

Syria – Complex Emergency

MARCH 30, 2021

SITUATION AT A GLANCE

<p>13.4 MILLION</p> <p>Estimated Population in Need of Humanitarian Assistance in Syria</p> <p><i>UN – February 2021</i></p>	<p>12.4 MILLION</p> <p>Estimated Food-Insecure Population in Syria</p> <p><i>UN – December 2020</i></p>	<p>6.7 MILLION</p> <p>Estimated Number of IDPs in Syria</p> <p><i>UN – February 2021</i></p>	<p>4.8 MILLION</p> <p>Estimated People USAID/BHA Reaches per Month in Syria</p> <p><i>UN – February 2021</i></p>	<p>2.1 MILLION</p> <p>Estimated People State/PRM Reaches per Month in Syria</p> <p><i>UN – November 2020</i></p>
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- The USG announced more than \$596 million in new humanitarian funding for the Syria crisis during the fifth annual Brussels Conference on Supporting Syria and the Region on March 30.
- Recent hostilities in northwest Syria, including targeted attacks on a hospital on March 21, highlight the importance of UN cross-border access to vulnerable populations.
- Food security conditions continued to deteriorate across Syria in early 2021.
- USAID/BHA and State/PRM partners provide life-saving food, health, nutrition, protection, shelter, and WASH assistance to IDPs, vulnerable host community members, and refugees in the region.



TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN FUNDING

For the Syria Response in FYs 2012–2021

USAID/BHA¹ \$6,500,704,435

State/PRM² \$6,299,715,325

Total \$12,800,419,760

For complete funding breakdown with partners, see detailed chart on page 6

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

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

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

USG Announces \$596 Million in Funding at Brussels Conference on Syria

On March 30, U.S. Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield announced more than \$596 million in additional U.S. Government (USG) humanitarian assistance for the Syria crisis during the fifth annual Brussels Conference on Supporting Syria and the Region, the main annual high-level fundraising event for the Syria crisis. The new assistance comprises approximately \$347 million from USAID/BHA and more than \$249 million from State/PRM to provide life-saving emergency food, health, livelihoods, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance to Syrians. The funding will support internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other vulnerable populations in Syria and refugees in the region, including Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey. Since the start of the crisis in 2012, the USG has provided more than \$12.8 billion in humanitarian assistance to help Syrians in need.

The new funding includes USG support for UN agencies and non-governmental organization (NGO) partners to provide education, health, livelihoods, mental health, multipurpose cash, protection, psychosocial, shelter, and emergency food and nutrition assistance to Syrian refugees in the region; distribute shelter and relief commodity support to IDPs in Syria; rehabilitate shelters damaged by conflict and natural hazards; bolster IDPs' economic resilience by restoring livelihoods; and ensure communities' access to safe and reliable sources of water, particularly as part of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) mitigation efforts.

Hostilities in Northwest Syria Reinforce Call for UN Cross-Border Access

Recent hostilities in northwest Syria—including attacks on civilian and humanitarian infrastructure—have provoked international condemnation and triggered additional advocacy efforts ahead of the July expiration of UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2533, which authorizes UN humanitarian access to northwest Syria through Turkey's Bab al-Hawa border crossing. Relief actors reiterate that UN access is essential to providing humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations in northern Syria, particularly during and following hostilities. On March 21, a series of airstrikes and accompanying artillery shelling struck multiple locations in Aleppo and Idlib governorates, including Al Atareb Surgical Hospital in Aleppo's Jebel Samen District and areas near the Bab al-Hawa border crossing. The airstrikes on the UN- and NGO-supported hospital resulted in the deaths of at least seven civilians—including two children—and injured at least 15 other people—including five medical staff—while causing significant damage to the hospital, resulting in the evacuation of all patients and staff and the suspension of all health services. Prior to the attack, the hospital had provided an average of 3,600 out-patient medical services per month, nearly 200 surgeries, and emergency and obstetrics services; the majority of casualties from the March 21 attack were patients or staff.

Additionally, artillery shelling on March 21 hit two residential neighborhoods in Aleppo city, resulting in the deaths of at least two people and injuring at least 17 others, including two children, according to the UN. Aerial attacks on the same date also struck near densely-populated IDP camps and Bab al-Hawa border crossing, impeding life-saving UN cross-border humanitarian deliveries. Additional airstrikes in northern Idlib resulted in a fire at an NGO-supported warehouse on March 21, resulting in the destruction of humanitarian relief commodities that would have supported nearly 25,000 people in northwest Syria. The series of attacks on March 21 was the first of its kind on transportation routes in the northern Idlib area since 2015, according to an NGO. In a March 23 statement, the UN condemned the recent attacks in northwest Syria and reiterated that targeted attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, including health care facilities, are strictly prohibited under international humanitarian law.

Food Security Conditions Continue to Deteriorate Across Syria

Vulnerable populations continue to experience worsening food security conditions across Syria, according to an early 2021 food security analysis conducted by the UN World Food Program (WFP). Nearly half of surveyed households—including IDPs and host community members across Syria—reported poor or borderline levels of food consumption during February 2021, representing an increase of 3 percent compared to the previous month and an increase of 48 percent compared to February 2020. Female-headed households were disproportionately likely to experience food insecurity, with 59 percent reporting inadequate food consumption during the month. The ongoing economic crisis, and the resultant high food prices and negative impact on purchasing power, have led Syrian households to increasingly rely on negative coping strategies to meet their essential food needs. For instance, approximately 70 percent of households countrywide reported purchasing food on credit in February, an 11 percent increase since December 2020, while nearly 47 percent of households reported reducing adult food consumption to prioritize children’s food consumption needs, an increase of 5 percent compared to January 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic and resultant economic downturn has exacerbated the food crisis, driving additional Syrians to become food-insecure. Nearly 60 percent of Syria’s total population—approximately 12.4 million people—were food-insecure as of late 2020, representing an increase of 4.5 million people compared to 2019, WFP reports. Of the total, at least 1.3 million people were categorized as severely food-insecure, indicating that they are unable to survive without food assistance. The UN agency, with USAID/BHA support, reaches an average of nearly 5 million people per month with emergency food assistance inside Syria. Notably, a significant portion of that food assistance—nearly 30 percent of the countrywide total during February—is transported cross-border into Syria through Bab al-Hawa, further reinforcing the importance of UN access.

Women and Girls Disproportionately Affected by 10 Years of Conflict

Since 2011, intermittent hostilities and political and economic instability have generated significant humanitarian needs across Syria, resulting in approximately 13.4 million people in need of humanitarian assistance—or nearly two-thirds of the country’s total population—as of January 2021, the UN reports. According to the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), women and girls are disproportionately affected by the conflict both inside Syria and in neighboring countries, as insecurity, economic pressures, and gender-based violence (GBV) risks have sharply increased over the past ten years. Of the 13.4 million people in need in Syria, nearly 7 million are women and girls of reproductive age and approximately 500,000 are pregnant, requiring access to critical sexual and reproductive health services, which are difficult to access in Syria’s degraded health care system. Further, UNFPA has stressed that increased food insecurity will likely lead to heightened risks of GBV and harmful practices in Syria, such as early and forced marriage, as households struggle to meet basic needs.

According to the UN World Health Organization (WHO), more than 90 percent of the population in Syria lives below the poverty line, which has the most significant impact on vulnerable groups such as women and children, IDPs, and people with disabilities. Nearly one-third of the population—predominantly women and children—resides in IDP camps or camp-like settlements across northern Syria with limited access to food, health care, shelter, safe drinking water, and WASH services. More than ten years of conflict and direct attacks on health infrastructure have significantly deteriorated the health care system countrywide, creating additional obstacles for vulnerable populations during the COVID-19 pandemic. As of early 2021, nearly one-quarter of all hospitals and one-third of all primary health care centers across Syria remain inoperable, WHO reports.

KEY FIGURES



5.9 Million

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



5 Million

Number of people reached by USAID/BHA-supported health assistance during FY 2020



14

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

U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

USAID/BHA supports the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), WFP, and 17 NGOs to provide emergency food and nutrition assistance within Syria and to Syrian refugees in neighboring countries. In Syria, USAID/BHA partners provide monthly food rations; wheat flour and yeast to bakeries; food vouchers; cash for food; and emergency nutritional products. USAID/BHA-funded assistance also supports the provision of food vouchers and cash transfers for Syrian refugees. WFP and USAID/BHA-funded NGO partners provide monthly food assistance to more than 5.9 million Syrians, including more than 4.8 million people inside Syria and 1.1 million refugees across Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey.

HEALTH

USAID/BHA funds 10 partners, including 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, provision of equipment for health facilities, and training for Syrian medical workers. USAID/BHA is supporting additional NGOs to bolster COVID-19 health 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 the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) provides medical consultations and facilitates community-based health programming at 26 community center clinics and 11 UNHCR-run primary health facilities in Syria and distributes masks and sanitation supplies to community centers throughout the country to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. PRM also supports UNHCR, UNICEF, and 9 NGO partners to provide health assistance including medical consultations, vaccinations, and specialized health services to refugees in neighboring countries.

WASH

USAID/BHA supports 12 NGO partners, as well as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and UNICEF, to provide 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. Further, USAID/BHA is supporting additional NGOs to bolster COVID-19 response capacity in Syria by increasing water trucking frequency to communities and IDP distribution points, providing

additional water for handwashing and cleaning, and distributing soap and other WASH commodities. State/PRM also supports one NGO partner to provide safe drinking water to Syrian refugees in Iraq and Lebanon.



1 Million

Number of people reached by State/PRM-supported protection assistance in Syria from January to October 2020

PROTECTION

State/PRM partner UNHCR identifies protection cases, provides referrals to legal aid services, and facilitates community-based protection interventions for conflict-affected and displaced Syrians both in Syria and in neighboring countries. With State/PRM support, UNHCR manages more than 100 community centers throughout Syria, providing psychosocial support services, legal counseling, and case management and referrals. State/PRM also supports IOM, UNICEF, and 28 NGO partners to provide protection assistance, including legal documentation and case management services, for Syrian refugees in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey.

USAID/BHA's 15 protection partners, including IOM and UNICEF, provide psychosocial support, learning and recreational opportunities, and case management and referral services for children at high risk of exploitation and abuse. USAID/BHA also supports at least 90 safe spaces for women and girls, as well as medical supplies and specialized training for health staff to provide appropriate care for survivors of GBV, throughout Syria.



1 Million

Number of people in northwest Syria reached by State/PRM-supported shelter and relief commodity assistance in 2020

SHELTER AND RELIEF COMMODITIES

USAID/BHA supports 14 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. Further, State/PRM support to UNHCR facilitates the distribution of relief commodities, hygiene kits, and tents to IDPs and host community members in Syria. In 2020, UNHCR reached more than 1 million people in northwest Syria, including providing 141,000 core relief items and 51,000 tents. State/PRM also supports IOM, UNHCR, and 4 NGO partners to provide shelter and relief commodities to refugees in neighboring countries.



2.2 Million

Number of people in Syria reached by State/PRM-supported winterization aid from October 2020 to March 2021

WINTERIZATION

USAID/BHA supports 11 partners, including IOM, to provide winterization assistance in Syria. In advance of and during the winter season, USAID/BHA partners distribute emergency shelter and relief items, such as blankets, fuel, sleeping mats, tents, and winter clothing. With State/PRM support, the UNHCR co-led Shelter and Non-Food Item (SNFI) Cluster also continues to distribute winterization assistance—including cash assistance and core relief items—across Syria and to Syrian refugees in neighboring countries. From October 2020 to March 2021, the SNFI Cluster reached approximately 2.2 million people in Syria, including 1.5 million people in northwest Syria. In 2020, UNHCR also supported 1.7 million refugees with winterization assistance in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon.

CONTEXT IN BRIEF

- Following the commencement of peaceful demonstrations against the Syrian Arab Republic Government (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 has 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 announced the capture of the last ISIS strongholds in Syria.
- On July 11, 2020, the UNSC adopted UNSC Resolution 2533, authorizing UN cross-border and cross-line 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 one year, expiring in July 2021. The resolution is a partial renewal of previous cross-border aid resolutions, beginning with UNSC Resolution 2165 on July 14, 2014, which had authorized four border crossings from Turkey, Jordan, and Iraq.

USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE SYRIA CRISIS RESPONSE IN FY 2021¹

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
SYRIA			
USAID/BHA			
Implementing Partners	Agriculture; Economic Recovery and Market Systems (ERMS); Food Assistance—Cash Transfers, Local, Regional, International Procurement (LRIP), Vouchers; Health; Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management, and Assessments (HCIMA); Shelter and Settlements; WASH	Syria	\$38,737,090
IOM	HCIMA, Multipurpose Cash Assistance, Natural Hazards and Technical Risks, Protection, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Syria	\$15,000,000
UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	HCIMA	Syria	\$2,000,000

WFP	Food Assistance—LRIP, Vouchers; HCIMA; Nutrition	Syria	\$150,000,000
Program Support		Syria	\$247,295
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING IN SYRIA			\$205,984,385
STATE/PRM			
Implementing Partners	Capacity Building, Cash-Based Programming, Education, Emergency Food Assistance, Health, Livelihoods, Protection, Relief Commodities, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Syria	\$28,713,703
UNHCR	Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM), Health, Livelihoods, Protection, Relief Commodities, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Syria	\$29,200,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING IN SYRIA			\$57,913,703
TOTAL USG FUNDING IN SYRIA IN FY 2021			\$263,898,088

USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR SYRIAN REFUGEE-HOSTING COUNTRIES IN FY 2021¹

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
EGYPT			
USAID/BHA			
WFP	Food Assistance—Cash Transfers	Egypt	\$15,000,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING IN EGYPT			\$15,000,000
STATE/PRM			
Implementing Partners	Child Protection, Education, Livelihoods, Mental Health, Protection, Psychosocial Assistance	Egypt	\$446,939
UNHCR	Cash-Based Programming, Education, Health, Livelihoods, Mental Health, Protection, Relief Commodities	Egypt	\$3,890,000
UNICEF	Cash-Based Programming, Child Protection, Education, GBV Prevention, Health, Nutrition, Youth Programs	Egypt	\$2,500,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING IN EGYPT			\$6,836,939
TOTAL USG FUNDING FOR THE SYRIA REGIONAL RESPONSE IN EGYPT IN FY 2021			\$21,836,939
IRAQ			
STATE/PRM			
UNHCR	CCCM, Protection, Relief Commodities, Shelter and Settlements	Iraq	\$9,890,000
UNICEF	Child Protection, Education, Nutrition, WASH	Iraq	\$700,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING IN IRAQ			\$10,590,000
TOTAL USG FUNDING FOR THE SYRIA REGIONAL RESPONSE IN IRAQ IN FY 2021			\$10,590,000

JORDAN			
USAID/BHA			
WFP	Food Assistance—Cash Transfers, Vouchers	Jordan	\$51,000,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING IN JORDAN			\$51,000,000
STATE/PRM			
Implementing Partners	Capacity Building, Cash-Based Programming, Health, Livelihoods, Protection, Relief Commodities, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Jordan	\$3,870,103
UNHCR	CCCM, Cash-Based Programming, Education, Health, Livelihoods, Mental Health, Protection, Relief Commodities, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Jordan	\$23,743,600
UNICEF	Cash-Based Programming, Child Protection, Education, GBV Prevention, Health, Nutrition, WASH, Youth Programs	Jordan	\$15,060,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING IN JORDAN			\$42,673,703
TOTAL USG FUNDING FOR THE SYRIA REGIONAL RESPONSE IN JORDAN IN FY 2021			\$93,673,703
LEBANON			
USAID/BHA			
WFP	Food Assistance—Cash Transfers, Vouchers	Lebanon	\$70,000,000
Program Support			\$20,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING IN LEBANON			\$70,020,000
STATE/PRM			
Implementing Partners	Cash-Based Programming, Education, GBV Prevention, Health, Livelihoods, Protection, Relief Commodities, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Lebanon	\$7,573,143
UNHCR	Cash-Based Programming, Education, Health, Livelihoods, Mental Health, Protection, Relief Commodities, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Lebanon	\$27,366,400
UNICEF	Cash-Based Programming, Child Protection, Education, GBV Prevention, Health, Nutrition, WASH, Youth Programs	Lebanon	\$47,600,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING IN LEBANON			\$82,539,543
TOTAL USG FUNDING FOR THE SYRIA REGIONAL RESPONSE IN LEBANON IN FY 2021			\$152,559,543
TURKEY			
USAID/BHA			
WFP	Food Assistance—Vouchers	Turkey	\$5,000,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING IN TURKEY			\$5,000,000
STATE/PRM			

Implementing Partners	Capacity Building, Cash-Based Programming, Child Protection, Education, GBV Prevention, Health, Livelihoods, Mental Health, Protection, Psychosocial Assistance, Relief Commodities, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Turkey	\$2,500,000
IOM	Capacity Building, Cash-Based Programming, Education, Health, Livelihoods, Protection, Psychosocial Support, Relief Commodities, Shelter and Settlements	Turkey	\$5,800,000
UNHCR	Capacity Building, Cash-Based Programming, Education, GBV Prevention, Health, Livelihoods, Mental Health, Protection, Relief Commodities, WASH	Turkey	\$17,380,000
UNICEF	Cash-Based Programming, Child Protection, Education, GBV Prevention, Health, Nutrition, WASH, Youth Programs	Turkey	\$19,670,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING IN TURKEY			\$45,350,000
TOTAL USG FUNDING FOR THE SYRIA REGIONAL RESPONSE IN TURKEY IN FY 2021			\$50,350,000
REGIONAL			
STATE/PRM			
UNHCR	Cash-Based Programming, Education, Health, Livelihoods, Protection	Regional	\$3,300,000
TOTAL REGIONAL STATE/PRM FUNDING			\$3,300,000
TOTAL REGIONAL USG FUNDING FOR THE SYRIA RESPONSE IN FY 2021			\$3,300,000

USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE SYRIA REGIONAL CRISIS RESPONSE IN FY 2021

TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR SYRIA REGIONAL RESPONSE IN FY 2021	\$347,004,385
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING FOR SYRIA REGIONAL RESPONSE IN FY 2021	\$249,203,888
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE SYRIA RESPONSE IN FY 2021	\$596,208,273

USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE SYRIA REGIONAL CRISIS RESPONSE IN FYs 2012–2021

TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR SYRIA REGIONAL RESPONSE IN FYs 2012–2021	\$6,500,704,435
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING FOR SYRIA REGIONAL RESPONSE IN FYs 2012–2021	\$6,299,715,325
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE SYRIA RESPONSE IN FYs 2012–2021	\$12,800,419,760

¹ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of March 30, 2021.

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
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at reliefweb.int.

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