



Programme Report
January 2022



INTRODUCTION

The year 2021 has marked the tenth anniversary of the Syrian conflict. 3 million extremely vulnerable people currently live in contested areas and more than 4 million are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance*. Covid cases continue to rise in areas where the vaccination is not available or the uptake is low. In addition to the plummeting economy in both Lebanon and Syria, all of these are major obstacles for the teams of our local partners.

Despite all of that, they persist and we continue to be inspired by their strength to run our two main projects – [SAMS](#)'s Primary Health Clinic in Syria and [SAWA](#)'s refugee school in Lebanon. SAMS's medical team continue to provide medical services despite multiple Covid infections among staff members. SAWA's teachers were adamant to reopen the school for in-class teaching despite electricity cuts, fuel shortages and lack of basic necessities.

This report covers the period from July to December 2021 and reflects on the situation on the ground during that period.

*<https://www.un.org/press/en/2022/sc14779.doc.htm>





Primary Healthcare
in Tel Abyad, north Syria

INTRODUCTION – HEALTHCARE

The past six months were especially difficult for the medical team running the Primary Health Clinic in the village of Tel Abyad. Covid infections among staff members have forced the team to suspend some departments and services; the pharmacy was closed for more than five days and paediatric services were suspended for a week. With only one person managing each department, it is difficult to replace a staff member when hit by the virus.

Moreover, and in response to an outbreak of leishmania disease in the north east region, the clinic has launched a special leishmania treatment clinic in coordination with the Turkish Health Directorate. Over 500 people were affected and treated at the PHC in Tel Abyad.

We are proud to be supporting SAMS with its medical team at the PHC. Healthcare can be lifesaving in this part of Syria, especially for the local community of 50,000 who have no access to other healthcare facilities for miles.



PROGRESS & IMPACT

PRIMARY HEALTHCARE CLINIC

Despite the spread of Covid, the clinic in Tel Abyad has kept its doors open:

From July to December 2021, the team helped **12,688 patients** through **17,117 consultations**:

- **6,269** for women, 37%
- **3,820** for men, 20%
- **3,560** for boys, 21%
- **3,468** for girls, 20%

Internal medicine was the highest sought after service at the clinic during the past six months (30%), **paediatric services** came second (29%) followed by dental services which resumed after being suspended during lockdowns (17%).

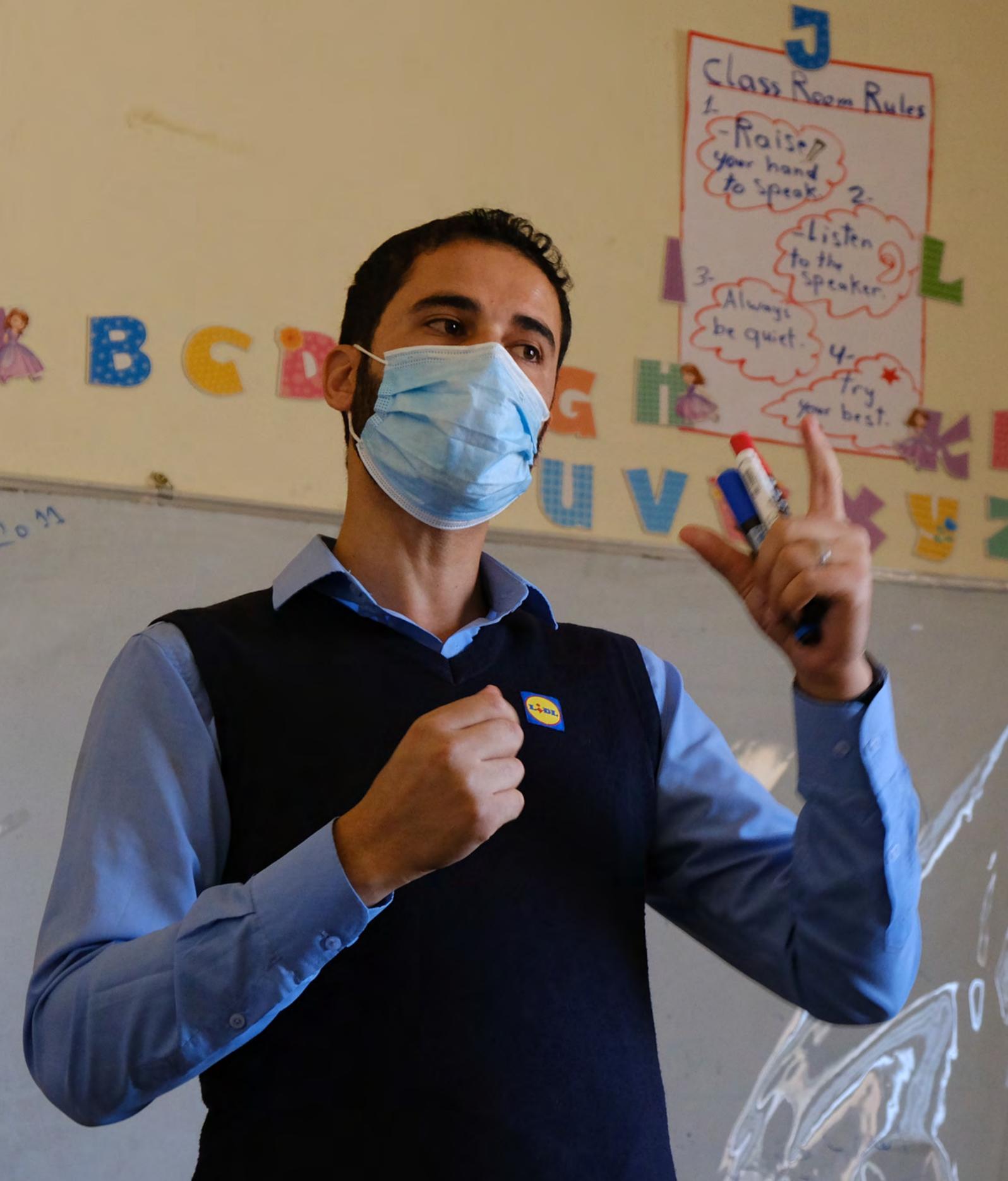
With the critical lack of healthcare professionals in Syria, replacing each medical staff is nearly impossible. **Hands Up funds the salaries of the 36 medical staff at the clinic**, as well as the costs – from stationery to medicine – that make their jobs possible. This is vital because salaries don't only enable people to earn a living and care for their families, they also give access to professional health services for the local community that would otherwise be without it.

COVID-19

By end of December 2021, the WHO assisted by EWARN reported a massive increase in positive cases due to the Delta variant with 73,000 confirmed cases in non-governmental areas. The health system in the north east is already overwhelmed; only 16 out of 33 COVID-19 treatment centres in the region are functioning. *

Since the start of the pandemic, the team at the clinic have put measures in place to protect staff and patients, including triage tents, supplying PPE and training staff to take swabs for Covid.

*<https://www.msf.org/health-system-overwhelmed-northern-syria-most-severe-covid-19-outbreak-yet>



Education
in the Bekaa Valley, Lebanon



Charity no. 1156491

INTRODUCTION – EDUCATION

The socio-economic conditions in Lebanon continued to deteriorate during the past year; the local currency plummeting in value, severe electricity shortages and an ongoing fuel crisis. This sparked concerns within the education sector for both the capacity of schools to continue operating as well as the number of children dropping out of education. According to surveys conducted by UNICEF, 15% of families stopped their children’s education. As schools remained closed for the majority of the year due to Covid-19, the survey revealed that 80% of caregivers said their children had difficulties concentrating on their studies at home*.

Additionally, a large teachers' strike took place just before the start of the school year causing the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher education to postpone the opening of all public schools from September 27th to October 11th.

Our partner SAWA was finally able to re-open classes to the children at Bar Elias camp on the 11th of October 2021. One young student said: “I can’t describe how happy I am to be back here with my friends and teachers. I miss meeting new people!”

*<https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/lebanon-escalating-crisis-puts-children-risk-majority-families-cannot-afford-meet>



PROGRESS & IMPACT EDUCATION

The reopening of classes has brought both feelings of relief and a new challenge for our partner [SAWA](#). Students were very excited to be back in the school with their classmates while staff were concerned with the challenges of applying the UNHCR's return to school safety guidelines*. In condensed refugee camps such as in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, that is not always easy or straightforward.

The lockdown and strike at the start of the term as well as heavy snow storms have caused a lot of strain on families and households. Add to that the ongoing economic crisis and high poverty rates, there were high rates of dropouts and children resorting to labour in order to support their families

Nevertheless, keeping the most vulnerable children in schools and providing them with access to the education system is a main priority. We are proud to be working with SAWA to provide **children with a chance for a better future and with the basic literacy and numeracy skills required for formal education.**

In addition to providing education for students, the project offers livelihoods for qualified Syrian professionals. Over the past six-months, we've helped to fund the salaries of 20 teachers and admin staff, the majority are Syrian and come from the local community. This not only enables staff to earn a living, but allows this vital sector to grow and develop within a community of Syrian refugees. In turn, fostering hope and stability.

The school reopened on the 11th of October 2021, a total of 260 students were registered and started attending classes in person: 127 girls and 133 boys.

The children are supported by 20 teachers and support staff. With increased difficulties in Lebanon and a new wave of Covid-19 approaching, we're hoping that another school shutdown would be avoided.

*<https://www.unhcr.org/5fdb7e724.pdf>



SARAH'S STORY

8-year-old Sarah registered as a student at the beginning of the Sawa school term, seemingly off to a good start. Over time, however, her teachers noticed signs of sadness and fatigue. The team followed up with her father to inquire about her growing shyness. It was revealed that her mother had passed away eight months earlier – on Mother’s Day – due to kidney failure.

Since her mother's death, Sarah had felt responsible for ensuring the responsibilities at home were being met as well as taking care of her baby sister. While this is a heavy burden for any young girl to carry, Sarah was still coping with her loss.

While teachers were informed of Sarah’s situation, her case was also referred to the Sawa protection team so that they could give her the extra help she needed. They even reached out to Sarah’s father to offer him psychosocial support.

Today, Sarah has improved and is showing great commitment. The team sees in her a great love of learning. The staff continue to monitor Sarah’s case as well as follow up with her father.



Funding Prostheses
on the Syrian-Turkish border



Charity no. 1156491

KOALAA PROSTHETICS

There are an estimated 86,000 children amputees inside Syria*, the real figure is likely far greater. While there is some medical care on the Syrian-Turkish border, comfortable and affordable prosthetic limbs are hard to come by. This is exasperated by the political nature of medical aid provision to refugees in Turkey.

This year, with our partner [Koalaa](#), we aim to deliver lightweight and easily-fitted prostheses to children with limb loss in Syria. Giving dignity, movement, hope and opportunity to amputees.

This will be done in conjunction with existing prostheses provision in this region so as to ensure holistic support for patients.

This new Hands Up project is currently being piloted and we're hoping to roll-out the first scale up phase in the coming year 2022.

*https://www.hi-us.org/news_a_the_who_and_hi_draw_attention_to_the_needs_of_people_inside_syria_living_with_injuries_and_disabilities





In 2021, Hands Up has helped over **25,000** Syrians

We've funded:

- **36** medical & clinical staff salaries
- **20** teacher salaries
- **24** admin and school staff including social workers & carers
- Education for over **300** Syrian refugee children
- Healthcare for over **23,000** patients, with over **30,000** free of charge consultations



THANK YOU

As you might expect, pandemic aside, the needs of people in Syria, Lebanon and Turkey is as great as ever. None of this work would have been possible without the support of our donors. Thank you for continuing to give so much to those that have lost so much.

We are always happy to hear from you, please get in touch.

Email:

contact@handsupfoundation.org

Post:

The Hands Up Foundation
Kemp House, 160 City Road
London, EC1V 2NX

www.handsupfoundation.org | Charity no. 1156491

