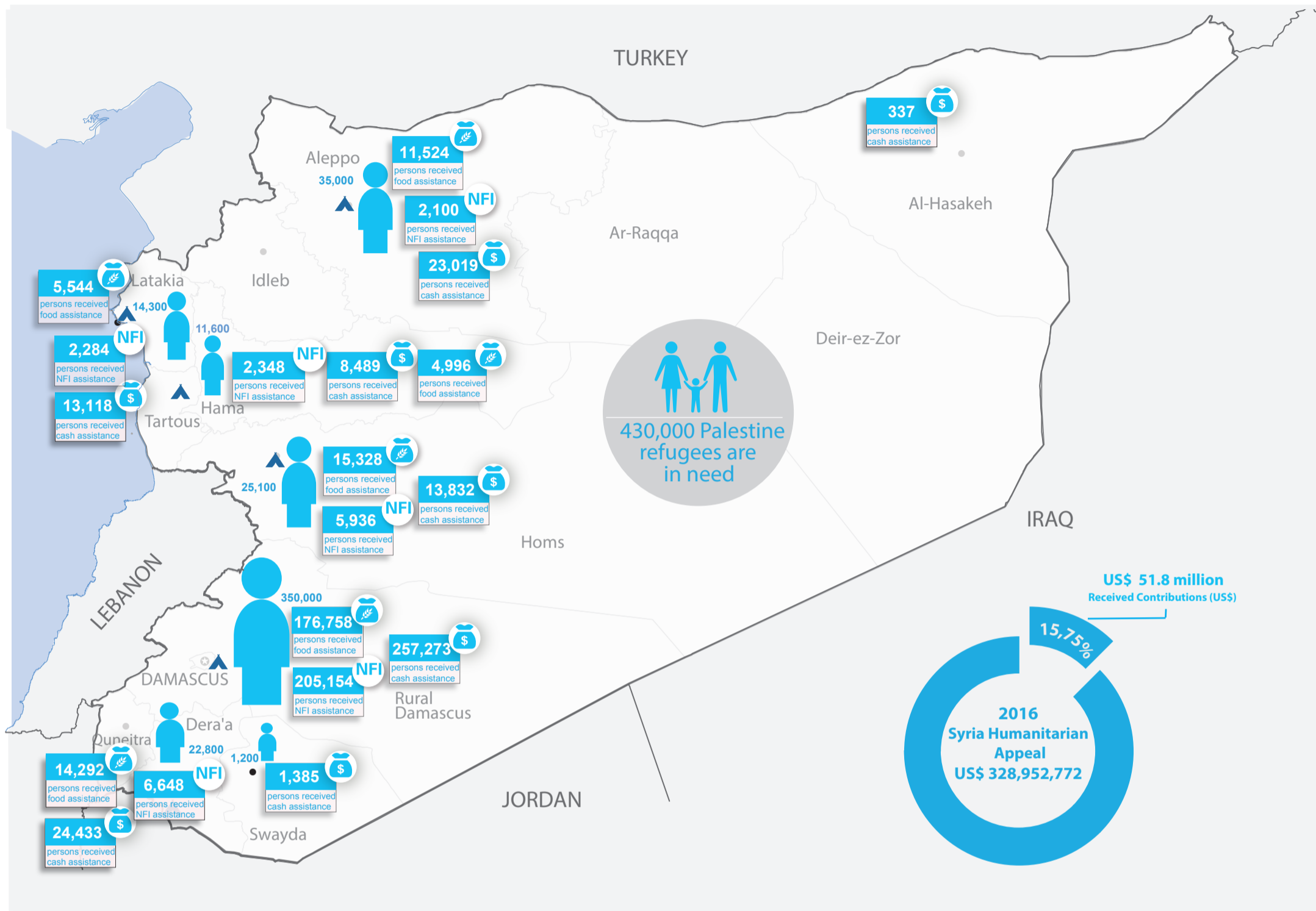


**National Exams** From 3 to 26 May 2016, approximately 45,000 students from grade 1 to grade 9 from 99 UNRWA schools undertook their final exams. Among these students were 117 grade 9 students from Yarmouk, including 60 girls and 57 boys, who were able to sit their national exams in Damascus from 15 to 26 May. UNRWA supported the safe passage of these students out of Yarmouk to a school located in Alliance, central Damascus, and provided them with a range of assistance, included health services, catch-up classes, food assistance and a cash stipend.

During his latest visit to Syria on 11-12 May 2016, Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl met with some of the students from Yarmouk boarding in Damascus, as they prepared assiduously for their exams. Mr. Krähenbühl reaffirmed the Agency's commitment to educating Palestine refugees in Syria despite immense logistical and infrastructural hurdles. Education is pivotal to building resilience in times of crisis and education remains central to the Agency's work. All UNRWA schools in Syria follow the Syrian national curriculum and only students who have passed the final exams are able to continue with secondary education.



## CASH ASSISTANCE:

The second round of cash assistance commenced on 2 May, distributing a total of US\$ 20,572,102 to 341,886 Palestine refugees (97,243 families) in Damascus, Aleppo, Qamishli, Dera'a, Swayda, Homs, and Latakia throughout the month of May. In Syria, a number of local markets remain functional. However, the loss of incomes and assets, combined with rampant inflation, has rendered basic food staples unaffordable. In this context, cash assistance remains the swiftest, most flexible and most cost effective form of humanitarian aid for Palestine refugees. Among its advantages are the ripple benefits to local economies, the empowerment of beneficiaries, and the dignity and decision-making power for people who can prioritize their most pressing requirements.

## FOOD ASSISTANCE:

The Agency's second round of food assistance for 2016 was conducted from 3 April to 13 May. A total of 55,317 family food parcels were distributed from 17 distributions centres throughout the month. On 2 May, UNRWA humanitarian operations in Yalda resumed after a brief suspension due to a sharp escalation of armed violence in the area. From 2 to 25 May, UNRWA delivered much-needed aid to families from Yarmouk, Yalda, Babila and Beit Saham, including 10,800 family food parcels. For specific hard-to-reach and besieged locations, UNRWA supplements its emergency food parcels with additional items, including tomato paste, canned food, jam, chickpeas, bulgur wheat, beans and tea. Food parcels are designed to provide one third of daily nutritional requirements for a month and are distributed based on family sizes. Each food parcel includes rice, sugar, pulses, milk, halaweh, oil and pasta.

## NFI SHELTER/NFI ASSISTANCE:

This reporting period saw a further reduction of the number of people residing in collective shelters with 2,946 residents (904 families) hosted by UNRWA in 12 collective shelters located in various UNRWA installations in and around Damascus and in two non-UNRWA facilities in Khan Dunoun Camp. Most collective shelters receive one hot meal and dry food every day, as well as regular distribution of NFIs and hygiene kits. In May, 41,824 canned food items, 13,467 kilograms of dry food items, and 968 family hygiene kits were distributed to shelter residents. A further 270 individual-size kits for grade 9 students boarding for their exams, as well as 10,884 blankets, 21,237 mattresses, 49,306 family hygiene kits, and 10,800 hygiene kits for families from Yarmouk, were distributed to Palestine refugees at distributions centres.

## HEALTH:

UNRWA medical teams conducted 79,054 health consultations in May. Currently, nine health centres have switched to the Family Health Team (FHT) approach, covering almost 60 per cent of the total caseload of Palestine refugees across Syria. UNRWA continues to provide health care to up to 450,000 refugees in Syria through 15 health centres and 11 health points and dental services through 12 health centres and 3 health points. UNRWA also maintains agreements with 11 hospitals to offer subsidized secondary care to Palestine refugees in Syria.

## EDUCATION:

In total, 43,017 students (21,842 males and 21,175 females) attended 99 schools, of which 44 are UNRWA facilities and 55 are hosted in government schools. A total of 144 UNRWA teaching staff received training on a variety of subjects, including basic group and individual PSS counselling, basic PSS training for art and sport teachers, and training on quality assurance for teachers and principals organized by the Inter-Agency Network of Education in Emergency (INEE).

## WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE:

UNRWA distributed a total of 968 hygiene kits, 253 packs of baby diapers, and 2,799 sanitary napkins to displaced refugees in collective shelters. UNRWA also provided regular garbage collection, rehabilitation of sewage systems infrastructure, supplies of chemicals for treatment, equipment, spare parts and fuel to Palestine refugee camps. Collective shelters benefit from specific WASH interventions to reduce the risk of epidemics, including regular maintenance, garbage collection, plumbing and sanitation works.