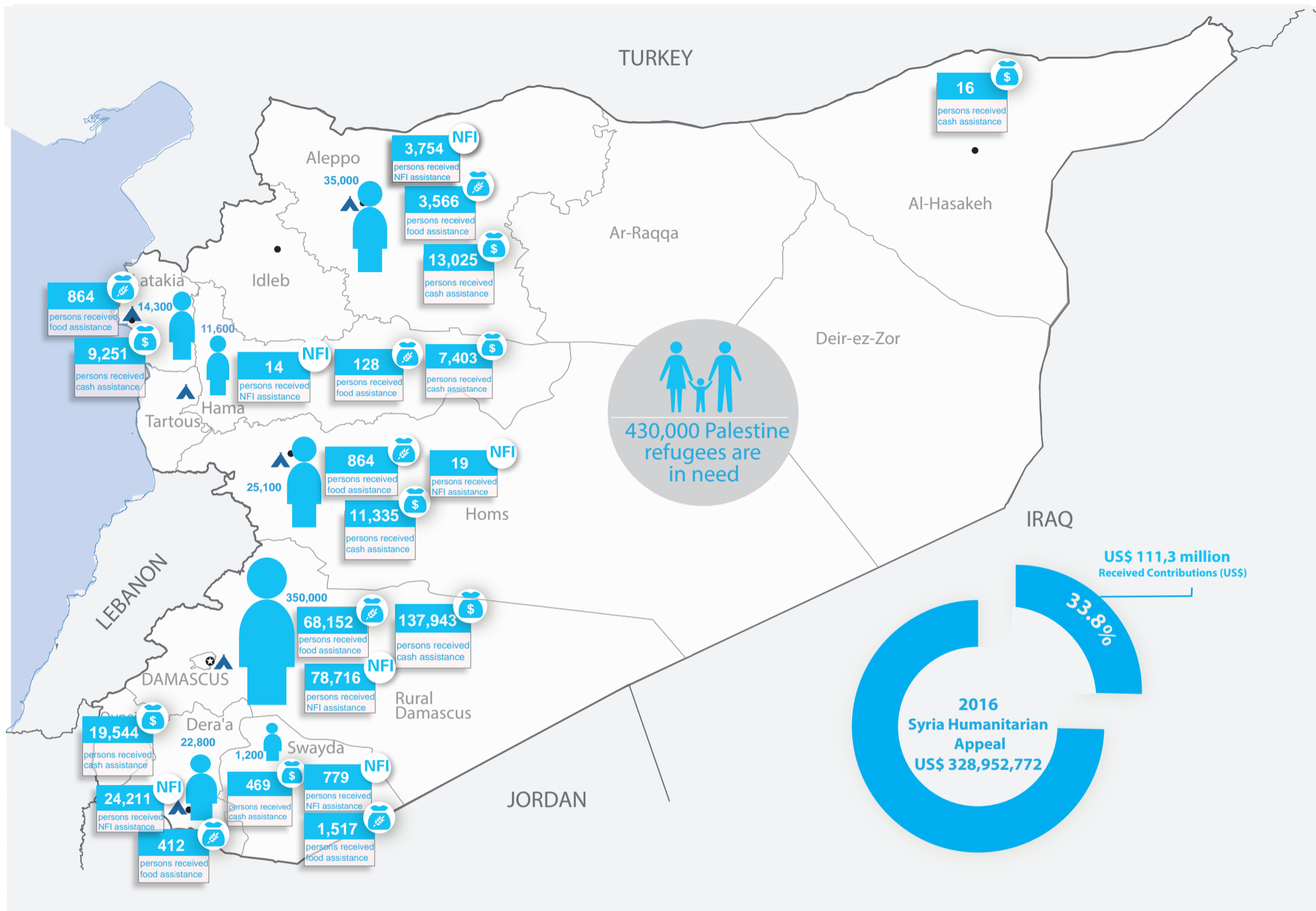


September marked the beginning of the new academic year. UNRWA schools opened for 44,597 students to attend regular classes, with services provided by 1,860 UNRWA teachers in 45 UNRWA schools and 56 schools managed by the Ministry of Education. Overall, the number of students enrolled in UNRWA schools has declined compared to the previous academic year. More students are expected to register over the coming weeks. UNRWA will also continue the implementation of its Education in Emergencies programme to support access to quality education for Palestine refugee children throughout Syria.



CASH ASSISTANCE:

UNRWA has expanded its cash distribution network to 45 banks and money transfer company branches in all areas of operations to ensure maximum reach to beneficiaries. The third round of cash distribution, which began on 21 August, is ongoing and will continue until 15 November. In September, 198,986 Palestine refugees (59,150 families) received two months' worth of assistance, at the monthly rate equivalent to US\$ 37 in Syrian Pounds. The verification process implemented along with this round of cash distribution is also ongoing and will enable UNRWA to improve the quality and coverage of data related to its humanitarian operations in Syria, including the location and demographics of the beneficiaries.

FOOD AND NFI ASSISTANCE:

UNRWA completed the third round of food assistance for 2016 on 30 September. Throughout the month, a total of 21,387 family food parcels were distributed to 74,775 Palestine refugee beneficiaries (18,993 families) through a network of 15 distribution centres, including one mobile centre, located in Homs, Hama, Latakia, Damascus, Rif Damascus, Aleppo and Dera'a. In addition, 99,272 blankets and 383 mattresses were distributed.

SHELTER:

The number of people residing in collective shelters continued to decrease in September, with a total of 2,571 Palestine refugees (818 families) remaining in 10 collective shelters. This represents a further reduction of 30 individuals compared to August. Palestine refugees residing in collective shelters receive 50 per cent of the cash assistance amount, as they benefit from a range of other forms of assistance. In addition to providing shelter and cooked meals, UNRWA distributed 182 food parcels, 21,084 cans of food, 14,201 kilograms of dry food, 1,777 mattresses and 460 baby kits to shelter residents.

HEALTH:

A total of 64,284 health consultations were performed by UNRWA medical teams this month. UNRWA continues to provide primary health care to up to 450,000 Palestine refugees in Syria through 15 health centres and 11 health points, as well as dental services through 12 health centres and three health points. The Agency also maintains agreements with 23 hospitals to offer subsidized secondary care to Palestine refugees in Syria.

EDUCATION:

The new academic year started on 18 September, welcoming 44,597 students (22,271 males, 22,326 females) to a total of 101 schools managed by UNRWA throughout the country. UNRWA provides primary education to students from grade one to grade nine, further complemented by a robust Education in Emergencies programme, including the provision of eight safe learning spaces, self-learning materials and regular catch-up classes.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE:

The Agency distributed 1,145 hygiene kits at distribution points, as well as 836 hygiene kits, 1,757 packets of sanitary napkins, 1,400 baby diapers and 5,514 adult diapers to residents in collective shelters. UNRWA also continued to provide regular garbage collection, rehabilitation of sewage systems infrastructure, supply of chemicals for treatment, equipment, spare parts, and fuel to camps and host communities, as well as safe drinking water to areas where access to water remains extremely difficult.