

OVERVIEW

The situation for Syria is dire; the needs increasingly urgent. Six years of relentless civil war, and the rise of extremist groups, especially ISIS, have devastated the country and its people. To date, about half of Syria's people have fled their homes as a result of the fighting, forcing millions to struggle simply to survive. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees calls it the "biggest humanitarian and refugee crisis of our time."

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Syria's economy lies in ruins. By one account, the damage to the economy will linger for years, even if the conflict ends soon. Demographically, the impact has been significant. Some six million people are displaced within the borders of the country. An estimated four million children are not in school. People are in dire need of food, shelter, medical care and hygiene kits — anything to help them survive.

IMPACT ON CHRISTIANS

Christians constituted about 10 percent of Syria's population before the war — dominating the nation's commercial and professional classes. Today, it is thought half of the Christians have fled the region, settling in neighboring Lebanon or further afield, such as Armenia and the West.

CNEWA'S PRESENCE

Always, CNEWA works with the men and women of the local churches. They are positioned best to determine who is in need of what, and can determine how to expedite that help. But delivering assistance to Syria has been particularly difficult as the situation is constantly fluid and the theater, particularly ferocious. Despite the danger, CNEWA has been working quietly and discreetly in Aleppo, Damascus, Hassake, Homs, Latakia and the Valley of the Christians, providing much-needed help, especially to the very young and very old.

We supply books and school supplies, tuition assistance and psychosocial support for students striving to complete their education. We also ensure the delivery of milk, diapers and clothing for children in these

regions and lend assistance to both the elderly and displaced families. CNEWA supports clinics and dispensaries operated by the local churches, but we are also engaged in providing spiritual support, by covering the operational expenses of 14 catechetical centers in Homs and Qalamoun.



Throughout Syria's civil war, CNEWA has worked with patriarchal representatives, bishops, parish groups and religious congregations, particularly the Besançon Sisters, Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, Good Shepherd Sisters, the Jesuit Fathers and the Marist Fathers, to help those desperately in need. We have:

- **Assisted families displaced from Aleppo, Damascus and Homs, providing basic non-food items, along with winter clothing, shoes and blankets**
- **Provided milk supplies for thousands of children in Aleppo**
- **Helped sustain health care programs to the displaced and the injured, including St. Louis Hospital, the Al Hakim Dispensary in Aleppo and smaller dispensaries nationwide**
- **Helped pastors in Homs sponsor catechesis and counseling programs**