Syrian Arab Republic

January 2022

Up to 45,000 people were displaced in January as a result of hostilities in Al-Hasakeh Governorate, north-east Syria. UNHCR responded to the urgent needs of those newly displaced and those impacted by the severe winter weather earlier in the month.

In addition to the emergency response, UNHCR continued to provide protection and assistance to refugees, internally displaced people (IDPs), returnees and stateless people based on identified needs and vulnerabilities.

Overall, the UN estimates that 13.4 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance in Syria. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated an already precarious situation, and the socio-economic situation is deteriorating.

HIGHLIGHTS

14,000

families living in camps received replacement tents in late December 2021 and early January 2022

111,000

families received winter core relief items so far this season

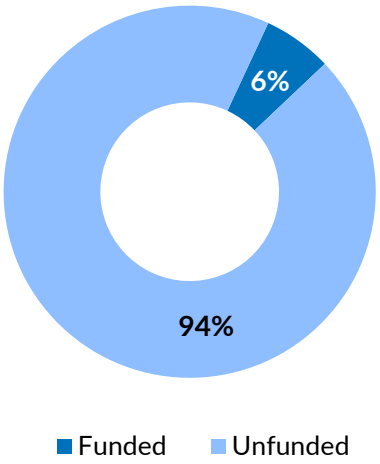
247

UNHCR-supported community/satellite centres and mobile units provide comprehensive protection-related services

FUNDING (AS OF 25 JANUARY 2022)

USD 465.2 million

requested for the Syria Operation in 2022



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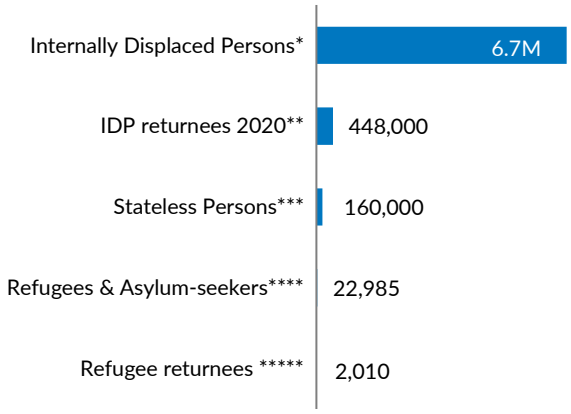


** Source: OCHA, December 2020*
*** Source: OCHA, 2020*
**** Estimated*
*****Source: UNHCR, 31 January 2022*
****** Source: UNHCR verified returns for January 2022*

UNHCR replaced tents damaged by the January snowstorm in Newroz camp, Al-Hasakeh Governorate. UNHCR/A.Shamou.

Operational Context

The 2021 Syria Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) estimates that over 13.4 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance inside Syria, including 6.7 million internally displaced Syrians. Of that number, approximately 5.9 million are in acute need of humanitarian assistance. UNHCR supports refugees, IDPs and returnees through targeted assistance following a community-based and area-based approach.

UNHCR works with 27 partners which include two government ministries, six international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), and 19 national NGOs.

Key Achievements

Emergency Response

On 20 January 2022, escalating hostilities in Al-Hasakeh city in north-east Syria led to the displacement of approximately 45,000 people from their homes to other neighbourhoods in the city. As of 30 January 2022, UNHCR and its partners had distributed core-relief items to 443 families (approximately 2,200 people) hosted in seven collective shelters. UNHCR and partners conducted a rapid needs assessment in the collective shelters hosting newly displaced people, completed minor rehabilitation, electrical and lighting works, provided water tanks, and repaired doors and windows. UNHCR also distributed food, water, and hygiene kits in the collective shelters in coordination with the authorities. By mobilizing its existing network of outreach volunteers, UNHCR and partners were able to enable continuous protection monitoring in collective shelters, make referrals for people with specific needs and coordinate the overall protection response. Protection partners in all locations provided displaced people with information on available services and hotlines for specific assistance.

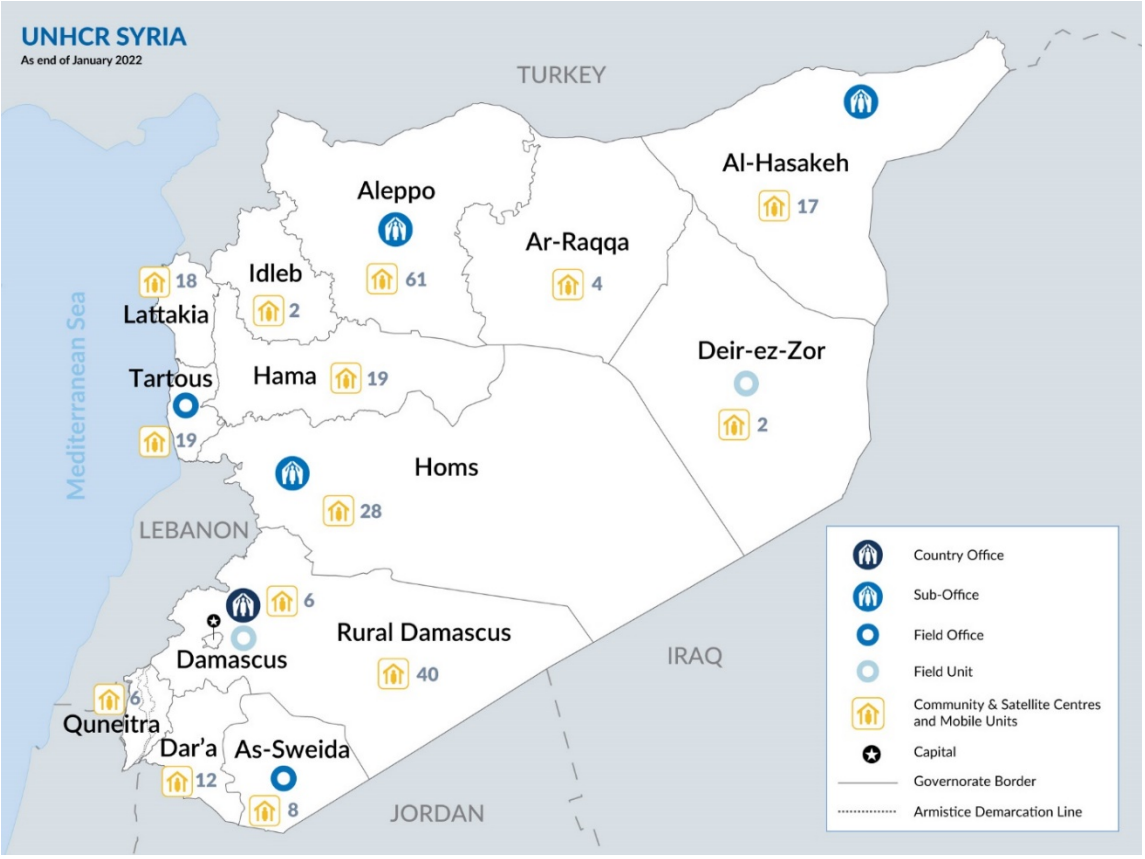
A heavy snowstorm in mid-January 2022, which affected the whole region, particularly impacted people living in camps in northern Syria. In response, UNHCR and its partners repaired or replaced damaged tents in camps in north-east Syria. In anticipation of further adverse winter weather and because of snow-related road closures, UNHCR pre-positioned tents and core-relief items in all camps for camp management authorities to respond quickly to the needs.

Aside from the emergency response, in late December 2021 and early January 2022, UNHCR distributed over 14,000 tents in eight formal and informal camps in north-east Syria in Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor Governorates as part of the regular replacement of emergency shelters in camps. The regular replacement of old and damaged tents enables families to live in safer, more dignified shelter conditions and offers better protection from winter weather. To improve overall conditions inside camps, UNHCR also carries out regular care and maintenance of basic infrastructure such as roads, streetlights and WASH facilities.

Protection

As of January 2022, and in line with its community-based protection approach, UNHCR is supporting 92 community centres, 36 satellite centres and 119 mobile units, and is engaging 2,870 community outreach volunteers (ORVs) in all 14 governorates.

The community centres provide comprehensive protection-related services such as support to child protection activities, catch-up classes for children, and legal assistance benefitting IDPs, returnees, host communities and other crisis-affected people in all Syrian governorates. At these UNHCR-supported community centres, outreach volunteers also engage with communities to identify and address specific protection concerns by implementing small-scale community-led or livelihood projects.



UNHCR-supported community/satellite centres and mobile units in Syria as of 31 January 2021.

UNHCR continues to support older people and persons with specific needs with various services. UNHCR and partners provided home-based rehabilitation support to more than 90 older people in December 2021. This includes advice on nursing care, physical rehabilitation methods, and assistance to cope with daily tasks. In addition, almost 16,000 people with specific needs received medical in-kind assistance such as the provision of glucometers, sphygmomanometers, nebulizers, wheelchairs, or medical mattresses in December 2021. During the same month, UNHCR provided general in-kind assistance such as water tanks, carpets, fans, and heaters to 18,660 people with specific needs in all 14 governorates. Around 1,130 persons with specific needs received psychosocial counselling, and 3,290 received adult diapers in December 2021.

Core Relief Items

UNHCR through its partners supports IDPs, returnees, vulnerable host community families and registered asylum-seekers with winter core relief items. UNHCR's winter programme in Syria started in September 2021 and is planned to be completed by February 2022. By end-December 2021, UNHCR had provided winter core relief items to over 111,000 families (approximately 493,150 Syrians) out of a total of 168,500 families (approximately 842,500 people) planned to be reached this winter (59%). This includes assistance to some 293,650 returnees and 199,500 IDPs. Core relief items include mattresses, blankets, winter clothing, sleeping bags and plastic sheeting.

Newly displaced families in Abu Rasien, Al-Hasakeh Governorate receive core relief items and winter assistance. UNHCR

Self-reliance and Livelihoods

UNHCR's livelihood strategy focuses on strengthening resilience, contributing to the reintegration of returnees and addressing protection risks of communities. It includes start-up support for small businesses, providing agriculture inputs like seeds or livestock and rehabilitating basic social economic infrastructure.

In December 2021 and January 2022, UNHCR provided over 910 people with small business start-up support. The selection of beneficiaries is based on agreed vulnerability criteria, existing skills and capabilities and takes consideration of age, gender and diversity.

During the same period, UNHCR also supported 5,000 farmers in displacement and return areas with agriculture inputs such as seeds, agricultural tools and livestock support. This support allowed farmers, particularly those in return areas, to resume their previous livelihoods and increase agricultural production and food availability.

Distribution of livestock to farmers in Dara'a Governorate. SSSD

In December 2021 and January 2022, UNHCR completed the rehabilitation of 18 basic economic infrastructures such as bakeries, vocational and skills training schools, and irrigation channels which were selected to help communities restore basic services. These services will benefit more than 300,000 returnees, IDPs and affected host community members in Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh, Hama, Homs, Lattakia, Dar'a, Rural Damascus and Deir-ez-Zor Governorates.

Assistance to Refugees

Registration

Registration and providing documentation are key to ensuring the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers in Syria, such as enabling them to access basic rights like freedom of movement and access to assistance. By end-January 2022, there were 22,985 registered refugees and asylum-seekers in Syria.

In January 2022, UNHCR renewed identification cards for 1,552 people. These documents provide protection against refoulement, enable access to basic rights and assistance, and facilitate freedom of movement. Most registered refugees originate from Iraq and reside

primarily in urban areas in Damascus, Aleppo, Tartous, Homs and Qamishli governorates. Of the total number of registered refugees and asylum-seekers in Syria, 20,069 individuals have been biometrically enrolled. This represents 91% of the registered population above three-years-old qualified for the iris (biometric) enrolment.

Refugee status determination (RSD)

UNHCR uses RSD procedures to help asylum-seekers realize their rights under international law. In January 2022, three cases comprising six individuals were interviewed. In addition, 10 cases comprising 17 individuals were submitted for review. In total in January, 13 cases comprising 36 individuals were reviewed, of which nine cases comprising 19 individuals were recognized as refugees enabling access to protection assistance and health services.

Cash-Based Assistance

UNHCR provides multi-purpose cash grants (MPCG) to the most vulnerable refugee families. UNHCR enrols families for MPCG assistance on a bi-monthly basis and beneficiaries' continued eligibility is reviewed every two months. Vulnerability is determined either through a scoring system based on demographics, special needs, or a panel review of individual protection risks. UNHCR targets approximately 86% of registered refugee families with the cash grant, which is delivered via a cash-over-the-counter modality. Each family of three receives monthly assistance of 299,000 Syrian pounds (approximately USD 119).

As a result of liquidity issues in Al-Hasakeh Governorate, refugees could only collect their winter and monthly cash entitlements for November and December 2021 in January 2022. A total of 209 refugee families and 231 refugee families collected their monthly and winter assistance respectively.

Refugee Returns

In January 2022, UNHCR verified just over 2,000 individuals as Syrian refugee returnees from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. This compares with around 2,740 individuals verified as Syrian refugee returnees in January 2021. In total in 2021, UNHCR verified the return of 35,900 individual refugees. There was an overall decrease of approximately 6% in refugee returns from 2020 to 2021. Returns from Jordan and Turkey appear to have increased from 2020 to 2021, while there was a reduction in return movements from Iraq and Lebanon.[1]

In January 2022, UNHCR and UNDP co-chaired another meeting of the Technical Working Group (TWG) of the Return and Reintegration Working Group (RRWG). The meeting provided an overview of 2021 refugee and IDP return developments and presented next steps on the operationalisation of a joint approach to Area-Based Return Support (ABRS) in Syria to UN agencies and partners. This support is intended to address the immediate and longer-term needs of returnees and the communities receiving them in a coordinated manner.

[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.*

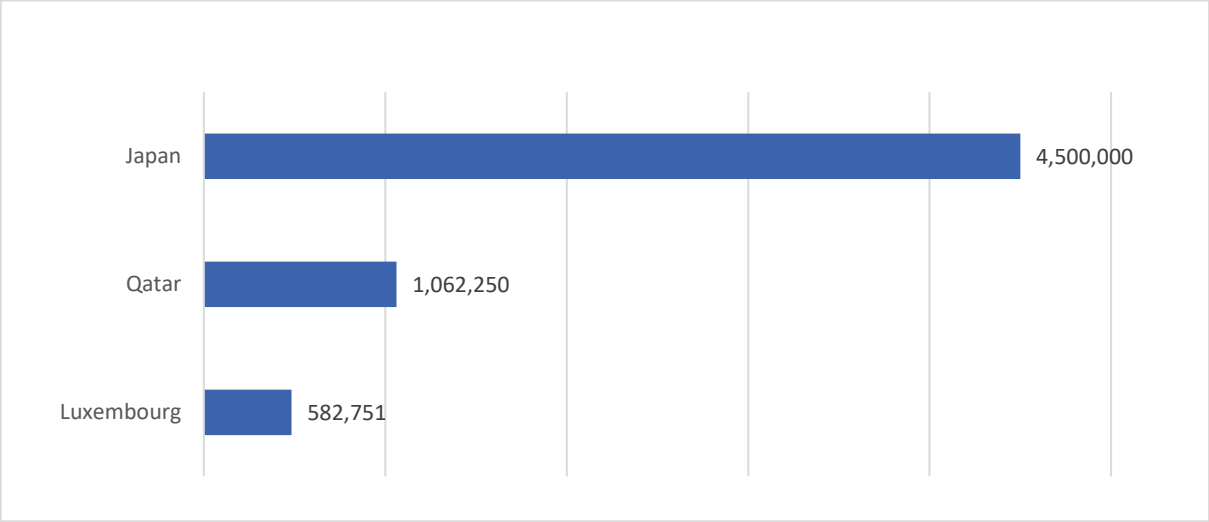
Financial Information

As of 25 January 2022

UNHCR Syria is grateful to all donors for the critical support provided with earmarked and unearmarked funding.

CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Earmarked contributions and indicative allocation of funds for the operation amount to **$28,321,701**
as of 25 January 2022



OTHER SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Norway | Private donors

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Sweden 77.6 million | Netherlands 37.2 million | Denmark 35.6 million | Germany 27.6 million | Switzerland 18.4 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Ireland 11.8 million

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