Humanitarian context: The second quarter of 2016 continued to be marked by a sharp escalation of armed violence across the country. The situation in Aleppo deteriorated, claiming the lives of many civilians including Palestine refugees. In Khan Eshieh camp in southern rural Damascus, direct shelling destroyed civilian houses and several Palestine refugees were reportedly killed. In Sayyida Zeinab, next to Qabr Essit camp in rural Damascus, two bombings on 25 April and 11 June killed at least 21 civilians and injured several dozens.

As intense fighting erupted between extremist armed groups inside Yarmouk on 7 April, UNRWA was forced to suspend all distribution operations in Yalda. Prior to the interruption, UNRWA had been able to provide a range of assistance to 6,000 Palestine refugee families from Yarmouk, Yalda, Babilé and Beit Saham, including food baskets, blankets, and hygiene kits. UNRWA had also deployed a mobile health team to provide primary healthcare to refugees. Following almost one month of interruption, an assessment mission was conducted on 27 April. From 2 to 25 May, operations resumed and UNRWA delivered an additional 10,800 Hygiene Kits and 10,800 family food parcels. On 25 May, operations were again interrupted as the Agency could not guarantee the safe delivery of humanitarian assistance.

FOOD and NFI ASSISTANCE:
The second round of food assistance ran from 1 April to 30 June. In total for the second quarter of 2016, UNRWA distributed 119,468 family food parcels, benefiting 384,956 Palestine refugees via 17 distribution centres in the Damascus area, Hama, Latakia, Aleppo, Qamishli, Dera’a, Swayda, Homs, Latina and Hama. Cash assistance remains one of the most efficient forms of assistance, as it is quick to deliver, cost-effective and provides people in need with greater choice. Among its advantages are benefits for local economies, empowerment of the beneficiaries, and dignity and decision power to people who can choose the items they would like to buy.

SHELTER:
UNRWA continues to provide shelter to Palestine refugees through a combination of 10 UNRWA and 2 Non-UNRWA facilities. Since last quarter there has been a decline of 553 residents in collective shelters in Damascus, Aleppo and Latina. Presently UNRWA hosts 2,855 individuals (880 families). Shelter residents receive food, non-food items and WASH assistance on a regular basis.

HEALTH:
In this quarter more than 217,262 health consultations and a total of 18,886 dental consultations were provided to Palestine refugee patients through a network of 15 operational health centres and 11 health points. Residents from Yarmouk, Yalda, Babilé and Beit Saham received in total 1,715 health consultations, including 186 dental treatments during Quarter 2.

EDUCATION:
Ninety percent of UNRWA schools maintained double-shift curriculums in order to accommodate the 45,380 students enrolled in 99 schools – of which 44 are UNRWA schools and 55 are in government schools. In April, UNRWA was able to implement the Monitoring of Learning Achievements (MLA) test for fourth and eighth graders in schools throughout Syria. This assessment had not been conducted in Syria since 2010 due to access and security issues. The results of this assessment enable UNRWA to better understand learning achievements on specific skills and competencies of students enrolled in UNRWA school system. In May, a total of 144 UNRWA teaching staff received training on a variety of subjects, including basic group and individual PSS counselling, basic PSS training for art and sport teachers, and training on quality assurance for teachers and principals organized by the Inter-Agency Network of Education in Emergency (INEE).

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE:
UNRWA distributed a total of 3,237 hygiene kits, 7,184 packs of adult and baby diapers, and 6,237 sanitary napkins to displaced refugees in collective shelters. UNRWA also provided regular garbage collection, rehabilitation of sewage systems, infrastructure, equipment, spare parts, and fuel to camps and host communities. UNRWA also continued to provide safe drinking water to areas where access to water remains extremely difficult through water trucking including in gatherings in Jdaydet Artouz and Shabba.

Date: July 2016
Sources: UNRWA
The boundaries and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.