

# Syria – Complex Emergency

DECEMBER 9, 2022

## SITUATION AT A GLANCE

<p><b>14.6</b> MILLION</p> <p>Estimated Population in Need of Humanitarian Assistance in Syria</p> <p><i>UN – February 2022</i></p>	<p><b>12</b> MILLION</p> <p>Estimated Food-Insecure Population in Syria</p> <p><i>UN – February 2022</i></p>	<p><b>6.7</b> MILLION</p> <p>Estimated Number of IDPs in Syria</p> <p><i>UN – March 2022</i></p>	<p><b>5.5</b> MILLION</p> <p>Estimated People USAID/BHA Reaches per Month in Syria</p> <p><i>USAID/BHA – March 2022</i></p>	<p><b>2.1</b> MILLION</p> <p>Estimated People State/PRM Reaches per Month in Syria</p> <p><i>State/PRM – Sept 2021</i></p>
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- After more than a week of conflict in northeast Syria, UN Special Envoy for Syria Geir O. Pederson called on all parties to de-escalate and respect UNSC Resolution 2254.
- The UN provided humanitarian assistance through a cross-line convoy to Idlib in late November.
- Health actors recorded more than 46,400 cases of acute watery diarrhea, a proxy for suspected cholera, across all 14 governorates as of November 19.



<b>TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN FUNDING</b> For the Syria Response in FYs 2012–2022	USAID/BHA <sup>1</sup>	\$8,066,929,129
	State/PRM <sup>2</sup>	\$7,791,400,271
	<b>Total<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>\$15,858,329,400</b>

<sup>1</sup> USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA)

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM)

<sup>3</sup> FY 2023 funding for the Syria Complex Emergency will be included in future products when committed/obligated. For information on the U.S. Government's funding toward the response in FY 2022, refer to Syria Fact Sheet #11 released on September 30, 2022, available on the USAID website at <https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work>.

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

### **Armed Conflict in Northeast Syria Threatens Civilians, Infrastructure**

Beginning on November 20, the Turkish Armed Forces conducted airstrikes and shelled both Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)- and Syrian Arab Republic Government (SARG)-held areas across Aleppo Governorate's Ain Al-Arab and Jarablus districts and Menbij sub-district; Al Hasakah Governorate's Al Malikiyah, Darbasiyah, and Tel Tamer sub-districts; and Ar Raqqa Governorate's Ein Issa sub-district. The hostilities come after an improvised explosive device attack—which the Government of Turkey (GoT) attributes to the People's Defense Units, Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), and Syrian-based SDF—occurred in Istanbul, Turkey on November 13, resulting in six fatalities and more than 80 individuals injured, according to international media. In response to the GoT airstrikes, clashes have broken out between the SDF- and GoT- armed forces. The GoT airstrikes have damaged or destroyed both military and civilian infrastructure, including approximately 12,000 metric tons of wheat from grain silos in Al Hasakah's Darbasiyah town, a hospital near Aleppo's Kobani town, and local electric grids, resulting in power outages.

At a UN Security Council (UNSC) meeting on November 29, the United Nations Special Envoy for Syria (UNSES) Geir O. Pedersen expressed growing concern for the increase in conflict taking place across northern Syria between the SDF and the GoT, stating that an increase in violence could compromise UNSC Resolution 2254, which calls for a ceasefire and political settlement in Syria. UNSES Pederson called for all parties to the conflict to de-escalate hostilities, assist the unlawfully detained, and find disappeared and missing persons.

### **UN Delivers Life-Saving Humanitarian Supplies Via Cross-Line Delivery**

The UN dispatched an 18-truck cross-line convoy carrying humanitarian assistance from SARG-held Aleppo to opposition-held Sarmada town in Idlib on November 30. The convoy transported 480 metric tons of UN World Food Program (WFP) food and nutrition commodities. The convoy also included trucks carrying humanitarian commodities from UNHCR, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), and the UN World Health Organization (WHO). This is the ninth cross-line humanitarian delivery overall, and the fourth cross-line delivery since the July 12 passage of UNSC Resolution 2642 renewing UN cross-border access to the northwest from Turkey. UNSC Resolution 2642 will expire on January 10 and is scheduled for a renewal vote on the same day; USAID/BHA and other donors are advocating for the renewal of UNSC Resolution 2642.

### **Cholera Continues to Impact Vulnerable Populations, Strains Health System**

Since the SARG Ministry of Health declared a cholera outbreak in Aleppo Governorate following laboratory confirmation of the disease on September 10, the outbreak continued to spread to other areas of Syria in the subsequent weeks. Between August 25 and November 19, health actors recorded nearly 46,400 cases of acute watery diarrhea (AWD) representing an increase of nearly 11,000 AWD cases since November 9; there have also been at least 97 cholera-related deaths and laboratory testing had confirmed more than 1,700 total cholera cases countrywide as of November 29, the UN reports. However, the number of cases is likely underreported due to limited testing capacity, according to the UN. The UN uses AWD as an indicator for the likely presence of cholera in areas where a cholera outbreak has been declared or is suspected. Laboratory testing to confirm suspected cases is a significant constraint in Syria, as not all governorates have capable microbiology labs to conduct tests, WHO reports.

Untreated water from the Euphrates River remains the main source of cholera cases in northeast Syria, and chlorination along the river continues to be a challenge, relief actors report. In addition to providing water quality testing to 68 treatment and pumping stations along the Euphrates River, relief actors are chlorinating more than 640 water trucks; an estimated 450,000 cubic meters, or nearly 118.9 million gallons, of water have been chlorinated from September 12 to November 29. As of late November, the attack rate—representing the cumulative incidence of cholera since the start of the outbreak—among the population across Syria was 0.2 percent, representing an approximate 17.6 percent increase in the attack rate since early November, which recorded a 0.17 percent attack rate.

## KEY FIGURES



**6.6 Million**

Number of people USAID/BHA reaches with monthly food assistance in Syria and neighboring countries



**5 Million**

Number of people USAID/BHA reached with health assistance in FY 2022

## U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

### FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

USAID/BHA supports UNICEF, WFP, and 15 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) providing emergency food and nutrition assistance within Syria and to Syrian refugees in neighboring countries. In Syria, USAID/BHA partners provide vulnerable populations with cash transfers for food, emergency nutritional products, food vouchers, and monthly in-kind food rations while also distributing wheat flour and yeast to bakeries. USAID/BHA assistance also supports the provision of cash transfers for food and food vouchers for Syrian refugees. WFP and USAID/BHA-funded NGO partners provide monthly food assistance to more than 6.6 million Syrians, including more than 5.5 million people inside Syria and 1.1 million refugees across Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey. State/PRM supports UNICEF to monitor, identify, and respond to cases of malnutrition in refugee populations throughout Turkey, as well as support awareness campaigns on breastfeeding and best practices to prevent chronic malnutrition.

### HEALTH

USAID/BHA funds 11 partners, including UNFPA, UNICEF, and WHO, to provide critical health assistance in Syria, cumulatively supporting approximately 480 health facilities. USAID/BHA supported activities include community-based health education, direct health services through mobile medical units, reproductive health services, the provision of equipment for health facilities, and training for Syrian medical workers. USAID/BHA is supporting additional NGOs to bolster coronavirus disease (COVID-19) response capacity in Syria by establishing primary health care services in areas with limited health infrastructure, providing equipment to intensive care and isolation facilities, and promoting effective infection prevention and control practices.

State/PRM partner UNHCR provides medical consultations and facilitates community-based health programming through community clinics and health points in UNHCR-supported community centers in areas of Syria with minimally accessible health services. The UN agency also distributes masks and sanitation supplies to community centers throughout the country to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. To date in 2022, approximately

160,000 people received primary health services in UNHCR-supported health facilities. In addition, State/PRM supports UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO, and nine NGO partners to provide health assistance, including medical consultations, specialized health services, and vaccinations, for refugees in neighboring countries.



**15**

Number of USAID/BHA partners providing critical WASH assistance in Syria

## WASH

USAID/BHA supports 13 NGO partners, as well as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and UNICEF, to provide water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance in Syria. USAID/BHA partners distribute essential hygiene items to vulnerable populations and enhance WASH facilities by rehabilitating small-scale sanitation and water systems—such as handwashing stations and latrines—in displacement camps and informal settlements. In northern Syria, USAID/BHA partners increase access to safe drinking water through emergency water trucking and the distribution of water storage tanks and water treatment devices. Furthermore, USAID/BHA is supporting NGOs to strengthen COVID-19 response activities by increasing water trucking frequency to communities and IDP sites, providing additional water for handwashing and cleaning, and distributing soap and other WASH commodities. State/PRM also supports partners—including one NGO in Iraq, one international organization in Jordan and Lebanon, and a third partner in Syria—to provide WASH assistance to Syrian refugees, as well as vulnerable populations inside Syria. With State/PRM support, UNHCR and partners repair WASH networks to improve sanitation services and enable the provision of safe drinking water in northwest Syria.



**242**

Number of centers through which State/PRM provides protection assistance in Syria

## PROTECTION

State/PRM partner UNHCR provides comprehensive protection services—including identifying protection cases, facilitating community-based protection interventions, providing referrals to legal aid services, and providing educational services for parents and children—for conflict-affected and displaced Syrians in both Syria and neighboring countries. With State/PRM funding, UNHCR engages 2,900 community outreach volunteers and supports approximately 120 mobile units and nearly 130 community centers and satellite centers across all 14 governorates in Syria to provide psychosocial support (PSS), legal counseling, and case management and referrals. UNHCR also supports community-led initiatives that aim to foster better community relations and support the needs of IDPs, returnees, and host communities. State/PRM also supports IOM, UNICEF, and NGO partners to provide protection assistance, including legal documentation and case management services, for Syrian refugees in neighboring countries. UNHCR provided and equipped a new mobile unit of the Directorate of Civil Affairs to serve Idlib Governorate's Maarat Al-Numan city on October 28. The mobile unit will facilitate the issuance of documentation for returnees and other vulnerable populations in need of documentation.

USAID/BHA funds 13 protection partners, including IOM and UNFPA, to

provide PSS, learning and recreational opportunities, and case management and referral services for children at high risk of exploitation and abuse. USAID/BHA also supports safe spaces for women and girls, as well as medical supplies and specialized training for health staff to provide appropriate care for gender-based violence survivors throughout Syria.



18

Number of USG partners providing shelter and relief commodities in Syria and neighboring countries

## SHELTER AND RELIEF COMMODITIES

USAID/BHA supports 11 partners, including IOM, to distribute shelter materials and basic household items and conduct shelter rehabilitation activities in Syria. In northern Syria, USAID/BHA partners establish and maintain IDP camps, rehabilitate existing IDP camps and collective centers, and distribute emergency shelter items. State/PRM partner UNHCR supports the replacement of damaged tents for households in IDP camps in northeast Syria. State/PRM also supports IOM, UNHCR, and six NGO partners to provide shelter and relief commodities to refugees in neighboring countries.

## CONTEXT IN BRIEF

- Following the commencement of peaceful demonstrations against the SARG in March 2011, SARG President Bashar al-Assad pledged legislative reforms. However, reforms failed to materialize, and SARG forces loyal to President al-Assad responded to demonstrations with violence, leading armed opposition groups to retaliate. The escalation in conflict led to widespread displacement and a humanitarian crisis within Syria and the region. Hostilities continue to date, as shifting frontlines and areas of control force IDPs into smaller and more congested areas, exacerbating humanitarian needs.
- At a November 2012 meeting in Doha, Qatar, Syrian opposition factions formed an umbrella organization, the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, also known as the Syrian Coalition. The USG recognized the coalition as the legitimate representative of the Syrian people on December 11, 2012. On March 19, 2013, the Syrian Coalition established the Syrian Interim Government, which opposes the SARG and is based in decentralized locations throughout opposition-held areas of Syria. During 2014, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) captured significant areas of Syria, adding additional complexity to the multi-actor conflict. In March 2019, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) announced the capture of the last ISIS strongholds in Syria.
- On July 12, 2022, the UNSC adopted UNSC Resolution 2642, authorizing UN cross-border delivery of humanitarian aid to conflict-affected populations in Syria. The resolution permits the UN's use of Turkey's Bab al-Hawa crossing for the delivery of humanitarian assistance into Syria for six months, with a potential renewal in January for an additional six months—until July 10, 2023—subject to the issuance of a UN Secretary-General report detailing humanitarian needs in Syria and adoption of a new UNSC resolution. The resolution is a partial renewal of previous cross-border aid resolutions, beginning with UNSC Resolution 2165 on July 14, 2014, which authorized four border crossings from Iraq, Jordan, and Turkey.

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## PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at [interaction.org](https://www.interaction.org).
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
  - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: [cidi.org](https://www.cidi.org)
  - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [reliefweb.int](https://www.reliefweb.int).

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)