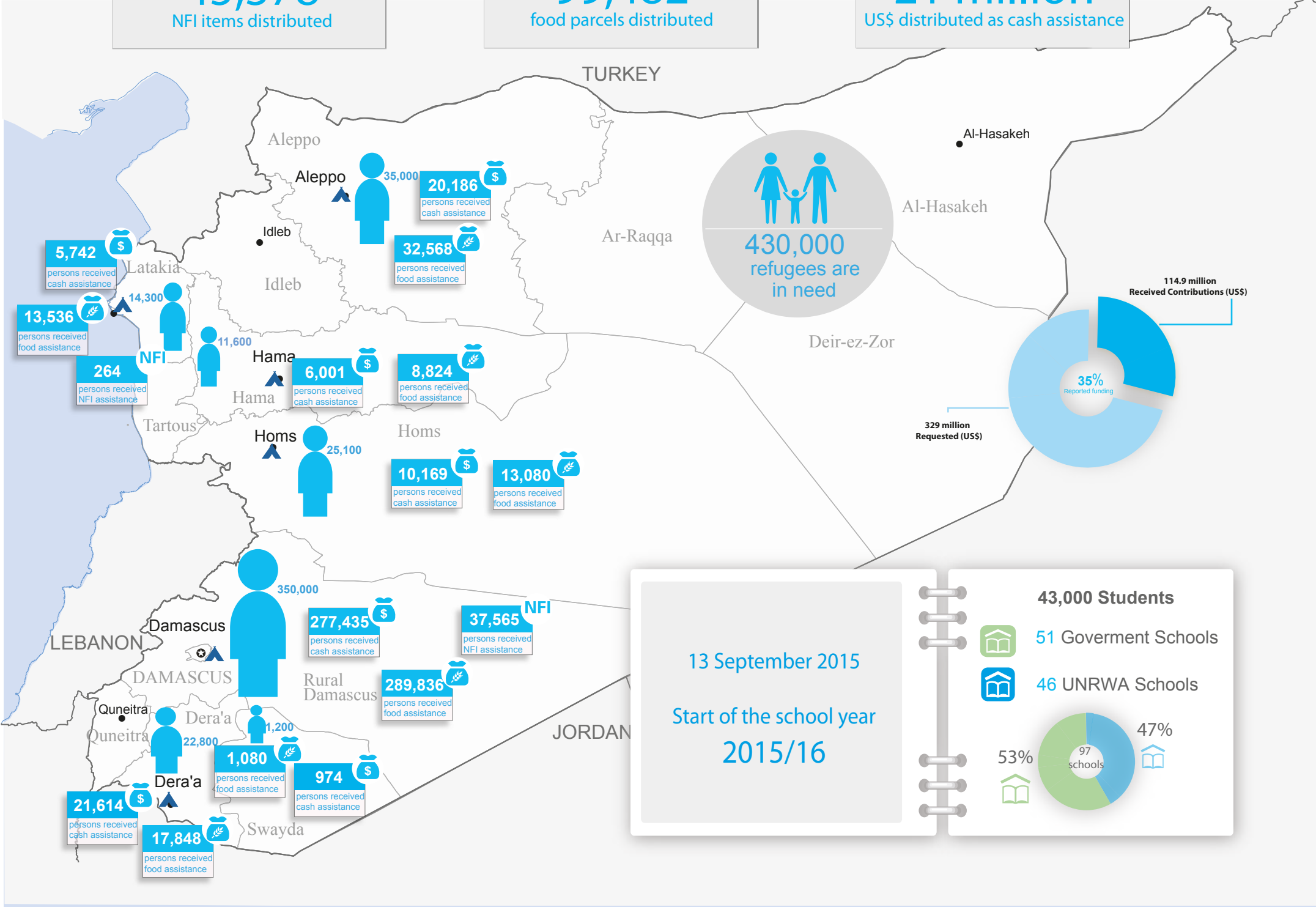


Syria: UNRWA - Humanitarian Snapshot, JULY-SEPTEMBER 2015



In the third quarter, UNRWA was forced to temporarily suspend operations and services in Dera’a City following a significant escalation of violence as armed confrontations prevented staff and refugees from safely accessing the UNRWA area office and other facilities. Humanitarian access to Yarmouk and adjacent areas also continued to be extremely constrained, with missions limited to providing basic health care in Yalda, Babila and Beit Saham (YBB), where many Palestine refugees from Yarmouk have been displaced to. The last UNRWA mission inside Yarmouk took place on 28 March 2015. Between July and September UNRWA was authorized to resume very limited operations, conducting 10 cross-line missions to YBB, focused on providing basic health care to address reports of typhoid in the area.

Civilians, including Palestine refugees, continued to return to the gathering of Husseineyeh throughout the quarter, following their displacement by armed conflict two years prior. The return to Husseineyeh constitutes the first large-scale return of over 3,600 Palestine refugee families within Syria. UNRWA re-established core health and education services, with three schools, including two UNRWA schools, reopening on 13 September, accommodating over 2,700 students. A total of 3,600 food parcels, 3,600 hygiene kits, 3,000 jerry cans and 1,700 kitchen sets were distributed to returning families during September.



CASH ASSISTANCE:

A second round of cash assistance continued throughout July to 30 September. In total, 419,793 Palestine refugees (116,405 families) each collected the equivalent of US\$ 64 in Syrian pounds through 34 distribution points throughout Syria. Each round covers two months of cash assistance. Between June and September 2015, UNRWA conducted a verification exercise of its cash assistance programme on the basis of which the Agency estimates that 450,000 Palestine refugees currently remain in Syria, out of which 430,000 depend almost entirely on UNRWA to meet their basic needs.



FOOD ASSISTANCE:

In the third quarter of 2015, UNRWA distributed two rounds of monthly food parcels to 352,168 individuals (87,962 families) via 14 distribution centres in the Damascus area, Dera’a, Neirab, Homs, Latakia and Aleppo. Following the reopening of Husseineyeh in September, UNRWA distributed food parcels to 3,600 families in the gathering. The Agency also distributed 2,523 food parcels in 16 collective shelters in addition to daily hot meals prepared through central kitchens in 20 collective shelters. Distribution of food to the areas of Yarmouk and Yalda remains restricted, while refugees from Khan Esheih in Rif Damascus and the countryside around Dera’a must travel to other areas to collect humanitarian assistance.



HEALTH:

UNRWA provides primary health care to up to 430,000 refugees in Syria through 15 health centres and 11 health points, which together provided over 232,836 health consultations and 10,770 dental treatments. Health centres provide outpatient consultations, pharmacy services and referrals for hospitalization where required. The majority of patients were women (56 per cent). UNRWA medical teams treated a total of 86 suspected cases of typhoid in Yalda, and a noticeable drop in cases was reported towards the end of September. A further 1,788 patient consultations were provided to refugees in Yalda in September, following a period of more than two months with no access.

NFI NON-FOOD ITEM ASSISTANCE:

Throughout the third quarter of 2015, UNRWA distributed hygiene kits to 4,086 families, as well as 10,327 packs of diapers for infants, 4,546 packs for elderly refugees, 150 jerry cans of water, 105 blankets, 50 mattresses, and 18,926 sanitary products to refugees living in UNRWA-managed collective centres and via distribution centres. In addition, 3,000 jerry cans and 1,700 kitchen kits were distributed to civilians returning to Husseineyeh.



EDUCATION:

During July and August, the UNRWA Summer Learning Programme supported students who missed classes or dropped out of school. Fifty-two participating schools organized activities and provided support in mathematics, Arabic, English, French, music, sports and art. Approximately 10,000 students participated. The start of the new academic year began in September with the enrollment of approximately 43,000 students to 97 schools, 46 of which are hosted in UNRWA facilities and 51 in other facilities including government school buildings. Two UNRWA schools in Husseineyeh reopened in time for the new academic year, following the return of refugees to the area.



COLLECTIVE CENTRES:

In part due to the reopening of Husseineyeh, there has been a 28 per cent reduction in the collective shelter population since the last quarter. It is expected that the shelter population will continue to reduce over the coming months. In July, UNRWA operated 36 collective centres in Damascus, Aleppo, Hama and Latakia, providing shelter to 12,153 Palestine refugees and Syrian IDPs, including 180 newborns and 191 persons with disabilities. By September, 10,926 Palestine refugees (2,786 families) were being hosted in 34 collective shelters located in various UNRWA installations. An estimated 1,200 refugees and Syrian IDPs have left the shelters following the reopening of Husseineyeh to civilians, closing two shelters as a result.



WATER, SANITATION & HYGIENE

A heat wave was experienced across the Middle East during the third quarter, with temperatures in Damascus topping 39°C (101°F). The provision of clean, safe drinking water was paramount to ensuring adequate hydration among refugees and containing the threat of water-borne disease. Despite ongoing constraints on distributing basic humanitarian relief items in Yalda, UNRWA distributed 1 million water purification tablets to displaced refugees from Yarmouk to the Yalda community throughout the summer. Collective centres continued to benefit from WASH interventions to reduce the risk of epidemics, including regular maintenance, garbage collection, plumbing and sanitation works in all accessible facilities, camps and gatherings. This quarter saw the provision of 4,086 family hygiene kits. The Agency also provided 6,000 water filter and sanitation tablet kits to 8,000 families in rural Damascus and 5,800 cubic meters of fresh potable water for 6,800 families in Khan Dunoun, Khan Eshieh, Artouz and Shahba during the summer.