



SAMS

ANNUAL REPORT 2018



TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Message from the President & Foundation Chair

II. About SAMS

III. SAMS Medical Relief Work

Syria

Jordan

Turkey

Lebanon

Egypt

SAMS Global Response (SGR)

SAMS Community Outreach (SCO)

IV. SAMS Funding

V. Society Work

VI. Advocacy

VII. Media & Celebrity Engagement

VIII. Leadership





MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear SAMS family,

In the face of the humanitarian crisis in Syria that erupted in 2011, many of us wanted to help alleviate the suffering, uphold our humanitarian values, and build a brighter future for those who have been deeply impacted by conflict and displacement. When the conflict began, SAMS was still in the process of developing its professional identity and mandate as a medical society.

In 2015, my colleagues and I launched “SAMS Vision 2020.” Our main goal was to build a global institution that seeks to inspire and support those in greatest need. Thanks to your unwavering dedication, contributions, and support, we succeeded!

As a network of medical professionals, medical students and doctors across the U.S., Syria, and beyond have been utilizing SAMS professional society to advance their medical careers. At the same time, more doctors and nurses are contributing to the organization by providing professional partnerships and educational opportunities, including research projects and medical missions to neighboring countries, Greece, Bangladesh, and beyond.

A few years after the conflict erupted, individuals and organizations stepped up in response to the greatest humanitarian crisis of our time. Now, eight years later, the world has hit compassion fatigue and funds started to lessen, while the suffering is still growing. This has stimulated the need for an innovative change to build an institution that would respond to crises while having a lasting impact for years to come. Since 2011, SAMS has sent \$190 million in humanitarian aids into Syria and beyond, including more than \$160 million in the last four years only, provided more than 14 million medical services in eight countries, and recruited 1,500 members in 2018, tripling our membership in the last four years.



The growth of SAMS is the product of your dedication and the collaborative work over the years.

SAMS has successfully built and fostered relationships and partnerships with like-minded academic and humanitarian institutions. SAMS has become an essential partner in a number of consortiums focusing on the crisis in Syria.

Despite the ongoing challenges we have faced, SAMS has never taken a step back. We have launched our SAMS domestic program to support underserved communities here at home, bringing medical relief to hundreds of people who were affected by natural disasters or had limited access to quality health care.

Over the last four years, systematic attacks on hospitals in Syria have intensified, one-third of the impacted hospitals were supported by SAMS. However, we rebuilt them to ensure that no patient was left untreated.

When hundreds of thousands of people were forcibly displaced from Aleppo, Damascus, Homs, Dara'a, and East Ghouta, we responded immediately by deploying mobile clinics, advocating for unhindered access to humanitarian aids, and supporting makeshift IDP camps.

It is with great honor and joy that I have served as the President of the Syrian American Medical Society for the past four years. Every day, I am reminded of how lucky I am to be a part of this great family. Even though my role as SAMS President will soon come to an end, my dedication and commitment to this organization and the people we serve will never stop.

I would like to thank you for placing your trust in me to lead this great organization, and for your steadfast support, dedication, and compassion throughout the years. You have kept hope alive in the face of the greatest humanitarian crisis of our time.

Sincerely,
Ahmad Tarakji, MD
President, Syrian American Medical Society



MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDATION CHAIR

Dear SAMS volunteers, supporters and donors,

With great pride, SAMS stood in 2018 with Syrians during a challenging and difficult year, expanding its operations and reach to bring relief and vital care to those who were subjected to indiscriminate bombardment, stifling siege, and forced displacement. SAMS was there with civilians and with over 2,500 medical staff despite the constant threats. In spite of all of this, we kept on going because our unflinching support offered a life-line and hope to millions living in extremely dire conditions. And we faced these challenges head-on because our heroic staff refused to leave, persevering against the odds.

One of the biggest challenges we faced in 2018 was the waves of displacement of civilians, including our medical personnel, in East Ghouta and Dara'a. However, thanks to the commitment of our staff on the ground and the generosity of our members and donors, we were able to immediately respond to the humanitarian crisis by deploying mobile clinics, delivering humanitarian aid, food, baby formula, and resupplying our medical facilities. We ensured that our displaced staff and civilians were treated with dignity and respect upon their arrival to Idlib.

In all, SAMS provided more than 3 million medical services in 2018 at over 100 medical facilities in Syria, its neighboring countries, and beyond. Again, with great pride, we did this at a rate of only \$12 per service, focusing on bringing high-quality, dignified care to refugee camps and in the aftermath of natural disasters; in besieged and aerial bombarded communities; and to those needing psychological respite from years of trauma and chaos.



With its cadre of over 1,000 specialized medical volunteers and members, SAMS provided medical care in Lebanon and Jordan to thousands of refugees who would not have otherwise received this life-saving care.

They also helped train the future cadre of Syrian medical specialists through in-person trainings of refugees as well as tele-trainings and mentoring online from experts in the US and around the world. Furthermore, in 2018, SAMS supported medical training of students in Syria, Jordan, Turkey, Bosnia, and in the US.

Finally, I have great pride in our donors who have also given a lifeline of hope and support to the disgraced, the displaced, and the most vulnerable. Your donations and support have given credence to the idea that one flame can lead someone out of darkness; can lead to a better tomorrow. I am a witness of that. I have seen our medical heroes do miracles with the limited resources they have. I am a whole-hearted believer in the work and mission of SAMS. I so greatly appreciate that we have thousands of others who also believe and serve as witnesses. Our work is far from done, but we can surely be proud of what we have achieved this past year, together.

On behalf of everyone at SAMS, we thank you for your steadfast support.

Sincerely,

Amjad Rass, MD
SAMS Foundation Chairman



ABOUT SAMS

The Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS) is a global medical relief organization that is working on the front lines of crisis relief in Syria, neighboring countries, and beyond to alleviate suffering and save lives. SAMS is one of the most active and trusted international NGOs on the ground in Syria. In 2018, SAMS provided more than 3 million medical services, including 2.7 million inside Syria.

SAMS was founded in 1998 as a professional society, working to provide physicians of Syrian descent with networking, educational, cultural, and professional services. SAMS facilitates opportunities for its members to stay connected to Syria through medical missions, conferences, and charitable activities. SAMS currently has over 1,600 grassroots members across the United States, leading 25 chapters nationwide.

When the conflict in Syria began in 2011, SAMS expanded its capacity significantly to meet the growing needs and challenges of the medical crisis.

SAMS has since implemented an integrated model of essential services that emphasizes priority needs, including the delivery of medical education, training, and financial support for physicians and other healthcare workers inside Syria and in neighboring countries.



SAMS has established field hospitals, intensive care units, dental and primary care clinics, birth and newborn care facilities, mobile medical units, dialysis centers, and mental health and psychosocial support and organized specialized medical missions. SAMS provides all its programs with the necessary medications, medical devices, supplies, and instruments through procurement and distribution of gifts in kind donations. In 2017, SAMS launched its SAMS Community Outreach (SCO) to bring free, quality health care to vulnerable communities in the US.

OUR MISSION

is to save lives, alleviate suffering, advocate for medical neutrality, and ensure a healthier future for Syrians inside Syria, in neighboring countries, and beyond through medical relief and healthcare development.

OUR VISION

is to be a leading humanitarian organization, harnessing the talents of Syrian-American healthcare professionals, and channeling them toward medical relief for the people of Syria, the United States, and beyond.



SAMS MEDICAL RELIEF WORK

Since the beginning of the conflict in 2011, SAMS has been working on the front lines of crisis relief in Syria, neighboring countries, and beyond. Since then, SAMS has expanded its operations to new locations to meet growing medical needs worldwide.

In 2018, SAMS operated in eight countries, with major operations inside Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan.

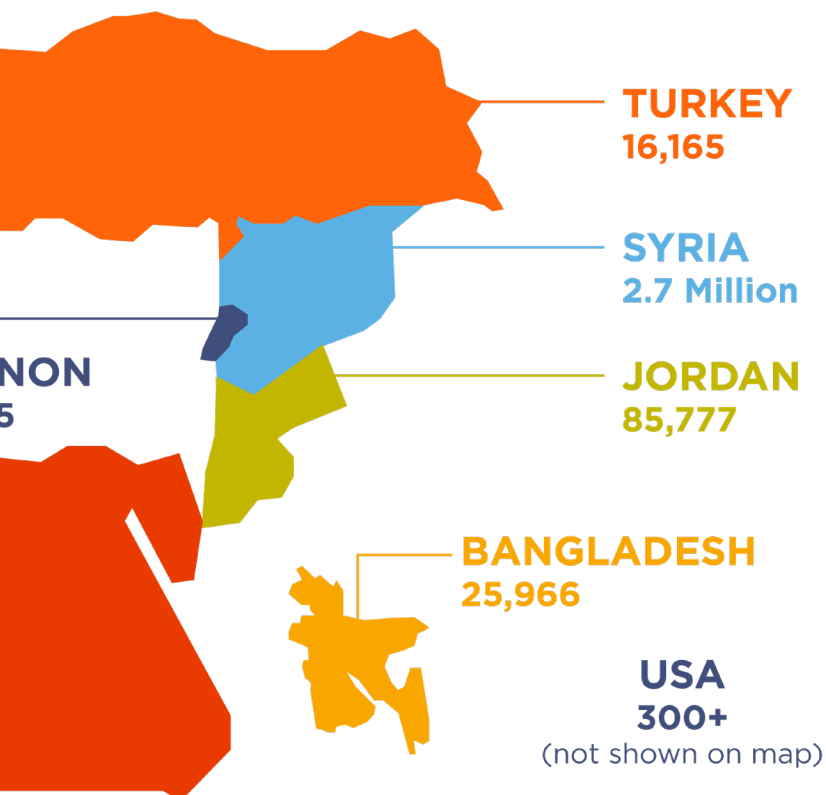
In 2018, SAMS provided more than 3 million medical services for vulnerable individuals in eight countries, with an average cost of \$12.26 per patient.

In 2018, SAMS health care se





provided **over 3 million**
services to those in need.



3+ million

medical services



111

facilities supported



2,504

medical staff
supported



131,985

surgeries
performed



233,624

reproductive
services



40,851

psychosocial
services



27,696

vaccinations
provided



15,264

dialysis
services



SYRIA PROGRAMS

Over the past eight years, SAMS has supported healthcare throughout Syria, sponsoring hospitals, mobile clinics, and ambulances, training and paying the salaries of Syrian medical personnel, supporting education for medical students whose studies were interrupted due to the ongoing conflict, and sending life-saving humanitarian aid and medical equipment to where it is needed most.

In 2018, SAMS operated in seven Syrian governorates, providing primary and specialized medical care, ranging from reproductive health and trauma to psychosocial support and chronic care.

In 2018, SAMS provided 2.7 million medical services, treating more than 1.5 million patients inside Syria.

Aleppo

Idlib

Hama

Homs

East G

Quneitra

Dara'a



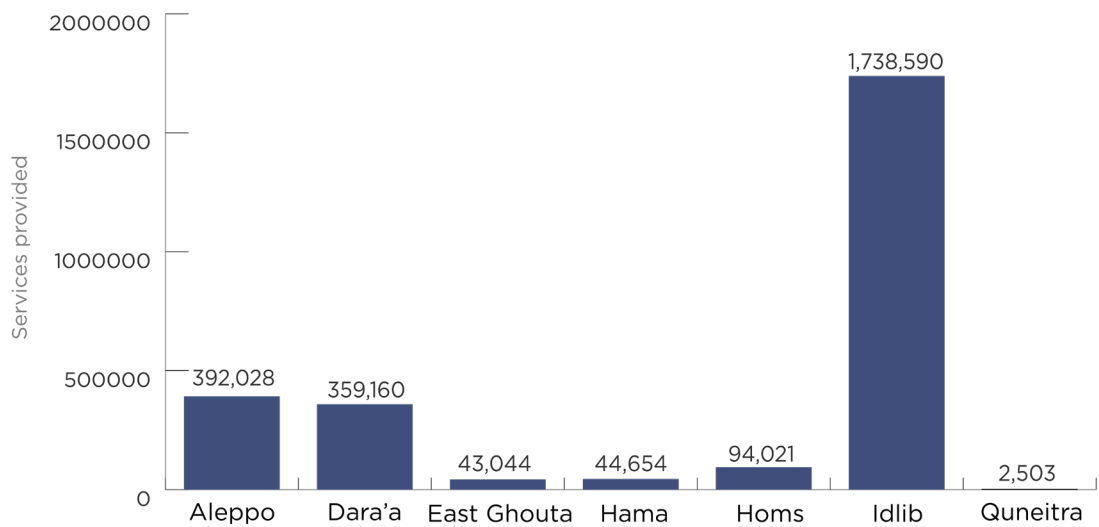
During the second half of 2018 and as new developments unfolded on the ground, SAMS established a robust mechanism to promptly and effectively respond to new crises, operating mobile clinics in areas of displacement and expanding our humanitarian relief activities- including distribution of baby formula, cooked meals, clean water, and food baskets to its medical workers and patients- as conditions in southern Syria worsened.

SAMS also led the response mechanism of medical evacuations of injured and critically-ill patients, as well as the relocation of medical workers. When the security situation on the ground exacerbated, we were forced us to discontinue our operations there.

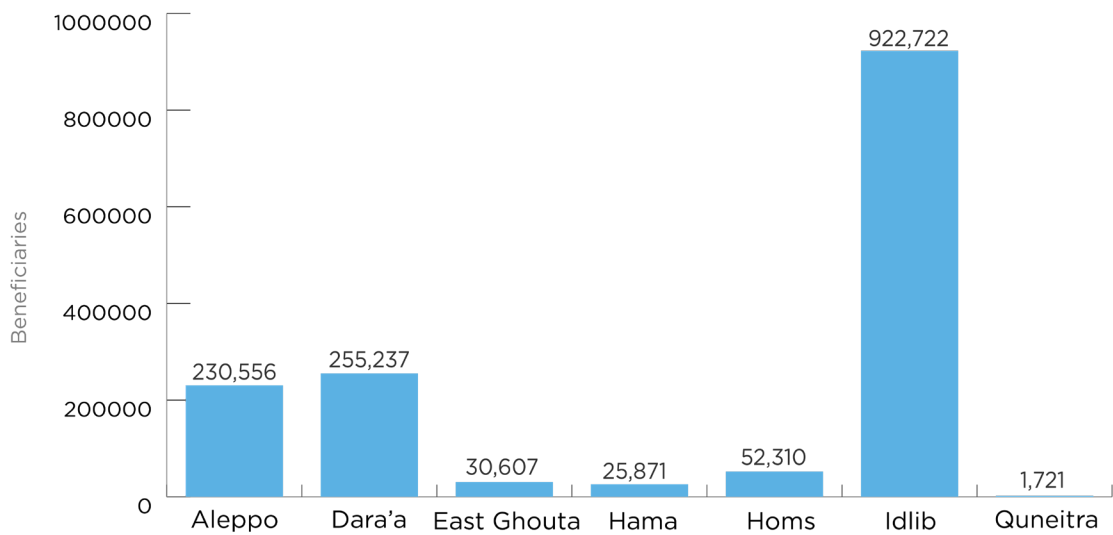
SYRIA



SERVICES PROVIDED

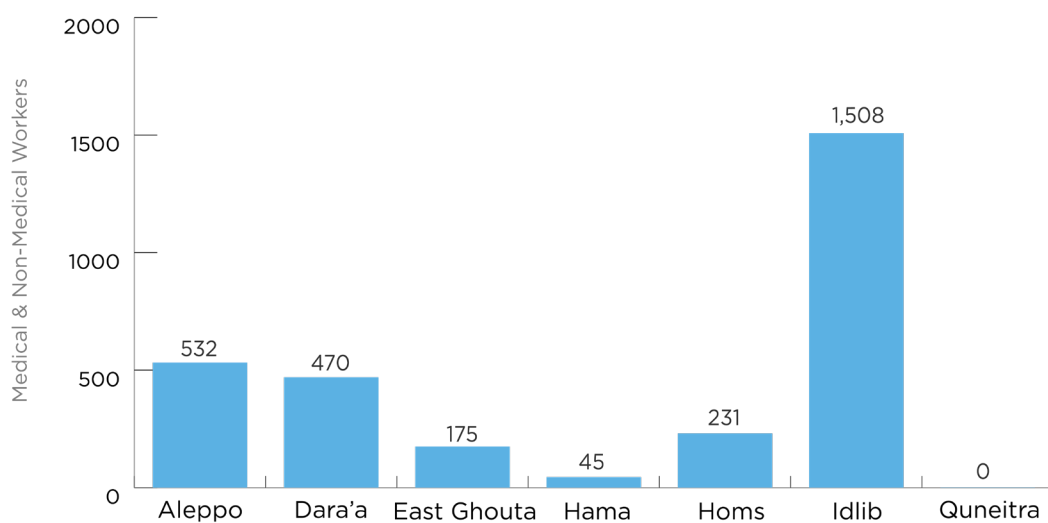


BENEFICIARIES

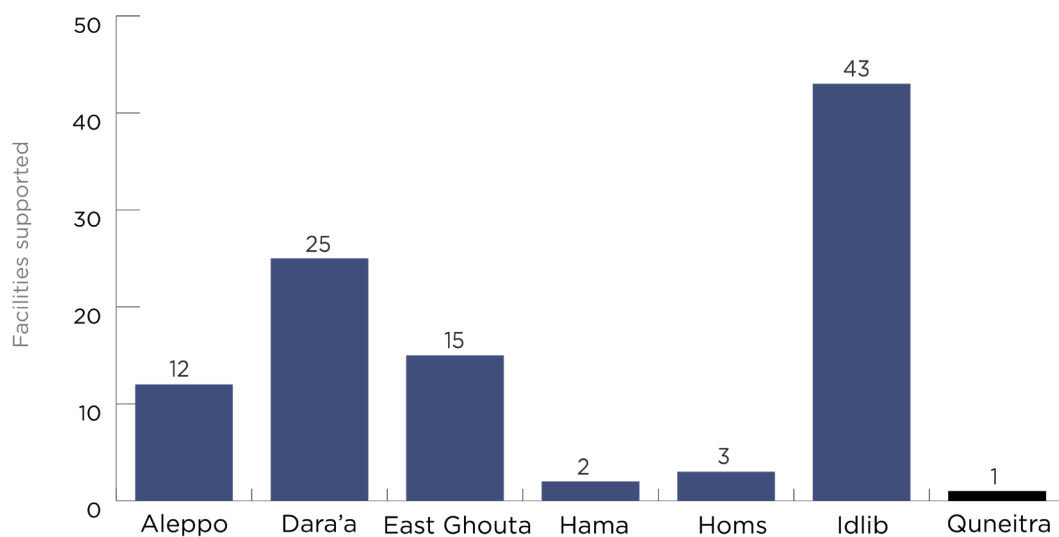




WORKERS SUPPORTED



FACILITIES SUPPORTED

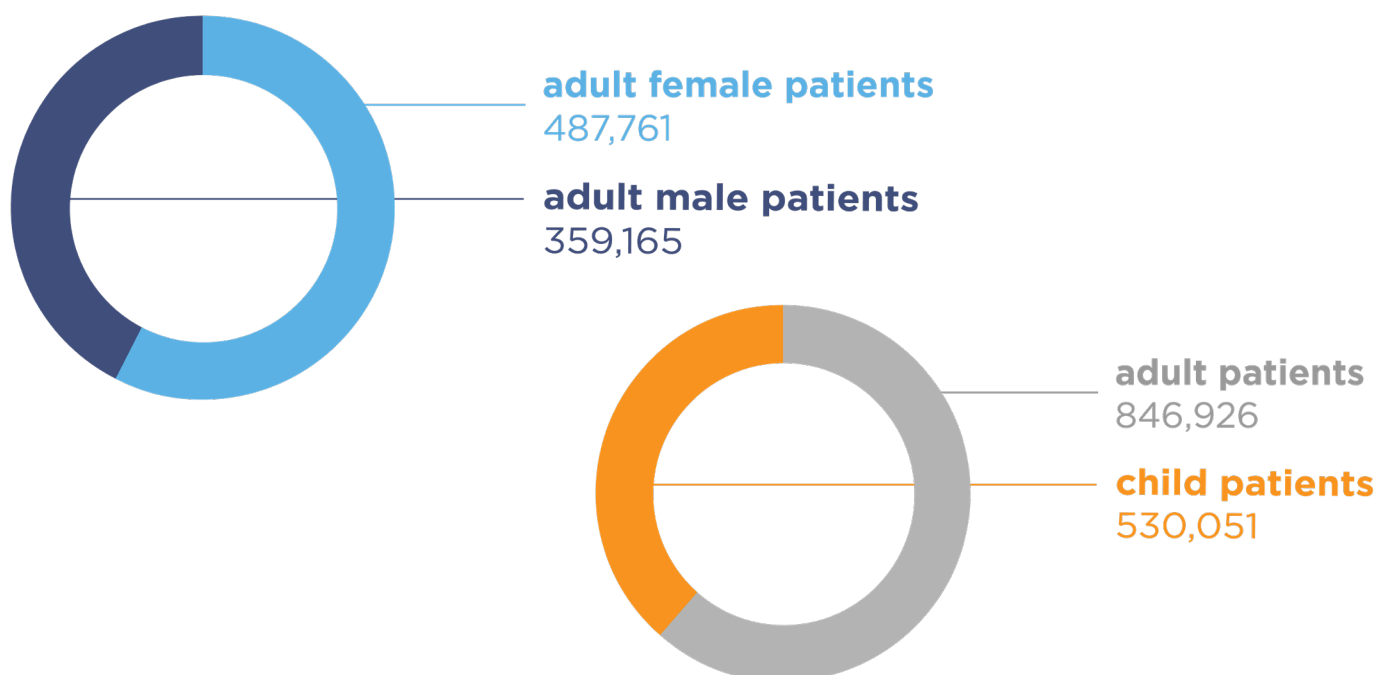




SERVICES PROVIDED

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Aleppo ——— surgeries 10,680 ——— vacc. 78,365 ——— internal medicine 7,796

Dara'a ——— PHC 18,425 ——— ICU 2,516 ——— PSS 8,111 ——— dialysis 998 ——— trauma 30,877 ——— RH 16,118

East Ghouta ——— PHC 15,512 ——— RH 5,509 ——— trauma 6,490

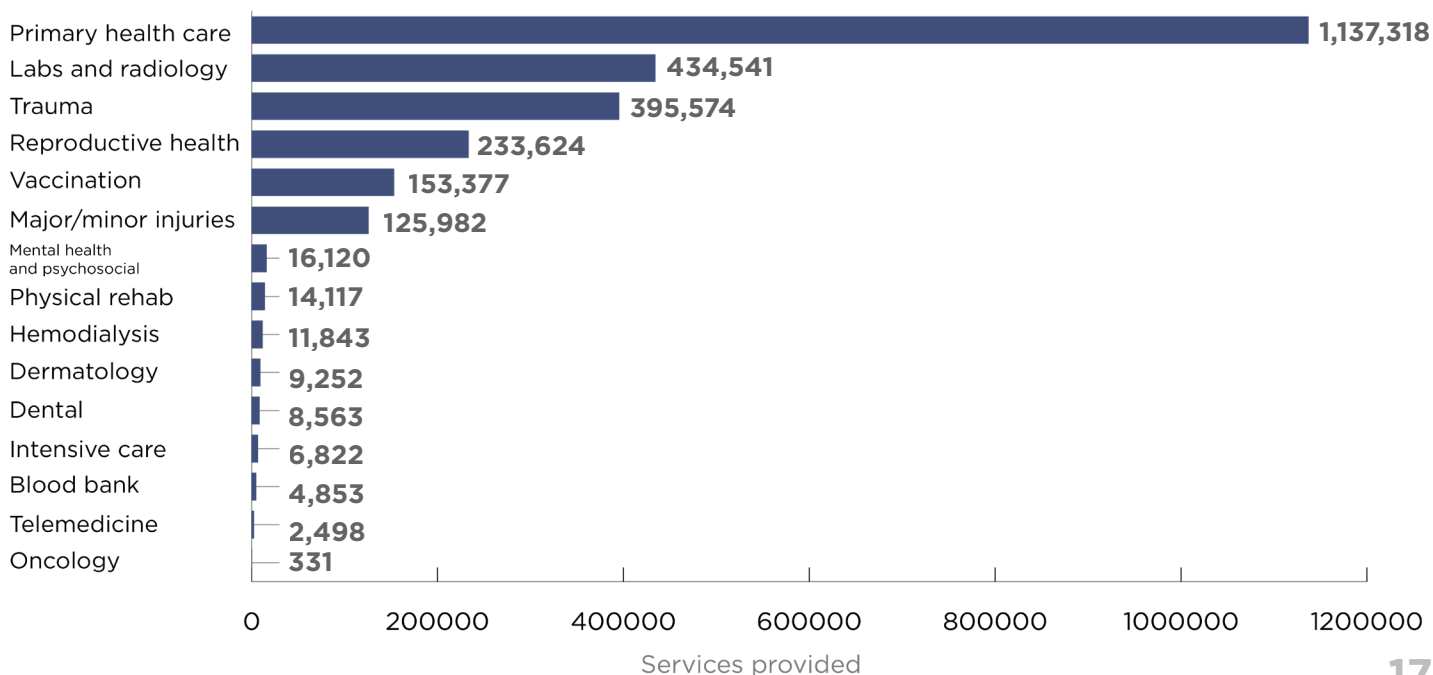
Hama ——— surgeries 207 ——— ICU 195 ——— internal medicine 1,179

Homs ——— surgeries 3,480 ——— PT 1,652 ——— internal medicine 7,939

Idlib ——— surgeries 106,569 ——— PT 12,436 ——— dialysis 10,487 ——— ICU 4,111 ——— vacc. 75,510

Quneitra ——— trauma 422 ——— pulmonology 410

In 2018, SAMS delivered 27,550 babies in Syria.





NEW PROJECTS

ONCOLOGY CENTERS

SAMS established two oncology centers in Dara'a and Idlib to provide cancer treatment, free of charge, to those who otherwise had no access to this type of treatment.

SAMS Oncology Center in Dara'a:

In April 2018, SAMS opened the doors of its Center for Oncology Care in Tal Shehab, Dara'a. This center was an enormous relief for patients suffering from cancer, and represented the first of its kind in the area. In its four months of its operation, the center cared for 281 patients, and provided services such as biopsies, medical treatment, and medication.





SAMS Oncology Center in Idlib:

In November 2018, SAMS opened an Oncology Center in Idlib, the only one of its kind in the region, providing an alternative to long travel to other governorates or to Turkey for patients seeking cancer management and medications. The center is staffed with three oncologists, two nurses, and two support technicians, and is currently serving 50 critical patients in the area under the guidance of protocols developed in collaboration with SAMS Oncology Subcommittee.

DIABETES CARE FOR SYRIA:

One in 10 Syrians lives with diabetes, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), and diabetes now ranks among the top 10 causes of death and disability in the country. Due to the ongoing conflict, access to insulin is severely strained - almost all insulin must now be imported, resulting in inflated prices and affordability issues for most diabetes patients.

In April 2018, to address insulin shortages in Syria, SAMS partnered with Direct Relief and the International Diabetes Federation's Life for a Child program and delivered approximately 15,500 vials of insulin to more than 700 Syrians under the age of 26 with type 1 and 2 diabetes.

THE SECURITY SITUATION IN SOUTHERN SYRIA & SAMS' RESPONSE

In 2018, systematic attacks on healthcare and civilian infrastructure continued with impunity, leading to loss of life, loss of access to healthcare, and attrition of skilled health care workers. During the first three months of 2018, East Ghouta witnessed a horrific escalation of aerial and chemical weapons attacks, killing at least 2,000 civilians, half of whom were children and women, and forcing 130,000 civilians to evacuate to areas in northern Syria, after enduring five years of bombardment and siege.

In response to the emergency situation in besieged East Ghouta and the internal displacement of its civilians, SAMS implemented the following projects:

- Deployed mobile clinics and ambulances to establish medical points in Hama to receive and treat patients as they arrived from the enclave. On March 25 and 26, 2018, SAMS medical staff treated 374 patients and documented 60 cases of malnutrition, mostly children. All critical cases were brought to SAMS facilities in the area, equipped with ICUs and specialized/emergency capabilities to treat the injured.



- Supported temporary IDP camps in the area by providing basic needs such as food and medical care to those who had been uprooted from their homes with nothing but a few belongings.
- Distributed baby formula, cereal, hot meals, and hygiene kits.
- Provided lodging and supported our medical workers who were forced to evacuate while they were going through psychosocial support to recover from the five years of siege, starvation, and bombardment. SAMS has also provided employment opportunities in Idlib for these brave and tireless medical workers. In East Ghouta, SAMS supported 350 medical workers.
- Expanded services such as intensive care unit (ICU) and neonatal ICU at SAMS-supported Al-Atareb Hospital in northern Syria as patients were transferred to that facility.



THE SECURITY SITUATION IN SOUTHERN SYRIA & SAMS' RESPONSE

Later in 2018, an escalation of bombardment in Dara'a and Quneitra pushed hundreds of thousands civilians from their homes, forcing them to seek shelter in the open, in extremely dire conditions, and without access to clean water, food, infant formula, or health care. SAMS responded immediately by deploying fully-equipped mobile clinics that traveled to camps and displaced populations living in the open near the Jordanian border.

On a daily basis, our mobile clinics in Dara'a treated 50 - 100 patients. The clinics provided primary health care, reproductive health services, psychological care, and medication.

Additionally, SAMS procured medications and medical supplies, coordinated with Jordanian entities to treat evacuated patients, partnered with a local organization, Sawasia Charity Foundation, to provide humanitarian aid, including food baskets, clean water, and baby formula, and cooked meals to 30,000 displaced families through this partnership, and established an emergency response mechanism to monitor events on the ground on a 24/7 basis.



As a result of the heightened aerial and ground operations on East Ghouta and Dara'a, couple with stifling siege, SAMS was forced to discontinue its operations in southern Syria.





MEDICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In addition to supporting the salaries of its medical personnel, SAMS provides unique educational and training opportunities for its staff inside Syria who continue to risk their lives to save others. These trainings are designed to address the gaps in healthcare provisions and ensure that medical staff are well-equipped and trained to provide the best care for their patients, while staying up-to-date with the latest developments and innovations in the field of research and medicine.

Led by SAMS members from the U.S., SAMS conducted seven trainings and workshops in Syria in 2018 in the field of infant & young child feeding (IYCF), community-based management of acute malnutrition (CMAM), non-communicable diseases (NCD), reproductive health protocols, gender-based violence (GBV), clinical management of rape (CMR), and early warning, alert and response network (EWARN).

In response to the attrition of skilled healthcare providers due to the ongoing conflict, SAMS has established seven medical institutions inside Syria.

In East Ghouta, SAMS supported the only medical institute, focusing on theoretical and practical curricula for laboratory and anesthesiology. The total number of students enrolled in the school was 279.

**In 2018, SAMS
trained 941
medical workers
inside Syria.**



SAMS NURSING SCHOOLS

Currently, SAMS supports a two-year nursing program at the Termanin Nursing School, enrolling 71 students, including 18 transfer students from the Aleppo Nursing School.

In 2018, SAMS provided continuing medical education to over 300 students inside Syria.

SAMS MIDWIFERY SCHOOLS

SAMS has trained 76 nurses to become midwives over the duration of one Academic year in Al-Salam Maternity Hospital in Idlib. Currently, SAMS supports two types of midwifery schools: a three-year model for high school graduates and an 18-month fast track for the “Nurse-to-Midwife” model. SAMS designed the curricula for these two programs in collaboration with United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA). SAMS currently supports two midwifery schools:

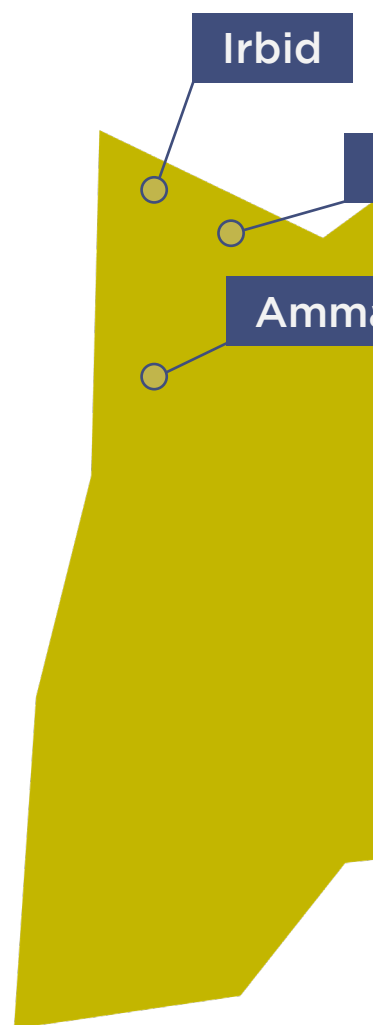
- Termanin Midwifery School: The school was launched in 2017. It currently enrolls 21 students who rotate in 5 facilities.
- Al-Ma’ara Midwifery School: The school was launched in 2018.

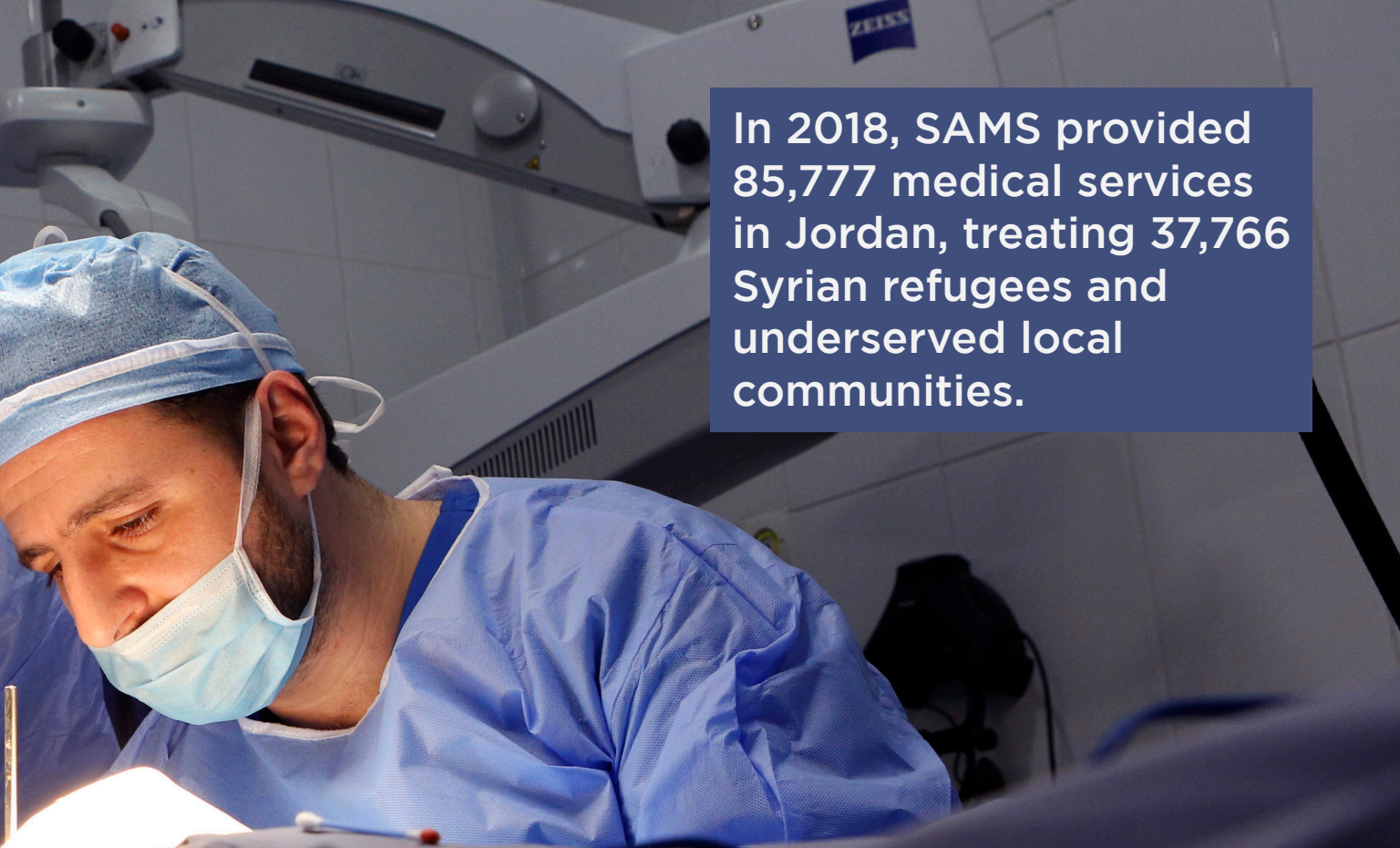


JORDAN PROGRAMS

Jordan is one of the countries most impacted by the ongoing conflict in Syria, hosting more than 671,000 Syrian refugees. Since 2012, SAMS has operated medical relief programs in Jordan, providing free medical services for vulnerable populations living in refugee camps and in urban areas.

In 2018, SAMS continued to operate its multi-specialty medical center in Al-Zaatari Refugee Camp, expanded its mental health and psychosocial programming in Irbid, and organized four medical missions. Additionally, SAMS Jordan team has led our operations on the ground in southern Syria, providing 404,707 medical services in three governorates.





In 2018, SAMS provided 85,777 medical services in Jordan, treating 37,766 Syrian refugees and underserved local communities.

Mafraq

an

SAMS AL-ZAATARI MULTI-SPECIALTY MEDICAL CENTER

In 2017, SAMS launched its medical center in Jordan's Al-Zaatari Refugee Camp to provide both primary and specialized care to Syrian refugees, free of charge. Specialties offered included orthopedics, neurology, pediatrics, internal medicine, cardiology, gynecology, dentistry, pharmacy, radiology, laboratory, mental health and psychosocial support, and thalassemia management.

The center also provides emergency services, and operates a well-stocked pharmacy. **In the first six months of 2018, the center provided 65,434 medical services, treating 18,484 Syrian refugees.**

MENTAL HEALTH & PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT (MHPSS) CENTER

In 2018, SAMS continued to deliver MHPSS and gender-based violence (GBV) services for Syrian refugees living in camps and for vulnerable Jordanians and other refugee populations living in urban areas :

- Provide different means of interactive therapy for individuals struggling with trauma, anxiety, and depression
- Provide prevention programming for individuals who are at risk of mental breakdown
- Promote gender equality and women's empowerment through workshops, group support programs and specialized case management services for women and adolescent girls
- Raise awareness on topics related to the risk of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) for women and girls in Jordan through the implementation of programs designed to help prevent SGBV, teach survivors how to seek help when needed, and create a culture of support for women and adolescents, girls with disabilities, female headed-households and the elderly.



SAMS MHPSS team also conducted training for medical providers from southern Syria in Amman and implemented a telepsych program in four locations in Dara'a.



In 2018, SAMS provided 11,262 MHPSS services to 5,463 patients, many of whom were children and women, through one-on-one sessions, play and art therapy, clinical services, home visits, and group sessions.

In Jordan, SAMS MHPSS operates three different programs:



Support groups: The team is divided into two groups who meet three times per week. This program mainly targets children and their mothers, aiming to instill positive discipline and reduce psychological symptoms among children.



Workshops: These workshops consist of awareness sessions implemented at community centers, targeting psychosocial challenges, such as memory, management of thoughts, management of emotions, and management of physical pain. These workshops are provided for men, women, adolescents, and children.



In-home Assessment & Outreach: A trained team of social workers and four volunteers from local universities visit beneficiaries in their homes and conduct an evidence-based assessment to assess their needs in order to provide the necessary treatment.

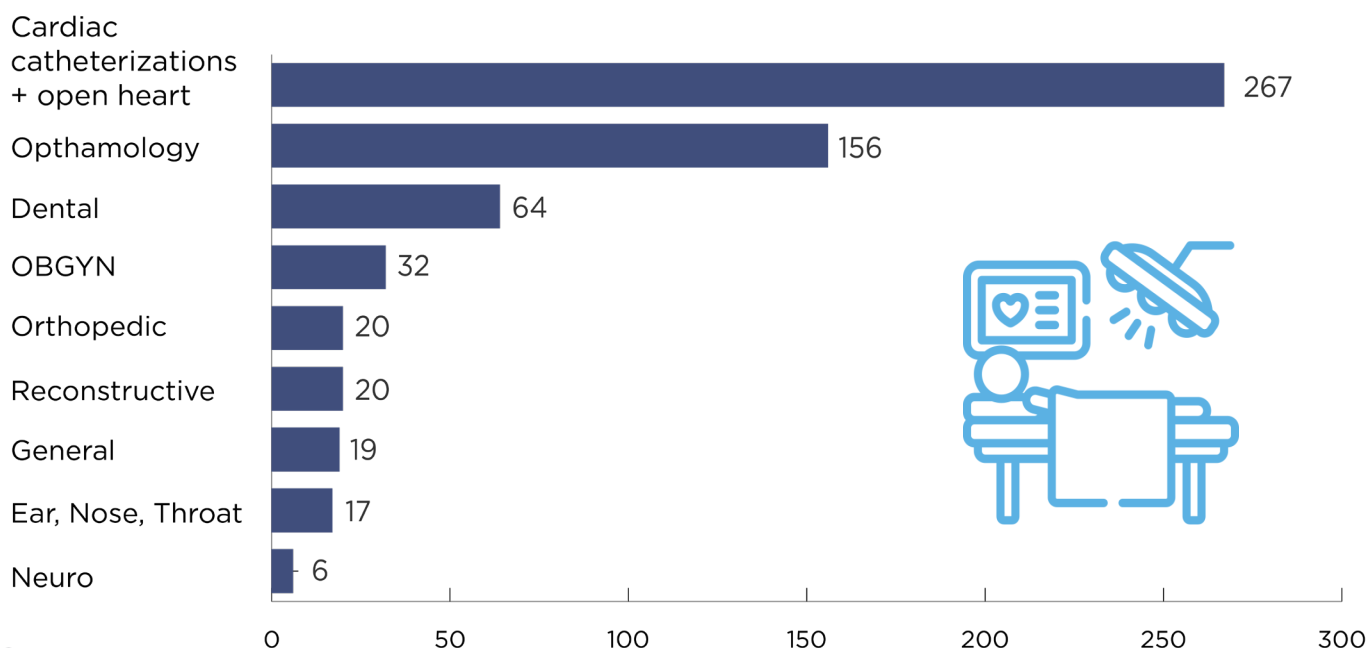



In Amman, SAMS expanded its MHPSS programming into a new clinic, providing outreach, case management, and workshops for vulnerable populations.



MEDICAL MISSIONS

SAMS continues to organize and lead specialized and surgical medical missions to Jordan throughout the year to serve Syrian refugees and vulnerable local communities, free of charge, who otherwise have difficulty accessing the care they need. **SAMS medical missions to Jordan provided 601 surgeries and interventions:**





In 2018, SAMS organized four medical missions to Jordan, bringing together 279 volunteers and treating 18,741 beneficiaries.



“All I hope for is to recover and go back to my home and my children, to care for them until they grow up and be able to look after themselves.” Anwar Mohammed Aqla, 28, a Syrian refugee from Dara’a, Syria, currently lives in Al-Za’atari Refugee Camp with her husband and four chil-

Anwar was suffering from severe respiratory distress which impacted her daily life in the camp. She was transferred to the University Hospital in Amman, Jordan, and following her examination, she was diagnosed with aortic aneurysm and severe atrophy of the aortic valve.

Unfortunately for Anwar, the cost of the procedure to repair her aorta was simply too expensive to afford. In order to survive, Anwar needed an immediate open heart surgery. The cost of an open heart surgery and valve replacement is more than \$20,000, a high cost that very few, especially not Syrian refugees, can not afford.

During our Jordan medical mission in October 2018, SAMS volunteer cardiologist performed an open heart surgery for Anwar, replacing the aortic artery and installing a new aortic valve. Following the procedure, Anwar was discharged from the hospital a week later in good health. Her condition is monitored by SAMS volunteers, by periodic testing and continued medication.





STAND WITH DIALYSIS PATIENTS CAMPAIGN

In May 2018, SAMS launched the “Stand With Dialysis Patients in Jordan” campaign to provide immediate support for dialysis patients whose treatment was interrupted due to budget cuts.

For refugees, risk factors that worsen a kidney condition include a lack of dialysis supplies, lack of adequate nutrition, and lack of proper medications and adequate laboratory monitoring. Because of the high cost of treatment for dialysis patients, many refugees cannot afford the treatment, causing worsening morbidities and increasing mortality. In early 2018, 129 displaced Syrian patients in Jordan lost access to dialysis treatment.

In order to address this gap, SAMS formed an alliance of NGOs to support these patients, while covering the cost of care for 47 patients, providing 483 dialysis sessions.

47 

483 



INNOVATIVE TRANSPLANT PROGRAM

In April 2018, SAMS conducted its first screening mission for chronic kidney disease to Jordan in partnership with Bridge of Life. A few months later, in August 2018, SAMS established SAMS Innovative Transplant program in Jordan, under the supervision of SAMS Nephrology Subcommittee.

This subcommittee supported its first ever kidney transplant procedure for 17-year-old Hanan Aboudan, a Syrian refugee living in Jordan. Hanan had been suffering from kidney atrophy, which led to progressive deterioration of her kidney function over the last couple of years, and needed frequent life-saving dialysis sessions.

The complications of the disease were so severe that Hanan had to stop going to school for one year. The transplant procedure was successfully performed at a specialized hospital in Amman. “I hope to recover from the effects of the process quickly, so that I can return to school, to achieve my dream of becoming a lawyer,” Hanan said.



TURKEY PROGRAMS

Since 2013, SAMS has been one of the co-leaders of the Health Cluster in Turkey, leading the humanitarian response and operations in Syria. In addition to working closely with the Minister of Health, the Turkish government, and other NGOs involved in the the Whole of Syria (WoS) humanitarian response, SAMS Turkey implements our cross-border operations and medical programs on the ground in four governorates (Aleppo, Idlib, Homs, and Hama), providing 2,269,293 medical services.





In 2018, SAMS Turkey office organized and conducted 584 shipments across the Turkish border to its 60 medical facilities in the North.

CROSS BORDER OPERATIONS

SAMS Turkey office leads and oversees our cross-border operations in northern Syria, delivering medical supplies, fuel, and equipment to our medical facilities. Additionally, SAMS manages a network of warehouses in northern Syria, including SAMS Termanin Warehouse, which is an essential piece of the supply chain, and is used as a central storage facility once containers are shipped across Bab al-Hawa crossing on the Turkish side into Syria.

SAMS logistics staff work to ensure the supplies and materials are kept safe and in the best condition possible before delivering to the appropriate hospitals, clinics, and other facilities inside Syria, based on needs. Additionally, SAMS ensures that its medical facilities are well-equipped to respond swiftly in the event of attacks on civilian infrastructure.

In 2018, SAMS partnered with other international medical relief and humanitarian organizations, including OFDA, UNFPA, Direct Relief, Médecins du Monde, WHO, GIZ, Caritas, as well as grants from France and Luxembourg, **receiving 234 containers which is equivalent to nearly \$12.5 million in aid value.**



CROSS BORDER OPERATIONS CONT.

In January 2018, SAMS collaborated with the Turkish Ministry of Health to deliver 10 dental chairs to clinics in rural areas of northern and eastern Aleppo, benefiting between 600 and 700 dental patients per month at each clinic. The donation came as part of the ongoing cooperation between SAMS and the Turkish Ministry of Health.

EL-EMEL HOSPITAL

From September 2017 until August 2018, SAMS supported El-Emel Hospital in Reyhanli, Turkey. **During that time, SAMS provided 16,165 services for Syrian refugees living in Turkey and critically ill Syrians who were brought in from Syria for treatment, many of whom were women and children.**

In 2018, SAMS organized a surgical medical mission to El-Emel Hospital, performing a total of 35 surgeries. Surgeries were provided free of charge and performed by specialized surgeons from the United States and Europe.



EL-EMEL HOSPITAL CONT.

Additionally, SAMS conducted an endoscopy mission to Turkey in November 2018. SAMS volunteers conducted 2 Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangio-Pancreatography (ERCP), 100 endoscopy consultations, and 33 upper and lower endoscopy procedures. During this mission, Dr. Saoud conducted a training for six medical workers working at El-Emel Hospital, including three doctors, two nurses, and one anesthetist.

MEDICAL EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND WORKSHOPS

As part of its ongoing commitment to supporting medical workers inside Syria, SAMS organizes and conducts frequent trainings and workshops in Gaziantep, Turkey. In 2018, SAMS conducted three trainings in Turkey, including Intensive Care Unit (ICU), Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), Prehospital Referral Stabilization, and Capacity building on humanitarian health and nutrition, training 48 Syrian medical workers.



MEDICAL EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND WORKSHOPS

In November 2018, SAMS launched Support for Resident Doctors program in partnership with the Syrian Board of Medical Specialties (SBOMS), targeting 13 physicians, six of whom have been conducting their residency program in internal medicine. The remaining seven physicians are continuing their residency program in the subspecialty of general internal medicine.

“Through trainings, we aim to transfer our expertise and knowledge to medical workers inside Syria, so that they can, in turn, share this knowledge with staff in the clinics or medical centers.”

- Dr. Mohammed Al-Hosni, SAMS Member



Through this program, SAMS is working on the development of a set of standardized and robust curriculum for different specialties, and will be monitoring the implementation and progress of the project, while providing technical and scientific guidance through our advisory team in Turkey and the SAMS Medical Technical Committee in the United States. The committee consists of mentors with expertise in different medical specialties and works with residents, supervisors, and instructors as part of ensuring the efficiency of the trainers.

As part of its ongoing scholarship programming, SAMS awarded new scholarships to 25 Syrian medical students in the fields of medicine, dentistry, and pharmacy. These students were admitted to Turkish universities. Recipients of these competitive awards were continuing students who started their medical studies in Syrian accredited universities but had to leave due to the ongoing crisis.

LEBANON PROGRAMS

Lebanon remains at the forefront of one of the worst humanitarian crises of our time, hosting the largest number of refugees per capita. As of October 2018, the Government of Lebanon (GoL) estimates there are 1.5 million Syrians residing in Lebanon, including 948,849 registered as refugees with UNHCR. The vast majority of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, more than 80%, are women and children, many of whom are unable to access the care they need and remain exposed to grave protection concerns.

In 2018, SAMS provided 219,685 medical services, treating 145,205 Syrian refugees and underserved local communities.



Beka'a Valley



Tripoli

In order to meet growing medical needs for refugees in Lebanon, SAMS continues to operate a number of medical relief programs and has expanded its reach, providing care for Syrian refugees and underserved Lebanese living across the country.

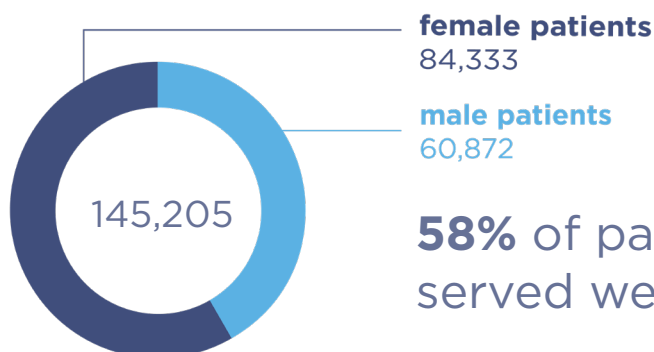
PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY SAMS

		Beneficiaries	Services
24/7 Surgical Center	Secondary healthcare services (surgeries & physiotherapy services)	5,243	5,243
Medical Missions	Primary healthcare services (consultations/ screenings) & secondary healthcare services (surgeries)	8,476	8,476
Dialysis Project	Dialysis sessions for kidney failure patients	37	2,935



PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY SAMS CONT.

		Beneficiaries	Services
Ghiras Al-Khair Medical Center	Primary and secondary healthcare, including surgeries, physical rehabilitation, and X-ray and lab services	110,275	120,787
Diabetes Project	Consultations, medications, and lab tests	3,639	45,798
MH PSS Project	Mental health & psychosocial support services, in-home assessments, and GBV	5,663	13,469
Al- Amal Center	Primary & secondary health care services, including surgeries, X-ray, lab, and physiotherapy.	11,872	22,977
Total		145,205	219,685



58% of patients served were female

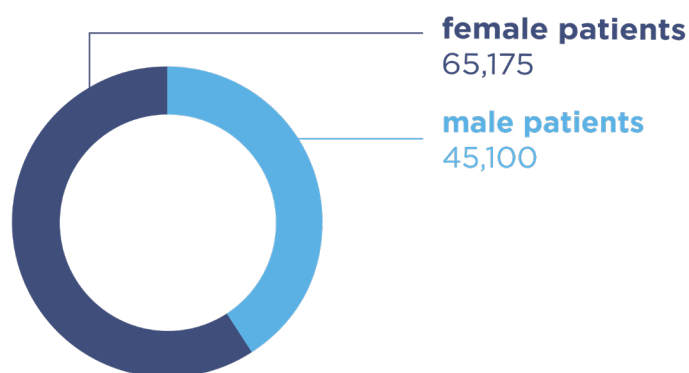


Additionally, SAMS conducted a professional development training for more than 15 participants in 2018. The training focussed on oral health and hygiene, as well as speech therapy training for social workers, teachers, and psychologists.

MULTI-SPECIALTY CARE

Of registered refugees in Lebanon, more than 35% (340,000 people) live in underserved areas of the Beka'a Valley, close to the border with Syria, often in informal settlements and makeshift shelters on farmland. In the Beka'a Valley, SAMS supports Ghiras Al-Khair Center that operates three main departments: primary health care, surgical, and physical rehabilitation care.

In 2018, Ghiras Al-Khair Center benefitted 110,275 patients:



62,328 patients

received primary and emergency care, general internal medicine (endocrinology, cardiology, hematology, oncology), pediatrics, reproductive health, dermatology, orthopedics, ENT, dental, eye care, and general surgeries.

MULTI-SPECIALTY CARE CONT.

46,995 patients

received laboratory services, X-Ray, ultrasound, cardiac ultrasound, breast diseases, dialysis, urology, and gastroenterology.

892 patients

received 9,211 physiotherapy sessions for 892 patients. The mobile physiotherapy clinic provided care for 60 patients, including 1,301 sessions.

MENTAL HEALTH & PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

Psychosocial support services are one of the most underfunded medical services, especially for refugee populations living in surrounding countries. SAMS is proud to support programs that address the long-term impacts of violence, displacement, and trauma.

SAMS continues to invest in addressing the psychological trauma among Syrian refugees living in Lebanon who face barriers in accessing mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS).



In 2018, SAMS provided 13,469 MHPSS services for 5,663 beneficiaries including 2,811 children.

SAMS MHPSS programs are mainly held in the Beka'a Valley, Akkar, and Aarsal.

Aside from addressing and reducing stigma associated with mental health, MHPSS sessions provide a 'gateway' through participating in group activities, such as our flagship program "Helping Hands," which teaches children how to identify their negative thoughts and use positive coping mechanisms.

SAMS is proud to expand its reach to underserved host communities who have no access to such services.





MENTAL HEALTH & PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

In 2018, SAMS launched two new MHPSS projects in Lebanon:

CUP OF TEACH:

Launched in October 2018 and implemented in two underserved communities in the Beka'a Valley, the project uses a holistic community-based approach to provide health and dental care, disease management, mental health and psycho-social services, as well as remedial educational services to children and young adults in these two communities.

The primary goal is to give Syrian refugee children and youth a fighting chance to thrive in the future. A team of SAMS teachers, social workers, outreach workers, a psychologists, medical professionals, and four volunteers recruited from these two communities continue to lead the program and provide these much needed services for vulnerable populations.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE SUPPORT:

In partnership with Heartland Alliance International, SAMS launched this project in order to reach women and girls who may otherwise fail to report GBV concerns due to fears and stigma.



This project integrates sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and gender-based violence (GBV) awareness and service provision. As part of this program, SAMS provides family planning commodities and feminine hygiene products, individual counseling and referrals for survivors of GBV.

PATIENT STORY

“My dream is to hear my son’s voice and have him spell his first words like other children his age,” said Mazen’s father. Mazen, 3, settled with his family in a shared apartment in the Beka’a valley.



Because of the ongoing violence in their hometown of Aleppo, they sought refuge in Lebanon. Mazen had hearing problems since birth. He would visit a specialist each month to follow up on his medical case. Each visit would cost \$30 for a private consultation and about

\$20 for his medications- a financial burden that his father couldn’t afford. Additionally, services like these are not usually available in primary health care centers nor easily accessible. Luckily, Mazen’s father heard about SAMS Hearing Aid Mission to Lebanon in October 2018.

During the mission, Mazen was given a hearing aid. Since then, Mazen has been receiving speech therapy sessions at SAMS MHPSS Center in Beka’a, free of charge. **“You will never understand the meaning of the word “Dad” until you hear it from your child for the first time. Today, I finally heard it,” said teary eyed Mazen’s Father.**



DIABETES CARE

In Lebanon, it has been estimated that nearly 100,000 Syrian refugees live with diabetes. Of these patients, at least half cannot manage their diabetes with diet alone, requiring daily insulin injections and a number of other medications to keep them healthy.

These medications, including insulin injections, cost roughly twice the average monthly salary for refugees living in Lebanon. This financial burden, coupled with inaccessibility, leaves most diabetic patients to rely on nonprofit health organizations, like SAMS, for their medications.

SAMS remains dedicated to providing chronic care support to refugees, displaced populations, and underserved communities in greatest need. As a result, SAMS launched its Diabetes Care program in Lebanon in September 2016 in eight locations, in partnership with Multi-Aid Programs (MAPS) and the International Diabetes Federation (IDF). Since then, the project has provided medical consultations, laboratory tests, medications, eye exams and screenings, and nutritional counseling, free of charge.

In 2018, SAMS provided 45,798 services for 3,639 diabetic patients in Lebanon, including 73 children and 2,182 women.



MEDICAL MISSIONS

Throughout 2018, SAMS organized specialized medical missions to Lebanon to provide quality, dignified care for Syrian refugees and underprivileged locals.

Specialized services such as hearing aids are often inaccessible to refugees due to prohibitively high costs. In October 2018, SAMS conducted its first ever Hearing Aid Mission to Lebanon, treating 70 children and fitting 81 hearing devices. This mission was conducted in partnership with Entheos. A month later, during our multi-specialty mission, SAMS provided speech therapy sessions for the same children who received hearing devices from the Hearing aid Mission.

In 2018, SAMS led 229 volunteers from around the world on 12 medical missions, treating 8,476 patients.

SAMS partnered with the American University Beirut Medical Center and the Northwestern Memorial Hospital on a cardiology mission specialized in electrophysiology and pacemakers placement.

In November 2018, SAMS volunteers conducted corneal transplants for two patients living in Lebanon for the first time ever during a SAMS medical mission.



STAND WITH DIALYSIS PATIENTS CAMPAIGN

In early 2018, SAMS provided dialysis treatment for 37 Syrian refugees living in Lebanon, including 23 women and 3 children, who lacked the financial means to pay for their dialysis sessions (one dialysis session costs around \$110 in Lebanon; each patient needs a minimum of two sessions per week). Without care, they faced the possibility of death.

SAMS launched an awareness and fundraising campaign to support these dialysis patients, in collaboration with other NGOs, including Caritas and UNHCR, to ensure that dialysis care for these patients can continue without interruption.





In 2018, SAMS provided 2,935 dialysis sessions to patients living in the Beka'a Valley, Beirut and Tripoli.



EGYPT PROGRAMS

Launched in 2017 and in partnership with Ain Shams University, SAMS has continued its work in Egypt, providing interventional cardiology procedures for Syrian refugees and underserved Egyptians.

In 2018, SAMS conducted two medical missions to Egypt, one in July and the second one in November. **Eleven volunteers from the US, the UK, and Egypt participated in these two missions, performing 132 cardiology interventions.** Stents used during these missions were donated by Medtronic.

In addition to providing interventional services, SAMS Volunteers conducted a medical training mission at Ahmed Maher Teaching Hospital. Eleven members of the rehabilitation department at Ain Shams University participated in the training led by one of our physiotherapists.





SAMS GLOBAL RESPONSE

Since its launch in April 2016, SAMS Global Response (SGR) has responded to natural and man-made disasters and crises that have exacerbated the lack of access to healthcare for impacted populations around the world. In 2018, SAMS continued to operate in Greece and Bangladesh, providing more than 30,000 medical services.

Our field teams in Greece and Bangladesh set up emergency primary health care services, upgraded critical care services, distributed relief supplies and medical aid to vulnerable individuals, and coordinated medical volunteers who served as a core component to our response methodology. Coordination with other entities, including NGOs, UN clusters, local Ministries of Health and government officials has also been an essential part of our disaster response mechanism.



SAMS GLOBAL RESPONSE



GREECE PROGRAMS

Since April 2016, SGR has worked closely with the Greek Ministry of Health (KEELPNO) to provide medical care to thousands of refugees and migrants in Athens and Thessaloniki, and those stranded on the islands with limited access to health care.

In 2018, SGR continued to provide primary health care, chronic disease management, and referrals to secondary health care for refugees and migrants living in Kos, Chios and Leros. For the first 6 months of 2018, SGR Greece provided 6,815 services and brought together 66 volunteers specialized in general/family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, and OBGYN . SGR's medical relief projects were transferred to be managed by the Greek Ministry of Health.





BANGLADESH PROGRAMS

In 2017, SGR launched a medical relief program in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh in response to the Rohingya refugee crisis. In partnership with a local health organization, Gonoshasthaya Kendra (GK), SAMS established two primary care centers in Lambashia Camp and Moynerghona Camp. Each facility was staffed with two doctors, two nurses, a pharmacist, interpreters, and local and international medical volunteers. On average, SGR provided health to 200-250 patients per day at both facilities, half of whom were women.

For the first half of 2018, SGR team in Bangladesh treated 25,966 patients, more than half the population in these two camps.

Each center provided antenatal and postnatal consultations, serving an average of **700 women per month**. Health education sessions and support were provided to pregnant women, along with laboratory tests and medication, as needed. The Lambashia Center provided 187 antenatal consultations (ANC), and 202 postnatal consultations (PNC) per month; while, the Moynerghona Center provided ANC consultations to 266 women and PNC consultations to 60 patients per month.



BANGLADESH PROGRAMS CONT.

Both centers also provided nutrition screening and assessment services, vitamin supplements, and infectious disease screening and treatment. A total of 7,032 children and 715 pregnant and lactating women (PLWs) were screened during the course of the project. 261 chronic nutritional cases were referred to nearby therapeutic feeding centers for treatment.

Both health facilities were equipped to provide not only primary care, but also prevention and control of communicable diseases. At the Lambashia Center, a total of 2,820 patients were treated for infectious diseases during the project's timeframe. At the Moynerghona Center 2,272 patients were diagnosed and treated.

EDUCATION

SGR and GK partnered with WHO and the Ministry of Health in Bangladesh to develop an educational and awareness campaign focusing on sanitation, infection prevention and control, diarrhea control, and pregnancy complications. Also, educational materials were displayed at waiting room areas.



Community health volunteers (CHVs) were recruited and trained to perform home visits, provide educational sessions about hygiene, proper hand washing techniques, nutritional information, and record health data from pregnant and lactating women for screening purposes.

SGR also sought to strengthen local technical capacity by conducting and facilitating trainings for GK medical staff led by an international emergency obstetrics care expert, organizing trainings on Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) for paramedics and community volunteers, and leading an orientation for Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs).

SAMS provided intensive basic obstetric emergency care teaching in conjunction with GK to its core medical staff, including two doctors, eight nurses, and emergency medical technicians. The training covered emergency obstetric and newborn care, general antenatal, intrapartum and postnatal care, as well as red flag recognition in high risk deliveries. This interactive training was conducted through lectures with a translator, simulated assessments, and videos using an abridgement of internationally accredited curriculum for teaching obstetrics to traditional birth assistants and untrained staff in low resource countries.



SAMS GLOBAL RESPONSE

EDUCATION CONT.

The curriculum had a built-in assessment component to test knowledge and skill retention at intervals beyond the course, and also involved “training the trainers” to allow for subsequent ongoing education. These educational tools and materials were developed in both English and Bengali.

MEDICAL MISSIONS

SGR conducted four medical missions to Bangladesh, bringing together 25 volunteers to provide medical care for refugees living in both camps. On average, each volunteer saw more than 80 patients a day. SGR Volunteers also trained local doctors and paramedics to treat prediabetes and diabetes with oral hypoglycemic agents and insulin, when required.

SGR Volunteers helped establish nutrition screening programs in both centers, screening a total of 7,747 children and PLWs for malnutrition.

In September 2018, SAMS partnered with Bridge of Life to conduct a medical mission to Uganda to provide care to an estimated 1,500 individuals from multiple communities with chronic disease screenings and prevention education over the course of two weeks.



SAMS COMMUNITY OUTREACH



SAMS COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Since its inception in 2017, SAMS Community Outreach (SCO) has provided medical care to communities impacted by hurricanes in Houston, Puerto Rico, and Florida, free of charge. In 2018, SCO served over 300 beneficiaries through health fairs and disaster relief missions in three states, conducted a refugee health needs assessment in Houston, and is on track to open a free specialty clinic in the Chicago area in early 2019.

In September 2018, one year after responding to Hurricane Harvey in Texas, SCO returned to Houston to serve affected communities still recovering from the devastating impact of the hurricane. SAMS “Week-end of Service” in September 2018 included a free health fair and build day in partnership with the Houston Department of Health and local nonprofit West Street Recovery.

In 2018, SCO served over 300 beneficiaries through health fairs and disaster relief missions in 3 states.



The health fair provided free screening and preventive services, back to school check-ups and physicals for school children, as well as referral services for underinsured patients to access affordable long term care. Patient ages ranged from 1 year to 85 years old, with many seniors suffering from chronic diseases such as diabetes. A few patients came in with dangerously high blood sugar levels and were immediately referred to urgent care at an affordable local health center.

In addition to providing medical care, SCO volunteers spent a day with West Street Recovery helping to renovate houses affected by Hurricane Harvey. The prolonged effects of inadequate access to proper shelter and healthcare are still visible in homes and among communities.



SAMS COMMUNITY OUTREACH



SAMS COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In October 2018, SCO also responded to Hurricane Michael in Panama City, Florida. SAMS volunteers, led by Dr Angeline Rubasingham, provided medical services to over 150 displaced residents at the Bay County consolidated shelter for two weeks. SCO assisted hurricane survivors with replacing medication lost in the storm, managing acute illness and chronic diseases, and preventing and controlling of infectious diseases.

SCO's intervention at the shelter was timely, given that many hospitals and clinics were closed or at reduced capacity due to damage from the hurricane. As the health system recovered and the shelter population declined, SCO was able to withdraw and transition patient care to back to the local health system.

SCO is expanding its domestic programming to serve communities in need by increasing the number of health fairs annually, partnering with free clinics in multiple cities, and developing our capacities to respond to domestic disasters.

SAMS volunteers provided medical services to over 150 displaced residents at the Bay County consolidated shelter for two weeks.



SAMS FUNDING

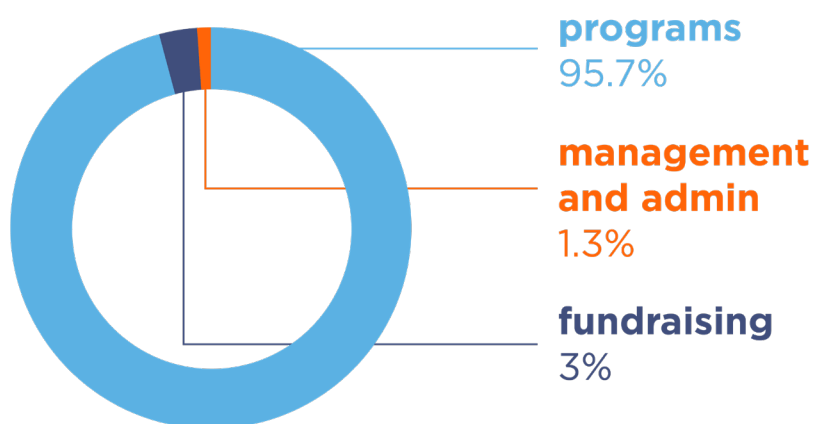
The following is SAMS' Statement of Activities for years ended December 31, 2017 and 2018.

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

SUPPORT AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS	2017	2018
Contributions	\$14,853,510.13	\$10,568,943
Grants	\$17,874,083	\$20,943,967
Gifts in Kind	\$19,112,687	\$14,209,496
TOTAL	\$51,844,664	\$45,722,474

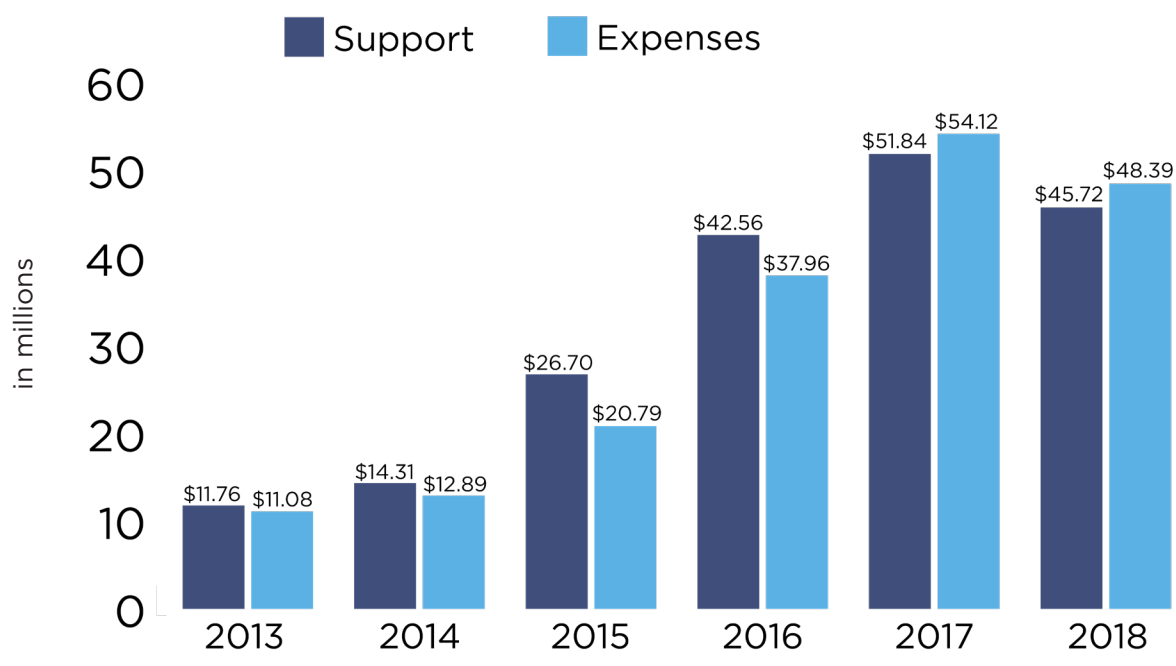
EXPENSES	2017	2018
Program Services		
Medical Relief Program	\$52,070,208	\$46,275,234
Supporting Services		
Management and General	\$877,623	\$641,621
Fundraising	\$1,170,736	\$1,472,736
TOTAL	\$54,118,567	\$48,389,591

2018 DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENSES

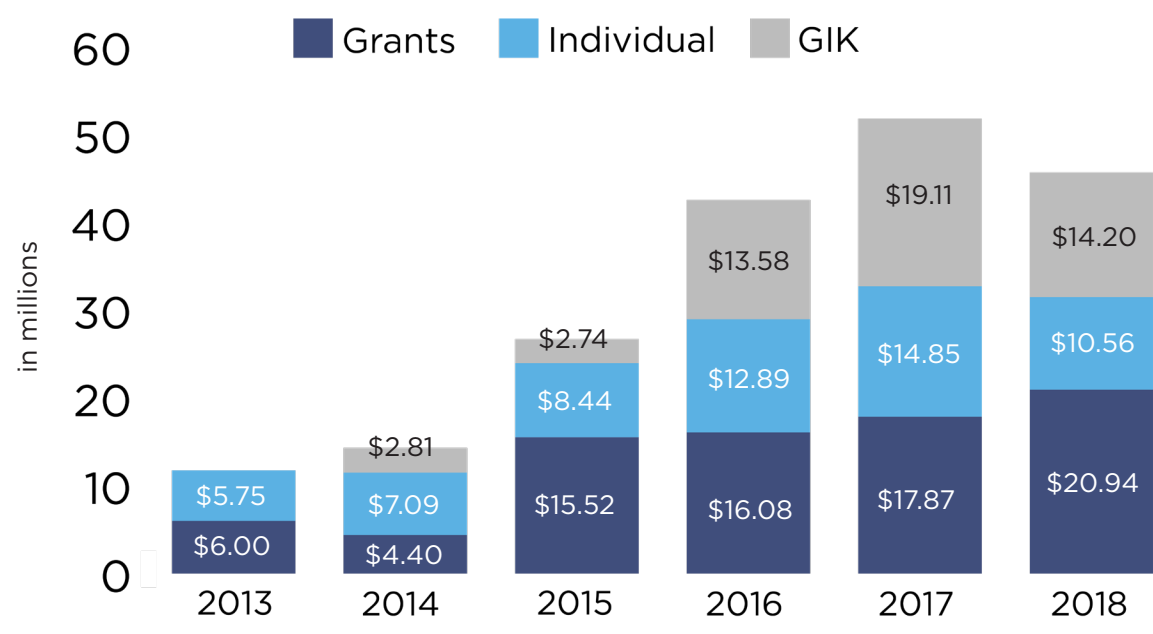


Please note that 2018 numbers are preliminary until audit is completed

FINANCIALS OVER 6 YEARS INCLUDING GIFTS IN KIND



SOURCES OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT



SOCIETY WORK



SOCIETY WORK

Founded in 1998, SAMS is a professional and educational medical society. Through its educational programming, annual conferences, fundraising and awareness events, and medical missions, SAMS provides a platform for exchange of ideas and best practices, recognition of humanitarian leaders and medical professionals, and educational training on cutting-edge medical relief work in conflict zones.

Additionally, SAMS provides Syrian medical students, whose education was interrupted because of the conflict in Syria, unique opportunities to pursue their medical education through its scholarship programming.

In 2018, SAMS reached 1,656 members, leading 25 chapters across the United States.



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Through its vast network of medical professionals across the United States and abroad, SAMS Education Committee spearheads collaborative educational programs, seeking to support Syrian medical students and professionals by providing unique educational opportunities to expand their knowledge and gain guidance and experience in their career.

SAMS Education Committee was founded in 2013, comprising a group of 12 members. Since then, SAMS Education Committee spearheads the following programs:

- **Residency Workshops and Webinars:** These webinars and workshops are tailored to help recent graduates applying for residency programs. Webinars included: ERAS application and USMLE Step 1 & 2 Exam.



EDUCATION COMMITTEE CONT.

- **Interview Skills Workshops:** SAMS has been providing Residency MATCH program, helping applicants prepare for their interviews through one-on-one mock interviews with academic instructors, while receiving feedback to improve their interviewing skills. In 2018, SAMS Education Committee conducted interview skills workshops in Detroit, Cleveland, Chicago, and Houston for 49 applicants.
- **Observership Program:** This program was designed in collaboration with academic institutions in private practices across the US to introduce US health system program to new Syrian practitioners.
- **Scholarship Program:** This program was designed to support Syrian medical residency applicants through the provision of interest-free loans, between \$1K and \$4K to cover the expenses related to the MATCH season and interviews. In 2018, the total amount of loans distributed was \$54,000 to 20 applicants. Awardees were selected based on strict criteria: scores, number of residency interviews, and resume.

Additionally, in 2016, SAMS partnered with Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health on a scholarship program to support up to two Syrian medical students who have been displaced as a result of the conflict in Syria. Awardees began their studies in July 2017 and continued into 2018 to help students apply for residency programs in the United States.



In 2018, the total amount of loans distributed was \$54,000 to 20 applicants.

- **Online Medical Education Projects:** Throughout the year, SAMS Education Committee conducts online lecture series, targeting medical students and physicians working inside Syria.
- **Avicenna Journal of Medicine:** SAMS is a proud sponsor of the Avicenna Journal of Medicine, which is the first Syrian medical journal cited in PubMed. The journal promotes excellence in medicine and covers all aspects of comprehensive healthcare including preventive, curative, and rehabilitative. The journal focuses on promoting research and editorial skills among Syrian researchers. Since 2012, the journal has published 22 issues, 139 articles, 42 original studies, 49 case reports, 22 review articles, 26 editorials and brief reports.
- **The Morning Report:** This project offers a unique opportunity for medical practitioners and students to participate in discussions about clinical cases and best treatment options. Discussions are recorded and conducted in Arabic to be shared with their counterparts inside Syria.
- **The Journal Club:** Launched in 2017, the Journal Club provides medical students and professionals the tools to discuss and evaluate research papers. Between 25 and 30 medical students and physicians participate in these online sessions that take place the first Saturday of each month. The Journal Club features different speakers each month.



SAMS CONFERENCES

Throughout the year, SAMS hosts three major conferences, bringing together members and staff from the field to share expertise and acquire CME credits.

SAMS 7TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE

SAMS hosted its 7th Annual National Conference on February 16- 18 in Orlando, FL. The conference brought together distinguished speakers to discuss the theme of “Monumental Developments in Medicine.” Topics ranged from responding to crises to providing sub-specialty cardiac care to refugees in host countries.

During the Gala Dinner, we were joined by esteemed speakers, including Dr. Paul Spiegel, Director of the Center for Humanitarian Health at Johns Hopkins Center for Humanitarian Health, who received the SAMS Humanitarian Award. We were also joined by Andrea Hall, Senior Director of WMD & Counterproliferation at the National Security Council, and Ethan Goodrich of the US State Department Office for Levant Affair.

SAMS 18TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

During SAMS 18th Annual International Conference that took place in Istanbul, Turkey on June 28-30, we heard from inspirational speakers, including displaced medical workers from Aleppo, Idlib, East Ghouta, and Homs.



These brave doctors, nurses, and midwives shared their harrowing experiences providing care under siege and constant bombardment. The theme of the conference was “Challenges of Delivering Medical Relief in a Protracted Conflict: Effects on the Vulnerable Population and Medical Neutrality.”

We also heard from humanitarians, medical professionals, and journalists, including Alessandria Masi of Peacebuilding Deeply, Ramesh Rajasingham of the United Nations, and Dr. Jennifer Leaning of Harvard FXB.

SAMS 5TH NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

SAMS 5th Annual Symposium took place in Detroit, Michigan on September 28. It brought together leaders and peers in the humanitarian and medical professions to discuss the theme of “Medical and Ethical Challenges in Healthcare Delivery.” The symposium included a wide array of lectures and discussions, identifying and addressing challenges of accessibility, funding, accurate assessments, donor and compassion fatigue, and limited resources available for Syrian refugees living in neighboring countries.

Topics included the history of implementing public health programs in humanitarian settings; an update on innovations in renal humanitarian response; and the experience of providing neonatal services in northern Syria, among others. Keynote speaker Judge Jodi Debbrecht Switalski presented an in-depth look at the controlled substance epidemic in America.



CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT

On October 20, 2018, SAMS Midwest Chapter received the prestigious Advocate Humanitarian Award during the Advocate Christ Medical Center's Salute Gala in Oak Lawn, IL for its ongoing medical relief efforts in Syria's neighboring countries and beyond to ensure access to dignified, quality care to those in greatest need. During the event, SAMS Midwest Chapter was also awarded a \$25,000 scholarship to enable doctors, nurses, respiratory therapists and pharmacists to participate in upcoming SAMS medical missions to the region.





ADVOCACY

“Dr. Morad, we salute you for your bravery, for your courage, and your determination to help any Syrian who is in need. Dr. Morad is here today to be an inspiration to all of us. He works to save lives of the Syrian people even after living through missile attacks and airstrikes, even after being gassed at Khan Sheikhoun. Dr. Morad does not stop. He does not give up. And if he’s not going to stop, we must not stop.” Remarks recognizing the courage of SAMS surgeon Dr. Mamoun Morad, delivered by Nikki Haley, United States Ambassador to the United Nations, before the Security Council on April 4, 2018.

SAMS is committed to effective advocacy on the local, national, and global levels. We work to amplify the voices of our colleagues on the ground who continue to risk their lives to save others and alleviate suffering. SAMS continues to advocate for an end to the targeting of healthcare and unhindered access to humanitarian aid for all Syrians. This past year, we began to undertake a series of trips to Europe and the US with local doctors from inside Syria.

These trips provided the doctors the opportunity to communicate their humanitarian message directly to world leaders and key government officials. SAMS is the first medical organization to undertake such trips during the Syrian crisis, and they resulted in several governments changing their position on certain humanitarian issues in Syria, public statements of support from key actors, more accurate needs assessments to major donors, and significant new funding opportunities for SAMS.



UN ADVOCACY

Throughout the Syrian conflict, SAMS has played a leading role in advocacy with the UN, both with its affiliated agencies and with member states.

In March, SAMS Board Member Dr. Mufaddal Hamadeh briefed UN Security Council members on the humanitarian situation in East Ghouta, while SAMS President Dr. Ahmad Tarakji spoke at a separate Arria-formula meeting at UN headquarters about the situation in the besieged enclave, where he announced the sharing of hospital coordinates and called on all parties to the conflict to respect medical neutrality and adhere to international humanitarian law.

In April, Dr. Mamoun Mourad was a guest of US Ambassador Nikki Haley during the Security Council's session on chemical weapons, where he was honored for his bravery in responding to the Khan Sheikhoun chemical attack that took place on April 4, 2017. He then held meetings with several Security Council Ambassadors, where he called for accountability for uses of chemical weapons.

During September's UN General Assembly meeting, Dr. Ahmad Tarakji met with senior officials from US, France, Canada, and Italy, and attended side events on protection of humanitarian workers and mental health.

In October, Dr. Farida and Dr. Abdulkhalek, two of SAMS staff working in Idlib, visited New York and met with key Ambassadors, including from UK, France, Turkey, Qatar, Canada, and Poland.



In these meetings, they advocated for additional support for women and girls in Syria, as well as increased protection for humanitarian workers. SAMS members and staff have strong working relationships with key UN missions, holding regular meetings and maintaining contact with member states. This includes providing briefings on the humanitarian situation to Security Council members, consulting on humanitarian resolutions, and updating key member states on the latest needs assessments.

For the past four years, SAMS has been the co-lead of the Turkey-based health cluster. Through this role SAMS improved the role of the national NGOs in building the health system in Syria. This position improved the representation of Syrian NGOs in the humanitarian coordination system and the partnership with UN agencies, and INGOs.

SAMS also serves as a civil society representative to the UN-led peace talks in Geneva, where we continue to be a strong voice for humanitarian principles, and urge adherence to international humanitarian laws throughout the negotiations.

EUROPEAN ADVOCACY

In 2018, SAMS continued to build and strengthen relationships with European governments and NGOs.

SAMS visited key European capitals as part of efforts to secure more financial support for our projects in the region, as well as public support for our humanitarian principles.



EUROPEAN ADVOCACY CONT.

SAMS particularly grew its presence in Brussels, when in November a visiting delegation of field doctors were the first civil society members to brief the Mashreq/Maghreb Working Party of all 28 EU Member States. During this visit, the delegation also met with senior members of the European Parliament and officials from the European Commission. Elsewhere in Europe during this visit, the delegation met with officials at the German Chancellery in Berlin, as well as with the Diplomatic Advisor to President Macron at the Elysee Palace in Paris.

This engagement has helped shape the humanitarian response by the EU and its Member States, particularly in the southwest and northwest of Syria. These efforts have also helped to secure and maintain funding from EU Member States, including from France, Germany, and Luxembourg.

REGIONAL ADVOCACY

SAMS has continued to increase our advocacy for rights of refugees, particularly in the areas of healthcare, GBV, and protection. This has involved increased engagement with host governments, UN agencies, and NGOs.



In Lebanon, SAMS became a member of the Lebanon Humanitarian INGO Forum (LHIF), and held meetings with Ambassadors from key regional and western countries, as well as with officials from Lebanese Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Affairs, and Prime Minister's Office. SAMS also worked with partners to advocate for persons with disabilities, and led efforts to secure funding and care for refugees suffering from renal failure.

In Jordan, SAMS has expanded on our strong relationship with Jordanian authorities to also include substantial new outreach to Embassies and UN agencies based in Amman. This has resulted in new funding opportunities, partnerships with UN agencies, and leadership on refugee healthcare advocacy. SAMS partnered with Mercy Corps to hold a series of roundtables in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey on the protection of humanitarian workers, which produced a series of recommendations for policymakers and donors.

In Turkey, SAMS continues to lead advocacy efforts on cross-border assistance, protection of humanitarian workers, and increased coordination with UN agencies. 2018 saw an increase in partnerships with human rights and accountability organizations, as well as increased coordination with Turkish humanitarian agencies, specifically AFAD and the Turkish Red Crescent.



U.S. GOVERNMENT AND CONGRESSIONAL ADVOCACY

SAMS staff and members regularly meet with Members of Congress, as well as with officials at the White House, State Department, and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), in order to provide updates on the humanitarian situation on the ground, and to convey what our field staff report as the most important humanitarian needs

In March 2018, SAMS Volunteer Dr. Samer Attar spoke at an event at the Holocaust Museum marking the seventh year of the conflict, which was attended by Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster, the United States National Security Advisor. Dr. Attar used his remarks to focus on the tremendous strain on the health sector and the daily challenges faced by medical workers throughout the country.

In April, Dr. Khaled Hamza spoke at an event at the U.S. Institute of Peace, Hidden Wounds: Trauma and Civilians in the Syrian Conflict. He spoke of the significant mental trauma endured by civilians, particularly children, over the course of the conflict.



Also in April, Dr. Mamoun Morad from Khan Sheikhoun visited Washington, DC and met with senior U.S. officials, including USAID Administrator Mark Green, Senator Lindsey Graham, and Senator Bob Corker to discuss the use of chemical weapons as well as to call for increased US humanitarian assistance in NW Syria.

In May, SAMS sponsored and organized advocacy meetings for the “Hope of Syria” robotics team, composed of a group of middle-school students who are refugees living in the Beka’a Valley of Lebanon. The team was hosted by senior officials at the State Department, met with National Security Council staff at the White House, and met with Members of Congress on Capitol Hill. The team advocated for greater access to health and education for refugees.



ADVOCACY

ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

SAMS continues to build and expand upon relationships with key academic institutions in the US and in the region. SAMS partners closely with Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health on the issues of attacks on healthcare and international humanitarian law, and with Harvard University School of Public Health on documentation of attacks on healthcare and human rights violations.

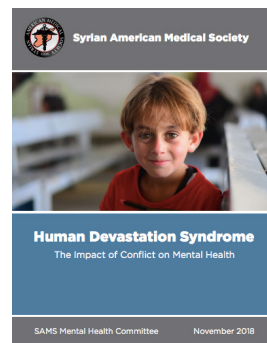
In addition, SAMS is a commissioner of the newly-formed Lancet Commission on Syria. Based out of the American University of Beirut, this commission is composed of leading public health officials from around the world, and publishes regular papers on attacks on health, training of medical staff, protection of health workers, and more.

SAMS has also spoken at events at Stanford University, Georgetown University, Columbia University, Cambridge University in the UK, and Massachusetts General Hospital.

REPORTS

In 2018, SAMS published two reports:

1. *Human Devastation Syndrome: The Impact of Conflict on Mental Health*
2. *Disrupted Health Care in Syria: The State of Reproductive Health*



PARTNERS AND COALITIONS

SAMS is a member of numerous coalitions and working groups that collaborate on advocacy and operational planning.

U.S. BASED

- American Relief Coalition for Syria (ARCS)
- #WithSyria Coalition
- InterAction
- Crisis Action
- Safeguarding Health in Conflict

FIELD BASED

- Turkey NGO Forum
- Jordan INGO Forum (JIF)
- Lebanon Humanitarian INGO Forum (LHI)
- Syria INGO Regional Forum (SIRF)
- Syrian NGO Alliance (SNA)

MEDIA & CELEBRITY ENGAGEMENT

SAMS continues to increase its visibility and public awareness through media and public relations, social media, and celebrity engagement. **In 2018, SAMS reached nearly 500K followers across its social media outlets, was mentioned more than 670 times in top-tier, reputable national and international news outlets, and secured a major celebrity endorsement.**





60 Minutes' "Wounds of War" segment featuring the life-saving, critical work of SAMS inside Syria won two News & Documentary Emmys for Best Writing & Best Report in a Newsmagazine.

In August 2018, CBS broadcasted for the second time 60 Minutes' "Wounds of War" segment featuring SAMS. Reporter Scott Pelley and his team traveled to Turkey and Syria to highlight the courageous and selfless work of SAMS medical workers and volunteers who continued to risk their lives to save others.





SAMS' DR. FARIDA SPEAKS AT TEDMED

Last year, our own Dr. Farida was invited to share her harrowing experience providing care under extremely difficult conditions on the stage of TEDMED in Palm Springs, CA. Dr. Farida was the only female OBGYN who remained in eastern Aleppo in 2016 to care for the besieged population. Despite extremely trying challenges, from shortages of medical supplies and trained midwives, to constant aerial bombardment on healthcare facilities and the stifling siege, Dr. Farida refused to leave her patients behind and seek refuge elsewhere. Dr. Farida exemplifies the courage and resilience of countless medical workers in Syria. Dr. Farida's TEDMED interview was moderated by NPR's Leila Fadel.





ACTRESS, ACTIVIST AMBER HEARD

In April 2018, actress and activist Amber Heard joined SAMS on her first medical mission to Jordan with SAMS. During the trip, Amber met Syrian refugees and local Jordanians who struggle to access health care, and the SAMS local doctors and volunteers who work tirelessly to provide the dignified, quality care for their patients.

“I was incredibly moved by the work SAMS is doing on the ground in Jordan & elsewhere to bring relief to those in need. I felt humbled by the countless doctors, medical staff, volunteers, everyone volunteering their life, time, and energy to helping. This experience left an indelible mark on my soul.”

- Amber Heard, SAMS Ambassador, Actor & Activist

During the trip, Amber met 12-year old Weam who lives in Jordan’s Al-Zaatari Refugee Camp. Weam suffers from a life-threatening condition called thalassemia. When Amber met Weam the first time in April 2018, Weam had not received the life-saving care that she needed in months due to budget cuts.



The cost of care is simply too high for her family to afford. Sadly, there are at least 12 other children in Zaatari suffering from the same condition.

As a result, Amber partnered with SAMS to ensure that Weam and the other 12 kids with the same condition can get the blood transfusions and medications that they need. Amber launched a CrowdRise campaign, raising nearly \$100K. Thanks to Amber's tireless efforts, we are happy to share that Weam has resumed her treatment. Weam dreams of becoming a hematologist to treat children who suffer from the same condition.

“The human spirit is embodied by those I met during the mission. I feel so honored to have met an organization like SAMS.”

- Amber Heard, SAMS Ambassador, Actor & Activist

During the evening, we were also honored to be joined by other celebrities including Michael Jackson, Jr., Steve McQueen, Jr., and more, as well as a team of young Syrian robotics champions living in Lebanon who had recently competed in a robotics competition in Louisville, Kentucky.

MEDIA



\$35,527.72 Total

Raised



\$50,000 Goal ↗

653

Donors

23

Fundraisers

[Make a Donation](#)

WWE SUPERSTAR SAMI ZAYN PARTNERS WITH SAMS TO SUPPORT MOBILE CLINICS IN SYRIA

For the second consecutive year, WWE superstar Sami Zayn partnered with SAMS to launch a new mobile clinic in southern Syria. In areas where hospitals and health clinics are nonexistent, SAMS brings medical care right to patients' doorsteps in the form of Mobile Medical Units (MMU). These mobile clinics are a cost-effective and sustainable method of reaching isolated populations with vital medical services. Thanks to Sami4Syria's campaign, we raised over \$35K.



LEADERSHIP

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- Rania Alqenneh, *Regional Acting Director*



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