

Syria – Complex Emergency

JUNE 3, 2021

SITUATION AT A GLANCE

<p>13.4 MILLION</p> <p>Estimated Population in Need of Humanitarian Assistance in Syria</p> <p><i>UN – March 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 – March 2021</i></p>	<p>4.8 MILLION</p> <p>Estimated People USAID/BHA Reaches per Month in Syria</p> <p><i>UN – May 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 \$239 million in additional humanitarian funding to respond to the Syria crisis.
- UN cross-border assistance continues to support 2.4 million people in northwest Syria each month through Bab al-Hawa.
- Relief actors monitor a water crisis in northeast Syria prompted by low water levels in the Euphrates River.
- 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 \$6,739,923,534

State/PRM² \$6,299,715,325

Total \$13,039,638,859

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 More Than \$239 Million in New Funding for the Syria Crisis

On June 3, during a visit to the Turkey–Syria border, U.S. Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield announced more than \$239 million in additional funding provided by USAID/BHA for the humanitarian response in Syria and to support Syrian refugees in neighboring countries. The new assistance will reinforce life-saving support for internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees, and other vulnerable populations in Syria and the region by providing emergency food, health, livelihood, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance. During the border visit, Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield—joined by U.S. Ambassador to Turkey David M. Satterfield and UN Deputy Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria Crisis Mark Cutts—emphasized the dire situation in Syria, where more than 13.4 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. The officials visited Turkey’s Bab al-Hawa border crossing and met with U.S. Government (USG) humanitarian partners to discuss humanitarian conditions and the emergency response in northwest Syria, including the critical and irreplaceable role of UN cross-border assistance. Since the onset of the crisis in 2012, the USG has provided more than \$13 billion in humanitarian assistance to help Syrians in need.

UN Cross-Border Assistance Continues Ahead of July Resolution Expiration

Since UN cross-border operations began in July 2014, nearly 47,400 trucks have transported UN humanitarian commodities cross-border into Syria from neighboring countries, as authorized by the UN Security Council (UNSC). However, UNSC Resolution 2533—which was adopted in July 2020 and re-authorized the UN’s use of Bab al-Hawa crossing for an additional 12 months—is scheduled to expire on July 10, 2021, which would result in a significant disruption of humanitarian access to approximately 4.2 million people in northwest Syria. During April 2021, more than 1,000 trucks delivered UN humanitarian commodities cross-border into northwest Syria’s Idlib Governorate through Bab al-Hawa, reaching approximately 2.4 million people in Aleppo and Idlib governorates; this total reflects the average monthly reach of UN cross-border support, including emergency food, health, nutrition, and WASH assistance. According to the UN, as of April, more than 80 percent of the population of northwest Syria is in need of humanitarian assistance—3.4 million out of the region’s 4.2 million people—including 2.4 million people in Idlib and 1 million people in northern Aleppo. The loss of UN cross-border access would significantly reduce humanitarian aid to the northwest, including monthly food assistance and substantial medical, nutrition, and WASH commodities.

Low Euphrates River Levels Prompts Water Crisis in Northeast Syria

Since January, relief actors have monitored decreasing water levels in the Euphrates River, which runs through northeast Syria, and resultant humanitarian impacts. As of May, the water levels had reached a critically low point, threatening access to safe drinking water for nearly 5.5 million people in Syria who rely on the Euphrates and its subsidiaries, the UN reports. Severely low water levels have hindered operations at Aleppo’s Tishreen dam and Ar Raqqa Governorate’s Tabqa dam in recent weeks, resulting in the closure of several water pumping and treatment stations reliant on the dams for hydroelectricity. The Tishreen dam is functioning on less than half of the minimum water level required for full operations, leading to a partial closure of the dam and resultant electricity blackouts across the northeast in early May; engineers at the dam warned of a full shutdown if water levels do not increase. In response, Tabqa dam—which is located downstream from Tishreen dam—was utilized as an emergency back-up source; however, the water levels at Tabqa were already 80 percent depleted as of mid-May. According to the UN, if both dams cease operations, approximately 3 million people would lose electricity across northeast Syria, as would hospitals and other vital infrastructure. The complete

shutdown of the two dams would also likely have negative ramifications on agricultural production in the region, amid below-average rainfall and drought conditions, and jeopardize coronavirus disease (COVID-19) mitigation efforts. Historically, the northeast produces 70 percent of Syria's wheat and barley; diminished crop production would further exacerbate food insecurity—which is already at a record-high 12.4 million people in need of food assistance, representing 60 percent of Syria's population.

Government of Iraq Repatriates 95 Iraqi Households from Al Hol to Iraq

On May 25, more than 380 Iraqis departed northeast Syria's Al Hol camp in Al Hasakah Governorate to return to Iraq; the households were repatriated by the Government of Iraq, the UN reports. The households were relocated to an IDP camp in Iraq's Ninewa Governorate until they are able to return to areas of origin or other locations. USAID/BHA partner the International Organization for Migration (IOM) continues to assess and register the new arrivals in Ninewa, as well as provide assistance to meet immediate needs. The households' relocation—the first coordinated returns to Iraq from Al Hol—is a notable step toward further departures in an effort to reduce the population of Al Hol amid increasing security and humanitarian concerns at the camp, relief actors report. According to the UN, more than 10,000 people—including Syrian and non-Syrian nationals—have departed Al Hol since June 2019. However, more than 60,000 people remained in the camp as of May, including nearly 14,000 children younger than five years of age.

COVID-19 Vaccination Campaign Continues Across Syria

Health actors continue to coordinate COVID-19 vaccination efforts across Syria, following the arrival of the first vaccines supported by the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) initiative in mid-April. An initial shipment of 203,000 COVID-19 vaccine doses arrived in Damascus city on April 22, intended for distribution in Syrian Arab Republic Government (SARG)-held areas of southern and western Syria and Self Administration of North and East Syria (SNES)-held areas of northeast Syria, with prioritized delivery to frontline health workers. As of late May, the UN reported that the first batch of COVAX-supported vaccines were sufficient for 9,000 health care workers in northeast Syria. Simultaneously, a separate batch of 53,800 vaccine doses for northwest Syria was shipped through the Bab al-Hawa border crossing in late April, which remains a vital transshipment component for the COVID-19 vaccination campaign. As of May 24, health actors had vaccinated more than 10,000 medical and humanitarian workers in northwest Syria, according to international media. Health actors had confirmed more than 66,200 COVID-19 cases across Syria, including at least 3,200 deaths, as of early June. UN agencies continue to warn that the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases likely represents a fraction of the actual caseload, as testing capacity remains limited countrywide.

2021 Syria HNO Identifies 13.4 Million People in Need of Aid

In late March, the UN released the 2021 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) for Syria, identifying 13.4 million people in need of humanitarian assistance across the country, including 6 million people classified as experiencing extreme or catastrophic levels of humanitarian need. The 2021 HNO reflects an increase of 2.3 million people in need—or 21 percent—compared to the 2020 HNO, largely due to increased food insecurity, continued hostilities and displacement, limited access to basic commodities and services, inadequate shelter conditions, and reduced livelihood opportunities. The COVID-19 pandemic and related mitigation measures accelerated Syria's economic deterioration by curtailing movement and hindering access to formal and informal labor markets, further reducing populations' ability to meet basic needs in 2021. The UN estimates that 12.4 million people will require health assistance through December 2021, largely due to the cumulative effects of the 10-year crisis, the high cost of health services, and the lack of medical supplies and functional health facilities.

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), UN World Food Program (WFP), and 17 non-governmental organizations (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 11 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. State/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 11 NGO partners, as well as 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 partners to provide safe drinking water for Syrian refugees, including one NGO partner in Iraq and Lebanon and one international organization partner in Jordan.



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 90 community centers throughout Syria, providing psychosocial support services, legal counseling, and case management and referrals. From January to March, UNHCR provided protection assistance to approximately 290,000 people. 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 neighboring countries.

USAID/BHA's 12 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 gender-based violence (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 13 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. From January to March, UNHCR reached nearly 15,000 beneficiaries with shelter assistance in Syria. State/PRM also supports IOM, UNHCR, and 4 NGO partners to provide shelter and relief commodities to refugees in neighboring countries.



1.7 Million

Number of Syrian refugees reached by State/PRM-supported winterization aid during the 2020/2021 season

WINTERIZATION

USAID/BHA supports 11 partners, including IOM, to provide winterization assistance in Syria, such as the distribution of emergency shelter and relief items, such as blankets, fuel, tents, and winter clothing. With State/PRM support, UNHCR and its partners reached more than 660,000 people in Syria and 1.7 million refugees in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon during the 2020/2021 winter season. In Syria, UNHCR distributed more than 2 million seasonal items, including blankets, winter clothing, and sleeping bags.

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 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 SDF 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); Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA); Protection; Shelter and Settlements; WASH	Syria	\$181,796,303
IOM	HCIMA, MPCA, 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	\$217,180,000

Program Support		Syria	\$387,181
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING IN SYRIA			\$416,363,484
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			\$474,277,187

USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR SYRIAN REFUGEE-HOSTING COUNTRIES IN FY 2021 ¹

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
EGYPT			
USAID/BHA			
WFP	Food Assistance—Cash Transfers	Egypt	\$20,280,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING IN EGYPT			\$20,280,000
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, Gender-Based Violence (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			\$27,116,939
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	\$72,800,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING IN JORDAN			\$72,800,000
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			\$115,473,703
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	\$6,760,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING IN TURKEY			\$6,760,000
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			\$52,110,000
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	\$586,223,484
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	\$835,427,372

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	\$6,739,923,534
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	\$13,039,638,859

¹ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of June 3, 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)