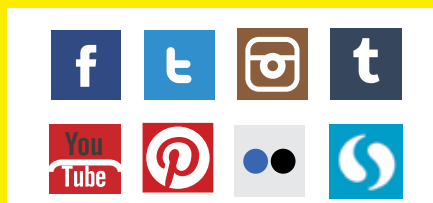


Highlights

- UNHCR Helps Students in Hard-To-Reach Areas Take Exams
- Community-Based Initiatives: Responding to Local Needs
- UNHCR Delivers Humanitarian Assistance Throughout Syria
- Communities in Qamishly Find Solution for Their Problems
- Successful Supplementary Assistance in Aleppo through Shelter Kits

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UNHCR Supports Students from Hard-to-Reach Areas in Aleppo Take their Exams

During May, UNHCR supported 200 students from Hard-to-Reach areas take their school exams in Aleppo city by distributing mattresses, blankets, jerry cans and kitchen sets at the six schools allocated as temporary shelter during the exams period. The students were accommodated by the department of education in the unfurnished schools that were ill equipped to accommodate them. UNHCR was the first responding agency who supported the students.

Ali (20) is a father of a newborn boy and one of more than 200 students who have struggled across conflict lines and numerous obstacles to reach Aleppo city to attend the exams. For example, when attempting the perilous journey last year Ali was shot by a sniper. As he says 'when trying to leave my village last year to take my exams my kidney was severely damaged after been shot' UNHCR provided mattresses, blankets, jerry cans and kitchen sets to Ali and his fellow students. In addition, a team of UNHCR outreach volunteers stayed in the shelter to ensure that everything was in order as well as offer students advice and support.

Although Ali is older than most students taking the exams, works and has responsibility for a family, he is very eager to continue his learning. "I am determined to do well in the exams. I have a dream to be a lawyer even after ten years when I will be above 30. We are Syrians, and we are very well known for our resilience; this is what I will raise my child to believe" Ali asserted excitedly.



Community Based Initiatives: Helping Communities to Help Themselves

UNHCR Syria recognizes the important role of Community Based Initiatives (CBIs) as a suitable approach to respond to some of the challenges identified by affected communities, and in creating solutions for their problems. The fundamental approach of the programme is to place communities in charge of designing, managing, implementing, and monitoring their own initiatives.

So far in 2016, and through more concrete measures and innovative approaches, UNHCR Syria supported CBIs in eight governorates benefiting approximately 15,652 people from IDP and affected communities, across sectors of education, health, shelter, child protection and women empowerment, aiming at increasing community participation to meet urgent needs. Many more are in the implementation stage and include new participation and skills opportunities for IDPs, the establishment of community gardens, clean up of areas, home-based education, establishing playgrounds, hygiene campaigns, and other projects that respond to their needs in a participatory manner.

Damascus

School Playground: Thinking of Future Generations

In order to support and encourage teamwork and cooperation among students from IDP and host communities. UNHCR supported a group of students in Noor Al Khater School, Damascus to transform their school yard into a playground through setting playground borders, installing goals and recycling old tires to be used as benches for the students as well as installing a sunshade in the yard. The school administration, social counselors and teachers helped the students during the implementation which positively affected the relationship between the



students and their teachers. Ahmed, one of the students who participated in the CBI activities expressed the impact of their work by saying 'We did it for the future generation who will attend this school after us'. 677 students are currently attending this school and will benefit from recreational activities in the new playground.

Improving Hygiene with New Mattress Sheets

An IDP women in Al Anshita shelter, Damascus came up with a proposal to make removable and washable mattress sheets which would contribute to the hygiene and comfort for families there. After material support from UNHCR the women finished and distributed 115 mattress sheets to the inhabitants of the shelter.



The Importance of Preserving Water

This CBI in the Al Hameh area was proposed by the residents to stop water leaking from the main pipes that provide water for 40 houses in the area. The residents in this hard-to-reach area sought UNHCR and SSSD support because access to any public services is problematic. After receiving the needed materials, the residents were able to replace the damaged water pipeline themselves conserving this valuable resource and increasing the water supply to their homes.



Rural Damascus

Sport activities for children in Husianiya camp

In order to foster fundamental values such as respect, fair play, team spirit and solidarity among the children, IDPs supported by UNHCR organized football tournaments and other sports activities for the benefit of 200 IDP children in Husianiya camp, Rural Damascus. A football league was organized in the camp and children were divided into clubs and offered regular training sessions. As one parent said 'the smiles on the faces of the children give us hope for the future'.

Tartous

Repairing Roofs: Improving Lives

Many IDPs in the Al Baranieha area were suffering from water leaks into their rooms, damaging belongings and affecting the health of the elderly. After proposing a CBI to repair the damaged roof they received support from UNHCR and implemented a series of activities to address this issue by cleaning the roof, removing waste and installing double tar layers with plastic sheeting to reinforce the surface and prevent any water leakages. This CBI vastly improved the living conditions of the families there.



Installing water tanks

With both dirt and rust found inside the main water tank supplying IDPs in Alton Al Jred shelter, the water supply was often contaminated. Thus residents there proposed a CBI to provide access to clean water in hygienic storage tanks. With the support of UNHCR and the supervision of its partner SSSD, skilled plumbers who were also residents, participated in the cleaning, sterilizing and sealing the tank. Because of this CBI, 200 IDPs in the shelter now have access to clean water.



Hassakeh

Establishing a library

A group of students in Hassakeh with the support of UNHCR worked together to rehabilitate their high school library by renewing the damaged books and categorizing it while another group worked on cleaning and painting the library. After that the group installed proper lighting and curtains in the place to make it suitable for reading and studying. The impact of this CBI on the community reinforced the importance of voluntary work amongst the participants, taught them the basics of covering books, and preserved rare and valuable books from damage as well as gave access to educational resources for the students.



Planting and Cleaning in Al Khawarizmie Street

The community of Al Khawarizmie Street in Hassakeh proposed this CBI as their area was in a very bad state of disrepair. Supported by UNHCR, the community was mobilized in cleaning, painting and renovating the appearance of the street. The community also participated in planting trees to further beautify the area. This CBI had great encouragement from the residents and the people in the surrounding neighborhoods.



Installing alternative lights in collective shelters

UNHCR supported a team of 25 IDP males to install LED emergency lights for 80 IDP families in seven collective shelters in Homs. The power outage for long periods of time and challenging security situation motivated the group to respond with this initiative helping families and providing children with a substitute source of light.



Homs

Home-Based Schooling Helping Children with Learning Disabilities

A group of teachers from both the host and IDP communities received support from UNHCR and its partner Al Birr to implement their CBI which targeted 30 children with learning difficulties with remedial classes and recreational activities.

Hama

Installing a drainage system

This CBI was implemented by a group of 30 IDPs in Al Fandara village that installed a sewage drainage system improving the environmental conditions of 500 families living in the area. The group installed a sewer line and sewer pipe that helped separate the potable water and the sewer water to avoid water borne diseases.



Renovating a public garden

Due to the increase in IDP population in Al Sawaf neighborhood, the demand for services has become high especially educational and recreational services. UNHCR and SSSD have supported this CBI to renovate a garden which was proposed and implemented by the community self-managed group themselves. The group composed of 50 IDPs and residents from the area who worked together on transforming the garden into a more child friendly area.



Aleppo

Celebration of Mothers' Day

International Women Day and Mothers' Day are special occasions for women. However, for Syrian IDP mothers, they can cause mixed feelings after three years of displacement. Despite their current situation, many women have never lost their hope for the future. With the encouragement of UNHCR outreach volunteers, many displaced adolescents celebrated this event with their mothers through activities supported by this CBI. The young girls made gifts to their mothers with a 'thank you letter', and presented successful stories about their mothers. The initiative had positive impact on 130 IDP women in the collective shelter in Aleppo, many of whom had been suffering from isolation in the past.



Sweida

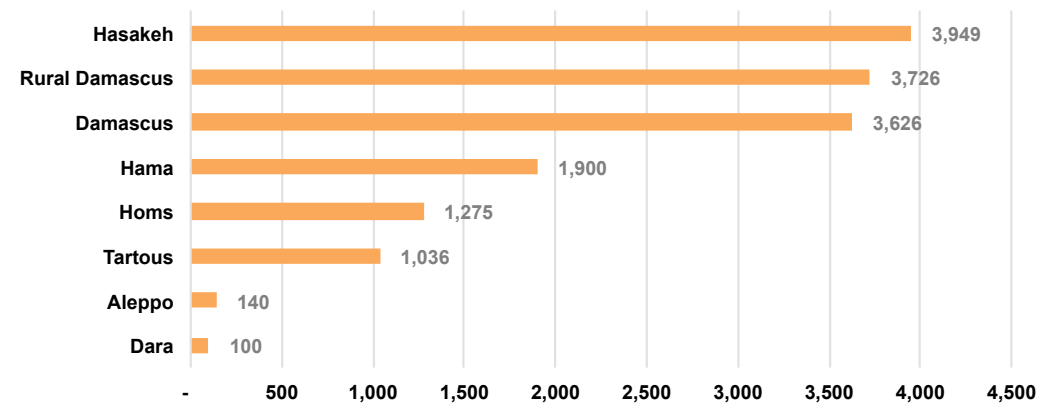
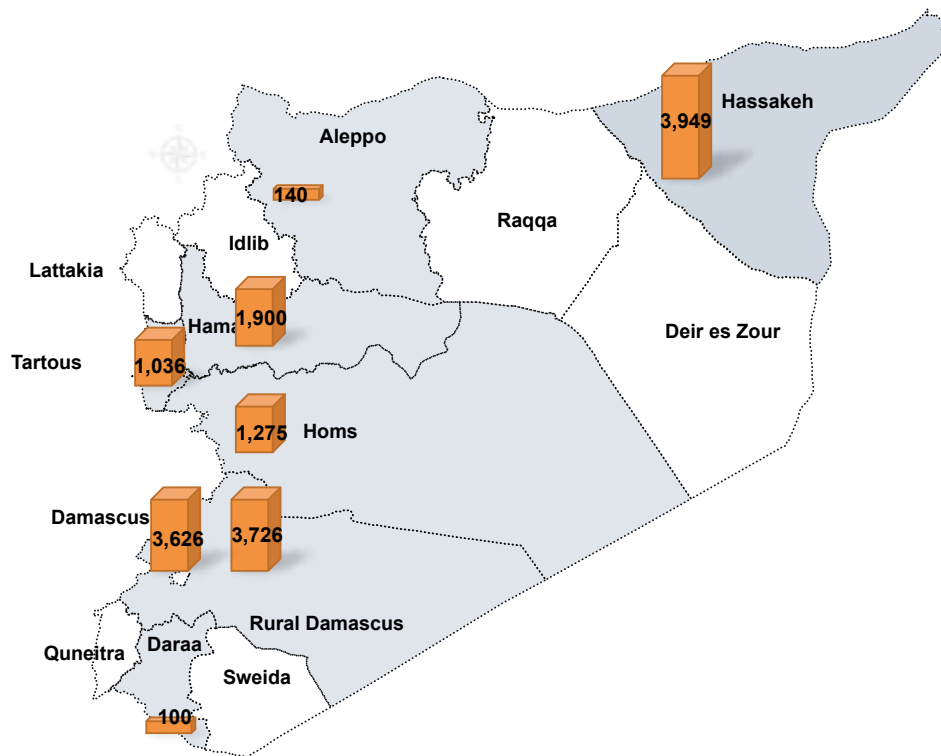
Running Water Brings Hope to Izraa

For more than three years, the community living in the Al Balad neighborhood in Izraa in the Daraa governorate has been cut off from the main water supply due to damaged water pipes. This led to great hardship as the residents instead had to buy bottled water at significant expense. However, this month, a Community Based Initiative (CBI) was implemented there with the assistance of UNHCR's partner GOPA.

Plumbing materials were purchased with UNHCR financial support and the community and GOPA then coordinated with civil authorities in the governorate and installed new pipes as well as rehabilitating damaged pipes, resulting in the lives of over 100 people being greatly improved.



15,752 Beneficiaries By CBIs Activities in 8 Governorates



UNHCR Continues to Deliver Assistance Throughout Syria

In May 2016, UNHCR continued to reach individuals throughout Syria with Core Relief Items (CRIs), including areas that are hard-to-reach and besieged. These include:

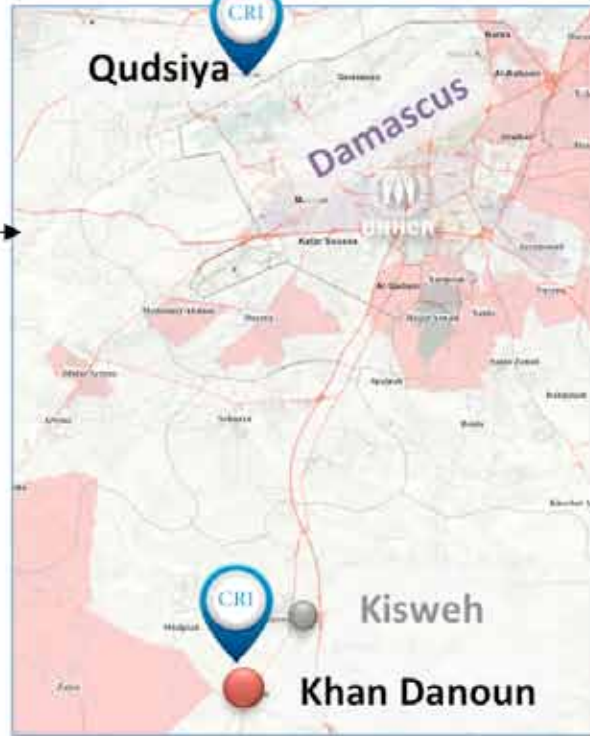
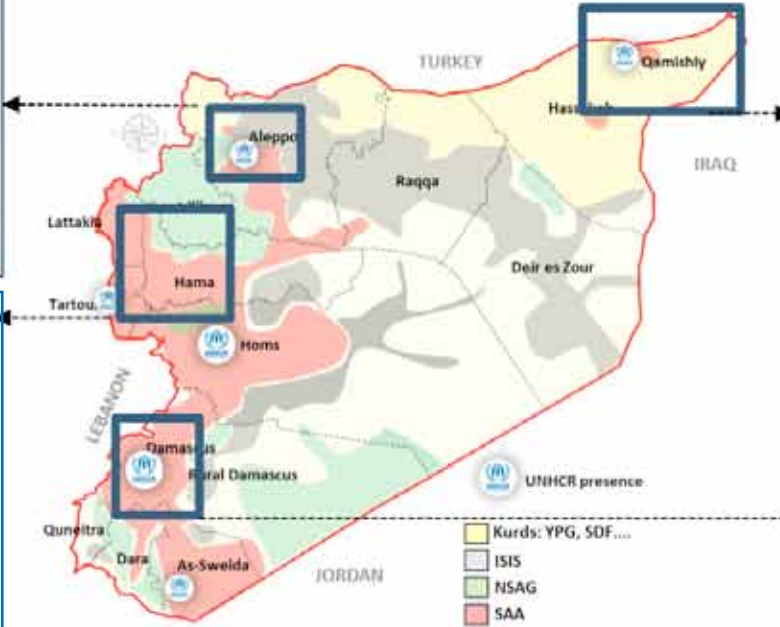
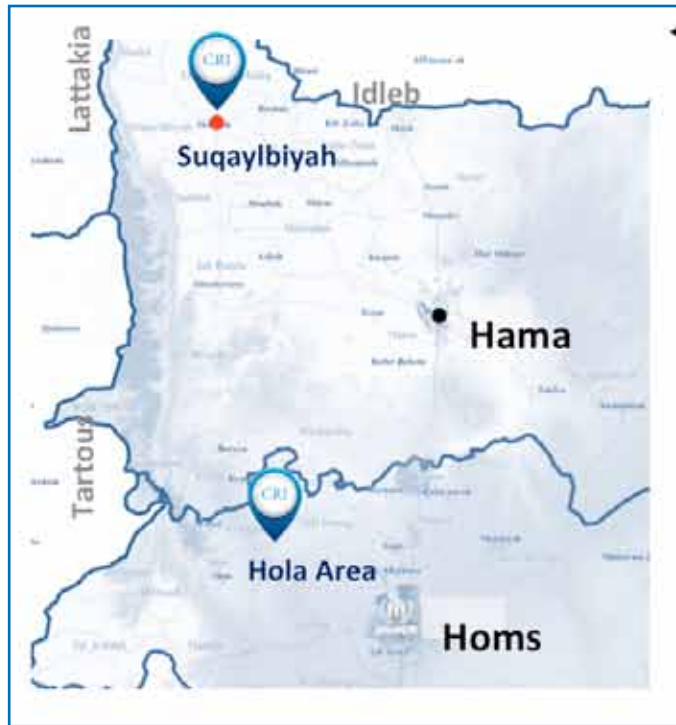
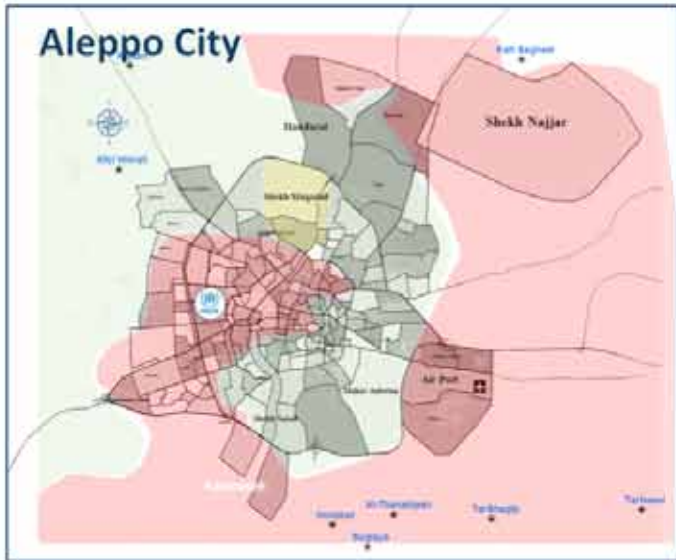
- On 03 May, UNHCR delivered core relief items to 12,500 individuals/2,500 families in the Sryan area of Aleppo city.
- On 06 May, UNHCR participated in an Inter Agency convoy to the hard-to-reach Bloudan area of Rural Damascus delivering thermal blankets to 22,500 individuals/4,500 families.
- On 11 May UNHCR dispatched CRIs to the Sryan neighbourhood in the Aleppo governorate for the benefit of 3,300 individuals/660 families.
- On 16 May UNHCR dispatched CRIs to 6,000 individuals/1,200 families in the Ein Al Kroum area in Hama governorate.
- On 18 May, UNHCR accessed the hard-to-reach Harasta in Rural Damascus through an inter-agency convoy delivering CRIs to 10,000 individuals/2,000 families there. The assistance included kitchen sets, jerry cans and plastic sheets.
- On 21 May, for the first time since March 2015, UNHCR provided humanitarian assistance to the besieged Qudsiya in Rural Damascus through an inter-agency mission coordinated by SARC. The assistance covered 20,000 individuals/ 5,000 families with core relief items including kitchen sets, jerry cans, plastic sheets, sleeping mats and for the first time, solar lamps.
- On 25 May, the hard-to-reach Al Houla area in Homs was reached by UNHCR through an inter-agency mission with 1,400 Hygiene kits for 7,000 individuals.

On all these missions, in addition to delivering aid, UNHCR conducted protection monitoring in the visited locations.

UNHCR Organizes Cross Border Airlift from Jordan

Because of the closure of the Nusaybeen border crossing and the inaccessibility of the Hassakeh governorate by road UNHCR emergency stocks there were dangerously low. Therefore, on 26 May UNHCR organized an airlift from Amman, Jordan to Qamishly in Syria carrying blankets for 13,000 people. These blankets were transported to the warehouse and will be used to respond to emergency influxes.





Community Solutions to Community Problems in Qamishly

With the rapidly rising prices of everyday goods in Syria people are struggling to afford even basic foods. However, in Amuda in the Hassakeh governorate, families living in the collective shelter there have come up with a simple and sustainable solution to this problem and implemented two small agricultural livelihood projects.

The collective shelter in Amuda is basically an old school located on a fertile agricultural land so the families proposed planting vegetables to feed themselves. With a little support from UNHCR and the Ihsan association in providing some seeds, the IDP families organized a small vegetable field with all the families' contribution to the tasks of planting, watering and harvesting. As well as this, the field identification team began a project with six chickens in the collective shelter to provide the IDPs in the community centre with eggs.

UNHCR/ Ihsan association identification team leader Tarik Al Said in Amuda asserts that 'the two projects are not only providing vegetables and eggs to the IDPs in the shelter but also creating an atmosphere of a real community amongst everyone. We feel like we all are a big family'



UNHCR Shelter Kits a Huge Success in Aleppo

In Aleppo because of specialized needs and very harsh conditions it was decided to provide supplementary assistance in the form of a Shelter kit to cover 20,000 individuals residing in 100 skeleton buildings, pending more durable shelter interventions. The package consisting of timber, plywood and a tool kit which will enable the residents of the skeleton buildings with the help of UNHCR and partners to reinforce and adjust their shelters to changing climate conditions. So far in 2016 over 18,000 people previously living in terrible, cold and damp conditions in unfinished buildings have benefited from the shelter kits.

Shelter Kits: A Guide for Beginners

- First of all a scanning done by ORVs for the families in the skeleton / unfinished buildings
- The kits then transported to the work locations
- Once the project supervisors take stock of the needs in each room, the needed items are brought to the apartment in the unfinished building.
- The workers then prepare the needed tools and materials to start the work such as ensuring the temporary electrical generators are operating, recharging tools, cutting the plastic sheets etc.
- The carpenters cut the wooden timbers and MDF sheeting to size.
- With the assistance of other workers and beneficiaries they fix the plastic sheets on the wooden frames.



- After that, the carpenters place the wooden frames on each wall by using drills and concrete nails.
- The MDF sheets are fixed from inside to provide isolation and protection.
- Doors are then hung and lock and handles installed.
- The remaining small openings between the building walls and the wooden frames are filled using the spraying foam.
- The finished shelter is private, safe and protected is then handed over to the family, normally with great excitement.



So far in 2016 over 18,000 people previously living in terrible, cold and damp conditions in unfinished buildings have benefited from the shelter kits.

Further Reading

UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Syria Protection and Community Services Sector Factsheet, 2016 April, available at:
<http://www.refworld.org/docid/5747e7564.html>

UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Syria - Emergency NFI Sector Factsheet, 2016 April, April 2016, available at:
<http://www.refworld.org/docid/57455cc04.html>

UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Syria Emergency Shelter Sector Factsheet, 2016 April, available at:
<http://www.refworld.org/docid/57442d0b4.html>

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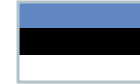
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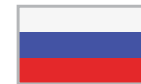
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