

With you



“I am hungry and waiting for my mother to bring me and my three brothers some food.”
Khulood Khaled, 7, sits alone near her family’s tent at the Dharawan settlement. ©UNHCR/M.Hamoud



Dear donor,

Warmest greetings!

For the past years, I look at March with some sadness and hope. This year is no different. This 2019, we mark several heart-breaking milestones – the Eight Year War in Syria, the 4th year of conflict in Yemen, and the anniversary of the earthquake in Japan. These tragic events have displaced millions of families from their homes. After some years, some were able to go back home and rebuild their lives in safety and in dignity.

Forcibly displaced families are just like us. This truth was repeated to me when I was stationed in Bangladesh where I had the honor of working with a Syrian colleague. Like many Syrians, his wife and children were displaced by the tragic war. “They miss home terribly,” he told me. His wife and children weighed the risks and returned to a war-torn Damascus, because it was the only home that they had ever known.

***“I don’t know what to do,”
he told me one day.***

Message from the Representative

It was at that moment that my commitment to supporting the forcibly displaced families was reinforced. Every single displaced person is someone’s mother, father, and child. The millions of people who are struggling everyday – the 13.1 million people driven away from their homes by the war in Syria, the 24 million in dire need of assistance in Yemen – are all women, men, and children, who had a family, a job, a home.

These forcibly displaced families have been struggling for years just to survive. For years, they have been living through some of the most difficult conditions. Yet, you have continued to support them in their greatest time of need.

As part of our community of givers, you continuously take a step with them. In this issue of WithYou, we share with you some of the most poignant stories on the field.

Together, we can continue to make a difference in the lives of families forcibly displaced from their homes.

Sincerely,

Shinji Kubo
Representative
UNHCR Philippines



A Taste of Tomorrow

Food is the way to stomach, and to the person's soul.

For the ladies at the Transitional shelter Area 6, the *palapa* offers a deeper meaning. It is a way for them to reconcile differences amongst the community, form strong, life-long friendships, and preserves their Maranao identity and heritage.

Palapa is a staple ingredient that is often used in Maranao cuisine to give your dish a savory and spicy kick. Made out of ginger, coconut, onions, garlic, salt, and a special kind of pale-green shallot that only grows in cold areas, the *sakurab*, the *palapa* is an ever-present dish in almost every household and eatery at Lanao Del Sur.

As *palapa* brings life and flavour to the dishes, and it also does its special magic to the displaced women of Transitional Shelter Area 6. Together with Magungaya Mindanao, Incorporated (MMI), UNHCR Philippines delivered a quick-impact project to restore livelihood and dignity of these women- *Palapalicious*.

Founded in 2018, the term "*Palapalicious*" is a way to convey the traditional Maranao dish to Filipinos. It is established a business to sell *Palapa* to many. It is a way for them to earn money, and more than that to join together as a community and share in the experiences that they have bene through.

Sania Naga, an IDP who is part of *Palapalicious* shares, "*Kaming mga IDPs- mixed kami dyan, marami sa barangay shelter. Halo-halo kami. Nung magkakasama kami, masaya. Nagkakasayahan. Kung baga nagkaroon kami ng good friendship. Magandang samahan.*"

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With your support, UNHCR has not only been able to provide a livelihood to these internally-displaced ladies, but also a means of peaceful co-existence among them. They learned how to look past their war-torn conflict and form a bond of sisterhood that helps them move forward together. With this project comes protection monitoring as well, so that UNHCR Philippines can further serve the needs of the internally-displaced people.

THE FACES OF YEMEN

As the crisis in Yemen enters its fourth year, we must reflect on the devastation that it has brought, and the crisis that continues. Three million Yemenis have been forced to flee, and every single one has a unique story. Here are stories of 5 individuals who were all affected by the war in different ways.



Najiba,
Yemeni Mother of Two

“I ask Allah (God) to heal me and every patient from this disease. But my disease and the disease of others is not important. What’s important is the cancer (of war) in this country to vanish...why should I care about my cancer if the whole country has cancer?”

Najiba is a mother of two and has Brain Cancer. In 2017, she escaped her hometown Taizz and found herself homeless in Shana’a. Since then, she has received UNHCR shelter assistance along with 175,000 IDPs.

“We didn’t know what it was but we thought we could play with it. A minute or so after she picked it up, it exploded. When I woke up, I was in hospital.”

In 2017, Salah and his friend Kareema were herding sheep in a field near their homes. Kareema found an unusual object, and with the curiosity of a child, picked it up. When it exploded, Kareema immediately died and Salah lost his left arm and leg. A little later that year, Salah fled his home with his grandmother and sister. His parents were left behind because they did not want to leave their livestock.

The war in Yemen imposes life-threatening risks on all people, most especially the children. The children are robbed of their safety at such an early age. Salah already had a near-death experience, witnessed his best friend die on the spot, and has become crippled when he was barely even an adolescent. The Yemen refugee crisis is alarming on its own, but what it does to children makes it all the more devastating.



Salah,
Child from Yemen

“We did not come to Korea for money or for better jobs. We came because Korea is a safe country. We cannot return now or even in the near future. If we return, we will die.”

Yemeni people come from one country but land on all corners of the world. In 2018, 500 Yemenis landed in Jeju Island, and this sparked worry among some Koreans.

Ha Min Kuyang, a South Korean Refugee advocate provided jobs for people like Sami by opening the first Yemeni restaurant on Jeju Island. It is now a haven of peace for the Yemenis and a place for cultural exchange.



Sami,
Waiter at Wardah Restaurant

“I stepped outside to get some food and then they were hit by a plane. When I went back to the house there was no one – my children, my brothers, mother, nor husband... I fear for my remaining children... I feel sorry to see them without food.”



Salwa,
Yemeni Mother of Six

Apart from the Yemenis who flew to other countries, there are also Internally Displaced People (IDPs). At present, there are more than 2 million IDPs in Yemen and Salwa is only one of them. These IDPs are in dire need of humanitarian aid as they face hunger every day.

“I wrote my children a will in case I didn’t make it. I told them to learn and study hard.”

Ali was a shopkeeper who lost his house and business during the conflict. He and his wife took the riskiest 10-day journey to Italy. Fearing that their children won’t survive the journey, they were left hiding in the mountains away from war.

Refugees cross continents in unreliable boats, prone to fatal accidents. Families are separated and many of them dream of being reunited.



Ali,
Yemeni refugee to Italy

Homelessness makes the refugees vulnerable to more physical health problems, mental distress (as well as an increase in trauma) and even human trafficking.

Even though these individuals experienced the conflict under different circumstances, one thing they share is the struggle to make it out alive. They had a difficult time escaping Yemen, and they completely lost their old lives in the process. The war in Yemen is far from ending, but with your help, these people can see brighter days despite it. Your donations for UNHCR go to the relief items for refugees like Ali, Shelter for IDP’s like Salwa and Najiba, and sustained schooling for children like Salah. With your help, we can help them regain their humanity and improve the quality of their lives.

Eight Years in the War in Syria

“There were airstrikes and dead bodies around us... I didn’t want my kids to end up like that.”

- Zeenab, Syrian Refugee in Jordan

When her house was destroyed in conflict, Zeenab immediately left Syria with her two sons. For three straight days, they dangerously walked through the winter cold to reach Jordan, where they were received by UNHCR staff, and given shelter and relief items in a safe camp.

Although the media has generally toned down on the Syrian refugee crisis, we must stay vigilant because it is still an alarming issue. Zeenab is only one of the millions of Syrians who struggled to make it out of the warzone. After 8 years, 5.6 million refugees continue to fight for survival and rely on limited resources.

On March 2011, conflict broke out in Syria after 16 students were penalized for activism against the government. The conflict quickly accelerated as a myriad of other forces and groups became involved. The layered war resulted in a broken city, with uncountable casualties and people fleeing from their homes.

And the distress did not end there.

To this day, the war continues. Civil unrest abounds and extremism has long penetrated the area. To this day, the Syrian people live in constant fear. Fear of violence, persecution, deportation. An end to the sufferings of the Syrian refugees is not within foresight.

People like Zeenab have left everything behind. For 8 long years, they have been struggling to merely



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survive. Which brings to question, if your life revolves around surviving, then are you really living?

UNHCR stands for the protection of these refugees in three strategic stages: responding with life saving support, safeguarding their human rights, and building better futures. This response covers their physical survival, the restoration of their humanity, and the improvement of the quality of their lives. We do all of this in the pursuit of reintegrating the refugees into society, as people who actually live.

Your donations have helped us build sustainable support for the refugees, and we call for its continuation as they still need more help. You have helped provide direct assistance, shelter, relief items, and protection. As the crisis enters its 8th year, let's help the refugees not just to survive.



YOUR HELP IN NUMBERS

PROTECTION



127,456
BOYS AND GIRLS
RECEIVING SPECIALIZED
PROTECTION SERVICES

FOOD SECURITY

2,024,395
INDIVIDUALS
RECEIVING FOOD
ASSISTANCE



EDUCATION



1,352,125
CHILDREN
ENROLLED IN FORMAL
GENERAL EDUCATION

HEALTH & NUTRITION

3,080,575
CONSULTATIONS
FOR PRIMARY HEALTH
CARE SERVICES



BASIC NEEDS



460,074
HOUSEHOLDS
RECEIVING UNCONDITIONAL
CASH ASSISTANCE

WASH

432,733
PEOPLE WITH ACCESS
TO SAFE WATER THROUGH
TEMPORARY PROVISIONS



SHELTER



35,092
HOUSEHOLDS
IN CAMPS RECEIVING
ASSISTANCE FOR SHELTER

SOCIAL COHESION & LIVELIHOOD

432,733
INDIVIDUALS
SUPPORTED TO ACCESS
TO EMPLOYMENT







Help them rebuild with hope.

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