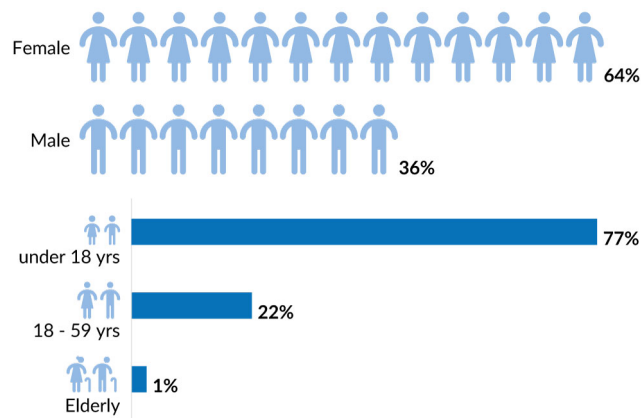


Child Protection in Syria

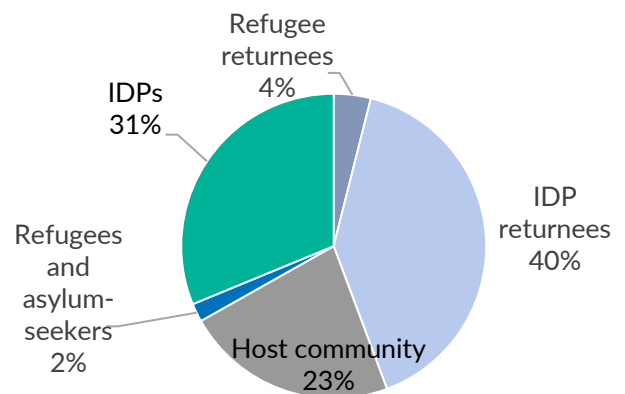
January – December 2023



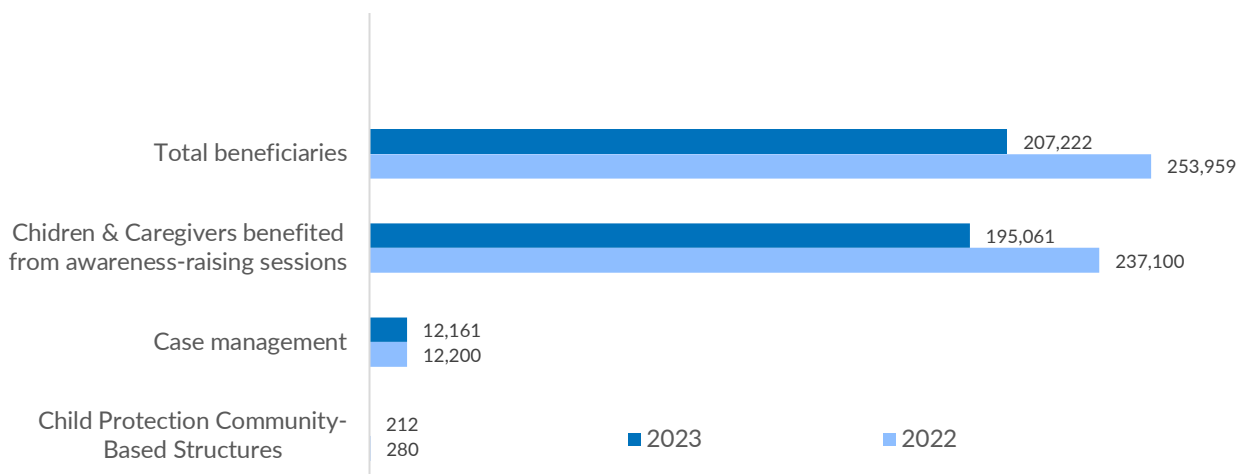
207,222 persons included in child protection services



Population groups benefiting from child protection services.



 **14 Governorates** |  **117 Community Centres** |  **20 Partners**



*Due to the decrease in funding and consequent closure of nine community centres in 2023, there was a decrease in the numbers achieved in 2023 in comparison to 2022.



Case management

UNHCR's approach to child protection aims to engage with children to protect them from harm, and ensure that case managers make inclusive decisions together with the children and their caretakers in the children's best interests. This is done through working closely with families and communities to address child protection concerns and identify solutions.

By the end of December 2023, **80%** of the children who received case management services were internally displaced or returnees. The main protection risks faced by children were **child labour, child neglect, and violence against children**.

During 2023, a total of **12,161 children (3,620 in Q4)** received **individual case management services**. The services included sessions with the children and their caretakers to assess their needs and risks, referrals to specialized service providers (such as education classes, medical services, psychosocial support, and livelihood opportunities for caregivers) where needed, and follow-up plans of action with caregivers and other stakeholders. The plans of action included interventions with teachers and employers, medical and general in-kind assistance, and child-friendly space activities. The case management services holistically address child protection concerns and respond to the needs by coordinating required assistance in line with the best interests of the child.



Awareness-raising

Awareness-raising is a fundamental component of UNHCR's child protection strategy, as it enhances the community awareness of protection risks faced by children, as well as identifies abusive behaviour towards children. Awareness-raising aims to initiate behavioural change within communities against the normalization of child abuse, recognize and respect the rights of children, empower communities to respond to child protection concerns, and inform caregivers as well as communities in general about the available child protection services.

During 2023, UNHCR and its partners conducted awareness-raising sessions reaching **195,061 persons (148,010 children and 47,051 caregivers)**, of whom 62,664 were reached in Q4. The sessions were conducted on various topics including the rights of children, violence against children, harmful effects of dropping out of school, child recruitment, child neglect, and mine risk education.

The child protection prevention programmes shifted to curriculum-based interventions in 2023. A total of **161** groups of adolescent children participated in the "Adolescent Empowerment and Life Skills" programme, along with **53** groups of children engaged in "Supporting Children Rights through the Education, the Art and the Media - SCREM" programme. In addition, **six** groups of female caregivers and **one** group of male caregivers were established to attend the "Parenting Care" programme in Damascus, Hama and Ar-Raqqa.

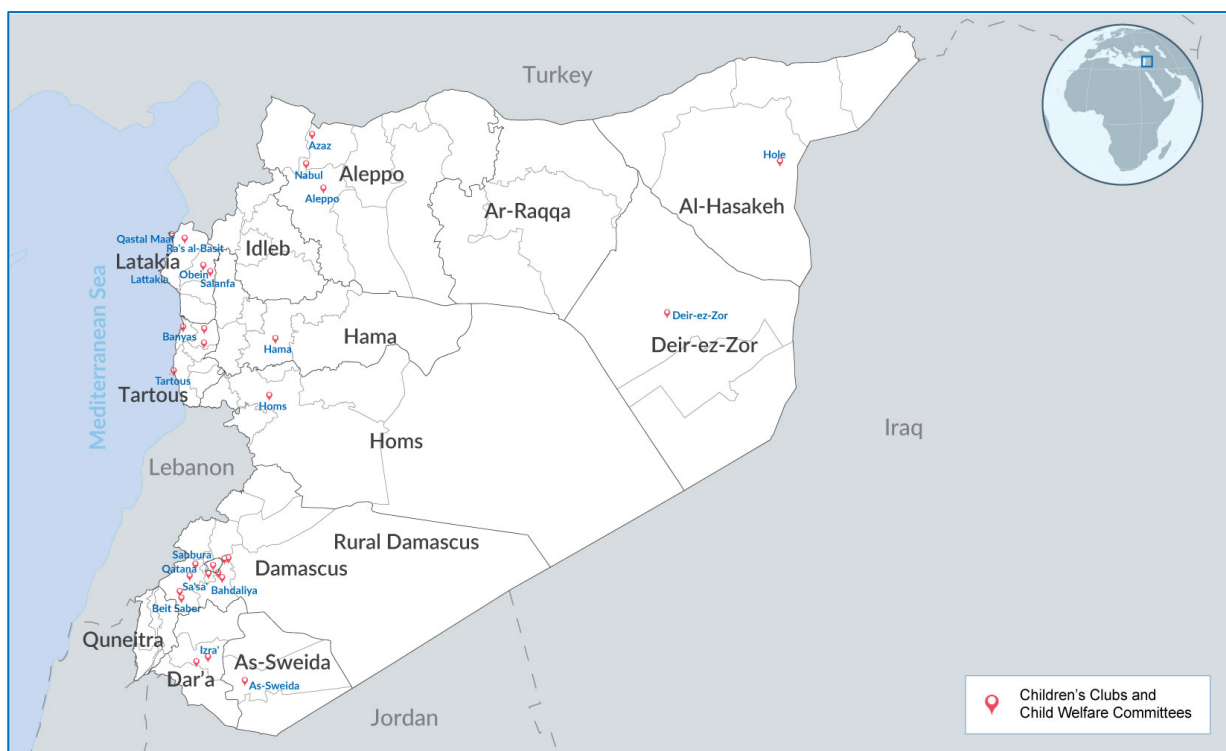


Community engagement

The establishment of child protection community-based structures is an important first step in enabling the community to protect and support its children. **Sixteen new structures** were established in Q4 and continued to support **196 already existing** children's clubs and child welfare committees, as part of enhancing community engagement and ownership of child protection.

Children's clubs play an active role in child protection within schools and communities. The clubs advocate for children's rights, identify and report on child protection concerns in the communities, share information with children on how to access child protection services, provide peer support to the children within their schools and communities, and raise awareness among the children on issues related to their rights through debates and role playing.

Child welfare committees are composed of members of the communities (such as teachers, social workers, and community leaders) who are responsible for identifying specific child protection issues and trends within the communities. They also advocate for, and provide appropriate support to, children facing risks through community engagement. In addition, they raise awareness on children's rights, child protection issues, and services available for children.




Capacity Building

Building the capacity of partner staff is a shared responsibility between UNHCR and the partners. By the end of December 2023, a total of **574 (361 in Q4)** partner staff received training on the basics of child protection, child protection case management, Explosive Ordinance/Mine Risk Education Awareness (EO/MRE) with UNMAS and Parenting Care Trainings with UNICEF.