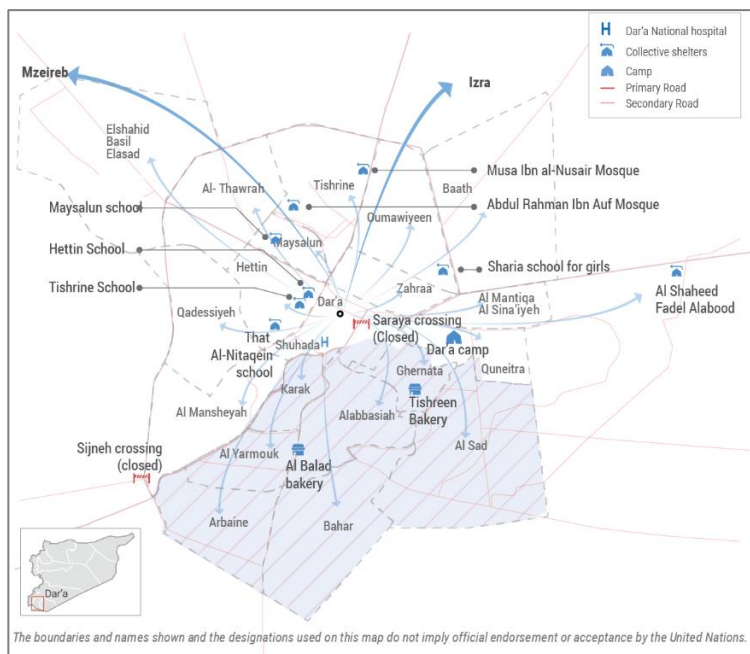


This report is produced by OCHA Syria in collaboration with humanitarian partners.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

- As of 22 August, ground clashes and artillery shelling continue across parts of Dar'a governorate, in particular Dar'a al-Balad. Military reinforcements reported around Tafas, Um Al-Mayathen Saida towns and the M5. There are reportedly ongoing attempts among the parties to reach an agreement, however, no consensus has been reached.
- Over 38,600 IDPs are officially registered by SARC in and around Dar'a city as of 17 August. This includes almost 15,000 women, over 3,200 men and elderly and over 20,400 children. About 1,500 IDPs residing in six collective shelters. However, informal reports indicated that as many as 45,000 people may have been displaced from Dar'a al-Balad.



- Saraya crossing point has been closed since 12 August. Between 21 and 22 August, it was reported to be temporarily open to allow women, children and the elderly to exit.
- According to UNRWA, almost half of the Palestine camp population – 329 families - have been displaced to Dar'a city. About 300 families are staying with relatives in Dar'a governorate and 29 families are residing in the collective shelters. Almost 300 families remain at risk of displacement from the camp. All roads into the camp and the roads between Dar'a and Muzeirib have been closed since 29 July and access from Dar'a camp to the city for pedestrians is a challenge.
- Access to services and goods within Dar'a al Balad is extremely challenging; food shortages and electricity outages have been reported. Due to continuing insecurity, delivery of flour to two bakeries (Tishreen and Al Balad) is still not possible. Dar'a authorities have therefore reallocated this flour to existing bakeries in Dar'a city, Bosra Esh Sham, Tiba, Da'el to help meet the needs of IDP populations. The distribution of bread to IDPs is supported by SARC and Al Birr.
- Plans are underway for an inter-agency convoy to deliver critical items including ready-to-eat meals, flour, water, purification tablets, jerrycans and medical supplies. The humanitarian community continues to advocate with all parties to facilitate the rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian assistance to all affected areas and communities, including Dar'a Al-Balad.

HUMANITARIAN NEEDS AND RESPONSE

Humanitarian partners are assisting displaced families and host communities in Dar'a city and surrounding areas as outlined below.

Food Security and Agriculture: WFP has delivered 1,500 ready-to-eat (RTE) packages in Dar'a city, 1,213 packages have been distributed to families in the collective shelters and host community as of 17 August. An additional 5,160 RTE packages for about 25,800 people is planned to be dispatched soon. In parallel, SARC in collaboration with other partners have provided food assistance to over 13,000 IDPs in Dar'a city and Nasib town.

As of 17 August, with support from WFP, SARC is also completing the distribution of the July cycle food assistance to several areas including areas hosting IDPs from Dar'a al Balad. This will cover over 71,600 people including IDPs and host communities in Nimeh, Nasib, Busra ash-Sham, Kahil, Al Jeeza, and Atman.

Health: Health partners together with DoH continue to provide critical health services and medical supplies. As of 18 August, Nour Foundation and UNICEF in collaboration with DoH conducted about 2,638 medical consultations related to gynaecology, paediatrics, internal medicine, mental health, psychosocial support and performed surgeries. A new medical clinic focused on internal medicine started operations in Dar'a city. Six mobile teams supported by WHO, UNFPA and UNICEF and operated by DOH, Al Birr, Nour Foundation, Al-Sham Association for Health and SFPA are providing medical services in the six collective shelters, host communities and surrounding areas. Three of these mobile medical teams are supporting Ash-Shajarah, Hrak and Busra Al Sham sub-districts. In addition, six ambulances from the Dar'a Health Authority - donated by WHO in 2020 and 2021 - are on standby to support any referral services as required. Health partners have set up an epidemiological investigation team to monitor, prevent and respond to possible disease outbreaks. Since 27 July, SARC and other partners have supported health services and reached 1,328 people through the mobile teams. In addition, over 3,300 people have been reached with health awareness/promotion sessions, COVID-19 infection prevention and control activities while 400 people have received first aid. SFPA with support from UNFPA provided maternal and reproductive health to about 547 women and adolescent girls.

With support from UNICEF, DoH is evaluating the vaccination status of children in the collective shelters, about 399 children have been assessed to date and 70 of them have received recommended vaccinations according to the national schedule. Beyond immediate response to the new displacement, IMC continues to support health services through the PHC clinic in As-Sanamayn. This includes medical consultations, health education, provision of essential medicine and referrals for secondary health care as required. Overall, medical supplies delivered to DoH and Dar'a national hospital are sufficient to cover current needs. WHO together with other health partners are ready to provide additional emergency support and supplies as needed.

Nutrition: DOH, Al-Bir and SFPA mobile teams with UNICEF support have screened a total of 759 children under the age of 5 years and 267 pregnant and lactating women (PLW) for malnutrition as of 18 August. About four cases of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) and 37 cases of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) have been identified among children under the age of five while 28 cases of MAM were identified among PLW. All identified cases of malnutrition are being treated.

Nutrition supplies including high-energy biscuits, micronutrient powder, iron and folic acid to support 1,900 children and 1,100 PLW have been delivered; 843 PLW and children were reached with nutrition services. Infant and Young Child Feeding counselling has been reactivated and 155 PLW have been reached. A second batch of 3.2 MT of nutrition supplies including micronutrients and therapeutic spread to support more than 3000 children and pregnant and lactating women were delivered to Al-Birr NGO to bolster nutrition response. As of 12 August, DoH is providing overnight health and nutrition services within the collective shelters with support from UNICEF. WFP has been supporting about 576 PLWs in Dar'a Al Balad with fresh food vouchers to support their nutrition. However, some PLWs have not been able to redeem their vouchers due to insecurity; WFP has therefore made a provision for the vouchers to be redeemed in the next two months to avoid loss of their entitlements. SARC has also delivered over 1,300 cartons of multiple micronutrients.

WASH: UNICEF together with other WASH partners including SARC, ICRC, PUI, DRC, ACF and OXFAM are supporting WASH response. Local authorities in collaboration with partners are pumping drinking water from the two main water stations (Al Irwa'a Project and Al Ash'aree station) to Dar'a Al-Balad. However, due to the water scarcity and electricity outages during the summer season, there is a rationing system applied weekly by the Water Board on water pumping to the city neighborhoods. WASH partner reported that the tanks could not be accessed to manage the rationing system, and has caused some disruption to water supply; however, this has been addressed at the time of reporting.

SARC is supporting distribution of additional water through water trucking and UNICEF is distributing chlorine tablets for purification to improve the quality of drinking water. About 10,000 tablets have been distributed to over 1,700 people; the tablets will be provided on a weekly basis. SARC has undertaken maintenance of water and sanitation network, supported waste management, supported the rehabilitation of shelters in the two schools, provided lighting and conducted other electrical repairs. SARC, PUI, DRC, ACF have delivered 12 tanks and 82 garbage bins.

Education: DoE together with DRC, GOPA, UNICEF, UNHCR and other education partners are undertaking various education activities; about 25 children out of school have been reached with self-learning programmes, over 290 students in grades 2-9 and grade 12 have been reached with non-formal education activities, students transported to and from learning centres and provided other education supplies. Working together with Child Protection partners, a case management point in learning centres has been set up to provide trauma counselling and other specialized services; four children have so far been referred. Mental health and hearing disability centres in Dar'a city that had been closed due to insecurity have now resumed operations and supporting about 60 children.

Given the spread of lice among school children, UNICEF and education partners are also providing shampoo to over 300 children and have conducted hygiene awareness sessions for all students to minimize further spread. A private donor is also providing ready-to eat meals for about 300 children that are unable to meet their food needs at home. In anticipation of possible delays to re-open schools due to insecurity and use of schools as collective shelters, partners are on standby to send self-learning materials and working with Shelter partners to identify options for displaced families which will allow schools to be used for education purposes.

Protection: Protection partners have provided assistance to the most vulnerable especially women, children, people with disabilities, the elderly and Palestine refugees. This includes raising awareness on preventing family separation, COVID-19, identify and follow up for unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), referral and case management, recreational activities, protection monitoring and psychosocial support (PSS) activities.

As of 18 of August, UNFPA has delivered 395 dignity kits and 306 sanitary napkins. An additional 2,900 dignity kits, 50 PLW kits and 8,000 sanitary napkins have been prepositioned in their warehouse in Kisweh. UNFPA and partners including mobile teams are also conducting GBV awareness sessions, PSS and case management, including referrals, reproductive health awareness sessions and services, antenatal, postnatal and neonatal care; as of 18 August, partners have provided about 2,410 emergency maternal and reproductive health services and reached 547 beneficiaries including 16 adolescent girls who received health and GBV integrated services including PSS and referral to advanced services. About 72 children under the age of six have been reached with recreational activities, 221 children reach with COVID-19 prevention and awareness sessions and provided 315 mine risk education magazines and 221 masks.

Partners on the ground have been monitoring for potential separation of children from their caregivers and have so far identified 15 cases of immediate risk. CP activities have been conducted including identification and follow-up for UASC, referral and recreational activities, life skills, and parenting programs- in shelters, learning points and community centers/CFSSs in host communities. Child Protection partners will also support UNRWA's response to Palestine refugees in Dar'a through provision of play materials and sport kits. Overall, about 64,000 protection services have been provided with support from 14 protection partners.

Shelter/NFIs: UNHCR has prepositioned stocks of non-food-items (NFI) in SARC warehouses in both Nawa and Izra' and are available for distribution. In addition to shelter and NFI assistance already distributed, the shelter sector in collaboration with UNHCR and PUI will conduct a rapid assessment to better understand the needs and provide additional items as required. SARC has undertaken minor works within the school facilities to ensure that WASH facilities are functioning, and doors are secure and lockable. They have also provided water tanks and garbage containers.

UNHCR in collaboration with PUI is preparing to undertake minor works to enhance the privacy of the occupants. As of 22 August, UNHCR/ SARC has provided 22 plastic sheets, 358 kitchen sets, 830 jerrycans, and 426 mattresses to 604 families. In addition, UNICEF is currently preparing for the release of 1,100 clothing kits to cover identified needs. There is a concern that the schools being used as collective shelters will be evacuated in the coming weeks, however, it is still unclear where the displaced families will be relocated to. The Area Humanitarian Country Team will engage local authorities to identify alternate locations.

For further information, please contact:

Liny Suharlim, Head of Office a.i, OCHA Syria, liny.suharlim@un.org
Katherine Carey, Senior Humanitarian Affairs Officer, OCHA Syria, carey2@un.org