

1. Crisis overview

4.6 / 5	16.5million	8 million	\$2 billion	12.2%
Inform severity index (Nov 2024)	People in need of humanitarian aid (Response Priorities – January-March 2025)	People targeted in the response plan (Response Priorities – January-March 2025))	Required to reach the target (Response Priorities – January- March 2025))	Of the required funding secured (Response Priorities – January-March 2025))
174 MSEK	-	8 MSEK	182 MSEK	
Initial allocation	Additional allocation	Flexible funding	Total Sida funding 2025	

After 14 years of conflict, Syria is undergoing significant change following the Assad regime’s fall in December 2024. While the interim government offers hope for increased stability and recovery, immediate humanitarian needs have worsened. The situation in Syria is highly dynamic, with continued conflict in parts of the country, as well as the aftermath of a civil war leaving 500,000 people killed and 13 million people displaced within and outside of Syria. Multiple crisis abound, with conflict, regional instability, food insecurity, climate change, water shortages, all augmented by an economic crisis. The number of people in need of life-saving assistance has surged to an unprecedented 16.5 million people in 2025. Reduced food assistance from the World Food Programme (WFP) has led to increased malnutrition, stunting, and the use of negative coping mechanisms such as child labour and early child marriage, and an increased incidence of child trafficking, sex trafficking, and work in the drug trade.

The abrupt halt of humanitarian aid from the United States has further compounded the dire humanitarian situation as the US was one of the largest humanitarian donors to the Syria HRP. Since Assad's fall, access has improved, and the new regime aims to unify the country. Yet challenges include internal and regional strife and population movements within Syria and from neighbouring countries.

2. Humanitarian needs & affected population

Humanitarian needs continue to grow in Syria. Large-scale displacements of people create immediate needs, in addition to protracted but acute needs in all humanitarian sectors. IDP’s

in particular women, children, elderly and people with disabilities, are especially vulnerable due to their limited access to resources, services, voice and power. In 2025, 90 percent of the population live in poverty, with 14.5 million people food insecure. The health system is vulnerable and inadequate, with only 50 percent of the system considered functional. More than 16.3 million people need protection assistance. Severe protection risks include frequent violations of international humanitarian law (IHL), minority persecution, sexual- and gender-based violence, heavy contamination by mines and unexploded ordnances, as well as lack of access to civil documentation and housing, land and property (HLP) rights. The crisis continues to have a gendered impact, with an increase of female-headed households and women and adolescent girls experiencing harmful and discriminatory gender norms, including gender-based violence. Children remain exposed to a number of threats and grave violations of their rights, such as forced early marriages, sexual violence and child labour. Young boys and men run a particularly high risk of recruitment into armed groups and engaging in the drug trade. Education is a challenge, with 2.45 million children out of school and 6.9 million children needing emergency education. Climate change is linked to worsening natural hazards such as harsh winters and droughts, leading to reduced livelihoods opportunities.

Most IDP camps can be found in northern and northwest Syria, hosting around two million IDPs. Another over five million IDPs live outside of camps, most still needing humanitarian assistance. The underfunded humanitarian response is severely impacting food security, health and GBV services, and many critical services are under threat of closing. While many IDPs are eager to return home, key barriers to return are damaged homes, inadequate services, unexploded ordnances and HLP issues. Ongoing hostilities between primarily Turkish backed Syrian National Army and Syrian Democratic Forces continue in the northeast impacting on essential services. Displacements continue and restrictions of access to humanitarian aid leave millions in need of basic services and livelihoods. The recent deal to integrate the Syrian Democratic Forces into the new government's military has an uncertain impact on ongoing hostilities with the SNA. In former GoS areas, 8.1 million people need humanitarian aid, including three million IDPs. These areas face food insecurity, poverty, and poor access to services. Despite improved security in many regions, the conflict in Tartous and Lattakia in March 2025 between groups loyal to the former regime and new regime forces, resulted in 1,500 civilian deaths and large-scale displacement, mostly of Alawites and other minorities.

Since 8 December UNHCR estimates that some 371,900 people have returned to Syria from abroad, and that two million people might return to Syria in 2025. In areas with many returns the additional strain on basic services and livelihoods is stretching coping capacities to the limit and increasing the need for life-saving humanitarian support. Syrian refugees remain among those most vulnerable in neighbouring countries, increasingly perceived by host populations as competing for jobs and scarce public resources. While UNHCR assesses that conditions for returns to Syria in line with international principles are not yet in place, Syrian refugees experience increased pressure from host countries to return. To facilitate a return Türkiye is allowing “go-and-see” visits for family members without this impacting on visitors ability to return to their country of refuge. A similar approach is being prepared in Lebanon.

3. The humanitarian response

The UN-led humanitarian coordination used to be an adaptation of the standard ‘country’ coordination model, adjusted to respond to three sub-contexts. The UN is now embarking on a process to merge the three sub-contexts into one response, towards a more traditional humanitarian architecture in Syria with seven UN-hubs across Syria. The process is led by the RC/HC in Damascus, with expected completion by June 2025. In addition, the UN has recently presented a draft “Transitional Action Plan” (TAP) which outlines how the UN can support the new regime in Syria’s transition and recovery.

In December 2024, a summary of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) Strategic Objectives for 2024-2025 was presented. Due to the new circumstances with a new regime and sharp reduction of funds, the HRP summary has been extended to June 2025, with a likely further extension until December. The current HRP summary was adjusted to show people in need, people targeted and people *critically targeted* based on the situation in December 2024. Even with this reduction of people targeted, the HRP continues to be severely underfunded at only 12.2 percent as of March 2025. The reduction in US funding creates an even more challenging funding environment. It has severely impacted organizations and sectors in North-East Syria, particularly for services to IDPs in and outside of camps, disrupting operations and leaving major gaps in coordination and information management.

While bureaucratic constraints have decreased somewhat with the new regime, and with more access across Syria, the operational environment remains challenging. Restrictions on humanitarian access continue. Concerns around insecurity, IHL violations, UXOs and cases of aid interference lead to various constraints and delays in the humanitarian response. The political dynamics that surrounded and permeated the country, partly manifested through a series of economic sanctions and restrictions, have also shifted. While some sanctions mainly relating to financial and banking issues and reconstruction have been lifted, there are still major constraints remaining for economic recovery and reconstruction of the country.

4. Sida’s humanitarian allocation

The protractedness of the Syrian crisis and reduced funding require new ways of working that still ensures that the most severe needs remain prioritised. Against this backdrop, Sida will continue to prioritise organisations that have the presence and capacity to meet the most urgent unaddressed humanitarian needs through aid modalities that enable, when and where possible, a sustainable humanitarian impact. Area-based approaches, multi-sector programming and cash modalities are considered by Sida to be appropriate approaches. Geographical coverage, based on the severity and scope of needs and the ability to respond in underserved and hard-to-reach areas remains a priority factor for partner selection. To address the unmet protection needs, any partner initiative should clearly indicate the integration and/or direct protection activities, preferably working with proactive protection and reduction of risk. Partners must demonstrate how their work aligns with the Centrality of Protection Strategy.

INITIAL ALLOCATION (SEK)		
PARTNER	SECTOR	INITIAL ALLOCATION
ACF	Food Security, Health, Nutrition, WASH	8,000,000
IRC	Protection, Food Security, Health	9,000,000
Islamic Relief	Health	20,000,000 ¹
NRC	Education, WASH, FSL, Shelter, Protection	50,000,000 ²
Save the Children	Education, Child Protection	9,000,000
Swedish Red Cross	Health, WASH	20,000,000 ³
Oxfam incl. INGO coordination	WASH, FSL, Protection, Gender	10,000,000
SCHF	Multi-sector	17,000,000
SHF	Multi-sector	17,000,000
UNICEF	Child Protection, Education, Health, Nutrition, WASH	14,000,000
TOTAL		174,000,000

FLEXIBLE FUNDING & ADDITIONAL ALLOCATIONS 2025		
PARTNER	FLEXIBLE FUNDING ^[1]	ADDITIONAL ALLOCATION
FAO	8,000,000	-
TOTAL	8,000,000	-

¹ Already committed in 2023.

² Already committed in 2023.

³ Already committed in 2023.

^[1] Flexible funding includes a mix of allocations such as Rapid Response Mechanism and other flexible funding mechanisms.