

UNHCR's Financial Requirements

Voluntary Return of Syrian Refugees and IDPs

January - December 2025



Syrian refugees in Türkiye, including families with children, arrive at the Cilvegözü – Bab Al-Hawa border crossing point between Türkiye and Syria, to complete a voluntary repatriation process, before crossing into Syria to return home. © UNHCR/Emrah Gürel

Key figures



5.5 million Syrian refugees in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Türkiye



7.4 million internally displaced Syrians



Up to **1.5 million** Syrians estimated to return from neighbouring countries by year's end (best-case scenario planning figures)



2 million Syrian IDPs estimated to return by year's end (best-case scenario planning figures)



\$370.9 million required

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, urgently seeks \$370.9 million¹ to facilitate the spontaneous and organized voluntary return of up to 1.5 million Syrians from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Türkiye in 2025, based on best-case scenario planning figures,² and provide returnees with essential support once in Syria. Additionally, the financial requirements include provisions for assisting internally displaced Syrians as they return to their communities, a number that could reach 2 million by the end of 2025.

This funding is critical to implementing UNHCR's [Operational Framework for the Voluntary Return of Syrian Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons \(IDPs\)](#), supporting refugees and IDPs who have expressed a clear intention to return, as highlighted in UNHCR's

January 2025 [Refugee Perceptions and Intentions Survey \(RPIS\)](#).

These resources will enable UNHCR and its partners to provide essential return preparations, transportation, and protection and reintegration assistance in Syria. This represents an initial investment in a long-term, sustainable response, integrating with national systems and aligning with UN agencies, international financial institutions (IFIs), and development actors.

While these resources are designated to support voluntary returns, continued investments in protection and assistance for Syrian refugees in host countries remain essential. These programs, funded through ExCom-approved country operation plans, ensure stability and protection for those who may not return in 2025.

Overview

The December 2024 collapse of Syria's former government has led to cautious hope among millions of Syrian refugees. By January 2025, an estimated 250,000 Syrians have already returned from neighbouring countries, with improving security conditions and public services driving further returns.

The January 2025 RPIS indicates that 27 per cent of Syrian refugees in the region now express a clear intention to return within the next year—a significant increase from 1.7 per cent in June 2024.

While [UNHCR's position on return to Syria](#) remains unchanged—urging all States to grant civilians fleeing Syria access to their territories, uphold the right to

seek asylum, and ensure full respect for the principle of non-refoulement—it has developed an Operational Framework to support those choosing to return voluntarily, working closely with host governments, Syrian authorities, UN agencies, NGOs, IFIs, and displaced communities.

Beyond refugees in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Türkiye, 1.37 million Syrian refugees are in Europe and 40,000 in North Africa (excluding Egypt) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region. Many are seeking information and assistance for return. UNHCR plans to support these refugees by providing return information, assessing intentions, and offering case-by-case assistance where needed.

¹ These requirements solely pertain to the return component of UNHCR's operations in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Türkiye in 2025. This financial needs document supersedes the [Syria Situation Crisis Prioritized Response \(January–June 2025\)](#).

² The latest regional inter-agency contingency planning estimates up to 1.5 million Syrians could return by the end of 2025, depending on improved security, effective governance, and continued international investment.

Planned Response

UNHCR will work with governments, UN agencies, NGOs, donors, civil society, refugees, and IDPs to ensure that voluntary returns align with protection standards and support reintegration in a conflict-sensitive manner. This will focus on three key areas: 1) preparatory activities; 2) the return process; and 3) protection and reintegration programmes inside Syria.

Preparatory activities

Preparatory activities will focus on establishing clear **legal frameworks** that define the responsibilities of host countries and Syrian authorities as a foundational step to support refugee returns, while ensuring that IDP returns are aligned with the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. **Joint planning with host governments, Syrian authorities, and partners** will be strengthened to improve departure infrastructure, enhance reception facilities inside Syria, and ensure that transportation and initial reintegration grants are available for returnees, particularly those with specific needs. **Close coordination with national and local authorities**, including camp authorities, will be maintained to uphold IDP rights and facilitate return logistics. **Communication with refugees and IDPs** will be enhanced through digital engagement tools, social media platforms, outreach volunteers, and community protection networks, ensuring their active participation in the return process. UNHCR will support **government-led “go-and-see” mechanisms**, where in place, to allow refugees to undertake visits to their places of origin or intended destinations in Syria, enabling them to make well-informed decisions before committing to permanent return. Where feasible, UNHCR will also facilitate such visits for IDPs with specific needs. **Monitoring and data collection systems** will be strengthened to provide regular, evidence-based analysis of return trends and conditions in areas of return.

The return process

To ensure safe and effective return processes, **biometric and identity management systems** in host countries will be expanded to verify refugee identities and strengthen government registration processes. Within Syria, a standardized identity management system will be used

to capture IDP profiles, enabling targeted assistance and referrals. UNHCR will support the establishment of **government and inter-agency multi-sectoral Return Centres** in host countries to provide refugees with information on return procedures and conditions in Syria, while also assessing the voluntariness of return, issuing documentation, and identifying individuals with specific needs. **Transportation grants** will be provided to refugees, with organized transport available for those requiring special assistance. Inside Syria, transportation for IDPs in camps will be arranged based on demand. UNHCR will contribute to **inter-agency, multi-sector services at border crossings in host countries and inside Syria** by equipping and staffing immigration offices and developing essential infrastructure, such as health outposts, waiting areas, and child-friendly spaces. **Protection monitoring** will be key to overseeing the return process and ensuring compliance with international standards.

Protection and reintegration programmes inside Syria

Protection activities will be scaled up through an extensive community-based network, including 122 Community Centres, with key interventions focusing on legal aid for housing, land, and property rights, civil documentation, two-way communication channels and community feedback mechanisms, and rehabilitation of civil registries and cadastral offices. In areas of return, monitoring will be expanded to collect **systematic data on returnees and host communities** to guide inter-agency responses and advocacy efforts. **Material assistance** will be increased, including the use of cash to support returnees in rebuilding their lives. Engagement with social protection actors, national entities, UN agencies, and IFIs will continue to develop **inclusive national programs** and facilitate the eventual transition of livelihood interventions. The scale-up of **shelter programming** will provide enhanced support to returnees and affected communities, including home repairs, distribution of shelter materials, and cash-for-shelter assistance.

Financial requirements

UNHCR seeks \$370.9 million³ to implement return and reintegration activities for refugee and IDP returnees.

Country	Return (in \$)	Protection (in \$)	Material Assistance & Inclusion (in \$)	Shelter (in \$)	Total in \$
Egypt	3,750,000	187,500	-	-	3,937,500
Iraq	747,500	172,500	-	-	920,000
Jordan	20,750,000	1,250,000	-	-	22,000,000
Lebanon	55,468,852	21,431,148	-	-	76,900,000
Syria	56,250,000	25,125,000	55,000,000	40,000,000	176,375,000
Türkiye	69,575,000	20,700,000	-	-	90,275,000
Regional activities	-	500,000	-	-	500,000
Total	206,541,35	69,366,148	-	40,000,000	370,907,500

Partnerships and coordination

While this framework is specific to UNHCR, inclusive partnerships are key to ensuring safe, voluntary, dignified and sustainable returns. Host governments in countries of asylum and authorities in Syria play a central role in planning refugee returns and bear the primary responsibility for establishing the legal framework and guarantees needed to protect returnees' rights. UNHCR and partners will work closely with them on all aspects of practical implementation.

The return process from neighbouring countries and beyond requires a coordinated effort from the

international community, UN agencies, NGOs, refugee-led organizations, civil society, the private sector, IFIs, and refugees themselves. Through the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP), UNHCR is actively engaging with these partners to align planning and implementation.

Inside Syria, refugee and IDP return and reintegration programs will be guided by a national plan led by national authorities and the UN Resident Coordinator, ensuring both immediate and medium-term support for returning IDPs and refugees, alongside reintegration efforts for other Syrian populations.

Flexible funding

Flexible, multi-year funding is essential to adapt to evolving return dynamics and provide sustained reintegration support in Syria. It also ensures ongoing protection and stability for refugees who remain in

host countries. By investing in flexible funding, donors enhance efficiency, predictability, and long-term solutions for millions affected by displacement.

³ This includes \$252.5 million in additional financial requirements, along with \$118.3 million reprioritized from the budget approved by the Executive Committee in October 2024.