

Overview

*Syrian children are at increased risk of disease because of the severe damage to water and sanitation systems caused by the conflict, a UNICEF assessment shows.*

As the crisis in Syria enters its third year, access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene continues to deteriorate, threatening the health of much of the population.

Damage to pumping stations and other water infrastructure has been severe, especially in areas that witnessed high levels of violence such as Rural Damascus, Idlib, Deir E-Zour, Homs, Aleppo and Al-Raqqah.

The situation is worsened by frequent power cuts, fuel shortages, and lack of maintenance of pipes and water works. Many water utilities are short of chlorine and trucked water that many communities rely on is of poor quality.

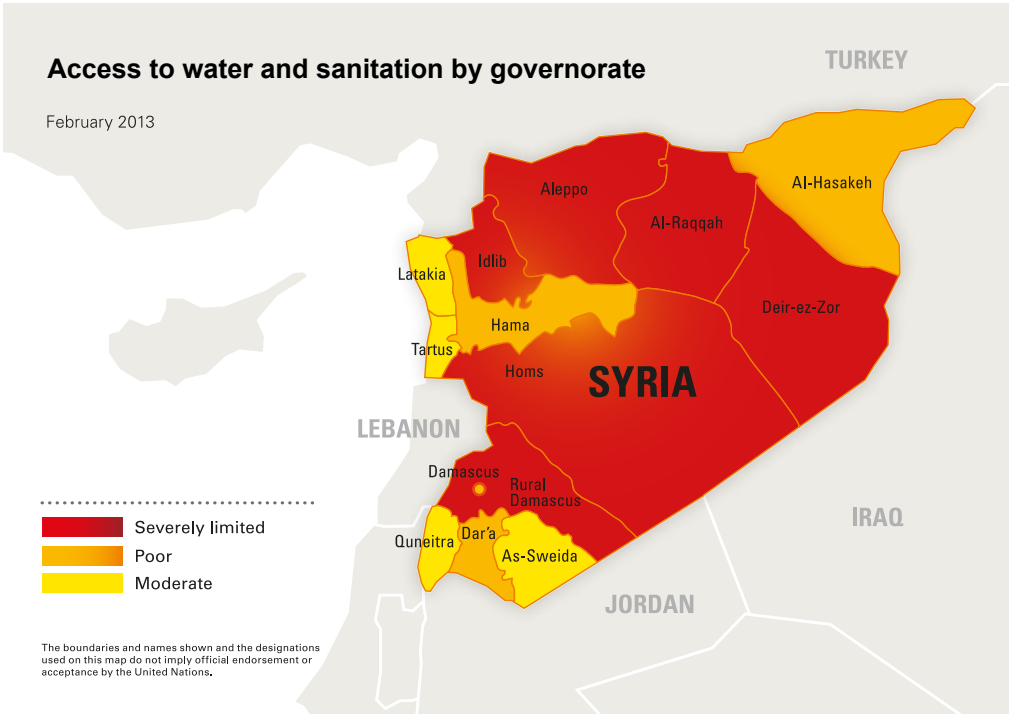
In the overcrowded shelters where many of the two million people displaced by the conflict live, access to toilets and showers is insufficient.

Children, who make up half of the four million people who urgently need assistance, are at increased risk of diarrhoea and other water-borne diseases.

The impact of the conflict on water and sanitation services

Key Assessment Findings:

● In conflict-affected areas, the availability of water per person has decreased to one third of pre-crisis levels, from 75 to 25 litres per person per day.



- Water pumping in localities of Deir Ez-Zor dropped by up to 90 per cent, while in Damascus it has fallen by 20 per cent.
- Urban water supply networks are vulnerable to attacks and system failures, because they are usually distant from city centres.
- Water trucking is commonly used in communities where water networks are not functional. A 3,000 litre tank sufficient for a family of seven for 15 days costs US \$15 which is beyond the reach of many vulnerable families.
- Treatment of sewage has decreased nationally from 70 per cent before the crisis to 35 per cent.
- A large majority of households reported cases of diarrhoea among children and adults, as well as rising incidence of scabies and head lice.
- Displaced populations living in collective shelters are most at risk from deteriorating sanitary conditions.
- Water supply is limited as most shelters now host up to 600 families each.
- In some shelters, 70 people have to share a single toilet.
- Many families report difficulties in buying soap, laundry detergent, toilet paper, baby diapers and sanitary pads.

- Lack of doors, locks and windows in toilets is putting children and women at risk.
- In parts of Aleppo, Homs, Deir E-Zor, Idlib and Rural Damascus, solid waste management is becoming a problem due to lack of garbage collection.



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*A girl, carrying containers of water, on a street in Aleppo.*

## UNICEF's Response

Since the beginning of the crisis in March 2011, UNICEF, as lead of the Water and Sanitation sector and in cooperation with partners including 40 NGOs, has worked to ensure access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene services. As a result:

**22,000 people have drinking and domestic water**  
**225,000 people have soap and hygiene kits**  
**17,000 people have toilets and sanitation services**

During the first half of 2013, UNICEF and its partners will:

- Provide 1,000 metric tonnes of sodium hypo-chlorite to ensure continuation of safe water for the next three months for 10 million people in 14 governorates.
- Support 500,000 emergency affected people with access to appropriate sanitation services.
- Support 750,000 emergency affected people with access to soap and other hygiene items.
- Support 50,000 schoolchildren in conflict-affected areas with access to safe water, sanitation services and hygiene practices.
- Repair and rehabilitate community-based water systems improving lives of at least 800,000 persons in shelters and affected areas.

To date, UNICEF has received only 20 per cent of its total funding needs in the area of water and sanitation.

## UNICEF water treatment response in Syria

January - April 2013

### Water treatment supplies (tons)



Total 1,000 metric tons  
= **10 million people**  
with safe water



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

