

Syrian Arab Republic

December 2025

The UN estimates that in 2025, **16.5 million** people across Syria need humanitarian assistance.

Since the political transition in December 2024 until the **end of December 2025**, over **1.3 million** Syrians have returned home from countries of asylum and around **2 million** internally displaced persons (IDPs) have returned to their places of origin or preferred destinations in Syria.

Based on actual and projected return numbers and in response to calls from Syrian refugees for UNHCR to support their return, UNHCR is facilitating voluntary return to the country.

This gradual operational shift is anchored in the **voluntary character of return and refugees' well-informed and free choices**.

This effort, however, remains constrained by challenges, including funding shortfalls, limited absorption capacity in areas of return, access restrictions, and the extensive scale of humanitarian needs.

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

HIGHLIGHTS

4,647

damaged houses were repaired by UNHCR and partners in 2025

36,545

returnee families across Syria benefited from UNHCR's Return and Reintegration Cash Assistance in 2025

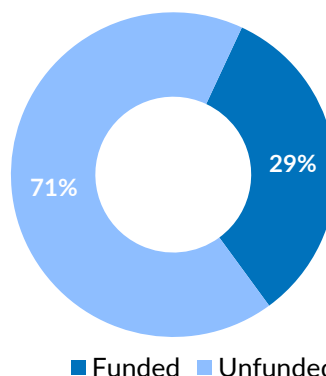
259,443

families across Syria received core relief items in 2025

FUNDING (AS OF 30 NOVEMBER 2025)

USD 575.4 million

requested for the Syria Operation in 2025



■ Funded ■ Unfunded

RETURNEES AS OF DECEMBER 2025



Houda, a widowed mother of four, returned to Syria after 11 years as a refugee in Jordan. With cash assistance from UNHCR, she was able to secure necessities for her family including a washing machine, bottled gas for heating and cooking, eyeglasses, medicines, and commodities. ©UNHCR/Toumeh

Returnees from countries of asylum*

1,354,245

IDP returnees**

1,955,879

* Source: UNHCR, since December 2024

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

Operational Context

Syria is experiencing an increase in the number of refugees and IDPs returning home, yet the number of internally displaced persons in the country remains one of the highest worldwide. The UN and humanitarian partners also estimate that in 2025, around **16.5 million** people in Syria need humanitarian assistance.

The security situation in the country is still unpredictable in some areas, and humanitarian and economic conditions remain dire, with limited access to basic services in many parts of the country.

UNHCR's [Enhanced Refugee Perceptions and Intentions to Return to Syria Survey](#) published in September, which analysed the intentions of Syrian refugees in the region to return to their home country, indicated that the political transition had triggered a sharp and almost immediate increase in refugees who stated intentions to return within a year. Among those still residing in host countries, the survey found that 18% of respondents intended to return within a year, and 80% expressed a desire to return to Syria one day. However, housing availability and property damage, limited employment opportunities, and safety and stability within Syria remain key factors in the refugees' decision-making and are likely to influence return trends.

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).

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. UNHCR and partners continue to reach thousands of returnee families across Syria to support their reintegration and access to basic services.

In 2025, UNHCR is collaborating with 23 partners, including international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and national NGOs in all 14 governorates.

Operational Updates



Protection

- By the end of December, UNHCR supported 71 [community centres](#) and 84 mobile units across the

country, including in north-west Syria, assisted by a network of 1,570 community outreach volunteers in all 14 Syrian governorates.

- As part of UNHCR's capacity-building efforts, two training courses were organized in December for newly recruited lawyers working with partners to strengthen partners' legal capacity and improve protection response. UNHCR also organized a workshop for field legal focal points and senior lawyers from partner organizations on return protection thresholds and UNHCR's 2026 legal aid strategy.
- In December, 36 [community-led initiatives](#) were implemented by female members of self-managed groups in Aleppo, Homs, Al-Hasakeh, Hama, Damascus, and Rural Damascus with the support of UNHCR and partners. These initiatives tackled numerous protection issues affecting women in their communities, emphasizing empowerment, skills development, and the creation of safe and supportive environments. Examples include a women's sports club as well as a project to produce winter clothing for pregnant women. In addition, UNHCR approved 11 community-led initiatives in Rural Damascus which included the rehabilitation of school toilets in Daraya and Nashabia, benefiting over 750 students, and the installation of solar-powered lighting in villages in Eastern Ghouta to improve safety and education access. In 2025, over 500 community/youth-led initiatives received support from UNHCR to address priority needs, positively impacting up to 1,200,000 individuals across Syria.
- As of the end of December, over 47,700 people displaced by tensions in As-Sweida in July have received protection services and participated in related assessments. The services included legal assistance, psychosocial support, gender-based violence risk mitigation, child protection, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.
- The [Syria is Home](#) platform, created in April to help Syrian refugees make informed decisions about return to Syria, had been visited by 92,000 individuals by the end of December. The highest number of visitors were from Syria, the US, Lebanon, Türkiye, and Jordan.



Core Relief Items

- In December, 36,772 families (158,795 individuals) across Syria received core relief items (CRIs). The kits comprised blankets, mattresses, sleeping mats, jerry cans, plastic sheets, solar lamps, and kitchen sets.
- From the beginning of the year up to the end of December, 259,443 families (1,262,336 individuals) received CRIs. The assistance included 43,278 CRI kits to support people displaced in As-Sweida, Dar'a, Rural Damascus and Quneitra due to tensions in As-Sweida.



Shelter

- From the beginning of the year until the end of December, UNHCR completed the repair of 4,647 damaged houses, benefiting about 28,000 including through the provision of cash. The repairs included fixing doors, windows, walls, roofs, electrical systems, as well as water, hygiene and sanitation facilities.
- Based on assessments, UNHCR provided 9,858 family tents to support displaced and refugee families in camps in north-west and north-east Syria in 2025, as well as maintained 13 sites in camps which benefited 26,943 individuals.
- In 2025, UNHCR installed 9,289 solar streetlights across Syria. These lighting improvements aim to enhance the security and protection of residents by illuminating communal areas.
- UNHCR continued to respond to the needs of IDPs from As-Sweida Governorates. By the end of December, the rehabilitation of 13 collective shelters; one in Rural Damascus, five in As-Sweida and seven in Dar'a had been completed. UNHCR also distributed 200 emergency tents in Eastern and Western Maliha (Rural Damascus), addressing the urgent shelter needs of vulnerable households there.



In addition to replacing tents and based on assessments, UNHCR reinforces and upgrades existing shelters in Manbij (Aleppo Governorate) by providing eco-friendly canvas rolls to help families withstand extreme weather conditions. ©UNHCR/H.Maarouf



Cash Assistance

- From the beginning of the year until the end of December, 36,545 returnee families (117,560 individuals) were supported with cash assistance in the form of return and reintegration grants to enable them to meet immediate needs.
- In December, 512 families (2,972 individuals) received cash assistance to establish or resume small businesses in Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa, Latakia, Rural Damascus, Homs and Aleppo. Since the beginning of the year, 1,439 households (8,364 individuals) across Syria have benefited from this type of assistance.

¹ Complementary pathways are safe and regulated avenues for persons in need of international protection that provide for a lawful stay in a third country where international protection needs are met.

- UNHCR is also assisting with shelter repairs for returnee families through the provision of cash. By the end of December, 1,032 families (6,356 individuals) had received this assistance.



Livelihoods

- Since the beginning of the year, 2,250 small start-up business projects (567 in December) have been supported through in-kind and cash modalities. A total of 4,362 individuals were also assisted through access to business training, finance, temporary employment through community projects, and on-the-job training opportunities.
- Through the restoration of socio-economic infrastructure, more than 12,000 individuals will have access to four vocational training schools and one public market rehabilitated by UNHCR with the aim of supporting returnee communities in Aleppo, Hama, and Latakia Governorates.
- In 2025, UNHCR's livelihood and economic inclusion interventions directly supported 6,612 individuals.



Refugee Response

- **Registration:** As of the end of December, 14,039 refugees and asylum-seekers were registered with UNHCR in Syria. 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 2025, UNHCR renewed the identification cards of 5,636 refugees. These cards protect refugees against *refoulement*, ensure access to basic rights and services, and facilitate freedom of movement.
- **Refugee Status Determination (RSD):** From the beginning of the year until the end of December, 33 families (89 individuals) were recognized as refugees. RSD ensures protection from *refoulement* and detention due to irregular stays, as well as facilitating access to basic services.
- **Durable solutions:** In 2025, UNHCR facilitated the departure of 13 families (42 individuals) for resettlement to the United Kingdom. In addition, under the private sponsorship complementary pathway arrangement,¹ four refugee families (12 individuals) departed to Canada. UNHCR also maintained communication with persons with and for whom it works through weekly counselling over the dedicated [helplines](#).
- Between 8 December 2024 and the end of December 2025, over 1.3 million Syrians returned to the country mainly from Türkiye and Lebanon, followed by Jordan, Iraq and Egypt.²



Return

² This figure is calculated based on a triangulation of data from Syria, Türkiye, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt and beyond.

- UNHCR completed the first stage of the rehabilitation of the Dabboussieh border bridge (Homs-Lebanon) to ensure voluntary, safe, and dignified return for Syrian refugees. The repair of two immigration buildings at Dabboussieh was finalized, which is expected to reduce congestion at the Joussieh border crossing point (Homs-Lebanon) and support safe and dignified refugee returns from northern Lebanon.
- In December, UNHCR provided technical support to the Directorates of Civil Affairs and Immigration and Passports including a generator, nine camera scanners and 10 laptops, to enhance the directorates' capacity in responding to the needs of returnees and host communities regarding documentation issuance.
- UNHCR facilitated transportation to governorates for some 150 Syrian refugee returnees from Libya arriving on two commercial flights. The returnees were received at Damascus International Airport, provided with information on available services in areas of return, and referred for assistance.
- As part of the organized [voluntary return](#) support coordinated by UNHCR Syria, UNHCR and IOM Lebanon, and Syria's General Authority for Borders and Customs, 381 Syrian refugees returned from Lebanon in December through the Jdaidet Yabous border crossing point (Rural Damascus-Lebanon). The returnees were assisted with transportation to their destinations, core relief items, psychosocial assistance, and legal aid. Since July 2025, 2,280 returnees have been assisted through this programme.
- In December, 727 families (2,545 individuals) were supported with transportation at the border crossing points of Bab Al-Hawa (Idleb-Türkiye), Al-Salam (Aleppo-Türkiye), and Joussieh (Homs-Lebanon). This brings the number of refugee returnees provided with UNHCR's transportation support since the beginning of the year to around 31,000.
- In close coordination with WFP, UNHCR provided vital food assistance to refugee returnees at border points with Türkiye, helping ease their transition during the early stages of return and reintegration. At Sarmada (Idleb) and Sejjo (Aleppo) bus stations, UNHCR and partners distributed ready-to-eat food baskets from WFP containing canned food, date bars, bread, as well as packs of high-energy biscuits to 11,148 returnees. In collaboration with UNFPA, hygiene kits were also distributed to address the needs of 8,089 returnee women and girls.
- In partnership with authorities in Deir-ez-Zor Governorate and other agencies, UNHCR supported three organized return movements of 155 IDP families (692 individuals) from Abu Khashab camp to villages in Deir-ez-Zor from 18 to 20 December, resulting in the closure of the camp. UNHCR teams registered return interest, conducted counselling, confirmed voluntariness, provided detailed information on services available at UNHCR community centres in their locations of return, and arranged for transportation to final destinations.
- On 18 and 24 December respectively, UNHCR, in coordination with the Directorates of Social Affairs and Labour in Aleppo and Idleb, facilitated two organized return movements from Naddah camp in Azaz and camps in Afrin and Jendires (Aleppo Governorate). The first movement included 19 IDP families (97 individuals) returning to Ma'saran village (Idleb Governorate), while the second involved 33 IDP families (174 individuals) returning to areas across Aleppo, Hama, Homs, and Idleb. UNHCR provided transportation and together with UNFPA, distributed CRIs and winter supplies, clothing, and dignity/hygiene kits. So far, 218 IDP families (970 individuals) have returned from camps in north-west Syria.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED

- [Regional Flash Update #60 \(16 January 2026\)](#)
- [UNHCR refugee return overview \(15 January 2026\)](#)
- [Regional Flash Update #59 \(9 January 2026\)](#)
- [Overview of Refugee and Asylum-Seeker Population \(31 December 2025\)](#)
- [Refugee Protection Factsheet \(31 December 2025\)](#)
- [Regional Flash Update #58 \(19 December 2025\)](#)
- [Regional Flash Update #57 \(12 December 2025\)](#)
- [UNHCR IDPs and IDP returnees overview \(11 December 2025\)](#)
- [UNHCR refugee return overview \(11 December 2025\)](#)
- [Regional Flash Update #56 \(5 December 2025\)](#)
- [UNHCR refugee return overview \(4 December 2025\)](#)
- [Shelter & Infrastructure Factsheet \(31 November 2025\)](#)
- [Livelihoods & Economic Inclusion Factsheet \(31 November 2025\)](#)

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