



GREEK ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE OF ANTIOCH AND ALL THE EAST DEPARTMENT OF ECUMENICAL RELATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT

ASSISTANCE TO THE AFFECTED IN THE SYRIAN CONFLICT OPERATIONS UPDATE 3

COVERING THROUGH AUGUST 2012

DERD has chosen the parable of Good Samaritan as its logo because it reflects the concept of service to all without any discrimination and this service is based on loving our neighbor as ourselves.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Over 43,000 humanitarian aid items have been delivered; serving an estimated 160,000 individuals**
- **777 people attended psychosocial sessions**
- **2.5 million Syrians in need of humanitarian assistance**

Coordination

DERD recently coordinated with the Syrian Trust for Development, Farah Charity, and Mu'az Bin Jabal, with distributions in public buildings in Damascus and rural Damascus. These are secular, non-profit organizations, registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs, that are charged with coordinating distribution efforts, for specific locations, from various charities and private donations. These organizations seek to develop and empower their communities to share the responsibilities of the development process in Syria.

DERD has been coordinating activities with Syrian Arab Red Crescent, local and regional municipalities, as well as local NGOs to determine the areas and public buildings that are housing the most vulnerable displaced Syrians who are in need of immediate assistance. Working with local city governments and NGOs helps to ensure that beneficiaries receive aid with minimal overlapping in efforts. DERD also coordinates food distribution activities with World Food Programme and SARC, to identify the locations of people in most in need of food and to avoid duplication. DERD attends coordination meetings established with UNHCR to discuss activities, distributions, and areas and locations for intervention. DERD regularly meets with UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to discuss relief efforts and the humanitarian needs and to discuss coordination.

DERD will soon be partnering with UNHCR, OCHA, and UNDP to provide essential non-food items for Syrians affected by the crisis, and has recently received a shipment of essential medicines from the Archbishopric of Brazil.

Outreach/Response

Distribution:

New figures from the UN estimate that approximately 2.5 million people in Syria are in need of humanitarian assistance, and around 1.2 million people are internally displaced. A recent report conducted by the Syrian Ministry of Education revealed that hundreds of displaced Syrians are residing in 330 public schools in 12 of the country's 14 governorates.

While distributing hygiene items in Al-Rama school in Jaramana Mukhayam (Jamarana Camp) area of Damascus, DERD came across a woman who earlier that day gave birth in the school to a beautiful, healthy baby girl. The mother named her daughter Rama--after the school in which she was born. This was the fourth birth that happened in this school in August.

DERD has distributed more than 3,000 hygiene items to over 21 schools in Damascus and Rural Damascus, benefiting an estimated 12,000 individuals.

DERD has previously distributed 600 hygiene kits to an estimated 2,400 displaced people in Hasakeh. These IDPs came from other areas of Hasakeh, Homs, Hama, as well as a large portion coming from Dayr Az Zor. DERD will be supplying more aid items to the people affected in north Syria.



Distribution of Clothing Vouchers in Damascus

Below is a table indicating DERD's humanitarian aid distributions since the beginning of the response.

Table of Total Distributions

Province	Clothing	Food Items	Mattresses	Bedding Sets	Infant Kits	Hygiene Kits	Kitchen Sets
Al-Hassakeh						600	
Damascus	572			337	265	3768	17
Damascus Suburbs		100		185	405	2489	255
Hama				61	44	561	
Homs	347	2400	1100	1733	3165	19649	626
Latakia	100			30	11	1458	25
Swaida				50	32	158	44
Tartous				250	265	1915	130
Total	1019	2500	1100	2646	4187	30598	1097

Remedial Classes:

Most displaced children have experienced considerable disruptions in their education, both within Syria and during their subsequent displacement. UNICEF estimates that half of all displaced Syrians are children. It is essential to provide tuition support and remedial classes to allow the children to resume their studies and catch up to grade level. DERD has provided 50 children with essential remedial classes.

Rent Assistance:

Many unemployed and displaced families struggle to provide food for their children, and are not able to pay their rent. DERD has been able to provide rent assistance for 302 individuals (71 families). The rent assistance helps alleviate the burdens facing so many families, and allows them to focus resources on other necessities.



After the bombardment of Arbeen area, a family that DERD is helping had to leave their destroyed house and rent an apartment in Dwa'il'a area. The family consists of 6 members; the mother, older son, younger son, deaf daughter and married daughter (Summer) and her 14 year old son. The only financial source that the family has is the monthly salary that a family member receives for working at General Consumption Institution. The apartment they

live in lacks kitchenware, bedding supplies and other food and hygiene items. DERD visited the family and provided them with hygiene kits, a bedding kit, a kitchen set, and two clothing vouchers, in addition to rent assistance.

"Because of your help and love this place feels like home. I always had faith in your humanitarian work and want to thank you for being here for us," said the father to DERD's team.

Health and Nutrition:

A training of medical professionals on nutrition in emergencies in Raqqa.

The situation in Syria is worsening by the day and it is essential to continue to stress the importance that optimal infant and young child feeding have in the healthy growth and development of individuals and communities. By conducting these lectures, DERD is helping to improve and strengthen the knowledge of the entire health systems, by starting at the community level and working all the way up to the health system, with the training of medical professionals. These lectures and workshops should have a lasting effect on the health of Syrian communities.



Breastfeeding in Emergencies lecture in Damascus

Psychosocial Support:

Many Syrian people, especially the newly and multiply-displaced people of Damascus and Aleppo, have witnessed an increase in violence over the last month and feel that everything in their lives have been ripped from them – too often, they have lost hope for the future. Such is the case that DERD is discovering from visiting schools and public buildings housing those displaced. It is a most difficult, most trying time in the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

DERD visited such schools with psychosocial experts to help the IDPs cope. DERD has supported 608 people with psychosocial sessions in Al-Ramah School, Pur Said School, and Sumayah Al-Makhzoumiyeh School of Damascus. Some of the IDPs have been displaced two or three times. Out of the 608 individuals, 364 were children.



Sabah has seven children from her first husband and a son from her second husband who divorced her 4 years ago. Sabah said that she left her house with just her son and she doesn't know anything about her other seven children. She first went to Harasta School and then to Al-Thebabia School, and now she lives in Pour Saed School located in Al-Mhajreen area of Damascus. She said, "I suffer from stress and I always needed a person to listen to my problems. I suffer from muscle spasms every time I

think about my family circumstances which now I live in. Thank you for the psychosocial programs because it helps us express our feelings, and ways to deal with stress. The most important thing for me was to see the smile back on my son's face. The talks on ways of dealing with children in crisis were useful, especially on ways to help children cope with the new changes in their lives. I would like to thank all those in charge of the program for their efforts and for the Ramadan Iftar which was provided every day."

To date, 12 psychosocial sessions have been conducted for 777 people.

Emerging Needs:

The need for humanitarian assistance is growing quickly as the violence in Syria continues to intensify and spread.

SARC has identified 70 sites in Damascus and 140 sites in rural Damascus that internally displaced people are using as shelters. Latest estimates approximate that there are 300,000 displaced people from Aleppo. According to UNHCR, more than 15,000 people have taken shelter in 32 schools and university dormitories. They are subjected to the ongoing violence, and limited access to food, water and medical care. Being tightly cramped in schools with hundreds of other people is leading to poor sanitary conditions. Displaced people are requesting hygiene items and cleaning supplies, and supplies for their children, such as diapers and wipes

Agricultural output in Syria is declining from many consecutive years of drought and from

the impact of 18 months of violence is having on the country. Critical inputs, such as fertilizer, are extremely costly to purchase, or are simply not longer available. Moreover, seasonal workers have found it difficult to travel to rural areas, leading to disturbances in harvests. A joint food security needs assessment carried out by FAO, WFP, and the Syrian Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform concluded that about 3 million Syrians are currently at risk of food insecurity. Of this total, 1.5 million people need urgent and immediate food assistance over the next 3 to 6 months

With the help of God, and your support, we can reach these families in need and provide them with life-giving care. Our resources are limited and we appeal to our Diaspora, friends, and partners to continue to assist the people of Syria.

Yours,



Samer Laham
Director of DERD