ALEPPO: Despite being situated in a damaged building, a resident in eastern Aleppo did not hesitate to re-open his 50-year old restaurant which he inherited from his grandparents. Before the crisis, Aleppo was considered as the Syria's industrial and economic hub.

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

- A total of 13 Shelter Sector partners submitted 18 Humanitarian Response Plan projects online. The review of the submitted projects was started by the vetting committee and after the review the partner will modify the projects based on feedback provided.

- The project agreement between the Engineering Syndicate and the UN Habitat on Rapid Structural Assessment in Aleppo covering nine priority (9) neighborhoods was signed in October. The month-long assessment aims to evaluate and categorize buildings into three types depending on the structural safety and level of damage.

- In Aleppo City, a simple beneficiary registration tool has been developed collectively with sector partners to harmonize the listing of owner-oriented shelter and shelter kits support recipients, ensure coverage of the most vulnerable, and avoid the duplication of assistance.

- The Technical Working Group (TWG) formed for the revision of the sector strategy continues to work on draft revised strategy. Once the draft document is ready, it will be shared widely for the comments.

- During the month of October, the shelter responses from the sector partners covered the shelter needs of 113,691 affected population with different shelter interventions.
CRISIS BACKGROUND: The crisis in Syrian Arab Republic that started in March 2011 has transformed into a complex emergency that has displaced around 6.3 million people and forced around 4.8 million people out of the country to seek asylum. As per the 2017 Humanitarian Needs Overview, around 13.5 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance of which around 4.3 million people are desperate to receive adequate shelter support and other multi-sectoral assistance as they continue to struggle in an unsafe and uncertain environment. Due to the protracted nature of the hostilities, many of both displaced and host communities become more vulnerable and their ability to cope and find safe and durable shelter solutions have been greatly affected. The humanitarian community has been challenged to both provide emergency and life-saving shelter solutions while building back community cohesion and resilience through provision of sustainable shelter assistance.

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

- In Aleppo, lack of property ownership documentation affects the ability of population to avail shelter support;
- Continued reports of remnants of war in rural areas of Aleppo governorate prevent some displaced persons from returning to their homes;
- Lack of financial resources to rehabilitate damaged houses in places of origin such as Aleppo continue to discourage the return of IDPs;
- Limited access to hard-to-reach areas and lack of long-term presence impede the provision of proper shelter support;
- In most cases, available shelters are not enough to accommodate newly displaced persons;
- The operational capacity of the sector is insufficient to meet the needs.

Aoun is part of the Islamic Charity Association which was established in 1921 as an orphanage to accommodate the affected children of the First World War. The Association later expanded to host other orphans in the city of Homs and its countryside. It has a number of service projects that were implemented to serve the orphans as well as the most vulnerable children in Homs. These projects include charity schools, charity kitchen, charity sewing workshop, and a conference and celebration hall. The Association has 100 permanent employees in various departments, in addition to 950 male and female volunteers who are working on temporary projects with international organizations for a limited period.

The Aoun Committee began its relief and development work in early 2012 after the displacement from nine neighborhoods in Homs governorate as a result of the current crisis. Since then, Aoun has been operating in all neighborhoods of Homs governorate and its countryside. It has rehabilitated residential apartments for displaced persons and returnees in Homs, in addition to government schools and collective shelters rehabilitation in some rural areas.

Aoun is one of the active Shelter Sector partners. In 2016, it reported the rehabilitation of 250 apartments in the Old City of Homs that benefitted around 1,300 persons. In 2017, it has reached another 1,500 persons with its emergency shelter support and rehabilitation of damaged houses. All of these interventions are in close partnership with the ICRC, IOM, SARC, UNICEF, and UNHCR.