

Regional Strategic Overview 2024



3RP

REGIONAL REFUGEE
& RESILIENCE PLAN



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ABOUT

The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan



is a **strategic coordination, planning, advocacy, fundraising and programming platform** with over **270** humanitarian and development partners across five countries.



has **channeled around US\$ 24 billion** since its inception in 2015.



is a **regionally coherent plan** that adopts a tailored approach to bring out country-specific needs and priorities.



consists of **one regional plan and five standalone country chapters**, which align with existing government-led national response plans (e.g., JRP and LRP).



is **centered on national leadership and capacities** to achieve resilience for all, guided by the principle of 'leaving no one behind'.



is at the forefront of many **programmatic innovations in support of national and local systems**, using technology to increase efficiency and effectiveness, and supporting the self-reliance of refugees and host communities.

Cover photo: Türkiye, ILO/Fatma Çankara

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The work of 3RP partners would not have been possible without the extremely generous support of donors.

As well as member states, 3RP Partners are grateful to governments, private donors, humanitarian funds, foundations, charities, and other organizations for their contributions. 3RP Partners would also like to acknowledge the huge contribution of host countries who have supported the response in many ways including by making their services available to refugee populations.

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Thirteen years since the outbreak of the Syria crisis, 3RP partners continue to work in an environment where long-term solutions for Syrian refugees remain extremely limited. The lives of refugees and those in host communities have become more challenging, exacerbated by high inflation rates and limited access to social services and economic opportunities. Some countries have witnessed increased social tensions between refugees and host community members.

In the past year, new conflicts as well as natural disasters have shaken the region, generating yet more challenges. In February, devastating earthquakes struck Southern Türkiye and North-West Syria, leaving millions displaced and homeless, and disrupting the education of countless children. This was followed by the conflict in Sudan that erupted in April, forcing over a million people to flee to neighbouring countries, including Egypt. Floods in Libya were a stark reminder of the effects of climate change on fragile environments. Most recently, the Israel-Palestine conflict has already led to significant internal displacement of more than one million individuals in Gaza and tens of thousands in Lebanon. It has also raised concerns about instability spilling over into Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan.

Diplomatic efforts have progressed in the past year, and Syria was readmitted to the Arab League. However, the country's socio-economic and political situation remains bleak, leaving millions of Syrians displaced internally and across the region. According to UNHCR's Refugee Perception and Intention Survey, while 56% of Syrian refugees still hope to return to Syria one day, the majority of Syrian refugees do not see themselves returning in the near future.

Meanwhile, socio-economic conditions in 3RP countries have deteriorated, putting increasing stress on refugees and host communities. Some 90% of the Syrian refugee population in Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt are in debt, borrowing money from friends and

neighbours to cover their basic needs. In Lebanon, unemployment has more than doubled since 2019 with an estimated 80% of Lebanese living in poverty. The average income of Syrian refugees in Jordan decreased by 12% between the fourth quarter of 2022 and the first quarter of 2023. Across all 3RP countries, inadequate and difficult access to social safety nets and other essential services such as health and education means more families are sinking below the poverty line, disproportionately affecting women, children and people with disabilities.

Despite this outlook, funding for the 3RP has been declining, leading to an increased burden on local and national systems to provide quality services and maintain social stability. With fewer available resources, 3RP partners have collectively made efforts towards prioritisation in 2024.

Following the 2022 independent evaluation of the 3RP, the joint secretariat took the recommendations forward and refined the 3RP's conceptual framework and operating model, as well as enhanced advocacy efforts. The 3RP's integrated approach continues to highlight the importance of promoting resilience. The collective efforts of 3RP partners in the first nine months of 2023 led to the provision of protection services to 5.4 million people, food and cash assistance to some 566,000, supporting 13,000 people to gain employment and start businesses, and training to over 17,500 national public institution staff.

In 2024, building on the progress made in the past year, our strategic directions will remain: protecting people, supporting durable solutions, contributing to dignified lives, and enhancing local and national capacities. 3RP partners will continue working with host governments and national and international stakeholders with an unwavering commitment to ensure no one is left behind by building resilience and promoting inclusion of refugees and host communities, and advancing durable solutions for the refugees.



Dr. Abdallah Al Dardari

Director, Regional Bureau for Arab States, UNDP



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Regional Situation Overview



The Syria crisis, now entering its 14th year, remains one of the largest displacement crises globally, with more than 12 million Syrians forcibly displaced. Within this dire situation, approximately six million Syrian refugees are still hosted by neighbouring countries, amid deteriorating socio-economic and humanitarian conditions.

Around nine out of ten Syrian refugees grapple with challenges in meeting their basic needs and more host communities than ever need assistance.¹ Syrian refugee hosting countries have shown incredible hospitality for over a decade yet are suffering from layers of crises which have led in some countries to an increasingly challenging protection environment with heightened negative sentiments towards refugees and worrisome pressures for return to Syria. At the same time, international support for Syrian refugee hosting countries is declining.

The February earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria have also exacerbated this already dire situation. In Southeast Türkiye, 1.7 million Syrian refugees are among the nine million individuals affected. Additionally, the ongoing conflict in Sudan has led to a significant influx of refugees into Egypt, adding more demand for Egypt's already stretched resources and public services. The recent hostilities in Gaza add additional challenges in this regard and threaten regional security conditions. A recently published socio-economic impact assessment demonstrates a sharp decline in the Human Development Index (HDI), setting the State of Palestine back by between 11 and 16 years, depending on the intensity of the conflict.² Moreover, regional implications on the war in Gaza can already be observed, with impacts on neighbouring countries' economies.

February 2023:

In the aftermath of the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria, over 9 million people were affected, with around 3.6 million rendered homeless.

Photo: UNHCR

In countries affected by the Syria crisis, the combination of protracted displacement and ongoing socio-economic challenges has had a devastating impact. In Lebanon, 90% of Syrian refugees now find themselves living in conditions of extreme poverty.³ Food prices have surged by 332% since June 2021, pushing 94% of refugee households to incur debt just to meet their essential needs.⁴ In Jordan, two-thirds of refugees have reported that their financial situation has worsened in the last 12 months while recent analysis conducted by UNHCR suggests that average household debt can be as high as JOD 1,261 (USD 1,778).⁵ In Türkiye, similar economic challenges, notably high inflation and currency fluctuations, have strained both refugees and host communities. Official figures in September 2023 put inflation at 61.5%, with disproportionate impact on low-income households, especially in transport, food, and housing. The unemployment rate stands at 9.4%, with a notable gender disparity. Host communities are strongly affected too, with unemployment in Lebanon having more than doubled since 2019,⁶ and unemployment in Jordan remaining at an all-time high at 23%.⁷ While relative stability in Iraq has presented a unique opportunity for displaced Iraqis, returnees, and refugees to gain greater access to public services and social protection schemes provided by the Government, years of conflict have weakened the capacity and resilience of national institutions, rendering the country vulnerable to further shocks.

Refugee returns to Syria continue to remain low, with 38,257 returns verified or monitored by UNHCR from January to the end of December 2023. UNHCR's latest return intention survey conducted in early 2023 indicated that while a majority of Syrians wish to return one day (56%), only a small number (1.1%) planned on doing so in the next 12 months. Resettlement and complementary pathways remain the most viable durable solution for Syrian refugees who continue to represent the refugee population with the highest global resettlement needs, with over 753,000 Syrian refugees projected to be in need of resettlement in 2024.⁸ With conditions in Syria not conducive for large-scale voluntary returns in safety and dignity, continued support to key refugee-hosting countries will remain critical to address humanitarian needs, maintain protection space and advance resilience.

2022 3RP Achievements



Prevent and reduce statelessness through legally recognized documentation and favourable legal provisions

96% of children have a birth document (birth certificate or birth notification)



Expanding local opportunities for refugees from a solutions perspective

7,067 refugees were issued with work permits and business licenses



Refugee children are enrolled in the national education system (primary and secondary)

1.5 million children were (5-17 years, girls and boys) enrolled in formal and nonformal education

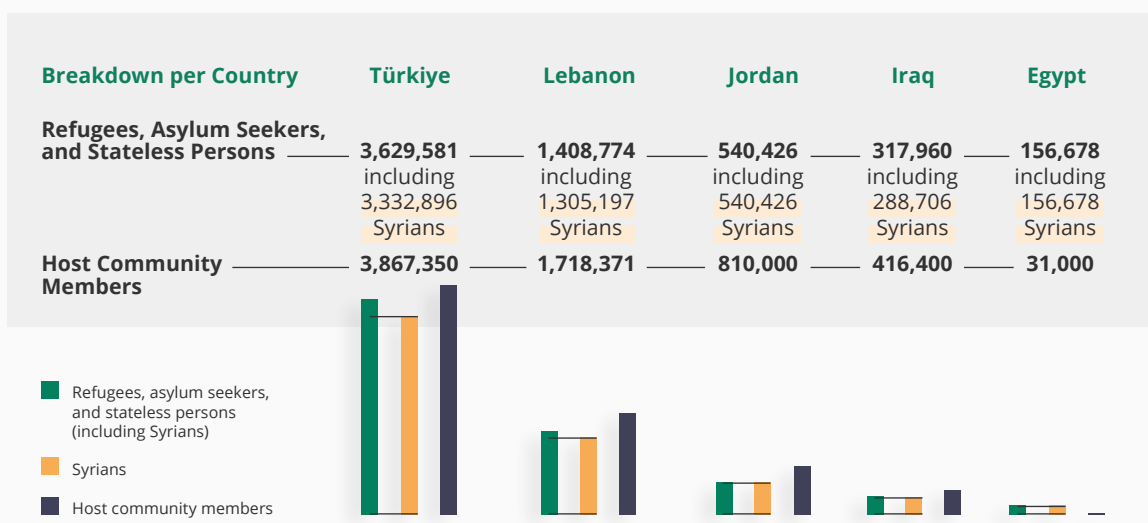
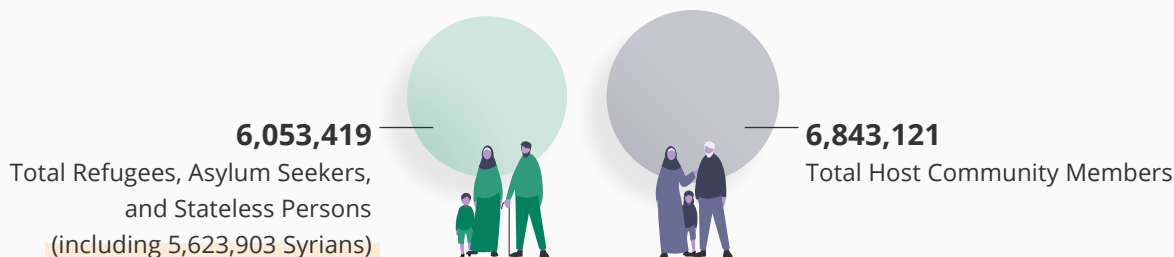


Response capacities of national public institutions strengthened

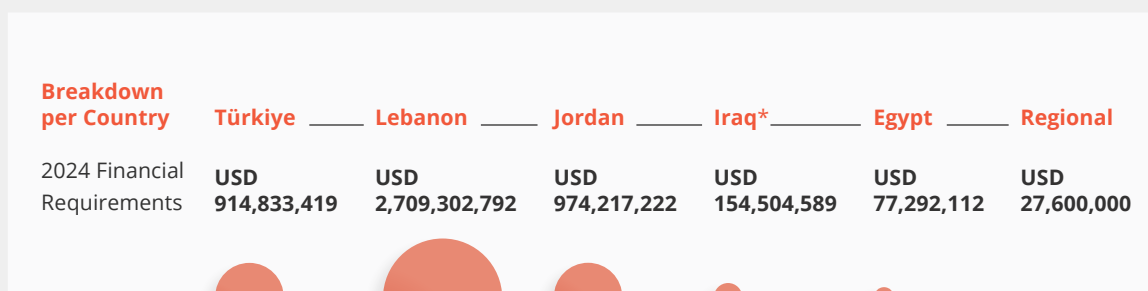
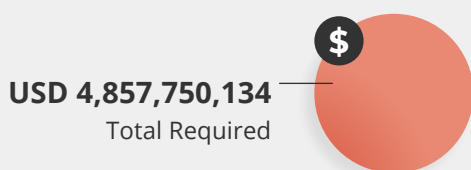
391,465 staff of national public institutions, including front line workers such as nurses and teachers were trained

2024 Response

Population Targeted in 2024



Financial Requirements for 2024

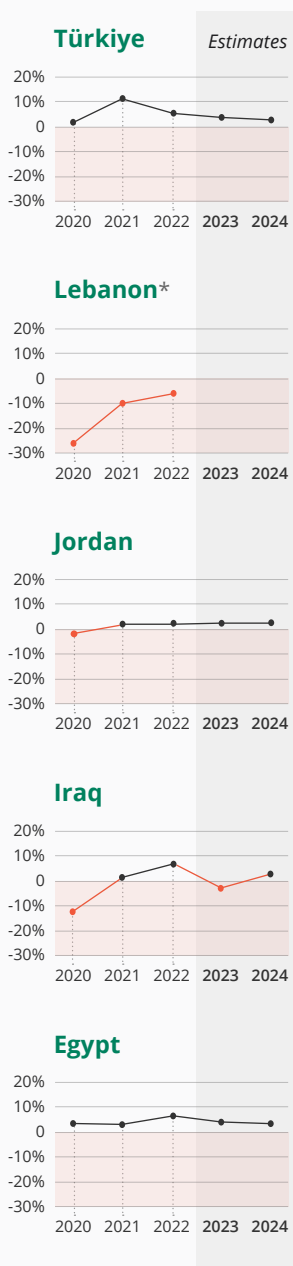


Note: These figures may change subject to further updates from countries.
 * As outlined in the Iraq Country Chapter 2023-2024, Iraq is transitioning from the 3RP; the requirements for 2024 are projected amounts to finalise the remaining activities.

Regional Needs, Vulnerabilities and Trends

Socio-economic Outlook in the 3RP Countries

Percentage of the Real GDP Growth in the 3RP Countries



* There is no data for Lebanon after 2022 due to the collapse of the financial system.

3RP countries hosting Syrian refugees continue to face macro-economic challenges, which have concrete impacts on the resilience and capacities of individuals, households, communities, businesses, and institutions. Three out of the five 3RP countries – Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan – carried public debt burdens of 88% of GDP or more by 2022. Most of the host countries allocate a significant share of their budgets to debt service, which can crowd out spending on health or education or other social services, that would otherwise benefit host communities and refugees.

Moreover, inflation rates in Lebanon and Türkiye have reached significant highs, with severe implications for the cost of living in those countries. This also leads directly to an increase in negative coping mechanisms among refugees such as child labour and early and forced marriages. In Jordan, unemployment remains high at 23% for Jordanians, 28% for Syrian refugees and 36% for refugees of other nationalities, affecting women and youth the most.

Poor host-community households and refugees living in poverty are more vulnerable to shocks and are at a higher risk of facing severe food insecurity, exploitation, and lack of decent work conditions. In most 3RP countries, refugees face different policy barriers such

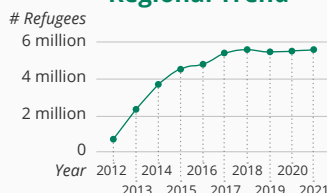
as in obtaining residency and work permits, finding work due to employment quotas, limited access to training, skills, validation, and certification of technical and professional abilities. Poverty levels among host communities are on the increase, and women, persons with disabilities, elderly, and youth represent the most affected groups. The deteriorating economic situation is impacting the purchasing power of households in vulnerable situations, including access to food, healthcare, and other basic needs.

Studies highlight the weaknesses and inefficiencies of social protection systems in terms of coverage, adequacy, and shock responsiveness in the Arab region, including in the 3RP countries.⁹ While government social protection expenditures represent a considerable share (above 20% in Jordan, Türkiye and Lebanon in 2020)¹⁰ of total expenditure, this does not represent a positive performance of social spending. Transformative and shock-responsive social protection systems require even more budget. For that reason, 3RP countries should explore the available innovative options for expanding fiscal space for social protection and SDGs, while they continue to require international support to mobilise financing, especially grants and concessional loans.

Protracted Displacement with growing Vulnerabilities among Refugees and Host Communities

Population over Time: Number of Refugees

Regional Trend



Forced displacement does not only affect those who are displaced, but also the communities which host them. It has even greater impact when the situation becomes protracted, usually characterised by more than 25,000 refugees from the same country of origin who have been in exile in a specific low- or middle-income host country for at least five consecutive years according to UNHCR.¹¹

over 330,000 Sudanese have entered Egypt,¹³ requiring life-saving protection and humanitarian assistance.

The vulnerability of refugees increases when there are regional or global crises triggering political, economic, social and security concerns in host countries. Refugees already face unique challenges, which are exacerbated when conditions in the host countries deteriorate as evidenced in the 3RP countries. Refugees tend to resort to harmful coping strategies, including reducing meal portions and non-food expenses, engaging in high-risk jobs, taking on debts, withdrawing children from school, engaging in child labour and forced and early marriage.

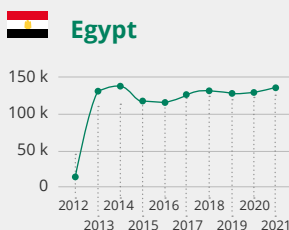
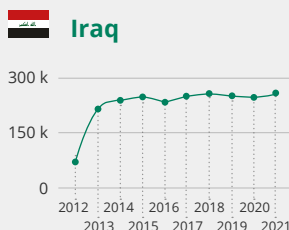
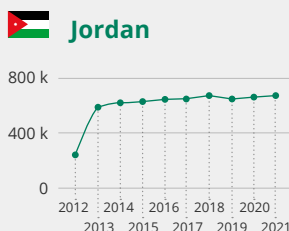
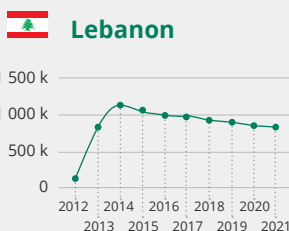
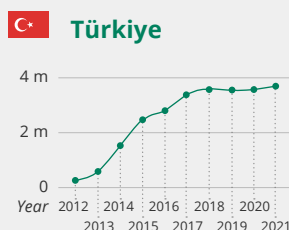
As a result of the conflict that broke out in Syria in 2011, a sharp increase in the number of Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR in the neighbouring host countries, including Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon, was observed in 2013. Since then, the number has remained at a similar or higher level without prospects for durable solutions.

Concurrently, protracted displacement in a deteriorating environment magnifies pressures on the host governments and directly affects resources needed to address the development demands of host populations and refugees. While coping mechanisms and recovering from shocks may vary between host communities and refugees, both groups face similar challenges such as unemployment leading to competition over limited job opportunities and already scarce resources, which hampers social cohesion.

In Türkiye, the number of Syrian refugees under temporary protection reached 1.5 million in 2014, then doubled in two years, reaching over 3 million in 2016, then 3.2 million in December 2023. Across the region, around 95% of Syrian refugees live with host communities and the remainder in camps. Türkiye is host to one of the largest refugee populations in the world while Lebanon and Jordan are in the top five globally in terms of refugees relative to their national populations.¹²

Better prospects for education, work, and fulfilling lives are needed to prevent the risk of inter-generational protection needs and to find lasting solutions.¹⁴

Egypt hosts a relatively small number of Syrian refugees in addition to refugees and asylum-seekers from 58 other nationalities, many from countries with protracted crises. However, since the beginning of the Sudan crisis in April 2023,



Key Cross-cutting Themes

Policy and Regulatory Frameworks

Host governments in the region have continued to play a generous role in hosting Syrian refugees displaced over the course of the crisis. However, ensuring progress towards self-reliance or achieving durable solutions remain challenging. The legal status of refugees in host countries, restrictive national policies and lack of comprehensive access to civil documentation, continue to limit the participation and the socio-economic inclusion of refugees within society. Access to basic services and decent livelihood opportunities is inconsistent, while social protection schemes are limited and often inaccessible to refugees. The 3RP response aims at expanding local opportunities and empowering refugees and host communities to become self-reliant. Embracing inclusive policies will play a pivotal role in supporting the achievement of any durable solution to displacement. *See the [Durable Solutions annex for a more detailed analysis on how policy frameworks relate to solutions.](#)*

Climate Change & Environmental Degradation

The wider region faces the most severe water shortages globally, with climate change significantly impacting water, energy, food security, and ecosystems. Urgent governance, development and humanitarian challenges resulting from the Syria crisis are worsened by ecological degradation, growing water insecurity, desertification and rising temperatures.¹⁵ These phenomena will negatively impact natural resources, health, and infrastructure, exacerbated by challenges including population growth, increases in multi-dimensional poverty, and the impact of displacement. Looking ahead, climate change will continue to be a key driver for heightened needs, vulnerabilities and potential tensions among and between refugees and host communities. The 3RP will prioritise addressing climate change, energy needs and environmental degradation to offset any potential instabilities.



Turning Dreams into Reality:
 In Türkiye, Hasan, a Syrian refugee, and Esma, a Turkish entrepreneur, are remarkable examples of resilience and entrepreneurial spirit. Hasan has established the Kardeşler Textile Company, building a bridge between Syrian and Turkish communities, while Esma, navigating a male-dominated industry, has expanded her textile business. Supported by IOM's Enterprise Development Fund, their stories highlight the transformative power of inclusive policies and assistance, showing how fostering cooperation and providing targeted support can empower and economically uplift both refugees and host communities.

Photos and Story: IOM



Gender

Conflicts, natural disasters, and economic crises have reversed development gains, including advancements in gender equality.¹⁶ Gender gaps continue to persist¹⁷ particularly as conflicts turn into protracted humanitarian crises, disproportionately affecting women and girls. Emergency responses can either reinforce or challenge these inequalities¹⁸ with e.g., older women in humanitarian settings facing limited services and often being overlooked.¹⁹ Displaced and refugee women often take on new roles due to economic pressures, potentially gaining decision-making authority but increasing burden, social pressure and risks of conflicts,²⁰ especially for women with disabilities. Notably, most Syrian refugee women in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Egypt earn low incomes which may lead to more negative coping strategies, such as withdrawing children from school and child marriage for girls. Recognizing and addressing these disparities is crucial to mitigate the impacts of existing inequalities.



Palestine Refugees

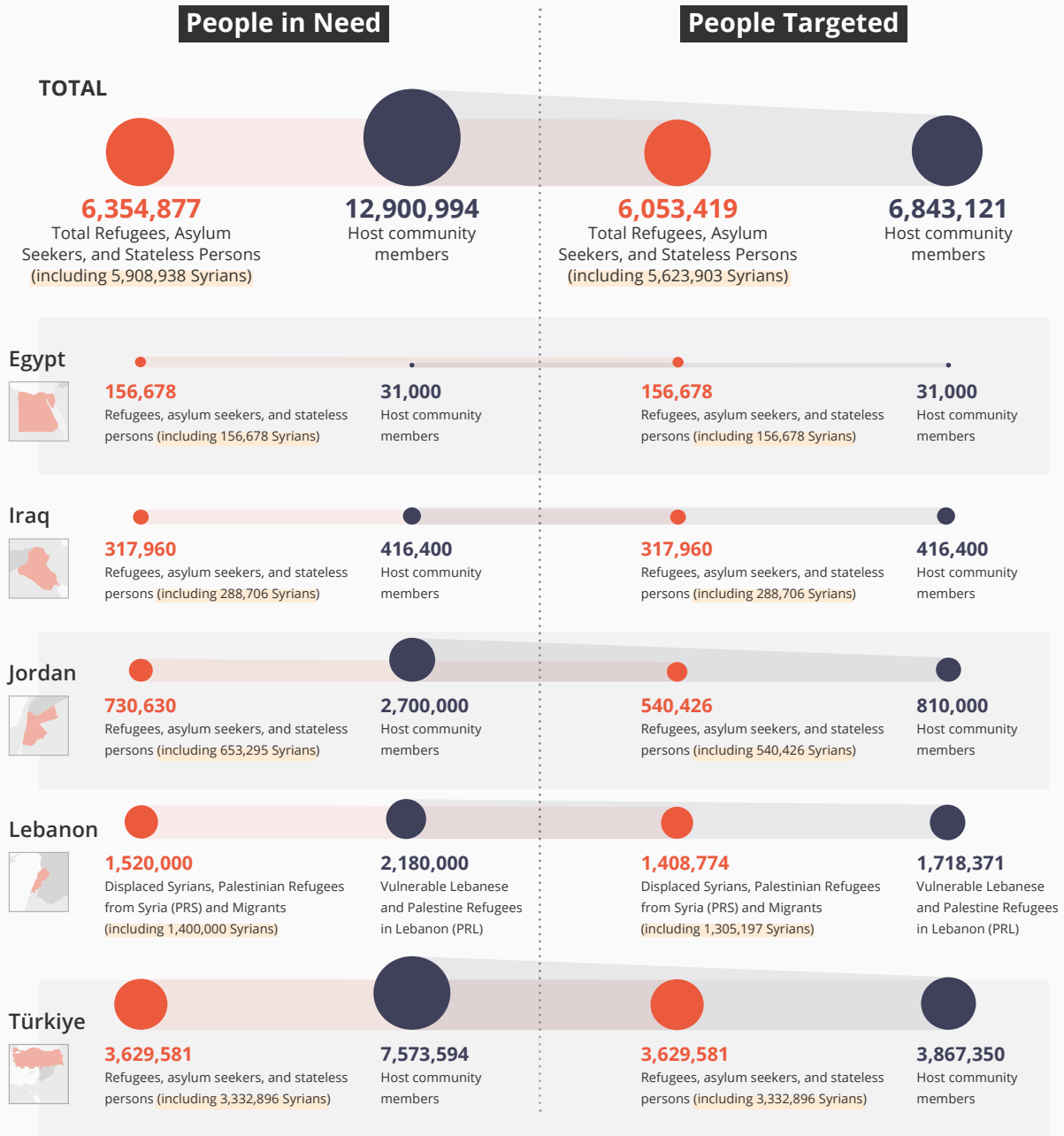
Thirteen years into the Syria crisis, the pressing humanitarian and protection needs of Palestine refugees in Lebanon and Jordan persist. Lebanon is at a particularly difficult juncture, facing economic collapse, which has had a staggering impact on people's lives and livelihoods. The structural marginalisation, deprivation of the most basic rights, compounded by 74 years of forced displacement, have eroded Palestine refugees' capacity to cope with current crises. More than 240,000 Palestine refugees face high levels of poverty and unemployment. A High Frequency Crisis Monitoring Survey conducted by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in March 2023, revealed that 80% of Palestine refugees are reported to be living below the national poverty line. In Jordan, over 20,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) residing in the country continue to face significant vulnerabilities stemming from high unemployment rates and rising living costs. PRS lacking Jordanian documentation, representing around one-third of the PRS population, face severe hardships, including limitations on their freedom of movement and access to employment and government services. According to a survey conducted by UNRWA in August 2023, only 30% of adult PRS in Jordan reported being employed. Beyond economic struggles, PRS in Jordan confront an array of protection challenges related to civil documentation, deportation and the risk of refoulement which further exacerbate the precarious circumstances they face.

A Syrian Mother's Resilience:

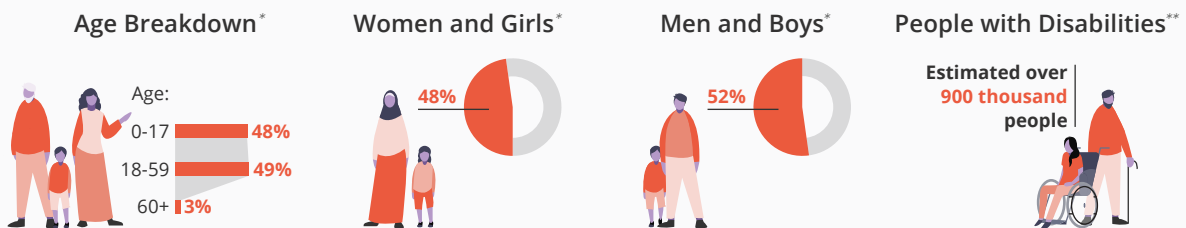
Amira, a Syrian refugee and mother, has navigated the challenges of displacement from Syria to Jordan with resilience, facing health struggles and adapting to life in a refugee camp. With the support of UNFPA, she received crucial healthcare and emotional support, fostering hope for her children's education and a brighter future.

Photo and Story: UNFPA

Population Overview



Targeted Refugee Population



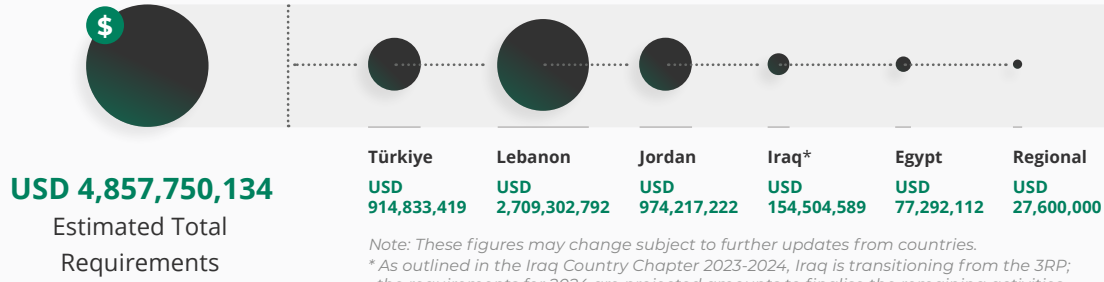
Note: These figures may change subject to further updates from countries.

* Regional Estimation, based on available data. Data Source: UNHCR data portal, as of 1 Dec 2023.

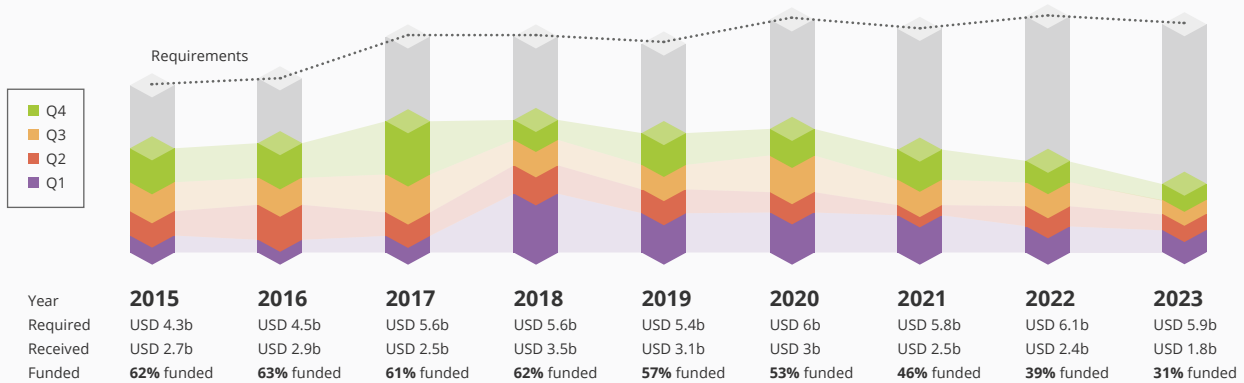
** Note: The number of persons with disabilities in the region is an estimation. Persons with disabilities make up an estimated 15% of any population, with higher numbers expected in situations of forced displacement.

Funding Overview

2024 Financial Requirements

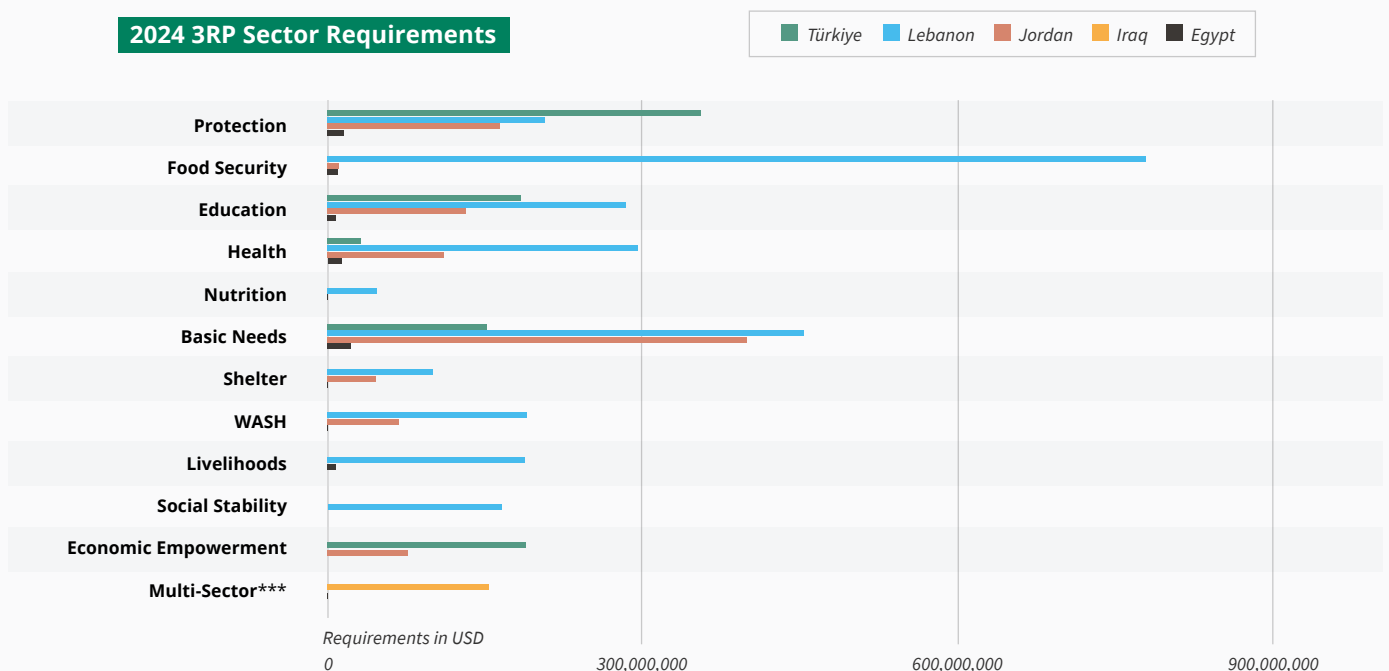


3RP Funding Trend over the Years



Data Source: <https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/dashboards/>

2024 3RP Sector Requirements



*Note: This does not include regional funding requirements and some other country-level requirements which have not yet been allocated to a sector.
*** Multi-Sector – Iraq: This is the total requirements of Iraq for 2024 to finalise the remaining activities in line with the transitional approach.*

Guiding Principles and Approaches

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

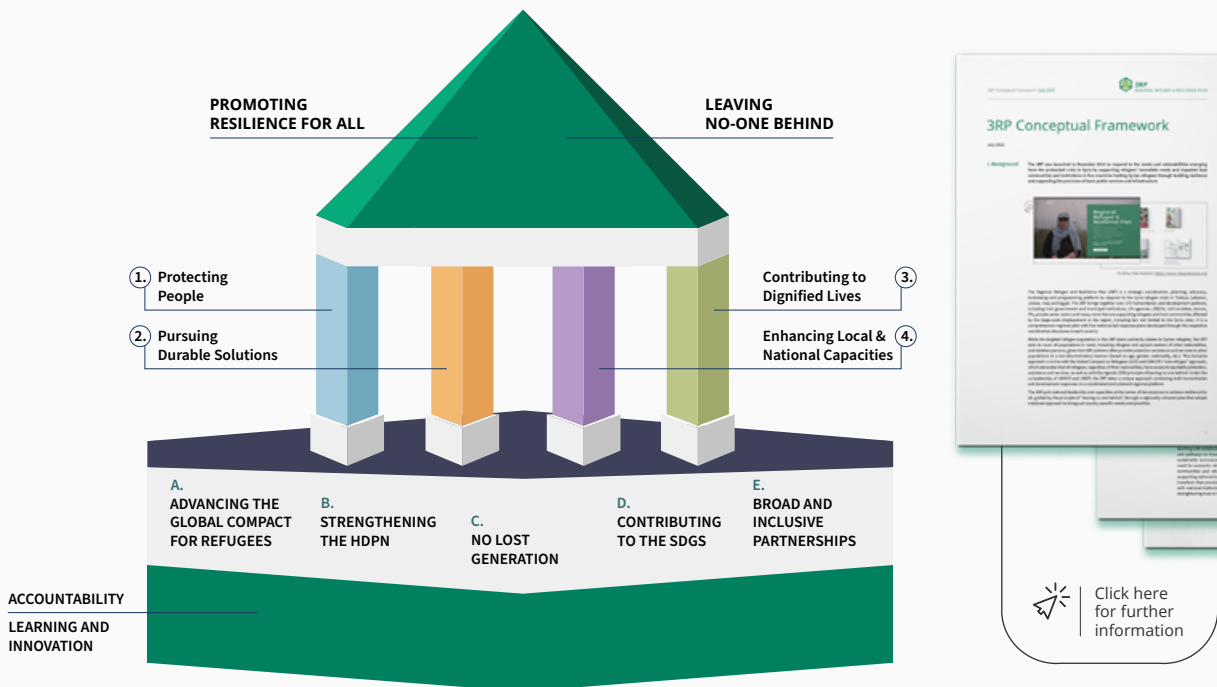
The commitment of the governments in Lebanon, Jordan, Türkiye, Egypt, and Iraq to achieving the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is resolute. However, the prolonged Syrian crisis unavoidably impacts the capacity of host countries to fully enact this ambitious agenda. 3RP interventions contribute to a wide spectrum of SDGs and their associated targets, with SDGs mainstreamed in 3RP planning and monitoring processes. Going forward, the 3RP will place increased focus on how interventions can continue to advance the implementation of the SDGs and support host governments in localizing the SDGs and meeting SDG targets.

Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)

Recognizing that international cooperation is necessary to address refugee crises in a sustainable manner, the Global Compact on Refugees (2018 GCR) was developed as a framework for achieving more equal and predictable responsibility-sharing. The 3RP's innovative HDP Nexus approach was itself an inspiration for the GCR. The 3RP uses the GCR as a guiding principle and objective for drafting policies and strategies and continues to support host governments in promoting protection and solutions that allow refugees and host communities to live in dignity and be included into society in line with national laws.

Conceptual Framework

Strategic Directions



'Resilience for All'

The concept of 'resilience for all' was introduced in 2020 to describe an approach of helping both refugees and host communities to be self-reliant and included, where possible, in local and national systems, plans and policies. The 3RP's resilience programming strives to achieve host communities' and refugees' self-reliance and supporting the capacity of local and national systems to guarantee access to essential services. 3RP partners have also been working with public institutions at different levels by providing support (financial and technical). While acknowledging that national systems are strained, refugees can make a positive contribution to the country in which they work and earn livelihoods in, for instance through contributions to the economy (e.g., growth, employment, taxes etc.).

Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (HDPN)

The 3RP has been at the forefront in bringing humanitarian, development and peace approaches closer to each other, contributing to drive the triple Nexus agenda globally. The resilience-based development approach adopted in the 3RP reinforces the position that the HDPN is critical in providing effective short- and longer-term solutions for host communities and refugees. The 3RP links humanitarian and resilience-based development interventions in various areas including protection, food security, education, health, basic needs, shelter, WASH, and livelihoods and economic inclusion, with an emphasis on identifying interventions and modalities that can promote sustainability. The emphasis on the promotion of social stability and cohesion and conflict sensitivity are of particular significance for the implementation of the 'peace' dimension of the HDPN in the 3RP.

Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)

Conflicts, disasters, and instability heighten vulnerabilities and contribute to social tensions, hindering assistance by government and local actors and impeding affected individuals to reach out for support. Given the unique challenges different groups of people with diverse backgrounds face, preventing misinformation, fraud and corruption, and promoting social cohesion, accountability and localisation are vital to ensure equal access to information and services.

Between January and September 2023, contact centres in Türkiye, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Egypt handled 947.363²¹ inquiries, feedback and complaints from affected communities on registration, documentation, cash assistance, health, and resettlement. In addition, the help.unhcr.org websites in these countries provided international protection information to 966,00²² individuals.

In 2024, 3RP partners will adapt to enhance community involvement, utilizing digital solutions and expanding outreach volunteer programs. Initiatives promoting AAP, diversity, and peaceful coexistence will continue to empower community and grassroots organisations and foster coordination among international and local actors. Community-, refugee-, women- and youth-led organisations will receive ongoing technical and financial support for identifying and protecting individuals with specific needs. The MENA Community Protection Network will continue assessing information needs, communication channels and joint messaging, and continue outreach and local organisation engagement with community structures.

Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

Risks of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) increase during crises and displacement when populations, especially women and children, rely on humanitarian assistance and existing protection mechanisms break down. The responsibility of 3RP partners to take all necessary measures to protect those at risk of SEA is particularly crucial, especially given the prolonged Syria crisis compounded by multiple emergencies in the region including the shrinking protection environment as well as humanitarian and development funding and livelihood opportunities.

Building on previous achievements, in 2024, 3RP partners will expand efforts to strengthen SEA prevention and response measures across sectors. Priorities include responsible staff recruitment with systematic vetting and reference checks, providing PSEA training to relevant staff. Ongoing engagement with community on their rights and reporting mechanisms, enhancing inclusive and safe feedback/grievance and response systems in consultation with all community groups, ensuring survivor-centred assistance with safe referrals to GBV response services will be critical priorities. Moreover, aligning with core principles, capacity-building for partners to conduct investigations per global standards, reinforcing the role of PSEA Focal Points and the Inter-Agency PSEA Network, and improving coordination among humanitarian and development organisations, government agencies, local partners, and non-traditional actors will ensure prevention of SEA.

Prioritisation

The 3RP is a country-led regionally coherent plan, comprised of five country chapters that present needs-based appeals, developed in consultation with the host governments and other key stakeholders. The 3RP also takes into consideration additional variables such as the Syria Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) in terms of assumptions, risks and scenarios in the planning process.

In preparation for the 2024 appeal, the 3RP embarked on a prioritisation exercise following the Regional Planning Workshop, where 3RP partners agreed on the importance of cross-sectoral prioritisation in an increasingly challenging funding landscape attributed to global competing crises as well as a complex protection environment across the region. Consequently, the Joint Secretariat developed a guidance note on prioritisation which was disseminated among partners across all levels. The 3RP sets out the following three principles to effectively integrate prioritisation in its appeal:

- ▶ Commitment and accountability by the individual agencies towards beneficiaries and donors.
- ▶ Ownership and leadership of the national/ local governments and localisation efforts
- ▶ Engagement of donors

Interagency coordinators and partners were requested to assess key parameters, including operational capacity, geographical coverage, impact of the priorities, data to ascertain complementarity with other actors operating outside of the 3RP, and criticality of activities among others. Simultaneously, the 3RP at regional level is committed to regularly analyze funding trends, check accountability of partners, and engage with donors.



Strategic Directions

I. Protecting People

Efforts to maintain or expand protection space remain at the centre of the response in 3RP countries. Without a conducive protection environment, refugees will face increased vulnerabilities and be unable to take advantage of resilience-building, or development, opportunities. It will severely limit refugees' ability to engage in the productive sectors and limit the possibilities for the private sector to support refugees' formal inclusion into the economy.

Valid documentation is vital for refugees to access rights, freedom of movement, education, work, services, and entitlements. Many Syrian refugees arrived in 3RP countries without proper documents, posing challenges in obtaining them. Ensuring civil registration and documentation access is crucial region-wide for refugees to enjoy basic rights, with birth registration being particularly important, as Syrian children born abroad acquire nationality solely through their fathers. Progress has reduced the number of undocumented Syrian refugee children from 35 to one to five % in recent years, but further improvement is necessary. Failing to register a Syrian child's birth can heighten statelessness risks with lifelong consequences. Timely registration of vital life events like births, deaths, and marriages is critical to prevent complex challenges, and to work towards the achievement of durable solutions.

After enduring extreme violence during the conflict in Syria, Ahmed (33) found refuge in Türkiye in 2018. Struggling with the trauma of his experiences, he found a new beginning through the support of UNFPA Türkiye, funded by EU Humanitarian Aid. UNFPA Türkiye's Men & Boys project, supported by EU Humanitarian Aid, offers essential services to refugee men and boys like Ahmed who have suffered sexual violence or are at risk. These services include case management, psychosocial support, and legal counseling, providing a safe space and a pathway to healing and rebuilding lives.

Photo and Story: UNFPA Türkiye

In 3RP countries, women and girls, especially those with specific needs, adolescent girls, and female heads of households are disproportionately affected by GBV. Reported incidents encompass domestic violence, child marriage, sexual violence (affecting boys, men, and those with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC²³), sexual exploitation, and online harassment. In 2024, top priorities include ensuring access to quality, inclusive specialised GBV services, evidence-based prevention efforts to tackle harmful gender norms, promoting women and girls' empowerment through education and safe livelihood opportunities, and mitigating GBV risks across all sectors.

Approximately half of refugees are children and are among the most affected by conflict and displacement, many of them facing family separation, child marriage, child labour and other forms of exploitation, and increased vulnerability to physical and sexual abuse.





Accessing basic services like education, healthcare, and birth registration is challenging, risking statelessness. Earthquakes in Syria and Türkiye have heightened child protection risks. In 2024, quality child protection interventions will remain crucial in the 3RP response. Priorities will include the effective implementation of best interests' procedures and continued efforts to integrate refugee children into national child protection systems through enhanced partnerships.

Despite ongoing efforts by host governments and international and local actors, the number of out-of-school refugee children in the 3RP countries remains high. This is primarily due to obstacles such as capacity limitations to inclusion in public systems, learning setbacks during the COVID-19 pandemic, and socio-economic pressures on families. However, notable progress was made in tertiary education, particularly in Jordan, Iraq, and Türkiye, to advance the 15by30 Agenda.²⁴ In 2024, 3RP partners will continue to collaborate with governments and partners to strengthen national education systems and interventions aimed at integrating refugee children and youth into formal and certified non-formal education.

Mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS) needs have surged due to prolonged displacement, economic hardships, earthquakes, increased discrimination, and xenophobic violence, raising risks of mental health issues. Stigma, misconceptions, and a general lack of specialised services in host countries can exacerbate these risks, with cases of increased self-harm and suicidal behaviours, especially among children. Access to mental health and psychosocial support services remains limited. In 2024, evidence-based MHPSS, including community-based support and specialised mental health care, will be upheld to address these pressing needs.

In 2024, 3RP partners will prioritise strengthening community empowerment and participation using digital and face-to-face solutions and promoting peaceful coexistence for both forcibly displaced and host communities. Joint coordination will focus on empowering vulnerable groups. Sustained progress will result from inclusive learning initiatives and engagement with community and grassroots organisations.

Failure to address the outlined protection challenges may lead to more Syrian refugees attempting onward movement. In 2023, trends of onward movement have included attempts to cross the sea from Lebanon and Türkiye, as well as movements by air to Libya and then onwards across the Mediterranean Sea to Europe. Such journeys are inherently dangerous, and sustainable responses that go beyond protection and humanitarian interventions are needed in order to contribute to more dignified lives for Syrian refugees.

Good practice:

Given the increasing mental health needs and the strain on specialised services in Lebanon, 3RP partners collaborated on a pilot project to enhance the capacity of Outreach Volunteers, community centers, and frontline staff in various regions of the country. The project focused on implementing Problem Management Plus,²⁵ a scalable psychological intervention for adults facing distress in communities exposed to adversity and experiencing depression, anxiety, and stress-related symptoms. This initiative was supported through the Dutch Opportunity Funds from 2021 until mid-2023 and is part of UNHCR's broader efforts to promote meaningful engagement of refugees as active participants in their own protection.

II. Pursuing Durable Solutions

Many Syrian refugees continue to face socio-economic destitution, with limited access to formal employment, making them vulnerable to various protection risks. Additionally, Syrian refugees are still attempting onward movements, exposing themselves to multiple dangers, including drowning, exposure to harsh weather, trafficking, assault, detention, and loss of life. For Syrian refugees in 3RP countries, voluntary repatriation and local integration remain elusive. Often, resettlement or complementary pathways are the only viable solutions, but the demand far exceeds the available opportunities.

Returns

Substantial and enduring barriers to returns to Syria persist, and overall return numbers remain low, with only thousands of refugees making self-organised or spontaneous movements each year. From January to December 2023, 38,257 Syrian refugees returned home. UNHCR's Return Perception and Intention Survey shows that, in the long term, approximately 56% of those surveyed aspire to return to Syria. However, only 1.1% plan to do so within the next 12 months, with 25.2% intending to return in the next five years. Refugees emphasise that conditions inside Syria remain the primary factor influencing their return decisions despite ongoing challenges faced in host countries.

While there is no active facilitation or promotion of return due to significant security and humanitarian challenges within Syria, it is crucial to support those who choose to return, while ensuring the 3RP response does not incentivise return or contribute to push factors. This support ensures adherence to critical protection standards, including voluntary, safe, and dignified return principles, reducing the risk of harm, and promoting the sustainability of informed and dignified returns. The 3RP continues to enhance refugees' long-term safety and stability, in coordination with the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT)-led response inside Syria. Refugees are provided with information on housing, land, and property matters in Syria, assisted with specific needs and documentation, and in some countries, refugees are offered pre-departure counselling on conditions within Syria.

Resettlement and Complementary Pathways

Across 3RP countries, there is a renewed urgency to continue advocating for multi-year, predictable resettlement quotas to provide ongoing protection and vital support for Syrian refugees. Resettlement serves as the most viable solution for them, especially those with specific protection needs and vulnerabilities. It also acts as a strategic advocacy tool for maintaining asylum space with host countries. However, annual resettlement opportunities cover less than 5% of the needs. Expanding both resettlement and complementary pathways, such as labour and education opportunities, remains a priority to enhance international responsibility-sharing, in line with the GCR.

In the short term, complementary pathways involve sustained efforts to boost partnership networks and systems while advocating for the removal of obstacles over time. Following a key recommendation from The MENA Contact Group on Complementary Pathways annual workshop, UNHCR and its partners have established local coordination structures in Egypt and Jordan. These local working groups aim to create networks, map out services, and enhance information-sharing, with the goal of informing regional and global fora. A long-term vision for equal access to pathways relies on independent partnerships that connect with local resilience and the refugees' capacity to return to their home country. This approach also involves building the HDP Nexus to support these broader goals.

Access to Local Opportunities and Solutions

Expanding local opportunities and solutions is a vital requirement across the refugee population in 3RP countries. While these opportunities may vary in scale and scope, refugees need a supportive legal and policy framework that safeguards their rights and provides socio-economic prospects to enhance self-reliance.

The 3RP will continue to advocate for supportive legal and policy frameworks and a conducive environment for sustainable service delivery that is on par with what is available to host communities. It will also promote access to formal and decent employment, financial resources, and the development of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).

This aims to bridge the gap between refugees' skills and the demands of the local job market. Achieving this necessitates establishing strategic partnerships, not only with the private sector but also with local governments and service delivery partners, to ensure comprehensive inclusion in service delivery systems. These partnerships will focus on training, certification, and recognition of education, qualifications, and skills while addressing gender inequalities. Exploring connections to provide access to skill development for opportunities in third countries will also be considered, as it can have positive ripple effects, benefiting those who remain in host countries.



Hamzah's journey from the challenges of a Syrian refugee to a successful engineer at SigmaPoint, Ontario, highlights the transformative impact of supportive resettlement and employment opportunities for refugees.


 [Click to read Hamzah's story](#)



Photo by Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB)

III. Contributing to Dignified Lives

Refugees and vulnerable host populations face a wide range of challenges due to displacement and socio-economic effects of various crises. Recent assessments in 3RP countries and the socio-economic outlook in this RSO reveal troubling trends of increased poverty rates among both refugees and host communities, and economic challenges impacting the resilience and absorption capacities of institutions and systems.

Against this difficult backdrop, the 3RP is committed to continue promoting and supporting refugees and host communities' self-reliance and institutions' capacities to assist vulnerable populations. In the context of increasing protracted displacement, support to dignified lives of the most vulnerable is a firm and central direction for the 3RP response going forward.

Over the coming period, 3RP partners will endeavour to ensure that the most vulnerable refugees can meet their essential needs, including through multi-purpose cash assistance and cash for food interventions. This is an increasingly challenging task due to declining international funding, with partners exploring prioritisation to reach those with the most critical needs for assistance. The 3RP will continue assessing and pursuing opportunities for alignment between assistance streams for refugees and national social protection systems, which encompass social assistance, thereby enhancing financial inclusion through access to social safety nets and promoting self-reliance.

Moreover, 3RP partners stand ready to support refugees and vulnerable host communities to gain sustainable sources of income through decent work opportunities, which ensures stability and promotes dignity. Expanded economic opportunities are critical for achieving self-reliance, yet the 3RP livelihoods sectors have been consistently underfunded. The 3RP partners require substantial support from the international community to conduct evidence-based advocacy on socio-economic inclusion of refugees and win-win situations for host countries and displaced people, expand access to work documentations, increase the employability and skills-building of vulnerable people and strengthen engagements with IFIs and notably the private sector as key stakeholders in the response. The 3RP will explore bringing the private sector on board at a strategic level to promote economic inclusion of refugees and host communities, leveraging the private sector's infrastructure capacities for responses.

Khaled, a master carpenter, has transformed his life and business with support from UNHCR and Caritas Egypt - Alex Refugees' Office. Through entrepreneurship training and two grants, he expanded his workshop, employing two people, including a local Egyptian. Khaled's business has grown to export finely crafted furniture overseas, providing for his family and creating new opportunities, showcasing resilience and growth.

Photo and Story by UNHCR Egypt/Sebastian Herwig



Around half of the Syrian refugee population is under 18 years,²⁶ and children represent a significant part of the national populations of host countries, with a high population growth rate and a rapidly expanding youth population. The provision of sustainable, equitable, and quality education for refugees and their host communities, and ensuring their access to these services, is critical for ensuring positive human development outcomes and 'leaving no one behind'. The number of out-of-school children remains a concern in several 3RP countries, for instance with 450,000 out-of-school children as well as the low number of refugees in secondary and tertiary education in Türkiye. The 3RP's work centers on enhancing education and skill development opportunities for all, ensuring access to all education tracks, including vocational and technical education.

Strengthening linkages between education and employability continues to be a critical area of focus, as this approach will ultimately improve employability, income, and the overall quality of life for refugees and host communities.

Importantly, 3RP partners will strive to deliver quality services by working with and through existing mechanisms and systems. These include local and national institutions as well as local and national civil society organisations (CSOs), and other complementary service providers such as national education centers, and private sector entities. A sustained effort is required between 3RP partners, host countries, donors, and other supporters to ensure the most vulnerable have opportunities for more dignified lives.



Photo by ASAM/Elif İnan, Story by ASAM



Aysel, an earthquake survivor in Arsuz, Hatay, transformed her hardship into hope through her work at the WFP Early Recovery by Socioeconomic Empowerment and Sustainability (SES) Project's Arsuz Soup Kitchen. She now supports her family, including funding her daughter's education and her son's critical heart treatment. 'This Soup Kitchen will enable me to have my child treated,' says Aysel.

IV. Enhancing Local and National Capacities

Host governments and their national systems across the 3RP countries struggle to meet the needs of the populations they serve. As the number of refugees and asylum seekers increase, the burden on host governments increases. In urban settings, where more than 94% of refugees reside,²⁷ municipalities, among other governmental entities, face increasing challenges in ensuring equitable access to and provision of infrastructural services for both refugees and host communities. Notwithstanding, municipalities play a crucial role in maintaining social stability and cohesion at the community level. In certain countries, they are also engaged in local economic development and fostering partnerships with private sector and development actors. Some municipalities have been providing additional services despite receiving little or no support from the central governments, which should not be assumed to continue given the prolonged economic hardships. While 3RP's support for municipalities focuses on protection, health, education, social cohesion, and livelihoods, International Financial Institutions (IFIs) have also increased their support to improving infrastructure at local levels.

The 3RP is committed to strengthening the support to local and national capacities to ensure the sustainable and long-term impact of the refugee response. 3RP partners will continue to align programmes with national plans and priorities, working in close coordination and partnership with institutions at local, sub-national, and national levels.

Cooperation through partnerships with local and national institutions and with local and national civil society ensures that the increasingly stressed systems are supported to meet the growing needs of refugees and host communities, including through technical and human capacity building and sharing.

Over the coming year, 3RP partners' efforts aim at scaling up social infrastructure development (e.g., schools, health facilities, waste management, and water networks), the provision of equipment (e.g., solid waste trucks, IT equipment), and the develop civil servants' capacities to deliver more effective responses. These efforts are especially relevant to enable those systems to access and absorb larger amounts of funding, particularly through loans and blended support from IFIs.



Lebanon: Libana turned adversity into opportunity by founding Recyco Recycling. Her venture, supported by UNDP's Business Innovation Training and Competition, overcame gender stereotypes in the waste management sector. Winning a crucial grant, Libana expanded Recyco, which now significantly contributes to local employment and environmental resilience.

Photo: UNDP Lebanon/Rana Sweidan ,

Story: UNDP Lebanon/Antoine Maalouf

Strengthening Local Systems: A Priority

In response to the growing needs of refugees and host communities, the focus of 3RP partners is on strengthening local and national systems. This includes scaling up infrastructure development and enhancing the capacity of civil servants for more effective responses.

Collaboration with Municipalities and IFIs

Municipalities play a vital role in maintaining social stability. Efforts by 3RP partners are in line with supporting them and fostering partnerships with the private sector and IFIs, particularly in urban areas where the majority of refugees reside.

Aligning Programs with National Priorities

Aligning 3RP programs with national plans and priorities ensures sustainable impact. Close coordination with local, sub-national, and national institutions is key to supporting strained systems.



Samet Firat Soydemir (centre right) in conversation with the Turkish Minister of Industry and Technology Mustafa Varank (centre) during the Minister's visit to earthquake zone.

Photo and Story by SPARK

Rebuilding Antakya's Economy Post-Earthquakes

In the aftermath of the devastating earthquakes that struck Türkiye and Syria in February 2023, Antakya's economy faced a standstill. The Antakya Chamber of Industry and Commerce, with support from SPARK, spearheaded efforts to revitalize the city's SME environment crucial for economic reconstruction.

Samet Firat Soydemir from the Chamber emphasized the urgent need for accommodation solutions like container houses to facilitate the return of the workforce and resume commercial activities. SPARK's role has been pivotal, providing grants and support to local businesses and creating shared workspaces to reignite economic growth.

This collaboration showcases the importance of partnerships between local institutions and INGOs like SPARK in addressing economic challenges and enhancing local capacities for long-term resilience.

Partnership and Coordination

The 3RP is a strategic coordination, planning, advocacy, fundraising and programming platform to respond to the Syria crisis. The 3RP is a comprehensive regional plan with five nationally led response plans, which are developed through the respective coordination structures consisting of government, UN agencies and I/NGOs.

Bringing together more than 270 humanitarian and development partners at the country and regional level, the 3RP's comprehensive approach has successfully channelled in total USD 24 billion through the plan since its inception.

Additionally, the 3RP recognizes actors that operate beyond the 3RP structures but are involved in Syria crisis response such as International Financial Institutions and bi-lateral development partners who provide support to the host governments' efforts to ensure they can continue supporting refugees and affected host communities.



REGIONAL LEVEL

COUNTRY LEVEL

Country Overview on Needs

Türkiye

- **57%** of Syrians in earthquake-affected areas reported very severe and 18% severe damage to their house as a result of the earthquakes.¹
- **65%** of Syrians reported that the earthquakes had a major impact on their mental health.¹
- The recovery of public institutions which were affected by the earthquakes is a **critical priority** in order to ensure that refugees and host communities will have access to basic services (e.g., health, education, waste management and employment).²
- The earthquake impacted livelihoods opportunities for both refugees and host community members. Damages to SMEs in the earthquake areas are estimated over **US\$ 8.2 million** and many businesses remain closed, which limit access to employment opportunities.²
- **34%** of Syrian families reported facing financial constraints with regards to schooling their children. **46%** of Syrian families manage to school all their children (**28%** none, **15%** some, **11%** the majority).¹
- **85%** of Syrian families reported a deterioration/decline of their financial situation in the past year. Only **18%** of Turkish citizens can fully cover their expenses, with **72%** indicate adopting survival strategies, highlighting a widespread financial challenge across communities.¹
- **92%** of Syrian families reported not being able to cover all their monthly basic households needs.¹

Data sources:

³ Inter-Agency Protection Sector Needs Assessment Round 7 (refugeeinfoturkey.org)

⁴ Türkiye Earthquakes Recovery and Reconstruction

Lebanon

- **A majority** of Syrian refugees cannot afford minimum essential items for survival. About **90%** of Syrian refugee households, compared to **21%** of Lebanese, **44%** of migrant, and **56%** of Palestinian refugee households, are in debt to meet essential needs.^{3,4}
- Food insecurity remains at worrying levels. **83%** of Syrian refugees, **78%** of Palestinian refugees and **59%** of Lebanese reported adopting food based coping strategies including skipping meals (IPC).³
- **Over half** of Syrian households are living in shelters that are either overcrowded or below humanitarian standards. This year, Syrians reported that the average monthly rental costs increased to **60 USD**, up from **29 USD** in 2022.³
- **56%** of school-aged Syrian children between the ages of 6 and 17 attended school in 2022-2023. The attendance rates were **94%** for Lebanese, **57%** for migrants, and **86%** for Palestinian refugees from Lebanon.^{3,4}
- Among Syrians, **25%** of girls and young women between the age of 15-19 are married.³
- In 2023, access to healthcare and medication remained challenging, with both cost and supply barriers. **84%** of Syrian refugees, **85%** of Lebanese, **68%** of migrants and **78%** of Palestinians reported difficulty accessing needed medication.^{3,4}
- **13%** of Syrian households reported the presence of at least one member with a disability.³

Data sources:

³ VASyR 2023: Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

⁴ Multi-sector needs assessment (MSNA)

Jordan

- **93%** of Syrian households remain in debt to cover basic needs.⁵
- **18%** of Syrian households are severely food insecure in both community and camps.⁵
- **27%** of Syrian households reported difficulties in paying for food in the past three months.⁵
- Unemployment has almost doubled from **11.9%** in 2014 to **22.3%** in 2023 (Jordan Department for Statistics, DOS), and stands at **28%** for refugees aged 15 and above. The prospects for self-reliance through employment are challenging in the current socio-economic environment for both refugees and resident Jordanian citizens.⁵
- **79%** of Syrian households employ stress coping strategies (spent savings, took loans for non-food essentials, bought food on credit or sold household goods/assets).⁵
- Alarming child protection concerns have been reported among refugees in both communities and camps: cases of withdrawn children from school have **doubled**, child labour has **multiplied drastically (5-6 folds)**, and instances of early marriages due to financial stress have **tripled**.⁵

Data source:

⁵ UNHCR Socio-economic situation of refugees in Jordan Q2 2023

Iraq

- Economic environment in Iraq is largely informal; private sector comprises only **40%** of the economy.⁶
- Refugees more likely to be employed in temporary work and have **higher reliance** on debt than host communities.⁶
- **Over half** of Syrian refugee households report barriers to access healthcare.⁶
- Enrolment of **75,000** school-aged refugee children remains a concern despite increased enrolment due to the Refugee Education Integration Policy.

Data source:

⁶ Iraq 3RP Chapter for 2023 and 2024

Egypt

- **12%** of refugees have never been to school.⁷
- Livelihood coping strategies were put in place by the **vast majority** of refugees in order to be able to meet their basic needs, especially to cover food and rent-related costs.⁷
- **Almost all** working refugees are employed informally without a contract due to the legal constraints of obtaining legal work permits. This further exacerbates vulnerability and the need for cash assistance.⁷
- It is estimated that **nearly all** refugees lack access to bank accounts.⁷
- **More than 80%** of Syrian refugees depend on employment as their main source of income.⁷
- 32,523 Syrian individuals categorised as either extremely poor or poor, are still on the waiting list to receive Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance.⁷
- **35%** of Syrian refugees receiving monthly assistance reported being unable to meet half of their basic needs.⁷
- **45%** of Syrians receiving cash assistance reported high food insecurity (as per the rCSI index).^{7,8}

Data sources:

⁷ Socio-economic profiling of refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt

⁸ reduced Coping Strategy Index



Türkiye

Overview

As of 2 November 2023, Türkiye hosts over 3.2 million Syrians under temporary protection, nearly half children and 48% women and girls. Many reside with host communities, though Temporary Accommodation Centers were reopened in earthquake-affected provinces. About 1.5 million refugees in these provinces need targeted assistance, and approximately 215,000 refugees have relocated to other provinces, straining public institutions. Additionally, Türkiye hosts around 300,000 international protection applicants and status holders from various countries, including Afghans, Iranians, Iraqis, and Ukrainians.

Amid socio-economic challenges, Türkiye provides Syrians under temporary protection, and other international protection applicants and status holders with access to health, education (997,243 refugee children enrolled), and social services, including labour market access. The recent massive earthquakes, rising food costs, lower incomes, and increasing unemployment have impacted vulnerable refugees and host community households, leading to negative coping mechanisms. Growing psychosocial needs, particularly among adolescents and youth, and rising anti-refugee sentiments, are concerns. The 3RP partners will continue supporting the Government of Türkiye, in line with the GCR principles and the Sustainable Development Goals' commitment to "leaving no one behind."

Sectoral/Inter-sectoral Response

In the basic needs sector, 3RP partners will provide cash and in-kind assistance (NFI, shelter, WASH) to the most vulnerable, including those affected by earthquakes, and support municipalities' response capacities and resilience. The protection sector focuses on empowering individuals with specific needs, emphasizing women, children, adolescents, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and other vulnerable groups. Efforts to combat gender-based violence, child marriage, and child labour are ongoing.

Economic empowerment efforts will continue to enhance refugee and vulnerable host community access to formal employment through skills training and entrepreneurship. Support for SMEs/Cooperatives and local farmers is provided in collaboration with public institutions and the private sector, focusing on earthquake-affected areas.

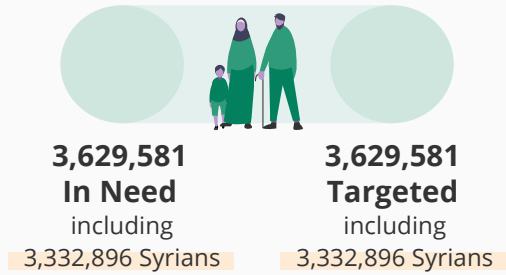
In education, over 450,000 refugee children remain out of school, a situation exacerbated by the earthquakes. Continued support to the Ministry of National Education is vital for formal and informal learning interventions, underpinned by data-driven decision-making.

The health sector, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, aims to support the most vulnerable, including unregistered persons and those with disabilities, in accessing primary health services and sexual and reproductive health services. This will alleviate pressures on health infrastructure, especially in earthquake-affected provinces, and support human resource capacity to increase healthcare access.

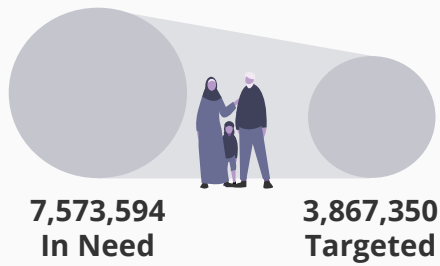
The 3RP response aligns with the UNSDCF and the 11th National Development Plan, developed in collaboration with multiple stakeholders and based on recent assessments, including in earthquake-affected provinces, to ensure complementarity.

Population in 2024

Total Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Stateless Persons



Host Community Members



Facts, Figures, and Stories



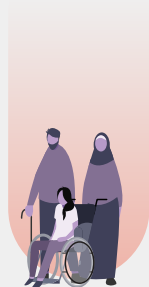
997,243
refugee children enrolled in education



Over 450,000
refugee children out of school

Socio-Economic Challenges

The compounded effects of the earthquakes, rising food prices, lower incomes, and increasing unemployment have severely impacted the most vulnerable refugees and host communities. This has forced many to adopt negative coping mechanisms to manage their basic needs and livelihoods.



2024 Financial Requirements

Total Requirements
914,833,419 USD

Protection	354,874,175 USD
Health	31,242,405 USD
Basic Needs	151,923,261 USD
Education	183,552,545 USD
Economic Empowerment	190,271,133 USD



Dalia (left), a Syrian refugee in Türkiye, faced the harsh reality of the Antakya earthquake in 2023. Her family, having rebuilt their lives in Türkiye after fleeing Aleppo, found themselves amidst chaos once again. In response to their dire situation, organizations like Hand in Hand for Relief and Development provided vital support, offering temporary shelter, basic necessities, food baskets, and daily meals to aid earthquake survivors like Dalia.

Photo and Story: Hand in Hand for Relief and Development (HIHFAD)

Lebanon

Overview

Compounding political, economic, and public health crises have caused severe hardship to people residing in Lebanon, aggravating existing inequalities, vulnerabilities, and risks. The situation, including a deterioration in basic services, is expected to be protracted, in the context of the political impasse on a comprehensive macroeconomic and financial stabilisation plan and increased hostilities in the South.

Lebanon continues to host the highest number of displaced people per capita in the world. The Government of Lebanon (GoL) estimates that the country hosts, across all governorates, at least 1.5 million Syrians, along with 180,000 Palestine Refugees in Lebanon (PRL) and 23,026 Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS). Since October 2023, there have been increasingly violent clashes at the Lebanese-Israeli border resulting in casualties, displacement and loss of property.

The economic situation, marked by soaring prices and decreased incomes, has made staple food and other basic goods unaffordable, adding further barriers to accessing essential services and contributing to spiraling debt levels and other negative coping mechanisms. The cost of the full Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) for a family of five reached US \$355 in September 2023. This represents a 17% quarterly increase driven by a combination of dollarisation of prices, the gradual depreciation of the LBP against the US dollar observed since March, and the increase in the customs exchange rate since April 2023. 15% of the Lebanese population, and 27% of displaced Syrians, 26% of PRL and 35% of PRS are facing high acute food insecurity (Integrated Phase Classification Analysis, 2023), impacting health and nutrition. Water trucking costs increased by 297% (USD value) between January 2021 and August 2023. Significant interruption to the school year were faced in 2023, especially due to teachers' strikes. Drop out and school retention remain a concern and

increasing socioeconomic challenges continue to result in child labour.

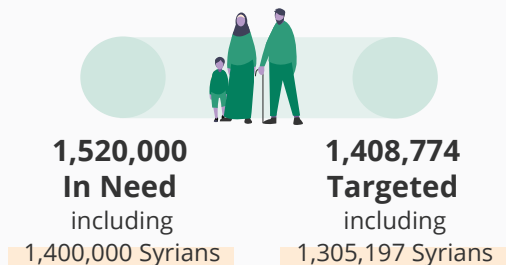
In 2023, 20% of Syrians held legal residency in Lebanon (up from 17% in 2022; down from 27% in 2018; VASyR). In 2023, an increase in raids and deportations to Syria without due process created significant fear among displaced Syrians. Positively, birth registration rates for Syrian displaced at the foreigner's registry reached 41% in 2023 (from 36% in 2022).

The colliding crises in Lebanon continue to increase pressure on communities and local authorities. An overwhelming 45% of respondents reported negative inter-communal relations in October 2023 (UNDP/ARK perceptions survey). Key tension drivers are still economic, such as competition for lower-skilled jobs and services, including electricity, healthcare and waste management. Regarding tensions driver among Lebanese, 33% of Lebanese mentioned shelter/housing, up dramatically from 6.3% in July 2023.

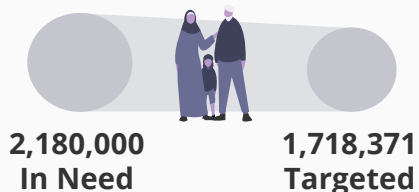
In 2024, the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP), co-led by GoL and the UN, will be a unified response framework for partners to help meet the needs of crisis-affected populations across Lebanon. The LRP will be a common two-year humanitarian-stabilisation framework (2024-2025), building on the previous Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) and Emergency Response Plan (ERP), and forms the country chapter of the 3RP. Under the LRP, partners will advance four strategic objectives: 1) Provide immediate humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations to ensure critical needs are met.; 2) Enhance protection of the vulnerable populations; 3) Support service provision through national systems, including national rapid response capacity; 4) Reinforce Lebanon's economic, social and environmental stability. The framework will uphold the centrality of protection, as well as seek to ensure the protection of humanitarian space. A commitment to localisation will be mainstreamed across LRP planning, coordination and operational delivery.

Population in 2024

Displaced Syrians, Palestinian Refugees from Syria (PRS) and Migrants



Vulnerable Lebanese and Palestine Refugees in Lebanon (PRL)



2024 Financial Requirements

Total Requirements
2,709,302,792 USD

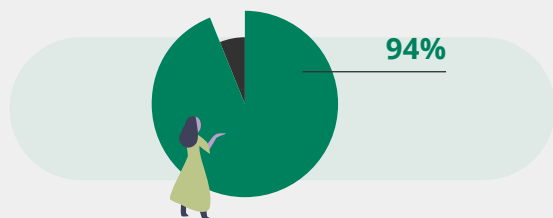
Protection	207,158,629 USD
Food Security	780,000,000 USD
Education	283,861,361 USD
Health	295,127,688 USD
Nutrition	46,878,965 USD
Basic Assistance	453,166,070 USD
Shelter	100,095,079 USD
WASH	190,000,000 USD
Livelihoods	188,000,000 USD
Social Stability	165,015,000 USD

Facts, Figures, and Stories

In Lebanon, WFP and UNHCR completed the annual targeting exercise to reassess the eligibility of Syrian refugees and Refugees of Other Nationalities (RONs) to receive cash assistance for food and essential needs in the upcoming 2023/2024 assistance cycle.

As a result, and due to funding shortfalls, coverage of assistance to refugees will decrease from 90 percent to approximately 60 percent of the Syrian refugee population while the most vulnerable RON families will only receive assistance from UNHCR in 2024.

WFP continued to carry out the retargeting exercise that started in August 2023. By the end of October, WFP visited **94 percent of the 65,000 targeted households** to assess their eligibility to continue receiving in-kind assistance in 2024.



Whilst the agriculture sector is essential to Lebanon's economy, water scarcity remains a challenge. UNDP has successfully trained 1,300 farmers in water management, fertilization, and modern farming, building the capacity of local farmers via sustainable agricultural practices. "Through this project, we learned many things, such as how to plant and prune trees, and how to use the drip irrigation system. I encourage farmers to adopt modern agricultural techniques."

Photo and Story: UNDP Lebanon

Jordan

Overview

Jordan is the second-highest refugee-hosting country per capita. Despite not being party to the 1951 Refugee Convention, Jordan has always hosted and protected refugees. It upholds fundamental human rights through its national frameworks and, since the beginning of the refugee response, has prioritised refugee inclusion in crucial areas, such as education, healthcare, and, most recently, full access to the national COVID-19 health response and vaccination programme. Currently, Jordan hosts 1.3 million refugees, under the mandate of UNHCR 730,630 Refugees, comprising 653,295 Syrians refugees and 77,335 refugees from other nationalities. Amongst these, 81.4 live within urban and peri-urban areas.

Thirteen years since the onset of the Syrian crisis, Jordan is no longer in a humanitarian emergency. Nonetheless, acute needs remain, centered on supporting the livelihoods of Syrian refugees, including shelter, food security, and safety, and promoting their integration into Jordan. As the population grows, challenges in accommodating refugees in health, education, and livelihoods arise, despite striving for a dignified existence. These challenges are compounded by over a decade of weak economic growth, regional instabilities, disruptions in trade, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, economic adversities and the prolonged refugee crisis necessitate a solutions-focused approach, aligning with Jordan's development goals. The Jordan Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) integrates humanitarian and developmental strategies.

The Government of Jordan has shown exceptional hospitality in hosting Syrian refugees since 2016. Despite the state's proactive actions providing comprehensive protection, the absence of a national legal framework for refugees poses challenges in effectively addressing refugee needs and implementing equitable protection and solutions.

Strategic Objectives & Response Priorities

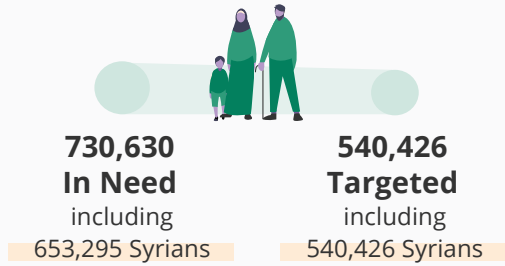
The Jordan Response Plan (JRP 2024-2026) guides the refugee response, focusing on strategic coordination and balancing refugee and host community needs. Its objectives include protecting individuals, fostering self-reliance, and enhancing local capacities.

Key focus areas:

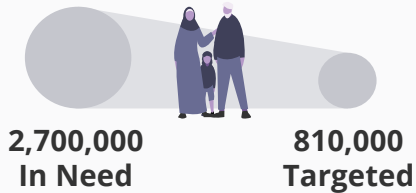
- ▶ Ensuring territory access and international protection for Syrian refugees while pursuing durable solutions.
- ▶ Supporting access to services, livelihoods, and advocating for legal frameworks aiding refugee integration.
- ▶ Fostering social cohesion between refugees and host communities, focusing on women- and youth-led initiatives.
- ▶ Strengthening public institutions and civil society to foster resilience and service provision, aligning with localization principles.
- ▶ Integrating humanitarian and development efforts under the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and the UN 2030 Agenda, emphasizing predictable, equitable responsibility-sharing.
- ▶ Aligning with national strategies, contributing to Jordan's Economic Modernization Vision.
- ▶ Promoting integrated response approaches and cross-sectoral linkages.
- ▶ Applying a gender- and age-responsive approach across all sectors.
- ▶ Implementing a resilience-based methodology, targeting vulnerable communities through strategic planning.

Population in 2024

Total Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Stateless Persons



Host Community Members

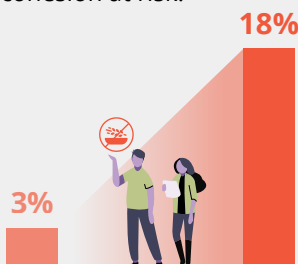


Facts, Figures, and Stories

In an increasingly constrained funding environment, the reduction in assistance is drastically impacting refugee families, as highlighted by WFP’s quarterly food security outcome monitoring (FSOM).

The proportion of severely food insecure households in both community and camps surging.

For instance, this percentage rose from **3% to 18% in Q3 2023**, directly affecting 74,000 of WFP’s 410,000 total beneficiaries. As a consequence, negative coping mechanisms, including migration to third countries, are on the rise and social cohesion at risk.



2024 Financial Requirements

Total Requirements
974,217,222 USD

Protection	159,425,308 USD
Food Security	10,244,723 USD
Education	127,728,571 USD
Health	107,281,934 USD
Basic Needs	394,272,493 USD
Shelter	42,376,023 USD
WASH	62,393,250 USD
Economic Empowerment	70,494,920 USD



Israa Omar, a Syrian refugee and young widow in Irbid, Jordan, found hope and purpose after facing the challenges of displacement and caring for her son with Rett Syndrome. With support from UNHCR and the Jordan River Foundation, she established 'Lutf,' a small business creating educational games for children with learning difficulties.

Photo and Story: UNHCR Jordan

Iraq

Overview

In Iraq, over the past few years, the inclusion of refugees into public services and policies has been gradually achieved in almost all sectors. Refugees have access to public services and have their rights fulfilled on par with the local community. The majority of refugees are hosted in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I), of which 36% are in camp settings. Almost all of them are of Kurdish origin which may explain the high degree of acceptance by both authorities and the local population and thus, of inclusion. The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has been exemplary in including refugees in its public services, such as access to health and now education, in line with the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and of the 3RP.

Transition

The [Iraq 3RP Chapter for 2023 and 2024](#) emphasises furthering the inclusion agenda through advocacy and capacity building. It aligns with the deactivation of the cluster coordination mechanisms for internally displaced Iraqis (IDPs) and integrates refugee and IDP responses under the UN Strategic Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). The focus is on government ownership and enhancing social protection systems, which encompasses the inclusion of refugees in government-led policies and programs. This approach includes enhancing public service delivery and expanding access to public services for refugees. Partners have developed a set of sectoral benchmarks to track progress and inform the currently ongoing work on defining the transition out of the 3RP by the end of 2024.

The phase-out of the 3RP framework in Iraq reflects the current operational and coordination context. The revised strategy focuses on strengthening capacities of relevant authorities, ensuring refugee access to public services, and socio-economic inclusion, rather than continuing parallel humanitarian interventions. The strategy aligns with the KRG Vision 2030, SDGs, and the UNSDCF, advocating for refugee inclusion in planning and programming.

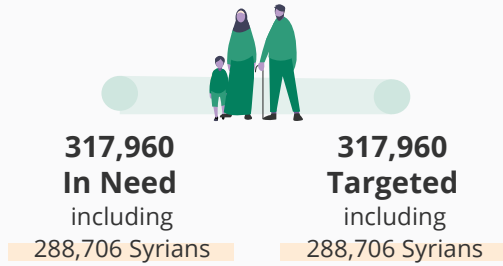
Challenges include a decrease in global humanitarian funding and the need for responsible disengagement, supporting the KRG and the Government of Iraq (GoI) to maintain protection space and advance public service access for refugees. Opportunities exist to enhance refugee inclusion, given the current context. This strategy is developed in consultation with regional and national stakeholders, including the KRG and key donors.

As of 30 November 2023, Iraq hosts 270,468 Syrian refugees, mostly in the KR-I, along with 29,409 refugees from other countries. UNHCR will not facilitate returns to Syria until protection thresholds for sustainable return are met and will continue resettlement submissions and exploring complementary pathways for refugees.

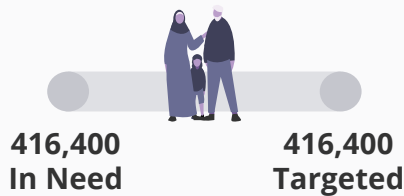
The projected refugee population in Iraq is expected to slightly increase in 2024. Refugees and asylum-seekers from other nationalities are integrated into overall programming as part of a unified approach. The total number of impacted host community members is estimated based on assessments and is expected to increase.

Population in 2024

Total Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Stateless Persons



Host Community Members



2024 Financial Requirements

**Total Requirements*
154,504,589 USD**

**As outlined in the Iraq Country Chapter 2023-2024, Iraq is transitioning from the 3RP; this is the total requirements of Iraq for 2024 to finalise the remaining activities in line with the transitional approach.*



Facts, Figures, and Stories



Roksana, a 23-year-old Syrian refugee in Iraq, transformed her life through a WFP-supported Vocational Training Center (VTC) Sewing Workshop in Sulaymaniyah. With only a primary school diploma and responsible for her family's shelter, she embraced the opportunity to learn tailoring. Now, Roksana is on her way to becoming a professional tailor, turning her passion into a source of income and inspiration for others.

Photo and Story: WFP

In Iraq's Kurdistan Region, the Refugee Education Integration Policy (REIP) is changing lives. Ghalib (right in the photo), a Syrian refugee, struggled to enroll his children in school due to language barriers. With REIP's implementation by the Ministry of Education, his children, including Ahmed, can now attend local schools in their language. This policy not only integrates refugee children like Ahmed into the community but also empowers Syrian teachers with employment opportunities, fostering a shared future for refugees and host communities.

Photo and Story by UNHCR Iraq

Egypt

Overview

The Arab Republic of Egypt is a party to two important international treaties on refugees, the 1951 Convention with its 1967 Protocol, and the regional legal instrument governing refugee protection in Africa (1969 OAU Convention). Cooperation between the Government of Egypt (GoE) and UNHCR is governed by the 1954 Memorandum of Understanding, which delegates responsibilities to UNHCR including registration, documentation, refugee status determination, resettlement, voluntary repatriation, and support for vulnerable individuals. Although the Government retains the role of the issuance of residence permits for refugees. In 2019, the Government of Egypt announced the drafting of a national asylum law with the aim of developing national procedures to regulate the asylum and refugee framework and proceed with the registration process.

Hosting refugees and asylum-seekers with a tradition of inclusivity, Egypt implements key principles of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), such as the out-of-camp policy and equitable responsibility-sharing. Syrian refugees and asylum-seekers, equating to Egyptian citizens, receive access to education and healthcare. Some of the challenges faced by refugees and asylum-seekers include limited formal employment opportunities, the inability to meet basic needs and high secondary and tertiary healthcare expenses. While Egypt maintains a generally tolerant protection environment, overlapping global shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic, in conjunction with the later consequences of the war in Ukraine and the escalation in Gaza have aggravated the economic challenges, equally affecting refugees, asylum seekers and host communities.

UNHCR has registered 487,695 refugees and asylum seekers from 60 nationalities in Egypt as of November 2023, with Syrians being the second-largest group, mainly living in urban areas. The conducive protection environment in Egypt allows regular residency permit renewal for registered refugees, though permit renewal

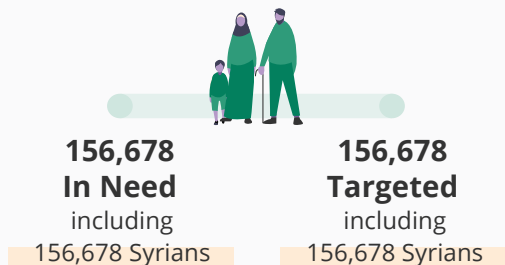
delays impact access to essential services, including education. The growing influxes and sharp increase in the number of refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt have put strain on national administrative capacities leading to, barriers such as lengthy residency application processes and increased waiting time to acquire residency. Advocacy efforts focus on increasing the national processing capacity of the residence permit for refugees and asylum seekers until the digitalization of the immigration data system is completed. In addition, the sharp increase of living costs leads refugees adopting negative coping mechanisms, highlighting the need for resilience activities to support public service capacity and livelihood opportunities for refugees and host communities

Strategic Objectives & Response Priorities

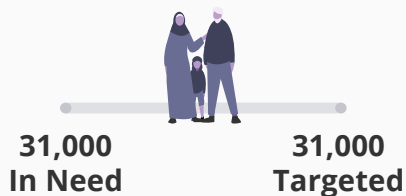
The 2024 3RP Country Plan for Egypt continues efforts in strengthening protection for Syrian refugees, mainstreaming protection across sectors. Aligned with the GCR's, pledges made by GoE focus on inclusive healthcare, education, registration, climate change and peacebuilding initiatives. Multi-level interventions address the socio-economic challenges affecting refugees, with technical support provided to the government for asylum and migration management policies. Priority areas include child protection, family and community-based care, specialized services for disabled children, cash-based interventions, psychosocial support, and self-reliance programs. Over 30 organizations collaborate with the government, aligning with the SDGs and the UNSDCF priorities. On the other hand, there is an urgent need to Advocate for more support by the international community to the government of Egypt to ensure the sustainability of the services provided to refugees, and to support developmental interventions aimed at enhancing the resilience of host communities and promoting social cohesion, in line with the principle of burden and responsibility-sharing.

Population in 2024

Total Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Stateless Persons



Host Community Members



2024 Financial Requirements

Total Requirements 77,292,112 USD

Protection	15,379,608 USD
Food Security	9,521,427 USD
Education	7,696,630 USD
Health	12,971,434 USD
Nutrition	140,255 USD
Basic Needs	23,534,188 USD
Shelter and NFI	162,800 USD
WASH	288,000 USD
Livelihoods & Social Cohesion ..	7,483,171 USD
Multi-Sector	114,600 USD

Facts, Figures, and Stories

Impact on Egypt's Economy

The inclusion of Syrian refugees in public services and government subsidies places an additional burden on the Egyptian economy. This challenge is exacerbated by the country's economic downturn and a high inflation rate, which stood at 40% as of November 2023, according to the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS).



Socio-Economic Conditions and Refugee Coping Mechanisms:

The challenging socio-economic conditions and rising cost of living in Egypt are forcing refugees to adopt negative coping mechanisms for survival. Unfortunately, these mechanisms often worsen their vulnerability levels and can have detrimental effects.



UNDP Egypt has launched a new project to accelerate digital innovation, promote digital resilience, and empower refugee and host communities in Egypt. In Cairo's Smart Village, UNDP and ITIDA unite for a five-year project aimed at bolstering Egypt's tech sector and fostering innovation offering opportunities for financing and mentorship, with a focus on building a resilient ecosystem and facilitating access to funding for startups. It aims to enhance Egypt's leadership in digital innovation-driven entrepreneurship and propel unprecedented growth, ultimately benefiting vulnerable refugee and host communities.

Story: UNDP Egypt

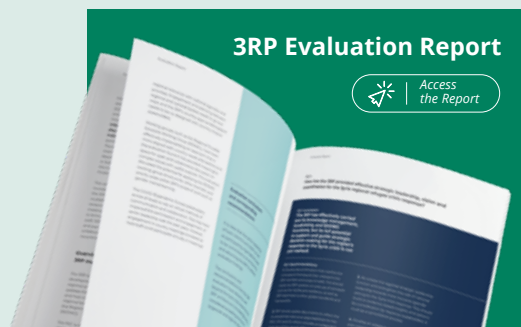
Annex I

Evaluation

Background

In November 2020, the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) agreed to initiate an independent regional-level evaluation of the 3RP, acknowledging the evolving context since its inception in 2015. This initiative aimed to ensure that the 3RP remains fit for purpose amidst a series of compounding challenges facing the region. Conducted by the independent consulting service

TANGO, with support from the 3RP Joint Secretariat (JS) and a dedicated Regional Technical Committee (RTC) Taskforce, the evaluation began in July 2021. A management response was developed and published in December 2022, detailing the agreed-upon actions in response to the evaluation's recommendations.



Evaluation Findings

The evaluation critically examined coordination approaches, identifying strengths, opportunities, and challenges, and made pivotal recommendations for the future direction of the 3RP within the regional context. Significant progress has been made in response to these recommendations:

Strategic Leadership, Vision, and Coordination

In response to the evaluation, the 3RP established a taskforce, a collaborative effort that resulted in the development of the Conceptual Framework and the Operating Model. Shared with all members of the 3RP Regional Technical Committee (RTC) in July 2023, these documents represent a significant step in clarifying the 3RP's strategic vision and operational approach, aligning them more effectively with the evolving regional context.

Supporting the Operational Response

The 3RP developed an Options Paper in coordination with country focal points. This paper outlines the roles, products, and emerging needs for future regional support for 3RP countries, reflecting inputs gathered from various channels, including the Regional Planning Workshop and country missions. It also looks at the future of the 3RP in the evolving context of the Syria crisis.

Advocacy, Policy, and Resource Mobilisation

A time-bound Advocacy Taskforce, operational since December 2022, was initially established to advance the 3RP's advocacy efforts and was instrumental in developing key advocacy messages for the Seventh Brussels Syria Conference in June 2023, drafting a comprehensive Advocacy Stocktaking Paper, and creating an Advocacy Roadmap. The Taskforce was deactivated in June 2023 due to the need for sustained advocacy efforts beyond the scope defined by the evaluation. Subsequently, the 3RP Advocacy Working Group (AWG) was established as a permanent entity to continue these efforts.

Meeting monthly, the AWG maintains the momentum initiated by the Taskforce, addressing ongoing and evolving advocacy needs that extend beyond the initial management response objectives. This strategic shift acknowledges the continuous and dynamic nature of advocacy in policy influence and resource mobilisation. The AWG builds upon the foundational work of the Taskforce, adapting and expanding the 3RP's advocacy strategies.

Conclusion

One year following the publication of the management response to the evaluation, all proposed objectives and suggested follow-up actions have been successfully carried out. These actions demonstrate the 3RP's robust response to the evaluation's recommendations, significantly enhancing its strategic leadership, operational response, and advocacy efforts. It also reflects the capacity of the 3RP to adapt and look at future endeavors with regards to the changing circumstances surrounding the Syria crisis.

Annex II

Durable Solutions

Background

The 3RP continues to be framed to the extent possible from a solutions perspective. While countries lead efforts related to durable solutions, the Regional Technical Committee (RTC) established a dedicated Regional Durable Solutions Working Group (RDSWG) to facilitate regional coordination in 2017. Meanwhile, support to durable solutions has been a regional Strategic Direction of the 3RP since 2018, defining the issue as a regional priority. Nine years into the 3RP, and thirteen years into the crisis, durable solutions continue to be out of reach for the vast majority of refugees. Each country now outlines a durable solutions strategy based on the specific context and informed by refugees' wishes and intention. These strategies are underpinned by [UNHCR's 2018 Comprehensive Protection and Solution Strategy](#) as well as the 3RP's regional Strategic Direction on pursuing durable solutions.

The 3RP's approach to durable solutions for Syrian refugees is guided by international protection and humanitarian standards and centered on refugee intentions and concerns. The outcomes and objectives of solutions-related interventions are that:

- ▶ Refugees have access to information on durable solutions so that they can make informed decisions on their future.
- ▶ Refugees continue to access safe and secure asylum space, and host countries continue to be supported by the international community.
- ▶ Refugees have increased access to and opportunities for economic and social inclusion in host countries.
- ▶ Refugees have access to and opportunities for resettlement and other third-country solutions.
- ▶ Refugees can voluntarily return to their country of origin in safety and dignity at the time of their own choosing, based on their free, informed and voluntary decision.

The section below reflects on progress related to some of these key components in the current contexts in host countries and within Syria.

Voluntary Repatriation

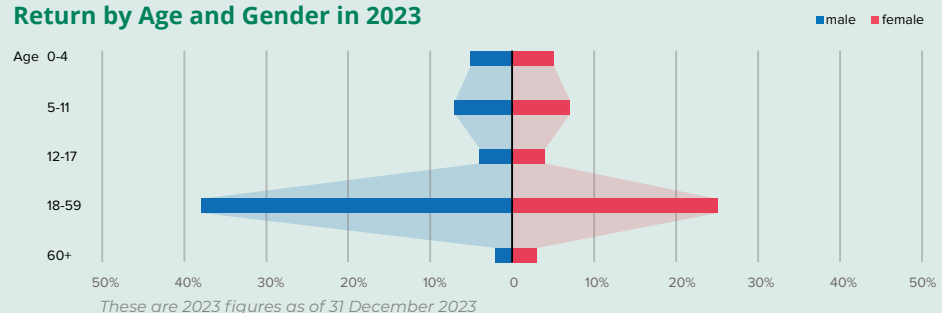
Background and Context

Spontaneous returns continued to take place at a modest rate during 2023 albeit reflecting gradual decrease in returns of Syrian refugees from neighbouring countries over the course of the year. Some 38,200 Syrian refugees returned between January and December 2023 compared to around 50,900 in 2022. The downward trend compared to the same period in 2022 was mainly observed in Türkiye, where temporary return and readmission were allowed by the Government following the earthquakes in February. In Türkiye, some 70,000 Syrians took advantage of the temporary visit modality with over 90% reported as having returned to Türkiye by September 2023. The overall number of UNHCR verified returns of Syrian refugees between January 2016 and December 2023 is 392,193.

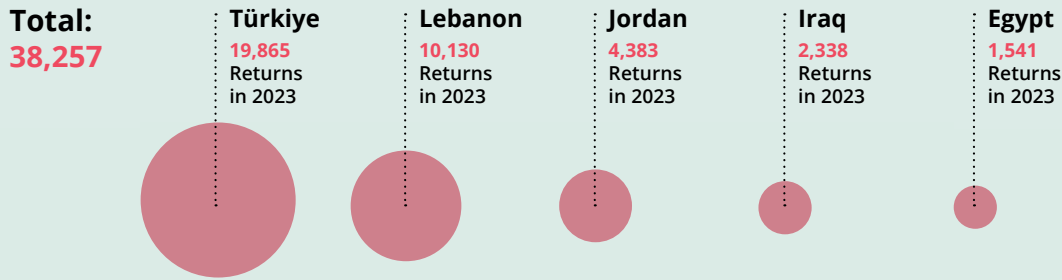
The decrease in actual returns is also in line with a decrease in the short-term return intention observed during the last round of [UNHCR's Return Perception and Intention Survey](#), conducted during January and February 2023. At that time only 1.1% of Syrians interviewed intended to return within the next 12 months compared to 1.7% in 2022 and 2.4% in 2023. The largest decline in intention was noted in Jordan where it decreased from 2.4% to 0.8% compared with last year's survey. However, over a

quarter of respondents indicated that they hope to return within the next five years and 56% expressed an overall intention to return to Syria one day. Across the region, as in previous years, safety and security, livelihood opportunities, basic services and access to housing inside Syria remain the primary barriers to return with the lack of livelihoods emerging as the top concern related to refugees' decision-making about return. Living conditions continue to be increasingly challenging for Syrian refugees in host countries with 90% of Syrian refugees surveyed not being able to meet their basic needs. Nonetheless, very few respondents cited conditions in the host countries as a key factor influencing their decision to return and it does not seem to be a significant driver for return given the continued low level of intention to return in the short-term. By contrast, this year's survey reflected an emerging intention related to onward movement: while 16% of respondents in 2022 indicated the hope to move to another country, this percentage increased to 26% in 2023. The largest share of refugees that expressed a hope to move to a third country were in Egypt (33%), Lebanon (27%), Jordan (26%), and Iraq (19%) respectively. Almost 68% of respondents who indicated a wish to move to a third country said that they are seeking better living conditions.

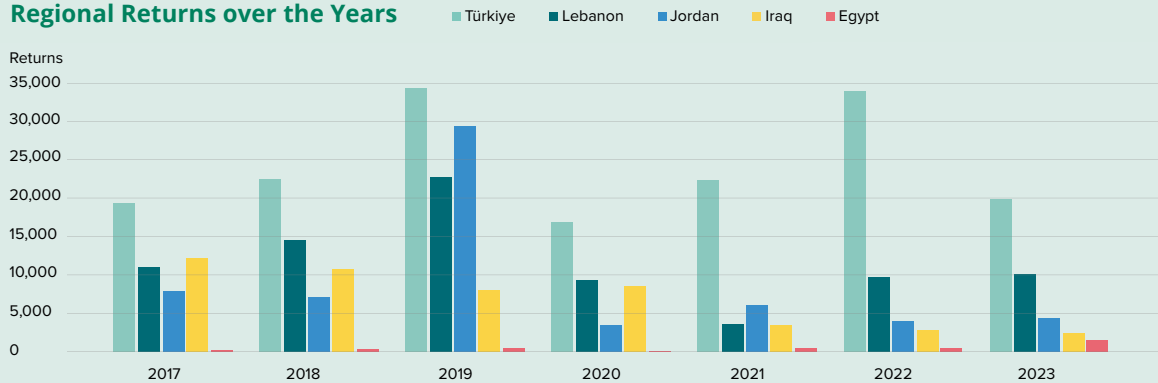
Return by Age and Gender in 2023



Monitored Returns in 2023 (as of 31 December)



Regional Returns over the Years



Voluntary Return as a Durable Solution under the 3RP

Support for voluntary return is underpinned by the right of Syrian refugees to return to their country of origin at a time of their own choosing in a voluntary, safe and dignified manner. Refugees’ intention and decision-making will remain the main guideline for planning and support, together with UNHCR’s 2018 Comprehensive Protection and Solution Strategy. While 3RP partners are neither promoting nor facilitating refugee return, support which includes ensuring refugees have access to reliable information for their decision-making and referrals to legal counselling and other protection services to reduce risks remain important. In some countries, through individual counselling, refugees are provided with information about the situation in Syria and access to services to help ensure they can make the safest and most sustainable choice for themselves and their families.

Returns without this type of support could expose refugee returnees to additional protection risks and further displacement. 3RP partners also have a direct presence at some of the border crossings (for example in Jordan and Türkiye), supporting families with administrative processes and monitoring their safe passage. UNHCR continues to strengthen this type of support in coordination with host governments and continues to monitor returns to assess voluntariness. At the same time, UNHCR stresses the continued need for protection space and access to legal support and basic services for the many refugees unable or unwilling to return. Without this, the risk of creating push factors for refugees to return to Syria prematurely will increase, possibly resulting in further displacement or onward movement beyond the region.

**Social and
Economic
Inclusion
and Local
Opportunities****Background and Context**

As many Syrian refugees are likely to remain displaced in host countries in the medium-term in protracted displacement, expanding local opportunities and solutions remains a key need across the refugee population. Advancing the inclusion of refugees has been a core principle of the 3RP since its inception in 2015, cutting across the 3RP's four strategic directions. Its importance is emphasized through the Global Compact on Refugees (2018), the Global Refugee Forums in 2019 and 2023 as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Social and economic inclusion of refugees includes, for example, policy frameworks that afford refugees their basic rights to health, education, and social services on par with nationals and in accordance with international refugee law; access to labour markets, financial services and economic opportunities for all; providing refugees equal access to social protection systems and anti-poverty initiatives; and adopting common approaches to assisting host country nationals and refugees in need.

While inclusion in the context of the 3RP has traditionally centred on refugees, it is now acknowledged as a cross-cutting issue that should be pursued for all displacement affected communities, including vulnerable host community members, in line with the Global Compact on Refugees and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**Social Economic Inclusion under
the 3RP: Access to Services**

Ensuring the inclusion of refugees into national systems requires supporting host governments to provide services and assistance to both refugees and host communities in an equitable manner, including through more predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing. This can be legally challenging and resource intensive, but when achieved, it can improve refugees and host communities' quality of life and sense of stability and promotes greater social cohesion. Refugees' needs include a supportive legal, policy, and administrative framework that protects rights and provides a range of socio-economic opportunities to build self-reliance in the short term, while enhancing the prospect of achieving durable solutions in the future. While the scale and scope of such opportunities are different in each of the 3RP countries, progress towards socio-economic inclusion has been made in some areas, while modest results are seen in other areas. Iraq, for example, has made great strides towards including Syrian refugees in education and health services.

The KRI has been hosting more than 71,000 school-age Syrian refugee children since the onset of the crisis. Until 2022, most Syrian refugees were taught in a parallel system: they followed the KRI syllabus but taught in Arabic. They learned in refugee schools, staffed by refugee teachers who are paid incentives by international humanitarian actors; primarily by UNICEF and Save the Children.

The Education Sector co-led by UNICEF, Save the Children and UNHCR advocated for the integration of refugee children into the KRG public education system. As a result, the Refugee Education Integration Policy (REIP) was devised through a collaborative engagement of all education partners. The Ministry of Education (MoE) and the KRI Council of Ministers endorsed it in November 2021 and the full government endorsement came in July 2022, with the plan to start delivering the curriculum in schools in grade 1-4 from September 2022. After six months of implementation, around 26,000 refugee students were enrolled into grades 1-4 in 977 schools across the region, a 20% increase when compared to the previous year.

On 4 July 2023, the MoE announced the extension of the REIP with its implementation in grade five starting September 2023. Moreover, the MoE agreed to take over the paying of refugee teacher salaries and including refugee teachers on the payroll at par of nationals through lecturer contracts. The policy highlights the importance of integrating refugee children into the public education system to advance refugee protection and rights as well as the Sustainable Development Goal 4, which recognizes that education is one of the most important ways to build self-reliance and resilience for refugee and host community children and youth; foster social cohesion between refugee and host communities; and mitigate child protection risks.

In Iraq, over the years, the inclusion of refugees into public services and policies has been gradually achieved in almost all sectors. Refugees have access to public services and have their rights fulfilled on par with the local community. The majority of refugees are hosted in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), of which 36% are in camp settings. Almost all of them are of Kurdish origin which may explain the high degree of acceptance by both authorities and the local population and thus, of inclusion. The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has been exemplary in including refugees in its public services, such as access to health and education, in line with the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and of the 3RP.

In line with the progress made in terms of refugee inclusion, and following extensive consultation with 3RP partners at country and regional levels, Iraq will transition out of the 3RP coordination framework after the 2024 cycle, further advancing refugee inclusion in development processes.

Access to livelihood and financial inclusion

Inclusion also means removing barriers to refugees achieving stability and self-reliance, including by securing the right to work. Access to economic opportunities enhances refugee resilience and self-reliance, while also allowing them to contribute to the economy and host communities in a measurable way. For access to formal work and other aspects of life, access to financial services is vital.

In Jordan, UNICEF, UNHCR and WFP are working to increase economic opportunities and broader access to financial services for refugees through engagement and collaboration with the Government, development actors, private sector partners, and donors. In a context where no durable solutions are available, cash assistance programme targeting a welfare population has shown to contribute to refugees' self-reliance in the short and long term.

In close coordination with other partners, programmes to foster financial inclusion for refugees in both camps and out of camps have rolled out. Thus far, more than 55,000 refugee households have access to mobile wallets through which over 30,500 receive monthly cash payments. Moreover, over 220,000 Syrian refugees in communities and camps receive monthly food assistance on 47,000 mobile wallets by WFP.

By mid-2024, it is planned to reach 350,000 Syrians living in communities and camps, on 70,000 mobile wallets. In addition to becoming customers of national financial services, refugee mobile wallet owners can use their own mobile money account to receive assistance from several humanitarian and social protection agencies.

Mobile wallets are available to both cash and non-cash recipients: a potential game changer which opens up possibilities for saving and storing money, accessing credit, and contributing to behavioural changes which could make a singular contribution to refugees' self-reliance.

Resettlement and Complementary Pathways

Syrians remain the largest refugee population globally in need of resettlement in 2023, with an estimated 750,000 Syrian refugees projected to be in need of resettlement in 2024 – a similar level to 2023. By the end of December 2023, the number of Syrians referred for resettlement from 3RP countries was 35,656, compared to 36,639 and 25,351 in 2022 and 2021 respectively. This reflects a slight decrease from 2022, following a decrease in available quotas for Syrians in the region. This decrease was not commensurate with the increased protection needs for Syrians in the region, where submissions represent less than 5% against the overall resettlement needs of Syrian Refugees. Given the changing protection space, it is vital that the international community continue to support and stay the

course with Syrian resettlement, and ensure ongoing, reliable, and ample resettlement quotas in the years to come.

It was in the aftermath of the Syria emergency in which an approach to 'safe and legal pathways' under the complementary pathways umbrella emerged as essential and gained traction in MENA. The need of complementary pathways opportunities to third countries remain critical to ensure protection and solutions as the needs of Syrian refugees continue to outstrip the available resettlement places. Since then, a variety of pathway programmes to third countries, ranging from employment and education opportunities to family reunification, have been carried out in MENA to facilitate access to refugees.

Complementary Pathways remain a collaboration with different states, partners and other stakeholders - partnership engagement and the creation of coordination structures are therefore key to expand complementary pathways in the region. In this regard, the MENA Contact Group for Complementary Pathways (MCGCP), created in 2020, has been instrumental, with over 100 representatives from Member States, NGOs, academia, refugee-led organisations and UNHCR operations. The MCGCP has launched a regional digital platform in 2022 with the aim of providing a live forum for its members to further develop partnership engagement and knowledge-sharing on complementary pathways.

The 3RP will continue to support refugees through ongoing third country solutions. In particular, UNHCR's Comprehensive Protection and Solutions Strategy will direct a focus on 1) safeguarding the resilience of resettlement programmes; 2) strengthening complementary pathways; and 3) contribute to advocacy efforts in receiving communities. Meanwhile, MCGCP will disseminate information on opportunities, advocate for complementary pathways programmes, and share best practices among partners.

Links and Sources

- 1 https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/RPIS_2023.pdf
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Empowering futures together

In Türkiye, the Meryem Women's Initiative stands as a model of empowerment, bringing together refugee and local women in sustainable agriculture and tech ventures. Aimed at improving livelihood opportunities through on-the-job training, and bolstering social cohesion within local and refugee communities, the initiative has provided livelihoods for 135 women. By creating green jobs, the initiative actively contributes to mitigating and adapting to the adverse effects of climate change, showcasing the profound impact of community collaboration in building opportunities and resilience for all.

Photo and Story: International Labour Organization (ILO) Türkiye



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