

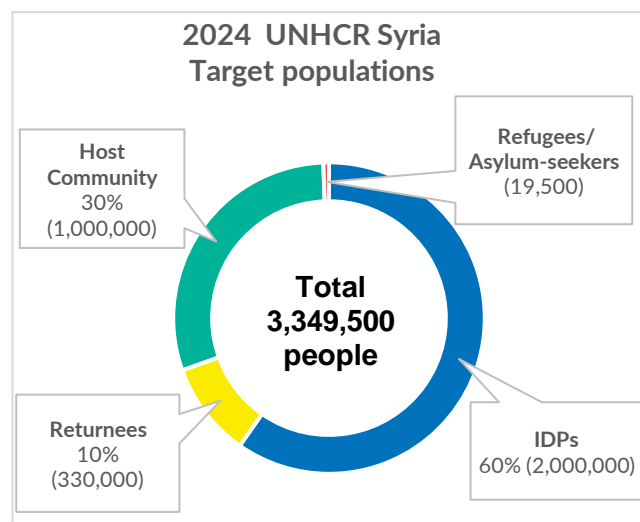
# Implications of Underfunding in Syria



Kinda, 48, her son with encephalopathy and two grandsons in front of their home in Deir- ez-Zor city, Syria. © UNHCR/Vivian Tou'meh

## Operational Context in Syria

The protracted crisis in Syria, entering its 14<sup>th</sup> year, continues to affect millions of lives. The security situation in parts of the country remains unpredictable, and the economic situation is increasingly dire. In Syria, an estimated **90 per cent** of the population lives in poverty, **12.9 million** are food insecure, and **7.2 million** are internally displaced. Multi-faceted crises including the February 2023 earthquakes, have led to **16.7 million** people needing humanitarian assistance, a 9 per cent increase from the previous year. Millions struggle to meet their everyday needs and depend on critical support from UNHCR and the international community.



In Syria, UNHCR plays an essential role in providing protection and assistance to vulnerable people. Interventions by UNHCR Syria range from life-saving emergency assistance, such as provision of non-food items, to mid-term humanitarian early recovery, including livelihoods assistance, legal services and repairs of damaged houses and communal facilities in locations with high numbers of returnees.

## Overview of UNHCR's financial situation

UNHCR Syria's financial requirements in 2024 amount to **US\$ 466,6 million**, which will address the needs of **some 3,350,000 vulnerable people**, including internally displaced people (IDPs), returnees, host community members and refugees and asylum-seekers - out of which 42 per cent are women and 36 per cent children.

However, UNHCR faces significant challenges to meet those needs due to the underfunding of its activities. In 2023, UNHCR's global income decreased by nearly US\$ 1 billion despite the increasing number and intensity of emergencies and of displaced people. In 2024, the global humanitarian funding situation is expected to become more severe, and UNHCR will have to scale down its activities and presence.

As of 1 April, UNHCR Syria's 2024 financial requirements are **only 10 per cent** funded (US\$ 46 million). The absence of adequate funding will result in lack of support for hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people, heightening protection risks, undermining social cohesion, and forcing people to join the ranks of terrorist or other illegal armed groups or drug trafficking rings, or to leave the country. **This would have a detrimental impact on those communities and families who have managed with the help of the international community and despite the challenges to regain some level of stability and restart their lives.**

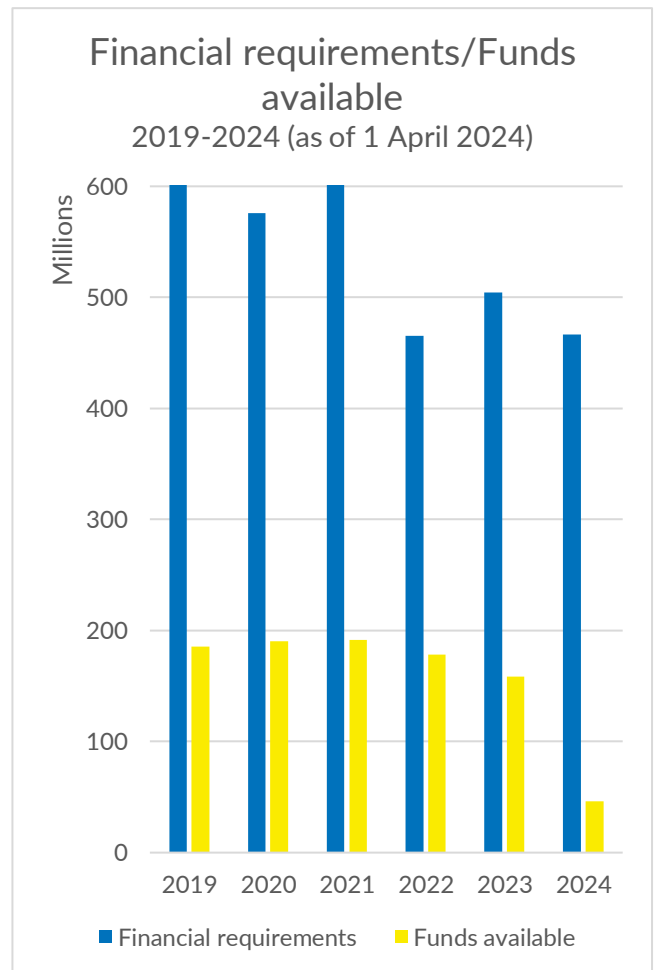
## Impact of the recent budget reductions

In light of the dire funding projections, UNHCR Syria has been compelled to reduce the overall 2024 planned budget and activities by **20 per cent**, despite the increasing needs in the country. This has resulted in **downsizing of the workforce and some core activities**, such as shelter (by 28 per cent), non-food items and cash-based interventions (by 21 per cent), community support (by 10 per cent), and livelihoods assistance (by 30 per cent).

The 20 per cent overall budget reduction and scaling down of activities is having a significant adverse impact in 2024. For instance:



- Over 225,000 people will not receive protection services
- Nearly 60,000 people will not receive shelter and housing assistance
- Some 130,000 people will not receive non-food items such as blankets and mattresses
- Over 47,000 people will not receive cash assistance
- Around 10,000 people will not receive livelihoods and economic inclusion assistance.

**As a result, UNHCR may not be able to fulfill its mandate effectively in Syria in the coming year.**



The dire humanitarian situation prevails in Areesha camp, hosting over 14,000 internally displaced people in north-east Syria. ©UNHCR/Hameed Maarouf

A funding shortfall of **US\$ 10 million in Syria** would affect around 142,000 people in need:

 <p>Some <b>31,000 people</b> will not receive essential protection services (child protection, MHPSS etc)</p>	 <p>Over <b>44,000 people</b> will not receive core relief items (blankets, mattresses, kitchen set, etc.)</p>
 <p>Around <b>27,000 people</b> will be left without shelter</p>	 <p>Over <b>12,000 vulnerable people</b> will not receive cash assistance to address their basic needs</p>
 <p>Over <b>11,000 people</b> will not receive legal assistance</p>	 <p>Over <b>5,200 people</b> will not receive assistance for gender-based violence</p>
 <p>Around <b>8,100 individual health consultations</b> will not be carried out</p>	 <p>Over <b>4,000 children</b> will not benefit from education programmes</p>

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**CONTACT:** UNHCR Syria External Relations Unit - [SYRDAREPORTING@unhcr.org](mailto:SYRDAREPORTING@unhcr.org)

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