

Legal Aid Factsheet

January-March 2026

55,533 returnees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host community members benefited from legal aid

41,622 (75%)
 individuals reached through civil documentation and services

13,911 (25%)
 individuals reached through housing, land and property (HLP) Documentation and services


342 refugees and asylum-seekers benefited from legal aid


34,156 (62%)
 individuals reached through awareness raising on legal matters


17,821 (32%)
 individuals received legal counselling

3,556 (6%)
 individuals benefited from interventions before courts and administrative bodies

IMPACT OF LEGAL INTERVENTIONS *BEFORE COURTS AND ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES

 **617 (17%)** individuals assisted to obtain HLP documents

 **616 (17%)** individuals assisted to document their marriage events

 **1,679 (47%)** children assisted to obtain birth certificates

644 (18%) individuals benefited from other interventions, including divorce authentication, gender-based violence prevention and response, and other civil documentation issues.

Coverage:

Legal services are provided nationwide across all **14 governorates** through a network of legal clinics, community centres and mobile legal teams

Partners:

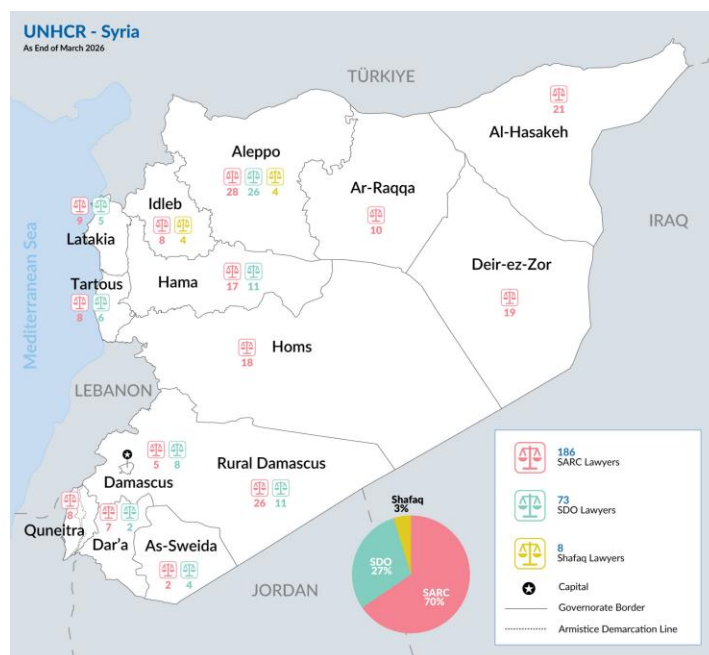
- Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC)
- Syrian Development Organization (SDO)
- Shafak

Legal clinics:

Damascus, Al-Hasakeh, Hama, Homs, Aleppo, Deir-ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa.

Legal aid is provided through:

- 267 lawyers
- 166 legal outreach volunteers



Legal assistance for refugees, returnees, IDPs and host communities

UNHCR's legal assistance programme supports vulnerable refugees, returnees, IDPs and host communities to access their rights and essential services by addressing legal and documentation-related barriers. The programme focuses on:

- **Supporting the documentation of vital events**, including births, marriages, divorces, and deaths;
- **Facilitating access to personal and civil documentation** including identity cards, family booklets, and civil status records;
- **Supporting the recognition of housing, land, and property (HLP) rights** by facilitating the issuance of HLP documents and documenting HLP ownership;
- **Responding to protection risks affecting women and children** including risks related to gender-based violence and custody, alimony, and inheritance disputes;
- Intervening in **cases at risk of refoulement of refugees and asylum-seekers**;
- Supporting refugees and asylum-seekers issues related to **immigration procedures**, including the issuance and renewal of residency permits and the acquisition of exit visas.

Positive developments and achievements:

- **Presidential Decree No.13/2006** was issued on 16 January 2026, recognizing Kurdish population from Syria as an integral part of the Syrian people by annulling the effects of the 1962 Al-Hasakeh census and enabling access to Syrian nationality. The Decree provides an opportunity to obtain Syrian nationality after years of legal uncertainty linked to the lack of recognized citizenship and civil documentation. Following the issuance of implementing instructions on 18 February 2026, UNHCR and partners launched an awareness campaign to reach affected communities and facilitate access to information on the naturalization application process .
- **Improving access to civil documentation:** on 20 January 2026 the Minister of Interior issued a decision removing geographic restrictions on civil-status correction cases. Individuals can now submit requests to the Civil Court of Reconciliation regardless of the location of their original civil registry record. The decision simplifies procedures, reduces travel and administrative burdens, and improves access to civil documentation services for citizens across the country.
- **General amnesty:** On 18 February 2026, Legislative Decree No. 39/2026 granted a general amnesty for certain offences committed prior to its issuance. Following UNHCR advocacy, immigration authorities confirmed that refugees and asylum-seekers are eligible to benefit from the waiver of fines related to overstaying residency and irregular entry. To support access to the amnesty, UNHCR communicated to registered refugees and asylum-seekers, encouraging them to regularize their status with immigration authorities. UNHCR and its partners also made legal assistance and protection support available through dedicated hotlines.

Working with Partners

Working with partners is an integral part of UNHCR's legal strategy in Syria. The main governmental counterparts include Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Justice and Local Administration and Environment.

UNHCR operates in close cooperation with operational partners, Syrian Development Organization (SDO), Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) and Shafak who provide legal aid in Syria.

Furthermore, UNHCR co-leads the Legal Aid Technical Working Group and the Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Technical Working Group, both under the Protection Sector in Syria.

During this quarter, among other achievements, UNHCR, in coordination with its partners, held a meeting with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and agreed on the referral mechanism for cases encountering difficulties related to payment of consular fees. In addition, further cooperation will be initiated among the three actors (NRC, SDO and SARC) to harmonize procedures and provide legal support for cases in areas that are not served by NRC.

During the first quarter of 2026, UNHCR's partners SDO and SARC expanded their legal aid outreach and community engagement across all governorates. In this regard, SDO broadened its legal assistance outreach by engaging in new partnerships with local organizations in Durar Association in Bab Sharqi, Reyado Al Manakh in Douilaa, and Islamic and Kiwan Associations in Daraya, improving community level access to legal services. It also delivered legal workshops at some universities, strengthening students and recent graduates' knowledge on labour laws.

Meanwhile, SARC advanced coordination efforts across multiple governorates by meeting with local authorities and community organizations—including entities in Quneitra, As-Sweida, Qamishli, and Ar-Raqqa—to introduce the legal aid project, outline its objectives, and identify avenues for collaboration and expanded legal service delivery.

Institutional Support

To enhance access to civil documentation, UNHCR provided equipment (10 laptops) to the General Directorate of Civil Affairs to support the implementation of Decree No. 13 of 2026, with a focus on strengthening administrative capacity and facilitating nationality and civil registration processes.