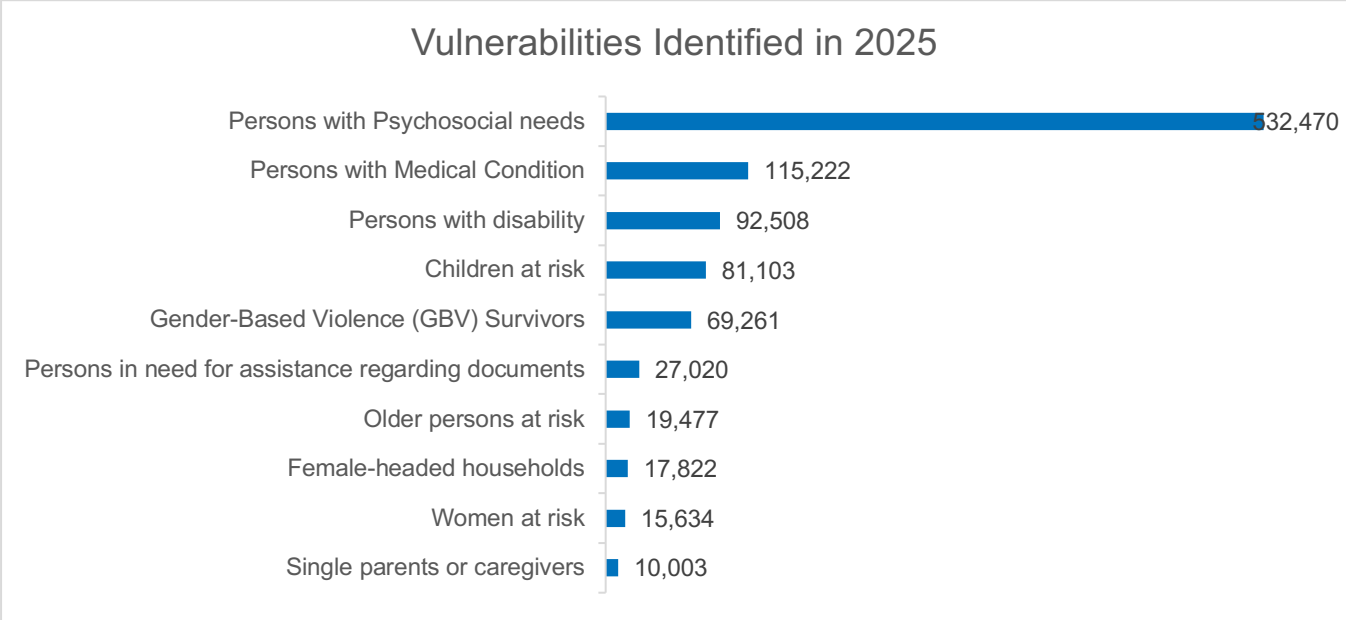
UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

FACTSHEET

# Community Centres & Community Engagement in Syria

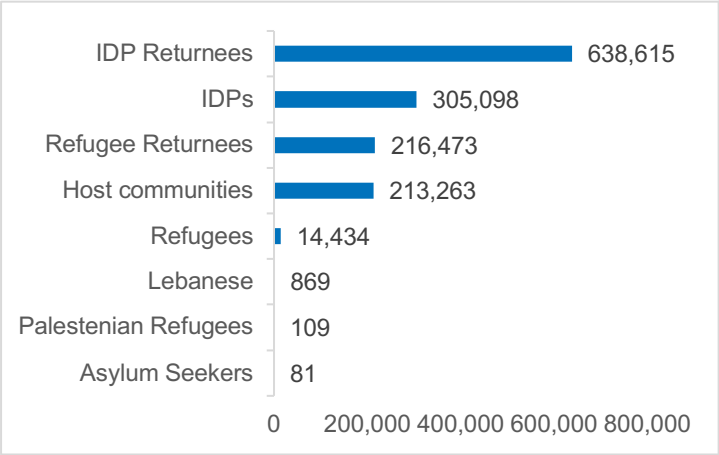
January – December 2025

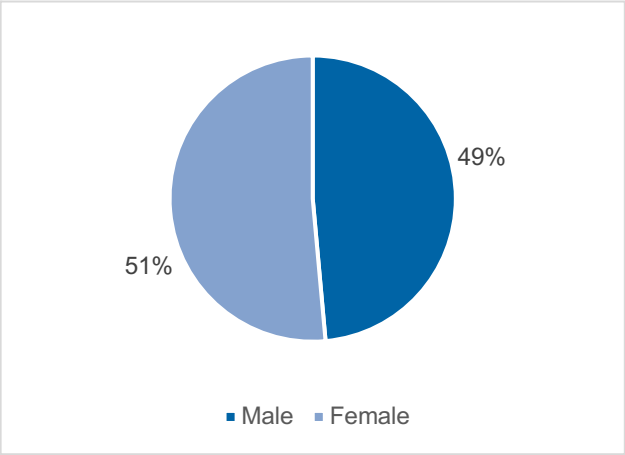
| Community centres | Outreach volunteers | Mobile units |
|---|---|---|
| 71 | 1,569 | 84 |




## Community Centres - Number of People Assisted

**1,388,943 Individuals**
**478,225 Households**
1 Jan-31 Dec 2025



## UNHCR-Supported Community Centres

The network of UNHCR community centres in Syria is fundamental to the UNHCR Syria Protection and Solutions Strategy, bringing to the fore community participation, reaching out to affected populations, assessing protection risks and vulnerabilities using a participatory **age, gender and diversity approach**, identifying community resources, responding to the priority needs expressed by communities, strengthening community self-help networks, and offering a wide range of protection services and support to benefit the returnee population in addition to the internally displaced people (IDPs), asylum-seekers, refugees and host communities.

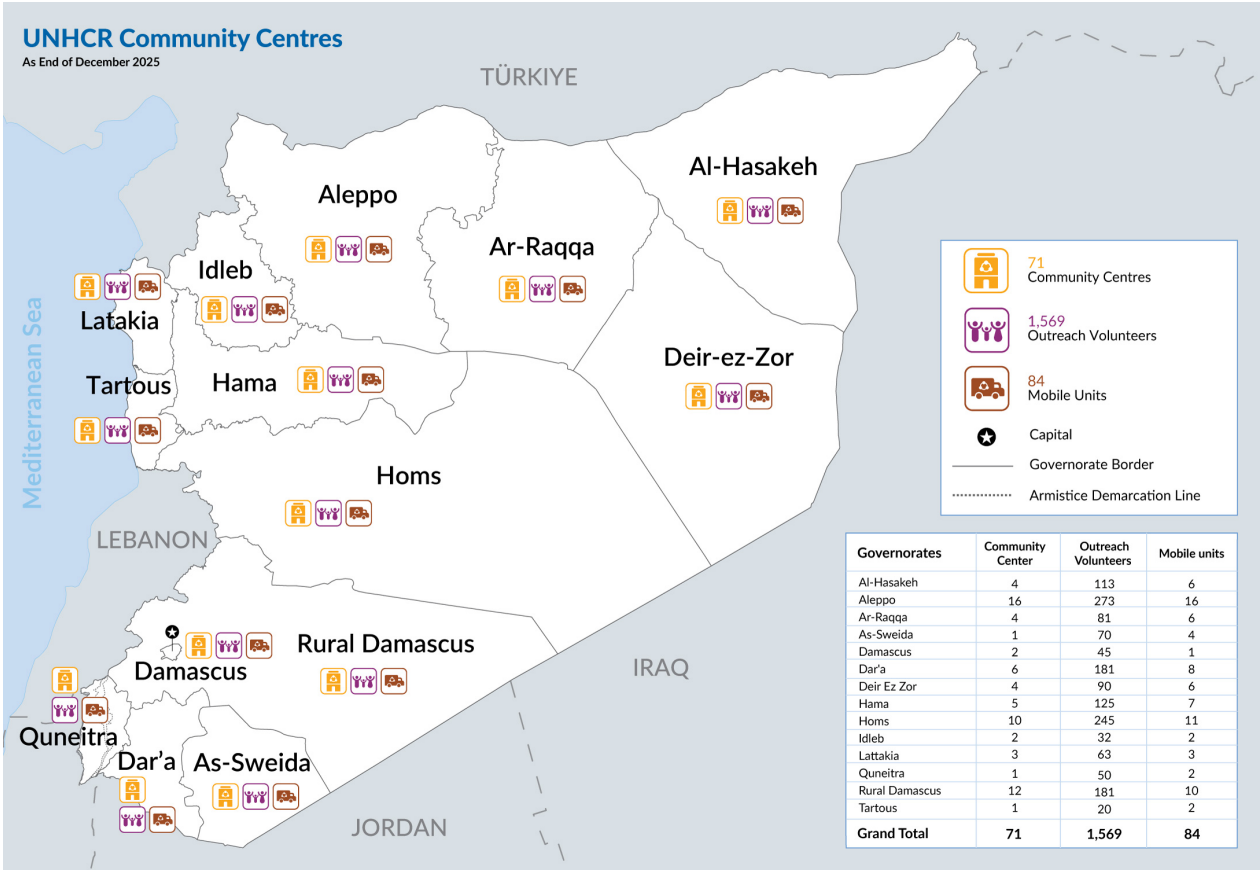
## "One-stop shop"

UNHCR community centres are designed as a **"one-stop shop"** providing protection interventions that include, but are not limited to, psychosocial support (PSS), gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response, child protection activities, legal aid programmes, services for persons with disabilities and older persons, social and recreational activities, life skills and development, awareness raising on a range of protection issues as well as consultations with communities to ensure their meaningful participation.

**Over the years, the community centres have successfully earned the trust of the communities, becoming the go-to destination for services tailored to their needs.**

The community centres are considered the hub where identification of needs and vulnerabilities, as well as referrals to adequate response and protection services are provided.

## Community Centres, Mobile Units and Outreach Volunteers




| Governorates | Community Center | Outreach Volunteers | Mobile units |
|---|---|---|---|
| Al-Hasakeh | 4 | 113 | 6 |
| Aleppo | 16 | 273 | 16 |
| Ar-Raqqa | 4 | 81 | 6 |
| As-Sweida | 1 | 70 | 4 |
| Damascus | 2 | 45 | 1 |
| Dar'a | 6 | 181 | 8 |
| Deir Ez Zor | 4 | 90 | 6 |
| Hama | 5 | 125 | 7 |
| Homs | 10 | 245 | 11 |
| Idleb | 2 | 32 | 2 |
| Lattakia | 3 | 63 | 3 |
| Quneitra | 1 | 50 | 2 |
| Rural Damascus | 12 | 181 | 10 |
| Tartous | 1 | 20 | 2 |
| **Grand Total** | **71** | **1,569** | **84** |

UNHCR-supported centres and mobile teams serve as critical entry points for protection and assistance, ensuring that vulnerable individuals—including refugees, asylum-seekers, and returnees—have access to essential services and information.

In June 2025, due to funding limitations, UNHCR closed **35** community centres across Syria. These closures followed a **prioritization plan**, with UNHCR retaining centres in high-return areas and in line with the area-based return support (ABRS). By December, the number of UNHCR-supported community centres stood at **71**, linked to **84** mobile units. These facilities are supported by a network of **1,569 outreach volunteers** (male and female).

**The Mobile Units** are established to reach communities in remote and hard-to-access areas and cover persons who live away from the centres, are unable to afford transportation fees, or are unable to reach the centres because of lack of available public transportation, security restrictions or other personal circumstances. The role of the mobile teams is to identify and address needs and refer cases or directly provide a variety of protection services. These services include legal assistance, child protection activities, women empowerment, gender-based violence prevention and response activities, psychosocial services, awareness-raising and recreational activities.

**The Outreach Volunteers** are an important link between the communities and the community centres. The outreach volunteers play a fundamental and active role in building trust between UNHCR and the communities, acting as advocates for the most vulnerable members within their communities, identifying needs and supporting protection monitoring efforts. They inform communities of the services available in the community centres, identify community needs, provide first response, and refer cases to the community centres or other services providers for further intervention.

**The Complaint and Feedback Mechanisms (CFMs)** promote information sharing and transparent communication between UNHCR and the communities to ensure their participation in the monitoring of the quality of services and assistance delivered, as well as decision-making on all issues affecting their lives. They also reinforce accountability aiming at improving all services targeting communities and ensuring transparency, equitable access to services without discrimination, abuse, or exploitation in all the services provided. The CFMs allow UNHCR and its partners to provide timely protection-sensitive solutions and feedback to communities.
UNHCR and its partners have established an effective feedback and complaint procedure in all its premises, including community centres, to report any misconduct or procedural unfairness.

**Community-Led Initiatives and Youth-Led Initiatives programmes** In 2025, **502** dedicated community groups received support from UNHCR, through both technical guidance and material resources to help tackle essential priority needs through community-led interventions. With these combined efforts of UNHCR and communities, the programme positively impacted the lives of **1,206,428** people, through the initiatives led by **3,889** self-managed group members throughout Syria.

Out of the supported 502 projects, **36** community-led initiatives were entirely conceptualized and executed by female members of self-managed groups in various governorates in 2025, including Aleppo, Homs, Al-Hasakeh, Hama, Damascus, and Rural Damascus. These initiatives tackled numerous protection issues affecting women in their communities, emphasizing empowerment, skill development, and the creation of safe and supportive environments. Throughout the year, UNHCR and its partners continued to provide capacity-building support to **Youth**, empowering them to implement projects with lasting impact.

**Women-Led Winter Maternity Clothing Initiative**

**a project to produce winter clothing specifically designed for pregnant women. The initiative addresses the pressing need for suitable and warm maternity garments during the winter, meeting health needs while prioritizing the comfort and dignity of expectant women**

**Women's Sports Club for Well-Being Initiative**

**A group of women established a sports club to provide a secure, private, and supportive environment where women can focus on their physical and mental well-being. This initiative serves as an outlet for stress relief, cultivates social bonds, and encourages healthy coping strategies.**

In 2025, **175** young community members were trained, and a total of **35** youth groups were supported to carry out their initiatives, benefiting refugees, IDP returnees, and refugee returnees. These initiatives addressed key community-identified needs in education, livelihoods, and protection, while promoting social cohesion, enhancing safety, and improving access to basic services in affected areas. In 2025, most trained youth groups and supported initiatives were led by refugee returnees, with social cohesion and peaceful dialogue serving as the main thematic priorities.

**The Community-Based Programme (CBO)** made remarkable steps over the past year through a series of well-organized and collaborative projects. An extensive outreach campaign was conducted, inviting applications from community-based organizations, which led to the careful selection of **73 CBOs** through interviews, background checks, and site inspections. UNHCR through partners delivered in-person training to **168 CBO representatives** employing a variety of methods, including instructor-led sessions, group discussions, role plays, and daily case studies that bolstered practical skills in project design and proposal development. As a result, in 2025, the programme effectively enhanced the capacity of local CBOs, improved their organizational skills, and ensured a consistent and effective training experience for CBOs across the country. Out of the 73 trained CBOs, the projects of **32** CBOs benefited from UNHCR's fund in 2025, aiming to address a wide range of community needs. These organizations included social service agencies and non-profit groups. With strong community trust and proximity to the populations they serve, these CBOs were well positioned to mobilize community members, provide emergency assistance, and respond to various drivers of vulnerability. This capacity was clearly reflected in the range of projects implemented throughout the year.

## Protection Services Provided in UNHCR-Supported Community Centres

### Community mobilization &Outreach

- A Network of 25 outreach volunteers linked to each community centre
- Mobile activities in communities where people cannot easily reach the centres
- Community-based committees including:
  - Women committees and men committees
  - Children Clubs and Child-Welfare Committees supporting child protection intervention.
- Support to Youth-led and community-led initiatives and community-based organizations

### Mental health and psychosocial support

- Mental health and psychosocial support (counselling groups and individuals)
- Services for persons with specific needs including rehabilitation programmes and care for older persons
- In-kind assistance for persons with specific needs, including provision of adult diapers
- Medical in-kind assistance for persons with disabilities.

### Legal aid

- Legal counselling, awareness, and assistance, primarily on birth registration, civil documentation, personal status issues, and housing, land, and property

### GBV services

- Referrals of GBV survivors to specialized services such as specialized mental health and psychosocial support services, health services, livelihood programmes, and legal services
- Counselling and case management for GBV survivors

### Two-way communication &information dissemination

- Focus group discussions, awareness raising sessions and campaigns
- Dissemination of information on services and assistance provided within the catchment area of the community centres such as establishment of information desks, brochures, leaflets, hotlines, and service mapping

### Child protection services

- Child-friendly spaces
- Recreational activities
- Awareness sessions
- Counselling and case management for children-at-risk

### Recreational activities

- Cultural and social events
- Tailored occasional activities
- Social activities and events with representation of different population groups including youth, persons with disabilities, children, women, men, older persons in decision making

### Education

- DAFI scholarships[1] offer qualified refugee students the possibility to earn an undergraduate degree in their country of asylum. (In 2024/2025 academic year, 64 students supported through DAFI programme).
- Education cash grant provided to 4,309 refugee and asylum-seeker children, assisting families in covering school expenses such as books,

| | |
|---|---|
| | uniforms, and stationery, enabling children to maintain enrollment and access formal education<br>▪ Coordination with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education, and the Education Sector<br>▪ Accelerated learning programmes support preparing mid-term and final exams, also support out-of-school children to re-enrol in the formal education system (As of June 2025, **1,871** children were reached)<br>▪ Homework café activities support children visiting the community centres by helping them to complete their homework and review their lessons with the assistance of teacher. (As of June 2025, **1,427** children were reached) |