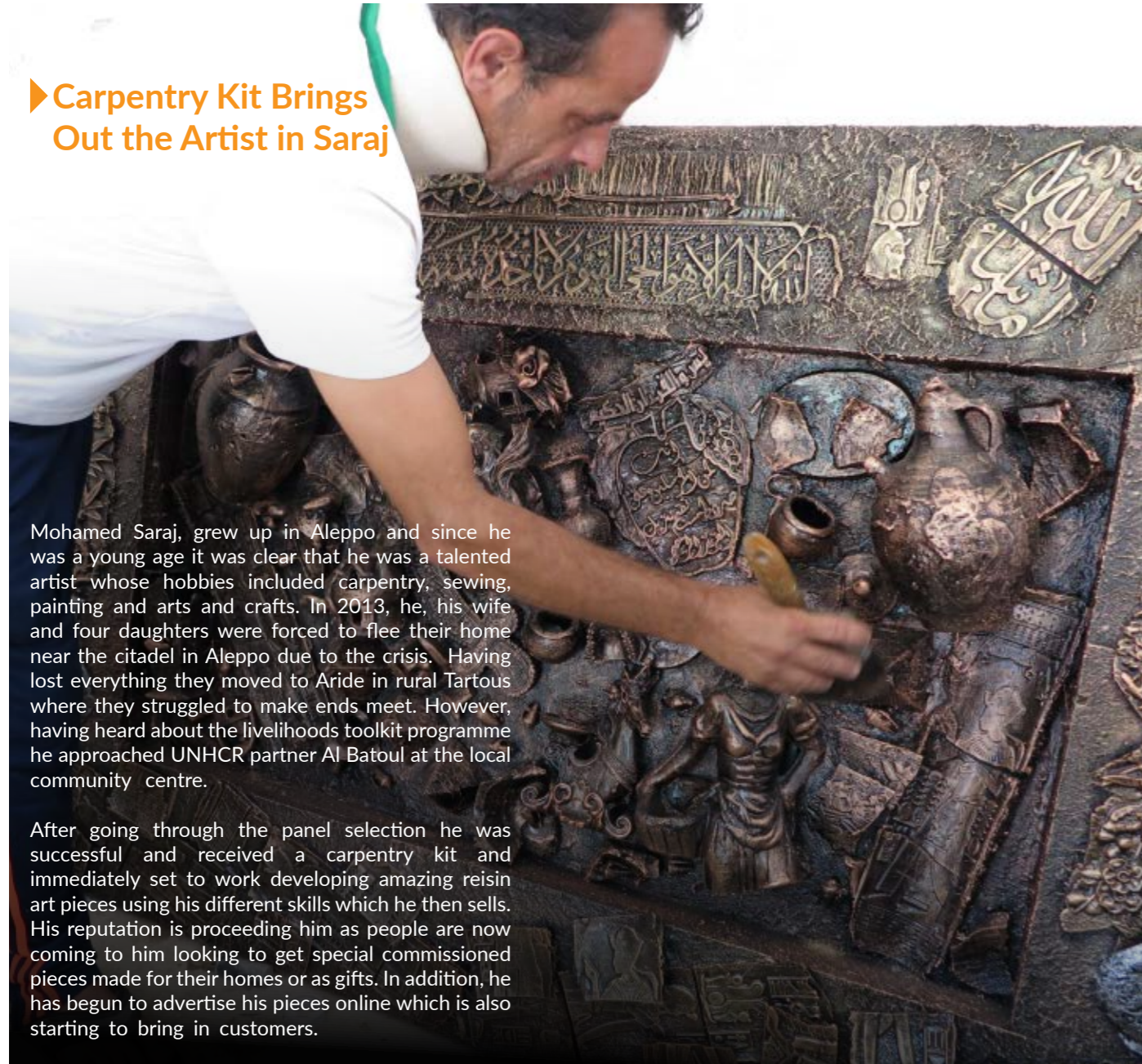
	Plumbing Kits	Carpenter Kits	Electrician Kits	Sewing Kits	Hairdressing Kits for females
	Mobile Phone Maintenance Kits	Computer Maintenance Kits	Air-conditioning Maintenance Kits	Blacksmith Kits	Painting Kits

In 2017 UNHCR distributed **11,011** livelihood kits in Damascus, Rural Damascus, Homs, Hama, Sweida, Hassakeh, Aleppo, Tartous, Lattakia, Daraa, Quneitra, and Raqaa.

► Carpentry Kit Brings Out the Artist in Saraj

Mohamed Saraj, grew up in Aleppo and since he was a young age it was clear that he was a talented artist whose hobbies included carpentry, sewing, painting and arts and crafts. In 2013, he, his wife and four daughters were forced to flee their home near the citadel in Aleppo due to the crisis. Having lost everything they moved to Aride in rural Tartous where they struggled to make ends meet. However, having heard about the livelihoods toolkit programme he approached UNHCR partner Al Batoul at the local community centre.

After going through the panel selection he was successful and received a carpentry kit and immediately set to work developing amazing resin art pieces using his different skills which he then sells. His reputation is proceeding him as people are now coming to him looking to get special commissioned pieces made for their homes or as gifts. In addition, he has begun to advertise his pieces online which is also starting to bring in customers.



UNHCR Small Start-Up Business Grant (SSBG)

UNHCR's Small Business Grants programme is geared to give a second chance to displaced people, enabling them to open business ranging from grocery stores, beauty salons, barbers, tailors, clothes shops, shoe making, car maintenance and even cow breeding. These grants are designed and provided to empower the most affected IDPs in Syria following comprehensive business training that tackles market research, project management, feasibility study, drafting of business plan and submitting projects for panel approval. The grant may be in the form of a productive asset for their business, or cash that the person can use to purchase start-up equipment and materials. Grants are only provided to IDPs who have developed viable business plans which have been approved by technical reviewers.

In 2017, UNHCR in coordination with partners have given 1,069 grants which have been in particular a great support to those who have spontaneously returned to their homes and areas after years of displacement.

Khalid Finds a New Purpose in Life

The Persons of Concern (PoCs) in Tartous and Lattakia, who live in rural and coastal areas, often have different needs than those residing in urban areas. UNHCR and partners in consultation with these PoCs have developed a number of projects specific to these rural areas. One of these UNHCR projects is beekeeping that attracted interest and support from local authorities, IDPs and host community alike. The project which began in May 2017 delivered 375 equipped beehives to 75 IDPs and vulnerable members of the host community in the most affected villages in Lattakia and rural Tartous. UNHCR monitored the distribution with one-to-one monitoring visits covering all 75 beneficiaries dispersed throughout 34 rural villages, many of whom were reached for the first time with UNHCR services. Detailed training was provided to all beneficiaries including the use of the equipment and tools provided, the bee life cycle and practical training where beneficiaries handled the bees.

Khalid Mahmoud Ibrahim is a 70 year old internally displaced man from Qatana in Rural Damascus now living in Jableh in rural Lattakia. After being identified by UNHCR in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture as a participant, and after the proper training, Khalid received five beehives with the related tools and equipment and is now producing honey. "I am very impressed with the bees, not only do they give me honey but they have given me a new purpose in my life", he says with a huge smile. "They have also taught me patience and how to be productive, thank you UNHCR for this new chapter to my life" he adds. Khalid is now working on expanding the beehives in order to produce more and increase his income.



► Mohammad: Able to Bake Again through a Grant



Mohammad Sheikh and eight of his family members were internally displaced in 2013 from the Bab Al Hadid in the Old City of Aleppo where he owned a patisserie shop. This area was severely affected due to the fighting so Mohammad had to leave everything behind; his house, his shop and had to stay at his parents' house in Al Kahwania with his wife and children. "I spent the last few years borrowing money to rent shops so that I could keep working in my trade until recently when people started to return to this area", said Mohammad.

Upon return, he found his shop had been looted and was now just an empty shell. Mohammad received an start-up small business grant from UNHCR in coordination with its Namaa which helped him restore his damaged shop and



buy baking equipment and tools such as oven, scale, trays, cookies molds, gas bottles and a generator as there is power shortage in the area. As the premises is his own he no longer has to pay rent and in order to protect the equipment he and his brother take turns to sleep in the shop. "Now that I am fully equipped and functional, customers are approaching me even from other areas in Aleppo. I had to ask my brother for assistance and not take any day off to meet the increased demand", said Mohammad proudly while inviting the UNHCR team to taste his sweets.

With the income that is coming from the business, he is now beginning to repair his damaged home and hopes that he and his family will move back in the near future.

Livelihood Training



UNHCR considers vocational training a very important protection tool as it is a practical way of learning new skills through hands-on training. By attending vocational training, IDPs develop skills for getting jobs, start small businesses and increase self-reliance that is useful not only during the present crisis but will be after as well. UNHCR supports many types of vocational training including a variety of subjects such as hairdressing, computers, and language courses, graphic design, cosmetics, knitting, sewing, phone maintenance and painting. In 2017, over 19,211 IDPs and host community members benefited from the vocational and life skills trainings organized by UNHCR and its partners.

On 18 January UNHCR signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UNDP to confirm commitment on working cooperatively throughout the displacement cycle inside Syria from emergency to stabilization, early recovery, livelihood, and resilience.

UNHCR and the UNDP are strengthening the capacity of existing vocational training centres, identifying joint projects, supporting the self-employment through start-up grants and linking people with the local markets. The two agencies agreed to formulate programmes to meet the needs of the internally displaced persons and local population as well as enhance the involvement and development of local civil society and the private sector in partnership with international and local NGOs. UNDP is coordinating with the UNHCR's existing community centres and is ensuring the referral of its beneficiaries to these centres for efficiency of services provided by each agency.

The productive units are one type of livelihood training proven to be extremely effective. They are established by UNHCR and Namaa in Aleppo to support affected women in the local market by rehabilitating an abandoned warehouse and equipping it with sewing machines. They help 100 women every six months to master the art of sewing and provide incentives to improve their economic situation as women produce items and sell them in the market such as blankets, sheets, pillows, mobile covers, jackets and others. The productive unit is playing an important role in linking, particularly the displaced, widowed, affected women, to job opportunities or assisting them in starting their own business through the small business grant programme and supporting them with the needed sewing toolkits. Similar productive units have been also established in Damascus.



From Start to Finish: Evolution of the Productive Unit, Aleppo

► Naela Sews Like a Professional

Naela is a young woman who lives in eastern Aleppo and is deaf. Her sister was working in the productive unit and one day asked the management if she could bring Naela to the centre to learn sewing. The management welcomed the idea and when one of UNHCR staff members communicated with Naela through sign language, Naela showed a lot of enthusiasm. "Only within couple of weeks Naela was able to sew like a professional. She is really talented and productive", said her teacher proudly.



► Nouri: Displaced Tailor from Erbeen



Nouri and his family were displaced due to the crisis six years ago from Erbeen in Eastern Ghouta, Rural Damascus and are now living in Sweida. "We went through multiple displacements; from Erbeen to Jeroud to Adra to Sweida" he tells UNHCR. "Hopefully our last displacement will be when we eventually move back home" he adds.

A tailor by trade, Nouri was struggling to support his family doing small sewing jobs. After hearing about the UNHCR livelihoods programme, he applied for the sewing toolkit and was successful due to his experience. "I have been working in this domain for 25 years. For a while now I had to work only on repairing clothes as I don't have my own toolkit. I'm really grateful to UNHCR and SARC for the equipment. I now can have my own workshop where I can tailor clothes and generate more income" said Nouri with excitement.

► Tent Repair in Al-Hol: A Practical Solution Supporting Livelihoods

Weather conditions can be extreme in many areas of Syria, in particular in the desert areas of the north east where a number of refugee and IDP camps are located, with tents often damaged by desert storms. However, in a practical protection response to this problem, UNHCR opened a “tents and clothing repair” workshop in Al-Hol camp in the Hassakeh governorate with a population of over 20,000, in order to create opportunities for female headed households to earn an income and support their families by fixing the damaged tents.



Gumrah, 38, a mother of nine children, twice displaced both within Deir es Zour and to Hassakeh. She used to work as a seamstress in Deir es Zour supporting her family, but fled leaving everything behind when ISIS took hold of the city, smuggling her way under heavy rain from to Deshesha town in Hassakeh, walking barefoot with her nine children to Rajm Selebi collection point, finally ending up in Al-Hol camp.

The moment Gumrah arrived in the camp, she received core relief items, a tent and food distributed by UNHCR and partners. However, nine children was a big burden so Gumrah badly needed some source of income. “UNHCR with the women committee approached me looking for someone who has skills in sewing and is able to train other IDPs on the job. This was my opportunity to live again and support my children”, said Gumrah.

Gumrah and her peers are repairing 10 tents per day, earning an income of SYP 1,000 per tent, ensuring that she and the other workers can now secure the basic needs of their children. She is currently training eight female headed households from both the IDP and refugee community on repairing tents and clothes, and they are actively supporting her in her work. “I feel happy and strong, I am happy that I am building myself and others again. We got back on our feet”, says Gumrah, with a voice full of confidence, thanking UNHCR for this livelihood initiative. Till end of the year, 300 tents have been repaired and are ready for re-use as emergency shelters.

UNHCR Expands Partnership with UNDP



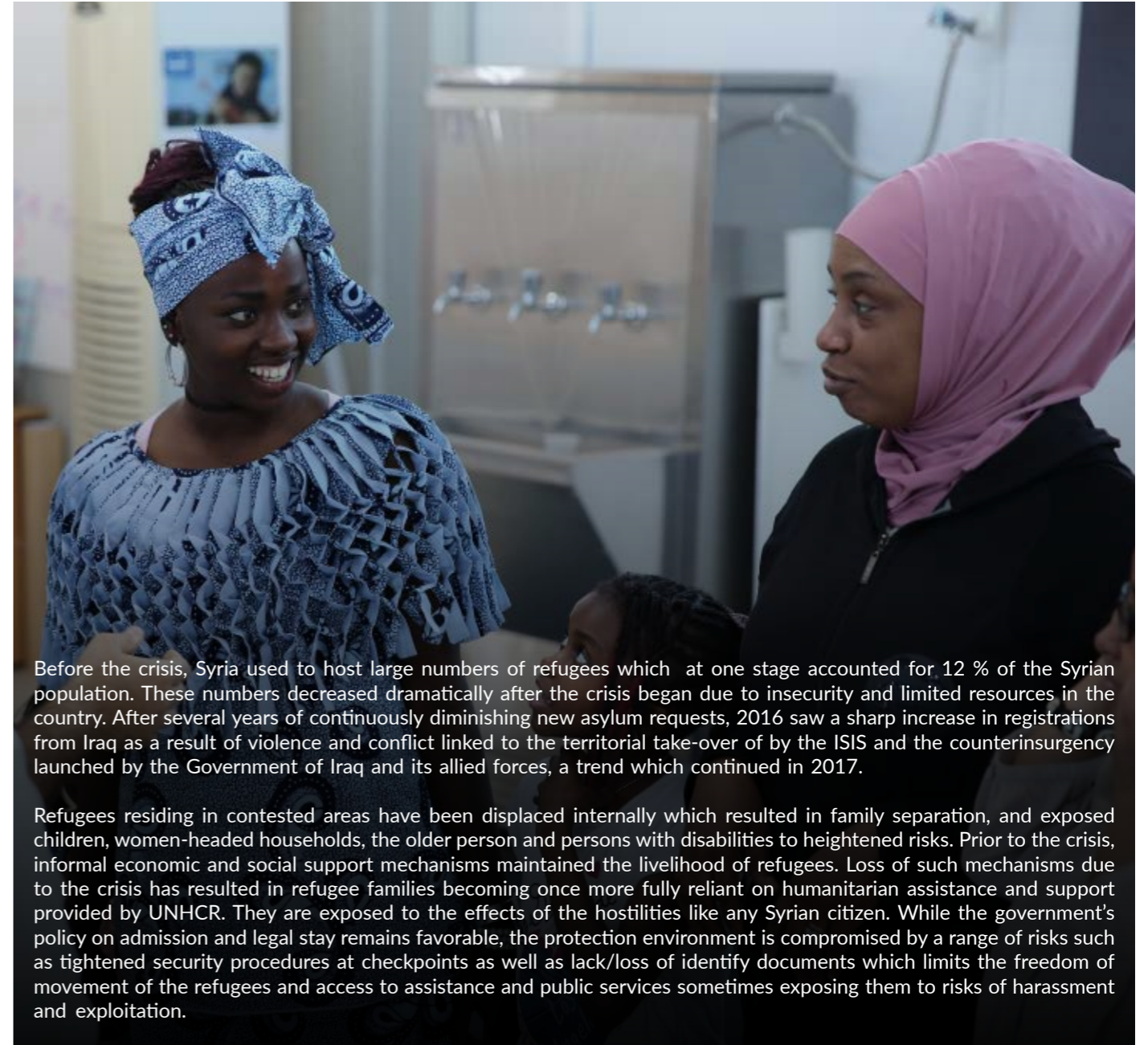
On 18 January UNHCR signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to confirm their commitment on working cooperatively together throughout the displacement cycle inside Syria from emergency to stabilization, early recovery, livelihood, and resilience.

UNHCR and the UNDP will strengthen the capacity of existing vocational training centres, identify joint projects and support the self-employment through start-up grants, and link it with the local markets. In order to advance their operational cooperation, the two agencies agreed to formulate programmes to meet internally displaced and local population needs as well as enhance the involvement and development of local civil society and the private sector in partnership with international and local NGOs. UNDP will coordinate with the UNHCR’s existing community centres and ensure referring its beneficiaries to these centres for better benefitting from the services provided by each agency.

“Resilience building initiatives will be designed in an inclusive participatory manner engaging both internally displaced people and host communities, and will provide protection services to empower their resilience to cope with the consequences of the on-going crisis and address negative coping mechanism”, said Sajjad Malik, UNHCR’s representative in Syria.



Refugees in Syria



Before the crisis, Syria used to host large numbers of refugees which at one stage accounted for 12 % of the Syrian population. These numbers decreased dramatically after the crisis began due to insecurity and limited resources in the country. After several years of continuously diminishing new asylum requests, 2016 saw a sharp increase in registrations from Iraq as a result of violence and conflict linked to the territorial take-over of by the ISIS and the counterinsurgency launched by the Government of Iraq and its allied forces, a trend which continued in 2017.

Refugees residing in contested areas have been displaced internally which resulted in family separation, and exposed children, women-headed households, the older person and persons with disabilities to heightened risks. Prior to the crisis, informal economic and social support mechanisms maintained the livelihood of refugees. Loss of such mechanisms due to the crisis has resulted in refugee families becoming once more fully reliant on humanitarian assistance and support provided by UNHCR. They are exposed to the effects of the hostilities like any Syrian citizen. While the government's policy on admission and legal stay remains favorable, the protection environment is compromised by a range of risks such as tightened security procedures at checkpoints as well as lack/loss of identify documents which limits the freedom of movement of the refugees and access to assistance and public services sometimes exposing them to risks of harassment and exploitation.

UNHCR Refugee Response



Reception and registration

The main reason for registering with UNHCR remained to be the continuous need for Protection, resettlement and financial assistance. The first point of access for assistance from UNHCR is through reception and registration facilities which are available in Damascus, Aleppo and Hassakeh. During this phase, appointments are issued, documents are collected, registration forms are projected and referrals are made. In 2017, 10,486 new individuals were registered.

However, operational challenges such as lack of access has delayed the implementation of the decision to register the 11,213 Iraqis as asylum-seekers residing in the three camps in Al Hassakeh governorate eastern Syria. In addition, UNHCR reception facilities in Syria provided services to more than 58,000 individuals who approached UNHCR offices in Syria several times during 2017 to access services that are mainly related to registration, financial assistance, community services, protection, health and refugee status determination.

Refugee Status Determination (RSD)

The RSD Unit interviewed 1,303 individuals in 2017 with 1,563 assessments drafted and 2,949 reviews undertaken to clear significant backlogs of caseloads in 2017. 1,923 decisions were issued with 654 individuals granted refugee status and 1,269 rejected. The overall recognition rate was 41 %. As of 31 December 2017, there were 711 individuals awaiting determination of their status, which is a decrease from the 2016 year-end figure of 2,007 individuals /881 families. 15 refugee status determination staff were trained in 2017. The training included individual coaching, sessions on interviewing children, processing Ethiopian, Eritrean and Yemeni cases, Fraud Prevention Training and Interviewing Techniques. UNHCR Syria continued to face difficulties in securing access to all asylum-seekers and refugees in the country, however the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) capacity to process claims pending at field office-level increased throughout the year with the opening up of some regions. An RSD mission to Tartous in September and a mission to Homs in October helped clear the majority of pending cases in those governorates. In view of the inaccessibility of the Sub Office of Aleppo innovative techniques were developed to reduce the numbers of pending cases in this governorate to by using VCT.

Resettlement

In 2017, a total of 227 refugees were submitted for resettlement consideration to the United Kingdom, Sweden, Netherlands and Australia. The resettlement needs of eligible Palestinian refugees' ex-Iraq were largely resolved with the submission of 40 Palestinian refugees' ex-Iraq to Australia by December 2017. During the year, a total of 553 refugees left Syria through resettlement and family reunification (FRU) programmes. These include resettlement departures of 406 refugees to Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Norway and Italy and departure of 147 refugees under the humanitarian or FRU programme to Australia and Canada. In 2017, 96 refugees were transferred to the Emergency Transit Centre in

Romania for onward resettlement to the UK. Digital Video Conferencing was facilitated for 102 refugees interviewed by Australia, Switzerland and Canada and biometrics were collected for 65 refugees under processing with Australia and Switzerland. UNHCR increased its efforts in expanding the use of complementary pathways, including assistance with private sponsorship programmes, family reunification and humanitarian mechanisms.

Management of refugee expectations continued to be a priority and 3,542 refugees were counselled through proactive sharing of general information and individual case eligibility outcomes, to avoid conflicts arising out of unreasonable expectations and to allow refugees to take informed decisions about their future.

Efforts to prevent and respond to fraud continued to be a priority. A one-day training for all case management staff on addressing fraud committed by refugees and asylum seekers and on conducting investigations was organized. A total of 40 staff members attended the training which was held in Damascus.



Voluntary Repatriation

UNHCR's efforts to avail refugees of this durable solution is based on respect for refugees' decision-making, taking into account the prolonged experience of limited protection space in Syria. In 2017, six refugees who expressed an interest in repatriation after initial counselling were interviewed and informed about the conditions in their country of origin and support options, in order for them to make an informed decision. After conducting the counselling and thorough assessment regarding the conditions for return, no refugees were processed for voluntary repatriation departure to their country of origin in 2017.

Legal Aid

In 2017, 1,040 refugees and asylum-seekers benefited from UNHCR legal assistance related to obtaining civil status documentation and 2,257 refugees and asylum seekers received legal assistance on issues related to residency, personal status and exit visa. Legal assistance was provided by UNHCR protection staff and three contracted lawyers through legal counselling, interventions and awareness raising. Additionally, UNHCR continued to provide legal assistance to the detained refugees and asylum seekers by conducting regular visits to accessible detention centres to assess their protection needs, conduct protection interviews and provide basic assistance. UNHCR continued to advocate for their release and sensitize the authorities on the need to respect the principle of non-refoulement.

Furthermore, upon UNHCR's advocacy with the relevant Syrian authorities, UNHCR received approval from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on regularizing the status of refugees and asylum seekers with illegal entry/expired travel documents. Accordingly, 510 out of 879 individuals have been successfully assisted to regularize their status and obtain temporary residency. The regularization process and relevant UNHCR advocacy continues to be an on-going process in order to include the Iraqi populations in Al Hassakeh governorate and the new arrivals in other governorates.

Education/Training

As of December 2017, approximately 9,040 of the refugee and asylum-seeker population are at the age of primary school while 2,295 children are at the age of secondary school. UNHCR Syria, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education, maintained its education support through four main programs: education grants, remedial classes and learning activities, scholarships for university students and counselling/information-sharing. 9,014 children benefited from the education grant, with many refugees and asylum-seekers benefiting from remedial classes and accelerated learning programs organized through the network of community centres in different governorates. UNHCR continued to support 82 refugee students to continue their university studies in different domains covering tuition fees and some living expenses. Furthermore, through outreach activities and a dedicated hotline, information/counselling were provided to refugees on school registration procedures in public schools.



Child Protection

Many refugee children are facing various challenges such as bullying in the community and school, psychosocial problems, SGBV and being required to leave school and work to contribute to family income given the difficult economic situation in Syria that impacts on refugees' ability to secure an income as well as due to the fact that refugees are not allowed to work. UNHCR continued to provide counselling and assistance to refugee children at risk through various types of interventions based on best interests of the child assessments to determine the appropriate course of action, including referrals to specialized services. In 2017, 13 best interest determination (BID) processes were carried out to facilitate the identification of a suitable durable solution for specific types of cases such as separation from family (unaccompanied and separated children), and dispute on custody and domestic violence. In addition, 42 best interest assessments (BIA) for children identified with different risks were conducted.

UNHCR partners and 110 refugee ORVs played an essential role in identifying and reaching out to refugee children at risk through home visits and the provision of recreational activities in hard-to-reach areas. They also carried out awareness raising activities on child protection in the communities. Additionally, UNHCR supported a child-friendly space within its premises as well as in one of the refugee shelters (in north east Syria) where children can safely play, learn and interact under the supervision of the outreach volunteers and partners and be involved in recreational activities. In 2017, 3,936 refugee and asylum seeker children benefited from social/recreational events and PSS activities, through mobile and fixed child-friendly spaces and outreach activities.

Livelihood Support

Due to the crisis, a large number of refugees lost their jobs were unable to secure minimum levels of financial income. Some refugees faced multiple displacements and others exhausted their savings and sold their assets. Therefore, vocational training and livelihood programs are important tools to build the capacity of refugees and reduce their dependency on humanitarian assistance. The skills obtained through vocational training allow refugees especially women, to become self-reliant and reduce the risks of exploitation. A total of 1,195 refugees participated in vocational training courses offered by UNHCR partners.

Sexual and Gender Based Violence

UNHCR staff continues to assess and follow up on the needs of survivors of SGBV and ensure adequate access to available services. In 2017, 68 new cases of SGBV were identified and brought to the attention of UNHCR. The most common types of SGBV identified within the refugee community was domestic violence, sexual violence and forced/child marriage. Following identification and counselling, survivors were referred to services relevant to their needs. In addition, complementary types of assistance were provided including monthly financial assistance, urgent cash grants, community support through trained volunteers and empowerment programs. A total of 405 awareness sessions were implemented in the refugee communities in Damascus, Rural Damascus and in Hassakeh reaching a total of 7,835 PoCs of different SGBV topics. Survivors who faced safety concerns or suffered severe psychological consequences and were in need of a comprehensive follow-up were referred to a safe house for survivors of SGBV. The Women Safe House provided appropriate assistance for 21 hosted SGBV survivors and their children such as psychosocial support, specialized PSS, medical services, vocational training, educational sessions and recreational activities

Psychosocial support

The psychological problems increased continuously within the refugee population due to the high level of stress they are exposed to.

UNHCR continued to provide the psychosocial support services to the refugees and asylum seekers in Syria throughout a network of community centres distributed in 12 governorates and supported by UNHCR. While in Al Hassakeh camps UNHCR was providing the needed services through its local partner GOPA, despite major challenges in refugees' accessibility to the services.

14,948 refugees participated in 341 social and recreational events including soft PSS activities organized in Al Hassakeh camps. Additionally, 593 refugees received direct psychosocial services by UNHCR staff and were referred to MHPSS services in multi-disciplinary clinics at SARC. The predominant psychological disorders identified were depression and anxiety, while the predominant disorder for children was attention-deficit/ hyperactivity disorder.

► Afrah and Dirsen: Outreach Volunteers in Al-Hol Camp



Afrah and Dirsen are two sisters that fled with their family from the conflict in Iraq to Al-Hol Camp in Syria. The family spent two days on the road in order to reach Rajm Slebi border crossing point at one stage unknown to them, sleeping in a minefield. "I laid my head next to a mine and slept. I only realized it in the morning when I woke up and saw the mine next to me. I was terrified," 21 year old Afrah tells UNHCR. "We came here looking for a safe space, particularly for us as women," her 20 year old sister Dirsen added.

A feeling of calm and relief washed over them as they reached Al-Hol Camp, where they had their first hot meal in a long time and spent the night in the UNHCR reception centre before receiving their tents and full NFI kits in the morning. However, the feeling of calm of relief soon turned into depression after a month as they were spending all their time inside their tent doing nothing. That all changed once their

father told them about the UNHCR community centre in Al-Hol Camp run by its partner GOPA and the services it offers for women and encouraged them to go and attend the women sessions there.

The two sisters started attending all the different activities in the community centre which included sewing, drawing, knitting or SGBV awareness sessions. Their active participation and thirst for work and knowledge caught the attention of the facilitators who talked to them about the outreach volunteer programme and its importance in establishing a bridge between the camp population and the services provided in the community centre as well as ensuring that the people of concern are involved in both the decision making process and community based solutions.

Both Afrah and Dirsen are now refugee outreach volunteers working in Al-Hol camp. "We love our work; we managed to get to know a lot of people through it," said Afrah. "We used to attend the awareness sessions, while now we are part of it," added Dirsen.

UNHCR Syria Celebrates World Refugee Day (WRD)



On World Refugee Day, held every year on 20 June, the strength, courage and perseverance of millions of refugees is commemorated worldwide. In Syria WRD was celebrated throughout the country.

In Damascus, on 20 June refugees living in Syria from over 35 different nationalities came together with UNHCR to celebrate with an open day showcasing products made by refugees, drawings, art, musical performances and sketches. The event which was attended by Dr. Mekdad, deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, the UNHCR Syria Representative and heads of a number of UN sister agencies and included a very colorful folkloric fashion show, with participants from Iraq, Sudan, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia, enthusiastically cheered on by the audience. In addition, a wonderful Sudanese wedding sketch grabbed the audience with its color, emotion and show of tradition and wedding practice. Painters drew people, calligraphers wrote visitors' names in beautiful Arabic letters, a live band from South Sudan rocked the place and after much singing and dancing everyone settled down to a nice Iftar meal.



In Aleppo, UNHCR celebrated World Refugee Day jointly with five partners; Namaa, The Syria Trust, SSSD, SARC and GOPA in activities which included a Bazaar in which refugees and IDPs' handmade items were sold in addition to recreational activities for kids, a short play, singing and an Iftar meal for the invitees.



In Tartous, activities included a fair and a bazar at Tartous Cultural Centre and an Iftar with refugees. An opening ceremony took place attended by local authorities, international agencies and local NGOs which included music from different Syrian governorates and countries, as well as sketches and songs performed by IDP children. The fair included a section introducing UNHCR services, a section informing people about the WRD, booths for partners introducing their services, games and competitions, a section displaying items from different countries and governorates, as well as a bazar for IDP and host community handmade items and food.



In Hassakeh, celebrations took place over three days in Hassakeh city, Al-Hol, Newroz and Roj camps and Qamishly. These events included singing, dancing, fashion shows celebrating the Iraqi culture, comedy plays and Iftar meals for refugees and some IDPs.

In Homs the WRD was celebrated in the SARC community centre where UNHCR organized a number of information sessions showcasing the services available to refugees in the Community Centres. In addition, there were games, drama, arts and craft as well as a number of sports events.

In Sweida, UNHCR and partner GOPA celebrated by hosting different activities aiming at integrating refugees with the IDP and host communities. These activities included a PSS awareness session on displacement targeting adults, a handicrafts session where the participants made lanterns for Ramadan, a Child Protection activity 'From Saturn to Jupiter' which focused on respect and diversity and a Health and Hygiene awareness session for adolescents which included recreational activities.



Capacity Building



There is often a misperception in relation to the necessity of capacity building in relief situations, unstable environments and emergencies. However, it has been proven that capacity building is an investment in the present as it helps communities and responders to design local coping strategies to deal with crises, as well as in the future, because it adds great value and expertise after a situation has been stabilized and displaced populations have returned home. When capacity building is not included in the response of humanitarian agencies, there will be always a risk of implementing inadequate response plans during the crisis and an inadequate exit strategy when immediate relief needs have been met.

In order to ensure that partners provide appropriate protection services to affected communities, UNHCR

invests in the capacity building of both its own staff and the staff of partners and service providers in Syria in order to provide proper assistance to vulnerable people especially those affected by displacement. For example, in the area of Protection, UNHCR capacity building promotes Protection mainstreaming mainly in the field of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Legal Awareness, Child Protection, Community Mobilization, Psychosocial Support (PSS), Code of Conduct as well as professional skills needed by humanitarian workers which would improve standards of work provided in the field.

Capacity building in the areas of Protection, First Aid, Safety, Programming, Coordination, Reporting and Information Management are just some of the trainings that took place throughout Syria in 2017.

UNHCR Organizes Emergency Trauma Bag First Responder Course in Syria



Since the beginning of the crisis, 147 humanitarian workers have been killed in Syria with many more wounded.

With a view to mitigating risk and ensuring staff members are properly trained and prepared, UNHCR implemented the Emergency Trauma Bag First Responder Course (ETB-FRC) for staff members in Syria. The primary purpose of the Emergency Trauma Bag and its associated training is to ensure that proper first responder care, life-saving tools and supplies are readily available to provide adequate emergency medical treatment to UN personnel. It has three main objectives, firstly to train participants as emergency medical first responders, secondly, to familiarize participants with the ETB and finally, to impart participants with the baseline skills necessary to respond to a mass casualty incident. UNHCR facilitated the training, where 23 UNHCR staff members attended this intensive training as well as 17 staff members from other UN agencies.

UNHCR Launches SSAFE Training in Syria



In April, UNHCR Syria Field Safety Unit launched, for the first time, UN mandatory SSAFE (Safety and Security Approach in Field Environment) training for Syria. The training was entirely facilitated by UNHCR Syria in close coordination with the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) Syria and the UNDSS training Unit. The objectives of SSAFE was to raise staff awareness safety in their field operational environments and equip them with pertinent knowledge and skills required to prevent and respond to various incidents that they might encounter in the field.

This four-day high-intensity interactive course was facilitated by UNHCR security professionals and SARC paramedics with extensive experience in field humanitarian operations. It combined theoretical lessons, demonstrations, group work, practical exercises and simulations. The curriculum was based on the Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments (SSAFE) standard modules, jointly developed by the UN System Staff College.



The modules included mission planning and convoy security, access negotiation in high risk environment, stress management and resilience in high risk environment, emergency communications and equipment, UN Security Management System, hostage incident survival, active shooter response, personal security and weapon awareness as well as first aid and cultural awareness. The final day put the theory into practice through a Syria specific field-day exercise, conducted by professional security personnel which simulated real situations that staff may encounter while fulfilling their duties and missions in the field.

Since the SSAFE was launched, 157 UNHCR Syria staff members have completed the training with 40 staff from other agencies.

Protection and Community Services Sector (PCSS) inside Syria



The Protection and Community Services Sector (PCSS) brings together protection and community services actors in Syria to ensure an effective response to the protection needs of affected population, by coordinating preparedness, needs assessments, activities and by sharing best practices and harmonized approaches to address protection challenges. The Sector promotes the centrality of protection through interventions and advocacy within the Humanitarian Country Team, and assists other Sectors to mainstream protection principles and standards in their humanitarian response.

The PCSS is led by UNHCR and currently has 62 Sector Partners that provided almost 6.56 million protection interventions/ services to persons in need. The Sector includes UN agencies, National and International NGOs. It has two sub-working groups: Child Protection, led by UNICEF, and Gender Based Violence, led by UNFPA.

The Sector continued to strengthen coordination at sub-national level, with protection and CP operational Working Groups (WGs) in major areas of operation covered by the Syria hub (Aleppo, Homs, Lattakia/Tartous, Sweida and Qamihly).

Sector Approach

The PCSS strategic priorities in 2017 contributed to all Humanitarian Response Plan Strategic Objectives, with a particular focus on the realization of Strategic Objective 2 (“Enhance the prevention and mitigation of protection risks, and responded to protection needs through supporting the protective environment in Syria, by promoting international law, IHL, HRL and through quality principled assistance”). In Particular, the sector and its sub-sectors:

- Supported the expansion of protection services where gaps were identified, including in emergency responses. This includes an expansion of the UNHCR-supported Community Centres; UNFPA-supported Women and Girls safe spaces and UNICEF-supported child protection facilities;
- Supported the increase of mobile outreach capacity to respond more effectively to sudden emergencies;
- Continued efforts to strengthen standard-settings, harmonization of practices and procedures, including mapping of services and referrals;
- Continue to support the robust response by partners in Legal assistance, counseling and facilitated acquisition of civil status documentation and expand the offer of legal support in the area of House Land and Property (HLP).
- Maintained efforts in building the capacity of first responders, communities, volunteers and personnel to provide better care and support to GBV survivors and continue to reinforce awareness;
- Stepped up the scale, diversity and quality of child protection programming at the community level in order to address some of key priority issues such as child recruitment and child labour;
- Conducting capacity building for authorities, sector partners/ protection service providers and humanitarian partners in general remained a core engagement for the Sector and its sub-Sectors.

The interventions/ services have been provided in 195 sub-districts including 1,605 communities/neighborhoods. Those include 8 UN-declared besieged areas and 150 hard-to-reach areas.

From January to end December 2017, the Partners of the Protection and Community Services Sector and its sub-Sectors carried out 6,558,192 protection interventions/services in support to persons in need.



The PCSS in 2017

In 2017, 62 members and partners of the Sector and Sub-Sectors delivered a total of 6,56 million protection interventions to support persons in need. The increase of the response has been significant with service delivery more strongly focusing on direct protection through community-based initiatives on a wide range of issues. Out of those, 32% were general protection interventions, 21% child protection, 30% Mine Risk Education and 17% GBV. 38% of overall interventions benefitted girls, 33% benefitted boys, 24% benefitted women, and 5% benefitted men.



Community-based protection significantly increased this year providing wider and deeper reach:

- 99 Community Centres (92 UNHCR-led, 7 by other Sector partners) for integrated protection services (legal aid, informal education, livelihoods training and start-up business grants, community-based primary health care, psycho-social support, GBV services, child protection interventions, in-kind assistance to address persons with specific needs).
- Outreach activities and mobile services to expand interventions, mobilise communities, consult and assess needs, inform about available services and support individual referral to services as required (2,180 ORVs (UNHCR), Mobile Units (58 by UNHCR and 70 mobile units integrating GBV in Reproductive Health interventions UNFPA).

Legal assistance

A network of lawyers provided counselling and legal aid to IDPs in community centres and collective shelters, as well as through legal clinics, particularly on issues related to civil status documentation. More than 130,000 people benefitted from this assistance in 2017.

Child protection services were provided to 1.38 million beneficiaries:

- Child Friendly Spaces / temporary CFS/Child Protection Units (171 run by UNICEF and partners), as a first response to children’s needs with integrated programming including play, recreation, education, health, and psychosocial support.
- 450,000 children benefitted from child protection and PSS group activities
- 91,511 children benefitted from case management/referral
- 772,866 children benefitted from awareness raising through contact initiatives

Risk education was provided to 1,948,646 million children throughout the country, mostly through the Ministry of Education

Gender-based violence services benefited 1,121,668 persons:

- Awareness raising activities 766,395
- Dignity kit distribution 59,419
- Non- specialised psychosocial support activities 219,518
- Case management for survivors 20,533
- Legal services for survivors 5,346
- Referrals of survivors 19,328
- Specialized psychosocial support (PSS) for survivors 29,452

Awareness raising on various protection issues through contact initiatives benefited 2,346,565 people, of those:

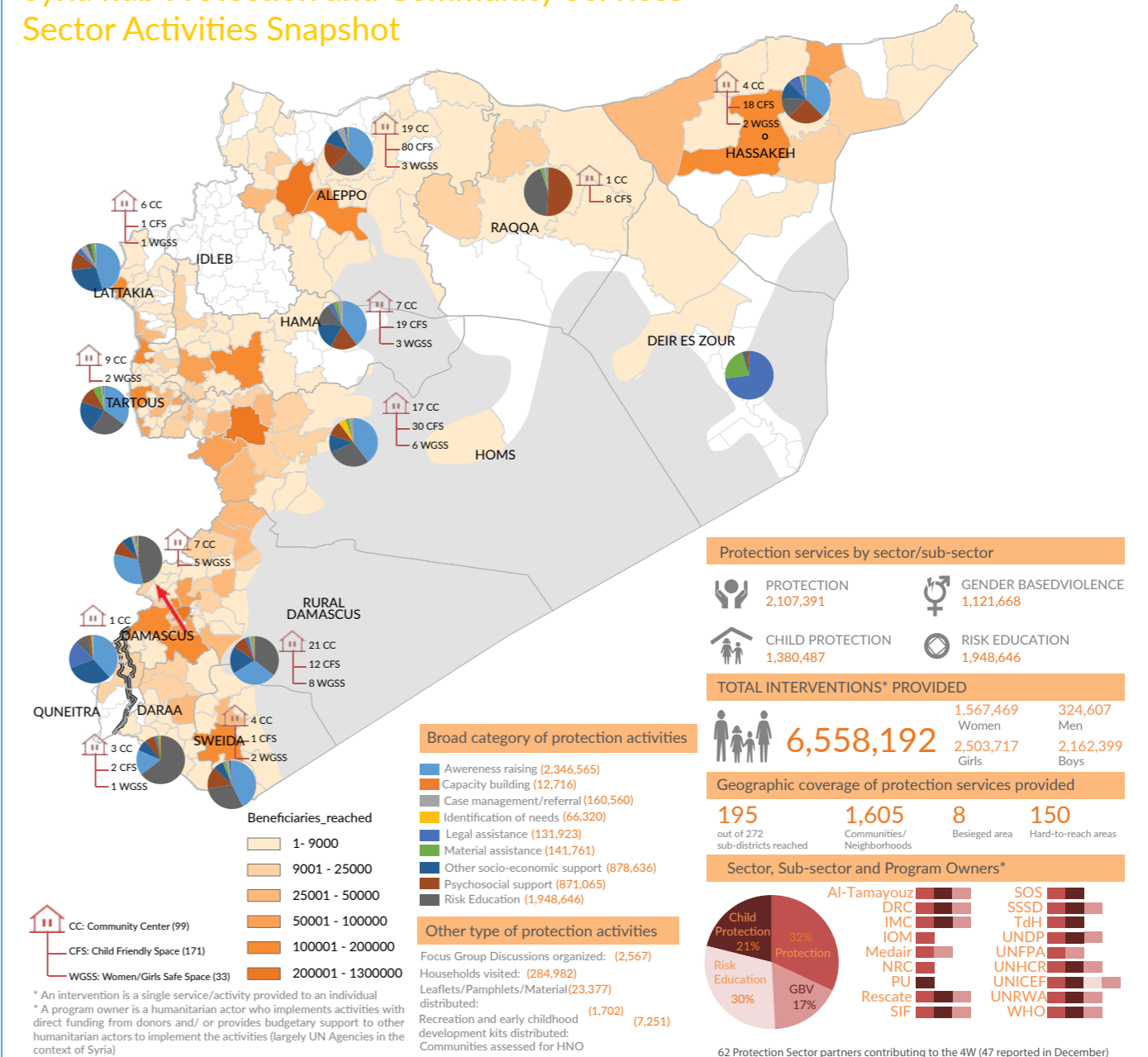
- 807,304 on general protection.
- 772,866 on child protection.
- 766,395 on GBV.

Technical coordination for cross-cutting issues relevant to the PCSS

- Technical Working Group on Housing, Land and Property (HLP) under the leadership of UNHCR, UN-Habitat and NRC gathering expert actors from the Protection, Shelter, Early Recovery Sectors to identify, analyse and provide advice and technical support on the emerging HLP issues and concerns.
- A Psychosocial Support and Mental Health (MHPSS) Task Force co-chaired by UNHCR, WHO and IMC to address specific aspects in this technical domain.

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Syria hub Protection and Community Services Sector Activities Snapshot



NFI Sector



For more than six years, the NFI sector has been responding to the needs of the displaced, hosting and other affected population inside Syria. In 2017, it was estimated that around 5.8 million Syrian people are still in need of non-food item (NFI) support as they continue to suffer the effects of prolonged insecurity and displacement. Collectively, the sector partners continue to provide life-saving and sustaining assistance in flexible and targeted approach while adhering to appropriate standards of humanitarian support. As of December 2017, around 7.5 million people were reached with at least one NFI. Of this figure, around 2.2 million people were considered adequately served with core and supplementary items. As the sector aims to shift from the usual blanket approach of distribution to tailored support targeting the most vulnerable members of the Syrian population, the 2.2 million adequately served people is 37 % lower than the 2016 overall reach which is around 3.5 million. While the people reach has reduced, the distribution ratio of item per person has increased from an average of 2 in 2016 to 3 in 2017 ensuring that the basic NFI needs of Syrians have been adequately addressed. The reduced reach can also be attributed to a reduced number of communities being covered given the fact that the sector partners have started to increase its support to returning population to their habitual residences. Out of the 295 reached communities, 94 of them (31 %) are communities with returnees. Lastly, the declining number of the sector partners that provide NFI assistance can also be considered a contributory factor of this year's overall reach. Apart from the sector regular programming, the delivery of NFI support to hard-to-reach and besieged communities through inter-agency convoy continued.

Of the estimated 2.2 million assisted people, around 766,000 of them (34 %) were located in 70 out of the 2,701 hard-to-reach communities and around 51,000 people (2 %) were from 9 out of the 34 besieged communities. Constant advocacy to improve access and open new land routes enabled partners to reach more beneficiaries in these communities in 2017. Along with the provision of regular NFI support, seasonal support continues with a focus on locations affected by severe weather conditions. In 2017, around 1.2 million people who are mostly located in Aleppo, Homs, and Rural Damascus governorates were served with basic winter support.

This is 201 % of the 825,000 total target people of winterization assistance. Collectively, the partners distributed around 2.2 million winter items most of which are high thermal blankets and winter clothing kit. Cash and voucher programming also continued as part of the assistance shift toward more sustainable solutions that support the resilience and early recovery of the affected communities. In 2017, around 293,000 displaced persons received cash-based assistance from International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) and UNRWA. The sector has also ensured an adequate and effective contingency planning to respond to sudden and cyclical displacements. Stock and pipeline monitoring have been strengthened to address acute and chronic needs and enable a tailored flexible response. By the end of 2017, the sector members prepositioned stocks of 4.6 million NFIs to respond to any emergencies.

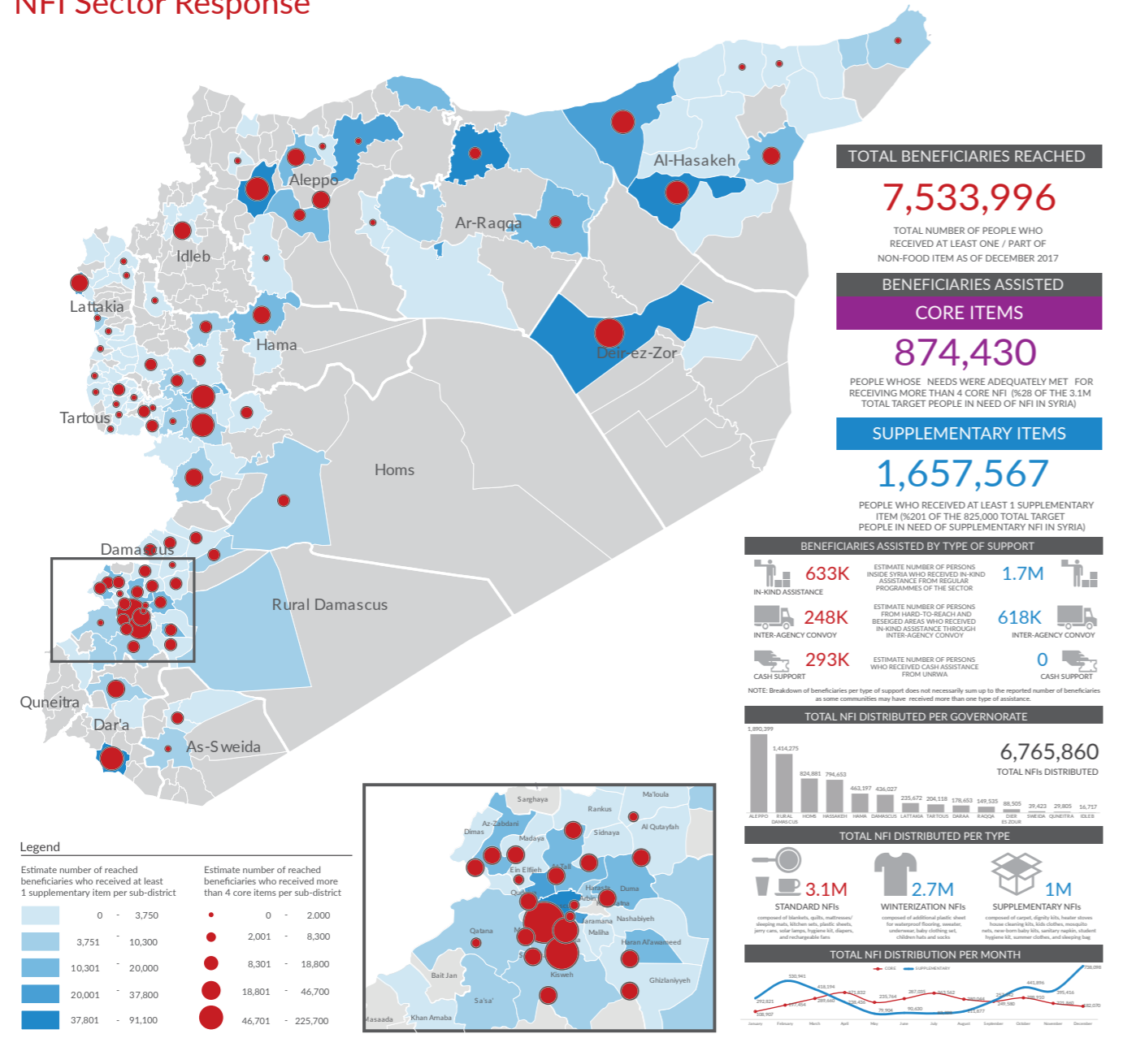


Gaps & Challenges

- Limited access to population in need especially in besieged and hard to reach areas.
- Bureaucratic constraints.
- Lack of reliable information and credible assessments.
- Lack of clear monitoring approach and reports.
- Limited data (and/or access to/sharing of data on needs).
- Limited beneficiaries' data-base being made available to actors leading to the inability to properly monitor and verify assistance delivery.
- Limited capacity (training needs, skills, knowledge) of local partners.

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NFI Sector Response



Shelter Sector



UNHCR co-leads the Shelter Sector together with Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment (MoLA). In addition to UNHCR and MoLA, the other sector partners are ACF, ADRA, AL Aoun, Al Birr, Al Ihsan, Al Taulouf, Child Care Society, DRC, GOPA, IOM, MEDAIR, NRC, OXFAM, PUI, Rebuild Syria, RESCATE, SARC, SIF, The Syria Trust, UN-Habitat and UNRWA.

Shelter Facts in Syria

- 13.1 million people in Syria require humanitarian assistance.
- 4.2 million people are in need of shelter assistance of whom 1.9 million people are in acute shelter need.
- 740,000 people were targeted with shelter assistance in Syria out of whom 303,385 people were targeted with shelter assistance by the Syria Hub.

In 2017, the Shelter Sector and the Syria Hub assisted 511,973 individuals through different shelter interventions.

Response

The shelter sector partners respond to the identified shelter and infrastructure needs of different population groups such as IDPs, returnees and non-displaced population according to the agreed standards and guidelines and based on the availability of funds and approvals.

The Sector focuses on five core areas of response:

- Provision of emergency shelter (tents with infrastructure/shelter kits/winter kits).
- Rehabilitation of public buildings such as schools as collective shelters.
- Upgrading of unfinished private buildings.
- Durable shelter support.
- Advocacy on HLP rights of affected population.

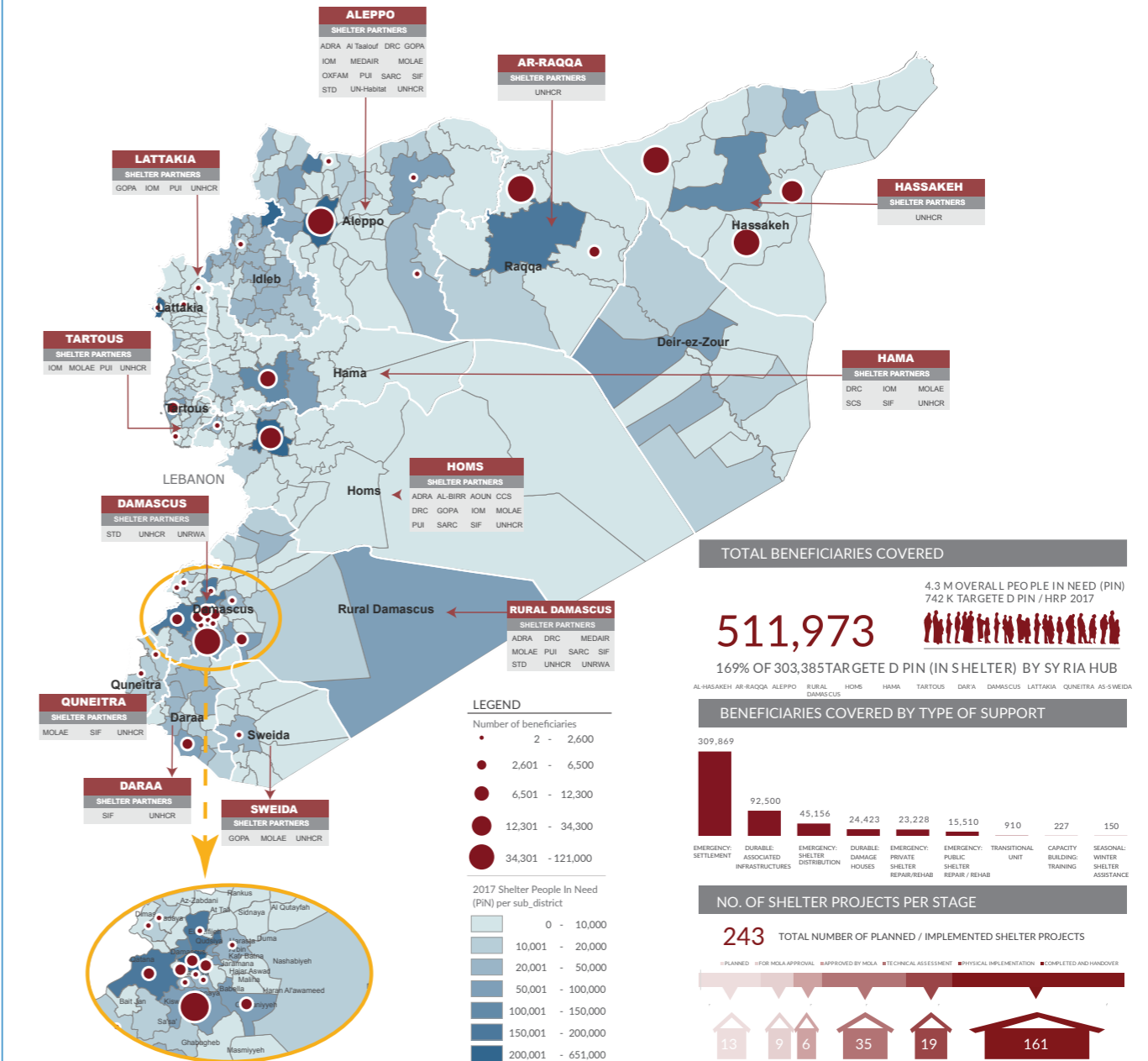
Gaps and Challenges

- Lack of financial resources to rehabilitate damaged houses in places of origin discourage return of IDPs.
- Limited access to hard-to-reach areas and lack of long-term presence impede the provision of proper shelter support.
- In most cases, available shelters are not enough to accommodate newly displaced persons.
- The operational capacity of the sector is insufficient to meet the enormous existing needs.



























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Shelter Sector Response



Partners

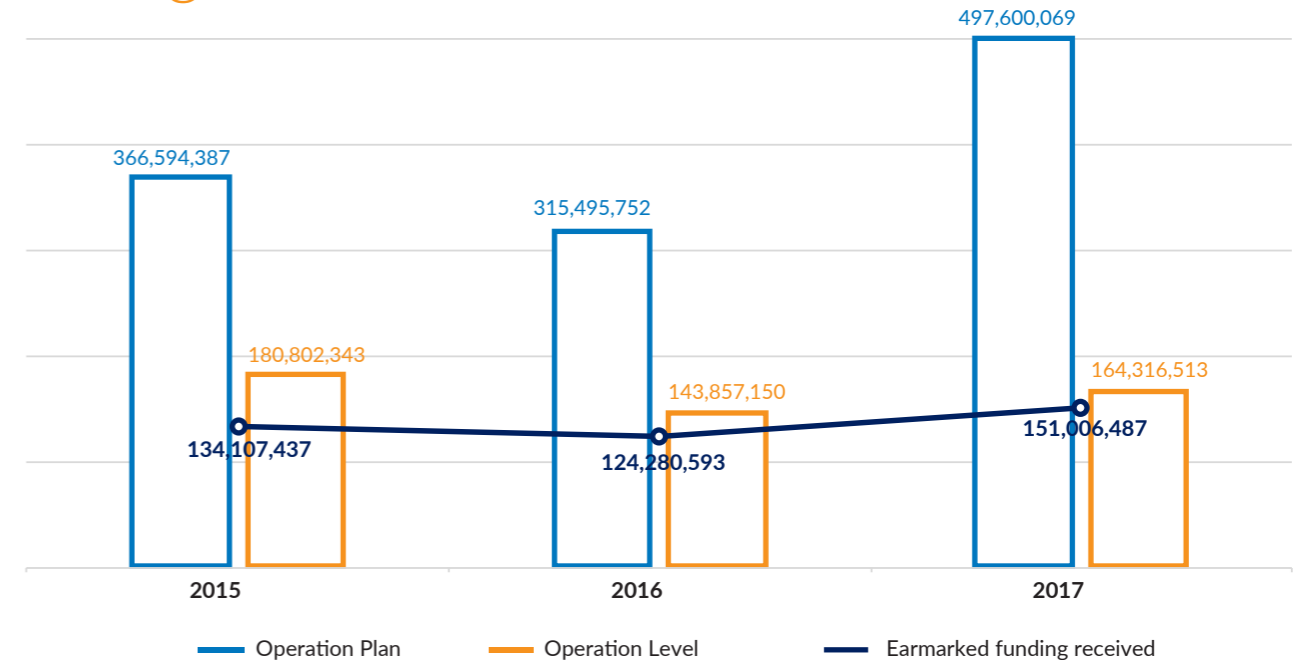
	Adventist Development and Relief Agency		Help Age International
	Al Batoul Charity		International Medical Corps
	Al Birr		Ministry of Higher Education
	Al Birr Qamishly		Ministry of Local Administration
	Al Nada		Namaa
	Al Taalouf		Première Urgence
	Al Tamayouz		Syrian Arab Red Crescent
	Aoun		Social Care Society
	Baraem		Secours Islamique France
	Child Care Society		Syrian Society for Social Development
	Danish Refugee Council		The Syria Trust for Development
	Deir Mar Yacoub		United Nations Population Fund
	Greek Orthodox Patriarchate & All the East		United Nations Office of Project Services

Donors and Funding

By the end of the first half of 2017, UNHCR Syria received a total contribution of \$151,006,487 for its programmes inside Syria, representing 45% of the funding requirements under the 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan, which is \$ 334,200,069. The top five donors were the governments of the United States of America, Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, Canada and ECHO. In addition, UNHCR continued to receive support from the private sector representing 4.2% of the total funds received. This level of funding limited UNHCR to implement only its prioritized activities. In a context of increasingly complex and expanding humanitarian needs, this level of funding has prevented UNHCR from reaching an even larger number of beneficiaries inside Syria with multiple services and activities. Additional funds would have allowed for more vulnerability reduction and resilience building interventions through the development of community support mechanisms.

The refugee programme inside Syria remained overshadowed by the on-going crisis and its associated protection risks affecting all civilians on Syrian territory. No funds have been earmarked for the refugee programme even though its comprehensive needs amount to \$47.4 million. The funding shortfall also forced UNHCR to reduce the cash assistance for refugees and asylum-seekers by restricting eligibility criteria and decreasing the nominal value of the benefit. This measure has considerable negative consequences for these persons of concern given that the current economic context in Syria offers limited livelihood opportunities, especially because they are not allowed to work under Syrian law and therefore highly exposed to several protection risks, chief among them exploitation.

Funding Level



We Thank our Donors for their Continued Support



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UNHCR

The UN Refugee Agency

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