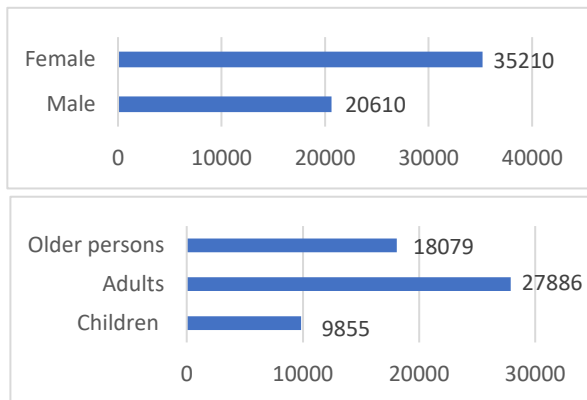


# Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Services

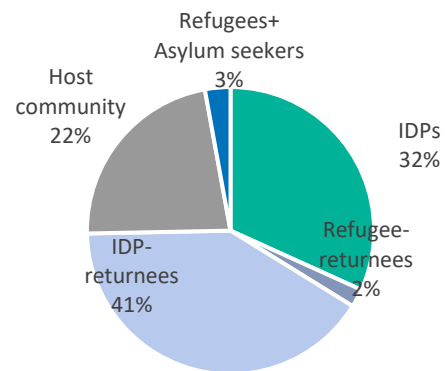
January – September 2023

<p><b>58,706</b></p> <p>vulnerable people received MHPSS services as a response to the earthquake.</p>	<p><b>1,788</b></p> <p>referrals to specialized mental health services.</p>	<p><b>7,592</b></p> <p>vulnerable people attended rehabilitation programmes.</p>
--	---	--

**Age, Gender Breakdown of people benefitting from services**



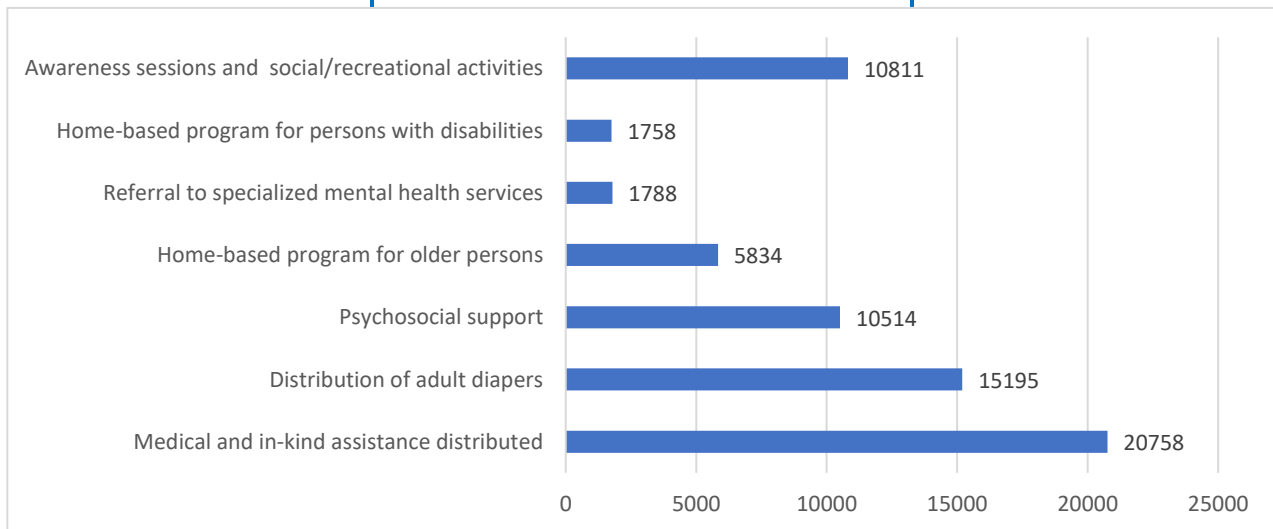
**Population groups benefitting from services.**



 **14 Governorates**

 **115 Community Centres**

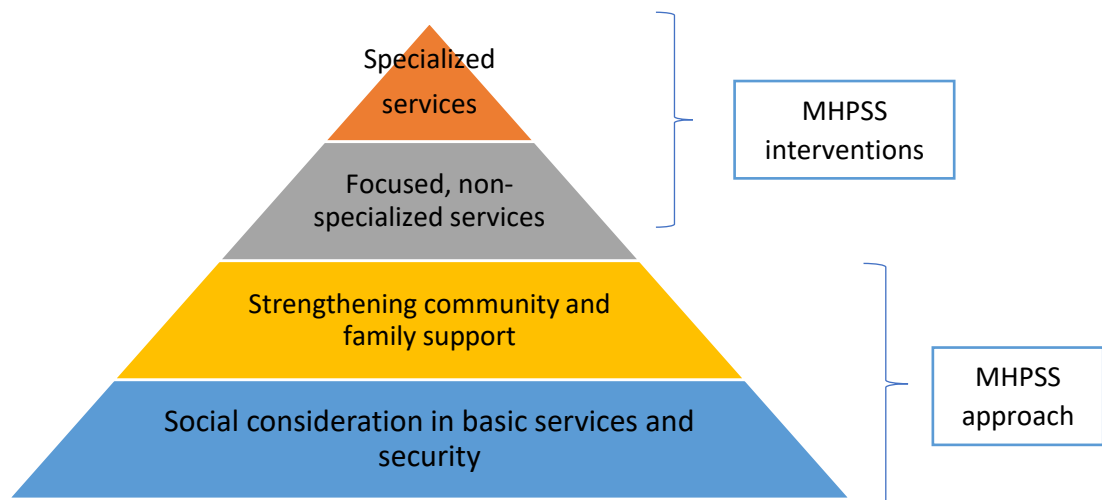
 **684 Volunteers**



## Services provided:

Mental health in Syria has been severely impacted by years of crisis, displacement, and economic insecurity. Affected populations have experienced a range of stressors such as exposure to violence, separation from or loss of loved ones, poor living conditions, poverty, food insecurity, loss of livelihoods, physical injuries, and illnesses as well as a lack of access to services such as health care, education, and social care.

The mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) approach of UNHCR Syria is aligned with [UNHCR’s operational guidance on MHPSS and Inter-Agency Standing Committee \(IASC\) guidelines](#). Multi-layered interventions are integrated in the health and protection responses (primary health care, community-based protection) as well as in education and shelter programmes.



IASC pyramid of MHPSS interventions

### Social considerations in basic services and security:

- The **age, gender and diversity approach** is applied and mainstreamed in all protection activities and interventions conducted at UNHCR-supported **community centres** and by mobile teams and outreach volunteers.
- Basic services such as food, core relief items, shelter, health, and education are provided in a safe and culturally appropriate manner that ensures dignified access for all persons that UNHCR serves.
- During the reporting period, UNHCR provided general and medical in-kind assistance for **20,758 vulnerable people** (older persons and persons with disabilities). This assistance is provided to increase a sense of dignity, help prevent harmful coping mechanisms and reduce the financial burden on the families and caregivers. In addition, **15,195 vulnerable people** received adult diapers.

### Strengthening community and family support:

- One child-friendly space is established in each UNHCR-supported **community centre** to support the development of children. Child-friendly spaces are safe spaces established in humanitarian settings to support and protect children. Their objective is to restore a sense of normality and continuity for children whose lives have been disrupted by crises.
- Older persons' clubs are established in each community centre to support the integration of older persons. Activities taking place at the clubs include social/recreational activities, intergeneration activities, awareness sessions, psychodrama, games, and music.
- Home-based rehabilitation interventions were provided to the families and caregivers of **5,834 older persons and 1,758 persons with disabilities** to strengthen their capacity to care for persons with specific needs and preserve their independence and dignity.
- UNHCR and partners conducted **10,811 social/recreational activities and awareness-raising sessions for 167,681 vulnerable people**.

### Focused, non-specialized psychosocial support:

- Individual and group counselling was provided to **3,442 vulnerable people with psychosocial needs** by MHPSS case managers in all UNHCR-supported community centres and multidisciplinary clinics.
- During the reporting period, **7,072 vulnerable people received mental health and psychosocial support case management services**.
- **52 partners' staff** received training on MHPSS case management, individual counselling, basic and psychomotor interventions for persons with disabilities and older persons, non-violence communication, inclusion of older persons, and portage programme. The Portage programme is an educational platform for children with developmental delays, where exercises and activities are conducted to develop skills and abilities within the framework of play. Through this programme, children learn, and participate which helps create positive interactions between the caregivers and the children.

### Specialized mental health services:

- **1,788 referrals to psychiatrists and psychotherapists** were made by MHPSS case managers for vulnerable people suffering from severe mental health disorders.

### Coordination:

**MHPSS Technical Working Group meeting:** The main objective of MHPSS TWG meeting is to strengthen mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) programming and build common understanding and language among actors by developing strategies for MHPSS in the Syrian context, ensuring coordination and fostering synergies among actors, facilitating the mainstreaming of protection in health and other sectors, and sharing knowledge and best practices in MHPSS in emergency settings. The meeting included members from UN agencies and partners. Discussions were made on reviewing coordination progress on

the national and sub-national levels, with the suggestion for the expansion of other sub-national MHPSS groups in the coastal area and Ar-Raqqa. Discussions on the MHPSS contingency plan for Syria and the drafted mental health and psychosocial support strategy also took place. As a result, a two-day consultative workshop was held in September 2023 with the participation of UNHCR, different ministries, UN agencies, and INGOs.