

# Syria

April - June 2018

At the beginning of the eight year, the crisis in Syria continues in the second quarter of the year, with three major emergency situations in Eastern Ghouta, Afrin and Dar'a leading to continued internal displacement and loss of livelihoods.

1,283,377 displacements from affected areas in northern and southern Syria were recorded by the CCCM Cluster in the last 12 months.

In 2018, UNHCR continues to provide humanitarian assistance and protection services to the most vulnerable IDPs, host communities, returnees and other crisis-affected populations in all areas where humanitarian access existed and/or emerged throughout Syria.

## POPULATION OF CONCERN

### Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

People in need of humanitarian assistance	<b>13.1 million</b>
IDPs	<b>6.6 million</b>
Syrian IDP returnees – 2018	<b>750,262<sup>1</sup> thousand</b>
Syrian refugee returnees – 2018	<b>12,620<sup>2</sup> thousand</b>
People required health assistance	<b>11.3 million</b>

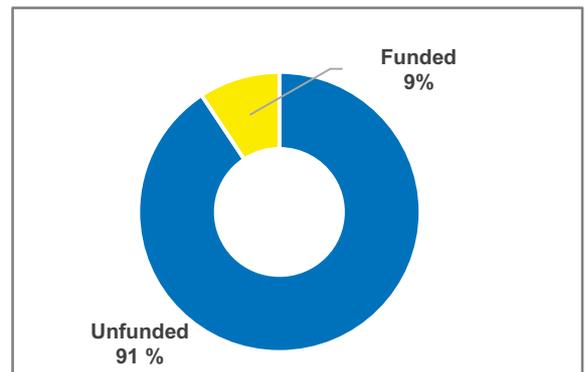
### Refugees Operation

Current Population	<b>48,599</b>
Total urban refugees	<b>18,490</b>
Total asylum seekers	<b>18,490</b>
Camp Population	<b>12,549</b>
Active Not of Concern	<b>62</b>

## FUNDING (AS OF June 2018)

# USD 612.2 M

requested for Syria Operation



## UNHCR PRESENCE

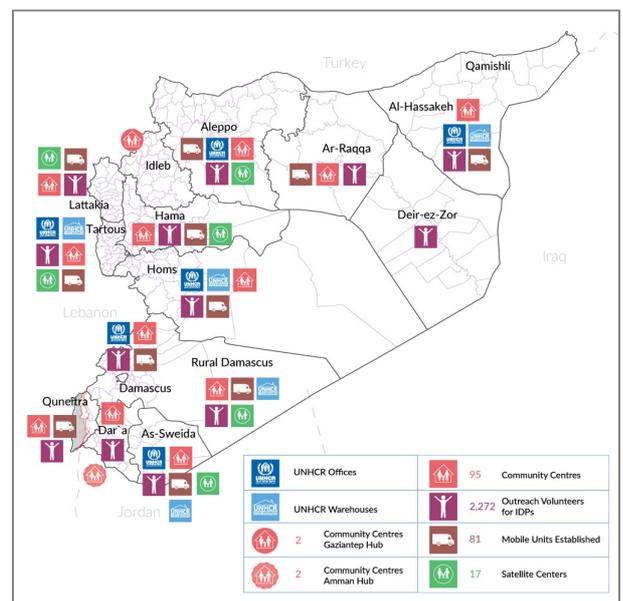
Staff: 530

National Staff: 444

International Staff: 86

### Offices:

- 1 Country Office in Damascus
- 4 Sub Offices in Aleppo, Homs, Damascus and Quamishli
- 2 Field Offices in Tartous and As-Sweida



<sup>1</sup> Source: OCHA, May 2018

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

## Emergency Response

### UNHCR's response to the Eastern Ghouta emergency

Over 92,000 civilians left or were evacuated from Eastern Ghouta, including some 77,000 that were accommodated in overcrowded conditions in 8 collective shelters in Rural Damascus until beginning of the second quarter. UNHCR's response to the needs of these displaced persons included, among others, legal counselling to nearly 22,000 individuals; more than 252,000 core relief items, including high thermal blankets, warm clothes, kitchen sets, sleeping mats, mattresses, solar lamps, sleeping bags, hygiene kits and jerry cans distributed to some 60,000 individuals. In addition, UNHCR provided shelter support that included the installation of three rub halls and 50 family-size tents in two IDP sites, in addition to the provision of 2,200 shelter kits, of which some 2,008 were installed in various IDP sites. The rehabilitation of three schools (180 rooms) in one IDP site was completed, in addition to the installation of four sheds (big size tents) in another IDP site. Nearly 15,000 people have benefited from UNHCR's shelter response to Eastern Ghouta emergency.

Since May 2018, it is estimated that 30,000 IDPs left the collective shelters and returned to Eastern Ghouta. UNHCR's legal aid partner visited the return areas in Eastern Ghouta, such as Douma, Harasta, Saqba, Hammouria, Erbin, and Zebdin and provided legal services. UNHCR legal aid partner is planning to provide 3,000 intervention at the courts, and 8,000 at the administrative bodies.

### UNHCR's response to the Afrin emergency

An estimated 137,000 people were uprooted from their homes in Afrin region by the latest escalation in fighting. The majority, some 100,000 were displaced in Tal Refaat, while another 37,000 sought safety in Nubul and Zahraa and surrounding villages in northern rural Aleppo. UNHCR's response to the needs of these displaced persons included, among others, the distribution of more than 95,622 core relief items, including high thermal blankets, warm clothes, kitchen sets, sleeping mats, mattresses, solar lamps, sleeping bags, hygiene kits and jerry cans for 45,025 individuals/9,005 families in Nubul, Zahraa, Tal Refaat and Aleppo city. UNHCR's partner SARC completed the installation of 300 shelter kits in 357 individual empty houses in Tal Refaat town where 784 families/4,012 individuals from Afrin are currently sheltered. More than 11,000 IDPs from Afrin have benefitted from protection services provided in UNHCR-funded Community Centres, outreach volunteers and mobile teams in Aleppo, Nubul, Zahraa, Ziyara, Khurbat Al Hayat and Kafar Naya villages in addition to Al Ashrafeiah neighbourhood in Aleppo city.

### UNHCR's response to the South emergency

Since the beginning of the military operation in the south of Syria in June 2018, it is estimated that some 300,000 people have been displaced. Up to 20,000 families fled to areas controlled by the Government of Syria (GoS) through three humanitarian corridors opened on 27 June. Some of these families have stayed in the pre-prepared Jbab IDP site, while the majority of these families proceeded to their final destination and were hosted by relatives in GoS-controlled areas in Dar'a. Some 490 families have been displaced from Dar'a towards areas in Rural Damascus such as Kisweh, Khiaarah Dannoun, Khan Dannoun, Adlieh, and Herjelleh including the Herjelleh collective shelter. The majority of internally displaced people in Dar'a is staying with relatives or rented apartments, however, many other displaced people live in collective shelters and IDP sites in both Dar'a and As-Sweida Governorates. At the beginning of the emergency, UNHCR responded through delivering some 4,500 CRI kits to its implementing partners SARC and GOPA in Izraa, Bsir and Khan Arnaba, Quneitra. Even though the need for legal assistance is less than in Eastern Ghouta, the Syria Trust has a team in the area and is planning to carry out legal activities. Meanwhile some 4,800 individuals received protection services from UNHCR and its partners in Dar'a and As-Sweida.

## Main Activities

### Protection activities

In the second quarter of 2018, UNHCR reached out to 520,469 affected people through protection activities in 12 governorates. UNHCR, together with its partners, established four new community centres in Aleppo and Hama, six satellite centres in As-Sweida, Hama, Lattakia and Tartous and 16 mobile units in newly accessible areas and areas of return. UNHCR conducted 392,345 general protection interventions including awareness raising, material assistance, legal services, education programmes and other socio-economic support, 74,258 child protection interventions, including, awareness raising through contact initiatives, case management/referrals, child protection and PSS group activities, parenting programmes, mine risk education and capacity building, as well as 53,866 sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) interventions, including awareness raising activities, dignity kit distribution, case management/referrals, specialized mental, psychosocial support activities and capacity building.

By end of June 2018, the total number of functioning UNHCR-funded community centres and mobile units stands at 95 community centres, 17 satellite centres and 81 mobile units supported by 2,272 Outreach Volunteers (ORVs).

### Shelter and Non-Food Items

UNHCR, through the Shelter/NFI sector it leads, provided 319,330 individuals with core relief and supplementary items during the second quarter of 2018, UNHCR participated in five interagency convoys (IACs), delivering multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance to IDPs in five locations (Talbiseh Tlul Elhomor, Duma-, Yalda, Ar-Rastan ) in three governorates (Homs ,Hama, and Rural Damascus), assisting 22,700 families / 113,500 individuals.

During the second quarter of 2018, over 17,040 individuals were served with shelter support, including through the installation of over 1,669 shelter kits. UNHCR, together with its partners, responded to the emergency shelter needs in Rural Damascus, Afrin, Homs, Hama and As-Sweida, in addition to rehabilitation of 38 rooms in collective shelter in the IDP sites by providing partitions, doors and windows. UNHCR also provided 1,353 family tents to the IDPs/refugees in camps in North-East Syria. In partnership with 15 governmental and non-governmental organizations, UNHCR started an initiation process in shelter projects i.e. technical assessment, obtaining needed approvals and allocate resources to achieve the 2018 overall target.

### Livelihood

During the second quarter of 2018, a total of 3,067 individuals benefited from UNHCR's vocational training, life skills and on the job training courses across nine governorates. The trainees were provided with vocational and life skills in fields such as tailoring, electricity maintenance, blacksmithing, painting, hairdressing, and carpentry courses through local partners. UNHCR has also supported 202 individuals from IDP and affected communities through entrepreneurship/ business training, out of whom 28 received support to start small business projects in Rural Damascus and Aleppo. UNHCR has also resumed distribution of livelihood toolkits to 4,436 individuals across 12 governorates. A significant portion of the beneficiaries consists of skilled IDPs and returnees who had lost their assets and willing to resume income generating activities. The toolkits included blacksmithing, hairdressing for male and female, air conditioning, mobile and computer maintenance toolkits.

As part of UNHCR's support to returnees in Aleppo, 2,042 IDPs and returnees have benefitted from laundromats supported by UNHCR in three neighbourhoods in Eastern Aleppo to improve hygiene situation of returnees which is heavily affected due to the damage and destruction in water supply and sewage. UNHCR has also equipped two carpentry workshops to be used by skilled workers from the IDP and returnee communities to repair and produce furniture without the need to procure the expensive machines or resort to pay additional cost for restoring their assets. 27 individuals benefited from this project so far in 2018. In rural Aleppo, UNHCR completed the rehabilitation of one public bakery in Khafseh area. The daily production capacity of the bakery is expected to serve 48,915 individuals who have returned to the area till end of June 2018.

## Health

Providing primary health care services, including mental health, and support to emergency life-saving interventions is the main component of UNHCR IDP response in the health sector. UNHCR continued its community-based health approach by establishing health points in the UNHCR-funded community centres. Through this approach UNHCR aims to raise awareness on health promotion and disease prevention, empower communities to actively influence their own health to efficiently prevent health problems, and identify diseases early to prevent serious complications, death and disability. The health workers will also provide individual and family counselling, conduct focus group discussions and engage the community not only through the community centres by also through Outreach Volunteers (ORV) and mobile teams. In the second quarter of 2018, UNHCR reached out and assisted 83,590 IDPs with Primary Health Care (PHC) services through 13 primary health care facilities in five governorates. In average, 63 percent of the beneficiaries were women. In the second quarter, 831 IDPs were supported through emergency interventions, including 53 interventions conducted during the evacuation from Eastern Ghouta. Emergency referrals extended to IDPs in Hama, Homs, Damascus and Rural Damascus, through three local NGO partners. Also 1,301 IDPs were reached with Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) services through six SARC clinics in Damascus and Rural Damascus. 2,836 IDPs received in kind assistance with medical assistive devices such as crutches and wheelchairs through community centres in eight governorates: Damascus, Rural Damascus, Homs, Hama, Aleppo, As-Sweida, Tartous and Latakia. Eight health points in community centres (one in each) managed by two local partners in Aleppo city including Eastern Aleppo and Homs rural and urban provided 1,313 health counselling to individual IDPs 56 health awareness sessions. Additionally, 3,074 IDPs received medical consultations; 65 were women, 24 percent under five years old and 10 percent were 60 years old and above. One new health point opened in an area of IDPs return in Aleppo (Katerji-East Aleppo) in May, which increased the number of functional health points to nine.

## Protection activities provided to refugees

The population of refugees and asylum seekers consists of 48,599 individuals, including 18,490 predominantly Iraqi refugees (some 83%), mostly residing in Damascus and Al-Hasakeh Governorates; 18,490 asylum-seekers, mostly residing in urban Quamishli; and 12,549 Iraqi asylum seekers living in three camps (Newroz, Roj and Al Hol) in Al-Hasakeh governorate. UNHCR's registration of the camp-based refugees in Al-Hasakeh, which has been rescheduled several times because of security reasons, is now planned for the second half of the year.

During the second quarter of 2018, UNHCR completed the third cycle of cash disbursements for the year, providing cash to 3,925 refugee families (12,179 individuals) and 1,241 families of asylum-seekers (6,389 individuals). For the second time this year, the multipurpose cash grant for refugees was targeted rather than provided to the whole population, benefitting families falling into higher vulnerability categories established by an adjusted dependency ratio. The transition phase between January and April saw a high volume of inquiries related to cash eligibility received by both the UNHCR hotlines and the refugee reception centre. One hundred and eighty-six families were given appointments for a review of their eligibility based on additional information provided to UNHCR. These numbers dropped during May and June as refugees used the opportunity to update their records during the previous months and had become more familiar with the new targeting criteria.

UNHCR continues improving its cash delivery mechanism, ensuring convenience and ease of use for recipients as well as efficiency and cost-effectiveness for the organisation. To this end, UNHCR prepared the ground to change the way cash is transferred to non-Iraqi refugees and streamline it with the cash disbursement to Iraqis, delivered through ATM cards. For the past several years, the non-Iraqi group of refugees has been receiving entitlements through a cheque, which had to be collected at UNHCR premises and then cashed at a bank branch within a specified time period. This cumbersome procedure incurred high transport costs for recipients and demanded significant staff time from the UNHCR team. In July, all eligible families will be issued rechargeable, prepaid ATM cards that can be used at ATMs throughout the country at the family's convenience.

Assistance levels for the multipurpose cash grants remained the same as during March and April. Refugee families received approximately USD 92 for the head of household and USD 23 for each additional family member. UNHCR

also continued to support asylum-seekers living outside the camps in Al-Hasakeh governorate. Families received USD 16 for each individual to cover monthly food needs.

During the second quarter of the year, 262 refugees were submitted for resettlement consideration to Australia, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Acceptance decisions were received for 70 refugees and 98 refugees who departed for resettlement to Australia, Sweden and the Netherlands. Further, 16 individuals departed on humanitarian or family reunification programmes. UNHCR office continued to provide support to resettlement countries through facilitation of digital video conferencing interviews, biometric collection, and hand-delivery of documents to various locations.

In the second quarter, 79 asylum seekers underwent Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interviews and 79 RSD case reviews were undertaken. The leading country of origin for cases processed was Iraq. UNHCR submitted 92 decisions at different stages. 18 individuals were recognized with 26 rejected. UNHCR has carried out a training project to build the capacity of Protection staff in order to improve data collection and reporting.

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In 2018, UNHCR requirements to assist IDPs, returnees and refugees in Syria is **\$ 612.2 million**.

As of June 2018, UNHCR has received **only 57,9 million in funding, equal to 9 % of the total needs**.

### **Special thanks to our Donors:**

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**CONTACTS:** Toloe Masori, Reporting Officer Syria, [masori@unhcr.org](mailto:masori@unhcr.org), Cell: +963 9933 578 59