

Syrian Arab Republic

August-September 2024

The Syria crisis entered its fourteenth year in March 2024. The UN estimates that **16.7 million** people need humanitarian assistance across the country – a 9 per cent increase from 2023.

The security situation in the country is unpredictable and the economic situation is increasingly dire. The hostilities in Lebanon that escalated as of 23 September further exacerbated the situation due to the sudden displacement of families crossing from Lebanon to Syria. UNHCR is responding to this new emergency.

UNHCR continues to provide protection and assistance to refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, stateless people, and host communities based on identified needs and vulnerabilities.

HIGHLIGHTS

7,000

families crossing from Lebanon to Syria were provided with transportation to reach their destination in Syria as of the end of September

4,250

students from the refugee, IDP, returnee, and host community populations attended summer courses at UNHCR-supported community centres in September

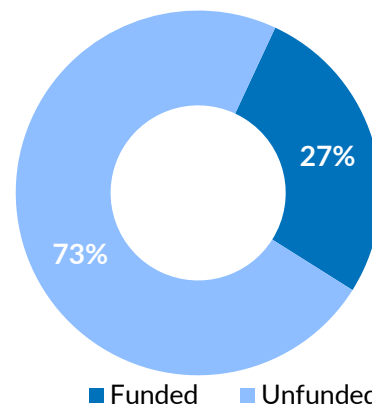
70

micro and small-business enterprises were supported by UNHCR in September

FUNDING (AS OF 30 SEPTEMBER 2024)

USD 460.6 million

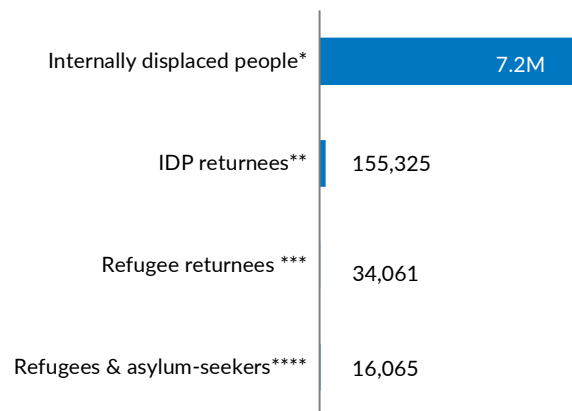
requested for the Syria Operation in 2024



PEOPLE AFFECTED BY DISPLACEMENT IN THE WHOLE OF SYRIA



Core relief items offloaded in the Dummar warehouse (Damascus Governorate) for the emergency response to the influx of families from Lebanon. ©UNHCR



* Source: 2024 HNO

** Source: OCHA, January-July 2023

***Source: UNHCR verified returns in 2024

**** Source: UNHCR, September 2024

More information on UNHCR's operations in the Syrian Arab Republic, including north-west Syria, is available on [Global Focus](#).

Operational Context

The [2024 Syria Humanitarian Needs Overview \(HNO\)](#) estimates that over 16.7 million people need humanitarian assistance in Syria. This is the highest number of people in need since the beginning of the crisis. Syria also has one of the largest numbers of IDPs in the world (7.2 million). The 2024 HNO states that the humanitarian and economic indicators in Syria continue to deteriorate, and many basic services have collapsed. The displacement of families from Lebanon due to the regional conflict, as well as the implications of the February 2023 earthquakes, have further compounded existing needs in a country that has experienced over 13 years of crisis.

UNHCR supports refugees, asylum-seekers, IDPs, host community members, and returnees (refugees and IDPs who have returned to their home areas) by providing assistance to those most in need using the [area-based](#) and [community-based](#) approaches. 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.

In 2024, UNHCR is working with 28 partners including international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and national NGOs in all 14 governorates.

Operational Updates

Response to Displacement from Lebanon

On 23 September, the escalation of hostilities in Lebanon resulted in a mass influx into Syria, with over 128,000 people crossing the borders (around 70% are Syrians and 30% are Lebanese nationals) by the end of September. The number of persons crossing the Syrian borders was increasing daily.

UNHCR continued to be present at all border crossings Syria shares with Lebanon. The Border Health-Protection Support Points that UNHCR, with its partners, established over the past year became operational 24/7. UN agencies and humanitarian partners stepped up their response and provided essential assistance and services at the border crossing points. To address the increased number of extremely vulnerable families arriving at the borders, UNHCR, with its partner, provided transportation for approximately 7,000 newly arrived families (as of 30 September) to help

them reach their destinations inside Syria. The majority of new arrivals indicated their intention of joining their relatives.

UNHCR also provided legal assistance, including documentation, civil event registries (such as new births and marriages), and border entry facilitation. Local authorities established centres across Syria to host a small number of destitute Lebanese. UNHCR and its partners identified families there and continue to respond to their needs.

At the destinations of new arrivals across Syria, UNHCR identified Syrian and Lebanese families hosted by local communities and provided them with core relief items, protection assistance and referrals to the nearest UNHCR-supported community centres in their host areas.

For more information about the response to the displacement from Lebanon, please refer to UNHCR Syria's flash updates on [Global Focus](#) and the [UNHCR Syria Data Portal](#).



UNHCR staff receive and support people who fled hostilities in Lebanon at Jesr Qmar border crossing point (Homs Governorate). A.Mourad ©UNHCR

Regular response



Protection

- In line with its community-based protection approach, in September, UNHCR supported 114 [community centres](#) and 113 mobile units across the country. UNHCR also engages around 2,210 community outreach volunteers in all 14 governorates.
- UNHCR and its partner opened three new community centres; in Sheikh Maqsood (Aleppo city) as well as in Al-Mansoura and Al-Karama towns (Ar-Raqqa Governorate), which will provide protection services to the residents of these areas and the surrounding areas.

- To reallocate resources to locations where needs are higher, UNHCR and its partner closed one community centre in Rural Damascus Governorate and finalized a relocation plan for a community centre from Tartous city to a location in Latakia where the area-based return support approach is applied, while implementing an exit strategy to link the concerned communities with alternative service providers.
- In September, UNHCR rolled out a training on Accountability to Affected Population Complaint and Feedback Mechanisms in Qamishli, Damascus and As-Sweida Governorates. Around 280 partners, UNHCR staff and outreach volunteers participated and learnt ways to strengthen accountability for the people with and for whom UNHCR works.
- In August and September, UNHCR conducted two training courses for 43 focal points in Tartous and Damascus Governorates, working with UN partners on gender-based violence prevention and response. The training introduced the curriculum of the [Girl Shine](#) programme, including communication approaches with girls, delivering sensitive content, responding to the diverse needs of adolescent girls, engaging caregivers in the programme, and handling group disclosures with practice sessions.
- UNHCR and its partner conducted four rounds of training on “Psychological First Aid” for 21 partner staff working at the Border Health-Protection Support Points of Jdaidet Yabous (Rural Damascus), Jousieh and Dabbousieh (Homs Governorate), and Al-Arida (Tartous Governorate).



Education

- In September, UNHCR in collaboration with its partners concluded the summer courses for around 4,250 students from the refugee, IDP, returnee, and host community populations in its supported community centres in 14 Governorates in Syria. The courses covered the main school subjects of writing, reading, mathematics, Arabic and English and included recreational activities to provide students with a safe learning environment. UNHCR partners also conducted training for teachers involved in the summer courses to build their capacity in interactive learning methods. The summer courses assist students mainly who are out-of-school to catch-up on missed classes, re-enrol in the formal education system and prepare for mid-year and final exams.



Core Relief Items

- In August and September, 4,963 families (20,755 individuals) in Al-Hasakeh, Idleb, Latakia, Hama, Aleppo, Ar-Raqqa, Rural Damascus, Homs, Deir-ez-Zor and Damascus Governorates, including those who

recently returned to Syrian from Lebanon were assisted with core relief items, at borders and at their final destination.

- The UNHCR Syria campaign for free-of-charge eye examinations and the provision of reading glasses for people registered at the UNHCR-supported community centres who are above 43 years old continued. Since the start of the campaign in July till the end of September, 102,400 glasses were provided.



Shelter

- Following the influx of Syrian and Lebanese families from Lebanon to Syria, UNHCR worked on improving the conditions at the border points where people were gathering to process their entry to Syria. This included cleaning the site, installing solar streetlights to improve visibility and safety, erecting Rub-halls to provide additional resting space for the new arrivals and enhancing infrastructure mainly water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities.
- By the end of September, hosting centres established by the local authorities began accommodating destitute Lebanese who do not have alternative means. UNHCR conducted assessments at these sites to ensure that protection risks are addressed, and basic living conditions are met.



Livelihoods

- UNHCR and partners are providing entrepreneurship training through the community centres to enhance financial management skills, benefiting over 1,500 individuals in August and September.
- As part of the entrepreneurship training, around 400 individuals in Aleppo, Latakia, Tartous, and Rural Damascus Governorates participated in sessions on microfinance held at UNHCR-supported community centres. These sessions were conducted in coordination with microfinance institutions in Syria to raise awareness among participants on how to benefit from the existing national financial services. The training offered participants the knowledge to find alternative solutions to start or expand their businesses and make a sustainable income.
- UNHCR also supported 70 micro and small-business enterprises either through cash or in-kind support in Rural Damascus, Idleb, Tartous, and Al-Hasakeh Governorates.
- In Aleppo and Tartous, UNHCR initiated the rehabilitation of two vocational training schools that are expected to benefit more than 1,000 students in 2025.



Cash Assistance

- In September, UNHCR received official approval to provide multi-purpose cash assistance to Syrians, which enabled UNHCR and partners to start the beneficiary enrolment process.



Health

- In August, UNHCR installed a solar lighting system in the “Ibn Khaldoun” psychiatric hospital in Aleppo city. The system will ensure a consistent electricity supply in the hospital, particularly benefiting in-patients.



Refugee Response

- **Registration:** As of the end of September, 16,065 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, Al-Hasakeh, Aleppo, Homs, Tartous, and Latakia Governorates. In August and September, UNHCR renewed the identification cards for over 2,725 refugees. The identification cards protect refugees against *refoulement*, ensure access to basic rights and services, and facilitate freedom of movement.
- **Refugee Status Determination (RSD):** In August and September, eight families (16 individuals) were recognized as refugees. This helps to ensure their protection from *refoulement* and detention due to irregular stay, and facilitates access to basic services.
- **Durable solutions:** In August, UNHCR, in close coordination with IOM Lebanon, facilitated the departure of two individuals to Australia under the private sponsorship complementary pathway arrangements¹.
- **Cash Assistance:** UNHCR provided regular multi-purpose cash assistance to 5,065 refugee and asylum-seeker families (13,718 individuals) during the reporting period. UNHCR also supported 4,815 refugee students (2,157 families) aged between 6-17 years with education grants.
- **Legal Assistance:** In August and September, UNHCR's legal teams and lawyers provided legal assistance to around 790 refugees and asylum-seekers. This included legal counselling, assistance related to

residency and exit visas, legal response to gender-based violence, child protection issues, as well as interventions to obtain personal civil documentation for Iraqi refugees in light of the latest instructions of the Iraqi Government to receive civil record extracts exclusively from Iraq.



Return

- Since January till the end of August 2024, UNHCR **verified or monitored** the return to Syria of 34,061 refugees from Türkiye, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt². Between 2016 and August 2024, UNHCR verified or monitored the return of 426,254 individual refugees³ to Syria. As of 23 September, an increase in the number of people crossing from Lebanon to Syria was observed due to the escalation of hostilities in Lebanon.



Syria and Lebanese families at the Jdaidet Yabous border crossing point (Rural Damascus). V.Makeev ©UNHCR

- In September, the UNHCR-supported Border Health-Protection Support Points of Jdaidet Yabous, Al-Arida, Joussieh and Dabbousieh (at the Syria-Lebanon border), Nassib point (at the Syria-Jordan border) and Kassab (at the Syria-Türkiye border) were fully equipped and operational. The points at the Lebanese border played an important role in supporting people fleeing hostilities in Lebanon and crossing to Syria.
- These Border Health and Protection Support Points provide information on available services in the areas of return for people coming from neighbouring countries as well as counselling and referral services for those who register with UNHCR. They also offer access to the internet or a hotline to communicate with relatives, basic medical attention and other amenities. Furthermore, they provide the physical capacity to observe daily movements at the borders.

¹ Complementary pathways are safe and regulated avenues for persons in need of international protection that provide for a lawful stay in a third country where international protection needs are met.

² The reported voluntary return figures do not include movements of Syrians into Syria as a result of the current conflict in Lebanon.

³ Provisional figures pending further verification

RECENTLY PUBLISHED:

- [Inter-Agency Emergency Appeal for the Influx from Lebanon to Syria \(October 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #18 \(October 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #17 \(October 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #16 \(October 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #15 \(October 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #14 \(October 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #13 \(October 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #12 \(October 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #11 \(October 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #10 \(October 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #9 \(October 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #8 \(October 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #7 \(October 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #6 \(October 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #5 \(September 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #4 \(September 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #3 \(September 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #2 \(September 2024\)](#)
- [Response to displacement from Lebanon flash update #1 \(September 2024\)](#)
- [Return of Syrian Refugees \(July 2024\)](#)
- [UNHCR Syria Factsheet \(June 2024\)](#)
- [UNHCR Syria: Area-based Programming and Humanitarian Early Recovery factsheet \(April 2024\)](#)
- [UNHCR Syria: 2024 Needs Overview \(April 2024\)](#)
- [UNHCR Syria: 2024 Implications of Underfunding in Syria \(April 2024\)](#)

DONORS – As of 30 September 2024**Special thanks to our donors, including major donors of unearmarked contributions to UNHCR:**

Australia | Belgium | Canada | Country-based pooled funds | Denmark | European Union | Finland | France | Germany | Ireland | Italy | Japan | Luxembourg | Malta | Netherlands | Norway | Other private donors | Republic of Korea | Russian Federation | Sweden | Switzerland | Syria Humanitarian Funds | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security | United States of America

CONTACT: UNHCR Syria External Relations Unit, Email: SYRDAREPORTING@unhcr.org

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