

UNHCR Delivers Essential Medicines for 23,000 Internally Displaced Patients

The conflict in Syria has resulted in limited access to health clinics, delayed access to health care, the discontinuation of treatment and follow up, limited access to clean water and sanitation as well as interrupted vaccination programmes. The impact of the current crisis on the populations' health and wellbeing is complicated and far reaching. It includes permanent disabilities, potential risk of women delivering without being able to reach clinics and/or receive postnatal care, complications and high rate of mortality in patients with chronic diseases, epidemic outbreaks of water and food-borne diseases, outbreaks of vaccines-preventable diseases and psychological trauma and mental health.



Donated medicines reaching SARC clinic in Al Zahira
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UNHCR has responded by providing primary health care services and emergency life-saving medical and surgical interventions to respond to the population's health needs through its implementing partners as well as national authorities, national associations and international partners to reduce suffering and minimize mortality rate in Syria. In November, in one such intervention, UNHCR donated essential primary healthcare medicines valued at over US\$1.4 million to its implementing partner SARC which will be distributed to the pharmacies in ten SARC polyclinics and medical points in Damascus, Rural Damascus, Homs, Tartous and Aleppo. More than 23,000 internally displaced persons will benefit from this free assistance on a monthly basis will be used to treat a range of the most common acute and chronic diseases such as coronary arteries disease (CAD), diabetes, arthritis, asthma, epilepsy, upper and lower respiratory infections, enteritis, ophthalmology infections, gastric ulcers, scabies and lice as well as mental problems.

HIGHLIGHTS

- UNHCR Delivers Essential Medicines for 23,000 IDPs
- First UNHCR Supported Community Center in Latakia Officially Opens
- Two millionth Beneficiary Reached with CRIs
- UNHCR team Visits Health Clinic in Hama



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UNHCR Representative Officially Opens the First Community Center in Lattakia



On 02 December, the official opening by the UNHCR Representative of the first community center in Lattakia supported by UNHCR and run by its implementing partner, the Syria Trust took place. The center which is located in the Suleiba area of Lattakia city started functioning earlier in September despite not being completely finished. Since then it has provided support to the psychosocial well-being for both the IDP and host communities and promoting their participation in such things as vocational training and remedial classes.



meeting women attending vocational training in soap making
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So far the community center has benefited over 1,000 individuals and been providing many services for the affected population including psychosocial support, vocational training, educational support, community-based initiatives support, social services as well as various other activities based on the needs of the community. UNHCR presently supports 30 community centers in nine governorates in Syria of which 12 were opened in the last three months in Aleppo, Lattakia, Hama, Homs and Rural Damascus, with a number of others planned for 2016.

UNHCR Reaches Two millionth Beneficiary and Continues Winterization Programme

In November, UNHCR reached yet another milestone when it reached its two millionth beneficiary with humanitarian assistance. This includes nearly quarter of a million under its winter aid programme which started at the beginning of October and is targeting 750,000 individuals with 150,000 kits in the winter period of 2015-2016. As of the beginning of December, UNHCR and its partners reached over one third of the beneficiaries with **281,750** individuals benefiting from this programme. The standard winter kit is composed of winter clothes, thermal blankets and plastic sheets.



Priority is given to the newly displaced individuals, people in hard-to-reach areas, people with specific needs and vulnerabilities such as unaccompanied minors or elders, single women as well as people with disability, mental health problems or serious medical conditions and chronic diseases. Since the beginning of 2015, UNHCR has distributed nearly **8.5 million** Core Relief Items (CRIs) to **2.1 million** vulnerable individuals.



UNHCR Supported Health Clinic in Hama gives hope to Mohamad

It is estimated that the Hama governorate is home to two million displaced people. This week, a UNHCR team visited Hama city and saw firsthand the huge challenges facing people there. While there the team visited a health clinic run by UNHCR's partner Social Care Hama. This is one of seven supported by UNHCR in Hama who together assists over 3,500 individuals per week with primary health-care free of charge. The team were informed of the main challenges faced by the clinics on a daily basis such as the massive 'brain drain' throughout Syria with many healthcare professionals leaving the country, Inflation which is driving up the price of medicines, shortages of medicines and health equipment and the trauma suffered by many people due to the conflict with shortages of PSS supports and mental health specialists.



Waiting area of the clinic
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Pharmacy dispensing essential medicines
©UNHCR/ D.Mc Sweeney



Mohamad at the center receiving treatment
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While there, the team met an eight year old child Mohamad and his mother. Mohamad suffers from Cerebral Palsy and receives medication and regular healthcare at the centre. However, he is in need of brain surgery in the future which is unavailable in the centre or in Hama. Mohammad's mother explained to the team that "If the clinic wasn't there I don't know what I would do as there is no other place for me to go". She then thanked UNHCR and Social Care Hama for their assistance saying "with the help of the clinic we are handling the condition the best we can, but unless he gets the operation he needs I fear for the future"

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These are the 2014 and 2015 donors for the Syria situation

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