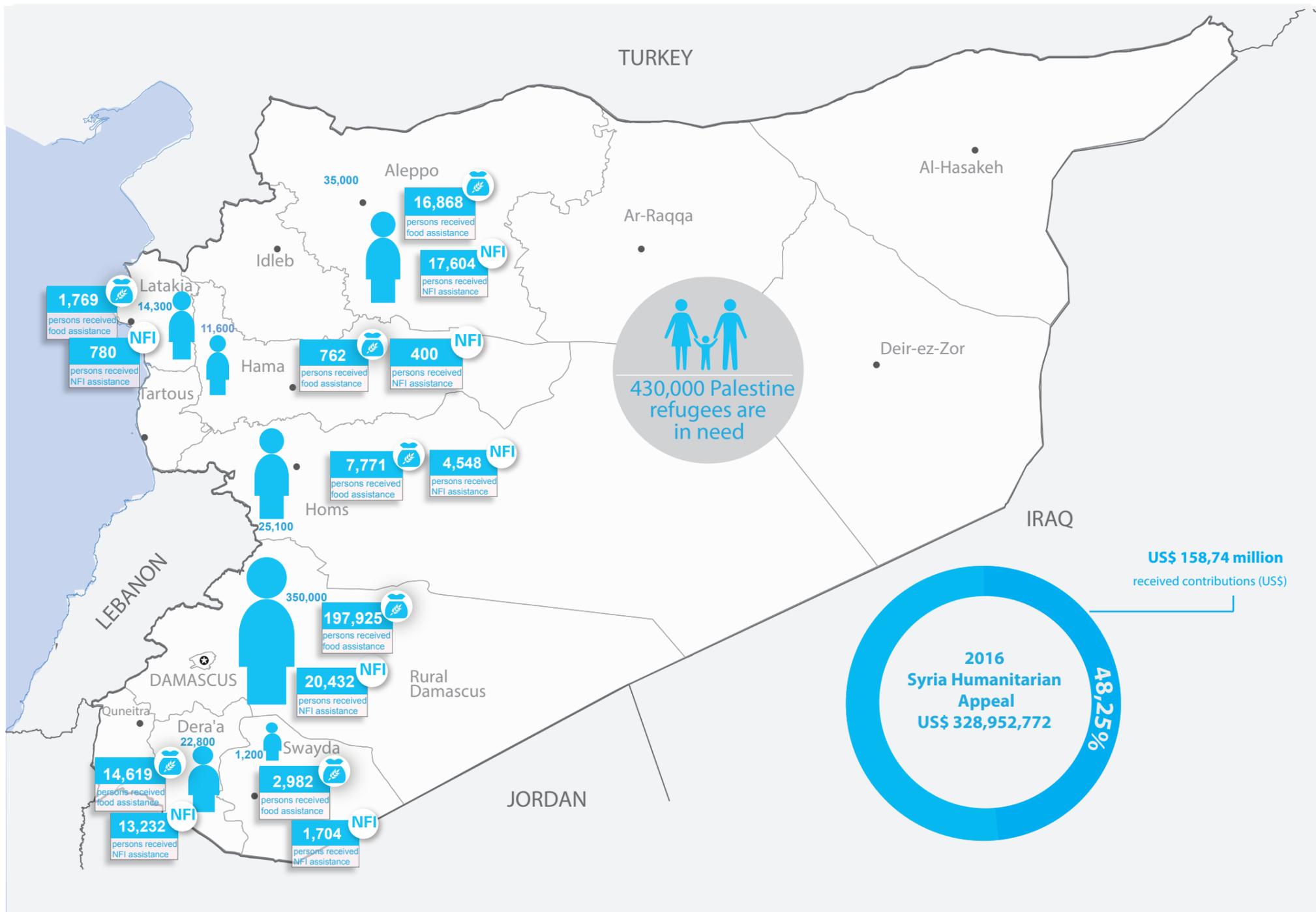


In Khan Eshieh camp in Rif Damascus, a truce was signed between the Government of Syria and the Armed Opposition Groups at the end of November 2016. Subsequently, an inter-agency convoy was authorized to access civilians trapped in the besieged area. On 16 December, UNRWA participated in the convoy and successfully delivered food, non-food items (NFIs) and medical items to Palestine refugees trapped in the area. This is the first time since 2013 that UNRWA has had access to Khan Eshieh camp. UNRWA will continue its efforts to regain access to Khan Eshieh and other camps, including Sbeineh. The priority in this regard is re-establishing core services, including rebuilding community institutions such as schools, and addressing urgent humanitarian needs that have arisen among refugees as a result of being cut off from services for lengthy periods of time.



CASH ASSISTANCE:
The third round of emergency cash assistance concluded on 15 November, with a total of 408,102 individuals (120,418 families) each receiving the equivalent of US\$ 74 in Syrian Pounds (SYPs), covering two months of assistance. The first cycle of cash distribution for 2017 will commence on 15 January, with a one-off increase in the amount provided to US\$ 96 per beneficiary to help Palestine refugees meet their minimal winter needs.

FOOD AND NFI ASSISTANCE:
In December, UNRWA provided 73,307 food parcels to 60,952 families via 17 distribution centres in Aleppo, Damascus, Dera'a, Hama, Homs, Latakia and Rif Damascus. Residents of the nine UNRWA collective shelters received 216 food parcels, 30,464 canned food items and 19,574 kg of dry food items, as well as 210 blankets, 100 mattresses and 300 baby kits.

SHELTER:
The number of residents in collective shelters decreased further in December, with a total of 2,354 Palestine refugees (770 families) residing in collective shelters, in comparison to 2,480 individuals (804 families) in November. Palestine refugees accommodated in the nine UNRWA collective shelters in Damascus have received food, non-food items and WASH assistance. In December, UNRWA closed down one of its collective shelters in Khan Dunoun camp.

HEALTH:
UNRWA continues to operate 26 primary health-care centres across Syria. In December, the Agency's medical teams performed 72,707 health consultations through 15 health centres and 11 health points. Health centres provide outpatient consultations, pharmacy services and referrals for hospitalization where required. To ensure access to subsidized secondary health care for Palestine refugees in Syria, the Agency maintains agreements with 23 hospitals throughout the country.

EDUCATION:
In December, UNRWA provided primary education to 45,625 students (21,999 girls, 23,626 boys) in grades 1 to 9. Of the 101 schools, 45 are UNRWA schools and 56 are UNRWA-managed schools in government buildings. Ninety-five per cent of schools continue to operate on double-shift curriculums, while 3 per cent operate on triple shifts.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE:
Through its environmental health programme, UNRWA maintains regular garbage collection; rehabilitation of sewage systems infrastructure; and the provision of equipment, spare parts, and fuel to camps and host communities. The Agency also ensures the delivery of safe drinking water to areas where access to water remains particularly difficult. In December, 834 hygiene kits were distributed to Palestine refugees in collective shelters, in addition to 3,600 litres of cleaning detergent, 828 packs of baby diapers, 1,510 packs of adult diapers and 2,398 sanitary napkins.