

# Syrian Arab Republic

March 2025

The UN estimates that **16.7 million** people across Syria need humanitarian assistance.

Since the fall of the former government on 8 December 2024 until the end of March 2025, some 372,000 Syrian refugees had returned to the country, while other refugees continue to express their intention to return home.

Over one million internally displaced persons (IDPs) have also returned to their places of origin since the end of November 2024.

Based on actual and projected returns, and triggered by calls on UNHCR from refugees to support them to return, UNHCR has moved into the facilitation voluntary returns to Syria.

This will be gradual and based on **voluntary character of return and refugees' well-informed and free choices**.

UNHCR continues to provide protection and assistance to refugees, asylum-seekers, IDPs, returnees, stateless people, and host communities based on identified needs and vulnerabilities.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### 30,400

families in Latakia, Tartous, Aleppo, Deir-ez-Zor, Hama, Homs, Rural Damascus, Al-Hasakeh and Ar-Raqqa received core relief items in March

### 7,200

Syrians benefited from legal assistance through lawyers and legal outreach volunteers in March

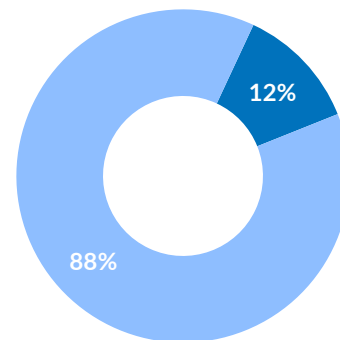
### 1,100

individuals received emergency shelter support including tents in March

## FUNDING (AS OF 31 MARCH 2025)

### USD 564 million

requested for the Syria Operation in 2025

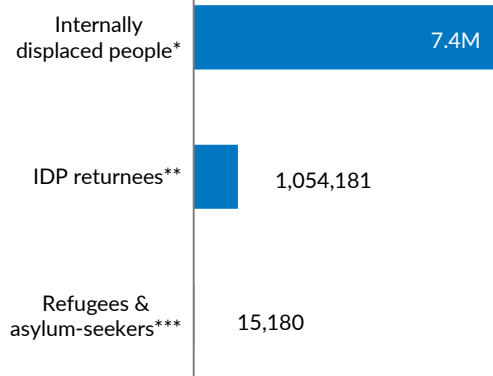


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## PEOPLE AFFECTED BY DISPLACEMENT IN THE WHOLE OF SYRIA



Students attend classes at an elementary school in Rural Damascus Governorate, which was rehabilitated by UNHCR. The school accommodates 350 children, including displaced and refugee returnee students. © UNHCR



\* Source: OCHA, June 2024

\*\* Source: Population Movement Reporting Tool, since 27 November 2024

\*\*\* Source: UNHCR, March 2025

## Operational Context

Syria has one of the largest numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the world (7.4 million IDPs). The UN and humanitarian partners also estimate that over 16.7 million people in Syria need humanitarian assistance.

The security situation in the country remains unpredictable, and the humanitarian and economic conditions are dire, with limited access to basic services.

The Brussels IX Conference “Standing with Syria: meeting the needs for a successful transition” organized on 17 March 2025, made financial pledges to support Syria’s recovery, alongside plans for a new coordination framework for reconstruction.

Through the *area-based* and *community-based approaches*, UNHCR supports refugees, asylum-seekers, IDPs, host community members, and returnees (refugees and IDPs who have returned to their home areas).

The UNHCR’s *community-based approach* focuses on community mobilization and building self-reliance. It aims at reducing vulnerabilities and protection risks by providing services through community-based structures and networks. UNHCR’s *area-based approach* entails working with partners to enhance support in geographic areas where the needs are greatest.

In 2025, UNHCR is collaborating with 28 partners, including international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and national NGOs in all 14 governorates.

## Operational Updates



### Protection

- In line with its community-based approach, UNHCR supported 106 *community centres* and 110 mobile units across the country in March, including in north-west Syria. A total of 15 community centres remained non-functional due to damage and looting. UNHCR also engages around 2,080 community outreach volunteers in all 14 Syrian governorates.
- UNHCR launched *Syria is Home* website created to help Syrian refugees make informed decisions about return to Syria. Returnees can find relevant and reliable information on legal procedures, documentation, housing, land and property issues, healthcare, education, and others.

- In March, UNHCR partners provided legal assistance through lawyers and legal outreach volunteers to over 7,200 Syrians. The assistance included legal awareness raising, counselling, and direct legal interventions related to civil documentation and housing, land, and property matters.
- Various *community-led initiatives* supported by UNHCR’s partners were implemented in March. An initiative repaired a primary school in Albukamal (Deir-ez-Zor Governorate) including the installation of glass for windows, provision of new doors, and maintenance of bathrooms. Another initiative took place in Damascus where young dentists provided free dental treatment and preventive care to 150 low-income families. Other ongoing community-led initiatives included cleaning campaigns by volunteers in Damascus, Hama and Aleppo Governorates. In March, UNHCR and partners also initiated support to two youth-led initiatives, one in Ashara city (Deir-ez-Zor Governorate) aiming at training 30 individuals on emergency medical response and first aid techniques, and another in Zara village (Homs Governorate) providing basic first aid equipment to the local primary health care facility.
- UNHCR partner conducted a two-day training course for 20 newly recruited partner staff and outreach volunteers to raise their capacity in prevention from and response to gender-based violence.
- On the occasion of the International Women’s Day on 8 March, UNHCR partners conducted a series of events across various community centres in the country. The activities included storytelling and workshops, focusing on the concept of empowerment and the importance of education.
- In March, UNHCR organized awareness-raising sessions on Explosive Ordnance Risk Education for over 350 children and caregivers in Sayyeda Zeinab, Al-Hama, Ghizlaniyeh, Jaramana, Az-Zabdani and Sabboura (Rural Damascus Governorate), As-Sweida city, and Zara village (Homs Governorate). The sessions covered the dangers of war remnants, avoidance of unsafe areas, and reporting mechanisms including the hotline and to authorities.



### Education

- In coordination with the interim Ministry of Education, UNHCR developed a pamphlet for Syrian students abroad which outlines the standards for school-certificate equivalency in Syria, helping returnee students understand the necessary documentation for continuing their education in Syria. The pamphlets were distributed in countries of asylum through community centres and border points.



## Shelter

- In March, UNHCR provided over 1,100 individuals with emergency shelter support including the provision of 280 tents.
- UNHCR initiated a technical assessment for the rehabilitation of the Immigration and Passports Centre in Damascus. This initiative aims to improve structures of the centre thereby enhance services for Syrian citizens.
- In March, UNHCR started shelter needs assessments targeting houses of returnees and vulnerable people across Syria as part of the ongoing efforts to identify needs and prioritize support for vulnerable populations.



## Core Relief Items

- In March, over 30,400 families (149,460 individuals) in Latakia, Tartous, Aleppo, Deir-ez-Zor, Hama, Homs, Rural Damascus, Al-Hasakeh and Ar-Raqqa Governorates received core relief items, including those who were displaced due to the recent violent incidents in the coastal area.



## Livelihoods

- In March, UNHCR supported 352 households (over 1,760 individuals) across five governorates through livelihoods and economic inclusion initiatives. Of these, 210 households in rural Latakia received agricultural inputs and assets for farming.
- Additionally, 142 individuals in Aleppo, Tartous, Latakia, Homs and Hama Governorates benefited from business training and cash grants for the establishment of small businesses.



Distribution of agricultural toolkits in rural Tartous. The toolkit included manual agriculture sprayers, hoes, hand saws, pitchforks, poleaxes, shovels, agriculture carts, automatic grass clippers, water tanks, short pruning scissors, hosepipes, and fertilizers. © UNHCR



## Cash Assistance

- In March, UNHCR provided the first instalment of cash for shelter to 82 Syrian families (492 individuals) in Aleppo, Homs, Hama and Dar'a Governorates. UNHCR also provided cash for livelihoods to 142 Syrian families (760 individuals) in Aleppo, Tartous, Latakia, Homs and Hama Governorates.
- The Central Bank of Syria issued a circular on 25 March, waiving the use of a valid residence card by non-Syrian refugees who have a refugee ID card issued by UNHCR as an identification document for non-Syrians to access financial institutions.



## Refugee Response

- **Registration:** As of the end of March, 15,180 refugees and asylum-seekers were registered with UNHCR. The number decreased from last month after UNHCR completed an exercise in March to deactivate ID cards that had expired for more than three months. The majority of the registered refugees are from Iraq and reside primarily in urban areas in Damascus, Al-Hasakeh, Aleppo, Homs, Tartous, and Latakia Governorates. In March, UNHCR renewed the identification cards for over 800 refugees. These identification cards protect refugees against *refoulement*, ensure access to basic rights and services, and facilitate freedom of movement.
- **Refugee Status Determination (RSD):** A total of 11 families (27 individuals) were recognized as refugees in March. RSD ensures protection from *refoulement* and detention due to irregular stay, as well as facilitates access to basic services.
- **Legal Assistance:** In March, UNHCR's legal teams and lawyers provided legal assistance to around 360 refugees and asylum-seekers. This included civil documentation particularly birth registration, residency, and other legal issues.



## Return

- Around 732,700 Syrians have returned to the country since January 2024, of these 371,960 individuals crossed into Syria between 8 December 2024 and 27 March 2025, mainly from Lebanon and Türkiye, followed by Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. Around 74,570 individuals returned to Syria in March, an increase of 22% from February.
- In March, the UNHCR-supported Border Health-Protection Support Points at Nassib (Syria-Jordan border in Dar'a), Jdaidet Yabous and Joussieh (Syria-Lebanon borders in Rural Damascus and Homs) and Bab Al-Hawa (Syria-Türkiye borders in Aleppo) continued to monitor trends and support those returning to Syria. The Dabbousieh and Al-Arida

points (Syria-Lebanon borders in Homs and Tartous) remain under repair due to previous attacks.

- UNHCR has also expanded its border presence to Al-Salama crossing (Syria-Türkiye border) through a local partner. UNHCR continues to conduct regular border monitoring missions to Al-Ra'ee, Jarablus and Al-Hamam (Syria-Türkiye borders), engaging directly with returnees.
- Through the border points in Syria, around 5,000 returnees who registered with UNHCR in March were referred to needed services, and around 1,500 returnees benefited from free transportation from the border points to their final return destinations.
- In north-east Syria, UNHCR facilitated the voluntary return and relocation of IDPs residing in Areesha camp (Al-Hasakeh Governorate). In March, UNHCR supported 42 families (207 individuals) to return to

their home areas in Deir-ez-Zor Governorate. The returnees received information about conditions and services in their destination areas and were offered free transportation, while persons with specific needs were referred to relevant services. UNHCR will continue supporting IDPs in the camps in north-east Syria to return to their places of origin.

- The inter-agency Area-Based Return Support (ABRS) approach is currently being implemented across eight prioritized return areas in eight governorates. Moving forward, UNHCR and UNDP, together with other members of the Area Humanitarian Country Teams, will continue to expand this approach to additional locations, subject to rigorous conflict sensitivity and protection risk assessments with a gender and social cohesion approach.

#### RECENTLY PUBLISHED:

- [UNHCR Refugee and Asylum-Seeker population overview in Syria \(1 April 2025\)](#)
- [UNHCR Regional Flash Update #20 \(27 March 2025\)](#)
- [UNHCR Regional Flash Update #19 \(21 March 2025\)](#)
- [UNHCR Regional Flash Update #18 \(14 March 2025\)](#)
- [UNHCR Regional Flash Update #17 \(7 March 2025\)](#)
- [UNHCR return overview \(27 March 2025\)](#)
- [UNHCR IDPs and IDP returnees' overview \(27 March 2025\)](#)
- [UNHCR return overview \(20 March 2025\)](#)
- [UNHCR IDPs and IDP returnees' overview \(15 March 2025\)](#)
- [UNHCR return overview \(13 March 2025\)](#)
- [UNHCR return overview \(6 March 2025\)](#)

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