

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

REGIONAL SITUATION REPORT

FOR THE SYRIA CRISIS



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Expanding options and choices for the poorest women and adolescent girls is the most important thing we do. By empowering them to make their own decisions about the timing and spacing of pregnancies, we open an important pathway towards their economic security and independence. It is also a pathway towards more balanced economies and societies as envisioned in the Sustainable Development Goals.

UNFPA Executive Director, Dr. Natalia Kanem

New Year, New Beginnings

12 January 2018

REGIONAL SITUATION REPORT ON THE SYRIA CRISIS

IN THIS REPORT

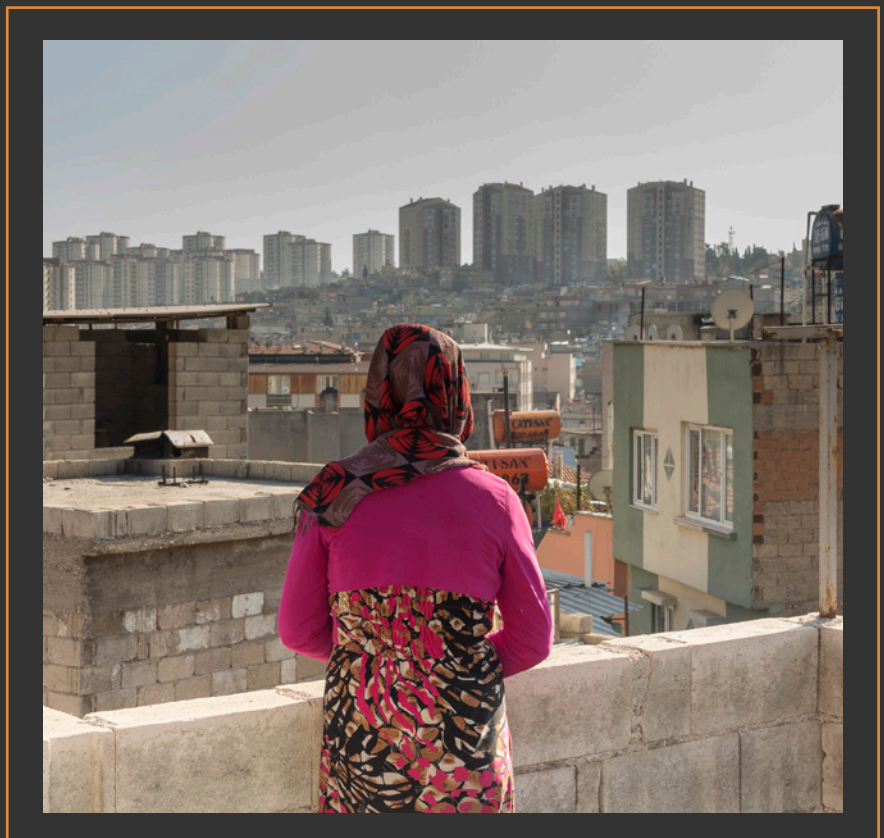
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The Regional Situation Report for the Syria Crisis offers a bird's eye view of UNFPA's operations within the context of the Syria Crisis.

The report is prepared by the UNFPA Regional Syria Response Hub in Amman, Jordan, and spans operations conducted by UNFPA offices in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq, and Egypt, in addition to operations conducted in Syria through cross-border modalities from Jordan and Turkey.

In addition to providing aggregated quantitative updates for each country, the report also brings stories from the field that highlight the plight of communities inside Syria and in host countries, in addition to underscoring the positive impact of the response services provided by UNFPA in the areas of reproductive health, gender-based violence, youth, and others.



SNAPSHOT

THE SYRIA CRISIS

RESPONSE EFFORTS FROM ALL CHANNELS.

The conflict in Syria has created one of the most severe and protracted humanitarian crises in the world today. Millions have been displaced both inside the country and outside as refugees, especially in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. The crisis continues to devastate the country and shows few signs of letting up in the near future.

Even in these circumstances, UNFPA believes that every Syrian woman, adolescent girl and child has the right to reproductive health and protection from gender-based violence.

UNFPA operations in Syria are run from the Syria Country Office, as well as from the UNFPA hubs in Amman, Jordan and Gaziantep, Turkey for respective cross-border operations.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

- 241,779 beneficiaries reached with reproductive health services
- 56,943 family planning consultations
- 6,060 c-section procedures
- 8,318 assisted vaginal deliveries
- 43,460 ante-natal care consultations
- 11,475 post-natal care consultations provided
- 1,023 primary healthcare facilities
- 64 functional health facilities that provide Emergency Obstetric Care
- 69 functional mobile clinics
- 176 people trained on reproductive health related topics

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- 136 functional women and girls safe spaces (WGSS)
- 95,082 beneficiaries reached with GBV programming and services
- 60,245 beneficiaries reached with Dignity Kits
- 2,186 beneficiaries provided with GBV case management
- 66,293 beneficiaries reached with GBV awareness-raising messages
- 100 people trained on GBV-related topics

YOUTH SERVICES

- 43 functional youth centres
- 19,958 beneficiaries reached with any kind of youth programming



WHOLE OF SYRIA

COMBINED RESPONSES FROM SYRIA COUNTRY OFFICE,
CROSS-BORDER JORDAN AND CROSS-BORDER TURKEY.

Through the unanimous adoption of resolution Security Council Resolution 2165 in 2014, it was decided that United Nations agencies and humanitarian partners could, with notification to the Syrian authorities, use the border crossings from Jordan and Turkey to ensure that assistance, including medical and surgical supplies, reached people in need throughout Syria through the most direct routes.

With the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2393 in December 2017, the provisions of Resolution 2165 were renewed for an additional twelve months in 2018.

This will enable UNFPA to continue supporting people in need within locations in Syria that are currently inaccessible from Damascus through cross-border modalities operated from Turkey and Jordan.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

SYRIA COUNTRY OFFICE

- 160,344 beneficiaries reached with reproductive health services
- 22,515 family planning consultations
- 5,129 c-section procedures
- 6,289 assisted vaginal deliveries
- 27,732 ante-natal care consultations
- 6,189 post-natal care consultations provided
- 967 primary healthcare facilities
- 39 functional health facilities that provide Emergency Obstetric Care
- 56 functional mobile clinics
- 93 people trained on reproductive health related topics

CROSS-BORDER JORDAN

- 7,720 beneficiaries reached with reproductive health services
- 736 family planning consultations
- 496 c-section procedures
- 821 assisted vaginal deliveries
- 3,462 ante-natal care consultations
- 95 post-natal care consultations provided

CROSS-BORDER TURKEY

- 26,880 beneficiaries reached with reproductive health services
- 11,814 family planning consultations
- 390 c-section procedures
- 841 assisted vaginal deliveries
- 7,139 ante-natal care consultations
- 1,534 post-natal care consultations provided
- 10 primary healthcare facilities
- 10 functional health facilities that provide Emergency Obstetric Care
- 11 functional mobile clinics
- 62 people trained on reproductive health related topics

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

SYRIA COUNTRY OFFICE

- 35 functional women and girls safe spaces (WGSS)
- 26,558 beneficiaries reached with GBV programming and services
- 426 beneficiaries reached with Dignity Kits
- 1,089 beneficiaries provided with GBV case management
- 46,144 beneficiaries reached with GBV awareness-raising messages

CROSS-BORDER JORDAN

- 4 functional women and girls safe spaces (WGSS)
- 418 beneficiaries reached with GBV programming and services
- 353 beneficiaries reached with GBV awareness-raising messages

CROSS-BORDER TURKEY

- 11 functional women and girls safe spaces (WGSS)
- 13,877 beneficiaries reached with GBV programming and services
- 2,577 beneficiaries reached with Dignity Kits
- 136 beneficiaries provided with GBV case management
- 7,581 beneficiaries reached with GBV awareness-raising messages
- 94 people trained on GBV-related topics

YOUTH SERVICES

SYRIA COUNTRY OFFICE

- 16 functional youth centres

HIGHLIGHT

HOPE FINDS AL-TABQA

AFTER YEARS OF INTENSE VIOLENCE AND CONFLICT, UNFPA HELPS DELIVER AID TO THE RESIDENTS OF AL-TABQA BY SUPPORTING THE OPENING OF A REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CLINIC IN THE EMBATTLED CITY IN NORTHERN SYRIA.

Nestled on the banks of the Euphrates River, some 160 kilometers east of Aleppo, is the Raqqa Governorate of Northern Syria — a place that has seen its fair share of violent conflicts since the onset of the Syria crisis. The second largest city in Raqqa, known as Al-Tabqa, was reclaimed from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) around seven months ago, and has since become a concentration point for displaced families and individuals.

Since May 2017, the population of Al-Tabqa has grown by some 200 percent according to a joint UN assessment mission conducted in December, with around 90,000 residents and 80,000 displaced people, many of whom came from Raqqa City and its surrounding rural areas.

The health situation in Al-Tabqa remains precarious, but the new UNFPA-supported reproductive health clinic, opened in January, is already addressing the urgent needs of the population.

"In the first two weeks of the clinic's operation, we have provided medical and reproductive health services to 460 women," explains Dr. Adnan Al-Aqoub, a member of the medical staff supervising the operations at the clinic.

Reproductive needs seriously underserved

According to the UN assessment held in December, basic, critical care in Al-Tabqa is substantially lacking. Routine vaccinations are unavailable, the cost of medication is spiraling, and medications for diabetes, asthma and other chronic conditions are in short supply.

Moreover, lack of health facilities and qualified health workers has been a serious concern. While the national hospital in the area is functional, it lacks essential equipment and supplies to provide adequate care. Two private hospitals are also functional but remain insufficient to meet the needs of the city's growing population.

As a result of the conflicts, the sexual and reproductive health needs of the residents have been seriously underserved for years. Contraceptives and reproductive pharmaceuticals have long been out of reach or under the control of ISIL, and therefore unavailable to health facilities supported by the government or NGOs. It is estimated that around 6,800 pregnant in Al-Tabqa women are in need of reproductive

health services, but poverty and insecurity have worsened health-care access for a considerable portion, especially those from surrounding rural areas.

A Lighthouse in a Sea of Darkness

The new reproductive health clinic, opened by UNFPA and a local implementing partner with funding from the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (ECHO), is already bringing much-needed relief to women. On January 16th, 30-year-old Maysaa celebrated the safe delivery of her twins — a boy and a girl — in the clinic, marking the end of a nine-month struggle amid plenty of uncertainty.

"I am so blissful to hold my newborn twins. They are in very good health and they were provided with the essential medication and medical services," explains Maysaa, who was fortunate to receive post-partum and neonatal care services following the delivery of her twins, whom she named Zakaria and Hanan.

After she was discharged, a UNFPA-supported medical team provided follow-up care to ensure that her condition remain stable. "Even after returning home, the medical team is still paying me visits to follow-up on my health and that of my newborn children," notes Maysaa.

Plenty of Work Ahead

Access to Al-Tabqa remains difficult, with some routes into the city still at risk from landmines, although demining agencies are working to improve safety in the area. Other routes into the city have been disrupted by infrastructure destruction, while snowstorms have considerably hampered communications. Despite these challenges, the new clinic has been fully equipped and staffed and continues to provide urgent care to residents in need.

"We are thrilled to see that all the needed services are being provided to the poor families in the area," commented Dr. Al-Aqoub. "There is still plenty of work ahead."

The local health council has requested another mobile health team to provide additional services in the surrounding rural areas. UNFPA is now targeting Raqqa's southern regions, working with partners to distribute hygiene kits containing essential sanitation supplies, as well as winterization kits containing warm clothes in the coming weeks. UNFPA's presence and response has been enabled by the UNFPA Emergency Fund, which provided the initial investment for establishing a field office for coordination purposes.



HIGHLIGHT

A SAFE HAVEN IN JARABULUS

WOMEN AND GIRLS IN JARABULUS, NORTHERN SYRIA, FIND ROOM TO HEAL AND GROW IN THE WOMEN AND GIRLS SAFE SPACE SUPPORTED BY UNFPA FROM CROSS-BORDER TURKEY.

"We feel at home here. The center has changed our lives and made us feel more secure," explains the young mother who sought help at the women and girls safe space (WGSS) in Jarabulus.

She was one of 17 other women and girls taking part in a series of focus group discussions conducted by an independent research and evaluation agency, which had been contracted by UNFPA to perform third party monitoring of gender-based violence and reproductive health service delivery points in Syria. The women and girls were a combination of internally displaced persons and host community residents, with a myriad of social backgrounds including former students, home-makers and nurses.

All had come to the Jarabulus WGSS to access vital services to respond to and prevent gender-based violence.

The women and girls took part in various activities such as computer lessons, hair dressing, sewing, first aid, and literacy courses. Specialized psycho-social services and comprehensive case-management were also available for those who needed them. Despite the differences in age and background, all were unanimous in their praise for the staff and the importance of the services they received. Psycho-social support services were singled out by the group for their ability to assist beneficiaries in releasing emotional stress and build their self-esteem. The center also provides

these women and girls with vital coping mechanisms to allow them to find the strength and willpower needed to overcome past traumas. As one participant describes, "we can now support ourselves and our children."

Many of these women had experienced the indiscriminant violence of occupation first-hand when Jarabulus was under ISIS control. The services at the center have been crucial in helping these women and girls adopt positive coping mechanisms to heal the emotional wounds that had been inflicted upon them and navigate the perils of day-to-day life in an active war zone.

UNFPA SERVICES FROM CROSS-BORDER TURKEY PREPARE TO MEET 2018 HEAD-ON

UNFPA Turkey Cross-Border Program has undergone a number of changes in 2018 that will enable it to respond to the needs of GBV and RH service delivery in Syria more effectively and efficiently.

Firstly, there have been adjustments in the number, type and locations of health facilities being supported. Under the new framework, there are 8 CEmONCs, 2 BEmONCs, 10 PHCs and 11 Mobile Clinics in Idleb, Aleppo and Hama governorates. Secondly, support to all 11 WGSS will be strengthened with increased emphasis on GBV services for adolescents as well as women and girls with disabilities. Third, new tools are being developed for remote monitoring of service delivery as well as new reporting tools. Corresponding training will take place in February on implementation of the tools..

During January 2018, UNFPA Turkey Cross-Border hub was heavily involved in the humanitarian emergency response to on-going displacements in Syria. This recent wave of displacement began in late 2017, which resulted in over 300,000 displacements between December and January.

To respond, UNFPA Turkey and its implementing partners have deployed mobile teams to provide rapid response to the large influxes of internally displaced persons, delivering dignity kits, psychological first aid, and primary healthcare. These efforts are continuing to ensure that partners have access to vital RH and GBV services in their current locations.

UNFPA Syria delivers aid to residents of rural Al-Raqqa

UNFPA Syria was able to reach the rural outskirts of Al Raqqa Governorate to provide much needed health services in the area. In cooperation with a local implementing partner, residents of this severely underserved region of northern Syria received a wide array of aid packages and services, including 1,800 winter- hygiene kits distributed to women and young girls.

UNFPA is the first UN organization to reach the village of Dabsi Afnan south of Al Raqqa, which currently hosts 2,000 families in dire need of health services. The area lacks any operational health centers, with the exception of a mobile clinic operated by a local implementing partner and supported by UNFPA Syria.



UNFPA's Mission

Delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

UNFPA believes that every Syrian woman and girl has the right to have access to affordable reproductive healthcare and be effectively protected from gender-based violence. UNFPA and partners are scaling up efforts to empower and improve the lives of Syrian women and youth and impacted communities inside Syria and in host countries, including by advocating for human rights and gender equality, to better cope with and recover from the crisis.



COUNTRY REPORT

JORDAN

UNFPA JORDAN CONTINUES TO PROVIDE MUCH NEEDED SERVICES TO SYRIAN REFUGEES NATIONWIDE.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

- 8,316 beneficiaries reached with reproductive health services
- 1,519 family planning consultations
- 159 assisted vaginal deliveries
- 2,021 ante-natal care consultations
- 469 post-natal care consultations provided
- 3 functional health facilities that provide Emergency Obstetric Care
- 15 primary healthcare facilities

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- 20 functional women and girls safe spaces (WGSS)
- 6,016 beneficiaries reached with GBV programming and services
- 296 beneficiaries provided with GBV case management
- 916 beneficiaries reached with GBV awareness-raising messages

YOUTH SERVICES

- 1 functional youth centre

Jordan is currently hosting more than 1.3 million Syrians, including 655,000 registered refugees, who face increasing vulnerability as their savings, assets and resources are long exhausted. Providing for their needs and ensuring their access to basic reproductive health and gender-based violence services is among the top priorities of UNFPA Jordan.

According to the 2015 population census, the total population of Jordan was estimated at 9.531 million, including 1.265 million Syrians, who represent 13.2% of the overall population.

Approximately 79% of Syrian registered refugees, representing 516,000 people, live in host communities in urban and rural areas of Jordan. The remaining 21% is settled in camps, either in Azraq, Emirati Jordanian Camp, or Za'atari. The highest concentration of refugees is found in the northern governorates of Amman, Irbid, Mafraq and Zarqa.

UNFPA Jordan has been providing essential reproductive health and gender-based violence prevention services to Syrian refugees throughout the kingdom, whether in refugee camps or in host communities.



HIGHLIGHT

ILLUSTRATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

UNFPA JORDAN, SEVEN CIRCLES AND WORKING DREAMERS DEMONSTRATE HOW IMPACTFUL ART CAN BE IN TACKLING COMPLEX HUMANITARIAN ISSUES.

In an effort to leverage on the universal power of art to raise awareness on gender-based violence, the Women's Empowerment cartoon competition supported by UNFPA Jordan offered cartoonists in the region the opportunity to use their talents to address this vital subject.

In a stunning marriage of art and activism, UNFPA Jordan collaborated with Seven Circles, renowned Jordanian cartoonist Omar Al Abdallat, and the competition-based online platform Working Dreamers on this innovative project, which was organized as part of the 16 Days of Activism campaign. Various gender-based violence issues like child marriage and domestic violence were on full display in the 167 cartoons submitted for the competition, depicting haunting images that demonstrated the sheer power art has in capturing the daily struggles of women and girls.

"To mark the campaign this year, we wanted to find an innovative way to shed light on gender-based violence," explains UNFPA Jordan Representative Laila Baker. "We think cartoons can provide a fresh take on a subject matter that is often times not easy to explore."

A total of 6,190 votes were cast to select the winners of this competition, with Alaa Rustum's cartoon, "Underage," chosen by 1,724 online voters. Rustum's cartoon depicts an older man with a baby carriage containing a weeping young girl in a wedding gown. Doaa El Adl's cartoon, titled "Marriage of Minors," depicts a smiling older man pushing a shopping cart full of young girls wearing wedding gowns.

The competition not only served to raise awareness on an issue that continues to impact a significant portion of women and girls region-wide, but also demonstrated the importance of leveraging on the power of art to tackle prevalent humanitarian issues in creative and far-reaching ways.



UNFPA continues to provide aid to Syrian refugees stranded on the Berm

Tens of thousands of Syrians remain stranded in no man's land in between Jordan and Syria in a situation that goes far beyond desperate. Living on a strip of land between two man-made barriers of sand, a rocky desert with no vegetation, no water and one of the harshest climates on earth, communities on the Berm remain in dire need of humanitarian assistance, threatened by nearby tribal conflicts, extortion and a growing black market.

While only a few outsiders have ever had the chance to visit the location, UNFPA

Jordan continues to deliver services to Syrians on the Berm, particularly in Rukban, which remains the most densely populated area in the region.

In January, UNFPA conducted a training for 45 community health workers from Rukban camp on two essential topics: the use of clean delivery kits and high risk pregnancies. UNFPA also conducted free medical days targeting a population of around 4,000, in two areas in Rwaished, delivering much needed assistance to 548 beneficiaries.

Moreover, UNFPA participated in the interagency humanitarian assistance delivery at Rukban — an operation that lasted for five days and saw the delivery of 96 trucks and two cranes to transport humanitarian assistance to communities in need. In total, UNFPA Dignity Kits reached 9,740 households from 28 tribes, groups and sub-groups, delivering hygiene supplies and other essential dignity items to women in the area.

COUNTRY REPORT

LEBANON

WITH THE HIGHEST PER CAPITA NUMBER OF REFUGEES IN THE WORLD, UNFPA CONTINUES TO PROVIDE VITAL SERVICES TO SYRIANS NATIONWIDE.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

- 350 beneficiaries reached with reproductive health services
- 164 family planning consultations
- 50 assisted vaginal deliveries
- 140 ante-natal care consultations
- 46 post-natal care consultations provided
- 3 primary healthcare facilities
- 1 functional mobile clinic

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- 3 functional women and girls safe spaces (WGSS)
- 2,022 beneficiaries reached with GBV programming and services
- 28 beneficiaries provided with GBV case management
- 1,994 beneficiaries reached with GBV awareness-raising messages
- 6 people trained on GBV-related topics

YOUTH SERVICES

- 1 functional youth centre

Since the onset of the Syria crisis in 2011, Lebanon has continued to be a generous host, welcoming around 1.5 million displaced Syrians — the highest per capita number of refugees in the world.

Given the significant refugee-per-capita ratio and the undue strain the crisis has placed on Lebanon’s economy and services, UNFPA Lebanon continues to provide a wide array of programmes and services to displaced Syrians in Lebanon.

More than 75 percent of refugees in Lebanon are women and girls, making it all the more vital to provide them with essential reproductive health services as well as programmes to respond to and prevent gender-based violence.

Since the beginning of the crisis, UNFPA Lebanon has continually worked on enhancing coordination, expanding partnerships, and assessing needs in close collaboration with key humanitarian actors including pertinent agencies within the United Nations.



COUNTRY REPORT

TURKEY

WITH THE LARGEST NUMBER OF REFUGEES WORLDWIDE, TURKEY CONTINUES TO PROVIDE MUCH NEEDED ASSISTANCE TO DISPLACED SYRIANS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

- 52,484 beneficiaries reached with reproductive health services
- 21,578 family planning consultations
- 5,546 ante-natal care consultations
- 2,068 post-natal care consultations provided
- 35 primary healthcare facilities

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- 35 functional women and girls safe spaces (WGSS)
- 41,537 beneficiaries reached with GBV programming and services
- 57,222 beneficiaries reached with Dignity Kits
- 81 beneficiaries provided with GBV case management
- 8,514 beneficiaries reached with GBV awareness-raising messages

YOUTH SERVICES

- 4 functional youth centres
- 3,592 beneficiaries reached with youth programming

Turkey hosts the largest number of refugees and asylum-seekers in the world, which includes more than 3.5 million Syrians registered with UNHCR.

Most refugees in Turkey are situated in host communities around the country, which has stretched the absorptive capacities of many host communities and resulted in tensions between refugees and host community members.

As the refugee crisis in Turkey becomes more protracted, delivering support to national and local systems, with a strong focus on supporting women, children and youth, is more vital than ever to reinforce the country's resilience.

UNFPA Turkey continues to provide essential reproductive health and gender-based violence services to Syrian communities in need in Ankara, Gaziantep, and Istanbul, addressing assistance gaps and organizing far-reaching programs that serve to protect vulnerable members of the community.



HIGHLIGHT

THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF CHILD MARRIAGE

AYA'S FATE WAS SEALED AT AGE 16 WHEN HER FAMILY MARRIED HER OFF TO A RELATIVE. TODAY, SHE IS A REFUGEE WITH EIGHT CHILDREN, THREE OF WHOM LIVE WITH DISABILITIES.

Aya was born in Syria as the middle child of a family of 10 children. Grappling with poverty and harsh living conditions throughout her early years, Aya had never truly experienced the true meaning of childhood — an unfortunate fate that came to full fruition when her family married her off to a relative at age 16.

For Aya, that untimely union dictated the course of her life, forcing her to bear the brunt of family and children when she had barely begun to discover her real self.

"For many women born into poor families, early marriage is a matter of course," explains Aya. "It is perceived as the fastest and easiest way to economic stability, but in reality that is rarely the case."

By the time she was in her late thirties, Aya had eight children of her own — three of whom are living with disabilities — and was leading a life of socioeconomic hardship not dissimilar from the one she suffered through as a child. Today, at age 59, she lives as a refugee in Turkey, having left her homeland in 2012 following the eruption of the crisis in Syria.

"The war made it impossible to remain in Syria, with extended disruptions in basic services like water and electricity that made it impossible for me to care for my children," notes Aya.

Recently, Aya came across UNFPA's partner in Turkey, the Kamer Foundation, which provides assistance to survivors of gender-based violence.

"I first heard about the foundation during the Home Visits programme offered by the foundation," says Aya. "I sought their help, requesting financial support with the hope of securing the needed care for my disabled children and providing for my family."

UNFPA supported Aya throughout the process, securing an appointment for her at Kızıltepe State Hospital where she was able to obtain the required documentation establishing the disabled status of her children, each of whom is currently covered by a monthly disability allowance.

UNFPA is also supporting Aya in submitting school applications for her other children, whom she hopes to provide with basic education to hopefully secure a brighter future.

HIGHLIGHT

ESCAPING THE CLUTCHES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

NATALIE'S JOURNEY WITH DOMESTIC ABUSE REVEALS THE TRAP OF SILENCE THAT WOMEN IN HER SITUATION OFTEN FALL INTO AND THE IMPORTANCE OF SPEAKING OUT.

Natalie came to the attention of a UNFPA Turkey health mediator during a field visit, who suspected that she and her children were survivors of domestic abuse at the hand of her husband. Although Natalie dismissed the idea outright, her body and mannerisms showed clear signs of abuse and she seemed in desperate need of urgent assistance.

A visit to Natalie's house was organized and conducted by a group of UNFPA health mediators and a psychologist, during which she and her children were interviewed while her husband was out of the house.

"We introduced ourselves and initiated a conversation," explains the health mediator. "This is when we learned that this was her second marriage, and that she had two children from her first marriage and one child from this one. While Natalie herself was reluctant to open up on the abuse she had been experiencing, we learned from the children that her husband was routinely abusing his stepchildren."

It was Natalie's son, Sami, who quickly became vocal about the abuse, bringing out a slipper which she explained was the step father's weapon of choice against his mother, his sister and himself. He continued to narrate a story of routine and abject violence, describing in detail the horrific treatment he and his sister experienced at the hands of their stepfather.

"He used to pull our nails with pliers," explained Sami, "and he would send us to buy bread and beat us if we couldn't find any."

The fear and confusion that resulted from the frequent abuse had rendered Natalie speechless, preventing her from openly discussing the violence to which she and her children were exposed to on an almost daily basis.

Given her fear of speaking out, and because the safety and wellbeing of her children was the main priority, UNFPA immediately contacted the local authorities. UNFPA's health mediator accompanied Natalie and her children to the police station, where her sworn statement was taken. It was there that Natalie opened up, corroborating the narrative described by her son.

It was decided that Natalie would be moved to a women's shelter to protect her from further abuse, and Natalie expressed her desire to relocate to Lebanon with her father — a process in which she is being assisted by migration specialists working with UNFPA.



EGYPT

WITH NEARLY HALF A MILLION SYRIANS LIVING ALONGSIDE EGYPTIANS, UNFPA CONTINUES TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO SYRIAN REFUGEES IN THE COUNTRY, FOCUSING ON ISSUES RELATED TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE.

Egypt remains a destination and transit country for refugees and asylum-seekers, most of which live in urban areas. The country continues to generously host Syrian refugees, despite the absence of a land border with Syria. Currently, there are 127,414 Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR Egypt.

Egypt constitutes a successful model with regards to the social inclusiveness dimension. The country hosts nearly half a million Syrians who live alongside Egyptians in various areas, sharing public services, resources and many of the privileges afforded to local citizens.

Among refugees in Egypt, women and girls, boys, adolescents, and unaccompanied and separated children face disproportionate risks. According to UNHCR, 94 percent of the Syrian population in Egypt have been identified as either highly or severely vulnerable. UNFPA Egypt continues to provide essential services to Syrians, focusing on prevailing social predicaments associated with forced migration such as various forms of gender-based violence.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

66 beneficiaries reached with reproductive health services

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

6 functional women and girls safe spaces (WGSS)

377 beneficiaries reached with GBV programming and services

105 beneficiaries provided with GBV case management

208 beneficiaries reached with GBV awareness-raising messages

YOUTH SERVICES

138 beneficiaries reached with youth programming

HIGHLIGHT

THE WINDING ROAD TO NORMALCY

HANA'S EXPERIENCE WITH WOMEN AND GIRLS SAFE SPACES IN EGYPT HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANCE OF THESE HAVENS IN HELPING REFUGEES INCH THEIR WAY BACK TO NORMALCY.

For Hana, safe spaces offered a safe haven after a turbulent year of war and forced displacement. When she first came to the safe space, Hana was severely depressed and confided in the social worker that she had been struggling with frequent suicidal thoughts.

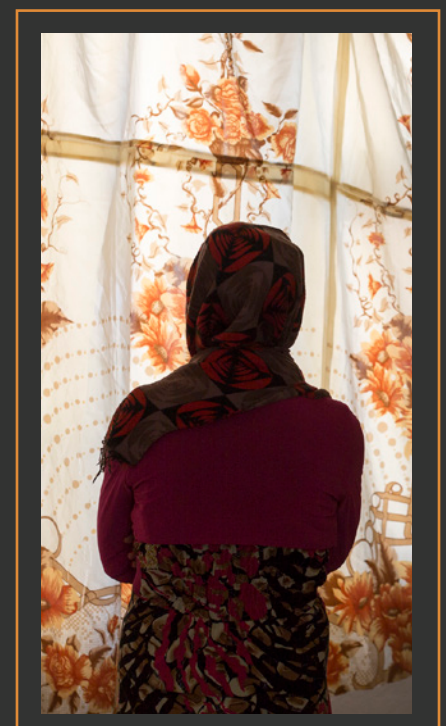
During the session, Hana opened up about her experience, revealing to the social worker that she had been raped the year before shortly after arriving in Egypt.

The trauma of that experience was also being reinforced on a daily basis, as Hana was also suffering routine sexual harassment and abuse, which made her feel like a pariah.

The safe space supported by UNFPA helped restore a sense of normalcy for Hana. Through one-on-one counselling with the psychologist and the visiting psychiatrist, Hana was able to begin her journey to recovery.

Slowly but surely, the suicidal tendencies abated, at which point she joined the larger group therapy sessions where she listened to other women like her detail their own experiences with displacement and gender-based violence. These sessions were vital in helping Hana cope and easing her sense of alienation,

At the same time, Hana was encouraged to join the crochet classes held at the safe space which helped her gain confidence and self-efficacy. It was also a way to generate modest income which helped her support her children.



COUNTRY REPORT

IRAQ

UNFPA IRAQ CONTINUES TO PROVIDE ESSENTIAL SERVICES TO REFUGEES IN BASIRMA, DRASHAKRAN, KWARGOSK , AND QWSHTAPA CAMPS.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

- 1,655 beneficiaries reached with reproductive health services
- 56 c-section procedures
- 210 assisted vaginal deliveries
- 376 ante-natal care consultations
- 225 post-natal care consultations provided
- 8 primary healthcare facilities
- 16 functional health facilities that provide Emergency Obstetric Care
- 21 people trained on reproductive health related topics

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- 10 functional women and girls safe spaces (WGSS)
- 4,695 beneficiaries reached with GBV programming and services
- 20 beneficiaries reached with Dignity Kits
- 451 beneficiaries provided with GBV case management
- 936 beneficiaries reached with GBV awareness-raising messages

YOUTH SERVICES

- 11 functional youth centres

Currently, some 247,379 Syrian Refugees are registered with UNHCR in Iraq, with the majority centered in the Kurdistan Region while the remainder is distributed throughout the center and south of the country.

Over three million Iraqis have been internally displaced since January 2014, including close to one million internally displaced persons (IDPs) hosted in the three governorates of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq alongside the refugee population already hosted there.

The sheer number of IDPs and the deterioration of the economic situation has had a significant impact on the ability of Syrian refugees to attain and maintain self-reliance.

Moreover, budgetary issues as well as drops in oil prices continue to constrain the provision of basic services to refugees and the impacted community.

UNFPA Iraq has continued to scale up its responses to the Syria refugee crisis, with a wide array of programs tackling reproductive health, gender-based violence and overall capacity building.

Response activities are targeting refugees in the four primary camps in Iraq: Basirma, Drashakran, Kwrgosk, and Qwshtapa, with programs that span vocational training for women, awareness sessions for women and adolescent girls, lectures on topics related to reproductive health and gender-based violence, and various community engagement activities.



COORDINATION

UNFPA CONTINUES TO LEAD THE GBV AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (GBV AOR), ENSURING THAT MINIMUM STANDARDS ARE IN PLACE TO PREVENT AND RESPOND TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN EMERGENCOES.

To ensure good coordination when emergencies occur, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) has introduced the Cluster Approach. Clusters are groups of humanitarian organizations, both UN and non-UN, in each of the main sectors of humanitarian action such as water, health and logistics. In contexts where the IASC Cluster Approach has been activated, UNFPA is mandated to co-lead the GBV Area of Responsibility (GBV AoR), a body part of the Global Protection Cluster, which is led by UNHCR.

As lead, UNFPA is accountable for working closely with national authorities, partners and communities, to ensure that minimum standards are in place to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in emergencies. In non-clustered and refugee contexts, UNFPA's isi co-leading with UNHCR.

In the Whole of Syria, UNFPA leads the GBV coordination mechanisms in Syria, in Turkey with Global communities and in Jordan with Relief International. In Iraq, UNFPA and IMC lead the GBV subcluster. In Jordan and Lebanon, UNFPA co -leads the refugee GBV response with UNHCR.

In January 2018, UNFPA Jordan conducted a workshop for the SGBV Sub-working Group (SWG) to kick-start the year and review key priorities. The workshop was attended by several NGOs, INGOs, and UN organisations who discussed several essential issues, including GBV IMS reporting, SGBV programs and work plan for 2018, and overall recommendations based recent coordination gap analyses. The final 2018 SGBV work plan will be finalized by the co-chairs of the SGBV SWG (UNFPA and UNHCR) and will be shared for endorsement by members of the group.

Meanwhile, coordination efforts from cross-border Turkey were predominantly geared toward technical guidance, with two key events taking place within the health cluster mechanism. On January 24, the Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring workshop took place to review the ratings garnered in the Health Cluster performance survey for the year 2017, culminating in a qualitative analysis through a group discussion. The workshop also included a presentation on the Health Cluster's action plan proposed for 2018, which was also reviewed during the group discussion.

Another UNFPA-led workshop was held at the World Health Organization to explore the integration of community workers in primary healthcare in northern Syria, during which the SRH working group provided an overview of Training of Trainers activities targeting community health workers. The group also facilitated a discussion on the expected tasks for community health workers in the arena of reproductive health.

Lastly, a series of discussions took place with the Syrian Board of Doctors, the department for Rehabilitation and Training for Health Directorates, and the Secondary Care Working Group, covering a variety of key issues. Topics tackled included the draft guidance note on C-Sections as well as the planned training of general surgeons and residents in gynaecology. The discussions had an overall positive result, with all sides endorsing the projects and acknowledging their need and pertinence.



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IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

In Syria: Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), Syrian Family Planning Association (SFPA), Agha Khan Foundation, Masyaf Charitable Association, Al Bir and Social Welfare Hama, Al Bir Charitable and Sociable Qamishly, Pan Armenian Charity Association, Al-Ihsan Charity Association, Al Bir and Al-Ihsan Charitable Association in Ras Alain, Albatoul Charity for Humanitarian Services, Islamic Charity Association – Aoun for Relief and Developments (AOUN), Monastery of Saint James the Mutilated (MSJM), Nour Foundation for Relief and Development, Syrian Catholic Archbishopric – Relief and Development Center (RDC), Syrian Commission for Family Affairs and Population, SCS, SEBC.

In Lebanon: Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Social Affairs, Lebanon Family Planning Association for Development & Family Empowerment (LFPAD), Amel Association, International Medical Corps, KAFA (“Enough Violence and Exploitation”), INTERSOS, Makkased Philanthropic Association of Beirut, Development Action without Borders-Naba’a, RET Liban, NABAD, Heartland Alliance, Relief & Development, Maarouf Saad Social and Cultural Foundation, Danish Refugee Council (DRC).

In Jordan: Ministry of Health (MOH), Institute for Family Health (IFH), International Medical Corps (IMC), Jordanian Health Aid Society (JHAS), Family Protection Department (FPD), Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), Youth Peer Education Network (YPE), NCFA (National Council for Family Affairs), Questscope.

Jordan Cross-Border: Relief International, Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS).

In Iraq: Ministry of Culture, Sport and Youth (MCSP), Ministry of Labor & Social Affairs (MLSA), AL Massela, START NGO and Harikar.

In Egypt: Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP), Ministry of Youth and Sport (MoYS), Arab Medical Union (AMU), Care International.

In Turkey: The Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) of the Prime Ministry of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), and Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Family and Social Policies (MoFSP), ASAM (Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants), HÜKSAM (Hacettepe University Women’s Research and Implementation Center), IMPR (International Middle East Peace Research Centre), KAMER (Women’s Center Foundation), CVF (Community Volunteers Foundation), Osmangazi University, PYD (Positive Life Association), SPoD (Social Policies, Gender Identity, and Sexual Orientation Studies Association), Bilgi University.

Turkey Cross-Border: Ihsan RD, Syrian Expatriate Medical Association (SEMA), Syrian American, Medical Society (SAMS), CARE International, Shafak.

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