Syrian Arab Republic

November 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

8,200

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

161,100

Families were supported with core relief and seasonal items so far in 2022

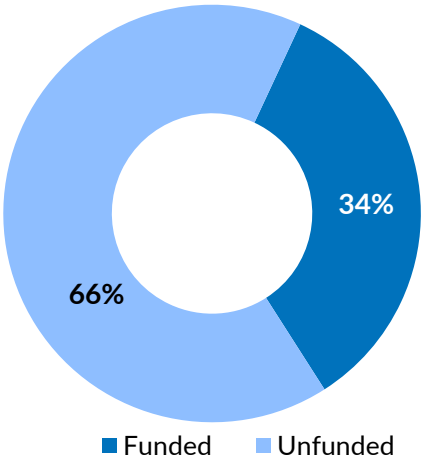
3,300

Refugee students between the ages of 5 and 18 received cash grants to continue their education

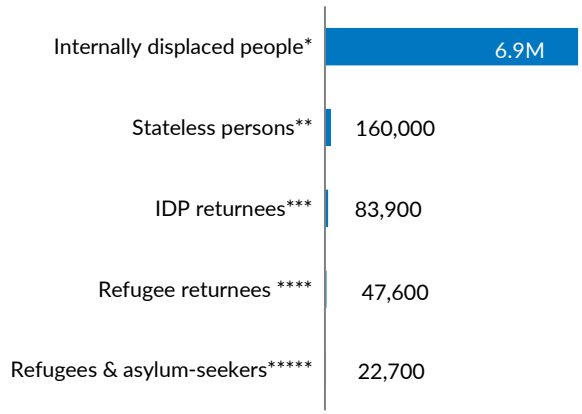
FUNDING (AS OF 24 NOVEMBER 2022)

USD 465.2 million

requested for the Syria Operation in 2022



POPULATION OF CONCERN



UNHCR provided winter assistance to vulnerable families in Homs Governorate to help them cope with the harsh winter conditions. ©UNHCR/S. Sawas

** Source: 2022 HNO*
*** Estimated*
**** Source: OCHA, May 2022*
*****Source: UNHCR verified returns in 2022 as of 30 November*
****** Source: UNHCR November 2022*

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 30 November and 1 December, an inter-agency cross-line mission (Sarmada 9) delivered humanitarian supplies to north-west Syria. UNHCR contributed 500 core relief item kits. This was the ninth 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 fifth in which UNHCR participated.

Protection

- In line with its community-based protection approach, UNHCR supports 126 community/satellite centres and 120 mobile units across the country. UNHCR also engages around 2,900 community outreach volunteers in all 14 governorates.
- In November, UNHCR approved 228 new community-led initiatives which will be implemented by local communities and through partners. They aim to foster better community relations as well as address the needs of IDPs, returnees and host communities. The new initiatives will aim to support approximately 300,000 people in seven governorates (Aleppo, Damascus and Rural Damascus, Dar'a, Homs, Latakia and Tartous). Examples of some of the initiatives include establishing a safe space for children in Rural Damascus, planting trees in a community in Aleppo, and providing wheelchairs to people in need in Dar'a.

Core Relief Items

- UNHCR started distributions of winter assistance in November. Around 35,200 vulnerable families (152,000 people) received winter items such as high-thermal blankets, plastic sheeting, warm clothes and sleeping bags. Out of this total, around 16,800 families (60,900 people) received winter items in ten camps in north-east Syria to help protect against harsh weather conditions.
- In November, UNHCR also assisted around 7,300 IDP and returnee families with regular core relief items including plastic sheets, mattresses, solar lamps, blankets, sleeping mats, jerry cans and kitchen sets. This brings the total number of families assisted with both core relief items and winter assistance so far in 2022 to some 161,000 families.

Shelter Interventions

- In November, UNHCR and partners completed minor repairs to 240 damaged houses and distributed 1,400 shelter packages consisting of materials to install doors and windows. In total in 2022, UNHCR supported 1,100 families to repair their damaged houses in Aleppo, Rural Damascus, Dar'a, and Lattakia governorates and 8,200 families with shelter packages. UNHCR has also helped repair 29 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 25,300 cubic metres of debris in November (almost 87,300 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 1,640 solar streetlights so far in 2022 in Damascus and Rural Damascus, Dar'a, Deir-ez-Zor, Hama and Idleb governorates to improve security conditions in poorer neighbourhoods.
- Since the beginning of the year, UNHCR through its partners repaired more than 6,000 metres of sewage network (1,900 metres during the reporting period) and distributed 235 solid waste bins in Aleppo, Lattakia, Rural Damascus and Tartous governorates

to contribute to solid waste management. UNHCR also helped repair 1,250 meters of the water network in Aleppo Governorate (250 meters completed in November) to benefit vulnerable households. In addition, UNHCR and its partner completed the repair of two rainwater networks in Tartous Governorate. The project will help provide water for irrigation in these two areas.

- In north-east Syria, as part of its emergency shelter response in 2022, UNHCR rehabilitated seven collective shelters and replaced 2,500 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.
- UNHCR also contributed to mitigating the water crises in Al-Hasakeh Governorate, north-east Syria, by digging 19 boreholes in urban areas and equipping them with a solar power system to help ensure they will not be affected by electricity cuts.

Health

- In November, UNHCR supported 22,500 IDPs and 2,130 refugees and asylum-seekers with primary health care services. Services were provided through 13 primary health care facilities supported by partners in Al-Hasakeh, Aleppo, Damascus and Rural Damascus, Hama and Homs governorates. In addition, 285 refugees and asylum-seekers received secondary health care services at hospitals.
- In November, two health points in UNHCR-supported community centres in Aleppo and Tartous governorates conducted a training on neonatal home care for 40 female volunteers. The aim was to train volunteers in monitoring, guidance and referral of pregnant women to reduce mortalities among new-born babies. The volunteers also received training to identify and refer protection risks during home visits such as lack of documentation, child protection and gender-based violence.

Livelihoods

- In November, UNHCR completed minor repairs to two water reservoirs for irrigation in rural Lattakia Governorate. This project will potentially benefit 1,250 people living in the area including displaced and returnee families. UNHCR also completed minor repairs to an irrigation canal in Al-Madiq Castle (Hama Governorate) which will potentially support around 8,400 farmers in the area, including returnees, by improving agricultural livelihood opportunities.
- UNHCR completed minor repairs of a vocational training school in Al-Haffa village (Lattakia Governorate) in November, potentially benefitting 1,360 students, including returnees, from the surrounding areas. The school will allow students to attend vocational training courses and improve livelihood opportunities.
- UNHCR also provided start-up business training to more than 2,300 vulnerable people in 14 governorates. Out of this total, 645 people who completed the training were selected based on vulnerability and capacity assessments and received support to start their businesses.

Refugee Response

- **Registration**: As of end-November, 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 November, UNHCR renewed identification cards for more than 1,600 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, 117 asylum-seeking families (comprising 233 individuals) were interviewed to determine if they are refugees. In 2022, 129 families comprising 317 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 November were primarily related to the status of individual cases and requests for cash assistance.
- **Resettlement**: In November, UNHCR interviewed six families comprising 17 individuals to determine resettlement eligibility. Out of those cases, four families comprising 15 individuals were submitted for resettlement under the allocated quota. In addition, as part of complementary pathway initiatives, UNHCR facilitated virtual interviews for 48 privately sponsored refugees.
- **Cash-Based Assistance:** UNHCR continues to provide regular multi-purpose cash grants (MPCG) to the most vulnerable refugee families. More than 2,700 refugee families received cash grants in November. For more information on the MPCG programme, please refer to the UNHCR Syria Factsheet. In addition, UNHCR started the distribution of cash grants for winter to refugees and asylum-seekers. A total of 3,440 families received assistance during the first round of distribution.

Thanks to the Syria Humanitarian Fund, UNHCR will be able to conduct a second round of winter cash assistance distribution before the end of the year.

- **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 November, UNHCR completed the distribution of education cash grants to almost 3,300 refugee students between the ages of 5 and 18 (1,600 families). Around 81% of the students supported are enrolled in primary school while 19% are enrolled in secondary school. Meanwhile, 26 refugee students were awarded the DAFI scholarship programme (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) for higher education. The scholarship students are from Sudan, Afghanistan, Somalia and Iraq. This brings the total number of DAFI scholarships to 56 for the 2022-2023 academic year (including students selected in previous years).

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 prepared its draft 2023 HNO chapter in consultation with partners. In coordination with the sub-working groups in Aleppo, Deir-ez-Zor, Damascus, Hama, Homs, Qamishli as well as the south and coastal areas, the Sector reviewed severity scales and the number of people in need of protection assistance. The Sector identified 15.1 million in need of protection interventions in 2023.
- On 2 and 3 November, the Protection Sector provided a training to humanitarian partners on protection risk analysis. The training aimed to provide guidance on identifying key protection risks relating to proposed interventions in the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) projects and suggested corresponding mitigation measures.
- The Protection Sector contributed to the Al-Hol camp inter-sector strategy. The strategy outlines humanitarian interventions to sustain assistance programmes, address identified response gaps and protection concerns, and presented recommendations to move towards durable solutions for the camp population.

Return

- In November, UNHCR verified or monitored the return to Syria of almost 4,100 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 over 47,600 (compared to 32,650 during the same period in 2021). In total, between 2016 and 2022, UNHCR verified or monitored the return to Syria of some 350,800 individual refugees[1].
- Following the organized return by the Lebanese General Directorate of General Security (GSO) of a first group of 511 individual refugees to Syria on 26 October, the GSO organized the return of a second smaller group on 5 November. Most returnees returned to Rural Damascus. UNHCR conducted a field mission to the area on 9 November to follow up on the situation of returnees. Priority needs include winterization and core relief item support, shelter, documentation, livelihoods, support for persons with specific needs as well as enhancing the capacity of public systems such as schools. UNHCR is responding through its community centre in An Nabek and its partner is providing legal awareness-raising and support for civil registration and documentation.

DONORS

Special thanks to our donors including major donors of unearmarked contributions to UNHCR: Belgium | Canada | CERF | Denmark | European Union | Finland | France | Germany | Ireland | Italy | Japan | Luxembourg | Netherlands | Norway | Private donors | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom | United States of America.

CONTACT: Alessia Pignatti, Reporting Officer, UNHCR Syria, Email: pignatti@unhcr.org

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

[1] *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.*