

# Syrian Arab Republic

October 2022

The Syria crisis is now in its twelfth year. The UN estimates that 14.6 million people need humanitarian assistance across the country, a 9 per cent increase from the previous year.

The security situation in parts of the country is unpredictable, and the economic situation is increasingly dire. Economic deterioration is a major driver of needs.

UNHCR provides protection and assistance to refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced people, returnees, stateless people and host community members based on their identified needs and vulnerabilities.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### 26,500

People with specific needs received general and medical in-kind assistance in 2022 including for example medical assistive devices

### 6,800

Shelter packages including doors and windows were provided to vulnerable people so far in 2022

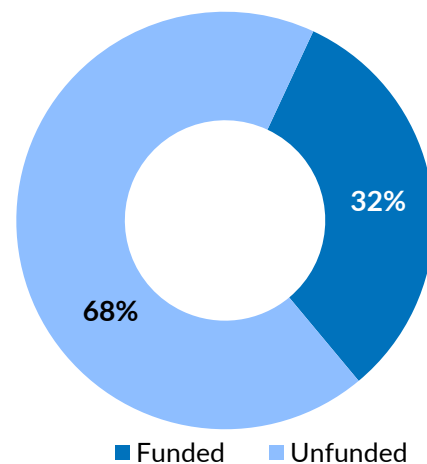
### 2,000

Vulnerable people received training in 2022 to start-up small businesses

## FUNDING (AS OF 25 OCTOBER 2022)

### USD 465.2 million

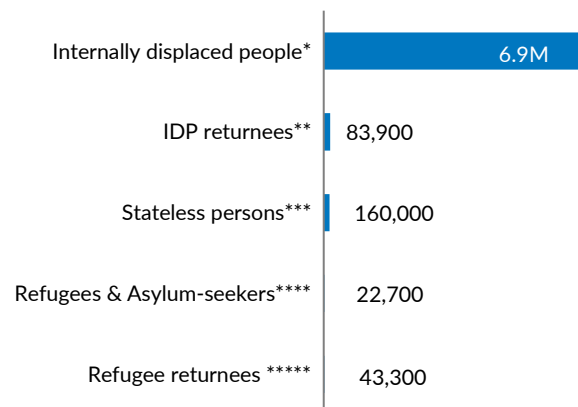
requested for the Syria Operation in 2022



## POPULATION OF CONCERN



UNHCR participated in a cross-line inter-agency mission (Sarmada 8) to north-west Syria on 22 and 23 October, delivering core relief items for 500 families. ©UNHCR/H. Maarouf.



\* Source: 2022 HNO

\*\* Source: OCHA, May 2022

\*\*\* Estimated

\*\*\*\* Source: UNHCR October 2022

\*\*\*\*\* Source: UNHCR verified returns in 2022 as of 31 October

## Operational Context

The [2022 Syria Humanitarian Needs Overview \(HNO\)](#) estimates that over 14.6 million people need humanitarian assistance inside Syria, including 6.9 million internally displaced Syrians. Of that number, approximately 9.6 million are in severe need of humanitarian assistance. The 2022 HNO finds that economic deterioration is now a major driver of needs even in areas which have been less directly affected by hostilities and displacement.

UNHCR supports refugees, internally displaced people (IDPs) and returnees (refugees and internally displaced people who have returned to their home areas) by providing assistance to those most in need using a *community-based and area-based approach*. 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.

UNHCR works with 28 partners which include government ministries, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), national NGOs and UN agencies.

## Operational Updates

### Field Highlights

- On 22 and 23 October, a cross-line inter-agency convoy (Sarmada 8) delivered UN humanitarian supplies including food and relief items from UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WHO to north-west Syria. UNHCR contributed 500 core relief item kits consisting of mattresses, blankets, sleeping mats, plastic sheets, jerry cans, solar lamps and kitchen sets. This was the eighth cross-line convoy in line with the UN inter-agency operational plan developed after the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 2585 in July 2021, and the fourth in which UNHCR participated.



### Protection

- In line with its community-based protection approach, UNHCR supports 126 community centres and 120 mobile units across the country. UNHCR also engages around 2,900 community outreach volunteers in all 14 governorates.

- On 28 October, UNHCR provided and equipped a new mobile unit of the Directorate of Civil Affairs to cover the area of Maarat Al-Numan in Idlib Governorate and potentially additional locations at a later stage. The mobile unit will facilitate the issuance of documentation for returnees and other people in the area in need of documentation.



### Core Relief Items

- So far in 2022, UNHCR assisted some 90,600 families with core relief and seasonal items including plastic sheets, mattresses, solar lamps, blankets, sleeping mats, jerry cans and kitchen sets. Out of this number, 6,400 households in two camps in Al-Hasakeh Governorate were assisted for the first time by UNHCR with solar fans and face masks.
- UNHCR is preparing for its winterization support to alleviate the suffering of vulnerable people during the harsh winter season and help them withstand the cold weather. Distributions are planned to start in November and will continue throughout the winter until March 2023. Preparations include the delivery of essential winter items such as high-thermal blankets, plastic sheeting, warm clothes, and sleeping bags. The winter programme will cover 14 governorates across Syria with a focus on areas with the lowest temperatures in winter, in line with guidance from the Non-Food Item Sector. Assistance will be prioritized for the most vulnerable, including those recently displaced or newly returned, living in hard-to-reach or newly accessible areas and in sub-standard shelters.



### Shelter Interventions

- In October, UNHCR and partners completed minor repairs to 224 damaged houses and distributed 430 shelter packages consisting of materials to install doors and windows. In total in 2022, UNHCR supported 840 families to repair their houses in Aleppo, Rural Damascus, Dar'a, and Lattakia governorates and 6,800 families with shelter packages. UNHCR has also helped repair 13 common areas in 2022 such as building entrances, stairs and roofs to improve the safety conditions of vulnerable families in Aleppo Governorate.
- UNHCR completed the removal of 42,100 cubic metres of debris in October (almost 62,000 cubic meters in total in 2022) to improve safe access to public roads and enable other small-scale repair works to basic services. UNHCR also installed 177 solar streetlights in Damascus, Rural Damascus and Dar'a governorates to improve security conditions in poor neighbourhoods.

- Since the beginning of the year, UNHCR through its partners repaired a total of 4,100 metres of a sewage network (240 metres during the reporting period) and distributed 235 solid waste bins (15 in October) in Lattakia, Tartous, Rural Damascus and Aleppo governorates to contribute to solid waste management. UNHCR also helped repair 1,000 meters of the water network in Aleppo Governorate (400 meters completed in October) to benefit vulnerable households.
- In north-east Syria, as part of its emergency shelter response, UNHCR rehabilitated seven collective shelters and replaced 2,160 tents in camps. Ongoing construction works include the upgrade of accommodation facilities in Al-Hol camp, Al-Hasakeh Governorate, which aims to benefit over 6,000 families once completed.



### Livelihoods

- UNHCR and UNDP completed minor repairs to a vocational training centre in Al-Fayyad neighbourhood in Aleppo city. The centre officially opened on 27 October and started providing vocational training courses to people in the neighbourhood and surrounding areas, including internally displaced people and returnees.
- As of end-October, UNHCR and UNDP also completed minor repairs to a vocational school in Duma (Eastern Ghouta), Rural Damascus Governorate, which will provide vocational training to students from various areas.
- As part of ongoing livelihoods support to vulnerable internally displaced people and returnees in order to enhance their resilience, UNHCR in 2022 supported over 2,000 people in villages in Lattakia Governorate with agricultural tools and livestock to support income generation.
- UNHCR also provided start-up business training to almost 2,000 vulnerable people in 14 governorates. Out of this number, 450 people have so far been selected based on vulnerability and capacity assessments and received support to start their businesses.



### Refugee Response

- **Registration:** As of end-October, some 22,700 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, Aleppo, Tartous, Homs and Qamishli governorates. In October, UNHCR renewed identification cards for 726 refugees. The card will protect them against *refoulement*, ensure access to basic rights and services, and facilitate freedom of movement.

- **Refugee Status Determination (RSD):** So far in 2022, 95 asylum-seeking families (comprising 192 individuals) were interviewed to determine if they are refugees. In 2022, 72 families comprising 180 individuals were recognized as refugees, ensuring that they could be protected from *refoulement* and detention due to irregular stay and could access basic services. UNHCR also provided counselling on the RSD process and individual cases through its hotline. Inquiries received during October were primarily related to the status of individual cases and requests for cash assistance.
- **Resettlement:** In October, UNHCR facilitated the departure of two families comprising six individuals to the United Kingdom through the Emergency Transit Centres in Romania and the Philippines. In addition, UNHCR facilitated the departure of one individual accepted for resettlement to Sweden.
- **Cash-Based Assistance:** UNHCR continues to provide regular multi-purpose cash grants (MPCG) to the most vulnerable refugee families. Around 2,400 refugee families received cash grants in September and October. For more information on the MPCG programme, please refer to the [UNHCR Syria Factsheet](#).
- **Education:** To support the continuation of education, UNHCR provides refugee families with school-aged children and in need of financial assistance with education grants at the beginning of the school year to cover transportation and education material costs. In October, UNHCR provided education grants to 740 refugee families. UNHCR will provide additional grants in November to support children between the ages of 5 and 18.

### UNHCR Co-led Inter-Agency Sector Updates

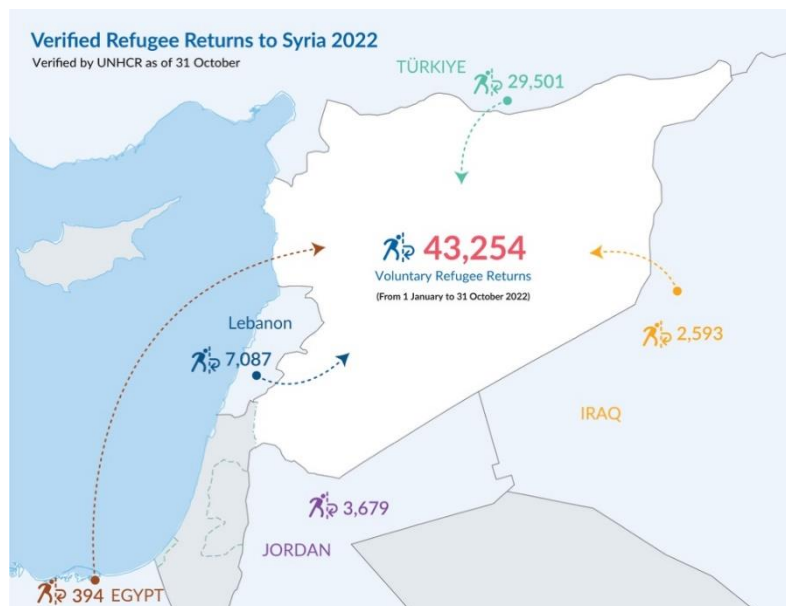
- UNHCR leads the inter-agency Protection and Shelter/Non-Food Item (NFI) Sectors as part of the Syria and Whole of Syria inter-agency response.
- The Protection Sector presented their 2023 sector strategy in October. The sector has identified 15.1 million people in need of protection interventions across Syria, an increase of more than 7 per cent compared to the previous year.
- The Protection Sector provided training to more than 40 volunteers and contractors involved in cross-line assistance to mitigate protection risks to individuals and communities during distributions of assistance.
- As part of the Protection Sector capacity-building plan for 2022, around 430 humanitarian staff and partners received training on thematic protection issues. The thematic topics were selected in consultation with partners at the beginning of the year.


**Return**

- In October, UNHCR verified or monitored the return to Syria of 4,800 individual refugees from Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. This brought the total number of refugee returnees verified or monitored by UNHCR in 2022 to almost 43,300 (compared to 30,200 during the same period in 2021). In 2021, UNHCR had verified or monitored the return to Syria of a total of 35,600 individual refugees from Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Egypt. In total, between 2016 and 2022, UNHCR verified or monitored the return to Syria of some 346,390 individual refugees<sup>1</sup>.
- In October, a meeting of the Technical Working Group (TWG) of the Return and Reintegration Working Group (RRWG)<sup>2</sup> took place in Damascus. The meeting was co-chaired by UNHCR and UNDP and attended by UN agencies and international

NGOs. It provided an update on the planned roll-out of the area-based return support<sup>3</sup> approach in Syria and discussed related next steps.

- The Lebanese General Directorate of General Security (GSO) reported the resumption of organized voluntary returns of refugees to Syria, with a first group of 511 refugees returning on 26 October; this was the first such return to be organized after the COVID-19 pandemic period. While UNHCR does not promote or facilitate returns to Syria at this time, UNHCR may assist refugees who have exercised their right to return in accordance with its mandate, alongside other population groups such as internally displaced people and host communities, based on identified needs and vulnerabilities (rather than status).


**RECENTLY PUBLISHED:**

- [UNHCR Syria Key Figures and Achievements \(January-September 2022\)](#)
- [UNHCR Syria Factsheet: Core Relief Items \(October 2022\)](#)
- [UNHCR Syria Factsheet: Winterization \(October 2022\)](#)

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

<sup>1</sup> The numbers reported are only those verified or monitored by UNHCR and do not reflect the entire number of returns, which may be significantly higher.

<sup>2</sup> The Syria Return and Reintegration Working Group (RRWG) and its Technical Working Group (TWG) are the main fora for developing and implementing the area-based return support approach. UNHCR serves as Secretariat of the RRWG and as Co-Chair (with UNDP) and Secretariat of its TWG.

<sup>3</sup> The area-based return support approach envisages an integrated multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral approach to address the immediate needs of communities experiencing high returns and high needs, while promoting humanitarian early recovery and resilience.