

UNHCR SYRIA SITUATION REPORT FOR THE EASTERN GHOUTA AND AFRIN HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCIES As of 08 May 2018

EASTERN GHOUTA

- A total of 93,373¹ individuals arrived to the IDP sites, including 43,984² currently residing in eight IDP sites in Rural Damascus and 49,389³ who have left the shelters, primarily through the 'sponsorship'⁴ programme. Some 3,000 individuals have arrived in Sweida governorate from the IDP sites in Damascus, meanwhile some 100 individuals have arrived to Tartous and Lattakia governorates.
- Humanitarian access is still constrained in some areas in Syria, including in areas that recently shifted control. UNHCR is fully engaged and responding to the needs of the IDPs that left Eastern Ghouta since early March, however access has not yet been granted for UN agencies to provide humanitarian aid inside Eastern Ghouta.
- The situation in the collective shelters hosting IDPs from Eastern Ghouta is stabilizing. UNHCR continues to advocate for the freedom of movement of the displaced civilians, once they have been security cleared, without additional requirements, such as sponsorship by a direct family member. In the recent weeks, due to the limitations of the 'sponsorship' programme, a small number of individuals are leaving the IDP sites, even though they continue to be congested. Some IDPs are also returning to the sites, either due to financial constraints to rent accommodation, to be reunited with their husbands/fathers inside the IDP sites or not to overburden their relatives that sponsored them. UNHCR is advocating for the principle of family unity to be respected at all stages of the evacuation/flight and in all the IDP sites.
- UNHCR, together with its partners, have in the past two months responded to the protection, shelter and NFI needs of the displaced men, women and children in the eight IDP sites; legal counselling was provided; core relief items were delivered for individuals in the sites; shelter support was offered through the installation of rub halls and family-size tents as well as shelter kits.

¹ Figures provided on the 05 May by the Ministry of Local Administration and Environment (MOLAE), who is heading the High Relief Committee.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Mostly women and children, have been released from the IDP sites, primarily through the 'sponsorship' programme, whereby women with children under 15 and men over 55-65 are allowed to leave the shelter, subject to availability of a sponsor.

Emergency response update



Protection

Needs: the priority needs of the displaced families continue to be freedom of movement, implying ability to leave the shelters as entire families, once they have been security screened. This would help decongest the crowded IDP sites, while at the same time mitigating the risk of family separation. Lack of civil documentation and need for registration of marriages and birth of new-borns continue to feature among the priority needs of the IDP population.

This week, the lack of Mukhtar presence in the Harjellah IDP site who is assigned to Douma in Rural Damascus is impeding the issuance of civil documents, as Harjellah police station only accepts identification statements initiated by the local Mukhtar. Meanwhile, the police station at Dweir IDP site accepts identification statements issued by the Mukhtar of the nearby area of Hafir Al Tahta.

Response:

- UNHCR and its partners are responding to the needs of the displaced men, women and children through protection interventions. Since the onset of the Eastern Ghouta emergency response, UNHCR provided 21,978 legal aid counselling sessions to 32,592 IDPs in need of legal intervention through its partners. UNHCR partner, the Syria Trust, with 30 lawyers and Outreach Volunteers (ORVs) together with staff from the Civil Registry, continued registration of applications for identity cards and other civil documents in the IDP sites.
- During UNHCR mission to Najha IDP site on 02 May, many protection issues were observed. Families are still departing the shelter, while many others are returning due to lack of proper accommodation outside the site. Moreover, the newly-opened school in the area remained unfinished and unequipped. However, the Ministry of Education reported that 63 students from the 9th grade were issued “Exam Cards” to take their exams at Najha Educational Centre. UNHCR partner SARC also highlighted the issue of

the privacy in the IDP site in order to mitigate SGBV risks. In addition, SARC organized two separate activities in the Child Friendly Space on life skills addressing 18 female adolescents as well as a recreational activity for 42 children aged between 6-12 years. 75 UNHCR community centres' brochures were handed to SARC for distribution. UNHCR partner SSSD also continued to provide recreational activities for children and awareness raising sessions on the women's hygiene.

- Another mission was conducted by UNHCR to Akram Abu Nasser IDP site on 06 May. As the site has a relatively small population of IDPs, it has been assigned as a family reunification site from all other sites. So far, 25 families separated during East Ghouta evacuation have moved from various sites to reunite in Akram Abu Nasser site.

- During a UNHCR mission to Adra Electricity Complex IDP site on 06 May, it was reported that 50 individuals/15 families returned to the site. UNHCR partner; the Syria Trust continued providing legal assistance and recreational activities for children and has finalized the legal needs assessment.

In Adra Electricity Complex it was also reported that there were more than 20 cases of children with psychological problems which are followed up by a specialized psychiatrist, in addition to 36 persons with disabilities. Two unaccompanied children cases have been identified; one child has been reunited with his family while SARC is following up on the case of the second child. UNHCR partner SSSD is also supporting a sewing project which will start the production of mosquito nets and clothes for IDPs.



Shelter

Currently eight IDP sites are populated, namely; Harjellah (13,450), Adra School Shelter (4,471), Adra Electricity Complex (7,470), Najha (3,572), Nashabiyeh (2,572), Dweir (9,648), Fayhaa Al Sham (2,046), and Akram Abu Nasser (755). Another seven potential shelter sites are; Al Karnak, Al Bueda, Shams Stoves, Harjellah 1, Education complex in Sehnaya, Berdeh, Baghdadi.

Needs and gaps: The IDP sites remain congested, with a total population of 43,984 individuals against the shelters' maximum capacity of 19,808 individuals.

- During the mission to Najha IDP site, SARC requested 40 UNHCR shelter kits, as the six units are very congested and currently hosting 3,175 IDPs in 200 rooms. The communal kitchen in Najha is not functioning, thus SARC is looking for a partner NGO to be responsible for the kitchen. SARC also reported the need for water taps' valves and water heaters in addition to the need for insect repellent spray especially that three cases of scorpions' stings were recently reported.
- The Akram Abu Nasser site has been assigned for hosting family reunification cases from other sites. UNHCR partner SARC is currently providing 70 UNHCR shelter kits to install rooms inside the main warehouse which is currently divided in two sections to ensure the privacy of families moving in. Moreover, SARC made 12 tents out of the UNHCR plastic sheets inside a big tent to accommodate 12 out of the 25 families who have been reunited there.
- In Adra Electricity Complex, the UNHCR team observed that several families moved from the garden and set up their non-standard tents on the sidewalk at the entrance to the site to avoid the insects in the garden. UNHCR is preparing for the delivery of 400 UNHCR shelter kits to its partner SSSD to be placed in the unfinished building and to support families staying in the non-standard tents. One kit will accommodate one or two families based on the family reunification list.

Response: UNHCR, together with other UN agencies and partners, continues its efforts to decongest the IDP sites, and to maintain a reception capacity in case of new displacements.

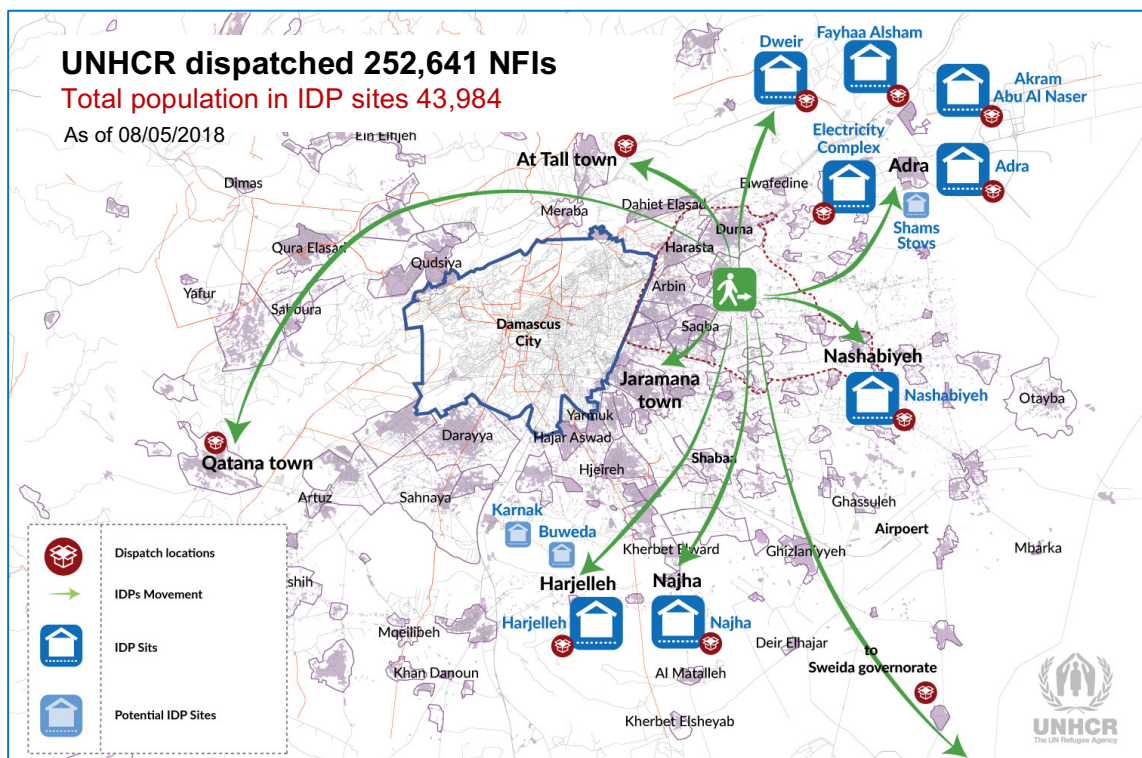
- Three schools in Adra city are being rehabilitated by UNHCR partner SIF. 150 emergency rooms in the three schools have been completed, in addition to 30 emergency rooms installed in the yards.
- UNHCR partner ADRA has also completed the rehabilitation of a school in Najha complex education centre in partnership with UNHCR for the benefit of 552 individuals, as well as completed the installation of four sheds (big size tents) in Harjellah.

- 50 UNHCR family tents have been erected in Adra Electricity Complex by SARC as well as 60 family size tents ready for use in Al Karnak old garage and Harjellah. One big size tent has been installed in Al Karnak site.
- The site preparation for Al Karnak garage with the Syria Trust has been completed. The works included cleaning, levelling and compaction for the area in order to install UNHCR family and big size tents.
- Another site in Harjellah city has been identified and approved by the Governorate of Rural Damascus to be used as an IDP site. UNHCR technical team prepared the layout design and UNHCR partner PUI has completed the site preparation works including cleaning, levelling, compaction for the area and the installation of a new fence for UNHCR family as well as big size tents. The total capacity of this site is 3,070 individuals.
- The 2,200 UNHCR shelter kits provided to SARC are still being used. As of 07 May, 1,272 shelter kits have been distributed (600 in Dweir, 413 in Adra electricity complex, 150 in Fayahaa AL sham, 50 in Akram Abu Nasser and 59 in Harjellah housing unit. The three rub halls were also installed in Adra Electricity Complex and Akram Abu Nasser.



Non-food items (NFIs)

- UNHCR partners are still distributing the 252,641 non-food items that UNHCR had delivered including high thermal blankets, kitchen sets, sleeping mats, mattresses, solar lamps, sleeping bags, hygiene kits, jerry cans to the displaced people from Eastern Ghouta in the eight IDP sites and in Qatana, Jaramana and Al Tall in Rural Damascus, as well as in Sweida governorate.
- In Najha IDP site, UNHCR is following up on the NFI needs of the community including undergarments, manteaux, scarves and footwear, sanitary napkins, portable ovens.
- SARC distributed NFIs to the IDP families in the in Abu-Naser IDP site to cover their basic needs including 200 UNHCR solar lamps. However, IDPs reported that there is still a need for clothes, shoes, fans and mosquito nets.
- In Adra Electricity Complex, the IDPs reported their needs of clothes, shoes, standardized





Health

- UNHCR with other UN agencies; WHO, UNFPA and UNICEF continued its support to the Directorate of Health (DoH) and national NGOs to provide outpatient care in all eight IDP sites.
- UNHCR is currently supporting four medical teams in Adra Electricity Complex and Dweir IDP sites. The support with psychotropic medicines and in-kind assistance with assistive devices extends to other shelters.
- In Najha site, assistive devices i.e. wheelchairs, crutches and bathroom chairs to persons with special needs remain a gap. SARC supplied a list of 20 cases in need of artificial limbs and more than 20 cases in need of crutches. UNHCR is following up on these needs.

AFRIN - Emergency response

- **Some 137,000 IDPs have left Afrin and are in Tal Refaat (some 100,000), Nubul (some 20,000) and Zahraa (some 10,000).**



Protection response

- Since the onset of Afrin emergency, UNHCR has provided protection assistance to 8,134 IDPs through its partners' two community centres, outreach volunteers and mobile teams.
- On 01 May, UNHCR conducted a mission to the new A'ser IDP site in Tal Kraa, northern Aleppo. UNHCR observed two main IDP voluntary movement trends from Nubul and Ziyara to the A'ser IDP site due to economic reasons with many families arriving directly from Afrin reporting lawlessness, kidnapping and looting. There are currently about 1,400 IDPs residing in 255 tents with one family in each tent. The IDPs have no financial income while many have sewing skills, however they lack sewing machines and raw materials. The community in A'ser has established a registration point to keep up-to-date statistics of all IDPs residing in the site, including disaggregated figures. Of the total camp population, 40% are minors, 33% are women and 26% are men. Most IDPs in the camp lost their documents while fleeing the area. Reportedly many others did not want to disclose their documents, resulting in lack of information about birth or marriage registration. Mobile legal services are needed in A'ser to respond to documentation issues and registration of civil events. The community in the A'ser IDP site established various committees dealing with distribution, communication, construction, registration, counselling and security. The community members also conducted household visits to monitor the situation and provide counselling or mediation. In the A'ser IDP site, there are about seven unaccompanied children living together in one of the tents, who are closely monitored by the community. There are also a number of separated children who are taken care of by relatives. UNHCR is following up with their partners to determine the best interest of these children. Two families with persons with disabilities were identified to be in need of medical assistance. The cases were followed up with UNHCR partners to respond to the needs.
- On 02 May, UNHCR conducted a mission to Tal Sheer village in Aleppo. Around 4,500 individuals/900 families in the village fled Afrin area. The residents are living in partially destroyed buildings and most of the original owners are living in Aleppo and did not return due to the prevalence of UXOs which caused many casualties. Many protection issues were observed including documentation where around 30% of the population lacks documentation. One SGBV case was identified and immediately referred to UNHCR partner Al-Ihsan for follow up. There is a need for SGBV prevention and response activities, including the creation of a safe space, rooms that are lockable,

as well as relocation options for individuals at high risk. The IDPs informed the mission that there are many cases of early marriage, therefore an urgent need for awareness raising and counselling.

Children are not attending school and lack a child-friendly space or recreational activities. Accordingly, some children have reportedly developed violent behavior towards each other.

Also, a number of persons with specific needs were identified in Tal Sheer, including people with disabilities, single female-headed households, medical cases and elderly persons. UNHCR is following up on the provision of specialized support, including possible referrals for services in Aleppo.



Shelter response

- UNHCR's partner SARC continued the installation of shelter kits in Tal Refaat village for IDP families, who are currently residing in empty houses which need doors, windows, minor rehabilitation works and WASH facilities. This week, SARC has installed 25 shelter kits for 150 individuals.
- Four new IDP sites have been recently established in villages around Fafin area; Barkhodar, A'ser, Afrin, and Al-Aloushiyeh. UNHCR is arranging visits to these sites to identify the needs of the population there.
- During UNHCR mission to A'ser new IDP site, levelling was ongoing for further site expansion, however tents are being erected and flooded with the rains in the previous days. The layout of the IDP site is well organized with sufficient space between tents. Water is not available in the IDP site. The committee has privately purchased a number of metal tanks and constructed basic shower and washing facilities. The water that exists locally is in need of purification tablets.
- During the mission to Al Sheer village, UNHCR observed that IDPs are staying in damaged houses, and other buildings, and are under the threat of being evicted as the original owners are asking the IDPs to leave. According to the GoS representative, an agreement is being worked on for the IDPs to go to the IDP sites and for the original inhabitants to return to their houses.



NFI response

- SARC and other four UNHCR partners continue to distribute NFIs to IDPs in many locations in Tal Refaat and its surroundings. UNHCR is preparing to assist students who may arrive in Aleppo from hard-to-reach locations to take their exams. UNHCR has availed its NFIs to assist those students who may be accommodated in collective shelters during the period of exams.
- The situation in the A'ser camp, Tal Kraa is dire with families not having received any non-food items so far. Families are sleeping on old plastic sheeting on the hard ground inside the tents. UNHCR is following up with its partner SARC on the provision of a full NFI kit along with mosquito nets and rechargeable fans in addition to the requested fire extinguishers, dignity kits and clothes which are a high-priority need for these IDPs.



Health response

- UNHCR partner; the Syria Trust carried out four health activities for children between 7 and 13 years focusing on self-hygiene and health behavioral promotion. Also, a focus group discussion was held through the Syria Trust addressing adolescents hosted in the IDP sites. The discussion focussed on the sanitary and health situation and identified suitable persons to join the health promotion team. The implementation of a sanitation community-based initiative "Showers and laundry space" is ongoing through Al-Ehsan in the IDP site in Kafar Naia village, near Tal Refaat. Moreover, medical in-kind assistance was also granted to 22 persons through the community centre in Ashrafieha in Aleppo city.

- In Tal Sheer, many cases of Tuberculosis, Hepatitis and Leishmania were tracked. Fafin Hospital has recently begun upscaling services and treating IDPs free of charge. Moreover, there is lack of chronic diseases' medicines. The local NGO Yadan bi Yad provided on 06 May specialized doctors for the hospital in the area.

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