



Programme Report

July 2021



INTRODUCTION

2021 marks ten years since the start of Syria's conflict. While official accounts of Covid cases continue to fall in Lebanon and Syria,^{*} the pandemic has created major obstacles for our partners on the ground. The economies in both countries continue to plummet, with the Lebanese lira/pound having lost more than 85 percent of its value.^{**} In Syria, bread prices have doubled and diesel prices nearly tripled.^{***} Although a prime minister-designate has recently been appointed, no new government has been formed in Lebanon, leaving mounting uncertainty.

Despite this grim picture, and these obstacles, Hands Up's two main projects – [SAMS](#) PHC in Syria and [SAWA](#) school in Lebanon – continue. As well as ongoing grants with six local partners working on the Syrian-Turkish border as part of a special collaboration with Choose Love this year.

This report covers January to June 2021 where we provided education, healthcare, Covid response, and camp rehabilitation for **over 43,000 Syrians**.

* World Health Organization: <https://covid19.who.int/region/emro/country/sy>

** The New Humanitarian: <https://buff.ly/3iDASxu>

*** Al Jazeera: <https://buff.ly/2TsbBO6>





Primary Healthcare
in Tel Abyad, north Syria

INTRODUCTION – HEALTHCARE

There have been over 600 attacks on medical facilities since the beginning of the conflict in Syria.* In March and June this year, two hospitals run by our partner, [SAMS](#), in northern Syria were targeted and destroyed killing over 20 people and injuring 30 more. Both were forced to close. Without its services, an entire community – already overcrowded and under-resourced – were consequently denied access to vital healthcare.

With SAMS, we are proud to support a Primary Health Clinic in the district of Tel Abyad, east of Aleppo, which opened there in March 2020. Healthcare can be lifesaving in this part of Syria. There are [22 staff members at the clinic](#), including a GP, paediatrician, five nurses and a midwife. We continue to be in awe of the team's bravery and resilience.

Providing this type of support isn't always straightforward but the [local community of 50,000](#), and the thousands like them – who hope to live normal healthy lives – are the reason why we must not give up.

*Physicians for Human Rights: <https://syriamap.phr.org/#/en>



PROGRESS & IMPACT

PRIMARY HEALTHCARE CLINIC

The new clinic in Tel Abyad has continued operating despite the spread of Covid.

From January to June 2021, the team helped **10,571 patients** through **12,396 consultations**:

- **5,049** for women, 41%
- **2,350** for men, 19%
- **2,437** for boys, 20%
- **2,560** for girls, 21%

From January, **pediatric services** remain the most sought after consultations (30%) followed by **reproductive services** (15%). These two services are always the highest percentage of consultations delivered at the clinic.

70 percent of health professionals have left the country.* We provide livelihoods for the Syrian professionals who have chosen to stay and whose skills are so desperately needed. **We fund the salaries of 22 staff**, as well as the costs – from stationery to medicine – that make these 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

As of June 2021, authorities reported 18,036 cases, including 732 fatalities and 1,829 recoveries in northeast Syria,** but given the limited capacity to test, the numbers are likely far greater.

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

*Relief Web: <https://buff.ly/3CmkxpN>

** Relief Web: <https://buff.ly/2VrjSCX>



Education
in the Bekaa Valley, Lebanon

INTRODUCTION – EDUCATION

Many children are experiencing gaps in their education due to the unstable situation in Lebanon and Syria. MEHE has reported a significant decrease in school enrollment across Lebanon compared to last year, with over 3,500 dropouts in Bekaa alone. According to the UNHCR and UNICEF, the main reasons for dropping out of school are the fear of catching Covid, the deteriorating economic situation, and schools unable to enroll children due to having reached full capacity.

In light of the severe economic hardships, more and more Syrian families are resorting to negative coping strategies. With food insecurity being the main trigger, recent studies found that children are increasingly becoming the main breadwinners for their families. This poses greater protection risks as they not only lose out on education, but become exposed to physical and verbal abuse. Not to mention the negative effects on their well-being and mental health.

Education is key to protecting the future of the young Syrian generation, each of whom under ten has only ever known Syria in conflict, if they know it at all.



PROGRESS & IMPACT

EDUCATION

With our partner [SAWA](#), in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, we are working hard to combat this trend by continuing to provide **300 children with the literacy and numeracy skills required for formal education.**

Since May 2020, teaching has taken place outside of the classroom through online learning, providing lessons in core subjects: Maths, English, Science and Arabic. This is done either via WhatsApp to children's parents phones, or by distributing handouts to students in their camps to be collected the following day for marking and measuring progress. SAWA distributes mobile charging cards for families unable to afford internet connection. It is no substitute for teaching in person, but it does mean that the students are able to dedicate time to their studies, providing hope for a brighter future.

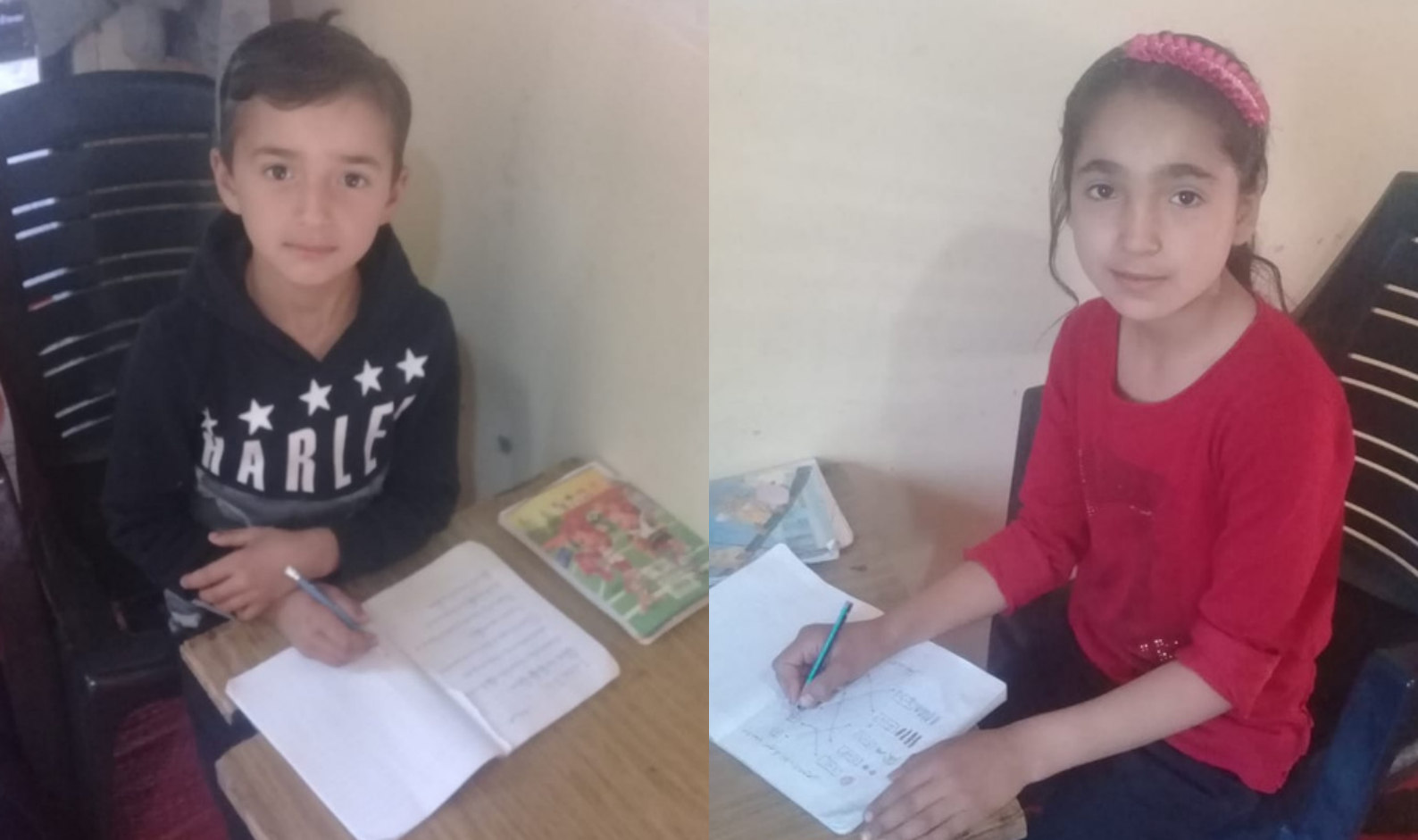
The plan is to reopen in September 2021 provided it is safe to do so.

300 children were taught since January, aged 6-13; **148 boys and 152 girls.** 57% of those taught achieved a grade of 60% or higher; 75% boys, 78% girls. (Grading is based on collecting the handouts from students and assessing their progress.)

As well as providing education for students, we offer **livelihoods for qualified Syrian professionals.** Over the past six-months, we've helped to fund the **salaries of 17 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.

COVID-19

While returning to the classroom in September is the ultimate goal, this ever-evolving pandemic has paved the way for major progress in online teaching. This enables SAWA to continue offering its online education platform as an alternative for children who are unable to attend school in-person.



MOHAMED & KAWTHAR'S STORY

Displaced Syrian families face multiple uncertainties. As well as the instability that the Covid brings, many must uproot and resettle, often resulting in gaps in education for children.

This would have been the case for two students, 8-year-old Mohamed and 9-year-old Kawthar, if it were not for their parents and SAWA's efforts to continue their schooling. Initially living in Bar Elias, the siblings came to SAWA with no prior education. In early 2021, however, the family relocated as their father found work in Baalbeck. The move was necessary due to increasing economic pressure.

Since remote learning is in place, both students continue to engage in lessons daily via videos. What's more, their father returns to SAWA school weekly to collect the homework handouts that the team leave with his sister.

SAWA continues supporting them and tracking their progress so that Mohamed and his sister can successfully continue their studies. Mohamed's favorite subject is English, while Kawthar prefers Arabic!



Ongoing grants with
local partners on the
Syrian-Turkish border



Charity no. 1156491

CHOOSE LOVE PROJECTS

This year, we collaborated with [Choose Love - Help Refugees](#) to fund six worthwhile projects on the Syrian-Turkish border. Choose Love provided an exceptional grant for Hands Up to aid these local partners with their Covid response efforts, camp rehabilitation, and youth empowerment. Details below.

- [Independent Doctors Association \(IDA\): Primary Health Clinic](#)

IDA were able to provide over 1,000 consultations per month, reaching 2,694 patients in total at the PHC. They also provided seven facilities with PPE for 95 medical workers.

- [Maram Foundation: Gender-based violence \(GBV\) sessions](#)

Maram Foundation covered salaries for male facilitators as well as laptops, printers and projectors to support the project in 13 internally displaced camps in Syria's northwest. These camps have extremely restricted access which only Maram is allowed to enter and conduct activities.

- [Molham Team: Camp rehabilitation and health](#)

Molham Team's project provided oxygen ventilators expected for four hospitals. They reached 292 families (approx. 1,438 people) in need of tent rehabilitation and provided access to water via a new well for 472 families (approx. 2,500 people).

- [Space of Hope: Youth empowerment & PSS support](#)

Space of Hope reached over 1,300 youth through training sessions on topics such as empowerment, gender violence, leadership and life skills.

- [Syrian Civil Defence: Oxygen delivery for ambulance services](#)

Syria Civil Defence provided 385 oxygen canisters for ambulance services, over 5,700 protective gowns for staff and over 5,500 burial bags for both Covid-related and normal deaths.

- [Violet: Ambulance to support their referral system in northwest Syria](#)

Violet have reached 876 critical Covid patients and were able to transfer them to the designated Covid hospitals for treatment.



Over the last six months
Hands Up has helped
over **43,000** Syrians

We've funded:

- **37** medical salaries
- **17** teacher salaries
- **31** admin and field staff including social workers & carers
- Education for over **300** Syrian refugee children
- Healthcare for over **26,000** patients, with over **10,000** free of charge consultations
- Rehabilitation of **292** tents in refugee camps
- Fresh water for over **472** families
- Over **9,100** PPE, oxygen ventilators and Covid-related supplies

THANK YOU

For an overview video highlighting the recent work we've done, [please click here](#).

None of this work would have been possible without the support of our donors. As the ten-year marker of Syria's conflict passes – exacerbated by the strains of living through the pandemic – this support is more crucial than ever. Thank you for continuing to think of us.

We are always happy to hear from you, please get in touch if you have any questions.

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