

PROGRAMME REPORT

July 2026



**Action
Syria**

Action Syria is the operating name of the Hands Up Foundation, Charity no. 1156491



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A student at Al-Nashabiyeh Mixed School, in rural Damascus, after the school's infrastructure was restored.

OUR IMPACT

In the first half of 2026, Action Syria has helped **595** Syrians.

We worked alongside two local partners to provide:



Education for **116 Syrian refugee children** in Lebanon.



Rehabilitated classrooms for **449 children** in Syria.



Salaries for **7** education staff and **4** support staff (including a social worker, school cleaner and a school guard).

53% of those reached were women and girls. 95% were children.

Today, Syrian communities are navigating a complex and uncertain period of transition. **16.7 million people** - including 7.5 million children - still need humanitarian assistance [1]. **90%** of the population live in poverty [2].

Communities who have already endured so much **need sustained support to rebuild and shape their own futures**. As Syria begins this long process of recovery, humanitarian support is more important than ever.

INTRODUCTION

Since the fall of the Assad regime in December 2024, **day-to-day life for the Syrian communities we support has been far from straightforward**. Political and economic instability continues to threaten an already fragile peace, bringing the risk of additional conflict in the country. The rising cost of food and fuel is continuing to deepen poverty, leaving over 7 million people food insecure and unable to meet their basic needs [3]. Access to life-saving healthcare and the education needed for a brighter future remains out of reach for many. Syria has entered a new chapter – but **the road to recovery is long and the needs on the ground remain urgent**.

At the same time, escalating conflict in the Middle East during this reporting period has brought renewed challenges to vulnerable Syrian communities. Since March 2026, **over 310,000 people have crossed the border from Lebanon to Syria** [4]. According to the UN Refugee Agency, the majority of those making this journey are displaced Syrians - forced to flee again as conflict escalates. **Most people are arriving exhausted and traumatised, with only a few belongings, in communities that are only just beginning to rebuild** [5]. For those who remain in Lebanon, displacement, uncertainty and disruption to basic services – like electricity and water – continues to make daily life extremely difficult [4].

Amidst the challenges of this current context, **renewed hope remains**. Many families in Syria are returning home. Children are getting back to learning in safe classrooms after years of disruption. And, **communities are looking towards the possibility of rebuilding a more inclusive, peaceful and tolerant Syria for all**. At this critical moment, we know that consistent, sustained support is essential. There is still much to do and we are committed to standing with Syrian communities for as long as we are needed.

In the first half of 2026, we've continued to support locally-led recovery – taking our lead from our partners on the ground, who understand the needs of their communities best. Through our partnership with SAWA for Development and Aid, we have provided a school for **116 Syrian refugee children in Lebanon**, enabling access to education for children with few other options.

We also worked with Abjad Initiative for Education to upgrade 14 classrooms and essential facilities at Al-Nashabiyeh Mixed School, in rural Damascus, supporting **449 students to get back to learning in safe, supportive classrooms**.

This report covers our work between February-July 2026. **We're proud of everything achieved during the last six months, none of which would have been possible without the kindness of our community of supporters and our brilliant local partners – who work with courage, dedication and commitment every day, even in the most difficult circumstances**. We've been planning how we can make the greatest difference in education and health going forwards, reaching more communities with the support that they need. We remain committed to stepping up our support for communities who fall between the cracks of large scale recovery efforts - to ensure that all Syrians can rebuild with health, opportunity and hope.

Thank you for standing with us – together, we are making a lasting difference for Syrian communities.

Students participating in lessons at SAWA School, Lebanon



OUR PROGRAMMES

Education



EDUCATION



Education is an **essential pathway to recovery** as Syrian communities begin to rebuild. Through our education projects in Syria and Lebanon, we are supporting children access the education they need to thrive, beyond conflict and displacement.

Education for Syrian Refugees

Bekaa Valley, Lebanon – SAWA for Development and Aid

For displaced Syrian children living in Lebanon, access to high-quality education is about more than just having a place to learn – it is about giving children stability, routine and the opportunities they need to shape their own futures, after years of disruption. Even in the most difficult circumstances, transformation and rebuilding starts in the classroom. Yet, **only 50% of Syrian refugee children in Lebanon are attending school**, and just 15% continue to secondary school [6]. Transport and stationery costs, few available places in schools and a lack of paperwork are among the key barriers for Syrian families, leaving many children vulnerable to child labour or child marriage, and limiting their future opportunities [6].

We have continued to respond to this need alongside our long-standing partner **SAWA for Development and Aid**, by providing a school for **116 Syrian refugee children in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley** (45% girls).

At SAWA School, children arrive each day from neighbouring refugee camps to learn Arabic, English, science and maths, alongside Life Skills and PE classes. We provide buses to help the students to travel safely to and from school, as well as the stationery and books they need to learn and study - reducing financial pressure for their families. Many of these children have never known life outside the refugee camps, and **without SAWA School would have no access to education at all.**

SAWA School focuses on providing a **safe and holistic learning experience**, that helps students build the skills and confidence they need to thrive beyond the classroom. Through **child-centred teaching, play and tailored psychosocial support**, the staff work hard to create a space where children who have experienced conflict and displacement can feel safe, encouraged and free to grow. Most of SAWA School's seven teachers come from the same community as their students and understand the challenges the students face. Action Syria funds the salaries of these teachers and four support staff, providing stable employment that allows them to support their families — while ensuring that SAWA School can continue to offer children the nurturing environment they need to build skills, confidence and hope for the future.

Since our last programme report, escalating conflict in the region has caused significant disruption and increased concern among the community at SAWA School. In March, the school's activities were temporarily suspended due to increased hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah. Moreover, in May, a fire broke out in a neighbouring refugee camp, damaging SAWA School's building. We are grateful that the school's staff, students and their families remained safe during these challenging times and that learning resumed quickly. However, these events **highlight again how precarious life remains for Syrian refugees in Lebanon**, and how critical safe learning environments are for bringing stability and protection to children.



During the reporting period, highlights included the 'Student Award Ceremonies', where children were recognised for their academic progress and 'Parent-Teacher Meetings', in which parents were able to hear more about their child's progress and growth.

In the midst of so much uncertainty and disruption, SAWA's social worker and teachers worked at full capacity to support the students' mental health and psychosocial well-being. Their unwavering dedication to providing a safe, supportive education for Syrian children – even in the most difficult circumstances – continues to inspire us.

PEOPLE WE'VE SUPPORTED

Rahaf's Story, Education, Lebanon

When Grade 6 student Rahaf started at SAWA School, she was very shy and found joining in with everyday classroom activities - like raising her hand - difficult. This significantly impacted her academic progress, enjoyment at school and ability to make friends.

But, thanks to the holistic, tailored support of the staff and teachers at SAWA School things began to change this academic year. SAWA School's social worker developed a support plan, and Rahaf's teachers provided consistent encouragement and opportunities for Rahaf to try new activities at her own pace. As a result, Rahaf has been steadily growing in confidence. **Now, she is raising her hand, joining in discussions, and accessing the support she needs to thrive.**

For children like Rahaf - who have faced years of displacement and uncertainty as a result of conflict - SAWA School provides more than just learning opportunities. It restores routine, supports emotional wellbeing and **gives children a safe place to develop the confidence they need for a brighter future.**



PEOPLE WE'VE SUPPORTED

Mohammad's Story, Education, Lebanon

Grade 3 student, Mohammad, **loves to learn** but often struggled with restlessness and maintaining concentration during lessons. His teachers at SAWA School noticed that this was impacting his completion of assignments and engagement in classroom activities, and put a plan in place to support him. Instructions were broken into smaller, clearer steps. His progress was followed up with individually. Encouragement was consistent. And, alongside the classroom support, SAWA School's social worker helped Mohammad develop organisational habits to improve his learning and build his self-confidence.

The staff at SAWA School have been delighted to see Mohammad's concentration, participation and academic achievement improve. Now, he is contributing frequently in class, completing tasks successfully on his own, and building confidence that will support him beyond the classroom. **His journey emphasises the critical role of teacher and social worker collaboration within the school, alongside the student's own motivation and commitment to learning.**



Receiving the right support at school helped Mohammad build the skills and confidence he needs to shape his own future.

Restoring safe learning in Nashabiyeh, Syria



Nashabiyeh, Syria – Abjad Initiative for Education

For many children in Syria, the simple act of learning in a safe, supportive environment remains out of reach. Over **7,000** schools were damaged or destroyed during the conflict and right now, **over 2 million children in Syria are still out of school** [7]. For children who are able to go to school, overcrowded classrooms, damaged infrastructure and a lack of psychosocial support often makes accessing quality education challenging. **Almost one-third of those enrolled do not make it to the end of primary school** [7]. In this context, restoring access to safe and supportive classrooms for Syrian children is essential.

In response, Action Syria has been working in partnership with **Abjad Initiative for Education** to help children in rural Damascus get back to learning. During this reporting period, we were proud to support the **full rehabilitation of Al-Nashabiyeh Mixed School**, restoring and upgrading the school's basic infrastructure, as well as promoting inclusive access to education by making the school accessible for children with disabilities.

Prior to the rehabilitation works, Al-Nashabiyeh Mixed School was in a poor condition. Classrooms were badly damaged and basic facilities - like toilets and water - needed urgent repairs. This was contributing to increased drop-out rates, particularly among girls and younger students. The rehabilitation project focused on restoring infrastructure and making the school child-friendly again. This included restoring **14 classrooms, 6 offices, and basic sanitation facilities, as well as installing roof insulation and solar panels.**

Now, **449 students** are attending the school every day, where they are learning in a safe and supportive environment. We are particularly proud that enrollment at the school increased after the completion of the project, highlighting that safe classrooms are essential for enabling Syrian families to send their children to school with confidence. With your support, and alongside our brilliant local partners, we are **restoring stability through education, protecting childhoods, and helping children rebuild hope after conflict.**

PEOPLE WE'VE
SUPPORTED

Rama's Story,
Education, Syria

12-year-old **Rama** is a student at Al-Nashabiyeh Mixed School in rural Damascus. Before Action Syria and Abjad Initiative restored the school, the unsafe learning environment was a daily concern for Rama's parents. With damaged windows, broken desks and unreliable sanitation facilities, Rama told us that school was "a place that caused more stress than hope".

But now things are different. In partnership with Abjad Initiative, Action Syria helped rehabilitate Rama's school, **restoring access to safe classrooms for 449 students**. Classrooms were repainted, lighting and electricity improved, sanitation facilities fixed, and the school yard made safer. **Now, Rama is learning in safety, with renewed motivation and excitement about the future.** The rehabilitation has created a more engaging learning environment and has restored confidence in education for Rama's family.

"When I entered the school after the rehabilitation, it felt like a completely new place." — Rama, age 12



Al-Nashabiyeh School
after the rehabilitation
works were completed.



OUR PROGRAMMES
Health



HEALTH



Access to free, high-quality healthcare remains a critical need for Syrian communities. 14 years of conflict have left a significant shortage of medical staff, facilities and equipment, and over **15 million people in Syria require urgent health assistance** [8]. Almost half a million children are at risk of severe malnutrition [9] and only 37% of primary healthcare centres are fully functional [8]. Alongside this, severe drought conditions have led to increased public health risks and respiratory illnesses, putting more pressure on a healthcare system already at its breaking point [10].

From our very beginnings, Action Syria has funded medical care — starting with prosthetics and growing to support primary healthcare services in some of Syria’s most underserved regions. These basic healthcare services have provided a lifeline to people with few other options.

Below are some examples of the healthcare projects we have funded in the past:

Primary Health Clinic, north-west Syria

Until 2024, we worked with the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS) to provide crucial and life-saving basic health services to communities in poor and remote areas, where no alternatives were available. Together, we provided vital clinics and medical equipment to around 25,000 patients a year. We cared for new mothers and their babies, treated chronic health issues like diabetes and, towards the end of the partnership, worked to combat malnutrition.

Prosthetics Programme, north-west Syria

With 86,000 Syrians facing amputations, we worked in partnership with Physicians Across Continents (PAC) to provide essential prosthetics services until May 2025, helping children and adults resume everyday activities — like riding a bike or writing.

During this reporting period, we have not funded any health programmes — not because the need has gone, but because the funds haven’t been there. Moving forwards, we are delighted to be supporting a new health programme in partnership with **SAMS**. Beginning in **August 2026**, this project will improve the quality of specialised care at University of Aleppo Hospital, **ensuring access to life-saving health services for vulnerable populations in northern Syria**.

Aleppo University Hospital — the primary referral hospital in the most populous region of the country — is under immense strain. In particular, the intensive care and neurological units are **facing critical shortages of functioning medical equipment**. Together with SAMS, Action Syria will provide a ventilator, multi-parameter monitors, and an echocardiography device at the hospital, and train medical staff on their usage. As a result, this project will **strengthen the hospital’s long-term capacity** to treat patients suffering from acute respiratory distress and severe neurological conditions.

We look forward to reporting on this project in our next Programme Report and are continuing to seek funding to support other projects providing vital healthcare services to Syrian communities.



Primary health clinic in north-west Syria, in partnership with SAMS

THANK YOU

It's only because of your kindness and generosity that we are able to make a difference to the lives of Syrian children, families and communities. We really couldn't do any of this work without you.

Thanks to your support, families like Rama's can send their children to school each day with the confidence that classrooms will be safe, welcoming and supportive. Your support also ensures that Syrian refugee children like Mohammad can receive the support and encouragement they need to get the most out of school and build confidence for the future.

Beyond providing safe spaces to learn, your support has helped us restore stability and protect childhoods, at a time when the road ahead is uncertain for many Syrians. We are dedicated to supporting communities with access to education and medical care as they rebuild – for the long run.

We are incredibly grateful to everyone who has supported the work outlined in this report. **With your help, we've been able to respond to the needs of Syrian communities on the ground at this critical time.**

With thanks from us all,
The Action Syria Team



FURTHER READING

- [1] UNICEF. 'The situation of children in Syria: A turning point for Syria's children and young people.' (Available [here](#)).
- [2] Save the Children UK. 'Syrians return home with hope but struggle to secure homes, schools, jobs.' (Available [here](#)).
- [3] World Food Programme. 'Syria: Emergency.' (Available [here](#)).
- [4] UNHCR. 'Briefing notes: Despite announced ceasefire, more people are forced to flee their homes in Lebanon.' (Available [here](#)).
- [5] UNHCR. 'Briefing notes: Over 200,000 people cross into Syria after a month of hostilities in Lebanon.' (Available [here](#)).
- [6] UNHCR Lebanon. 'What we do: Education.' (Available [here](#)).
- [7] UNICEF. 'Syrian Arab Republic – Education: Every child has the right to learn.' (Available [here](#)).
- [8] World Health Organisation. 'WHO calls for urgent support to rebuild Syria's health system.' (Available [here](#)).
- [9] Save the Children International. 'Over 400,000 children in Syria at risk of malnutrition following aid cuts.' (Available [here](#)).
- [10] World Health Organisation. 'Syrian Arab Republic: WHO Health Emergency Appeal 2026.' (Available [here](#)).





“After the renovation,
everything changed. Now, I
want to become an engineer
**SO I CAN HELP
REBUILD MY
COUNTRY, SYRIA.”**

- Khaled*, 12 years old

**Names changed to keep children safe.*



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Syria**

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