HOMS, Syria - Residents of Homs last month experienced their first-ever “TEDxMimasStreet” conference—a day long program organized locally with the help of 43 young Syrian volunteers—for which passionate people gathered to speak about their success stories in the face of conflict. Licensed by the TED organization—and organized around the theme, “Starting from Within”—115 people split almost evenly between males and females attended, coming from Homs itself, and from other cities in Syria such as Damascus and Aleppo.

“One TED platform has a huge influence on people,” said Afaf Atasi, an attendee. “It represents ideas of many creative and innovative individuals and groups.”

The program featured presentations from 8 young people whose topics covered a wide range of issues from technical and educational subjects to social and human interest success stories. The program also featured networking activities, musical performances and social spaces where audience members, partners and team members had the opportunity to talk, discuss and exchange ideas.

One of the speakers was Hala Murad, a student from Homs in 11th grade. She spoke about changing the educational system in Syria, which she compared to a piece of paper—flat, one-dimensional, and not able to hold anything inside. She called instead for the educational system to become like a cube. “This is a cube; I can put whatever I want inside it. It is three dimensional,” she said. “And this is paper; I can put nothing inside it. Our education is looking just like this paper.”

Hala lamented that the system in Syria hadn’t changed over time, saying the baccalaureate exams were the same as they were ten years ago. Other fields grow and change, she said, but education in Syria seemed to stay the same. “The world is in a continuous change, and science is in a continuous expanding phase, but education, it is standing still,” she said. “It has turned into a kind of traditions and habits that we inherit from a generation to another.”

At the end, she said that change was necessary for the rebuilding of her country. “Will education be a 3D force to make peace a sustainable future?” she said. “Will the future be like what we are planning for? Will we reach the change we are working for?”

UNFPA-Syria provided a strategic level of partnership, with Al-Barake Bank-Syria contributing as a golden partner, and the Syrian Computer Society (SCS) contributing as the educational partner. “Starting from Within” was chosen as the theme in order to highlight the importance of rebuilding humans culturally, academically, intellectually and psychologically as a result of the crisis. The goal of the event was to capture hope and success stories from Homs, and to inspire and ignite ideas in youth in Homs and all over Syria.

“Empowering young people to be more influential is part of our responsibility in mobilizing young people,” said Massimo Diana, UNFPA-Syria representative.

The city of Homs has been severely damaged, with its infrastructure dramatically affected by the Syria Crisis. However, young people there with their passion, dedication, and love for what they are doing insisted on delivering a message of hope and peace. While the crisis has resulted in many human and cultural losses, the “TEDxMimasStreet” team believes that rebuilding humanity is much more than reconstructing tall buildings and rebuilding roads.

Further details on the conference can be found at: http://tedxmimasstreet.com/

New women and girls safe spaces have opened cross border in both northern and southern Syria.

**SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC (FROM ALL CHANNELS)**

- 283,612 reproductive health services delivered to Syrians
- 9,299 deliveries supported, including 3,395 C-section deliveries
- 63,948 family planning services
- 15,797 gender-based violence response services provided to Syrians
- 14,276 women accessed women safe spaces

**IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY THE CRISIS**

- 23,105 reproductive health services delivered to Syrian refugees
- 5,217 Syrians received family planning services and consultations
- 5,223 clients received gender-based violence services
- 17,594 Syrian refugees accessed women safe spaces and participated in activities in camps and host communities
- 6,650 Syrian refugees reached with gender-based violence related messages
## Regional Situation Report for Syria Crisis

### Humanitarian Response

**Syrian Arab Republic: From All Channels**

**Syrians Affected by the Crisis: 13.5 Million**
- **Women and Girls of Reproductive Age: 42 Million**
- **Youth: 2.8 Million**
- **Pregnant Women: 360,000**

**Fast Figures**
- **Syrians Affected by the Crisis:** 13.5 Million
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**Sources:** 2017 Humanitarian Needs Overview Syrian Arab Republic (OCHA), UNFPA

### UNFPA Response in Syria - Supported from Damascus

#### Reproductive Health and Safe Motherhood

**Reproductive Health Services**
- **239,830** reproductive health services
  - **3,666** normal deliveries
  - **2,630** C-section deliveries
  - **21,840** ante-natal care services
  - **55,838** family planning services
  - **8,194** pregnancies under 18

**Other RH Services Supplies**
- **148,141** clients
- **1,600** reproductive health kits

**Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment**

**Response Services**
- **10,450** women and girls

**Women Accessing Safe Spaces**
- **10,171** women and girls

**Outreach Activities**
- **9,417** clients

**Supplies**
- **155** dignity kits distributed

### UNFPA-Supported Facilities in Syria

**Number of Women’s Spaces:** 31
**Number of Field Reproductive Health Clinics or Mobile Teams:** 44
**Number of Health Facilities:** 929

### Reproductive Health and Safe Motherhood

**Response through Cross-Border Modality**

**Reproductive Health Services**
- **13,630** beneficiaries received services supported from cross-border operations managed from Jordan:
  - **1,011** normal deliveries
  - **586** C-sections
  - **88** pregnancies under 18
  - **4,122** ante-natal care services
  - **1,084** post-natal care services
  - **973** family planning services

- **30,152** clients received services supported from cross-border operations managed Turkey:
  - **1,227** normal deliveries
  - **179** C-section deliveries
  - **124** pregnancies under 18
  - **4,139** ante-natal care services
  - **1,105** post-natal care services
  - **7,137** family planning services

**Outreach Activities**
- **831** women reached through outreach activities supported from cross-border operations managed from Jordan
- **7,937** women reached through outreach activities supported from cross-border operations managed from Turkey

**Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment**

**Response Services**
- **1,784** clients received gender-based violence services supported cross-border from Turkey
- **3,563** clients received gender-based violence services supported cross-border from Jordan

**GBV Awareness and Outreach Activities**
- **1,646** Syrians reached through outreach and awareness activities supported cross-border from Turkey
- **1,360** Syrians reached through outreach and awareness activities supported cross-border from Jordan

**Training**
- **67** persons trained supported cross-border from Turkey
- **24** persons trained supported cross-border from Jordan

**Incubator Unit at Al Noor Hospital, a SAMS-operated CeMONC facility in Kahl, Daraa. Photo Credit: SAMS**
HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY THE CRISIS

TURKEY

SERVICES

15,397 services for Syrian beneficiaries
• 2,806 family planning services
• 1,008 ante-natal care services
• 281 post-natal care services
• 112 pregnancies of women under 18

AWARENESS SESSIONS AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

2,733 clients

SUPPLIES

3,580 brochures distributed

TRAINING

168 participants

LEBANON

SERVICES

295 services for Syrian beneficiaries
• 18 family planning services
• 104 ante-natal care services
• 1 pregnancy of women under 18

JORDAN

SERVICES

10,592 reproductive health services
• 155 normal deliveries
• 44 pregnancies under 18
• 1,496 family planning services
• 3,011 ante-natal care services
• 442 post-natal care services

AWARENESS SESSIONS AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

4,713 clients

OTHER RH SERVICES

1,481 services

EGYPT

WOMEN AND GIRLS ACCESSING SAFE SPACES

324 women and girls

GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT

TURKEY

RESPONSE SERVICES

3,861 services

WOMEN AND GIRLS ACCESSING SAFE SPACES

8,234 women and girls

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

4,917 clients

SUPPLIES

959 dignity kits distributed

LEBANON

RESPONSE SERVICES

5 services

WOMEN AND GIRLS ACCESSING SAFE SPACES

272 women and girls

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

837 clients

TRAINING

176 participants

JORDAN

WOMEN AND GIRLS ACCESSING SAFE SPACES

3,470 women and girls

RESPONSE SERVICES

935 services

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

896 clients

Sources: Turkey’s Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD), UNHCR, OCHA, and UNFPA.

Community sensitization meeting on Gender and GBV in Majdle Anjar Bekaa, Lebanon. Photo credit: RDFL.
**HIGHLIGHTS**

**EGYPT**

Humanitarian networking meeting with Ministry of Youth and NGO partners

UNFPA formalized its initiative with the Ministry of Youth and Sports to integrate women and girls safe space interventions at youth centers in Sharkia governorate. This project was approved by the ministry as part of the UNFPA adolescents and youth work plan to engage both Syrian and Egyptian women and youth on GBV prevention and response, as well as to empower both communities with skills trainings. As part of this process, UNFPA, MoY staff and Y-PEER visited the identified youth centers in April to assess their location, accessibility to the Syrian community and human resource capacity. In addition, a humanitarian and safe space management meeting was conducted at UNFPA Co to introduce MoY staff to UNFPA humanitarian partners (i.e. AMU and Care) and to share their experience on safe space social empowerment activities and best practices in safe space management. The meeting also gathered Y-PEER members from the Syrian community, as well as medical students who spoke about their experience using peer education and theatre technique with Syrian and Egyptian youth.

A variety of continuing activities

UNFPA supported programs continued to operate at centers in El Maadi, Alexandria, and Naser City. The programs included courses in first aid, English and cooking, as well as classes in ceramics, handicrafts, and accessories design. Other programs included an educational session on issues related to hepatitis C, colon and breast cancer, early marriage, child exploitation and autism, as well as aerobics classes, group therapy sessions and a training on project management and marketing. “I come here to meet my friends and to feel freedom,” said one of the beneficiaries.

**UNFPA-SUPPORTED FACILITIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Jordan</th>
<th>Lebanon</th>
<th>Iraq</th>
<th>Turkey</th>
<th>Egypt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of women's spaces</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of field reproductive health clinics or mobile teams</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of youth centres and safe spaces</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UNFPA MISSION:

UNFPA believes that every Syrian woman and girl 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 inside Syria and in host countries, including by advocating for human rights and gender equality, to better cope with and recover from the crisis.

UNFPA: Delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person’s potential is fulfilled.
US Senator Michael Bennet visiting a maternal health clinic in Zaatari camp. Photo credit: UNFPA

**US senator highlights success of Zaatari Camp maternal health clinic**

Michael Bennet, United States Senator from Colorado, visited a maternal health clinic in Zaatari camp for refugees in Jordan that UNFPA has been supporting since 2012. Today, a total of 7,381 babies have been born safely in the clinic, which is the only one available in the camp where almost 80,000 people live, including 19,000 women of reproductive age. Senator Bennet visited several other UNFPA-supported projects during his time in Zaatari, such as a special centre for youth, supported by UNFPA and managed by US NGO Questscope. He gained a close view of the kind and the quality of services that are available to women and young girls at the various reproductive health facilities in the camp. “Babies continue to be born even when conflict and displacement hit their families,” he said. “To be able to sustain a maternal clinic for nearly five years with zero maternal deaths means this is a model of best practice.”

**UNFPA supports vaccination campaign**

UNFPA supported the inter-agency work on the Emergency Vaccination Campaign (EVC) at the Berrm on Jordan’s northeastern border with Syria. The focus of UNFPA’s work in the campaign will be on identifying pregnant women that need to be vaccinated (Tetanus Toxoid (TT)), identifying high risk pregnancies which might need urgent interventions by the RH team, and providing dignity kits to pregnant women. UNFPA will also provide technical support and monitoring for the above mentioned activities.

**TURKEY**

**Gaining strength through assistance**

F. is a 38-year-old mother with 4 children. She first married at 14 years old, to a boy of 15. However, this marriage ended after 6 months due to violence, which she sought psychiatric treatment afterwards as a result of. She married again at age 19, but experienced violence in this marriage as well. In fact, she says that she does not even remember a single positive moment about her life during this time. “The only thing I remember about my husband is that he wanted to make me suffer,” she said. “He cut my long hair to punish me. Be assured that he beat me every day, but cutting my hair was so painful.”

When the war broke out in Syria, F. lost her eldest son, and she was severely wounded. After she healed, she became pregnant to fill the void from losing her son. However, in the first months of her pregnancy, her husband found a new woman. And, despite her pregnancy, she said, her husband practiced violence against her and even against her children. He even tried to kill her son with a gun, she said. He also did not allow anyone in the family to leave the house. In the last months of the pregnancy, her city experienced intense bombardment and conflict. Finally, she gave birth alone in the house because she was afraid of both her husband’s repression and the conflict in the city. After this, though, F. escaped from her husband and his relatives, and took refuge in Turkey, bringing her children with her.

We met with F. when she came to our Turkish language course. First, F. met with our social workers to start the registration process and then they gave various information to her. We were also in contact with other non-governmental organizations to work together to give her rent and family assistance.

F. has now been working as a healthcare agent for about 3 months in our institution. F., a woman who had never worked before, was very upset when her 13-year-old son began earning money by collecting garbage when she first came to Turkey. But, she says, the difficult times are a little further behind her now because she is working on her own.

She says our institution has had a great impact on her life. “I was afraid to talk to even a little boy before. I was afraid my husband or relatives would find me,” she said. “But now I’m strong like a door. Now I get the right without fear, I feel strong enough to protect myself and my children.”

**UNFPA supported heath facilities and women and girls safe spaces continued to implement integrated RH and GBV services in under served areas of Aleppo, Idlib, Hama, Homs and Damascus. Significantly—following three months of preparations—one women and girls safe space in Idlib that had been out of service for several months resumed activities at full scale, and beneficiaries as a result began to benefit from the various services. Furthermore, a new women and girls safe space has opened in Suran, in an effort to serve under served communities that will possibly receive IDPs from Raqqa.**
UNFPA strategy to deploy technical expertise in both Gaziantep and at field level has been a major success so far. Thanks to newly deployed case managers, a number of UNFPA supported health facilities in Aleppo have for the first time become capable of dealing with complicated GBV issues.

With regard to the IP management and monitoring, UNFPA continued to hold regular monitoring and coaching meetings with partners in order to oversee the progress of the projects inside Syria. At the same time, UNFPA—with support of the regional Hub—is in the final stages of circulating the modified data collection tools to partners.

Finally, in response to the recent four villages agreement in Syria—which included displacements of population from the south to the north, and vice versa, UNFPA through partners has been playing a major role in responding to the protection and reproductive health needs of IDPs. Dignity kits and PFA have been provided in response to each evacuation from besieged areas to Idlib or Aleppo.

“A person should always seek knowledge and enlightenment and never be afraid of speaking out about his or her problems.” Beneficiary

“This meeting has broken my fear of silence and has allowed me to express myself.” Beneficiary receiving emotional support group sessions

“My wife was 14 years old when we got married. I loved her and asked her parents for her hand. My wife is now 15 and we have a baby. My mother has to show her through everything, such as housework and raising children. She could never do this on her own.” FGD participant in the group of fathers.

Activities for children at WGSS in Breiqa Camp, Quneitra, operated by Relief International. Photo Credit: RI

New women and girls centers established

UNFPA’s implementing partner Relief International has established 6 new safe spaces. A team of volunteers for new WGSS have been recruited and trained in GBV, general protection, PFA and communication skills, and outreach teams have started activities in all 6 new locations. Regarding other WGSS facilities operated by Relief International, a 12 year old girl who goes to the center at Al Noor Maternity Hospital in Nasriyeh, Dara’a, said, “I heard about the center from my friends at school and wanted to see its activities.” Of the center at Al Amal Camp, located in Al Rafa’d, Quneitra, a 52 year old woman said, “I love to come to the center and chat and laugh with the other women.”

Cross border convoy reactivated

On March 7, UNFPA participated in the reactivated cross border convoy and sent one truck to Tal Shehab containing 154 RH kits as well as essential RH medicines and supplies procured by UNFPA’s partner, Relief International. Part of the ERH kits were then moved to UNFPA’s warehouse in eastern Dara’a to pre-position supplies there.

Remote training held

On March 2, consultant to UNFPA Dr. Manal Tahtamouni conducted a remote training on Clinical Management of Rape (CMR) for Jabata al Khhashab PHC, which was attended by 4 medical staff. This facility is located in a hard-to-reach area, and access from this area to Relief International’s training facility in Quneitra—as well as the main CMR-provider in Nasriyeh, Dara’a—is often militarily obstructed. Therefore, UNFPA and Relief International worked together to ensure that staff from this PHC were provided with basic training on CMR to enable them to provide services to patients in this area.
LEBANON
UNFPA has co-led with UNHCR and the Ministry of Social Affairs the monthly National SGBV Task Force meeting, where the way forward on the IASC Guidelines roll-out has been endorsed, and the national plan to develop a strategy on early marriage was discussed with the Higher Council of Childhood.

UNFPA has led the CMR Monthly Task Force meeting, where CMR training updates were shared and the joint CMR advocacy document intended for the nationalizing of CMR services in Lebanon was reviewed and endorsed by the members before submission to the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH).

JORDAN
The Child Marriage Task Force has been re-activated under the umbrella of the SGBV-SWG. The task force consists of about 15 member organizations including the National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA) and will remain active for six months. The task force will do the mapping of services and identify best practices to address the issue of Child Marriage among Syrian refugees in Jordan.

WHOLE OF SYRIA GBV COORDINATION
UNFPA leads the Whole of Syria GBV coordination system. Preparation for protection and GBV assessment for the Whole of Syria Humanitarian Needs Overview has begun. Whole of Syria Adolescent girl strategy development has also begun. The adolescent girl strategy will address the needs of adolescent girls in a holistic way, with a specific focus on gender based violence and reproductive health. The strategy will be final by end of July.

CHALLENGES

TURKEY
Previously mentioned challenges continue. Economic problems make it hard for beneficiaries to reach the programs. Security threats within and outside the borders of Turkey have some indirect negative impact on the programming. Language barriers limit access to some services, especially in the field of health (lack of Arabic speaking psychologists, social workers, doctors, etc.). Other challenges faced include limited access to justice, unemployment, and increased tension between the refugee population and the host community.

JORDAN - CROSS BORDER
The siege of eastern Ghouta in rural Damascus, where UNFPA supports two facilities, has worsened in March with Syrian government forces launching further attacks on health facilities and also destroying tunnels that were serving as critical supply routes for essential food and medicines for the people there.

Due to territorial advances in West Dara’a of ISIL-affiliated Jaysh Khalid bin Walid in February, access to the UNFPA supported facility in Tseel remains blocked.

DONORS & PARTNERS

UNFPA IS GRATEFUL FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE FOLLOWING DONORS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE SYRIA CRISIS:

Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, European Commission, Germany, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Netherlands, Norway, OCHA/CERF, Saudi Fund for Development, Sweden, United States, United Kingdom, UNDP.

Private sector: MBC and Samsung Electronics.

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

IN SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC: Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MOSA), Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE), Syrian Family Planning Association (SFPA), Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC).


IN JORDAN: Ministry of Health (MOH), Institute for Family Health (IFH), International Medical Corps (IMC), Jordanian Health Aid Society (JHAS), Family Protection Department (FPD), Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), Youth Peer Education Network (YPE), NCFA (National Council for Family Affairs), Questscope, JORDAN Cross-border: Relief International and Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS).

IN IRAQ: Ministry of Culture, Sport and Youth (MCSP), Ministry of Labor & Social Affairs (MLSA), Al Massela, START NGO and Harikar.

IN EGYPT: Ministry of Health (MOH), CARE International Arab Medical Union and Regional Centre for Training.

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 (MoSP), ASAM (Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants), BUHASDER (The Association for the Prevention of Infectious Diseases), HÜKSMAM (Hacettepe University Women’s Research and Implementation Center), IMPR (International Middle East Peace Research Centre), KAMER (Women’s Center Foundation), CVF (Community Volunteers Foundation), Osmangazi University, PYD (Positive Life Association), SPoD (Social Policies, Gender Identity, and Sexual Orientation Studies Association), Bilgi University.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Daniel Baker,
UNFPA Syria Regional
Response Advisor
baker@unfpa.org
+962797225829

RELEVANT RESOURCES

www.unfpa.org
www.ocha.org
www.unhr.org
http://syria.humanitarianresponse.info