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United Nations Population Fund Syria

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UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND – SYRIA

OUR LATEST NEWS

Creating a Space for Syrian Young People and an Opportunity to Express Views and Initiatives

On the International Youth Day, UNFPA, as one of the leading UN agencies in supporting youth, continued its support to youth by organizing a 2-day event on the 10th and the 11th of August 2016.

The event was conducted at Damascus University, in partnership with the SCS (Syrian Computer Society), TEDxYouth@Jahez Team and YPEER network.

At this event **81** young people, **40** males and **41** females, gathered to brainstorm challenges youth face in achieving the global goals and discuss how they, as key stakeholders, can contribute to making the world a better place.

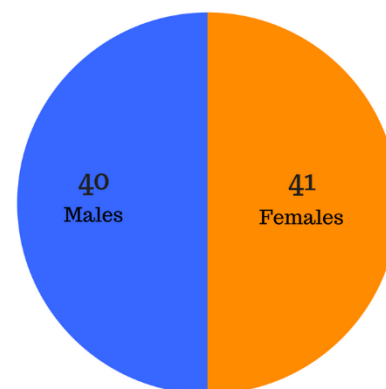
The first day brought with it a plethora of excitement and motivation, as the organizing team and facilitators weren't certain young people would be able to digest all the information given on SDGs. We opened the day with an icebreaking activity to get to know youth more. Then, one of the facilitators introduced the SDGs.



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Brainstorming on the challenges that youth face in achieving the global goals

Attendees



"We are proud to be working with youth, and not just for youth."
Massimo Diana, UNFPA- Syria representative

Creating a Space for Syrian Young People and an Opportunity to Express Views and Initiatives

Continued

The second day started with an introductory session on TED and TEDxYouth@Jahez accomplishments. We then watched and discussed a short video “How to manage for collective creativity. We aimed through this video to highlight the concept of collaboration in communities to achieve greater goals. Later, a speaker who is inspiring and high achiever comes to speak for 18 minutes about a successful personal story or a new concept from his/her perspective. For this time, Qusai Maklad, a CEO at Share group, talked about time banking.

Y-PEER Syria members performed 2 sketches during the celebration. On the first day, they introduced the linkage between global goals through an interactive theater performance. Young people see that the each global goal is not independent; they are rather connected tightly with each other.

On the second day, they highlighted the concept of volunteerism emphasizing on young people’s role as volunteers in global development. Although voluntarism, like any other sector, might has negative influencers, young people must keep their spirit in achieving great accomplishments through social work. Moreover, social studies show that young people are usually satisfied when they see the impact of their work rather than being financially rewarded.

Eventually, in an attempt to building bridges between people from the international community and local youngsters, we created a panel of UN staff. They shared different experiences and definitions on collaboration. “The Syrian community proved their resilience through tough times. They must captivate their capabilities to make greater things,” Thawra from UNICEF said.

We then opened the floor for young people to ask questions and make comments. Some of them left little sticky notes on the wall telling us that they know something has changed in their lives and they are willing to take the lead in changing the world to a safer and better place. “I think what I have been working on throughout the past 5 years links to SDGs. I’m grateful to learn about them and implement them more in my community,” Ahmad, a participant said during evaluation session.

We were taken aback by how they reacted to what they learned. It ended with a big batch of energy for tomorrow, and the future. Everybody in the room pledged to work together to achieve the global goals and maintain a youthful spirit towards leading the future. Moreover, each individual made a pledge to teach what they learned from the SDG workshop to at least 5 new people in their communities expanding the impact to a wider network.

Finally, “We are proud to be working with youth, and not just for youth,” Massimo Diana, UNFPA representative said emphasizing on the importance on young people’s role in implementing change and development. Our services reached to over 2000 young people now and we believe we still have a long way for the other 4 million.



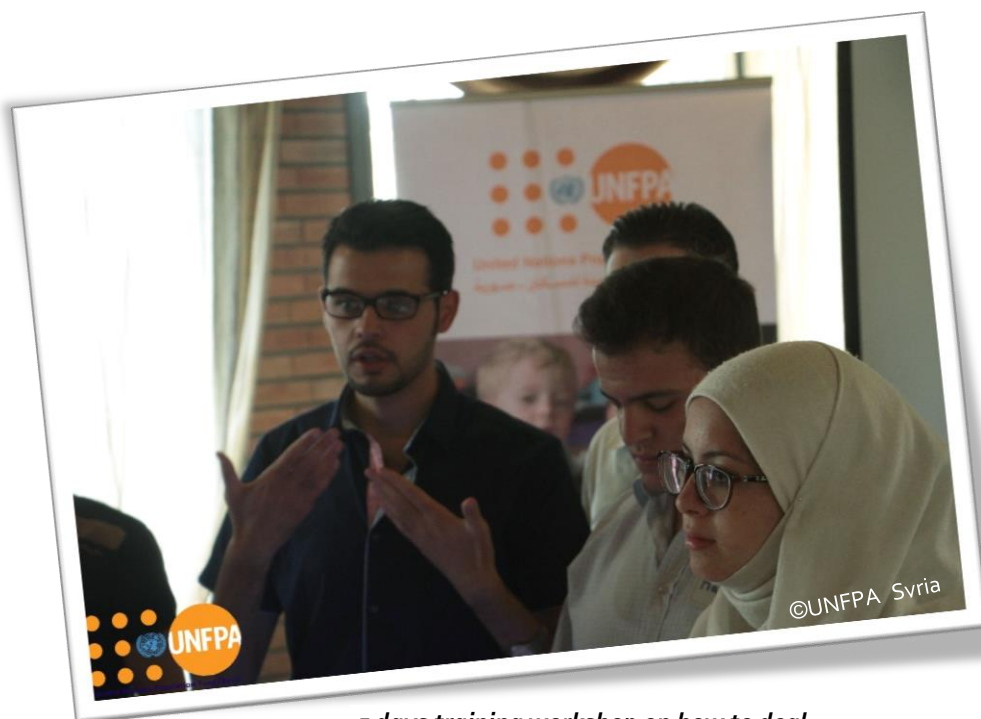
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At the end of the International Youth Day celebration



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Youth pledged to spread awareness on the SDGs



5 days training workshop on how to deal with Gender Based Violence survivors

Empowering Syrian young people in preventing gender-based violence

UNFPA- Syria held a training entitled “caring for survivors” in Damascus and Homs governorates for 51 of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent “SARC” mobile medical team volunteers from 7 governorates, i.e.: Damascus, rural Damascus, Daraa, Homs, Lattakia, Aleppo and Tartus. The five days training was held between the 31st of July – 4th August in Homs and from 7th – 11th of August in Damascus.

The training focused on the basic concepts of working with survivors including gender, gender based violence and multi sectoral approach. In addition to review, possible bio-psycho-social consequences of violence and survivors related needs.

Rein, a SARC volunteer in Lattakia, stated, “I work as a health educator in the mobile team, I always wanted to develop myself and my capacities to help the survivors from the Gender based violence, now I can Help, I can continue fulfilling my duties.”

The training equipped all the participants with practical methods and better communication skills while dealing with survivors. And it also provided them with full understanding of the gender violence dynamics including physical and psychological consequences of sexual violence in conflict affected areas and other emergency settings.

Participants were enabled to use the “survivor center approach” while engaging with survivors above adults and children to provide adequate and practical exercises on self-care for GBV service providers. At the end of the training, the participants were able to have better understanding of unclear cases and they were able to differentiate imprecise cases reported by survivors as routine medical cases rather than possible GBV cases. The participants evaluated the training as it was useful and full of information, which help them to improve their practical experience, and it was useful to connect their experience as youth in their community.

“I work as a psychological educator for the reproductive health project, I face a lot of women who need help and I hope to help them and give them support, I learned many new techniques during this workshop, that will help me achieving my work, and will make my future a better one”, Sana, a SARC volunteer commented after the end of the workshop.



“The training helps us to improve our practical experience & to connect our experience as youth in our community,” Salman, SARC volunteer

A woman, Not a Property

Wafaa Saleh AlBakr is 24-year-old woman who finished her first level education. However, that wasn't enough for her family to stop her arranged marriage to a man whom she has never met nor liked.

Wafaa had her first child when she was only 20 years old. Her relationship with her husband wasn't built on respect and understating. "I only felt like his wife when I had to deliver my duties in bed," Wafaa reported on the first clinical visit she paid to one of the UNFPA-ECHO supported clinics.

Unfortunately, Wafaa had an un-wanted pregnancy that she strongly desired to end. She also mentioned giving birth to a dead child before. "His life didn't last for long and passed away immediately after birth."

She is afraid of having another child since she is not happily married. She was considering undertaking a miscarriage. "I don't want my kids to grow up seeing their mother cruelly beaten every day," she said.

UNFPA coordinator concluded after many discussions with the local people and during his stay in the village that habitants see women as properties. They only leave their family houses to their husband's. Her ownership then turns to him and he is welcome to use her to fulfill his sexual desires and increase the number of his children. That was the case for Wafaa, a young girl living in a rural area with minimal or not at all control on her body, neither any rights to make life decisions.

"My life was frustrating. I was devastated and desperate for someone to talk to about my situation, Wafaa explained.

Wafaa went through the risks of a miscarriage, as that was the purpose for her visit. Doctors at the clinic were able to open her eyes to see positive things as well as seeing the negatives. Later to frequent visits, she felt much better. She spends hours talking nonstop and opening up about her suffering. She, eventually, left comfortable and promised to think about it again.

One week later, Wafaa visited the clinic again. Her psychological status was notable better. It was obvious how she tried to be satisfied rather than content about her life. She expressed that she is taking care of her pregnancy and is looking forward to a healthy newborn.

Finally, Wafaa is not the only young woman who has such a lifestyle. Many are in her position and are suffering the same conditions with more or less differences. Therefore, it is so essential to keep up the ongoing work to support these disadvantages women.



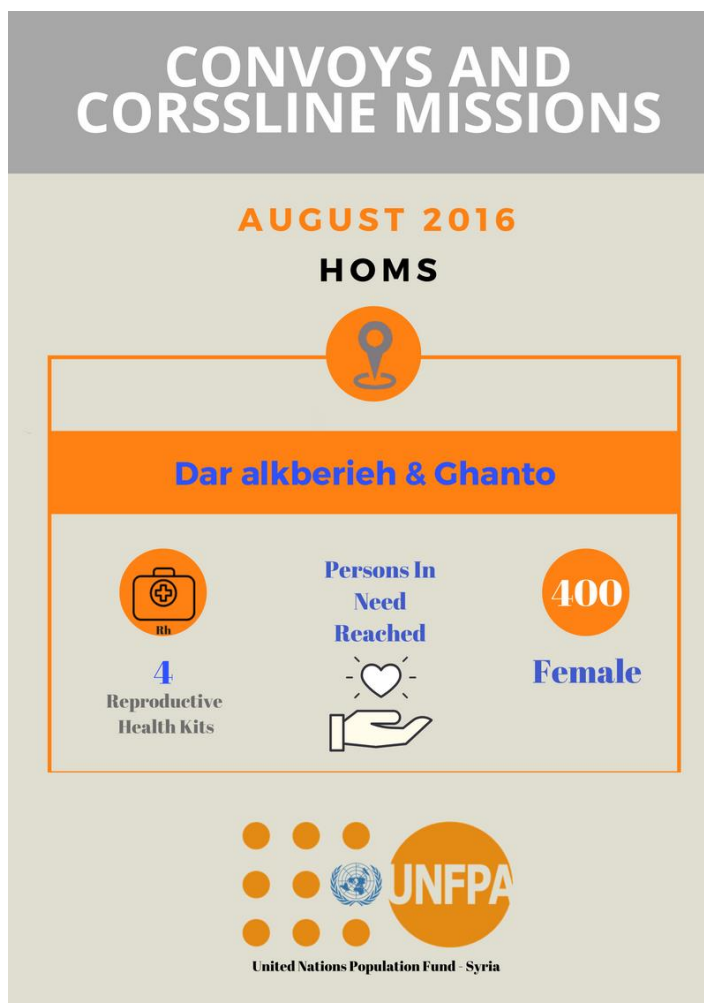
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Supporting women's health at the UNFPA-ECHO supported clinic in AlHassakeh

UNFPA-ECHO Supported Clinics

With the support of the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO), UNFPA Syria has started the implementation of a project to reach women with lifesaving reproductive health and gender based violence (GBV) services. The project is being implemented in cooperation with 8 local NGOs in Hama and Al Hassake to work throughout 10 mobile teams, 8 primary health clinics and 4 hospitals.

Latest UNFPA-Syria Participation in Convoys



United Nations Population Fund

Damascus, Syria

UNFPA is the lead UN agency for delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

While UNFPA assistance must remain concerned with saving lives and safeguarding human dignity, preparing Syrian people for future recovery, reconstruction, reconciliation and stability, is equally a priority.

UNFPA Syria focusses on:

- Improving access to high-quality reproductive health care.
- Scaling-up gender-based violence prevention and response.
- Enhancing youth participation and inclusiveness.
- Supporting capacities to collect and use gender-and age-disaggregated data for tailoring response and recovery programming.



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