

Breaking the Silence

Hope for a New Life

Stories of women and girls benefiting from
the **UNFPA** regional response to Syria crisis

UNFPA believes that every Syrian woman has the right to have access to affordable reproductive health care 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 in host countries by advocating for human rights and gender equality to better cope with and recover from the crisis.

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund
Regional Syria Response Hub

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UNFPA programmes have helped many regain their self esteem, cope with the misfortunes and heal the heartache that many Syrian women and girls have faced during the crisis.

Foreword

They have dreams of a better life for themselves and their children. More than four years of war have ravaged Syrian families and communities. Syrian women and girls are living through the most damaging conflict in the region's recent history. Female refugees are sometimes subjected to sexual violence and more frequently suffer from harassment and abuse. Delivering their children can be dangerous. They often lack access to prenatal and postnatal care and emergency obstetric care if they need it. For the women of Syria the process of reintegration and recovery at the individual and community level will be long and complex.

Even though many of their own dreams may have been thwarted, resilient Syrian women have not lost hope and have never stopped believing that life could one day be better for their children. If we are to see that these hopes do not die, it is important that we ensure that women and girls are provided with adequate access to reproductive health services and safe supportive spaces where they can heal and rebuild their lives. It is becoming apparent that in the aftermath of this conflict, it will be empowered Syrian women who will be active agents in bringing about peace and reconstruction in their war-torn country.

This pictorial book documents the impact of the years of violence upon Syrian women, girls, men and boys. The pictures and stories show how even small interventions may change lives. We have used alias names in some stories for protection purposes.

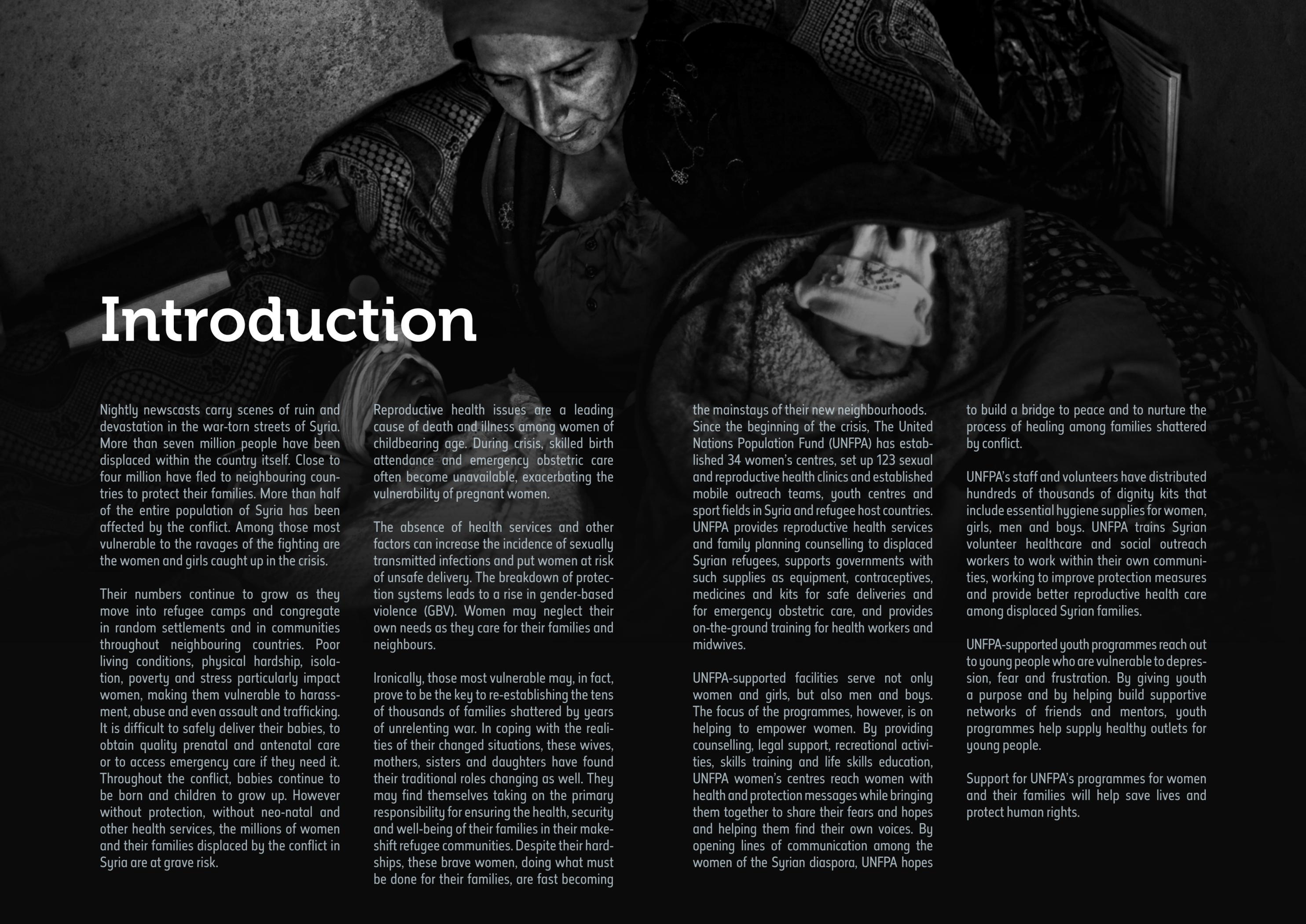
I hope the voices recorded in these pages will contribute to knowledge and understanding of some of the issues faced by the beleaguered people of Syria, especially the women.

UNFPA is working with a wide variety of partners in supporting these brave women, who are struggling to hold their families and their communities together against such incredible odds. We are working to develop programmes for girls and women that will empower them to sustain themselves today and rebuild a better future later.

Restoring hope and a brighter future for the women and girls of Syria, who will one day take the lead in rebuilding their communities from the wreckage left by the war, deserves our support and that of the humanitarian community as a whole.

Daniel Baker
UNFPA Syrian Regional Response Advisor



A black and white photograph of a woman in a headscarf looking down at a baby wrapped in a blanket. The woman has a somber expression. The baby is lying on a patterned surface, possibly a bed or a mat. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows and highlights, emphasizing the textures of the clothing and the blanket.

Introduction

Nightly newscasts carry scenes of ruin and devastation in the war-torn streets of Syria. More than seven million people have been displaced within the country itself. Close to four million have fled to neighbouring countries to protect their families. More than half of the entire population of Syria has been affected by the conflict. Among those most vulnerable to the ravages of the fighting are the women and girls caught up in the crisis.

Their numbers continue to grow as they move into refugee camps and congregate in random settlements and in communities throughout neighbouring countries. Poor living conditions, physical hardship, isolation, poverty and stress particularly impact women, making them vulnerable to harassment, abuse and even assault and trafficking. It is difficult to safely deliver their babies, to obtain quality prenatal and antenatal care or to access emergency care if they need it. Throughout the conflict, babies continue to be born and children to grow up. However without protection, without neo-natal and other health services, the millions of women and their families displaced by the conflict in Syria are at grave risk.

Reproductive health issues are a leading cause of death and illness among women of childbearing age. During crisis, skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric care often become unavailable, exacerbating the vulnerability of pregnant women.

The absence of health services and other factors can increase the incidence of sexually transmitted infections and put women at risk of unsafe delivery. The breakdown of protection systems leads to a rise in gender-based violence (GBV). Women may neglect their own needs as they care for their families and neighbours.

Ironically, those most vulnerable may, in fact, prove to be the key to re-establishing the tens of thousands of families shattered by years of unrelenting war. In coping with the realities of their changed situations, these wives, mothers, sisters and daughters have found their traditional roles changing as well. They may find themselves taking on the primary responsibility for ensuring the health, security and well-being of their families in their makeshift refugee communities. Despite their hardships, these brave women, doing what must be done for their families, are fast becoming

the mainstays of their new neighbourhoods. Since the beginning of the crisis, The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has established 34 women's centres, set up 123 sexual and reproductive health clinics and established mobile outreach teams, youth centres and sport fields in Syria and refugee host countries. UNFPA provides reproductive health services and family planning counselling to displaced Syrian refugees, supports governments with such supplies as equipment, contraceptives, medicines and kits for safe deliveries and for emergency obstetric care, and provides on-the-ground training for health workers and midwives.

UNFPA-supported facilities serve not only women and girls, but also men and boys. The focus of the programmes, however, is on helping to empower women. By providing counselling, legal support, recreational activities, skills training and life skills education, UNFPA women's centres reach women with health and protection messages while bringing them together to share their fears and hopes and helping them find their own voices. By opening lines of communication among the women of the Syrian diaspora, UNFPA hopes

to build a bridge to peace and to nurture the process of healing among families shattered by conflict.

UNFPA's staff and volunteers have distributed hundreds of thousands of dignity kits that include essential hygiene supplies for women, girls, men and boys. UNFPA trains Syrian volunteer healthcare and social outreach workers to work within their own communities, working to improve protection measures and provide better reproductive health care among displaced Syrian families.

UNFPA-supported youth programmes reach out to young people who are vulnerable to depression, fear and frustration. By giving youth a purpose and by helping build supportive networks of friends and mentors, youth programmes help supply healthy outlets for young people.

Support for UNFPA's programmes for women and their families will help save lives and protect human rights.



Stories

of Syrians overcoming the
challenges of their situation



Najwan

I have a chance to learn again

Thirteen year-old Najwan was left with her grandmother when her parents' divorced. Abused by a neighbour for two years, her grandmother punished Najwan when she found out by marrying her off to an older man for "protection". She soon had four children. Overwhelmed by her new responsibilities and worn out with caring for the babies, Najwan endured verbal and physical abuse by her in-laws. Then war broke out and bombs began falling in the neighbourhood. Her husband went missing and with no food and no place to go for safety, Najwan and her in-laws fled Syria.

She arrived in Lebanon, emotionally and physically exhausted. She worries about her children, especially her 4-year-old son, Emad. "He never had the same childhood my older children did before the war," explains Najwan. "He can't play outside. I feel like I'm keeping him in prison."

A friend sent her to the UNFPA's Bekaa women's centre for help. Najwan began seeing a therapist and attending the classes offered at the women's centre. "I missed out on school because I married young," she says. "But here I have a chance to learn again." Her friends say that Najwan is a changed woman with newfound confidence and hope.

"I missed out on school because I married young."
- Najwan



Mother of 4 children
Facility: UNFPA-supported
women's centre in Bekaa,
Lebanon



Shehab

Reunited with his mother after tragedy

Before the war, Shehab was a happy child. Noor, his mother, lights up when she talks about him. “He’s always been good; never caused me any worries,” she says wrapping her arms around her boys, holding them as though she’ll never let them go. When their neighbourhood in Dar’a, southern Syria was shelled, an explosion collapsed a wall on top of Shehab and his brother, Zaid, who tried to protect him. Shehab’s legs were crushed under the rubble. Noor collapsed in shock.

Adib, Shehab’s father, rushed the children and their mother to hospital. Shehab needed extensive surgery that the hospital was unable to perform. Urged to take the boy to Jordan, Adib evacuated his children to the hospital in Ramtha, Jordan, in the mean time he stayed in Zaatari refugee camp near the hospital. While the boys were being treated, the rest of the family arrived to Jordan and settled in Azraq camp. Noor was not able to visit her sons for three weeks. “I know they were well looked after medically, but children need their mother,” said Noor. The UNFPA women’s centre staff at Zaatari and Azraq have helped the family relocate and reunite. All the family lives in Zaatari camp now while Shehab is being treated in the nearby hospital. Shehab lost both his legs, but his injuries are healing. He looks forward to the day he will be fitted for prostheses.

“A child should not be alone at the hospital, and parents need to be able to visit their child. The UNFPA women’s centre helped us be together. I feel I am alive again, the women in the centre provided me with the support and information I was looking for.” - Noor, Shehab’s mother

A boy from Dar’a
Facility: UNFPA women’s
centre at Azraq camp, Jordan

Jannah

“You cannot buy my daughter.”

Since her family fled Syria, Jannah’s husband sits under a tree all day staring into space. Jannah and her daughter work from sunrise to sunset on a nearby Jordanian farm to provide for the family. The work is hard and chemicals used on the crops blister their skin, but Jannah does not mind. The work helps her keep an eye on her daughter and provides for her husband and four children.

Like many refugee girls, Jannah’s 14-year-old daughter, Maysa, is the target of men anxious to marry a very young bride. When a marriage broker offered 140JD for the girl, Jannah told her no. “You can’t buy my daughter,” she shouted. “I will die before I give my daughter away.” Relatives advise Jannah to marry Maysa off as soon as possible for the child’s safety, but Jannah believes Maysa is too young.

A UNFPA outreach team from the UNFPA-supported women’s centre in Deir Alla approached Jannah with health and GBV messages. “I want to go to the women center but it’s too far,” Jannah says. She can’t afford bus fare and fears being harassed if they walk. Still, it is her dream for her daughter to go to school and to marry for love.



Mother of 3 sons and 1 daughter
Facility: UNFPA-supported women's centre in
Deir Alla, Jordan

“Maybe love was not an option for my generation, but I want her to be able to choose marriage for the right reasons. This is what I came to know and what I read from the educational pamphlet I received.” – Jannah



Widow, 20 years old,
mother of 3 children
Facility: UNFPA-supported
women's centre in Bekaa,
Lebanon



Hind is visiting the women's centre to attend training courses

"I now live with my brother and his wife. I want to find work because I want to be able to help my brother pay the bills." -Hind

Manal

New life in the shadow of death

Manal and her husband were happy in Syria. Her husband had a good job, they had a nice home and life was good. Then war broke out. Manal gave birth to her youngest daughter amidst explosions and gunfire. Forced to flee, the family travelled from place to place in Syria seeking safety. Struggling to find food, Manal lived on what the children did not eat. She breastfed the baby as long as she could hoping to help her survive. The trauma of constant warfare left the children emotionally shattered. They all lost weight. At last, they crossed over into Lebanon to escape the conflict.

Forced to return to Syria due to visa problems, her husband and son were detained and arrested at the border. Manal has no idea what happened to them. She fears her son might have been inducted into the army. Meanwhile, she and her daughters live with 20 people in a two-room apartment.

Manal met a UNFPA social worker who invited her to participate in programmes at the UNFPA women's centre. "Whenever I come here my whole spirit changes," she says. She and her daughters enrolled in job skills classes and have become part of a supportive community through the women's centre programmes.



35 years old, son and husband missing
Facility: UNFPA-supported women's
centre in Bekaa, Lebanon

"At the women's centre, I discovered I am
a strong person. Whenever I come here
my whole spirit changes." – Manal

Shahd



37 years old, 3 children
Facility: UNFPA-supported
women centre at Zarqa, Jordan

“It is good to have a place where I can talk to someone, I do not feel like I have to face this all alone anymore.” – Shahd

A mother wishing her kids to be just kids again

Shahd, a Syrian mother of three, escaped from Syria to Jordan with her family when fighters burned their home in Yarmouk, Damascus. The family, away at the time, escaped the initial attack. When Shahd returned home with her brother, they surprised a group of looters, who attacked them and beat her brother. His last words to his sister were, “Run away!”

Shahd’s brother saved their lives that day, but at the cost of his own. Shahd and her family fled with only clothes on their backs. They lost everything. Shahd worries how her little family will survive. “Jordan is a very expensive place,” she

explains. “Food vouchers are only good in more expensive designated shops so they don’t go very far.” She wishes her kids could just be kids again, but her two young sons have to work after school to help out. Her husband works occasionally, when jobs can be found.

The UNFPA-supported women and girls safe space has been a huge help to the family. They receive counselling, supplies and support from staff. “It’s good to have a place where I can talk to someone,” says Shahd. “I don’t feel like I have to face this all alone anymore.”



19 years old, from Idlib
Facility: Azraq camp, Jordan

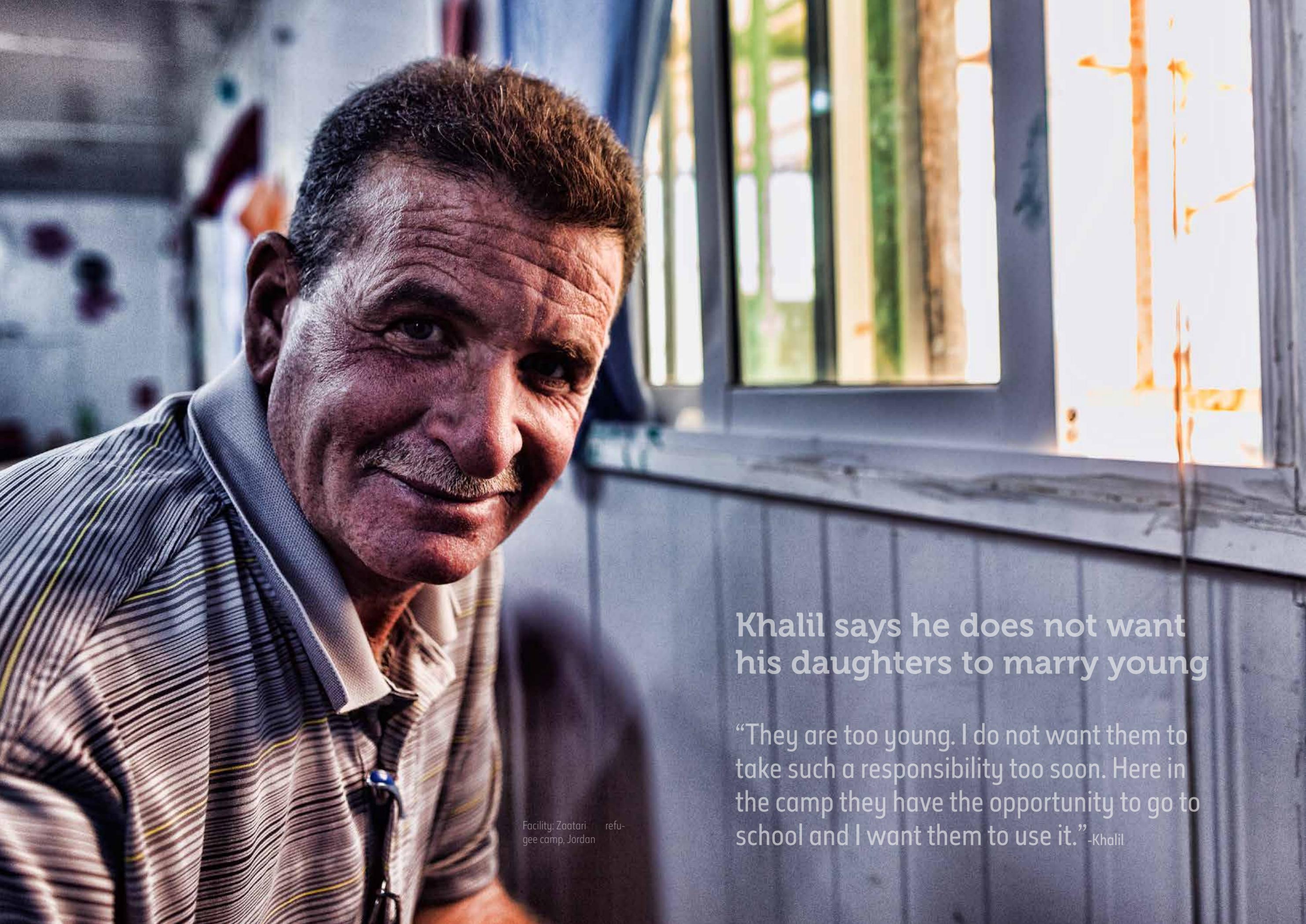
Qamar

A blanket of fear

Shortly before arriving at the Jordanian Azraq refugee camp, 19 year-old Qamar attempted suicide, an all too common occurrence among young women faced with domestic violence and abuse. When her family fled Syria, Qamar stayed behind with her brother to tend the family olive groves. Despite his promise to her parents, Qamar's brother and in-laws abused her, both emotionally and psychologically, insulting and humiliating her. They cut off communication with her family and restricted her movements.

"Violence against Syrian women and girls is hidden under a cultural blanket of fear, shame and silence," says one Jordanian social worker. "Girls like Qamar internalize blame and shame." After her suicide attempt, Qamar came to Azraq to live with her aunt, who promptly restricted Qamar to their tent and collected her food vouchers for herself. One day, Qamar visited the UNFPA women's centre. A staff member, noticing her distress and brought in centre staff. Qamar now lives with a friend, receiving counselling and training. "The UNFPA women's centre also teaches skills like literacy and English," Qamar says smiling broadly. "I have met new friends here. I don't feel alone anymore." A confident Qamar hopes to reunite with her parents soon.

"I came by myself to the camp. I miss my family. With the women's centre I do not feel alone anymore. I feel surrounded and have many people in my life." – Qamar



Khalil says he does not want his daughters to marry young

“They are too young. I do not want them to take such a responsibility too soon. Here in the camp they have the opportunity to go to school and I want them to use it.” -Khalil

Facility: Zaatari refugee camp, Jordan

"Pregnant women often have no idea where to get reproductive health care. We hear stories of women left to deliver on their own. It must be terrifying. At the centre I receive the guidance I need on where and what to do."
- Isra'a



Isra'a

A lost baby because of inadequate care

Isra'a, already a mother of two, is expecting her third child. When she arrived in Lebanon 18 months ago she was pregnant. "We left Syria so I could give birth in safety and I had my baby in a private Lebanese hospital." Isra'a's voice catches as she remembers. Her son was premature and needed neonatal care. Isra'a and her husband sold everything they had in order to pay his medical bills. When the money ran out, Isra'a was unable to pay, so she and her baby had to leave the hospital. Isra'a looks away, touching her belly tenderly, "He died seventeen days later at home."

She is anxious about seeing the midwife at the Kfar Sir reproductive health clinic, El Nabatieh. "The antenatal care is free here," Isra'a says. "I heard about the UNFPA women's centre from friends. No practice would accept me as a patient even though I'm registered with UNHCR. Medical care in Lebanon can be very expensive. I did not know that I could have free reproductive healthcare until I came to the women's centre". The dedicated staff working in UNFPA supported clinics and women's centres offer more than reproductive healthcare. They reach out to women like Isra'a, who are traumatized and in need for psychological support to help them cope with loss and enable them to move forward.

Isra'a's life as a refugee has been traumatic. She says that even though she is pregnant, men leer at her when she walks to the market with her children and make indecent remarks. She feels humiliated. "At least the people that work at the women's centre see that we're not bad people. I'm glad I found this place," Isra'a smiles faintly.

Mother of 2 children, pregnant
Facility: UNFPA-supported
women's centre in Kfar Sir,
El Nabatieh, Lebanon

Reem

If the sun is shining, there is hope

Reem was happy in Ghouta, Syria. "I consider myself unusual among refugees that I married for love when I was 24". "My father never pressured me to marry," she says. "He even supported my decision to train as a hairdresser." She did volunteer work before the war, organizing recycling efforts in her neighbourhood.

A broken foot forced her to wait eight months before she could flee the fighting with her elderly mother and four children. They stayed a while with her brother in Lebanon until he could no longer look after them. Reem found herself and her charges homeless at Ramadan.

Trainer from Ghouta. 4 children, cares for elderly mother
Facility: UNFPA-supported women's centre Bekaa, Lebanon

When a friend found out that Reem and her family were cold, hungry and alone, she sent them to a social worker at the UNFPA women's centre at Bekaa. The centre staff helped Reem find affordable accommodation. She found a job and began visiting the centre regularly. She even became a trainer and outreach volunteer at the centre. "I find comfort in my work when I listen to and help resolve other people's problems," she says. "Being a refugee doesn't mean you have to hide at home. We can make a difference by helping each other."



"Being a refugee doesn't mean you have to hide at home. We can make a difference by helping each other." - Reem

Jihan

Providing for her family; every day's struggle

Jihan is very protective of her 15 year-old daughter, Zeinab. Groups of men have come to her small apartment looking to arrange marriages for themselves with Zeinab and other young refugee girls. Jihan is constantly receiving marriage proposals for Zeinab. Jihan is adamant, however. "We have no women for marriage," she tells them firmly.

Like other Syrian women refugees, Jihan struggles to make ends meet. Many feel forced to marry off their daughters in order to provide for them and to protect them from sexual harassment and abuse. "I don't want to marry yet," Zeinab says. "I like going to the UNFPA-supported women's centre to learn. I'm taking English lessons there." Zeinab loves to study. "At the women's centre, we also learn how dangerous it can be to marry young."

Jihan also wants Zeinab to continue her education. "If I had been educated," she says, "I might be able to provide for my family in this situation." Mother and daughter look forward to going to the women's centre. The women's centre lifts their spirits and helps them meet new friends and learn things that will help them improve their lives.



A mother from Daraya
Facility: UNFPA-supported
women's centre, Bekaa, Lebanon

"Zeinab and I have learned a lot at the UNFPA women's centre. I have learned how to manage my emotions and I think I can relate to my children better too." – Jihan

Zubeir

His mother: we did not know if he was alive

Zubeir looked older than his 17 years when he joined his mother and siblings at a refugee settlement in Lebanon. Abducted two years before, unable to get word to his family, Zubeir says he was tortured, beaten, electro-shocked, starved and imprisoned. Zubeir suffered a severe leg injury and deep emotional wounds. His uncle died in the same prison.

“We didn’t know if Zubeir was even alive,” says his mother Dima. Meanwhile, the family’s situation deteriorated. Mother and siblings, trapped without food and water, were surrounded by snipers. Dima finally managed to flee to Lebanon with her youngest children. She left her husband behind and does not know if he is still alive. They own nothing. Blankets are borrowed. The children are cold and often sick. Their house is poorly ventilated. Dima finally went to UNFPA women’s centre looking for food, but she found much more.

Therapy and education programmes at the women’s centre are helping Dima and her children recover from the horrors they have experienced. Zubeir remains withdrawn, but his family is learning how to provide him with emotional support.



“I hope that because of what I have learned at the women’s centre that I am more patient with Zubeir. He is not as withdrawn as he used to be. He opens up more now.” – Zubeir’s mother

17 years old from Daraya
Facility: UNFPA-supported women’s
centre, Bekaa, Lebanon



“UNFPA has given me support, energy and willingness to open my own business, along with courage to get engaged in the community and the confidence to stand up for myself and my family.” - ‘Aida

‘Aida

Sharing her new confidence

‘Aida’s beauty salon in Bekaa, eastern Lebanon, is filled with laughter; women sitting together, drinking sweet tea, reading magazines and talking about their husbands. The salon is a sanctuary for Syrian women.

“In Syria, I was a nurse,” says ‘Aida. “I used to work in a hospital in eastern Damascus. “I was on call when the attack happened.” On 21 August 2013, news reports say that gas rockets were fired on the Ghouta suburbs. “I’d just got off the nightshift,” ‘Aida explains. “My son called out to me. He couldn’t see. I noticed a faint smell and saw that my son’s eyes ad turned white. I rushed him to the hospital.” There, ‘Aida found hundreds of victims and volunteered to help. “That day”, “I prepared the bodies of children for burial.” The experience left her shattered. “I’ve witnessed so much in that hospital, but I’m lucky because I still have my family. My children are alive, Alhamdulillah.”

Her family fled Syria soon after. ‘Aida began attending art therapy and drama therapy classes at Al Marj women’s centre. “I have to be strong. It’s the only way I can support my children.” ‘Aida became a UNFPA outreach volunteer at the women’s centre, identifying women who could benefit from the medical, psycho-social and vocational services provided by the women’s centre.

Nurse/salon owner from Ghouta Facility: UNFPA-supported women’s centre in Bekaa, Lebanon

“At the centre we can do many desperately in need, such as some of our worries and

things that our families are clothes. Crochet helps us forget enjoy ourselves a little.” -Rabee’a



29 years, 6 children, left Aleppo because of "Daesh"
Facility: Azraq camp, Jordan

Mahmoud

It hurts me to see my child like this

Mahmoud and his family fled Hama, Syria, 18 months ago. "I miss our old life, work, our orchard, walking down familiar streets, my favorite café and my neighbours," he says. The children miss school, their friends and family gatherings at their grandmother's. "We all miss home," Mahmoud reflects. "I carry the key to my house in my pocket everywhere I go. But I'm afraid we will never get the old life back."

Mahmoud holds his daughter close as he describes how his children have been affected by the war and displacement. "My daughter does not remember our life before the war. All she knows is conflict and exile. She stopped talking and quit playing with other children."

"As a father, it hurts me to see my child like this," said Mahmoud. His wife visited Deir Alla women's centre throughout her pregnancy and now receives postnatal care. The staff told his wife about the rehabilitation programme for children. Now the whole family goes to counselling programmes together. His daughter has improved so much that she is speaking again. Her progress gives Mahmoud hope. "We've been through a difficult time and I think the centre helped us a lot, including me".

47 years old, 4 children under 18 from Hama
Facility: Women and girls' safe space in Deir
Alla, Jordan

"We have been through a difficult time. The women's centre provides comprehensive services to everyone in my family." - Mahmoud



Yara

It is good to speak out!



"It was happening before, but now it's worse," says Yara, a mother of five about domestic violence. After the family escaped to Jordan and came as refugees to Deir Alla in the Jordan Valley, her husband began shouting. He was angry all the time. He cannot get a work permit so he works irregularly. Between his laborer jobs and the aid they receive, the family barely covers their expenses from week to week.

Their financial situation is complicated by the fact that Yara cares for her brother, who lost both legs in the war. She sends what money she can to her mother and feels guilty that she cannot do more.

UNFPA sends outreach service providers to help identify and address cases of domestic violence among refugee families. In order to combat the problems faced by women and children, UNFPA provides one-to-one counseling and gives workshops on abuse prevention. "It's good to talk," says Yara. "Not just about the problems with my husband but also about my children." Yara says she is gaining more confidence knowing that she is not alone and that help is available for her and her children.



"I know I am not alone and that help is available for me and my children." –Yara

Rana's Children

I want to take my mind off my sorrows

The war in Damascus is a distant memory for Rana, but she and her children still live with the consequences. Her husband, a taxi driver, narrowly escaped three mortar explosions. He quit his job. Fearing their son would be forced to fight, Rana's family fled Syria to Lebanon. Before they left, Rana allowed her twin daughters, Hala and Malak, to marry young, hoping to protect them from predators, rape and violence - hoping to safeguard their futures.

Malak and her husband were able to leave Syria with the family. Hala, however, married a Palestinian-Syrian and cannot enter Lebanon. Alone, without family close by, Rana worries that Hala is vulnerable to abuse and mistreatment by her husband and in-laws. Rana says that Hala had one abortion already and is pregnant again and that her husband has started to abuse her verbally and physically, her health situation is deteriorating day after day. Rana worries that she can do nothing to help her daughter in Syria. Malak situation is not better than Hala's, she is also pregnant. Her husband does not work and he abuses her physically every day.

Rana recently visited the women's centre in Nabataea for recreation activities offered by the women's centre. "I wanted to take my mind off my sorrows," she explains. "Then, I realised they have a lot more services to offer." Rana now sees a counsellor and participates in art and drama therapy.



"Counselling helps me to express my feelings. I feel like a different person after classes in the safe space." - Rana

Mother of twin daughters
Facility: UNFPA-supported women's
centre in Kfar Sir, El Nabataea, Lebanon

Ahmed

Music will change your life

Education is vital to the improvement of society, opening doors for people like Ahmed, a 23-year-old Syrian Kurd. Despite the challenges he faced at home in Syria, Ahmed studied hard, reaching the top 2 percent in business management school. When war broke out, however, the family was forced to leave Aswad, their home village, and cross the border into Iraq seeking refuge in the Domiz refugee camp.

Ahmed saw a lot before they left Syria. “My neighbour was shot while holding his daughter’s hand,” he says with sadness. “Frightened by the gunshot, the little girl could not understand that her father was gone.” Ahmed, himself, narrowly escaped being kidnapped on his way to school.

Life is hard in the camps too. Homesick and depressed, Ahmed passed a billboard offering classes at the UNFPA Serdam youth centre one day. Doubtful that the centre could help, Ahmed took a chance and enrolled in a variety of classes. Ahmed’s decision encouraged his sister to sign up for job skills classes. “She feels better and she is learning things that will benefit her future life,” says her proud older brother. Serdam centre programmes have restored hope for many young men and women through the opportunities it offers for education.

23 years old
Facility: UNFPA youth centre,
Domiz camp, Iraq



“I was brought up to think that a girl and a guy are different and unequal. We learned through peer education that both have the same rights.” – Ahmed



Facility: UNFPA reproductive health clinic at Zaatari camp, Jordan

“My daughter Zarah, a 13 year old mother, is receiving reproductive health and counselling services. These services help her cope with her situation.” - Zarah’s mother regrets marrying her daughter at an early age.

Join us in
**helping the Syrian
people,**

especially
women and girls

who are
the mothers,
daughters, and
future leaders

who will
rebuild Syria “”

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is the lead UN agency for delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

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UNFPA regional response
for women and girls
affected by the Syria crisis