

Syrian Arab Republic

January 2024

The Syria crisis is entering its fourteenth year in March 2024. The UN estimates that **16.7 million** people need humanitarian assistance across the country – a 9 per cent increase from 2023.

The security situation in the country is becoming unpredictable due to the current regional situation impacting relatively stable areas. The economic situation is increasingly dire. Economic deterioration is a major driver of needs.

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

HIGHLIGHTS

9

schools affected by the earthquakes now repaired in Aleppo and Latakia Governorates

1,090

persons forcibly displaced by the floods in Tartous Governorate received emergency core relief items

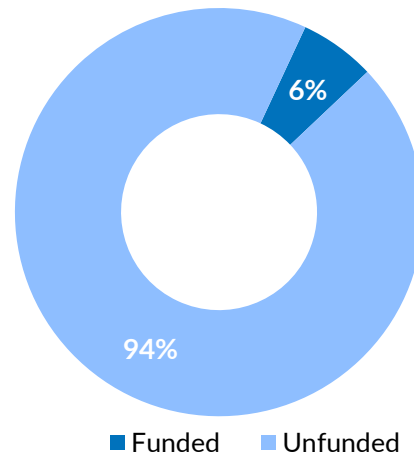
5,190

residents in the Newroz camp, Al-Hasakeh Governorate, have access to the local market rehabilitated by UNHCR

FUNDING (AS OF 31 JANUARY 2024)

USD 466.6 million

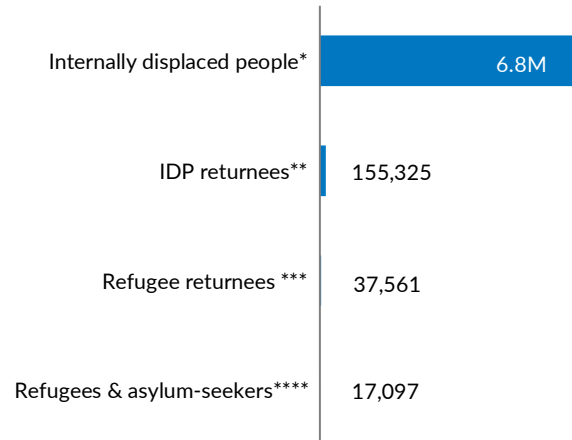
requested for the Syria Operation in 2024



PEOPLE AFFECTED BY DISPLACEMENT IN THE WHOLE OF SYRIA



Abu Rweil Elementary School affected by the February 2023 earthquakes was repaired by UNHCR and is ready to welcome students again. ©UNHCR/ H.Maarouf



* Source: 2023 HNO

** Source: OCHA, January-July 2023

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

**** Source: UNHCR, January 2024

More information on UNHCR's operations in the Syrian Arab Republic, including north-west Syria, is available on [Global Focus](#).

Operational Context

The 2024 Summary Syria Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) estimates that over 16.7 million people need humanitarian assistance in Syria. This is the highest number of people in need since the beginning of the crisis. Syria also has one of the largest numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the world. The 2024 summary HNO states that humanitarian and economic indicators in the country continue to deteriorate, and many basic services have collapsed. The February 2023 earthquakes have further compounded existing needs in a country that has experienced around 13 years of crisis.

UNHCR supports refugees, asylum-seekers, IDPs, host community members, and returnees (refugees and IDPs who have returned to their home areas) by providing assistance to those most in need using *area-based* and *community-based approaches*. UNHCR's *community-based approach* focuses on community mobilization and building self-reliance. It aims to reduce 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 2024, UNHCR is working 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 protection approach, in January, UNHCR supported 117 [community/satellite centres](#) and 114 mobile units across the country. UNHCR is also engaging over 2,480 community outreach volunteers in all 14 governorates.
- Several community-led initiatives were successfully completed in January in As-Sweida, Rural Damascus, Aleppo and Homs Governorates in collaboration with partners. The initiatives involved construction of a bus stop, installation of solar streetlights, repair of a sewage system, creation of a safe space for children, and activities for children with disabilities among others. Community-led initiatives are proposed and managed by communities to respond to challenges while contributing to social cohesion, life skills development, and poverty reduction.
- In Aleppo Governorate, UNHCR completed the installation of solar energy systems in three civil registry offices and a cadastral department as well as

finalized the rehabilitation of the cadastral department building affected by the 2023 February earthquakes. The interventions aimed to ensure these administrative offices provide uninterrupted services to the community, such as registration of vital events and properties.



Education

- UNHCR and its partners completed the repair of Shweiliekh, Al-Qutbyah, Antwan Aswad, Abu Rweil and Ainjara schools in Aleppo Governorate as well as Ammar Ismail, Anees Saqer, Bilal Makkeh and Bilal Atteh schools in Latakia Governorate which were affected by the 2023 February earthquakes. These were made possible by private earmarked donations. The schools have been handed over to the Directorate of Education in both governorates, and will allow resumption of education for over 3,500 students.



Health

- UNHCR and its partner finalized the repair of Fedio, Benjaro and Qalaeyee primary health centres affected by the 2023 February earthquakes in Latakia Governorate. These were made possible by private earmarked donations. These centres are now fully equipped and will resume providing health services to around 79,000 people as previously.
- As refugees and asylum-seekers do not have equal and consistent access to the whole national package of primary health care services in Syria, UNHCR had continuously advocated for their inclusion in the national primary health system. As a result, UNHCR in collaboration with the Ministry of Health initiated a pilot project in seven primary health facilities in Damascus and Rural Damascus Governorates. The Ministry of Health established a steering committee with UNHCR's representation to manage and evaluate the pilot project as well as provide recommendations on future implementation at the national level.



Livelihoods

- In January, UNHCR provided entrepreneurship/business training to 327 individuals. UNHCR also offered agriculture support to over 2,000 individuals.
- The repair of two irrigation canals in Maskana (Rural Aleppo Governorate) was completed. Over 3,200 farmers will be able to irrigate their lands, and hundreds of individuals are expected to be hired to work in the agricultural sector.
- The restoration of the Agriculture Guidance Unit in Al-Haffa (Latakia Governorate) to provide services and awareness to farmers was finalized.

- A UNHCR solar power project in Al-Zabadani (Rural Damascus) helped 470 farmers working in 95 agricultural lands to pump water for irrigation.
- The restoration of a local market and warehouses in Newroz camp (Al-Hasakeh Governorate) enhanced access to the market for over 5,190 camp residents, and directly benefitted 20 shop owners from the camp.
- A total of 378 refugees, IDPs and returnees received cash-for-work or participated in on-the-job-training in Latakia, Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh, and Ar-Raqqa Governorates in January.



Core relief items

- In January, UNHCR provided core relief items to 1,090 individuals forcibly displaced by the floods that affected the houses and livelihoods of hundreds of families in Tartous Governorate.
- Moreover, 307 families (1,535 individuals) in Deir-ez-Zor Governorate were assisted with core relief items following their displacement due to ongoing hostilities in eastern Deir-ez-Zor.



UNHCR swiftly delivers core relief item kits to flood-affected families in Karto village, southern Tartous ©UNHCR/ E.Kabbas



Shelter

- In January, 1,037 families (5,185 individuals) in Aleppo and Latakia Governorates received cash to repair their houses that were damaged by the 2023 February earthquakes. UNHCR also distributed cash to families (1,880 individuals) to rent houses after leaving from the collective shelters in Aleppo.



Cash Assistance

- UNHCR continues to provide multi-purpose cash assistance to people affected by the 2023 February earthquakes in Aleppo, Latakia, Tartous, and Hama Governorates. In January, 1,658 households (8,290 individuals) in Aleppo and 130 households (650 individuals) in Latakia received cash assistance.

- UNHCR continued its pilot project of cash assistance replacing the distribution of core relief items. In January, 658 households (3,587 individuals) received cash in Aleppo and Tartous.
- In addition, UNHCR continued its pilot project of cash assistance replacing the distribution of its general and medical in-kind assistance. This benefitted 1,080 individuals in Aleppo and Tartous Governorates in January.
- UNHCR started in January the distribution of cash for livelihoods benefiting so far 92 families (457 individuals) in As-Sweida and Dar'a Governorate.



Refugee Response

- **Registration:** As of end January, some 17,100 refugees and asylum-seekers were registered with UNHCR. 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 January, UNHCR renewed identification cards for around 1,500 refugees. The identification cards protect them against *refoulement*, ensure access to basic rights and services, and facilitate freedom of movement.
- **Cash Assistance:** UNHCR provided regular **multi-purpose cash assistance** to refugees and asylum-seekers, supporting 65 families (153 individuals) in January. A total of 84 families (189 individuals) also benefited from the winterization grant which helped them meet the increased needs during the winter months.
- **Legal Assistance:** In January, UNHCR-contracted legal teams and lawyers provided legal assistance to over 400 refugees and asylum-seekers. This included legal counselling, assistance in residency and exit visa, and legal response to gender-based violence and child protection issues.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED:

- UNHCR Syria factsheet (January 2024)
- UNHCR Syria: Area-Based Programming and Humanitarian Early Recovery (December 2023)
- UNHCR Syria: People with special needs (December 2023)
- UNHCR Syria: Shelter factsheet (November 2023)
- Post Distribution Monitoring Exercise- Non-Food Items Distribution (November 2023)
- Post Distribution Monitoring Exercise- Adult Diapers Distribution (November 2023)
- Post Intervention Monitoring - Damaged House Repair (November 2023)
- Post Intervention Monitoring - Livestock Distribution Programme (October 2023)
- UNHCR Syria: Core relief items factsheet (October 2023)
- UNHCR Syria: Winterization factsheet (September 2023)
- UNHCR SYRIA: Cash-Based Interventions (August 2023)

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LINKS: [UNHCR Global Focus](#) | [UNHCR Syria Data Portal](#) | [UNHCR Syria Website](#) | [UNHCR Syria Twitter \(@UNHCRinSYRIA\)](#) | [UNHCR Syria Facebook](#)