

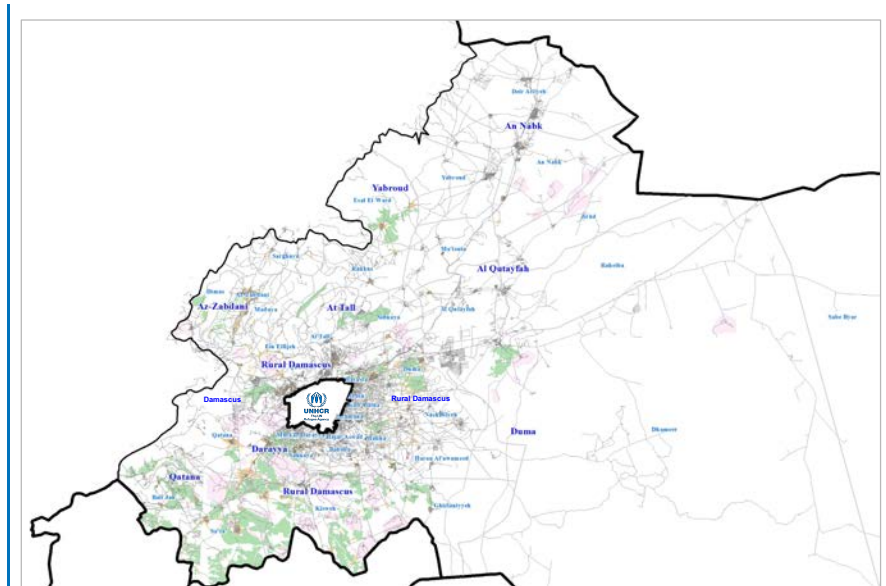
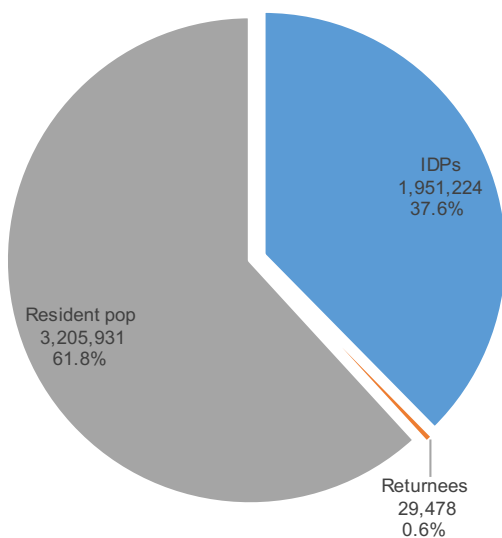
UNHCR Syria / Damascus FO

End of year 2017 / Factsheet

January – December 2017

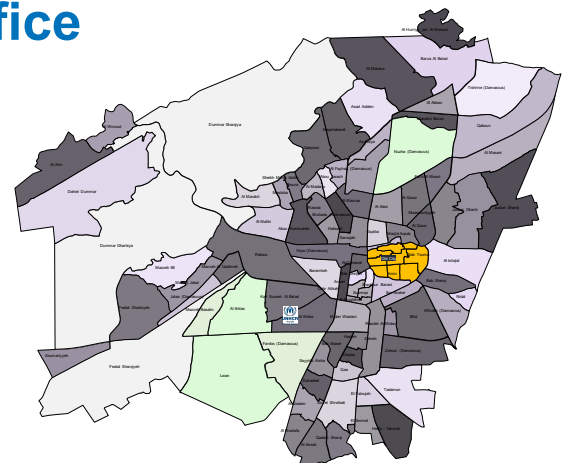
Highlights

Governments	Number of Sub-Districts	IDPs	Returnees	Resident pop	Total Pop
Damascus	1	647,602	4,717	1,273,068	1,925,387
Rural Damascus	36	1,303,622	24,761	1,932,863	3,261,246
Total	37	1,951,224	29,478	3,205,931	5,186,633



Presence in Damascus Field-Office

UNHCR National Staff	23
UNHCR International Staff	6
UNHCR Partners	11
UN Team in Damascus	12

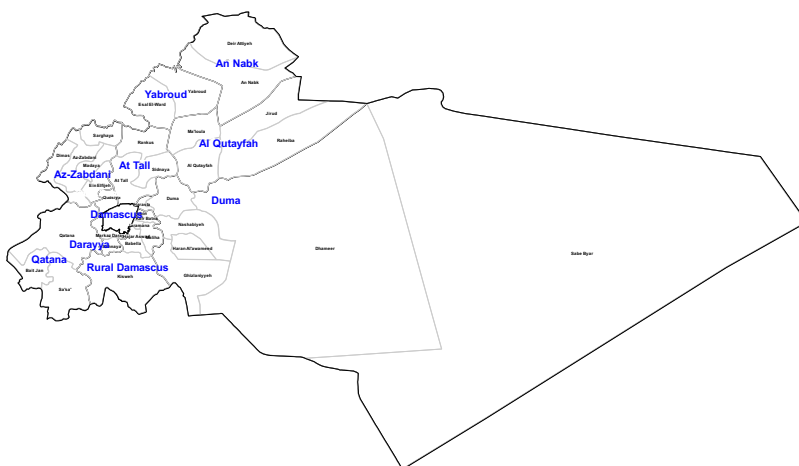


OVERVIEW

Damascus field office covers Damascus and Rural Damascus governorates; with the latter having witnessed a large influx of IDPs, both from within and outside the governorate. Rural Damascus governorate consists of 15 districts and sub-districts, including a besieged location, namely East Ghouta and the Hard-to-Reach Beit Jan.

ACCESSIBILITY

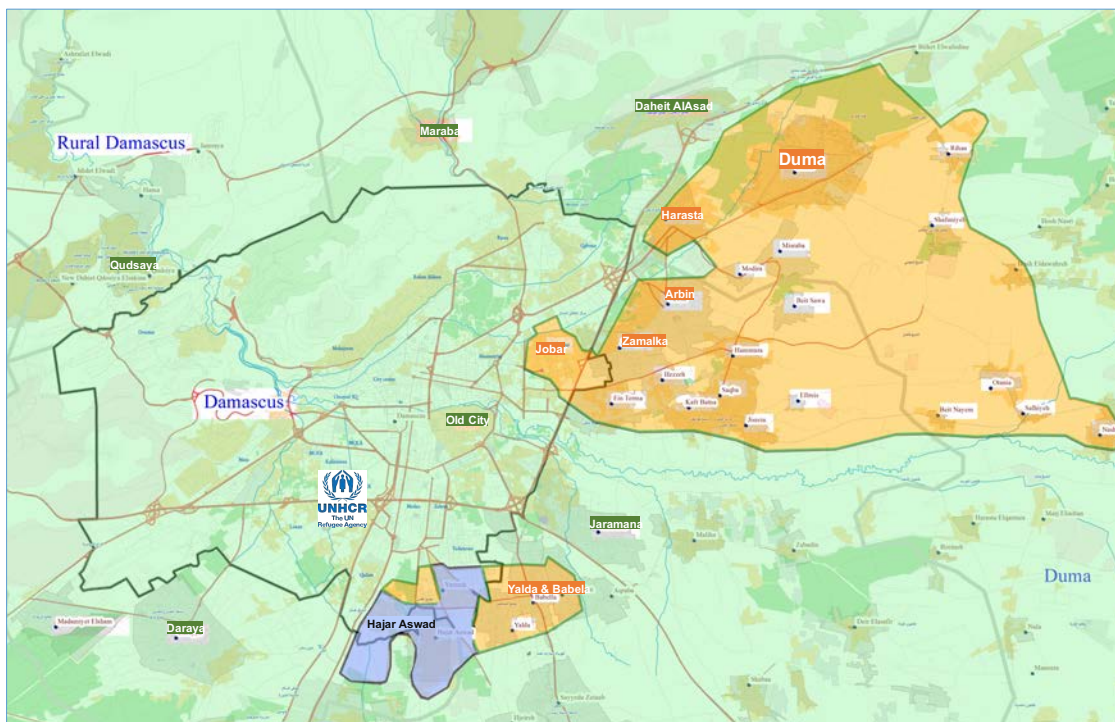
In the beginning of 2017, owing to continuous armed hostilities, Field Office Damascus encountered challenges in gaining access to a number of areas hosting needy populations. Since mid-2017, local agreements were concluded that resulted in a number of areas, such as Wadi Barada, At Tal, ADRA Industrial City, Madaya, Moadamiyeh and Az-Zabadani, becoming accessible for UNHCR and other humanitarian actors.



District	Who Has the Greatest Control Over the District?	Accessibility Status	Newly Accessible Areas in 2017
Al Kesweh	GoS	Full Access	Zakyeh & Deir Khabyieh
Beit Jen	GoS and NSAGs	Access is newly gained by GoS, while some areas are still under NSAGs	
Daria	GoS	No Access (even though area is under GoS, UN does not have access to the area)	Moadamiyeh
Qatana	GoS and NSAGs	80% under the GoS control, while the western parts are under NSAGs	
Al Zabadani	GoS	Full Access	Zabadani & Madaya
Esal Al Ward	GoS	Full Access	
Jeroud	NSAGs	No Access	
Wadi Barada	GoS	Full Access	Whole district
Al Nabek	GoS	Full Access	Fleeta
Qudsaya	GoS	Full Access	
Al Qutaifeh	GoS	Full Access	
East Ghouta	NSAGs	No Access	
Al Tal	GoS	Full Access	

SECURITY

- In 2017, the general security situation in Rural Damascus allowed UNHCR to conduct its regular activities in some areas, while other areas were reached through Inter Agency Convoys.
- Returns from the BERM area (Al Ruqban camp) towards Rural Damascus continued throughout the year.
- The security situation in East Ghouta deteriorated during 2017, with armed hostilities taking place periodically, resulting in internal displacement within the district. More than 22,500 needy individuals in East Ghouta were assisted with NFIs, through several Inter-Agency convoys.



MAIN ACTIVITIES



Protection:

Protection activities for IDPs:

- UNHCR, through its NGO partners, provide a package of protection services, including psychosocial support, child protection, GBV prevention and response, education, livelihoods and community mobilization activities as well as material assistance and specialized support to persons with specific needs, through 24 community centres. These services are not limited to the city but extend to the newly-accessible areas of Moadamyia, Al Tal, Adra and Boquin in rural Damascus. The Community centres are complemented by three satellite centres, 15 mobile teams and 473 Outreach Volunteers (ORVs) to respond to emergencies and reach underserved areas with protection services.

The below tables reflect numbers of beneficiaries from each protection activity conducted within the community centres or by mobile teams:

Case Management:

Child protection	SGBV	PSS
2,548	1,179	10,768

Awareness raising Activities:

Child protection	SGBV	PSS
2,934	1,363	7,675

Number of beneficiaries:

Child protection	SGBV	PSS
71,502	34,044	170,560

Community participation has been enhanced through the establishment in various locations in Damascus and rural Damascus, including 20 women committees, 24 children clubs and nine child welfare committees.

UNHCR, in collaboration with partners, continued to strengthen the Home-Based Rehabilitation Program, assisting, 348 children with disabilities, along with their care givers in improving their skills and mitigating the risks they might be subjected to.

- UNHCR legal programme operates out of one dedicated legal clinic and through all community centres in operation, with three implementing partners and 48 lawyers. In 2017, UNHCR, together with three legal/protection partners and 48 lawyers provided legal counselling to 18,017 individuals, legal interventions (including 2,602 before court, and 9,645 before Administrative bodies) to 12,247 individuals, in addition to conducting 1,040 awareness raising sessions for 28,016 individuals from the IDP and other crisis-affected populations.

149 Community-Based Initiatives (CBIs) were completed in 2017. 10 CBIs led by local youth volunteers were implemented to address the protection challenges. Moreover, six Community Based Organizations (CBO) were supported to strengthen and support local communities.

In addition to education services provided through community centres, 39,173 students, and 733 teachers received Training of Trainers (ToT) to enhance their skills for working with children with specific needs.

In 2017, UNHCR provided support to persons of concern with specific needs, including General in Kind Assistance (GIKA) and Medical In Kind Assistance (MIKA) to 16,342 individuals. In addition, 6,160 Dignity kits were distributed during SGBV activities throughout the year.

Protection activities provided for Refugees:

- Refugees in Syria face a range of protection risks, thus becoming fully reliant on UNHCR's assistance. SO, Damascus has a Refugee Protection Team consisting of eight staff, three lawyers and 50 Outreach Volunteers who provide Protection services to refugees and asylum seekers residing in Damascus and Rural Damascus, including Legal Aid, Child Protection, Education, SGBV prevention and response, psychosocial support, and Community Based Protection, livelihoods and community mobilization activities.

In 2017, legal counselling was provided to 1,656 refugees and asylum seekers. UNHCR also successfully assisted 210 individuals lacking civil documentation to obtain exit clearance and depart on resettlement.

Five awareness raising sessions were conducted, benefitting 175 refugees and asylum seekers, on subjects related to the amendment of the residency law, child Labor, and GBV.

UNHCR provided counselling to 2,957 individuals on general protection, conducted 270 vulnerability assessments, and provided 118 urgent grants. 46 refugee ORVs conducted 935 counselling sessions and 211 home visits, in addition to organizing supportive activities for refugees and asylum seekers from different ages, gender and backgrounds.

137 awareness raising campaign and activities were conducted reaching 3,476 refugees and asylum seekers.

UNHCR, provided services to refugee children through comprehensive counselling, structured case management and child-friendly spaces. During 2017, 3,641 refugee children benefitted from various social/recreational activities, conducted either at the child friendly space located at UNHCR premises, or through activities conducted by SARC.



NFI:

- Within the 2017 winterization programme, Field Office Damascus has reached more than 350,000 individuals with CRIs.
- Field Office Damascus focused particularly on newly accessible locations, which had not been served previously, in addition to areas receiving self-organised returnees from Lebanon in Al Qalamoun district.
- Since the beginning of 2017, 143,500 individuals/28,700 families in Hard-to-Reach and besieged locations in rural Damascus were assisted with NFIs, 10 Inter-Agency convoys.



Livelihood:

The livelihood strategy in Damascus and Rural Damascus focused on providing the needed support for IDPs, returnees and refugees, including through income-generation. The following covers livelihood interventions for 2017:

- **Vocational Training:** 2,283 individuals benefitted from vocational training provided by UNHCR through community centres in Damascus and Rural Damascus.
- **Start-up Small Business Grants (SSBG):** 99 business grants were delivered to beneficiaries, to support them to start their own businesses and become self-dependent.
- **Entrepreneurship Training:** A total of 398 individuals benefitted from UNHCR entrepreneurship and business training.
- **Productive unit:** beneficiaries from the production units received the necessary training and acquired technical skills and professional qualifications through passing different stages until mastering a particular craft and reaching the production: 277 beneficiaries graduated from the production unit.
- **Dignity Toolkits:** The dignity toolkits replaces PoCs lost assets caused by the crisis and allows them to resume their professions, maintain and enforce their sense of dignity and self-esteem then eventually enhance the protection environment. During the past year, UNHCR partners in Damascus and Rural Damascus distributed 1,144 to beneficiaries such as: electrician, plumbing, carpentry, sewing mobile, PC and AC maintenance, black smith, female and male hairdressing and painting in different areas of Damascus and Rural Damascus.



Shelter:

As an emergency response to the shelter needs and where the situation did not allow for more durable interventions, 1,500 shelter kits were distributed and installed by UNHCR in different areas in Rural Damascus (Moadamiya, Al Tall, Kesweh, and Al Ghezlanieh) assisting 7,500 individuals. In addition, 1,534 private shelters were upgraded, benefitting 7,670 individuals in Rural Damascus. In 2017, UNHCR is supported 700 households under owner-oriented shelter support, reaching a total number of 3,500 beneficiaries.

UNHCR, in cooperation with partners, rehabilitated 13 schools in Rural Damascus governorate. The school rehabilitation projects will serve more than 7,000 students.

Refugees & Asylum Seekers By the Country of Origin

Country	Refugees	Asylum seeker
Iraq	9448	183
Others	2991	395
Total	12439	578

UNHCR Partners in FO

Syrian Society of Social Development (SSSD) | Première Urgence Internationale (PUI) | Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and all the East (GOPA) | Secours Islamique France (SIF) | Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) | The Syria Trust (ST) | Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) | Ministry of Local Administration and Environment (MOLAE) | Danish Refugee Council (DRC) | Charity Association of Social Care – Tamayoz | Al - Nada Development.

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