

Despite Increasing Challenges UNHCR Continues to Access Hard-to-Reach Areas throughout Syria

Despite the conflict, extremely challenging operating conditions, crumbling infrastructure and risks to staff UNHCR has continued to deliver assistance throughout Syria to those most in need. For example, despite the hijack of the UN interagency (IA) convoy on March 26, to Arrastan, north of Homs, presently under control of AOGs, on April 13, UNHCR resumed the provision of humanitarian assistance there through its participation in a second IA convoy cross-line mission.

UNHCR's contribution covered **3,000** individuals with CRIs, including blankets, mattresses, hygiene kits, plastic sheeting and clothes. Also on the 21 of April UNHCR participated in the third IA convoy to the area, a contribution covering **10,000** individuals with CRIs.



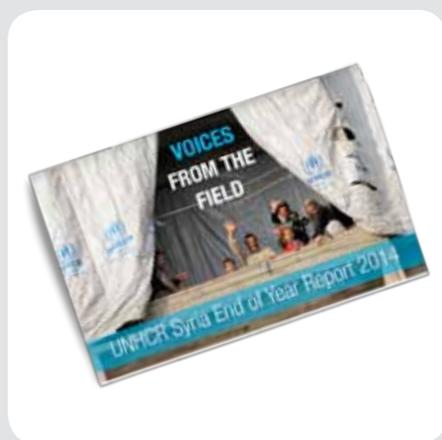
UNHCR Truck Loaded with CRIs enroute to Arrastan

On 26 April UNHCR managed to deliver humanitarian assistance to **2,500** individuals in Al Nabek in Rural Damascus. Also, on 27 April CRIs for **5,000** individuals were delivered to Khan Arnabeh in Quneitra, while on 04 May UNHCR delivered CRIs for **2,500** people in As Safira in the Aleppo Governorate.

HIGHLIGHTS

- UNHCR reaches many Hard-to-Reach areas despite Insecurity
- One millionth beneficiary reached
- Over 4.5 million core relief Items distributed
- UNHCR responds to rise in Hepatitis A rates

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On 27 April and 03 May inter-agency (IA) convoys delivered assistance to the hard-to-reach Yalda, Babella and Beit Sahm areas in Rural Damascus. These areas are witnessing an influx of families who fled Yarmouk Camp due to the on-going fighting there.

UNHCR's contribution to both IA convoys consisted of core relief items for **26,000** individuals.



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UNHCR Reaches its One Millionth Beneficiary with Humanitarian Assistance



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At the end of April, UNHCR reached yet another milestone when it reached its one millionth beneficiary with humanitarian assistance. Since the beginning of 2015, UNHCR has distributed **4,664,857** Core Relief Items (CRIs) to **1,022,405** vulnerable individuals.

UNHCR CRIs include mattresses, fleece blankets, jerry cans, plastic sheets, kitchen sets, baby and adult diapers, sleeping mats and hygiene kits and in the winter months also include extra items such as winter clothing and high thermal blankets.

UNHCR Responds to Increased Hepatitis A Rates throughout Syria



The conditions that characterize forced displacement can have a profound impact on the health of individuals and communities as displacement combined with lack of sanitation, food and safe water can seriously undermine people's ability to prevent and respond to health-related risks in their environment.

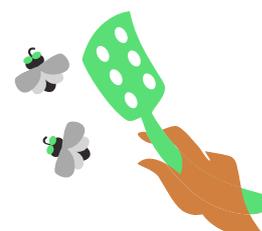
In Syria since January there has been a significant outbreak of viral hepatitis (A) with local doctors reporting over 1,000 new cases every month. Given the growing outbreak UNHCR has responded in collaboration with its implementing partner GOPA by organizing multiple health awareness sessions in the Tartous, Homs, Aleppo and Sweida governorates on Hepatitis causes, precaution and prevention as well as the treatment of this disease. This is in line with UNHCR's protection mandate to protect displaced people and guarantee everyone the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

Improved sanitation, food safety and immunization are the most effective ways to combat hepatitis A with awareness and education about the spread of the disease being essential. During these awareness sessions it was reinforced to both adults and children that Hepatitis can be reduced by ensuring adequate supplies of safe drinking water, organizing proper disposal of sewage within communities, proper practice of personal hygiene such as regular hand-washing with safe water as well as vigilance when it comes to preparing and storing foodstuffs.

Key facts



- Hepatitis A is a viral liver disease that can cause mild to severe illness.
- Hepatitis A is associated with a lack of safe water and poor sanitation.
- Globally, there are an estimated 1.4 million cases of hepatitis A every year.
- The hepatitis A virus is transmitted through ingestion of contaminated food and water, or through direct contact with an infectious person.
- Epidemics can be explosive and cause significant economic losses.



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