

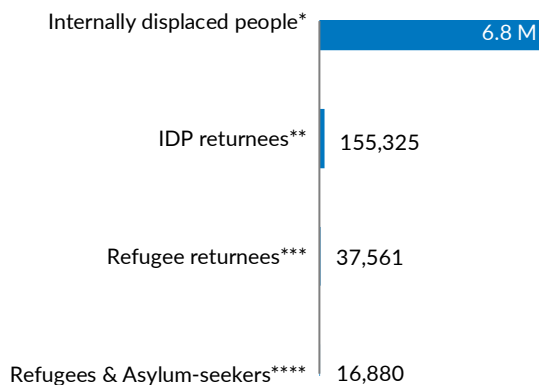
# Syrian Arab Republic

January 2024

The protracted crisis in Syria continues to affect millions of lives. The security situation in parts of the country remains unpredictable and the economic situation is increasingly dire. According to the [2024 Summary Humanitarian Needs Overview](#), 16.7 million people need humanitarian assistance, a 9 per cent increase from the previous year.

The February earthquakes further exacerbated the situation in Syria. UNHCR in Syria continues to provide protection services and humanitarian assistance to refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, stateless people, and vulnerable host community members based on identified needs and vulnerabilities.

## PEOPLE AFFECTED BY DISPLACEMENT IN THE WHOLE OF SYRIA



\* Source: 2023 HNO

\*\* Source: OCHA, January-July 2023

\*\*\* Source: UNHCR verified returns in 2023 as of 31 December

\*\*\*\* Source: UNHCR, December 2023

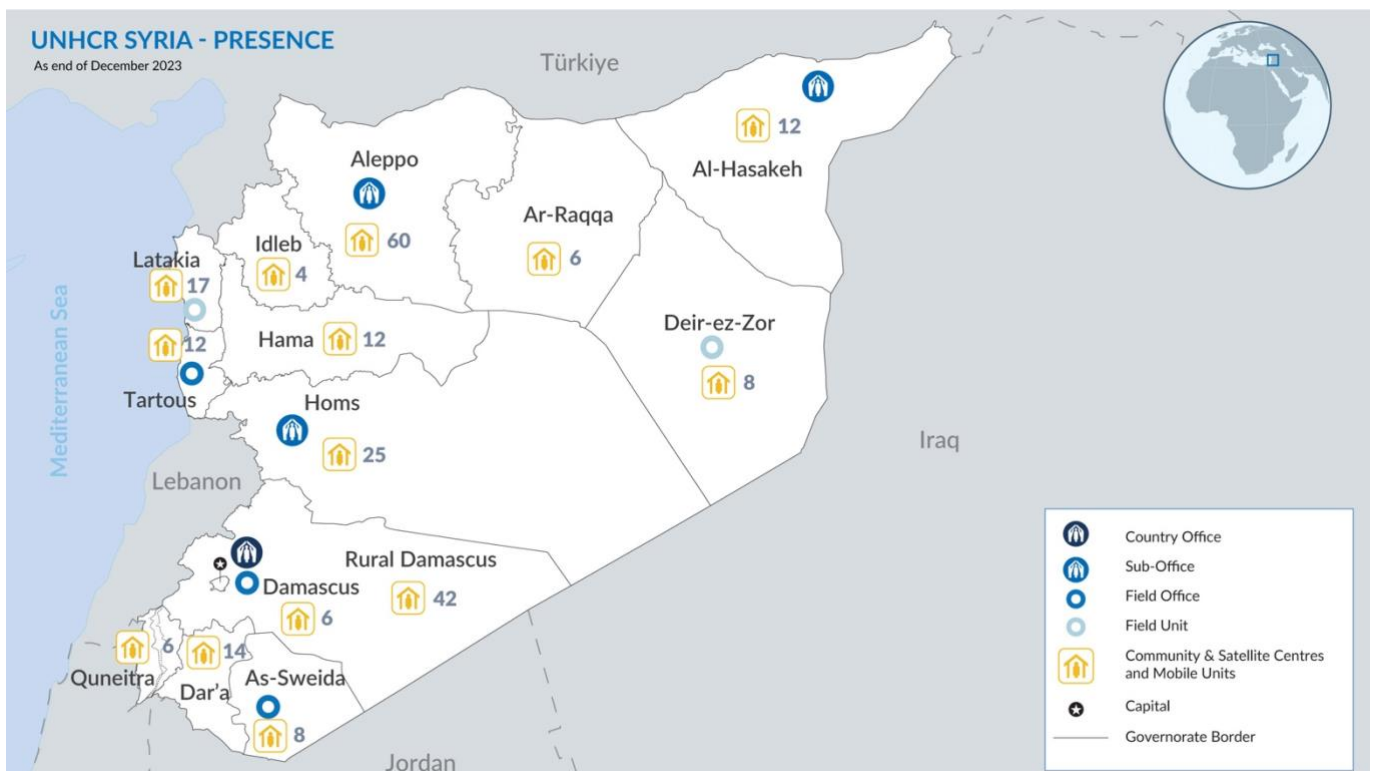
## UNHCR PRESENCE

**Staff: 463**

**391 National Staff**  
**72 International Staff**

**Offices: 9**

- 1** Country Office in Damascus
- 3** Sub-Offices in Aleppo, Homs and Qamishli
- 3** Field Offices in As-Sweida, Damascus, and Tartous
- 2** Field Units in Latakia and Deir-ez-Zor



## Partnership and Coordination

As of December 2023, UNHCR was working with 29 partner agencies, including government counterparts, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), national NGOs, and UN agencies.

In the context of the inter-agency coordination framework in Syria, UNHCR leads the Protection and Community Services sector and co-leads the Shelter sector with the Ministry of Local Administration and Environment and the Non-Food Items sector with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. UNHCR also participates in the work of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and the Area Humanitarian Country Teams (AHCTs), with several heads of field offices acting as Area Humanitarian Coordinators. UNHCR together with other UN agencies participates in the crossline operations delivering humanitarian assistance to north-west Syria through an inter-agency mechanism organized by OCHA, in line with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Furthermore, UNHCR has been co-chairing the In-Country Network on Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) together with UNICEF since 2022.

UNHCR co-leads inter-agency efforts aimed at enhancing cooperation and coordination in supporting areas experiencing relatively higher numbers of spontaneous refugee and IDP returns through multi-stakeholder and multi-sector [area-based](#) return support approaches.

## Strategic Directions

UNHCR's Strategic Directions 2023-2025 for Syria, validated in a consultative planning process, are threefold and in line with the [UN Syria Strategic Framework for the Syrian Arab Republic 2022-2024](#):

- **Support solutions:** UNHCR will further enhance its engagement with partners to facilitate solutions for IDPs and for those who have spontaneously returned, including through the UN's area-based return support approach, to strengthen humanitarian early recovery and resilience of communities, and therefore the sustainability of return and reintegration.
- **Maintain emergency preparedness and response capacity:** UNHCR will preserve its readiness to respond to new and protracted emergencies. In addition, the Office is prepared to scale up crossline assistance.
- **Enhance refugee protection, inclusion, and solutions:** UNHCR will step up its involvement and engagement in refugee protection, enhance the inclusion of refugees into services and assistance provided by other actors (such as livelihoods support), and advocate for solutions.



Distribution of agricultural toolkits for returnee families in Beit Sawa, Rural Damascus Governorate.  
© UNHCR/V.Toumech

## Main Activities

### Protection

UNHCR-supported community centres provide protection services such as [child protection](#) activities, catch-up [classes](#) for children, [psychosocial assistance](#), and support to prevent and respond to [gender-based violence](#). UNHCR and partners also provide [legal assistance](#), for instance to obtain civil documentation and register vital events like births and marriages. The services provided at the [community centres](#) are available for [refugees and asylum-seekers](#), IDPs, returnees (i.e., refugees and internally displaced people having returned to their home areas), and host communities.

Besides the community centres, satellite centres (smaller versions of community centres providing only some services) and mobile units also offer protection services based on identified needs in underserved or remote locations. The latter respond flexibly to population movements and increase outreach to the most vulnerable populations who do not have easy access to the community or satellite centres.

The community and satellite centres are supported by a network of outreach volunteers. The outreach volunteers, selected from the IDP and affected communities, are the first responders and assist those in need in a timely manner. They inform communities of the services available, identify needs, provide initial support, and refer cases to community centres for further assistance.

As of January 2024, UNHCR is supporting 117 community and satellite centres and 115 mobile units in all 14 governorates of the country and engaging over 2,500 outreach volunteers to strengthen its protection activities.

For refugees and asylum-seekers, UNHCR conducts refugee status determination, registration, and resettlement, when applicable. Some refugees and asylum-seekers may also benefit from additional protection services such as multi-purpose cash grants and scholarships for students.

### Cash-Based Interventions

UNHCR uses cash-based interventions to help the most vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers meet their urgent needs. Vulnerability is determined using either a scoring system based on age and gender specific needs or a panel review of individual protection risks. Eligibility is reviewed every two months. The monthly multi-purpose cash grants transfer value has increased as of September 2023 to around US\$ 80 per average family (of three), and entitlements are provided in cash over the counter. For urgent and unforeseen protection needs, a one-off emergency grant is also available for refugees. During the winter, eligible refugee and asylum-seeker households receive cash grants of more than US\$ 350 per family (of three to five) to help them meet additional seasonal costs such as for heating.

While primary and secondary public schools are open to refugees free of charge, they need to bear some associated costs by themselves. To support the continuation of education, UNHCR provides refugee and asylum-seeker families with education grants to help cover transportation and education material costs. The transfer value of this grant in 2023 varied between US\$ 62 and 100 per student. Scholarships are also provided to university students to help them cover core expenses and tuition.

In March 2023, UNHCR also started providing a total of 3.15 million SYP cash assistance to Syrians as part of the earthquake emergency response. Multipurpose cash assistance was provided to affected populations whose shelter was rendered uninhabitable in Aleppo, Hama,

and Latakia, while cash assistance for shelter minor repair was provided to those whose shelters required minor repair.

Furthermore, UNHCR implemented a pilot project of cash assistance in October 2023, which replaced the distribution of general and medical in-kind assistance and core relief items, targeting vulnerable families using a score card system. The transfer value varied from 800,000 SYP to 3,120,000 SYP, equivalent to the value of in-kind assistance.

2023 was the first year that UNHCR engaged in cash assistance for people other than refugees and asylum-seekers following many years of programme suspension. UNHCR aspires to mainstream and expand cash assistance for the vulnerable Syrian population in its programme going forward.

### Core Relief Items

UNHCR provides core relief items including blankets, sleeping mats, mattresses, jerry cans, plastic sheets, kitchen sets, and solar lamps to IDPs, returnees, and vulnerable host community members. Supplementary seasonal items such as winter clothing and rechargeable fans are also distributed to IDPs, returnees, host community members, and asylum-seekers based on needs.

### Shelter Interventions

In camps in north-east Syria hosting mainly Iraqis and Syrian displaced persons, UNHCR distributes tents and emergency shelter kits and helps maintain camp infrastructure. In urban and rural areas, UNHCR helps people repair houses damaged during the years of crisis by providing materials such as doors, windows, electrical equipment, and water and sanitation facilities at the household level. At the community level, UNHCR also restores basic services such as pavements and communal facilities and installs solar streetlights. In areas where spontaneous returns of IDPs and refugees are ongoing, UNHCR removes debris; restores sewage systems, water networks and boreholes; and distributes solid waste bins.

UNHCR also distributed cash to families to repair their houses damaged by the earthquakes in Aleppo, Latakia, and Tartous Governorates. Cash for rent was provided to earthquake-affected families who have departed from the collective shelters in Aleppo Governorate.

### Self-Reliance and Livelihoods

UNHCR supports vulnerable people to increase their self-reliance and reduce their dependency on assistance by providing agricultural support (seeds and livestock), restoring vocational training schools and irrigation systems, and assisting people to start small businesses through trainings and grants. For more information, see [UNHCR's Factsheet on Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion \(May 2023\)](#).

### Health

UNHCR health points are run by community health workers in some of the UNHCR-supported community centres. A range of health promotion, disease prevention, and referral services are provided there including health counselling, health support groups, screening for early detection of health problems, and support of community-led health initiatives. Trained doctors also provide medical consultations in some health points such as [mental health and psychosocial specialized services](#). UNHCR focuses on building sustainable health capacity in the community through community health outreach volunteers.

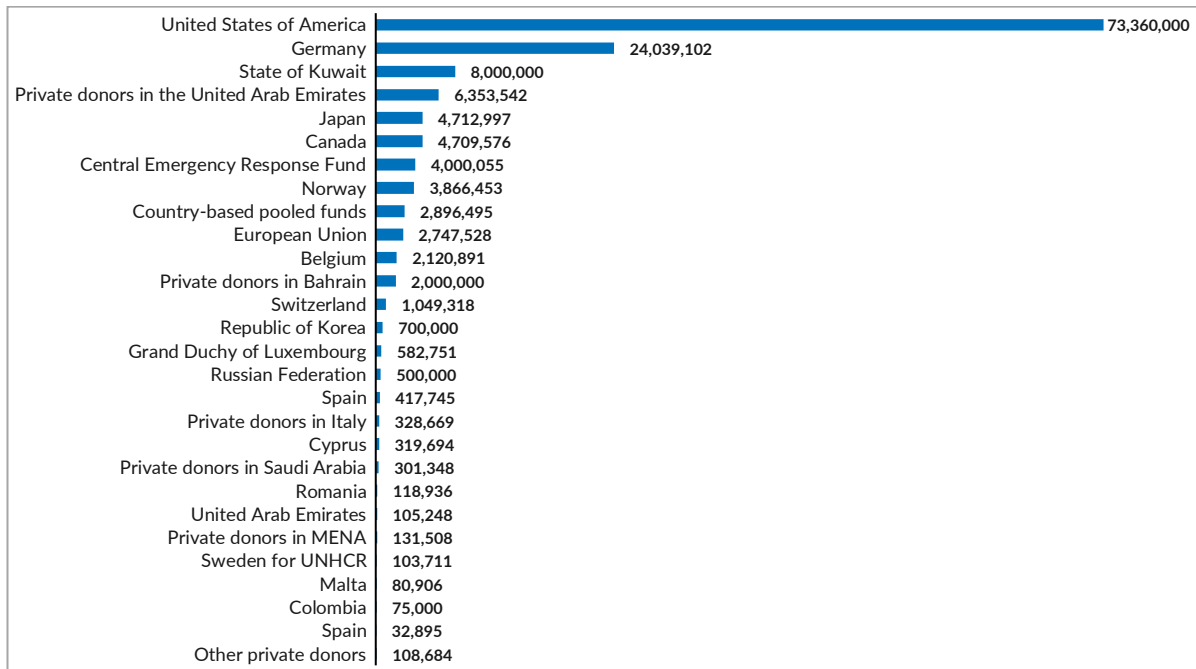
## Funding Update | 2023

As of 15 December 2023

UNHCR Syria is grateful to all donors providing critical financial support to address the needs of refugees, asylum-seekers, IDPs, returnees, stateless people, and host communities.

### CONTRIBUTIONS | US\$

Earmarked contributions and indicative allocation of funds for the operation in 2023 (as of 15 December) amounted to **\$ 158,301,763**.



### OTHER SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | US\$

UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe 15.1 million | Australia for UNHCR 12.2 million | United States of America 10.5 million | Japan for UNHCR 9.1 million | UK for UNHCR 8.7 million | Private donors in Italy 6.2 million | Private donors in the Republic of Korea 5.9 million | Private donors in China 5.2 million | Finland 5.2 million | USA for UNHCR 4.8 million | Private donors in the Netherlands 3.6 million | España con ACNUR 2.6 million | Denmark 2.5 million | Private donors in Canada 2.4 million | Private donors in the United Arab Emirates 2.3 million

### UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | US\$

Sweden 69 million | España con ACNUR 68.1 million | Norway 63.1 million | Japan for UNHCR 44.3 million | United Kingdom 41 million | Netherlands 36.3 million | Denmark 35.6 million | France 27.4 million | Private donors in the Republic of Korea 24.7 million | Germany 23.3 million | Switzerland 18.9 million | Japan 16.3 million | Private donors in Italy 15.4 million | Sweden for UNHCR 12.9 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Ireland 11.9 million | USA for UNHCR 10.8 million

### CONTACT

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### LINKS

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