

HIGHLIGHTS

- Ceasefires enable delivery of humanitarian assistance and return of civilians.
- UN Security Council resolution on humanitarian issues in Syria calls on parties to the conflict to protect civilians and enable aid to reach all areas.

FIGURES

Population	21.4 m
# of PIN	9.3 m
# of IDPs	6.5 m
# of Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries and North Africa	2.5 m

FUNDING

\$ 2.3 billion

requested (US\$) for humanitarian assistance inside Syria

8% funded

\$ 4.2 billion

requested (US\$) for the Regional Refugee Response Plan

14% funded



UNICEF/ RRashidi

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Ceasefires enable some delivery of aid

Military truces and ceasefires have been implemented in some hard to access and besieged areas, with varying degrees of adherence, allowing partial and sporadic humanitarian access. The ceasefire in Barzeh (Damascus) brokered earlier this month, has enabled the reported return of more than 1,000 people back to their homes. A UN inter-agency mission took place to the area on 25 February to conduct sectoral assessments and identify residual needs and gaps. While there the UN team met with a representative from the Governor's office and community leaders and witnessed the mass destruction of most parts of Barzeh, in particular the Old City. Due to the level of destruction, those with the financial means are renting in the surrounding areas of Barzeh. Following the mission, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) and international NGOs delivered medical, food and other relief items for 4,000 families in the area.



Credit: OCHA/PVerstraeten
Barzeh (February 2014) – UN staff report extensive destruction observed during an inter-agency mission to Barzeh on 23 February.

During the reporting period, a partial ceasefire was also observed in Beit Sahm, Babila and Yalda, near Yarmouk, enabling SARC to deliver supplies provided by the UN and international organizations during a four-day period. These supplies included 6,650 food parcels for 5,450 families (approximately 27,250 people), out of 12,000 families currently registered as IDPs with SARC. In addition, a total of 1,700 people were evacuated from these areas and 460 people received medical consultations via Mobile Health Units. Ten families were reportedly reunited. Over 30,000 people are estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance in these areas.

UN Security Council unanimously agrees to a resolution on humanitarian issues in Syria

After three years of conflict, the United Nations Security Council has unanimously adopted a resolution focused on humanitarian issues in Syria (A/RES/2139(2014)).

Through this resolution, the Security Council demands that all parties ensure the protection of civilians in line with their international humanitarian law and international human rights obligations. It also recognizes that parties to the conflict need to do more to facilitate access to the most vulnerable and in-need throughout the country. There are currently 9.3 million people who require urgent humanitarian assistance in Syria, 3.3 million of whom are in hard to access areas. Of these, 240,000 are trapped in besieged areas.

Escalation of fighting leads to new displacement

More than 35,000 people displaced from Quneitra

Over the past week, there has been an escalation of fighting in Quneitra, primarily affecting the south and south-eastern areas and resulting in displacement of people from numerous villages, including those previously displaced (largely from Dar'a and Rural Damascus). Initial registration of 35,000 IDPs indicates tens of thousands have fled to central and eastern Quneitra, north and western Dar'a, and large numbers to Damascus City and Rural Damascus.

Escalated fighting continues in Aleppo City and rural areas

People in Aleppo continue to flee fighting, reportedly both aerial bombardment in eastern Aleppo City and tense fighting in rural areas. While at least 200,000 people are estimated to have moved to western Aleppo City during the first two weeks, movement now is to the rural areas and to Turkey.

Thousands flee fighting in Yabrud to Lebanon

The continued escalation of fighting around Yabrud (Rural Damascus) has resulted in the displacement of more than 13,000 people, largely to Lebanon. As the fighting continues, the exodus is also expected to continue.

Protection monitoring continues for those evacuated from the Old City of Homs

Following the evacuation of civilians from the Old City of Homs, 7- 12 February, UN staff have been monitoring the situation of male evacuees between the ages of 15 and 55 undergoing a security clearance procedure by the Syrian authorities, hundreds of whom have been cleared since procedures were initiated.

Through individual interviews and group discussions conducted on site at the school location where evacuees are housed, UN staff have been able to identify specific vulnerabilities and protection concerns that will require further follow up. In addition to a high level of fear and uncertainty expressed with regard to their current situation, male evacuees raised concerns about lack of shelter options, need of medical treatment and freedom of movement after leaving the shelter. The UN will continue to monitor closely the situation of all the male evacuees remaining in the shelter.

To date, some 20 evacuated children separated from their families, reportedly as a result of the siege, have been identified. Signs of isolation, suspicion and other reactions were observed among evacuated children, acting as indicators for post-traumatic stress. The Department of Social Affairs in Homs has been engaged to facilitate reunification of children with their families, as well as identification of alternative care.

Additionally, medical treatment has been provided to those in urgent need, including a number of male evacuees requiring hospital stays. Food, clothing, hygiene supplies and cash assistance is being provided to evacuees to meet their immediate needs.

Violations committed against children

The Secretary General issues its first report on children and armed conflict in Syria

In his report on children and armed conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic (S/2014/31) the United Nations Secretary-General provides an account of the grave violations which have been committed against children in the Syrian conflict during the past three years. The report notes that children have been killed, arrested, abducted, tortured, mutilated, sexually abused, recruited into fighting and used as human shields. Schools and hospitals have been attacked and used for other purposes. Humanitarian access has been blocked and impeded, deepening the suffering of children and civilians. The report includes a series of recommendations urging all parties to the conflict to take, without delay, all measures to protect and uphold the rights of children in Syria.

Schools in Dar'a hit by explosions

On 19 February, at least 18 people were killed, including five Palestine refugee school children and a UNRWA staff member (the 11th UNRWA staff member killed since the onset of the crisis), in an explosion near Zeitoun school in Muzerib, Dar'a. At least 20 others were injured, including two UNRWA staff members and eight school children, two of whom have lost limbs. This came just eight days after an explosion that injured 40 school children at UNRWA's Turaan School in the same town. Five ninth graders, who had just left their school, were killed: A staff nurse, who was working in the nearby clinic at the time, was also killed.

New shelter upgrade guidelines target majority of IDPs in Syria

Since the beginning of the conflict in Syria, around 1.2 million houses have been damaged, with 400,000 totally destroyed, contributing to the displacement of an estimated 6.5 million people inside Syria and 2.5 million people to other countries. The 938 official collective shelters made available by the Government of Syria and local partners can accommodate approximately 182,000 people, some 3 per cent of the total estimated population that has been displaced. Access and security constraints have challenged humanitarian actors' ability to assess and respond to the specific humanitarian needs of the IDP population.

The shelter sector working group, comprised of Ministry of Local Administration (MoLA), UN agencies and international and national NGOs, has developed new guidelines to enable the upgrading of unfinished private buildings where a large number of IDPs currently live in dire conditions, especially during winter. Assistance has reached 4,495 people so far under this project including through the closure of facades, provision of temporary insulation, building and electrical materials, as well as the provision of water, sanitation and hygiene facilities.

Meanwhile, rehabilitation of official collective shelters continues, including: completion of repair work of three shelters in Damascus and Rural Damascus which host 417 IDPs; completion of technical assessments for 14 unfinished apartments hosting 112 IDPs in Rural Damascus; and handover of shelter upgrade works of 24 unfinished apartments in Homs. Since January 2014, 74 collective shelters have been rehabilitated in Damascus, Hama, Homs, Latakia, Quneitra and Rural Damascus, for the benefit of 24,998 people.

Inflation predicted to rise amidst shortages of housing, water, fuel and electricity in Syria

The Economist Intelligence Unit country report on Syria forecasts continued economic hardship for Syrians as the conflict continues. Nearly all of the country's oil sector, which previously supplied some 25 per cent of Government revenue, will remain off-stream. This means the Government of Syria will likely continue scaling-back subsidies in order to ease pressure on the public finances (fuel subsidies were cut four times in 2013). With localized shortages set to persist as the war continues, the Syrian pound continuing to weaken and the government monetizing its deficits, the report predicts inflation will subsequently rise once more, reaching 17.6 per cent in 2018.

Ordinary Syrians are expected to continue to struggle to meet their basic needs as prices increase and conflict causes shortages of basic commodities in some areas. Food and beverage costs increased by 109.6 per cent by June 2013, while housing, water, fuel and electricity rose by 62.6 per cent in one year.

Overview of coordinated humanitarian response

2.7 million children receive vaccine during polio 'National Immunisation Days' in February

Final reports from the 3rd polio 'National Immunisation Days' (NIDs) indicate that more than 2.7 million children received a vaccination dose. This surpasses the 2.6 million target overall and, critically, in some areas which are hard to reach, such as Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa and Idlib. Notably, a total of 234,542 children were reached in Aleppo, 68,220 above the target. More than 4,040 health professionals, 2,130 mobile team health workers and 1,150 volunteers supported implementation of the campaign to deliver this coverage. However this mass mobilization could not overcome access constraints and coverage remained low in Dar'a, Deir-ez-Zor, Hama and Rural Damascus. The outcome of the evaluation of the third round of vaccination campaigns revealed that 63 per cent of children are covered so far (according to finger marking).

The health sector confirms that polio remains the most significant health threat in Syria – noting that as of 24 February, 25 cases have been confirmed (please note: previously, we reported 26 cases but a case in Damascus remains unconfirmed). In addition to working with the Ministry of Health and local partners to raise awareness about the importance of immunisation, health sector partners have also imported sufficient doses for vaccination campaign rounds through March and April.

Food sector targets 4.2 million people in Syria for in-kind assistance

The February dispatch cycle for distribution of in-kind food assistance is currently underway, with a plan to deliver up to 850,000 family food rations, sufficient for over 4.2 million beneficiaries, to partners for distribution.

Food sector members continue to find alternative modalities to deliver food aid to areas with prolonged access constraints.



Credit: UNICEF/RRashidi
Syria (Feb 2014) – Ahmad, two-years-old, proudly displays the temporary mark on his fingernail which shows he has received his polio vaccine during the February campaign round.

In Aleppo, assistance is being redirected to western Aleppo City to meet emerging needs in view of the new population displacement, as there remains no access to the rural and eastern areas where 1.25 million people are estimated to be in need of food assistance.

In Al-Hasakeh, a second round of airlifts from Iraq are underway with a plan to deliver 32,400 family food rations, bags of wheat flour and rice by mid-March. By 26 February, 10,352 family food rations, 10,875 bags of wheat flour and 10,313 bags of rice were shipped to Quamishly. With humanitarian needs escalating in the governorate, the airlifted food rations are being split to reach double the number of beneficiaries. In the meantime, further population displacements were reported over the reporting period.

Successful negotiations through partners enabled safe-passage of cargo into Deir-ez-Zor. On 27 February, 6 trucks entered the governorate and dispatched an initial 5,400 family food rations for 27,000 people. A second dispatch of 5,000 rations will be sent within the next few days. Similar negotiations are on-going to allow food deliveries to resume in Ar-Raqqa.

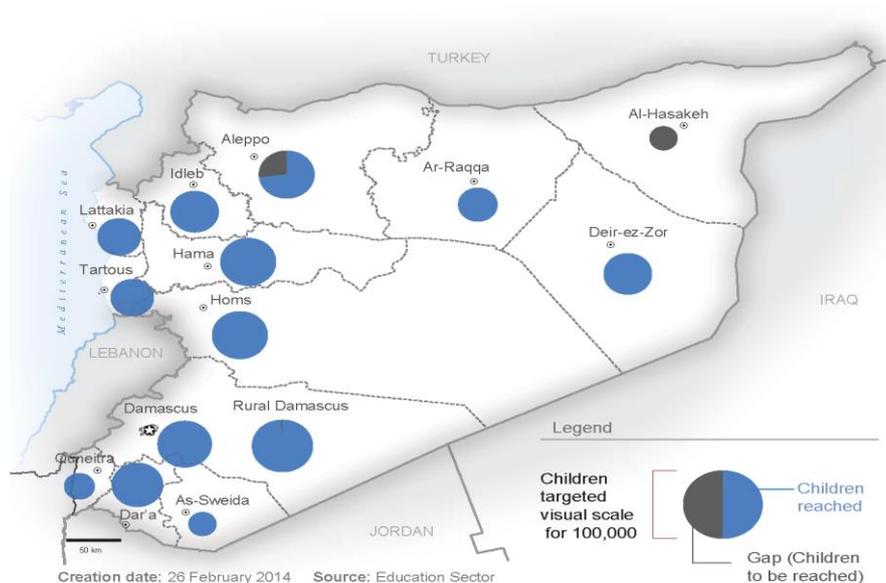
The food sector stepped up assistance in Quneitra, where heavy fighting and shelling in the southern parts of the governorate forced a massive wave of displacements. Over 18,000 family food rations were dispatched – an increase of 4,000 rations, sufficient for approximately 20,000 people from the original plan – to assist over 90,000 people.

New options for local partners continue to be explored Al-Hasakeh, mainly for rural areas, Dar'a, and Al-Tal area of Rural Damascus. A partner in Homs was removed from the approved list by the Government of Syria.

'Back to Learning' campaign reaches almost 1 million children in 2013-2014

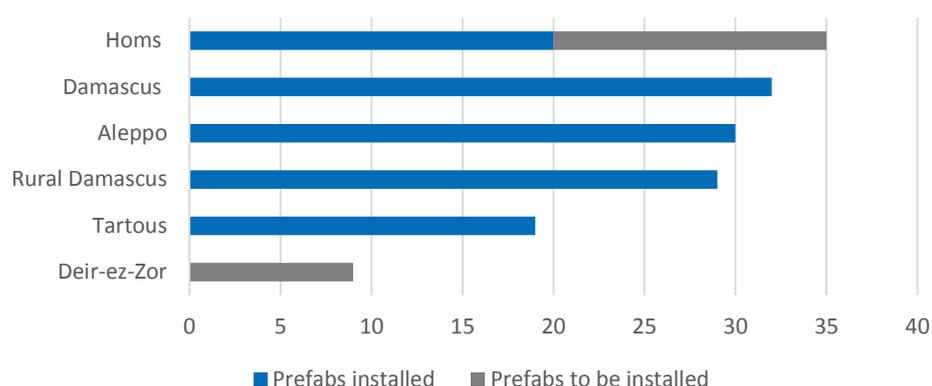
The education sector strategy emphasises 'education supply response' as a key element to encourage communities to send children back to school, as well as to enable children to continue learning with basic teaching and learning materials available. Launched in September 2013, the 'Back to Learning' campaign nears completion, reaching 946,960 children (out of one million targeted) across the 14 governorates of Syria. During the last two weeks, 1,080 school bags as well as teaching and learning materials were delivered to children in Daraya, Rural Damascus, and supplies are currently being airlifted to Quamishly for Al-Hasakeh.

Children targeted by the "Back to Learning" campaign



While access constraints have caused delays, nearly 85 per cent of delivery plans for additional learning spaces have been completed as of February 2014. A total of 130 prefabricated classrooms have thus far been delivered to six governorates which receive a large influx of internally displaced children, including 10 transferred and installed in Rural Damascus over the past two weeks.

Additional learning space provision



In response to millions of children unable or unwilling to attend school due to insecurity, the education sector has developed a self-learning programme as a key element to the education sector strategy. The self-learning materials – including four subjects for grades 1-6 and six subjects for grades 7-9 have been developed and are currently being printed for distribution alongside a user-guide. Next steps include: further technical discussion around examinations, accreditation and certification for the learners who attend and complete alternative education including the upcoming self-learning programme.

Health supplies and services provided for more than 125,000 direct beneficiaries

Health authorities in Damascus were provided with life-saving and non-communicable disease medicines for 84,121 direct beneficiaries, while health authorities and SARC in Hama with medicines for 350 direct beneficiaries. Two shipments of 128 boxes of medicines for the most common diseases have reached 3 Public Health Centers facilities in Aleppo, which regularly provide services to 1,350 patients per week. The provision of primary health care services through mobile teams and fixed health centers reached 19,610 children in vulnerable and displaced communities across 13 governorates with basic health care and referral services for complicated cases. Six ultra sound machines were dispatched to the national hospital in Al-Hasakeh through airlifts, enabling improved diagnostic health services for people unable to afford private health care.

Three new partners have been identified in southern Damascus, Hama and Idleb, to provide a comprehensive package of health services to hundreds of thousands of IDPs.

The health sector continues to deliver capacity-building for national stakeholders necessary to prevent, identify, treat and manage health issues during the crisis in Syria, including: training for 35 psychiatrists and psychologists representing the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, educational institutions and UN agencies on the Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP) to integrate mental health into the provision of basic health services; 51 health professional from Al-Hasakeh, Damascus, rural Damascus Tartous on management of vaccination preventable diseases, especially Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) and measles; and 80 nutritionists and health workers at primary health level, from Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh, As-Sweida, Damascus, Deir-ez-Zor, Homs, Idleb, Latakia, Quneitra, Rural Damascus and Tartous, on breastfeeding.

Water, sanitation and hygiene supplies and hygiene promotion campaigns aim to lessen deterioration of health outcomes in IDPs

As part of the broader WASH sector strategy to support access to safe drinking water, 23 tons of purification supplies were dispatched to Deir-ez-Zor governorate to benefit approximately 800,000 people. Three large storage tanks (capacity 45 m³ each), enough to store drinking water for approximately 2,700 IDPs, were positioned in Tishreen compound in Aleppo.

Hygiene promotion activities and distribution of hygiene supplies continues country-wide, despite security concerns and access constraints. In Al Wa'er neighbourhood of Homs

City, where access is strictly limited, a local partner provided 650 IDP families (approximately 3,250 people) with hygiene items and messages. Two local NGOs provided hygiene awareness activities for 483 IDP families and host communities (approximately 2,415 people) in Homs City. A month-long campaign in three official collective shelters in Tartous City and rural areas reached 154 IDP families (approximately 770 people) hand washing and diarrhoea prevention activities for children and distribution of jerry cans and Family and Baby hygiene Kits, benefiting 154 IDP families.

Three prefabricated toilet and shower units were erected at IDP shelters in Jdaidet Artouz town, Rural Damascus and two prefabricated units were provided to Al Andalus official collective shelter to support the influx of male evacuees from the Old City of Homs.

More than 250,000 vulnerable IDPs and host communities provided with essential relief items

More than 856,767 essential non-food items were distributed through local partners to approximately 253,977 affected people in Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh, As-Sweida, Damascus, Dar'a, Hama, Homs, Idleb, Lattakia, Quneitra, Rural Damascus and Tartous, raising the number of beneficiaries in 2014 to 856,832 people. Over the last two weeks, the round of 15 flights to Quamishly, each carrying approximately 40 tons of supplies, aims to enable distribution of 10,000 winterisation packages (worth more than \$3.5 million) to 50,000 internally displaced people, including: 12,000 people in Al-Hasakeh City; 17,500 people in Quamishly City and surrounding areas; 10,000 people in Jawadiyah, Ya'robiyah and northeast rural areas; and 10,000 people in eastern rural areas.

Child protection and psychosocial support

Essential psychosocial support services continued to reach over 7,497 children in Homs, Quneitra, Rural Damascus and Tartous, although the response was hindered in some areas in Rural Damascus, such as Adra, due to the security situation. Specialized Psychological and Psychiatric services were provided to 32 beneficiaries in Damascus and Rural Damascus while additional support was provided to 52 children through school clubs, and 90 adolescents and 7 mothers through peer groups in Damascus and Rural Damascus.

Thousands of women are provided with reproductive health services

Continued fighting and escalation of violent conflict in some areas, particularly in Aleppo and Rural Damascus, is constraining women's access to health facilities which provide reproductive health services, include emergency obstetric care (EmOC). Further, partners report that RH services are not available or poorly functioning due the displacement of staff and severe shortage of medical supplies and medicines.

The health sector has facilitated access to reproductive health services for some 8,200 women, including EmOC and normal and C-section delivery for 400 women. Supplies were delivered to the Ministry of Higher Education hospitals and partners sufficient to facilitate quality reproductive health services for 4,000 women and safe delivery for approximately 600 women.

The sector coordinated a meeting with local partners and INGOs to address the challenges to delivering a timely and quality humanitarian response, enhance information-sharing and coordination among local NGOs partners and identify specific needs of SARC branches country-wide.

A total of 7,620 children and adolescents have benefited so far from PSS through the Adolescents Programme, bringing the total number of assisted children and adolescents through Mental Health and Psychological Support to 15,291.

Nutrition supplies provided in response to increased reports of malnutrition

As partners increasingly report cases of malnutrition in children identified during screening,

the Nutrition sector has found that there is limited capacity among local organizations to establish community based services of treatment of acute malnutrition. In response, the sector is set to pilot Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) services in Hama governorate. This pilot project will be replicated in all 14 governorates through sector partners.

Supplementary and complementary feeding supplies were dispatched to UN hubs in Homs and Tartous for blanket distribution through partners and cross-line missions.

A planned total of over 84,000 children are being assisted with both Plumpy'Doz® and Nutributter®. Over 58mt of Plumpy'Doz® were dispatched in Rural Damascus, Dara'a, Lattakia, Tartous and Idleb to assist approximately 50,000 children in collective shelters and host communities. In Addition 36mt of Nutributter® were dispatched to Aleppo for approximately 20,000 children.

In response to malnutrition cases reported in Hama, the nutrition partners delivered a one month supply of 500 Boxes of High Energy Biscuits for 2,500 children; 1,000 cartons of PlumpySup® to benefit 5,000 children and 50 boxes of PlumpyDoz for 450 children. Two flights carrying essential humanitarian supplies were airlifted to Quamishly on 21-22 February, 1,700 boxes of high energy biscuits, 5,040 bottles of permethrin shampoo, 2,700 sets of winter clothes for children and 100 boxes of fortified spread.

As reports have come in from partners, the nutrition sector notes that, in January, 67,765 children, more than 100 percent of the targeted 67,222, were provided with Plumpy'Doz® in host communities and collective shelters in Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Idleb and Rural Damascus. 7,000 children received Nutributter in Aleppo but no Nutributter reached the north-eastern governorates. Following agreements about modalities negotiated with local partners, distribution of Nutributter, which had been dispatched months ago, are underway in Al-Hasakeh, targeting over 7,000 children across governorate monthly.

Escalated fighting increases risk of gender based violence

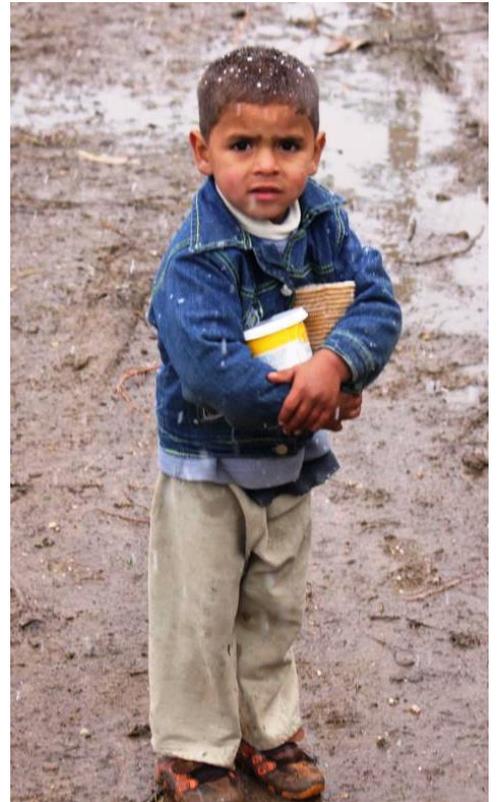
Protection sector partners continue to raise concerns regarding women's ability to report incidence of GBV and receive quality services in Syria, particularly in areas with escalated fighting, including Aleppo, Homs and Rural Damascus. Clinics in Damascus and Rural Damascus continue to offer various Gender Based Violence counseling services, including medical examination and referrals, psycho-social support (PSS) and legal advice. Of the 450 women screened for GBV, 360 were provided the full package of GBV services at no cost.

Hygiene products for family protection were distributed to 35,300 women and 15,100 men in Damascus, Hama, Lattakia, Rural Damascus and Tartous.

Multi-sectorial assistance reaches vulnerable Palestine refugees

Despite growing access and security challenges, 11,000 internally displaced Palestine refugees sheltered at UN facilities, and hundreds of thousands more in Aleppo, Damascus, Dar'a, Hama, Homs, Lattakia and Rural Damascus are provided with some form of humanitarian assistance.

Access particularly hinders provision of assistance to Palestine refugees in Sbeineh and Yarmouk camps. Sbeineh camp is virtually deserted following several months of shelling



Credit: UNICEF/RRashidi
Damascus, Syria (February 2014) – Ahmad, three-years-old, carries home the High Energy Biscuits and PlumpyDoz he was provided when visiting the mobile health point set up in the village of Al Emrat following administration of a dose of polio vaccine.

and armed clashes. Those who remain behind and lack the means to relocate are typically the poorest and most vulnerable Palestine refugees. Malnutrition is a grave concern in Sbeinah which remains sealed off and, as with other areas which are sealed off, delivery of supplies and assistance has been prevented for months. Over the past two weeks, limited access has been gained to Yarmouk camp, enabling distribution of 280 and 235 family food parcels to Palestine refugees each on 19 and 24 February. Nutrition supplies, including 200 cartons of High Energy Biscuits (HEBs) to benefit 8,000 children, were also sent to Yarmouk for the first time. As evidenced by the mass crowds queuing at the distribution point and stories of hardship shared by people, the situation of people inside Yarmouk is dire.

Regular school classes continue, and more than 47,000 Palestine refugee students currently attend one of 78 designated schools. 30 counselors received training on psychosocial support and are working at UNRWA schools throughout Syria.

In Aleppo, Damascus, Dar'a, Hama, Homs and Lattakia 2,250 Refugee children continue to be provided with psychosocial support; 1,814 with vocational training or career guidance; and over 1,930 young people are undertaking courses in English, French, computer skills, literacy and numeracy. 34 young people in Damascus are undertaking activities including start-up training and follow-up in Business development.

Though only 10 of 23 health centres for Palestine refugees remain fully operational in Syria, more than 159,000 patient consultations were provided in the last quarter. Eight new health points have been established to meet the needs of displaced Palestine refugees in Aleppo and Damascus and reimbursement is being provided for non-contracted hospital bills. Medicine supplies were distributed to the north, south and Damascus areas enough to cover until end February 2014.

Community-based Protection strengthened

Integrated protection services continued to be provided to internally displaced persons and conflict-affected refugees through 11 Community Centers, enhancing the protection space for refugees, IDPs and host communities. A Community Centre in Damascus has launched a two-month pilot cash-for-work scheme, employing 26 displaced women and men to sew 7,000 sets of woolen underwear which will be dispatched as emergency response.

In January 2014, 4,963 beneficiaries were reached through ongoing community services: 3,370 supported through educational and recreational activities implemented in the centers, 311 through vocational training, 785 through individual legal and social counseling, and other 497 benefited from social and livelihood activities. In addition, 235 IDPs benefited from advanced vocational training and livelihood activities in Damascus and Homs governorates. Reaching out to IDPs and refugees in the shelters and community centers has been enhanced through the support of Outreach Volunteers who provided different services to IDPs including care giving to persons with specific needs, information dissemination, awareness raising as well as additional services

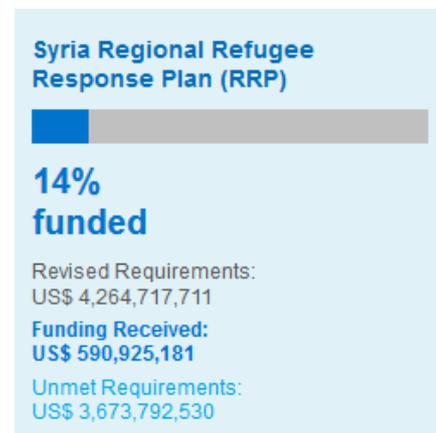
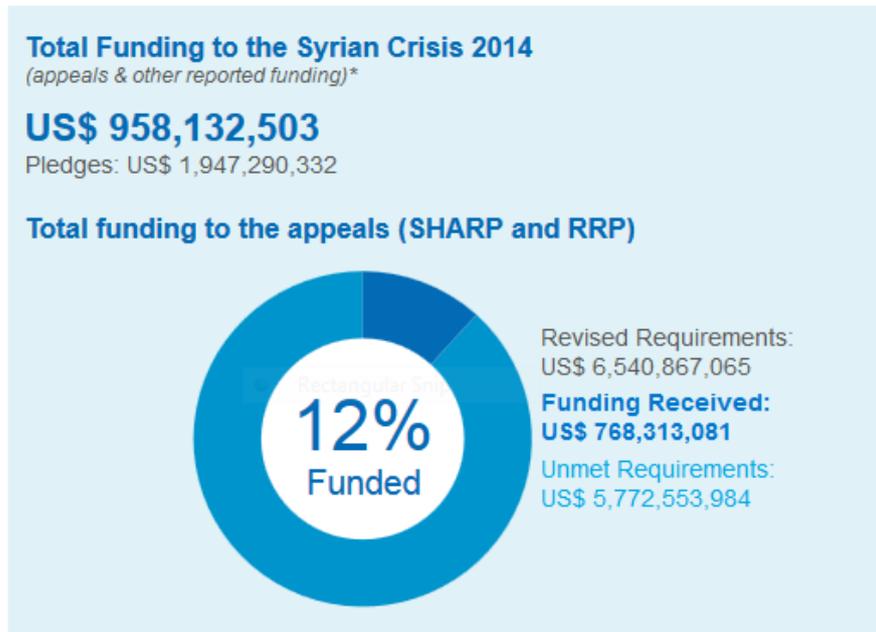
More than 2.5 million Syrian refugees

Country	Refugees registered and/or assisted awaiting registration as of 26 February 2014
Egypt	134,450
Iraq	224,356
Jordan	577,786
Lebanon	938,392
Turkey	619,642
North Africa	19,083
Total	2,513,709

Source: UNHCR as of 26 February 2014. For updated figures and more information: <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>. The above figures are based on numbers registered in each country and/or those who are assisted while waiting for registration.

Funding overview

Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan and regional Refugee Response Plans funded 12 per cent



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