

# Community- Based Protection in Syria

September 2018

In Syria, the humanitarian crisis is in its eighth year. In 2018, UNHCR continues to provide humanitarian assistance and protection services to the most vulnerable IDPs, host communities, IDP and refugee returnees and other crisis-affected populations in all areas where humanitarian access existed and/or emerged throughout Syria.

UNHCR partners with national and international actors are responding to immediate and urgent needs of internally displaced vulnerable Syrians, and mitigating risks and strengthening resilience, reducing vulnerabilities of persons affected by the crisis and enhancing their protection through a wide range of integrated community-based activities.

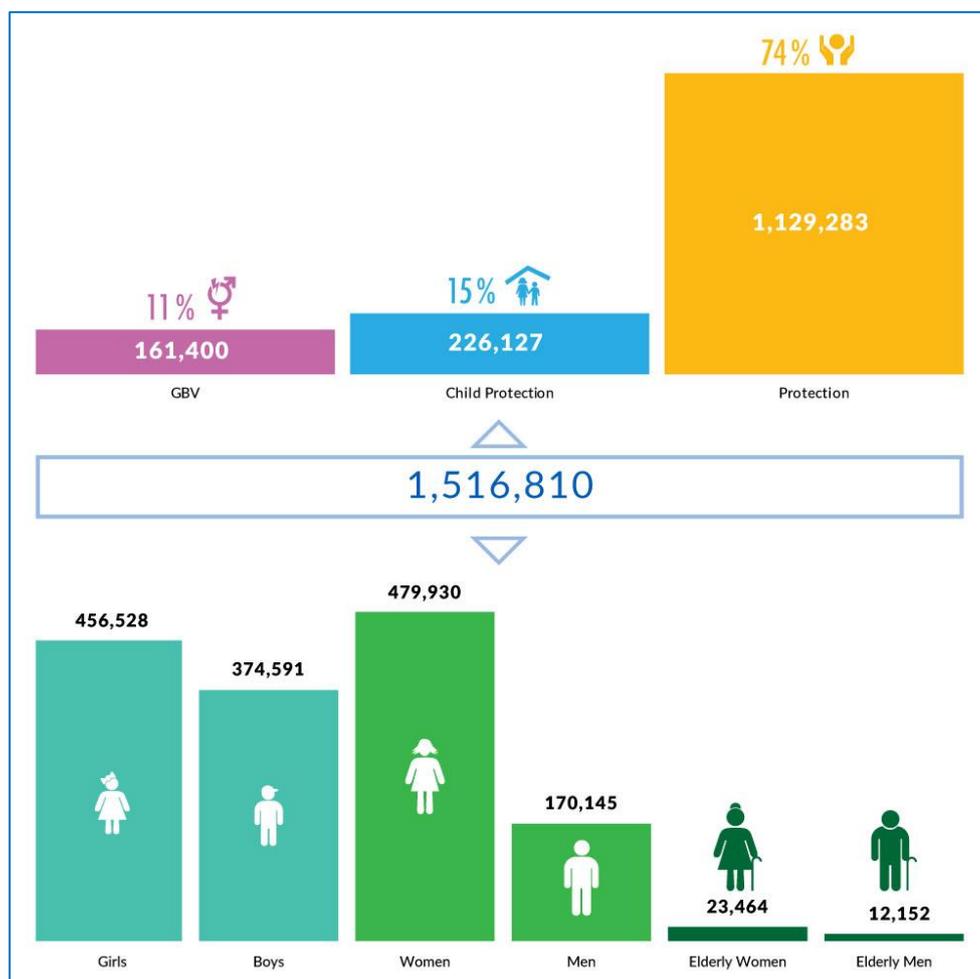
Over the years, UNHCR Syria has strengthened the rights and the community based foundation of its work. UNHCR works with communities to ensure people fulfil their rights to participate and decide on matters affecting their lives and improve protection as they are empowered, gain awareness and learn to seek assistance and services, all of which are entirely embedded in Community - Based Protection principles.

## Community Based Protection Services – Key Figures

**2.6 million persons in need** received protection interventions in 13 governorates in 2017.

**1,516,810 persons in need** received protection interventions in 13 governorates until end of September 2018.

**Aleppo remains the governorate with the highest % of interventions (24%),** followed by Rural Damascus (22 %), Homs (12 %) and Tartous (10%). These 4 governorates represent 68% of the total interventions.



## UNHCR's Community- Based Protection Strategy

UNHCR's protection response strategy follows a community-based approach and aims to reduce vulnerabilities and protection risks. It applies community participation and self-reliance approaches through psycho-social support, services for persons with specific needs, legal aid, in particular in relation to birth registration and documentation, education services and activities supporting livelihoods, vocational training to improve skills and opportunities to generate income, SGBV prevention and response and child protection services.

UNHCR aims to achieve these goals through its network of community centres and diversified international and national partner actors. To further expand the reach of community centres, UNHCR has introduced the concept of Satellite centres and, mobile units operating from the community centres.

The network of community centres, satellite centres and mobile teams with its outreach volunteers and services provided, are a fundamental tool for the implementation of community-based protection strategy, reaching out to affected populations, assessing protection risks and needs using a participatory age, gender and diversity approach, identifying community resources, and offering services and support to the affected populations.

### Community Centre Concept

Community centres are safe public places where women, men, boys and girls of diverse backgrounds can meet for social and recreational activities and attain integrated protection services ranging from legal aid, education, livelihoods training and start-up business grants, primary health care, psycho-social support, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) prevention and response activities, child protection interventions, in-kind assistance to address specific needs of persons with disabilities and the basic needs of vulnerable persons. In addition, the community centres reach out to populations of concern and carry out awareness-raising activities.

The main purpose of community centres is to provide integrated protection services, through the following approaches:

- Mobilize and empower Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), returnees and affected host communities and provide them with a forum to promote their participation in decision making processes that have an impact on their lives.
- Establish community interaction space where community members can meet, plan and organize activities.
- Help communities identify needs, available community capacities and formulate and implement practical solutions.
- Assess community's coping mechanisms and identify mitigation measures.
- Set up a community outreach system to facilitate community mobilization with a view to responding to the needs and the priorities of the communities.
- Map available services and develop a protection referral system, and thus strengthen the overall quality of the humanitarian response.
- Anchor a community-based protection approach in the community to ensure their ownership of the responses and increase sustainability.
- Gather qualitative and quantitative data on the needs of IDPs and affected populations.

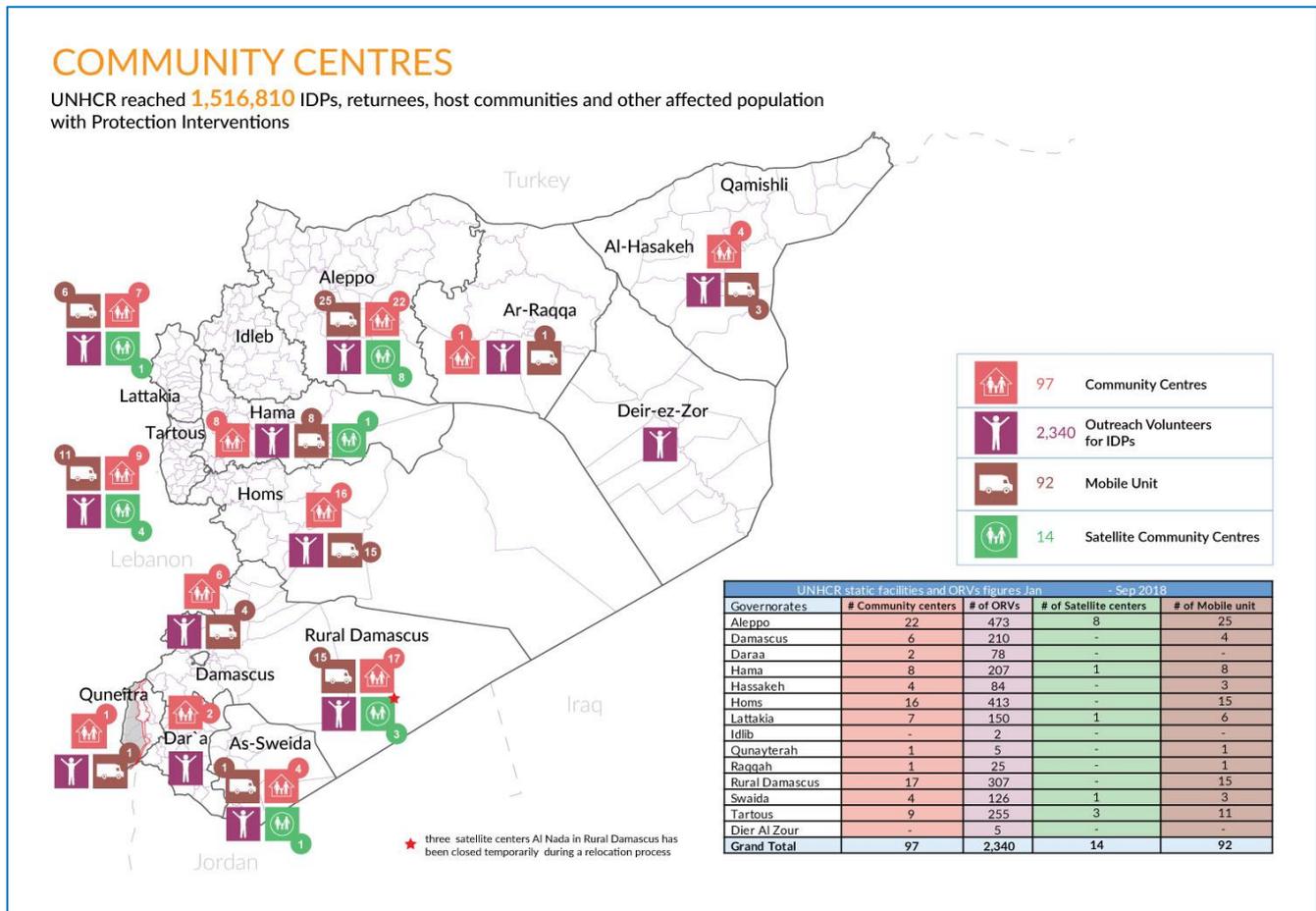
The network of community centres in Syria is a vital method of delivering UNHCR's multiple protection responses, enabling effective outreach to IDPs, spontaneous and self-organized returnees, and vulnerable host communities. UNHCR's assistance is community based, whereby IDPs, returnees and affected host communities receive same support through a needs-based approach. The centres are established based on the needs, capacities, and accessibility of an area, which are determined by multiple needs assessment, focus group discussions with the communities, analysis of movement trends of population and gaps review in terms of access and availability of protection services. Initially opened in seven governorates in 2013, the network of community centres has presently expanded to 12 governorates despite the challenging operating conditions.

Each community centre has a capacity to serve over 1,000 women, men, boys, and girls of diverse backgrounds and ages per month. Community centres are supported by approximately 25 community outreach volunteers per centre bridging communities to the centres, partners and UNHCR, thereby facilitating the reporting of risks, dissemination of information including on available protection services and assistance served within the community centres. Community centres are manned by experienced staff with specialization on psychosocial counselling and case management, legal aid, medical care and teaching pedagogy.

The community and their affiliated static structure satellite centres are further reinforced with mobile units expanding their reach out to people constrained with physical access. Unlike the community and satellite centres which offer a permanent space for communities in safe areas, mobile units provide protection services by reaching out to remote areas beyond the catchment area of the community and satellite centres. They also target newly displaced or returned communities and address emerging needs. On occasion, services are provided in collective shelters, informal settlements, schools, or skeleton buildings, depending on needs.

The community centres are run by 15 partners working with UNHCR, under partnership agreements.

## 97 Community Centres, 14 satellite centres and 92 mobile units in 12 governorates:



**Damascus and Rural Damascus Governorates:** There are 23 community centres, 19 mobile units and 517 community outreach volunteers in Damascus and Rural Damascus governorates. The centres and the outreach programmes are managed by UNHCR partners; Al Nada, Al Tamayoz, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate and All the East (GOPA), Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), Syrian Society for Social Development (SSSD), and the Syria Trust.

**Aleppo Governorate:** There are 22 community centres, eight satellite centres, 25 mobile units and 473 community outreach volunteers in Aleppo City and within the governorate of Aleppo. The centres and the outreach volunteers are managed by UNHCR partners; Al Ihsan, GOPA, Monastery Saint James the Mutilated (MSJM), Namaa, SARC, SSSD and the Syria Trust.

**Southern Region Syria: As-Sweida** There are four community centres, one satellite centre, three mobile units and 126 community outreach volunteers in As-Sweida, two community centres and 78 community outreach volunteers in Dara'a and one community centre, one mobile unit and five community outreach volunteers in Quneitra governorates. The centres and outreach volunteers are managed by UNHCR partners; GOPA (in Dara'a and As-Sweida) and SARC in Quneitra.

**Homs and Hama Governorates:** There are 16 community centres, 15 mobile units and 413 community outreach volunteers managed by UNHCR partners; Al Birr, Aoun, Child Care Society, GOPA, SARC and SSSD in Homs governorate while eight community centres, one satellite centre, eight mobile units and 207 outreach volunteers are managed by GOPA, Social Care, SSSD, the Syria Trust are available in Hama governorate.

**North East Syria:** There are four community centres, three mobile units and 84 community outreach volunteers managed by UNHCR partners; GOPA, SARC and SSSD in **Al-Hasakeh Governorate** and one community centre, one mobile unit and 25 outreach volunteers managed by GOPA in Raqqa are present in both governorates. In **Deir – ez – Zor** five outreach volunteers with legal specialization are supported by SARC.

**Coastal Region:** There are seven community centres, one satellite centre, six mobile units and 150 community outreach volunteers managed by UNHCR partners; GOPA, MSJM, SARC and the Syria Trust in Lattakia. While in Tartous, there are nine community centres, three satellite centres, 11 mobile units and 255 community outreach volunteers managed by UNHCR partners; Al-Batoul, GOPA, SARC, SSSD and the Syria Trust.

**2,340 Outreach Volunteers; each community centre is supported by a team of 25** dedicated community members, known as 'community outreach volunteers (ORVs). The main responsibility of an ORV is to reach to the most vulnerable members in his/her community and link them to the community centres. ORVs support in disseminating information on services including legal aid services, and providing feedback on community risks and concerns. They organize focus group discussions, recreational activities and awareness raising through different modalities as well as identify and refer IDPs, refugees and other affected population in need of protection intervention to specialized service provisions. The Outreach Volunteers are selected from the IDP or host community and are trained on basic community-based protection concepts. Depending on their specific skillset, some ORVs assume general responsibilities, while others assume specialized responsibilities for psychosocial support, SGBV, and child protection.

**Community-Led Initiatives (CLI) and Group Community Led Initiatives (GCLI);** In 2018, the outreach volunteers representing 15 partners facilitated 350 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) through their ORV teams and Community-Led Initiatives coordinators with IDP and affected communities within the neighbourhoods of their community centres. These FGDs serve as a platform for building trust with communities, identify their needs, and encourage communities to play an active role in the community-led initiatives programmes. The outcomes of these FGDs lead to the identification of community-led initiatives. In 2018 more than 50 community-led initiatives were identified through discussions with communities of which 30 are still under implementation. The 20 completed community-led initiatives include support for libraries in schools, campaigns for re-enrolment of out of school children back to schools, building protective fences along some roads to protect pedestrians, providing awareness raising on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and rehabilitation of toilets in shelters that are gender and age sensitive.

**The community led initiatives are managed by 400 persons from a self-managed youth groups. 11,000 persons from IDPs, host communities and returnees are reported to have benefited from such programmes.** UNHCR introduced a new phase for planning group Initiatives implemented by youth. This phase entails mobilizing and training young members inside the community centres to be able to design and lead initiatives addressing protection needs in their communities. The training includes topics on understanding community, identification of community problems then designing and implementation of initiatives. After accomplishing the training, the young participants propose projects that are funded by UNHCR under the group community-led initiatives programme.

## Success stories<sup>1</sup>

### Mobile teams make a difference in children's lives

They travel long distances to reach the most vulnerable, they are the first on the ground to assess and intervene in the situation, they are from the community and serve the community - they are the mobile team.

"We are all affected by this crisis and I want to see children grow up in a safe environment with a smile" said Shahd Eid, a mobile team member in Namaa organization one of UNHCR partners. Shahd and the rest of the team were working in Tal Shair village north rural Aleppo where they arranged a small child friendly space so that children have an opportunity to play in a safe space. Over 200 children come to this child friendly space to play games, listen to stories, watch cartoons and take part in other activities that support their well-being and help them

have a proper childhood. "I became a mobile team member because I wanted to give back to my community and ease the suffering of others" said Ahmad Youzfan while playing a game with children that have been displaced, some even multiple times. Many of the children in the child friendly space in Tal Shair are from Afrin and they have some difficulties in interacting with the local children due to the language barrier, so Ahmad and the rest of the team ensure that all children can play together and interact without any challenges.

The mobile teams proved to be a successful tool in Syria, as many IDPs, returnees and host communities have difficulties reaching the static facilities such as community centres due to security reasons, financial issues or lack of knowledge. The mobile teams have managed to provide community-based protection services to vulnerable Syrians in rural and urban areas and they can be deployed in new displacement and return situations helping UNHCR better assess protection needs and plan appropriate interventions.



<sup>1</sup> For more on our success stories please see UNHCR Syria's webpage, <http://www.unhcr.org/sy/stories>, UNHCR Syria's Facebook page and UNHCR Syria's twitter account.

### A young man's dream comes true

Anas is one of 1.75 million boys and girls that dropped out of school to support their families, millions of young Syrians lost their youth and years of education.

Anas, originally from rural Aleppo, was displaced 6 years ago when fighting broke out in his village. He and his family moved from Deir-ez-Zor then settled in Rural Damascus, draining the family's little savings. In Jaramana, Rural Damascus, Anas, being the eldest in his family, he found himself as the sole breadwinner. He worked long hours in a plastic factory to support his family, "I worked the night shift, from 7 pm to 7 am and I was always tired". Through the hardship Anas kept dreaming to one day continue his education and become a carpenter. "I love the craft of carpentry; designing and producing furniture," said Anas.

It was through UNHCR's partner SSSD's outreach volunteers who introduced Anas to a community centre near his home. Almost instantly, Anas began to attend remedial classes and months later passed his high school exam. Anas also attended a vocational training course and was selected to receive a carpentry toolkit. Through the community, Anas was introduced to a carpentry workshop where he starting working and supporting his family. Anas's ambition did not stop there, he enrolled himself in an accounting course to be able to develop his capacities and learn more; in hope, to open his own carpentry workshop. When meeting Anas at this workshop, he said, "I'm very happy now! I feel relieved working in something I truly love. My future is finally in my hands."



### Educational support – a step to a brighter future

Samiah, is a 16-year old girl, originally from Bokamal, Deir- Ez-Zor. When she was 11 years old, her life turned upside down as ISIS took control over Bokamal. She lived with her family for five years in extremely difficult conditions and



many of her relatives passed away. She was forced to leave school, and stay home for months losing contact with her friends, neighbours, and relatives. “I missed three years of school,” said Samiah, “All schools were closed and we were not able to continue our education anywhere.” Samiah and her family left Bokamal and were displaced first to Sweida and then to Homs city.

In Homs, Samiah instantly started going to school. However, as a 9<sup>th</sup> grade student, she found it extremely difficult to study after being out of school for three years. She became depressed as her hope of pursuing her studies seemed impossible to achieve. “I was shocked when I started school again,” said Samiah, “I did not understand the subjects of physics, chemistry and French”. Samiah was almost giving up on school and then she visited the UNHCR community centre, run by Aoun, where she was offered to attend catch-up and remedial courses. She enrolled in the Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) and through these studies she managed to succeed in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade national exam which gave her an opportunity to complete her studies. “My goal is to be accepted into University and become a pharmacist and my dream is to be a writer” said Samiah.

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## Special thanks to our Donors<sup>2</sup>:

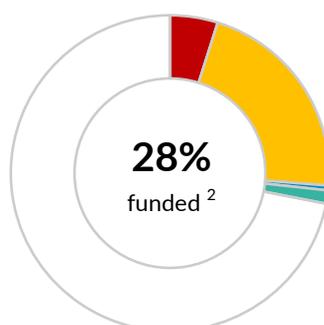
Bulgaria | Canada | Denmark | ECHO | Educate A Child Programme (EAC/EAA) | Finland | France | Germany | IKEA Foundation | Italy | Japan | Kuwait-America Foundation | Lithuania | Netherlands | Norway | Opec Fund for International Development | Private donors Australia | Private donors Germany | Private donors Italy | Private donors Republic of Korea | Private donors Spain | Private donors Switzerland | Republic of Korea | Russian Federation | Saudi Arabia | Sweden | Switzerland | Syria Humanitarian Fund | The Big Heart Foundation | UN Children Fund | United Kingdom | United States of America |

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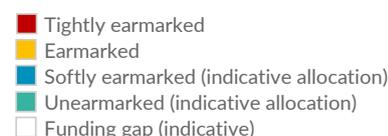
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<sup>2</sup> For more details on funding received by our Donors, please see Annex I – Syrian Arab Republic Funding Update – 23 October 2018.

**\$612.2 million**

 UNHCR's financial requirements 2018 <sup>1</sup>

**SYRIAN ARAB  
REPUBLIC**

as of 23 October 2018


**CONTRIBUTIONS <sup>3</sup> | USD**

	■ Unearmarked	■ Softly earmarked	■ Earmarked	■ Tightly earmarked	Total
United States of America	-	-	111,300,000	-	111,300,000
Canada	-	-	7,473,842	-	7,473,842
Norway	-	-	6,376,738	-	6,376,738
Japan	-	-	-	5,381,869	5,381,869
Saudi Arabia	-	-	-	5,000,000	5,000,000
European Union	-	-	-	4,705,128	4,705,128
Country-Based Pooled Funds	-	-	-	3,268,469	3,268,469
Sweden	-	-	3,172,589	-	3,172,589
Educate A Child Programme (EAC/EAA)	-	-	-	1,302,907	1,302,907
Finland	-	-	1,234,568	-	1,234,568
Belgium	-	-	-	1,165,501	1,165,501
Switzerland	-	-	1,016,260	-	1,016,260
Republic of Korea	-	-	1,000,000	-	1,000,000
Kuwait-America Foundation	-	-	-	1,000,000	1,000,000
France	-	-	580,720	-	580,720
Opec Fund for International Development	-	-	-	500,000	500,000
Russian Federation	-	-	500,000	-	500,000
Italy	-	-	-	478,150	478,150
IKEA Foundation	-	-	-	188,679	188,679
Private donors Germany	-	-	144,718	-	144,718
The Big Heart Foundation	-	-	-	120,375	120,375
UN Children Fund	-	-	-	96,862	96,862
Bulgaria	-	-	92,025	-	92,025
Spain	-	-	-	81,871	81,871
Lithuania	-	-	47,574	-	47,574
Miscellaneous private donors	-	-	7,052	12,834	19,886
Indicative allocation of funds and adjustments	8,255,085	3,041,206	(1,989,740)	6,427,904	15,734,455
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,255,085</b>	<b>3,041,206</b>	<b>130,956,345</b>	<b>29,730,550</b>	<b>171,983,185</b>

Methodology: Unearmarked funding is allocated and reallocated multiple times during the year to allow UNHCR to fund prioritised activities. This funding update includes an indicative allocation of funds so as to accurately represent the resources available for the country. The contributions earmarked for Syrian Arab Republic shown above are combined with an indicative allocation of the softly earmarked and unearmarked contributions listed below. This allocation respects different levels of earmarking. Adjustments relate to programme support costs and carry-over.

**OTHER SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS <sup>4</sup> | USD**

Germany 45.4 million | Private donors Australia 9.9 million | Private donors Germany 6.4 million | Denmark 5.7 million | Sweden 4.4 million | Finland 4.3 million | United States of America 4.3 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 3.6 million | Private donors Switzerland 3.2 million | Norway 3.2 million

Holy See | Iceland | Liechtenstein | Malta | Romania | Russian Federation | Slovenia | Private donors

**UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS <sup>5</sup> | USD**

Sweden 98.2 million | Private donors Spain 58.7 million | United Kingdom 45.3 million | Norway 42.5 million | Netherlands 39.1 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 28.5 million | Denmark 25.5 million | Switzerland 15.8 million | Private donors Italy 15.1 million | Private donors Japan 14.6 million | France 14 million | Germany 13.7 million | Private donors Sweden 12.2 million | Italy 11.2 million

Algeria | Argentina | Austria | Belgium | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Bulgaria | Canada | Chile | China | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | India | Indonesia | Ireland | Israel | Kuwait | Liechtenstein | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Philippines | Portugal | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Russian Federation | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Slovakia | Sri Lanka | Thailand | Turkey | United Arab Emirates | Uruguay | Private donors

Notes:

1. The financial requirements for Syrian Arab Republic include requirements for the Iraq Situation Response and the Syria Situation Response.
2. The percentage funded (28%) and total funding amount (\$171,983,185) are indicative based on the methodology described above. This leaves an indicative funding gap of \$440,205,815 representing 72% of the financial requirements.
3. Contributions to Syrian Arab Republic are shown by the earmarking modality as defined in the Grand Bargain.
4. Due to their earmarking at the region or sub-region, or to a related situation or theme, the other softly earmarked contributions listed are those which can potentially be used for Syrian Arab Republic. Where a donor has contributed \$2 million or more, the total amount of the contributions is shown.
5. Contributed without restrictions on its use, unearmarked funding allows UNHCR critical flexibility in how best to reach refugees and other populations of concern who are in the greatest need and at the greatest risk. Where a donor has contribution \$10 million or more, the total amount of the contribution is shown.

For more information: <http://reporting.unhcr.org>

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