

Syria

January - March 2018

At the beginning of the eight year, the crisis in Syria continues, with two emergency situations in Eastern Ghouta and Afrin during the first quarter of 2018 leading to continued internal displacement and loss of livelihoods.

1,461,920 displacements from affected areas in northern and southern Syria were recorded by the CCCM Cluster in the last **12 months**.

In 2018, UNHCR continues to provide humanitarian assistance and protection services to the most vulnerable IDPs, host communities, returnees and other crisis- affected populations in all areas where humanitarian access existed and/or emerged throughout Syria.

POPULATION OF CONCERN

IDPs

People in need of humanitarian assistance	13.1 million
Internally Displaced persons	6.6 million
Syrian IDP returnees	721,000¹ thousand
Syrian refugee returnees	77,000² thousand
People required health assistance	11.3 million

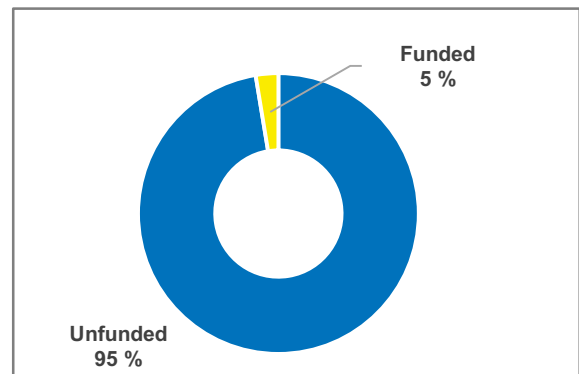
Refugees Operation

Current Population	50,038
Total urban refugees	19,253
Total asylum seekers	18,435
Camp Population	12,283
Active Not of Concern	67

FUNDING (AS OF MARCH 2018)

USD 612.2 M

requested for Syria Operation



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff: 478

National Staff: **414**

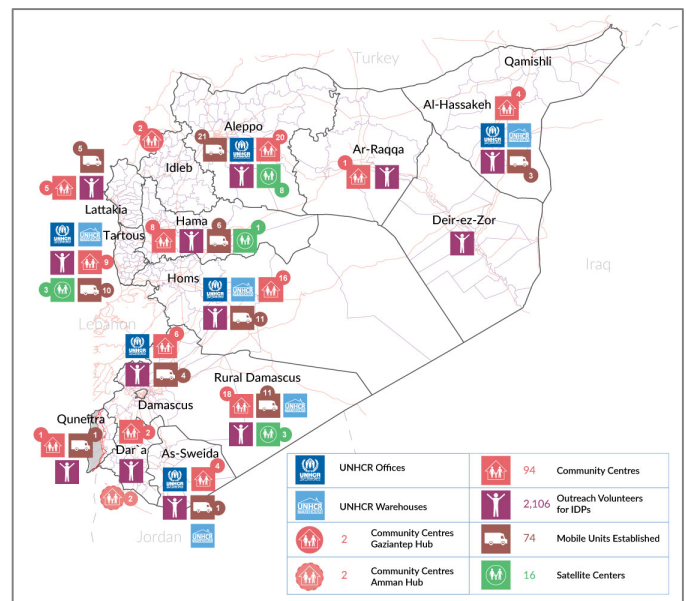
International Staff: **64**

Offices:

1 Country Office in Damascus

4 Sub Offices in Aleppo, Homs, Damascus and Qamishli

2 Field Offices in Tartous and Sweida



¹ Source: HNO 2018 (November 2017)

² Ibid

Emergency Response

UNHCR's response to the Eastern Ghouta emergency

In March, over 83,000 civilians left or were evacuated from Eastern Ghouta, including some 44,000 that were accommodated in overcrowded conditions in 8 collective shelters in Rural Damascus. UNHCR's response to meet the needs of these displaced persons included, among others, legal counselling to nearly 22,000 individuals; more than 225,000 core relief items, including high thermal blankets, warm clothes, kitchen sets, sleeping mats, mattresses, solar lamps, sleeping bags, hygiene kits and jerry cans was distributed to 63,716 individuals. In addition, UNHCR provided shelter support that included the provision to the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) of 2,200 shelter kits for rehabilitation of collective shelters hosting displaced people (e.g. partitioning, installation of doors and windows, etc.). Also, 800 UNHCR's family size tents were redeployed to rural Damascus to be used for expansion of collective shelters' capacity; 50 of these tents were installed in one of the collective shelters, and an additional 3,000 tents were ordered.

UNHCR's response to the Afrin emergency

In March, an estimated 137,000 people were uprooted from their homes in Afrin region by the latest escalation in fighting. The majority, some 100,000 were displaced in Tal Rifaat, while another 37,000-sought safety in Nubul and Zahraa and surrounding villages in northern rural Aleppo. UNHCR's response to meet the needs of these displaced persons included, among others, more than 137,000 core relief items, including high thermal blankets, warm clothes, kitchen sets, sleeping mats, mattresses, solar lamps, sleeping bags, hygiene kits and jerry cans for 6,000 families in Nubul and Zahraa, 10,000 families in Afrin, 11,800 families in Tal Refaat and the surrounding towns, and approximately 400 families in Aleppo city. UNHCR provided shelter support, through 600 shelter kits to respond to the IDPs' shelter needs in Nubul and Zahraa, while 800 shelter kits was provided to SARC to bridge the shelter gap in Tal Refaat. Moreover, 1,000 UNHCR family tents were delivered to UNHCR's warehouse in Aleppo, and will be pitched when and where the need arises.

Main Activities

Protection activities

In the first quarter of 2018, UNHCR reached out to 350,225 affected people through protection activities in 12 governorates. UNHCR, together with its partners, established four new community centres in Aleppo and Hama, six satellite centres in Sweida, Hama, Lattakia and Tartous and 16 mobile units in newly accessible areas and areas of return. UNHCR conducted 257,094 general protection interventions including awareness raising, material assistance, legal services, education programs and other socio-economic support, 52,430 child protection interventions, including, awareness raising through contact initiatives, case management/referrals, child protection and PSS group activities, parenting programmes and capacity building, as well as 40,731 sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) interventions, including awareness raising activities, dignity kit distribution, case management/referrals, specialized mental, psychosocial support activities and capacity building.

By end of March 2018, the total number of functioning UNHCR-funded community centres and mobile units stands at 94 community centres, 16 satellite centres and 74 mobile units supported by 2,106 Outreach Volunteers (ORVs).

Shelter and Non-Food Items

UNHCR, through the Shelter/NFI sector it leads, provided 536,293 individuals with core relief and supplementary items. During Q1 2018, UNHCR participated in two interagency convoys (IACs) through two rounds, delivering multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance to IDPs in (two) locations in (two) governorates (Homs and Aleppo), assisting 3,000 families / 15,000 individuals.

By end of March 2018, over 27,495 individuals were served with shelter support, including through the installation of over 1,521 shelter kits. UNHCR, together with its partners, responded to the shelter needs in Rural Damascus, through the rehabilitation of 190 rooms in unfinished buildings in the IDP sites by providing partitions, doors and windows, and the installation of 57 tents in open spaces in the IDP sites. UNHCR also provided 364 family tents to the IDPs in camps in North-East Syria and rehabilitated 96 damaged houses in areas of return in Hama.

Livelihood

As of March 2018, a total of 248 individuals benefited from UNHCR's vocational training courses across five governorates. The trainees were provided with vocational and life skills in fields such as tailoring, painting, hairdressing and handicrafts through local partners. UNHCR has also supported 18 IDPs through entrepreneurship/ business training as a preparatory activity to apply for the start-up small business projects in Aleppo.

As part of UNHCR's support to returnees in Aleppo, 920 toolkits were distributed to support removal and disposal of accumulated debris inside returnees' houses, allowing people living in these areas to enjoy better hygiene and environmental conditions. 3,116 IDPs and returnees have also benefitted from Laundromats supported by UNHCR through Syrian Society for Social Development (SSSD) in Aleppo. UNHCR has also piloted a Tent and Clothes Repair workshop in Al Hasakeh governorate, offering female headed households temporary job opportunities, vocational training and on the job training activities in Al-Hol camp; 45 women from refugee and IDP communities benefited from this project during the Q1 2018.

Health

Providing primary health care services, including mental health, and support to emergency life-saving interventions are the main components of UNHCR IDP response in the health sector. UNHCR also adopted in the first quarter of 2018 a community based health approach by establishing health points in the UNHCR-funded community centres. Through this approach UNHCR aims to raise awareness on health promotion and disease prevention, empower communities to actively influence their own health to efficiently prevent health problems, early identification of diseases to prevent serious complications, death and disability. The health workers will also provide individual and family counselling, conduct focus group discussions and engage the community through not only the community centres but through Outreach Volunteers (ORV) and mobile teams. In the first quarter of 2018, UNHCR reached out and assisted 128,556 IDPs with Primary Health Care (PHC) services through 14 primary health care facilities in five governorates, while 339 IDPs were supported through emergency interventions, including 26 interventions conducted during the evacuation from Eastern Ghouta. Emergency referrals extended to IDPs in Hama, Homs, Damascus and rural Damascus, through three local NGO partners. Also 2,257 IDPs were reached with Mental Health Psychosocial support (PHPSS) services through six SARC clinics in Damascus and rural Damascus. 11,803 IDPs out of the total displaced population supported with PHC services were received through eight health points in Aleppo and Homs.

Protection activities provided for Refugees

The population of refugees and asylum seekers consists of 50,038 individuals, including 19,253 predominantly Iraqi refugees (some 83%), mostly residing in Damascus and Hassakeh Governorates; 18,435 asylum-seekers, mostly residing in urban Qamishli; and 12,283 Iraqi asylum seekers living in three camps (Newroz, Roj and Al Hol) in Hassakeh governorate. UNHCR's registration of the camp-based refugees in Hassakeh, which has been rescheduled several times because of security reasons, is now planned for the second half of the year.

In the months of January and February, 7,897 refugee and asylum-seeker families (25,393 individuals) received UNHCR's cash for food assistance at the rate of USD16.13 per individual per month. Starting from 01 March 2018, cash for food and financial assistance were replaced by a multi-purpose cash grant (MPG).

As of 1 March 2018, UNHCR Syria has streamlined its blanket cash for food programme and financial allowance for households with specific protection concerns into a targeted multi-purpose cash grant (MPG) for all eligible refugees. During March 2018, UNHCR disbursed multi-purpose cash grants to 3,839 eligible refugee families (11,963 individuals), covering allowances for the months of March and April. Monthly assistance amounts to approximately USD 92 for the head of household and USD 23 for each additional family member. Asylum-seekers in Hassakeh governorate continue to receive monthly unrestricted cash for food assistance delivered through cheques. 8,027 asylum seekers families (25,994 individuals) benefited from this assistance during the March/April cycle.

During Q1 in 2018, resettlement submissions were made for 42 individuals under the following categories: Survivors of Violence and/or Torture (57%), Women and Girls at Risk (5%), and Legal and Physical Protection Needs (38%). During Q1, the total acceptance decisions covered 72 individuals, while 66 individuals departed for resettlement, 11 individuals were transferred to the Emergency Transit Centre in Romania and 6 individuals departed on humanitarian or family reunification programs.

Since the beginning of the year, 301 asylum seekers underwent RSD interview and 249 RSD case reviews were undertaken. The leading country of origin for cases processed was Iraq (214 individuals). The unit submitted 288 decisions at different stages, and leading country of origin was Iraq (209 individuals). 132 individuals were recognized with 82 rejected.

In 2018, UNHCR requirements to assist IDPs, returnees and refugees in Syria is **\$ 612.2 million**.

As of March 2018, UNHCR has received **only 31 million in funding, equal to 5 % of total needs**.

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