

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

REGIONAL SITUATION REPORT

FOR THE SYRIA CRISIS

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 inside Syria and managed from cross-border Turkey.

In addition to providing aggregated quantitative results 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 sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, youth, and others.

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"We, women and girls, are the most oppressed. A little more oppression and they will hold us accountable for the breaths we take."

Mariam, an adolescent girl from Aleppo, Syria

THE MISSION OF UNFPA

THE UNITED NATIONS SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AGENCY

UNFPA's core mission is to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

UNFPA calls for the realization of sexual and reproductive rights for all, and supports access to a wide range of services, including voluntary family planning, maternal healthcare and comprehensive education on sexuality.

As the Syria crisis enters its ninth year, UNFPA believes that every Syrian woman and girl has the right to have access to affordable sexual and reproductive healthcare and be effectively protected from gender-based violence. UNFPA and its 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.





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The crisis in Syria has been globally recognized as one of the worst humanitarian crises of our time. As of 2019, more than 11.7 million people inside Syria are in need, while close to 5.7 million have taken refuge in neighbouring countries throughout the region. They continue to suffer the effects of nearly a decade of conflict, including disruption of community networks, safety nets and rule of law. Even as some parts of Syria stabilize, the crisis has long since passed a critical point in terms of generational change, and its effects will undoubtedly continue for many years to come. This is particularly true in the case of women and girls due to the deep-rooted complexity of the issues they continue to face on a daily basis.



THE SYRIA CRISIS IN 2019

OVERVIEW OF THE SITUATION

DARAA, AL-HASSAKAH, DEIR-EZ-ZOR, LATTAKIA, HAMA, ALEPPO AND IDLIB GOVERNORATES REMAIN PRIMARY HOTSPOTS.

The security situation in Syria remains volatile. Idlib, Aleppo, Daraa, Al-Hassakah, Deir-ez-zor, North Latakia and North Hama governorates remain primary hotspots.

The recent Turkish incursion in northern Syria has resulted in the displacement of 108,514 from Al-Hassakah, including 27,130 women of reproductive age. Current population movements include IDPs in host communities, IDPs in collective shelters, relocation between camps, temporary displacement to host communities as well as movements from camps to host communities, collective shelters, informal settlements, and others. With the recent drops in temperatures and winter months approaching, women and girls are expected to adversely suffer the effects.

The current situation has put the lives of women, men, girls and boys at risk every day and has significantly impacted their psychosocial well-being with reportedly high levels of trauma. According to a rapid needs assessment conducted by REACH, safety and security concerns severely restricted freedom of movement, while damage to civilian infrastructure prevented access to essential services. This exacerbates the vulnerability of communities, making the provision of humanitarian assistance in these areas even more critical.

“The current situation has put the lives of women, men, girls and boys at risk every day and has significantly impacted their psychosocial well-being with reportedly high levels of trauma.”

Access to healthcare continues to be an essential need for newly-displaced individuals and for host communities, including pregnant women. Multiple displacements and lack of access to basic services further exacerbate the needs of individuals and communities, in addition to significantly increasing the risks of gender-based violence (GBV). Additional displacements further strain already-stretched coping mechanisms of individuals and families, leading to desperate measures that further increase the likelihood of protection threats, such as sexual exploitation, forced and early marriage, amongst others.

In response to these dire needs, UNFPA continues to provide services to people in need of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and GBV integrated services, with a focus on the needs of women and adolescent girls. A variety of SRH services are being delivered, including antenatal care, family planning, normal delivery services, postnatal care, referrals, treatment of reproductive tract/urinary tract infection, treatment of trauma, and others. UNFPA also addresses the needs of women and adolescent girls by providing GBV response services such as case management, psycho-social support, clinical management of rape, and referrals.

“Additional displacements further strain already-stretched coping mechanisms of individuals and families, leading to desperate measures.”

Meanwhile, recent months have seen additional displacements to Al Hol camp in Al Hasakah due to instabilities in Deir-ez-zor governorate. The population at the camp today stands at around 74,000 people, 90 percent of whom are women and children. Escalating violence and displacement often exacerbate women’s vulnerability to higher risks of maternal mortality and morbidity, and increase the threat of gender-based violence and harmful practices. Over 50 percent of maternal deaths occur in humanitarian and fragile settings. Additional displacements further strain already-stretched coping mechanisms of individuals and families, leading to desperate measures that further increase the likelihood of protection threats, such as exploitation and early marriage.

UNFPA aims to provide integrated sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and gender-based violence (GBV) services, including family planning supplies, personal hygiene items, counselling, gynaecological consultations, ultrasound diagnostics, ante-natal care, post-natal care, psychological first aid, psychosocial counselling, referral for safe deliveries, comprehensive emergency obstetric and neonatal care, legal assistance, and case management.

RESPONSE FROM ALL OPERATIONS

DELIVERING LIFE-SAVING REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE SERVICES TO COMMUNITIES IN NEED INSIDE SYRIA AND THROUGHOUT THE REGION.

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 has permanently altered the fabric of society in the nation, with far-reaching ramifications for its future resilience.

Even in these circumstances, UNFPA believes that every Syrian woman, adolescent girl and child has the right to sexual and 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 hub in Gaziantep, Turkey for cross-border operations.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

INDICATOR

INDICATOR	SINCE JANUARY
People reached with sexual/reproductive health services	2,389,795
Family planning consultations	932,146
Normal / assisted vaginal deliveries	76,698
C-Sections	54,014
Ante-natal care consultations	922,446
Post-natal care consultations	18,624
People trained on SRH-related topics	5,491

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

INDICATOR

INDICATOR	SINCE JANUARY
People reached with GBV programming / services	1,292,036
People reached with Dignity Kits	187,069
People provided with GBV case management	22,497
People reached with GBV awareness messages	1,171,842
People trained on GBV-related topics	4,632

YOUTH SERVICES

INDICATOR

INDICATOR	SINCE JANUARY
Beneficiaries reached with youth programming	146,316
Beneficiaries trained on youth-related topics	900



* Above figures reflect fully-supported service-delivery points. Inside Syria additional 954 primary healthcare facilities are being partially supported through the Ministry of Health.



HIGHLIGHT

UNBROKEN: THE TREE OF LIFE

GIVING ADOLESCENT GIRLS THE OPPORTUNITY TO REDEFINE THEIR OWN STORIES

In 2019, the UNFPA Regional Syria Response Hub published *Unbroken*, a collection of adolescent girl stories that showcase the strength of Syrian girls whose lives were forever altered by the discriminant hands of crisis but who have been able to persevere and pursue their dream of a better world. The stories featured in the publication not only demonstrate the remarkable strength of adolescent girls in the face of enormous odds but also serve to underscore the importance of ensuring that their insights inform any discussion on humanitarian, resilience and peacebuilding programmes.

During the 2019 16 Days of Activism campaign, one common activity — The Tree of Life — was conducted throughout the Syria response countries. The objective of the activity was to bring the stories of *Unbroken* back to their real owners (Syrian adolescent girls), and to give them the opportunity to redesign the flow of these stories, even to the extent of choosing a different ending or outcome. This gave participating adolescents the space to think about the challenges experienced and the resilience demonstrated, to derive inspiration from others whose experiences possibly mirror their own, and to identify factors that may be important to their wellbeing and protection. The activity was also designed and adapted for adolescent boys and men in the hope of inspiring careful examination of the violence and abuse that adolescent girls and women experience and the resilience they demonstrate in facing their daily struggles.

Several participants identified with the characters of the stories included in *Unbroken* and shared their own experiences as a result:

My family prevented me from going to school, and whenever I saw other girls going to or coming back from school, I would feel very sad and ashamed. Now, I am displaced and living in a school with my family. I keep telling my parents that it is a punishment from God: we are now forced to stay in a place, a school, where they never allowed me to go."

— 17 year-old girl

"I was still a child when I got married. After a few years my husband passed away. I have been raising my three daughters on my own without any support from my in-laws. Now I am afraid of the future, as my parents want to marry me off again. If they succeed in forcing me into a new marriage, I might lose my daughters. I already fear for them as life is not easy for females in this part of the world."

— 32 year-old woman

"I am married to a thirteen-year-old girl. I treated my wife badly during the first three months of marriage. I would beat her and swear at her. Then we moved from Mabrouka camp to Areesha. My wife complained to her family many times but they did not listen to her. They kept telling her that there is no way that I would beat her for no reason; that she must have been doing something wrong to deserve the beating and she should listen to me. At the end, my wife's family spoke to my father who advised me not to beat my wife but to protect and help her. I told my father that I do not know anything about marriage and my father told me that I would eventually learn. Now, my wife is eight months pregnant."

— 14 year-old boy



WHOLE OF SYRIA RESPONSE

SYRIA COUNTRY OFFICE

DELIVERING EMERGENCY AND LONG-TERM ASSISTANCE TO SYRIAN COMMUNITIES NATIONWIDE.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

INDICATOR

INDICATOR	SINCE JANUARY
People reached with sexual/reproductive health services	1,769,309
Family planning consultations	810,474
Normal / assisted vaginal deliveries	54,895
C-Sections	46,889
Ante-natal care consultations	740,821
Post-natal care consultations	92,854
People trained on SRH-related topics	1,641

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

INDICATOR

INDICATOR	SINCE JANUARY
People reached with GBV programming / services	822,043
People reached with Dignity Kits	76,980
People provided with GBV case management	14,112
People reached with GBV awareness messages	887,221
People trained on GBV-related topics	1,454

YOUTH SERVICES

INDICATOR

INDICATOR	SINCE JANUARY
Beneficiaries reached with youth programming	101,312



* Above figures reflect fully-supported service-delivery points. Inside Syria, an additional 954 primary healthcare facilities are being partially supported through the Ministry of Health.

UNFPA Syria continues to provide emergency and long-term support to communities in need inside Syria. As part of the cooperation between UNFPA and the Ministry of Health, five mobile hospitals will start providing health services in the governorates of Hama, Homs, Daraa, Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor, which will include four normal delivery hospitals and one Cesarean-section hospital.

UNFPA also continues to provide integrated SRH services, including ante-natal care, family planning, normal delivery services, post-natal care, referrals, treatment of reproductive tract/urinary tract infections, treatment of trauma, and others. UNFPA also delivers GBV services that span psychological first aid, referrals to public health institutions and GBV awareness raising. For the protection of health, hygiene and to preserve dignity, UNFPA also distributes female dignity kits, sanitary napkins, protection kits for adolescent girls, kits for pregnant/lactating women, and male dignity kits. UNFPA services are being provided in partnership with its implementing partners and in coordination with other UN agencies to meet the needs of IDPs and those affected by the crisis in Syria.



HIGHLIGHT

HANA'S JOURNEY: ESCAPING THE PRISON OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

"I do not know if I have any rights or even access to support of any kind," explains Hana, a 46-year old mother-of-six who was admitted to Al-Shagour Health clinic for medical consultation after she had been severely beaten by her husband. "All I know is that I need help."

Visibly distraught, Hana is welcomed into the clinic by Maha, a psychosocial support specialist who rushes to reassure her that the staff at the center are there to help. The bruises on Hana's face clearly show that she has seen more than her fair share of violence.

With the integrated package of services offered at the clinic, Hana begins to open up about the abuse she has been enduring at the hands of her husband. As she speaks, her expressions begin to relax and she appears more at ease with the idea of seeking professional help. The team enrolled her in a series of individual and group counselling activities, in addition to several sessions to help her feel more empowered and supported. Four months after accessing various services at the clinic, she feels revitalized and reports that both her emotional and physical states have never been better.

Hana, whose name means 'happiness' in Arabic, has two main hopes in life: that crisis in Syria would come to an end and that her newfound strength endures. Today, she visits the clinic regularly to continue improving her psychological well-being while continually working to cultivate various life skills to improve her prospects for viable livelihood, including sewing, handcrafts and cooking. Her story mirrors those of countless women throughout Syria whose lives have been forever changed after the crisis erupted and who continue to derive numerous benefits from the women and girls' safe spaces available in communities throughout Syria.

CROSS-BORDER TURKEY

ENSURING ACCESS TO LIFE-SAVING SERVICES FOR ALL COMMUNITIES INSIDE SYRIA.

The volatile security situation continued to exacerbate displacement on the ground over the reporting period with daily reports of bombardments affecting civilian infrastructure. As of 1 December 2019, almost 312,000 people fled from their homes, mainly from the southern Idlib governorate, moving further north away from the hostilities. The majority of the recently displaced, some 80 percent, are reportedly women and children.

Most of the recently displaced people moved to urban centres and IDP camps in north-western Idlib. Tens of thousands have reportedly moved to safe areas such as Afrin and A'zaz in the northern Aleppo governorate (under Turkish administration) to access services.

In response to the new wave of IDPs, UNFPA's IPs successfully serviced a 14% increase of beneficiaries, among those in need of SRH services. One IP reported a 60% increase of deliveries during the month of December, which they directly attributed to the new influx of IDPs from Ma'arrat An-Nu'man of Idlib.

While an overall 12% increase of GBV outreach activities, integrated with SRH services, was observed, a decrease of WGSS visits was registered during specific periods of heightened security throughout the month. IPs explain the decrease due to a shift in beneficiary priorities tied to the overriding need to stay safe at home. Therefore, a 17% decline of GBV case management was reported.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

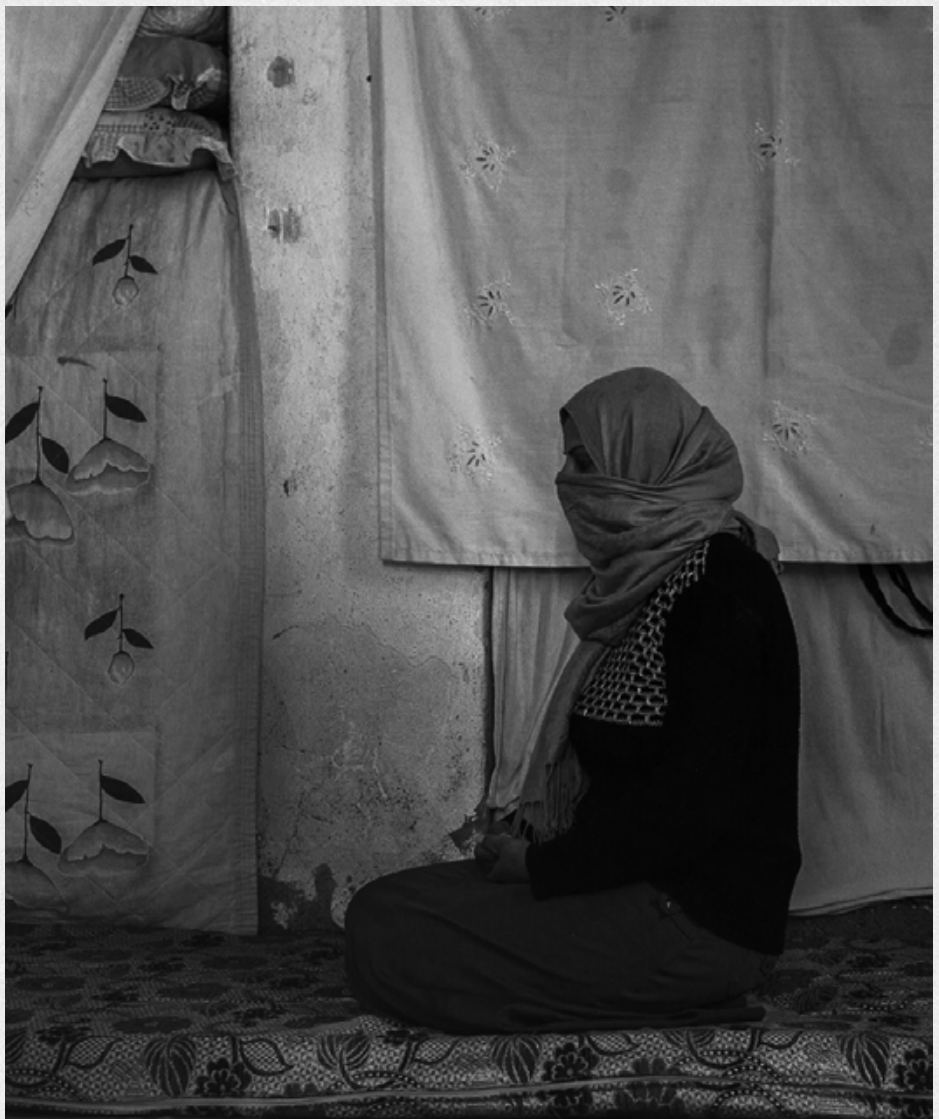
INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
Primary health facilities	12
Health facilities that provide Emergency Obstetric Care (EmOC)	12
Functional mobile clinics	8
People reached with sexual/reproductive health services	228,473
Family planning consultations	54,176
Normal / assisted vaginal deliveries	16,453
C-Sections	5,246
Ante-natal care consultations	113,881
Post-natal care consultations	17,009
People trained on SRH-related topics	480

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
Number of women and girls' safe spaces (WGSS)	14
People reached with GBV programming / services	150,747
People reached with Dignity Kits	55,720
People provided with GBV case management	1,280
People reached with GBV awareness messages	100,704
People trained on GBV-related topics	745



HIGHLIGHT

IN THE WORDS OF KAWTHAR: “I GAINED STRENGTH AND DETERMINATION.”

“My stepmother forced me to marry when I was 13. Moving into my husband’s house, I was hopeful I would have a better life. Two years passed without giving birth and my life became worse than before. My husband would not give me the examination fee to visit the doctor and he continued to abuse me with insults and beatings.”

“People kept asking me, “Have you have children yet?” I stopped going out; I did not want to see people. One day, a relative phoned and told me about the Milis Health Center and the services that were offered there for people in similar situations. More importantly, it was free! I could visit without arguing with my husband about money.”

“The midwife at Milis examined me and told me that I had not been able to get pregnant because I was too young and my womb had not yet matured. She told me it was quite harmful to be pregnant at my age and persuaded me to wait until I turned 18. I was then referred to the Center’s psychological counseling department.”

“I received psycho-social support and, after each session, my case worker would say “you seem to have a new spirit and the signs of improvement are clearly showing on your face.” I was also enrolled into the Young Mothers Club, which offers capacity building sessions on various life skills, particularly those relevant to new mothers, and it was there that I gained strength and determination. I learned tools for how to deal with my husband and society and to remain strong against the many challenges levelled against me. It has been a life-changing experience and I am forever grateful.”



EGYPT COUNTRY OFFICE

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 whom 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

INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
People reached with sexual/reproductive health services	9,611
Family planning consultations	860
Number of C-sections	203
Functional mobile clinics	2

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
Number of women and girls' safe spaces (WGSS)	11
People reached with GBV programming / services	21,533
People provided with GBV case management	3,842
People reached with GBV awareness messages	9,659
People trained on GBV-related topics	199

YOUTH SERVICES

INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
People reached with youth programming	731
People trained on youth-related topics	63





HIGHLIGHT

IN THE WORDS OF RANIA: “FOR ONCE, WE FEEL A SEMBLANCE OF STABILITY.”

My name is Rania and I am a 55-year old woman from Aleppo, Syria. I'm a moderately educated mother living with a divorced daughter and her infant child. I came to Egypt four years ago as a result of recent events in Syria, leaving behind a husband whose violent hands haunted me for years. Today, I feel much stronger than I had before, thanks to the awareness sessions I have been attending at the women and girls' safe space in my neighbourhood.

My first visit to the safe space was in 2017 — a day I will never forget. They had brought us together for an interactive painting session, during which we drew on the walls of the space as a means of expressing ourselves through art and colour. After that experience, I promised myself that I would never miss a session at this space. Over the years, I have returned consistently, attending awareness sessions on sexual and reproductive health, psychosocial support, and many others.

I cannot describe how helpful it has been to rid myself of all of the tension and anger that has been building up due to the years of anguish, displacement and violence that we have experienced since the crisis in Syria began. We were trained on crochet in the hope of finding additional avenues for economic support, and today I am honoured to be launching my own little business based on the skills I have learned. Not only have we gained knowledge and positive experiences, but it became much easier for us to blend into Egyptian society. For once, we feel a semblance of stability and harmony with our surroundings, and I feel immensely proud of these achievements.

I always try to spread this knowledge and sense of confidence, and to apply it as much as I can in my personal life. Even my daughter has benefitted greatly from these sessions, particularly when it comes to family planning, nutrition, counselling, and dealing with the consequences of the gender-based violence she herself had experienced over the years. Today, if I encounter women like me who have survived their own difficult journeys, I always recommend the safe space; it has become a source of physical and emotional nourishment for countless women in my community.

IRAQ COUNTRY OFFICE

WITH HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS TAKING REFUGE IN THE COUNTRY, UNFPA IRAQ CONTINUES TO PROVIDE ESSENTIAL SERVICES TO REFUGEES IN BASIRMA, DRASHAKRAN, KWARGOSK, AND QWSHTAPA CAMPS.

Currently, around 235,000 Syrian refugees are seeking safety in camps and host communities in Iraq. The recent military activity in northern Syria has also caused around 15,000 individuals to seek refuge in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

UNFPA supports seven women community centres, seven health facilities, one delivery room, and four youth centres serving the refugee population in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. UNFPA ensures that antenatal, postnatal, and emergency obstetric referral services are offered. In addition, UNFPA provides reproductive health kits in six maternity hospitals and supports referral services. Response activities are targeting refugees in the eight primary camps in Iraq: Basirma, Darashakran, Kawergosk, and Qwshtapa in Erbil Governorate, Domiz 1, Domiz 2, Gawilan in Dohuk Governorate and Arbat in Sulaymaniyah Governorate with programmes that span vocational training, awareness sessions, lectures on topics related to sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence, peer education sessions on reproductive health and life skills sessions for youth, in addition to various community engagement activities.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
Primary health facilities	4
People reached with sexual/reproductive health services	156,412
Family planning consultations	11,651
Normal / assisted vaginal deliveries	2,893
C-Sections	1,119
Ante-natal care consultations	12,551
Post-natal care consultations	4,263
People trained on SRH-related topics	2,060

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
Number of women and girls' safe spaces (WGSS)	7
People reached with GBV programming / services	5,314
People reached with dignity kits	4,502
People provided with GBV case management	289
People reached with GBV awareness messages	31,158
People trained on GBV-related topics	500

YOUTH SERVICES

INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
People reached with youth programming	31,002
Number of functional youth centres	2



JORDAN COUNTRY OFFICE

WITH 1.3 MILLION SYRIANS NATIONWIDE, UNFPA JORDAN CONTINUES TO PROVIDE ESSENTIAL SERVICES TO REFUGEE AND HOST COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE KINGDOM.

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 sexual and 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 sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence prevention services to Syrian refugees throughout the kingdom, whether in refugee camps or in host communities.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
Number of primary health facilities	20
People reached with sexual/reproductive health services	126,058
Family planning consultations	27,208
Normal / assisted vaginal deliveries	2,296
Number of C-sections	431
Ante-natal care consultations	42,120
Post-natal care consultations	6,130
Health facilities that provide Emergency Obstetric Care (EmOC)	2
People trained on SRH-related topics	325

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
Number of women and girls' safe spaces (WGSS)	20
People reached with GBV programming / services	27,331
People provided with GBV case management	2,378
People reached with GBV awareness messages	16,381
People trained on GBV-related topics	443

YOUTH SERVICES

INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
Number of functional youth centres	1
People reached with youth programming	8,045
People trained on youth-related topics	605



LEBANON COUNTRY OFFICE

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

The ongoing political turmoil and security situation in Lebanon has restricted movement and programming. Contingency planning by the UN Country Team is underway, of which UNFPA is an active part. This includes developing scenarios for UN agencies and partners to deliver support within the current security and access context in the country.

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.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
People reached with sexual/reproductive health services	5,867
Family planning consultations	1,197
Normal / assisted vaginal deliveries	161
C-Sections	126
Ante-natal care consultations	1,915
Post-natal care consultations	230
Functional mobile clinics	9
People trained on RH-related topics	88

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
Number of women and girls' safe spaces (WGSS)	18
People reached with GBV programming / services	21,359
People provided with GBV case management	1,270
People trained on GBV-related topics	267

YOUTH SERVICES

INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
Number of functional youth centres	3
People reached with youth programming	1,050
People trained on youth-related topics	40



TURKEY COUNTRY OFFICE

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

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 sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence services to Syrian communities in need, addressing assistance gaps and organizing far-reaching programs that serve to protect vulnerable members of the community.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
Number of primary health facilities	6
People reached with sexual/reproductive health services	93,332
Family planning consultations	26,580
Ante-natal care consultations	11,158
Post-natal care consultations	2,945
People trained on SRH-related topics	858

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
Number of women and girls' safe spaces (WGSS)	6
People reached with GBV programming / services	243,709
People reached with dignity kits	48,597
People provided with GBV case management	594
People reached with GBV awareness messages	61,246
People trained on GBV-related topics	1,024

YOUTH SERVICES

INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
Number of functional youth centres	4
People reached with youth programming	4,108
People trained on youth-related topics	21

OTHER SERVICES

INDICATOR

	SINCE JANUARY
Number of social service centers (SSC)	27
Number of Key Refugee Service Units (KRG)	7





HIGHLIGHT

FINDING THE COURAGE TO TAKE A STAND

At age 16, Ruqaya donned her wedding dress and entered a life she knew very little about. A primary school graduate who was taken out of school five years earlier, her experiences in life were limited to the confines of her home, where she spent most of her time before moving in with her husband.

“At that age, you never really know what’s waiting for you,” explains Ruqaya. “You resist, but ultimately you give in the way so many women before have done.”

Thirteen years have passed since Ruqaya’s wedding. Ruqaya’s husband, who is several years her senior, began revealing his abusive side about two years into their marriage. “He would call me names and beat me, even in front of our children.”

Throughout those years, Ruqaya had struggled with frequent and strong bouts of depression. “I spent entire days crying uncontrollably. I couldn’t stop. Some days, I couldn’t find the energy to stand up. My confidence was also completely destroyed and I barely had the strength to look others in the eye.”

Luckily, Ruqaya found her way to a Women and Girls Safe Space supported by UNFPA, where she was immediately referred to a case manager for psychosocial support. Despite her depression, Ruqaya immediately felt safe enough to open up about the struggles she has been enduring at home. Initially, she was enrolled in one-on-one counselling to help her process the traumas she has experienced over the years. After a successful few sessions, she was provided with legal counseling to inform her of her choices at that point, which included divorce and a request for full custody.

Ruqaya, however, hoped to give her children a chance to remain with their father. “I wanted to give him a chance to change, for the sake of the family. I felt much stronger at that moment as I understood my options, so I decided to confront him, and I did. I made it clear that he needs to change before he loses us forever.”

Today, Ruqaya continues to play an active role at the center, participating in a wide variety of collaborative activities that have immensely improved her mental state. In her latest sessions with her case manager, she reported that her relationship with her husband has improved substantially. “I have learned the hard way that staying silent and accepting abuse is not an option. Now, I speak up, and I make it clear that any violence against me or my children will not be tolerated.”

COORDINATION UPDATES

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 EMERGENCIES.

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 is co-leading with UNHCR.

UNFPA leads the GBV coordination mechanisms. Through its Damascus-based operation, UNFPA is the main lead, while in its Turkey Cross Border operation UNFPA co-leads with Global Communities. In its refugee response in Turkey and Iraq, UNFPA co-leads with the Government of Turkey and International Medical Corps (IMC) respectively. In Jordan and Lebanon, UNFPA co-leads the refugee GBV response with UNHCR.

In December, the Whole of Syria (WoS) GBV AoR published a detailed overview of GBV in Syria to provide a concise and easily accessible snapshot of the current situation in the country, including persistent and newly-reported trends. This was followed by a GBV donors meeting in Geneva advocating for the need to fully fund the GBV HRP and to highlight the shared responsibility by all sectors to reduce risks of GBV. The WoS GBV AoR also finalised the draft of the 2020 HNO and the 2020 GBV framework. This was followed by a donor meeting with WoS sectors held in Amman to present the main findings of the HNO and the main priorities for 2020. One training session on protection risk analysis was conducted for WoS coordinators and NGOs based in Amman in an effort to support the preparation of the HRP.

The UNFPA Regional Syria Response Hub supported the organisation and facilitation of the "We Decide" workshop in Casablanca, the objective of which was to roll out UNFPA/Women Enabled International's *Guidelines for providing rights-based and gender-responsive GBV and SRHR services to women and young persons with disabilities*. The hub also attended the No Lost Generation meeting to support the finalisation of the 2020 advocacy strategy, in addition to participating in the Regional Durable Solutions Meeting.

In Turkey, the protection sector coordinators meeting was held on 16 December, followed by the protection working group meeting on 17 December 2019 in Ankara. The focus of the meetings was the establishment and harmonization of the work plans for the year 2020 and how to better manage the coordination within and between sectors, not only at national level in Ankara, but also at sub-national level, in Gaziantep, Istanbul and Izmir. The 2020 Planning and Technical Workshop was also held in Gaziantep on 11 and 12 December, 2019. The South-East Turkey Protection working group was discussed, with break-out sessions for Child Protection SWG and GBV SWG. Additionally, evaluation and discussion on the package of recommended tools for individual protection responses were discussed on the last day of the workshop. The documents covered were the Advised Basic Operating Principles, Risk Assessment Matrices, Inter-Agency Referral Form and the Service Advisor & Service Mappings. Meanwhile, the Bi-monthly Inter-Sector Working Group meeting was held in Izmir under the heading of provincial relocation, specifically on the subject of prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

In Jordan, the SGBV SWG organized a joint art event in collaboration with the Greater Amman Municipality under the national theme *Break the Silence on Economic Violence*, which was attended by over 400 participants including the general public, donors, humanitarian and development actors, beneficiaries of the programs and refugee volunteers. The event showcased through art the negative consequences of economic violence but also women's resilience and empowerment. Groups of Jordanian, Syrian, Yemeni and Sudanese artists proposed different artistic activities such as graffiti, video screening, an art exhibition showcasing more than 50 photographs and paintings, storytelling, music, theater plays, storytelling, poetry, debate and awareness sessions.



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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 Commission for Family Affairs and Population, SCS, SEBC, OCHA / SHF. UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, ILO, UNDP, UNHCR.

In Lebanon: Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Social Affairs, Lebanon Family Planning Association for Development & Family Empowerment (LFPAD), Amel Association, KAFA (“Enough Violence and Exploitation”), INTERSOS, Makkased Philanthropic Association of Beirut, Development Action without Borders-Naba’a, RET Liban, Lebanese Order of Midwives, Lebanese Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

In Jordan: IFH (Institute for family health), MOH (Ministry of health), JHAS (Society Aid Health Jordanian), JWU (Jordanian Women’s Union), the National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA), YPEER (Youth Peer Education Network), Questscope, IRC, RHAS.

In Iraq: AL Massela, Harika, Zhian and Civil Development Organisation.

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), KAMER (Women’s Center Foundation), CVF (Community Volunteers Foundation), Osmangazi University, PYD (Positive Life Association), Bilgi University, Red Umbrella, MUDEM, Harran University.

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

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RELEVANT RESOURCES

www.unfpa.org

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All photos shown in this issue, unless otherwise stated, are courtesy of the UNFPA Regional Syria Response Hub. Moreover, unless otherwise stated, photos do not directly correlate to the stories next to which they appear. Real names of survivors have been changed for confidentiality.