

# REGIONAL QUARTERLY REPORT

## ON THE SYRIA CRISIS

December 2023

“ I LONG FOR DAYS WHEN SYRIANS, AND ESPECIALLY SYRIAN WOMEN, THOUGHT OF TOMORROW AS AN OPPORTUNITY. THESE DAYS, TOMORROW IS A MYSTERY THAT WE CANNOT IMAGINE.

— A woman from Aleppo, Syria

## SNAPSHOT

**As of year-end 2023, the needs of Syrians and host communities are higher than ever, particularly in light of widespread economic collapse, the cumulative impact of 12 years of conflict, climate-related challenges, natural disasters, and various other socio-political factors.**

Despite the continuing efforts of humanitarian actors, the Syria crisis remains one of the world's most complex humanitarian and protection emergencies. In 2023, 15.3 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance — the highest number since the onset of the crisis in 2011. This includes 7.7 million women and girls, around 4 million of whom are of reproductive age. Meanwhile, more than 6.8 million Syrian refugees remain as refugees in five neighbouring countries — Türkiye, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt, nearly half of whom are women and girls.

This report offers a bird's eye view of UNFPA's operations within the context of the Syria crisis. The report is prepared by the UNFPA Regional Humanitarian Hub for Syria and the Arab States (The Hub) in Amman, and spans operations led by UNFPA offices in Türkiye, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt, in addition to the Whole of Syria (operations led inside Syria, both from Damascus and cross-border via Gaziantep).

**With the exception of data on service delivery points, the quantitative data presented in this report is cumulative, covering achievements made between January 2023 and the reporting month.**



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REGIONAL HUMANITARIAN HUB  
FOR SYRIA & THE ARAB STATES



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“ VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS HAS BECOME A SERIOUS PROBLEM AFTER THE WAR. WE SIMPLY DO NOT FEEL SAFE ANYMORE.

– YUSRA, a woman from Qamishli

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## SITUATION OVERVIEW



**As of year-end 2023, civilian life and humanitarian assistance are severely impacted by artillery shelling, air strikes, land mines, and unexploded ordnance, creating fear for millions of Syrians who have known nothing but conflict and displacement since 2011.**

The basic service capacity in Syria continues to erode, with critical systems like water, sanitation, and public health under severe pressure due to minimal development investment. The region faces recurrent disease outbreaks, waterborne diseases, an extended drought and water crisis, vaccine-preventable illnesses, and food insecurity, leading to increased mortality and morbidity. This includes higher rates of malnutrition and a growing need for humanitarian assistance. Rural Damascus, Idleb, Ar-Raqqa, Quneitra, and Lattakia have reported alarming Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) levels, with Lattakia experiencing an emergency-level GAM prevalence of 10 percent. Over 12.9 million people

in Syria require food assistance, and the cost of a food basket has dramatically increased, doubling since January 2023 and quadrupling over two years.

As Syrians face these challenges, the economy has further deteriorated, sparking some internal migration as families seek livelihoods and better access to services. High inflation, currency depreciation, and rising commodity prices have escalated humanitarian needs, increasing poverty and dependence on aid. Since February 2023, the Syrian pound has lost about half of its value against the US dollar.

This multifaceted crisis perpetuates vulnerability cycles, particularly affecting those most in need, including individuals with disabilities. The increasing need for unavailable basic services exacerbates vulnerability and strains social cohesion. Active conflict and military operations, including shelling and airstrikes, especially near frontlines, have hindered humanitarian access, impacting both aid delivery and the population's access to services.

In October 2023, the most significant escalation of hostilities since 2019 occurred in northern Syria and Deir-ez-Zor Governorate, displacing over 120,000 people in north-west Syria and affecting numerous health facilities, schools, and water systems.

### Women & girls continue to bear the brunt

In addition to many women and girls lacking access to quality sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, gender-based violence (GBV) continues to pervade the daily lives of Syrian women and girls impacted by the crisis, as shown by assessments and focus group discussions conducted by UNFPA. Their lives are marked by mutually reinforcing forms of violence and gender inequality, often exacerbated by discriminatory attitudes based on age, displacement status, disability, and/or marital status. This has created an environment in which the health and lives of women and girls are consistently at risk, and in which they're devalued, controlled, exploited, and then blamed for the violence they face.

"Things have gotten much worse in recent years," explains Sali, a young woman living in Areesha camp, who was forced into a child marriage when she was 14, shortly after the crisis erupted. Fortunately, she was able to access services at a UNFPA-supported Safe Space, which helped her overcome her trauma. "The situation is the same for so many girls around me, but many are not able to find support as I did."

Unsurprisingly, women and girls throughout Syria and the crisis region are telling UNFPA that the violence against them has become normalised. Harassment, intimate partner and family violence, child and forced marriage and subsequent pregnancies, and sexual violence and exploitation are consistently reported, while new trends, such as various forms of technology-facilitated gender-based violence, have also been observed in recent years. Adolescent girls in particular face a wide range of challenges that usually accompany them throughout their lives. It usually begins with restrictions on movement and domestic violence, and progresses as the girl grows up to include child and forced marriages, domestic violence, early pregnancy, sexual violence, and sexual exploitation, among others. Girls are also being denied their right to an education, which further limits their life prospects and can entrap them in an unending cycle of violence and exploitation.

### Syrians & host communities still face an uphill battle

Among the more than 6.3 million Syrian refugees dispersed across neighbouring countries, women and girls confront heightened vulnerabilities due to the prolonged crisis, with GBV posing an increasing threat. Many find themselves in densely populated

and precarious environments where the danger of harassment, assault, and exploitation is ever-present. The deteriorating macroeconomic situation, exacerbated by the war in Ukraine, has pushed numerous families towards harmful survival strategies, including child and forced marriages.

Furthermore, Syrian refugees endure persistent challenges in their host countries, which hampers their efforts to heal from trauma and to rebuild their lives. These include language and cultural barriers, discriminatory attitudes, economic challenges, and many other challenges that can impede their access to work, education, healthcare, and essential services. For refugee women and girls, this often translates into an elevated risk of violence and exploitation and an obstructed path to legal redress. It also poses a key obstacle to their societal integration, leading to their marginalisation and social exclusion. This stark reality accentuates the critical need for interventions that are specifically designed to address the adversities faced by these women and girls and meet their distinct needs.

### UNFPA stands with those impacted

Amidst the chaos of the past 12 years, the pleas of millions of Syrians often seem lost in the cacophony of global crises. Yet, undeterred by the staggering adversities they face, Syrians across the region continue to show remarkable resilience, which stands to become eroded without ongoing humanitarian assistance. Individuals of various ages and backgrounds, particularly women and girls who have endured gender-based violence, showcase extraordinary strength and an unwavering resolve. Many strive to transcend their circumstances and past traumas, aiming to secure a brighter future and opportunities for their children and close ones. Many channel their experiences into creativity and advocacy, becoming artists, activists, and innovators, serving as pivotal voices for change within their communities.

In 2023, as part of its regional response to the crisis, UNFPA delivered sexual and reproductive health services to more than 1.9 million people, while more than 880,000 were reached with services designed to prevent and respond to gender-based violence. In addition to reaching more than 365,000 adolescent girls with vital services, more than 16,000 women were provided with cash and voucher assistance, and more than 10,000 LGBTQIA+ individuals were served.

**As part of its 2024 Regional Syria Crisis Response, which spans the Whole of Syria, Türkiye, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt, UNFPA is [appealing](#) for \$132.5 million to provide reproductive health and protection services to women and girls who are waiting in desperation. We urge the international community to show solidarity and provide the needed financial support without delay. One crisis cannot be funded at the expense of the other.**

# FROM ALL OPERATIONS

ACHIEVEMENTS MADE THROUGHOUT THE REGION, INCLUDING THE WHOLE OF SYRIA, TÜRKIYE, LEBANON, JORDAN, IRAQ, AND EGYPT.

1,930,940

PEOPLE REACHED WITH SRH SERVICES

98% FEMALE

880,743

PEOPLE REACHED WITH GBV PROGRAMMING

92% FEMALE

61,133

PEOPLE REACHED WITH YOUTH ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

74% FEMALE

365,545

ADOLESCENT GIRLS SUPPORTED THROUGH VARIOUS PROGRAMMES

17,940

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES REACHED WITH VARIOUS SERVICES

89% FEMALE

10,777

LGBTQIA+ INDIVIDUALS SUPPORTED THROUGH VARIOUS SERVICES

16,136

PEOPLE PROVIDED WITH CASH & VOUCHER ASSISTANCE

95% FEMALE

15,304

PEOPLE TRAINED ON VARIOUS TOPICS

80% FEMALE

## REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with SRH services	163,567	100%
Family planning consultations	615,538	99%
Normal / assisted vaginal deliveries	32,284	100%
C-sections	13,744	100%
Ante-natal care consultations	486,704	100%
Post-natal care consultations	80,853	100%
People trained on SRH-related topics	6,575	86%

## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with GBV programming	181,155	100%
People reached with dignity kits	411,426	100%
GBV case management consultations	46,987	96%
People reached with GBV awareness sessions	650,928	95%
People trained on GBV-related topics	7,748	74%

## YOUTH SERVICES

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with youth activities	20,823	100%
People trained on youth-related topics	981	80%



149

PRIMARY HEALTHCARE FACILITIES \*



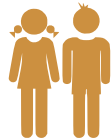
135

WOMEN AND GIRLS SAFE SPACES



28

EMERGENCY OBSTETRIC CARE FACILITIES



16

YOUTH CENTRES



111

MOBILE CLINICS



28

OTHER SERVICE DELIVERY POINTS

### AS THE CHALLENGES DEEPEN, WOMEN AND GIRLS CONTINUE TO PAY THE PRICE.

The conflict in Syria has created one of the most severe and protracted humanitarian crises in the world today. Millions have been displaced both inside the country and outside as refugees, especially in Türkiye, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt. The crisis has permanently altered the fabric of society in Syria itself, with far-reaching ramifications for its future resilience.

Assessments and interviews conducted by UNFPA since 2016 have also been able to illustrate the profound effect that years of instability have had on women and girls, particularly adolescent girls, who face a variety of unique risks. Lack of individual autonomy, movement restrictions, forced and early marriage, denial of resources and opportunities, and sexual and physical violence continue to be part of their daily reality, creating a web of violence that can transcend generations.

Despite testing their limits, however, the crisis has also revealed the remarkable resilience of women and girls, many of whom defy enormous odds to build brighter futures for themselves and their families.

\* Above figures reflect fully-supported service-delivery points. Inside Syria, an additional 638 primary healthcare facilities are being partially supported through the Ministry of Health.



# ESSENTIAL READING

## 2024 ADVOCACY BRIEF ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN SYRIA

Thirteen years since its onset, the Syria crisis remains one of the world's worst and longest humanitarian situations. In 2023, Syrians faced one of the worst years of this crisis, marked by a multitude of converging challenges that included ongoing hostilities, economic collapse, health outbreaks, natural disasters, climate-related challenges, mass displacement, food insecurity, and others. Coping capacities of households reportedly reached an all-time low and, despite increasing needs, there was a drastic reduction in humanitarian assistance due to funding shortfalls.

As in previous years, women and girls were the worst off, suffering heightened risks of negative coping mechanisms and gender-based violence (GBV). Most women and girls experienced compounded forms of violence, while facing high barriers to access humanitarian assistance and specialised GBV services.

This advocacy brief provides a snapshot of gender-based violence in Syria as the country prepares for yet another difficult year. The brief offers a closer look at affected populations, the types of gender-based violence taking place, and the risks of GBV in other sectors, in addition to a series of recommendations for donors, humanitarians, and GBV actors.

[START READING](#)

ADVOCACY BRIEF / 2024

## AN OVERVIEW OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN SYRIA

“I don't think the world understands what it means to be a woman living in Syria today. It is a life filled with danger, grief, and struggle, especially after the economic crisis.

— A WOMAN FROM DEIR-EZ-ZOR

# THE WHOLE OF SYRIA

UNFPA REMAINS COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT ALL COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT SYRIA HAVE ACCESS TO QUALITY SERVICES AND SUPPORT

1,333,017

PEOPLE REACHED WITH SRH SERVICES

98% FEMALE

682,785

PEOPLE REACHED WITH GBV PROGRAMMING

93% FEMALE

42,370

PEOPLE REACHED WITH YOUTH ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

68% FEMALE

285,767

ADOLESCENT GIRLS SUPPORTED THROUGH VARIOUS PROGRAMMES

13,027

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES REACHED WITH VARIOUS SERVICES

91% FEMALE

8,531

PEOPLE PROVIDED WITH CASH & VOUCHER ASSISTANCE

100% FEMALE

10,027

PEOPLE TRAINED ON VARIOUS TOPICS

80% FEMALE

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with SRH services	130,034	100%
Family planning consultations	526,669	100%
Normal / assisted vaginal deliveries	30,681	100%
C-sections	13,732	100%
Ante-natal care consultations	426,825	100%
Post-natal care consultations	68,404	100%
People trained on SRH-related topics	4,840	87%

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with GBV programming	140,375	100%
People reached with dignity kits	349,241	100%
GBV case management consultations	22,852	96%
People reached with GBV awareness sessions	515,833	96%
People trained on GBV-related topics	4,781	73%

YOUTH SERVICES	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with youth activities	15,358	100%
People trained on youth-related topics	406	77%



87

PRIMARY HEALTHCARE FACILITIES \*



58

WOMEN AND GIRLS SAFE SPACES



27

EMERGENCY OBSTETRIC CARE FACILITIES



11

YOUTH CENTRES



110

MOBILE CLINICS



15

OTHER SERVICE DELIVERY POINTS

\* Above figures reflect fully-supported service-delivery points. Inside Syria, an additional 638 primary healthcare facilities are being partially supported through the Ministry of Health.



I NEVER EXPECTED TO UNDERGO SUCH A SIGNIFICANT TRANSFORMATION. I’VE BECOME A DIFFERENT, STRONGER PERSON, MORE CAPABLE OF REACHING MY GOALS.

— RAYA, a 24-year-old woman survivor of gender-based violence



# SYRIA COUNTRY OFFICE

TWELVE YEARS ON, COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT SYRIA CONTINUE TO SUFFER AS MULTIPLE CRISES CONVERGE.

1,158,764

PEOPLE REACHED WITH SRH SERVICES

99% FEMALE

560,050

PEOPLE REACHED WITH GBV PROGRAMMING

96% FEMALE

42,370

PEOPLE REACHED WITH YOUTH ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

70% FEMALE

241,887

ADOLESCENT GIRLS SUPPORTED THROUGH VARIOUS PROGRAMMES

5,390

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES REACHED WITH VARIOUS SERVICES

94% FEMALE

9,250

PEOPLE PROVIDED WITH CASH & VOUCHER ASSISTANCE

100% FEMALE

5,651

PEOPLE TRAINED ON VARIOUS TOPICS

85% FEMALE

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with SRH services	117,696	100%
Family planning consultations	505,757	100%
Normal / assisted vaginal deliveries	12,613	100%
C-sections	9,190	100%
Ante-natal care consultations	340,554	100%
Post-natal care consultations	25,879	100%
People trained on SRH-related topics	4,388	87%

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with GBV programming	108,833	100%
People reached with dignity kits	69,854	100%
GBV case management consultations	21,429	96%
People reached with GBV awareness sessions	448,584	98%
People trained on GBV-related topics	857	79%

YOUTH SERVICES

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with youth activities	15,358	100%
People trained on youth-related topics	406	77%



77

PRIMARY HEALTHCARE FACILITIES \*



44

WOMEN AND GIRLS SAFE SPACES



19

EMERGENCY OBSTETRIC CARE FACILITIES



11

YOUTH CENTRES



108

MOBILE CLINICS



15

OTHER SERVICE DELIVERY POINTS

“ I KNOW THE WORLD I WANT TO LIVE IN. HELP ME BUILD IT, AND I WILL NEVER STOP WORKING.

— RASHA, a young woman from Syria

\* Above figures reflect fully-supported service delivery points. Inside Syria, an additional 638 primary healthcare facilities are being partially supported through the Ministry of Health.

# GREEN REVIVAL

## A SYRIAN STUDENT'S JOURNEY TO RESTORE HER FAMILY'S LEGACY

"In 2012, when the fighting pushed us from Deir-ez-Zor to Damascus, we had to leave our farm, which had been in our family for over 200 years," recounted Maya, a 23-year-old student of mechanical engineering in Deir-ez-Zor City, eastern Syria. "That farm was a spectacular place along the Euphrates River, with a 160-year-old mulberry tree right in its centre and a variety of other fruit trees."

Several years later, upon returning from Damascus to Deir-ez-Zor, Maya and her family found their once bountiful farm had transformed into an arid desert. "The scene was too dreadful to describe. The sight of the grey, treeless field, and the remains of the old mulberry tree that had been cut. It was shocking."

Despite the pressures of university exams, Maya enrolled in an entrepreneurship development program by the Society and Youth Hub, supported by UNFPA and facilitated by its local partner in Deir-ez-Zor City. "I learned how to generate innovative ideas, assess the economic feasibility of projects, and master marketing techniques to attract customers," she explained.

Eighteen adolescents participated in this competitive course, culminating in a requirement to propose business projects. The judges selected five winning projects, including Maya's, which focused on planting fruit trees and cultivating seasonal and annual crops on her family's farm.

"My passion for agriculture and deep connection to our land helped shape my project, convincing the judges of its viability. Our farm was more than just a business; it's where I've always found a sense of peace and purpose," Maya shared.

Reviving the farm posed challenges, particularly financial constraints, as Maya's parents were committed to providing a university education for their children. "I've always dreamed of rejuvenating our farm, but we lacked the funds. So, I dedicated myself to creating a compelling project to secure funding."

Securing funding was just the beginning. Maya's family, rooted in agriculture, united to rebuild the farm, drawing on her father's extensive farming experience for guidance. As Maya explains, "this project's success hinged on my family's support. My father provided invaluable advice, while my mother, brother, and I put his guidance to practice."

In January 2023, the project came to life, creating jobs for five individuals, including Maya's family and an agricultural worker. They planted 125 fruit trees — olive, apple, peach, mulberry, and apricot — alongside crops like grain, tomato, parsley, zucchini, eggplant, and bean.

"The joy of seeing the first buds and flowers this spring was indescribable," said Maya. "We harvested fruits this year, and I'm hopeful for a larger yield next year. We've already profited from selling winter crops and grain and are preparing to market our summer produce."

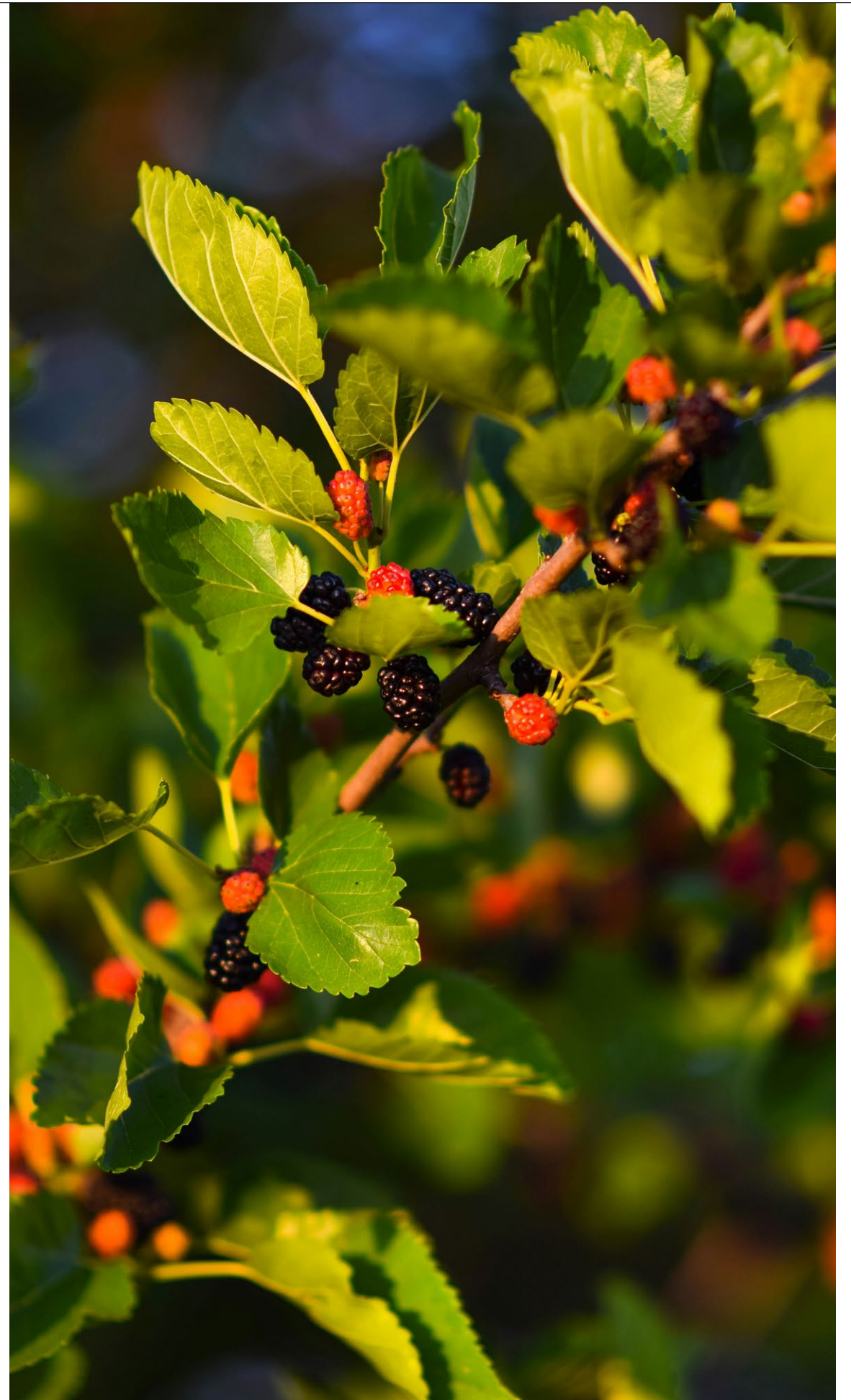
Beyond the project's success, Maya is challenging stereotypes about young women in her community, particularly those who pursue an education. "I'm proud of my work on the farm. Whenever I'm not studying, I'm actively involved in farming, and I love sharing my experiences on social media," she expressed.

Maya's focus remains on completing her studies and further developing the farm as an eco-friendly, profitable, and sustainable venture. "I'm committed to restoring our farm to its former lush state. We might have lost our cherished mulberry tree, but we've planted new ones for future generations to enjoy," she concluded, full of hope and determination.



**THIS PROJECT'S SUCCESS HINGED ON MY FAMILY'S SUPPORT. MY FATHER PROVIDED INVALUABLE ADVICE, WHILE MY MOTHER, BROTHER, AND I PUT HIS GUIDANCE TO PRACTICE.**

— MAYA, a young woman from Deir-ez-Zor, Syria





# CROSS-BORDER OPERATIONS

FOLLOWING THE EARTHQUAKE IN FEBRUARY, UNFPA CONTINUES TO RESPOND TO AN ONGOING AND FAR-REACHING EMERGENCY.

175,443

PEOPLE REACHED WITH SRH SERVICES

94% FEMALE

123,373

PEOPLE REACHED WITH GBV PROGRAMMING

80% FEMALE

44,684

ADOLESCENT GIRLS SUPPORTED THROUGH VARIOUS PROGRAMMES

7,939

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES REACHED WITH VARIOUS SERVICES

88% FEMALE

6,391

PEOPLE PROVIDED WITH CASH & VOUCHER ASSISTANCE

100% FEMALE

4,331

PEOPLE TRAINED ON VARIOUS TOPICS

73% FEMALE

## REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with SRH programming	12,338	100%
Family planning consultations	21,172	96%
Normal / assisted vaginal deliveries	18,134	100%
C-sections	4,522	100%
Ante-natal care consultations	100,100	100%
Post-natal care consultations	43,629	100%
People trained on SRH-related topics	407	86%

## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with GBV programming	32,346	100%
People reached with dignity kits	283,906	100%
GBV case management consultations	1,464	97%
People reached with GBV awareness sessions	71,678	84%
People trained on GBV-related topics	3,924	71%



10

PRIMARY HEALTHCARE FACILITIES



14

WOMEN AND GIRLS SAFE SPACES



8

EMERGENCY OBSTETRIC CARE FACILITIES



2

MOBILE TEAMS

Cross-border operations in Syria are essential to ensuring that women have access to sexual and reproductive health services and are protected from gender-based violence. With the ongoing crisis, women in Syria face numerous challenges, including limited access to healthcare, displacement, and increased risk of violence. UNFPA's cross-border operations enable the organization to provide vital assistance to women in areas where access to life-saving services is limited or non-existent.

Through its cross-border programming, UNFPA provides essential support to those in need, including emergency reproductive healthcare and gender-based violence response and prevention. These services play a crucial role in saving lives and protecting women from GBV, which has increased significantly during the conflict.





### Situation Update

The humanitarian situation in north-west Syria remains dire for 4.1 million people who are dependent on the humanitarian assistance provided through cross-border operations from Gaziantep, Türkiye. Out of the area's 4.5 million population, 2.9 million are internally displaced. Of those, 2 million live in camps and informal settlements. To date, 3.8 million are in need of health assistance, 1,305,000 people are in need of SRH services, and at least 1.8 million are in urgent need of accessing essential information and services.

Hostilities between the Syrian Government and armed groups in north-west Syria significantly escalated from October 5, 2023, leading to the largest clashes since 2019. Shelling and airstrikes have caused at least 99 civilian deaths and over 400 injuries, as reported by local health authorities on December 18. This escalation has impacted more than 2,300 locations, displacing over 120,000 people, including 30,000 women of reproductive age and 1,818 pregnant women.

Critical civilian infrastructure, including health facilities, schools, camps, NGO offices, markets, and mosques, has been severely damaged. The main power station in Idlib was attacked, resulting in widespread electricity outages. Despite fuel shortages hampering operations in the initial week, health facilities continued functioning with generators, focusing solely on emergency care and suspending non-essential services.

These hostilities have further intensified the urgent needs of women and girls in north-west Syria, who are already dealing with the impacts of a 12-year conflict and the catastrophic earthquakes of February 2023. The renewed violence in October, particularly in Northern Aleppo's countryside and around the city of Idlib, has disrupted GBV response services. This, combined with the suspension of services and displacement of key frontline staff, has severely limited access to GBV support for those in the affected areas.

### Programme Update

The 16 Days of Activism Campaign, jointly coordinated by UNFPA and the GBV Area of Responsibility (AoR), involved all GBV actors in north-west Syria (NWS). The campaign, taking advantage of improved access to NWS, was inaugurated in Dana-Idlib by Deputy Regional Humanitarian Coordinator David Carden, alongside UNFPA, GBV AoR, and other GBV actors. This high-profile event highlighted challenges faced by women and girls, including survivors of violence, in accessing support and services and emphasised the significance of the "Women and Girls Safe Space model," currently impacted by regional funding shortfalls.

October 2023's escalation in Idlib Governorate and Aleppo's northern countryside led to multiple displacements, overcrowding in reception centres, and exacerbated housing, land, and property issues, deeply affecting mental health, particularly among widows, single women, and the elderly, and increasing GBV risks. This resulted in the temporary suspension of GBV response activities, including the closure of Women and Girls Safe Spaces and displacement of frontline staff for a week. GBV emergency interventions were maintained through mobile teams, providing psychosocial support, psychological first aid, emergency case management, and referrals. Essential GBV services were delivered both in-person and remotely via hotlines. Additionally, 20 safety audits at new reception centres and camps enabled partners to identify GBV risks and formulate targeted risk mitigation recommendations. Mobile teams also distributed 8,263 customised dignity kits to displaced women and girls.

UNFPA-supported facilities in NWS temporarily suspended outpatient SRH consultations, focusing on emergency SRH services included in the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP). Despite security challenges, all Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care (EmONC) services continued, ensuring critical and lifesaving SRH service provision. The SRH Technical Working Group (TWG) facilitated adaptation for damaged EmONC facilities, advocated, and shared information in coordination with the Health Cluster. This group also coordinated emergency support to affected health facilities and ensured prioritisation of SRH needs in areas with increased internally displaced persons (IDPs).

### Defying the Odds: Raya's Transformation Through Adversity

"I never expected to undergo such a significant transformation. I've become a different, stronger person, more capable of reaching my goals. I decided to rely on myself," shared Raya, a 24-year-old woman and a survivor of gender-based violence.

Despite her visual impairment, Raya also suffered physical and verbal abuse from her brother. "She endures battles within her own home, where her brother restricted her from going outside, motivated by fear of societal stigma," explained Noura Alaa, a case manager at the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS).

With the support of her mother and sister, Raya embarked on an empowering journey of self-discovery. "It led to a reassessment of my life's ambitions and instilled in me the resolve to keep pushing forward. I've discovered aspects of myself I didn't know existed, despite my disability," she shared

with her case manager.

Midway through her journey, Raya faced another hurdle: a diagnosis of Endometrial Cancer, necessitating a hysterectomy and chemotherapy. She approached this challenge with steadfast resolve.

At the Maternity Hospital in Idlib, supported by UNFPA and operated by SAMS, Raya accessed a comprehensive range of services. This included medical care at the women's clinic, emotional support through psychological services, and vocational training in crocheting and handicrafts. "We adapted our training for online delivery. The instructor recorded sessions for her, and with her mother's help, she learned and improved her skills. She's now crafting a wool t-shirt for her nephew," Noura Alaa elaborated. This support aimed to help her navigate the complexities of her illness and the violence she had experienced.

"Today, I encourage every talented girl to persist and not lose hope, no matter the situation. I've realised that the real disability is in self-imposed limitations, and true incapacity is failing to grow and develop. Now, I feel confident in managing my life independently, facing challenges on my own terms," Raya concluded, a testament to her resilience and strength.

“LIFE HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY INTOLERABLE IN RECENT YEARS, AND THIS IS THE SAME FOR ALL THE WOMEN IN MY FAMILY. THE CONSTANT THREAT OF VIOLENCE AND THE ECONOMIC CRISIS HAS PUSHED US ALL TO OUR LIMITS.”

— SANA, a young woman from north-west Syria



# TÜRKIYE COUNTRY OFFICE

120,959

PEOPLE REACHED WITH  
SRH SERVICES

94% FEMALE

122,181

PEOPLE REACHED WITH  
GBV PROGRAMMING

88% FEMALE

11,616

PEOPLE REACHED WITH  
YOUTH ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

93% FEMALE

31,207

ADOLESCENT GIRLS SUPPORTED  
THROUGH VARIOUS PROGRAMMES

750

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES  
REACHED WITH VARIOUS SERVICES

58% FEMALE

9,171

LGBTQIA+ INDIVIDUALS  
SUPPORTED THROUGH VARIOUS  
SERVICES

1,409

PEOPLE PROVIDED WITH  
CASH & VOUCHER ASSISTANCE

52% FEMALE

3,784

PEOPLE TRAINED ON  
VARIOUS TOPICS

77% FEMALE

## REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with SRH services	10,554	100%
Family planning consultations	32,227	94%
Ante-natal care consultations	10,739	100%
Post-natal care consultations	3,073	100%
People trained on SRH-related topics	716	75%

## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

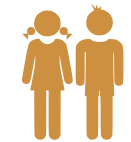
	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with GBV programming	18,878	100%
People reached with dignity kits	34,243	99%
GBV case management consultations	2,607	75%
People reached with GBV awareness sessions	80,827	91%
People trained on GBV-related topics	2,693	76%

## YOUTH SERVICES

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with youth activities	1,775	100%
People trained on youth-related topics	375	90%



8  
WOMEN AND GIRLS  
SAFE SPACES \*



4  
YOUTH CENTRES



13  
OTHER SERVICE  
DELIVERY POINTS



UNFPA HAS BEEN A SOURCE OF STRENGTH AND SUPPORT FOR US SYRIAN WOMEN IN TÜRKIYE. THEY HAVE PROVIDED US WITH ESSENTIAL HEALTHCARE SERVICES AND EMPOWERED US TO TAKE CONTROL OF OUR LIVES.

— RANA, a Syrian woman living in Türkiye

\* Safe Spaces in Türkiye are providing an integrated response to refugees in need, including both gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health services in the same facility.





## Situation Update

Türkiye currently hosts the largest refugee population globally, with over 3.4 million Syrian refugees under temporary protection and an additional 320,000 migrants of various nationalities.

The protracted crisis in Türkiye has been further exacerbated by the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes that struck Türkiye in February 2023. These earthquakes had a profound impact, affecting more than 9 million people, including over 1.7 million (43%) of the refugee and migrant population.

By November 2023, around 800,000 displaced individuals were living in various sites across six provinces: Hatay, Adiyaman, Malatya, Kahramanmaraş, Gaziantep, and Osmaniye, with high mobility within these areas. By December, approximately 200,000 refugees had left Türkiye, reducing the refugee count to 3.2 million compared to the start of the year.

November workshops by the protection sector revealed significant GBV risks in earthquake-affected provinces, particularly in container areas housing refugees. Additionally, refugee GBV survivors face threats of deportation when reporting incidents to the police, leaving many cases unresolved. Moreover, implementing restraining orders is challenging in informal living areas. The shortage of staff in public institutions and rising GBV cases delay social investigation reports and hinder the enforcement of precautionary measures.

Economic decline, soaring inflation, and fewer job opportunities have impaired vulnerable refugees' ability to meet basic needs. Limited access to safe, affordable housing and rising maintenance costs have increased their protection risks and needs. With winter approaching, the necessity for winterization assistance becomes crucial due to potential protection implications.

## Programme Update

As of December, UNFPA is actively supporting 24 static service units and seven mobile and outreach teams across Türkiye, offering a range of services that include SRH and protection, with a particular focus on GBV prevention and response, complemented by maternity and dignity kits. Additionally, UNFPA provides emergency and recurrent cash assistance targeting women, girls, and key refugee groups identified with high GBV risks.

To help service providers cope with the trauma and stress caused by the Kahramanmaraş earthquake, UNFPA organised self-care sessions for 221 individuals working in these supported service units. The training programs for implementing partner personnel at these units were multifaceted, encompassing cash assistance in GBV case management for women and girls who are survivors of GBV, inventory management and reporting (focused on UNFPA humanitarian commodities, including FP commodities, dignity and maternity kits, and SRH and GBV informational brochures), and accountability training for affected populations. This latter training, aimed at 27 service providers, emphasised complaint and feedback management, classification, response timeframes, privacy policies, and reporting mechanisms.

Furthermore, sessions on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), human rights of people with disabilities, and disability-inclusive service provision were conducted for 110 service providers, including social workers, nurses, midwives, and translators. Specific SRH service provision training was also provided for 22 nurses and midwives from UNFPA supported service units.

UNFPA also worked to enhance the GBV counselling expertise of 45 UNHCR Counseling Line staff and strengthened the SRH service provision capacity of MoH health professionals who cater to refugees, particularly in earthquake-affected provinces, focusing on topics such as emergency obstetric care, newborn care, family planning counselling and methods, and others.

In collaboration with the Young Approaches to Health Association (Y-PEER Turkey), UNFPA facilitated a national coordination workshop focusing on the needs and demands of young people in humanitarian crisis situations. This initiative resulted in the development of a risk reduction and emergency response plan, prioritising the wellbeing of young people in these challenging contexts.

“UNTIL I MET THE UNFPA-SUPPORTED TEAM, WE HADN'T BEEN ABLE TO COMMUNICATE WITH ANYONE FOR A VERY LONG TIME DUE TO LANGUAGE BARRIERS.

— HILAL, a Syrian refugee living in Türkiye



# LEBANON COUNTRY OFFICE

UNFPA CONTINUES TO ADAPT ITS PROGRAMMES TO PROVIDE LIFE-SAVING SERVICES TO PEOPLE IN NEED, WITH A FOCUS ON WOMEN AND GIRLS.

104,643

PEOPLE REACHED WITH  
SRH SERVICES  
96% FEMALE

53,886

PEOPLE REACHED WITH  
GBV PROGRAMMING  
92% FEMALE

28,546

ADOLESCENT GIRLS SUPPORTED  
THROUGH VARIOUS PROGRAMMES

2,702

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES  
REACHED WITH VARIOUS SERVICES  
85% FEMALE

1,605

LGBTQIA+ INDIVIDUALS  
SUPPORTED THROUGH VARIOUS  
SERVICES

1,889

PEOPLE PROVIDED WITH  
CASH & VOUCHER ASSISTANCE  
94% FEMALE

903

PEOPLE TRAINED ON  
VARIOUS TOPICS  
90% FEMALE

## REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with SRH services	15,199	100%
Family planning consultations	15,526	98%
Ante-natal care consultations	6,676	100%
Post-natal care consultations	1,525	100%
People trained on SRH-related topics	732	90%

## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with GBV programming	13,347	100%
People reached with dignity kits	32,320	100%
GBV case management consultations	15,665	97%
People reached with GBV awareness sessions	37,687	92%
People trained on GBV-related topics	171	88%



46  
PRIMARY HEALTHCARE  
FACILITIES \*



31  
WOMEN AND GIRLS  
SAFE SPACES

“SOME DAYS, I EXPERIENCE THE DISCRIMINATION EXPLICITLY. A SHOPOWNER MIGHT REFUSE MY MONEY BECAUSE I’M SYRIAN, OR BOYS MIGHT CHASE ME IN THE STREET AND SHOUT OBSCENITIES AT ME.

– MAY, a young Syrian woman living in Lebanon





Situation Update

Lebanon faces multiple challenges, such as political turmoil, financial instability, high unemployment, and rampant inflation. In the last quarter of 2023, the national currency lost over 95% of its value, pushing 80% of the population into poverty. Contributing factors include economic crisis, political paralysis, humanitarian issues, and regional instability. Without a president for over a year, the parliament struggles to pass legislation, hindering effective problem-solving. These challenges have been compounded by the deterioration of the security situation in South Lebanon, due to the spillover of the humanitarian disaster in Gaza. All these economic, political, and security uncertainties significantly impact vulnerable communities, particularly women, who face heightened risks.

In response, UNFPA and its partners are actively delivering gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services in Beirut, North, Akkar, Mount Lebanon, Bekaa, and South. Services include specialised GBV support, legal aid, psychosocial assistance, awareness sessions, and referrals. Additionally, they offer life skills, vocational training, and outreach to LGBTQIA+ individuals and people with disabilities. SRH services encompass counselling, medical consultations, and tests, with a specific focus on pregnant women.

Programme Update

In the last quarter of 2023, UNFPA Lebanon, in collaboration with its implementing partners provided vital GBV and SRH services across Lebanon, including in Beirut, Mount Lebanon, Tripoli, North, Akkar, and South.

During these three months, partners offered specialised GBV services such as case management with legal support, psychosocial support, awareness sessions, recreational activities, and referrals. Additionally, they conducted life skills and vocational training, along with GBV awareness sessions. SRH services included family planning counselling by midwives, antenatal and postnatal care, and SRH tests, focusing on pregnant women with a comprehensive maternal package.

UNFPA also reached out to individuals with disabilities and the LGBTQIA+ community, offering tailored support. Notably, a new shelter for GBV survivors was established in the southern region with the help of a new partner. With SIDA’s support, UNFPA Lebanon adapted the Asset-Building Framework, initially developed under the Action for Adolescent Girls Initiative, to the Lebanese context, aiming to help adolescent girls build economic, social, and health assets.

A significant training initiative was conducted in partnership with the Lebanese Order of Midwives (LOM), focusing on Family Planning counselling for 20 midwives from three Midwifery schools, facilitating the integration of this topic into their curricula. Additionally, the Lebanese Society of Obstetrics & Gynecology (LSOG) led and delivered

training for healthcare providers on various SRH topics, including family planning, cancer screening, and adolescent reproductive health.

In response to the situation in South Lebanon, UNFPA supported internally displaced people by deploying four medical mobile units with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Caritas, providing SRH medical care and services. In partnership with the Social Worker Syndicate Lebanon and the National Mental Health Programme of MOPH, 140 healthcare providers and frontline workers were trained in psychological First Aid. This was complemented by developing brochures and social media posts focused on maternal mental health during crises. Furthermore, internally displaced individuals received timely GBV assistance, including case management, PSS, PFA, PSEA, awareness sessions, and dignity kits.

Lastly, UNFPA provided Emergency Cash Assistance to 286 new users under case management and Recurrent Cash Assistance to 285 new cases referred by partners or GBVIMS actors, with women comprising 92% of the targeted cases in December.

“AS A SYRIAN REFUGEE, I’VE HAD TO ADJUST MY EXPECTATIONS SIGNIFICANTLY ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO LIVE IN DIGNITY.”

– MAYS, a young Syrian woman living in Lebanon

# JORDAN COUNTRY OFFICE

WITH 1.3 MILLION SYRIANS NATIONWIDE, UNFPA IN JORDAN CONTINUES TO PROVIDE ESSENTIAL SERVICES TO REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES NATIONWIDE.

93,979

PEOPLE REACHED WITH SRH SERVICES

99% FEMALE

8,820

PEOPLE REACHED WITH GBV PROGRAMMING

96% FEMALE

7,053

PEOPLE REACHED WITH YOUTH ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

74% FEMALE

12,860

ADOLESCENT GIRLS SUPPORTED THROUGH VARIOUS PROGRAMMES

1,248

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES REACHED WITH VARIOUS SERVICES

99% FEMALE

207

PEOPLE PROVIDED WITH CASH & VOUCHER ASSISTANCE

88% FEMALE

319

PEOPLE TRAINED ON VARIOUS TOPICS

70% FEMALE

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with SRH services	5,983	100%
Family planning consultations	16,889	100%
Normal / assisted vaginal deliveries	1,298	100%
Ante-natal care consultations	32,202	100%
Post-natal care consultations	4,560	100%
People trained on SRH-related topics	39	100%

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with GBV programming	3,621	100%
GBV case management consultations	2,306	96%
People reached with GBV awareness sessions	8,968	90%
People trained on GBV-related topics	80	70%

YOUTH SERVICES

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with youth activities	3,256	100%
People trained on youth-related topics	200	65%



11

PRIMARY HEALTHCARE FACILITIES



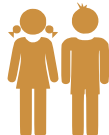
17

WOMEN AND GIRLS SAFE SPACES



1

EMERGENCY OBSTETRIC CARE FACILITY



1

YOUTH CENTRE



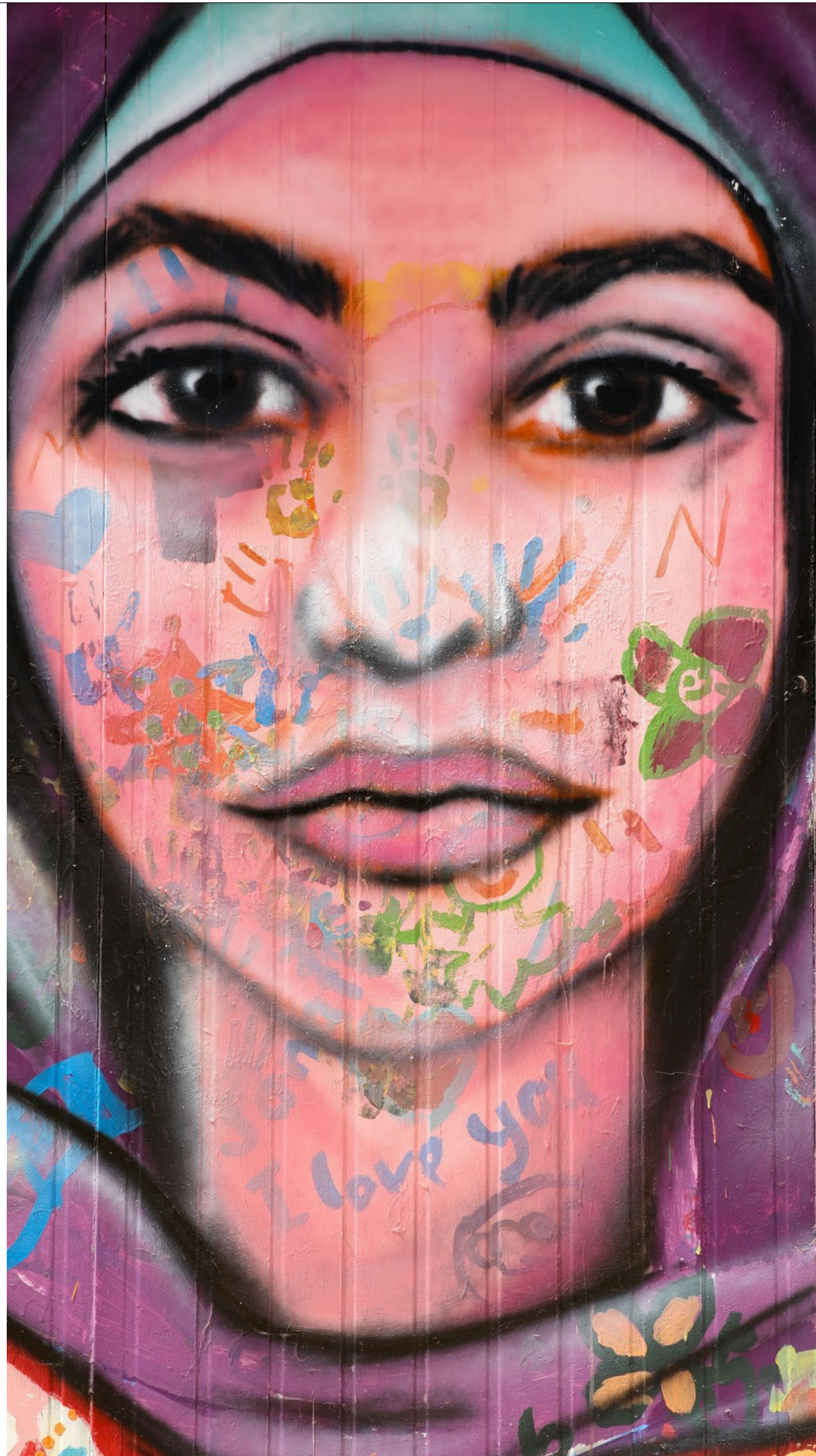
1

MOBILE TEAMS

SPENDING TIME AT THE SAFE SPACE MAKES ME FEEL SUPPORTED AND MOTIVATED. IT BRINGS OUT THE BEST IN ME, DESPITE THE DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES I FACE AS A REFUGEE.

– SALAM, a young Syrian woman living in Jordan





### Situation and Programme Update

The Syrian refugee crisis continues to significantly impact the Middle East, notably in Jordan. As of December 2023, Jordan hosts 649,091 registered Syrian refugees, alongside approximately 150,000 unregistered individuals. Maintaining security in refugee camps is a persistent issue, with frequent incidents of criminal activities, notably GBV. While the Jordanian government has implemented measures to improve camp security, further efforts are essential to safeguard the refugees, especially women and girls.

UNFPA has been actively involved in aiding Syrian refugees in Jordan since the crisis began. UNFPA's role encompasses ensuring sexual and reproductive health and rights, supporting service providers, addressing GBV, and advocating for gender equality.

In 2023, significant strides were made in the integration of sexual and reproductive health and rights, and in the prevention of and response to gender-based violence and harmful practices. This was exemplified through a dedicated initiative in collaboration with the National Women's Health Care Center (NWHCC), culminating in a major event on December 12, 2023, honoured by HRH Princess Aisha bint Al-Hussein. The event celebrated the successful implementation of Phase I of the Women Friendly Health Centers Program, marking a milestone in healthcare advocacy for women.

Throughout the year, a focused effort was directed towards preparing and assessing nine health centres, developing clinical audit key performance indicators, enhancing the capacity of national entities on quality-related topics, and finally, awarding centres that met the rigorous standards of the final assessment.

### The Strength Within: Nour's Quest for Hope

"If I had listened to my in-laws and those around me, I would have had 20 children by now" said Nema'at, a 34 Syrian mother residing in Azraq refugee camp since 2015.

Nema'at joined the IRC program funded by UNFPA Jordan in 2019 as an incentive-based volunteer. That is when she started learning about family planning through the sessions provided inside the clinic, and the need to contemplate many factors before considering having children.

"I learned that there are many things to consider, most importantly the mother's health, the economics of the household, the parents' commitments and their [the parents] ability to attend to the needs of their children", added Nema'at.

Nema'at fled the conflict in Syria with her husband and two children aged two and one years old. Despite the hardships that Nema'at and her family had to endure, she faced "social pressure" pushing for her to have more children.

"I realise now that this is part of outdated cultural convictions, where having many children, especially boys, is a source of pride. To my in-laws, their favourite daughter-in-law is the one with the most children. I am proud to say that I am the one with the least number of children," said Nema'at.

Married for 12 years now, Nema'at has "only four children" aged between 12 and one years old.

"I see women with 10, 12, 18 children, and you can tell that they are unhappy. They surely are unable to fulfil their needs as they should. Even physically, it is devastating. I see them with pale faces, scrawny bodies, and stressed all the time," she added.

Of course, in Nema'at's case, it took some convincing to get her husband onboard with family planning.

"It was difficult at first to get my husband on board with this. He used to say that 'we've been married for 12 years, we should have 12 children', but I know that if that was the case I wouldn't be able to raise them right, or give them the attention they need with all of life's responsibilities. Luckily, he was convinced, and now he is fully supportive of this approach. He even helps me take care of the children while I am working," concluded Nema'at.

IRC, funded by UNFPA Jordan, provides family planning, puberty sessions, and UTIs (urinary tract infections) sessions to women in the camp and offers a multitude of methods to support family planning, in addition to mother and child healthcare.

In humanitarian crises, particularly within refugee camps and settings, the importance of family planning becomes increasingly critical. Access to family planning services empowers individuals, especially women and girls, to make informed decisions about their reproductive health, crucial in contexts where health systems are often strained or disrupted. Effective family planning helps in reducing unplanned pregnancies, which can be particularly challenging in displacement settings due to limited access to maternal and newborn healthcare. It also plays a vital role in safeguarding the health and well-being of mothers and children by spacing births, thereby reducing the risks associated with closely spaced pregnancies.

Moreover, family planning is instrumental in managing population growth within already overcrowded refugee camps, helping to alleviate further strain on limited resources. UNFPA underscores that providing comprehensive family planning services, along with education and counselling, is not only a health necessity but also a key factor in enhancing the dignity, autonomy, and resilience of individuals affected by humanitarian crises.



# IRAQ COUNTRY OFFICE

IN IRAQ, UNFPA CONTINUES TO PROVIDE ESSENTIAL SUPPORT TO MORE THAN 290,000 REFUGEES AS 1.2 MILLION PEOPLE REMAIN DISPLACED NATIONWIDE.

5,412

PEOPLE REACHED WITH SRH SERVICES

100% FEMALE

2,542

ADOLESCENT GIRLS SUPPORTED THROUGH VARIOUS PROGRAMMES

2,324

PEOPLE REACHED WITH GBV PROGRAMMING

92% FEMALE

205

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES REACHED WITH VARIOUS SERVICES

99% FEMALE

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with SRH services	1,274	100%
Family planning consultations	8,670	100%
Normal / assisted vaginal deliveries	305	100%
C-sections	12	100%
Ante-natal care consultations	10,262	100%
Post-natal care consultations	3,291	100%

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with GBV programming	1,268	100%
People reached with dignity kits	544	100%
GBV case management consultations	135	100%
People reached with GBV awareness sessions	5,482	82%



5  
PRIMARY HEALTHCARE FACILITIES



8  
WOMEN AND GIRLS SAFE SPACES

Iraq, despite relative stability and fiscal expansion, continues to navigate protracted humanitarian and developmental challenges, a complex political landscape, and a volatile security context. The country is home to about 300,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, predominantly Kurdish Syrians (around 270,000) in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq facing limited prospects of returning due to escalating tensions in north-east Syria. Approximately 70% of these Syrian refugees live in urban settings, with the remainder in nine refugee camps and a transit facility.

Additionally, Iraq’s internally displaced population stands at 1.2 million, with many encountering obstacles in returning or integrating locally. Though the 5 million IDPs who have returned share similar rights and face comparable challenges as other Iraqis, they report concerns like insecurity, limited job opportunities, housing damage in their origin areas, and perceived affiliations with extremist groups.

The persisting protection issues for displaced populations in Iraq are predominantly driven by socio-economic factors, human rights gaps, and a lack of rule of law.

In addressing GBV, the UNFPA Iraq Country Office (CO) emphasizes community engagement, awareness campaigns, and educational activities. The CO also provides crucial support services, including counselling, medical care, and legal aid for GBV survivors. Regarding SRH, UNFPA Iraq CO is committed to ensuring refugees’ access to vital reproductive health services. This encompasses maternal and child healthcare, family planning services, and reproductive health education to enable informed choices. Additionally, efforts focus on enhancing maternal health through comprehensive prenatal and postnatal care and promoting access to skilled birth attendants.



# EGYPT COUNTRY OFFICE

UNFPA EGYPT CONTINUES TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO SYRIAN REFUGEES IN THE COUNTRY, WITH A FOCUS ON WOMEN AND GIRLS.

272,930

PEOPLE REACHED WITH SRH SERVICES

100% FEMALE

4,623

ADOLESCENT GIRLS SUPPORTED THROUGH VARIOUS PROGRAMMES

10,747

PEOPLE REACHED WITH GBV PROGRAMMING

95% FEMALE

271

PEOPLE TRAINED ON VARIOUS TOPICS

51% FEMALE

94

PEOPLE REACHED WITH YOUTH ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

86% FEMALE

## REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with SRH services	523	100%
Family planning consultations	15,557	100%
People trained on SRH-related topics	248	94%

## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

	TOTAL	% FEMALE
Adolescent girls reached with GBV programming	3,666	100%
GBV case management consultations	3,422	97%
People reached with GBV awareness sessions	2,131	94%
People trained on GBV-related topics	23	100%



13

WOMEN AND GIRLS SAFE SPACES

By the end of 2023, Egypt is hosting 480,000 registered refugees and asylum-seekers from 62 countries, with a 64 percent increase compared to 2022 with major conflicts across its borders. Refugees in Egypt live in urban settings across the major cities, with most new arrivals coming from Khartoum in Sudan. There has been a 242% increase in Sudanese registering as refugees since the start of the Sudan crisis in mid-April 2023, compared to a 61% increase of all registered refugee nationalities during the same time period. Since the onset of the conflict in Sudan, Egypt has been a primary refuge for mainly Sudanese women and children seeking safety. In the meantime, the crisis in Gaza that occurred since 7 October is also largely affecting the humanitarian programs in Egypt, being prepared to receive medical evacuations from Gaza, and also to facilitate the transportation of humanitarian supplies into Gaza.

During the last quarter of 2023, UNFPA, with its implementing partners Etijah and the Ministry of Youths and Sports, provided support to refugee women and girls through 13 Women and Girls Safe Spaces in Egypt. The humanitarian operation in Egypt is growing with the continued need to respond to the Sudan crisis but also with the new crisis in Gaza since October. By the end of December, UNFPA-supported Safe Spaces have reached out to 9,935 Syrian refugees in 2023, while more than 6,000 of them had access to the Safe Spaces for the first time. More than 6,400 have attended different awareness-raising sessions on GBV and harmful practices, as well as on SRH. Nearly 3,500 have received MHPSS services through

group sessions or individual counselling. Some 1,900 beneficiaries have been reached with GBV case management consultation, while 620 of them were newly reached. The Safe Spaces ensured the inclusion of adolescent girls, reaching up to 2,800 through different activities tailored for the age group. Around 1,620 women received vocational skills training as an economic empowerment activity, and 56 women and girls also received support with Dignity Kits.

During the last quarter of 2023, UNFPA, with its implementing partners Etijah and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, provided support to refugee women and girls through 13 Women and Girls Safe Spaces in Egypt.

## Beyond Borders: A Tale of Triumph and Autonomy

Rana, an 18-year-old Syrian girl living in Egypt, endured a challenging life marked by neglect and isolation within her family. After moving from Syria in 2018, she found herself deprived of education and limited to household chores, with no opportunity to socialize with peers. Her turning point came when her mother, who frequented the Safe Spaces, brought her along. At the Safe Spaces, Rana engaged in activities like art therapy, Zumba, and crafts, which helped her overcome her psychological struggles. She learned new skills and formed friendships, leading to a significant improvement in her emotional well-being.

Speaking of her transformation, Rana says, “Since I started attending the Safe Spaces, my mindset has improved significantly. I’ve discovered joy in the workshops, learning skills such as crafting leather wallets and concocting perfumes. Most importantly, I’ve formed friendships with girls my age.” These experiences have empowered Rana to express herself better and navigate her emotions, moving from isolation to a newfound sense of empowerment and connection.

## COORDINATION UPDATES



**UNFPA's coordination of gender-based violence is critical as it addresses a major health, human rights, and protection issue that often intensifies during emergencies. This coordination is key to providing accessible and safe services from the onset of a crisis and implementing prevention and mitigation mechanisms to reduce GBV. It involves collaboration between UN agencies, national governments, and local organizations to effectively deliver responses, meet priority needs, and reduce duplication of efforts.**

**The GBV Area of Responsibility (AoR), led by UNFPA, plays a significant role in ensuring a multi-sectoral response at various levels, offering crucial services like health, mental health, legal aid, and livelihood support. This coordination is not only vital for immediate response but also for the long-term prevention and empowerment of survivors and at-risk individuals.**

### Whole of Syria (The Hub)

Towards year-end 2023, the focus of the Whole of Syria GBV AoR was on the 2024 humanitarian programme cycle (HPC), in particular:

- Finalising the qualitative assessment to inform the GBV Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and the Voices from Syria 2024 Report. After finalising the consultation with communities, six focus group discussions (FGDs) with GBV experts took place across the three hubs. Consultations were conducted using the Delphi methodology.
- Analysing the qualitative data collected through community and expert FGDs to present and discuss initial findings, develop the first draft of the Voices from Syria 2024 report and of the recently published advocacy brief.
- Analysing of the quantitative data that came from the multi-sectoral needs assessment, conducted only in north-west and north-east Syria, and triangulating with other qualitative and quantitative

data. The analysis supported the development of the GBV Humanitarian Needs Overview.

- Calculating of the People in Need (PIN) of GBV interventions, which remains the same as last year at 8.5M people, 93 percent of whom are women and girls. The GBV AoR also engaged in comprehensive intersectoral discussions around the PIN.
- In line with the shifting from a project-based to a hybrid-based HRP costing methodology, the Whole of Syria GBV AoR held two rounds of consultations with GBV actors in all hubs, one with a selected number of GBV members through one-on-one meetings, and one with all GBV actors interested through a survey. From there, the AoR agreed on various activities and their overall costing.
- Developing the Whole of Syria HRP Framework, with some changes on previous years' indicators also based on the activity-based costing.
- Continuing to engage with other sectors to ensure GBV risk mitigation aspects are included in each sector's analysis and in the HNO, HRP and costing. A key focus was identifying and summarising major GBV findings in other sectors' assessments and present them in Whole of Syria Sectorial retreats. As a result, the GBV AoR supported other sectors in properly budgeting for GBV risk mitigation measures, mainly for WASH and Nutrition HRPs.

In December, a pivotal Whole of Syria GBV meeting was held in Amman, bringing together GBV coordinators and Information Management Officers (IMOs) to endorse the discussed strategies. This meeting was followed by a workshop focused on the Humanitarian Program Cycle (HPC), addressing Whole of Syria protection and AoR.

Looking ahead, the GBV AoR has developed a Training of Trainers (ToT) package on GBV Prevention and Response for Older Women, scheduled online from 15th to 18th January 2024. Additionally, the January-September 2023 Whole of Syria GBV dashboard, collating data monthly via the 5Ws across three hubs, was updated and published.

In support of the 16 Days of Activism campaign, the GBV AoR coordinated across three hubs and contributed to a joint statement issued on 25th November by the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator and the Whole of Syria Humanitarian Coordinator. The GBV AoR has also been instrumental in developing contingency plans for the Whole of Syria, preparing for potential humanitarian needs due to military activities in northern Syria, including scenario planning and risk analysis.

In a move to share best practices regionally, the AoR, together with the UNFPA Humanitarian Hub for Syria and the Arab States, assisted the Yemen GBV AoR in launching a contextualised "GBV Awareness Rising toolkit". This effort included two training sessions in November, facilitated by a member of the north-west Syria GBV Sub-Cluster, to further South-South cooperation.

### Cross-Border Operations

During Breast Cancer Awareness Month and World AIDS Day, UNFPA, the SRH Technical Working Group, and partners, in coordination with the Health Cluster, organised activities to raise awareness about early detection of breast cancer and HIV testing, referring individuals to services at supported facilities. Using tailored Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials, including animated and interactive videos, the campaign disseminated messages via social media and other channels. This initiative was crucial in north-west Syria, where breast cancer is the most prevalent cancer, according to health directorate data, ensuring women and girls receive comprehensive information and know how to access relevant services. Furthermore, to promote equal and rights-based access to SRH services, UNFPA and SRH TWG developed context-specific IEC materials on STIs and HIV, including mother-to-child transmission.

In the same period, the Q3 GBV Information Management System (GBVIMS) trends report was completed and shared with GBV AoR partners and donors. The report indicates that the vast majority of GBV survivors are female (99.6 percent), with 66.2 percent of incidents occurring at home and 86.4 percent of perpetrators being intimate partners. IDPs are notably more affected by GBV (83.3 percent of reported incidents). Common forms of GBV reported include physical assault (41.9 percent), psychological abuse (30.7 percent), and denial of resources, opportunities, or services (19 percent). There was a 6.9 percent decrease in reported GBV incidents in Q3 compared to Q2, likely due to fewer reporting organisations and the closure of about 17 Safe Spaces due to funding issues.

However, there has been a positive trend in timely GBV incident reporting by survivors, increasing from 26.35 percent in Q1 to 30.2 percent in Q3, which helps survivors access essential care and mitigate the health, emotional, and social consequences of GBV. This improvement is attributed to effective awareness-raising through the GBV Raising Awareness Toolkit implemented across north-west Syria by 56 partners.



## COORDINATION UPDATES



### Türkiye Country Office

UNFPA actively participated in the Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan (3RP) Inter-agency coordination mechanism, contributing to protection, health, and basic needs sectors. During this period, 3RP partners commenced consultation meetings for the 2024 planning process, including the appeal process for new partners.

UNFPA, co-chairing the Istanbul GBV sub-Working Group, shared insights from the GBV sub-sector's response to the earthquake, emphasising the importance of preparedness for the anticipated earthquake in Istanbul. This included highlighting the necessity for capacity building in GBV in emergencies.

As co-chair of both the Southeast Türkiye and Istanbul key populations thematic coordination groups, UNFPA organised two capacity-building trainings. These sessions aimed to enhance the abilities of protection and health sector service providers in addressing the GBV and SRH needs of key populations, including LGBTQIA+ individuals, people living with HIV, and sex workers. A

total of 55 service providers from 21 institutions across both regions, encompassing national and international NGOs and UN agencies, participated.

Furthermore, UNFPA, as part of the task team, finalised the referral mechanism for SEA cases through the PSEA Network, contributed to the forthcoming year's work plan and the PSEA strategy adopted by the government, in addition to playing a key role in the PSEA Focal Point training for 50 focal points from 43 organisations in earthquake-affected regions.

As the co-chair of the GBV Sub-Sector, UNFPA facilitated a workshop on GBV risk mitigation in cash and voucher assistance, engaging 34 service providers from 19 institutions. The workshop aimed to impart knowledge and skills for safely and effectively mitigating GBV risks in cash and voucher assistance. UNFPA also conducted training sessions on GBV case management and child and early forced marriages. At the year's final meeting, UNFPA introduced its Amber mobile application, gathered field feedback, and began planning for 2024.

### Lebanon Country Office

As part of emergency preparedness and response planning to the hostilities in South Lebanon, UNFPA, as the co-lead of the Reproductive Health Sub-working Group (RH SWG), conducted a rapid mapping of RH actors involved in the response and shared the findings with members of the RH SWG to avoid duplication of efforts, identify gaps, and improve referrals between partners. This included identifying basic RH services provided through mobile units, primary healthcare facilities, and institutional deliveries at hospitals. In addition, UNFPA developed key messages for internally displaced populations in December 2023, which included various topics related antenatal care, postnatal care, family planning, menstrual hygiene management, STIs, and clinical management of rape.

Furthermore, UNFPA played a key role in three GBV Working Group coordination meetings. UNFPA actively provided insights, shared best practices, and delivered strategic guidance, fostering collaboration among GBV actors. UNFPA's engagement strengthened the collective impact by facilitating the joint 2024 planning and knowledge exchange, emphasising the importance of a comprehensive approach to effectively address GBV, with a clear focus on emergency response in the south.

Moreover, UNFPA held a prominent role in three intervention meetings of the PSEA Network. Through active contribution, UNFPA promoted collaboration among the network's members. The organisation's participation strengthened the collective impact by facilitating collaborative planning for the year 2024 through the recruitment of a consultant. UNFPA stressed the importance of a comprehensive approach to effectively tackle PSEA concerns, with a specific emphasis on targeted intervention strategies, especially within emergency response contexts.

### Jordan Country Office

For the first time, diverging from its usual New York or Geneva locations, the Annual Global Meeting of the Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action was hosted in Jordan from October 2nd to 5th. Marking a historic moment, the UNFPA Jordan Country Office, as the Chair of the Youth Task Force, orchestrated a visit to Zaatari camp for compact members. This visit was more than symbolic; it offered a real-world glimpse into youth-focused humanitarian efforts, enhancing understanding of the challenges and successes in youth humanitarian work.

The visit included tours of key facilities such as the UNFPA/QS Space for Change Youth Center, NRC Vocational Training Center, and the UNHCR/Blumont Innovation Lab. These interactions with the Youth Task Force (YTF) member organizations and the Youth Committee were invaluable, fostering deeper connections and insights.

Meanwhile, the National Sexual and Reproductive Health Sub-Working Group (SRH SWG) meeting on December 27, 2023, led by UNFPA, delved into critical discussions. Key topics included the impact of climate change on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), the relevance of COP28 to SRHR, and the integration of SRHR in climate policies. The importance of evidence-based approaches in merging SRHR and climate change was underscored.

The meeting also reviewed the Cairo Women's Cancer Regional Expert Consultation, addressing challenges in women's cancers in the Eastern Mediterranean and Arab Regions. Progress in the Women Friendly Healthcare Centers Program and the Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC) Needs Assessment was discussed. Updates from agencies like IRC, HPC, SCJ, JHASI, and RHAS highlighted collaborative efforts, awareness campaigns, and advancements in sexual and reproductive health.

### Iraq Country Office

UNFPA Iraq is actively engaged in coordination efforts collaborating closely with the government, facilitating the handover of facilities, optimising resource utilisation for more efficient service delivery. A significant action involved is the rollout of the Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS+) to the government, empowering them with a systematic tool for monitoring and responding to GBV incidents. Through regular meetings and communication channels, over 150 staff from the government have been trained on the new GBVIMS+ in the country.

### Egypt Country Office

The GBV Sub Working Group conducted a 2024 planning workshop in December to reflect on the achievements of 2023, address challenges, and agree on the priority areas for 2024. The main areas of discussion were focused on legal support, safe relocations, case management, and medical support for the refugees in Egypt.

Furthermore, the GBV coordination group conducted a GBV case intake form standardisation workshop with organisations that are providing GBV case management services, attended by 11 partners. The purpose of the workshop was to initiate a task force on GBV information management, and to take the first step of standardising the case intake forms and the data points to be collected and analysed on a quarterly basis by the GBV SWG.



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**In Lebanon:** Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW), AMEL Association, Lebanese Order of Midwives (LOM), AKKAROUNA, SIDC, SALAMA, LECORVAV, CARITAS, CONCERN, NABAD, ABAAD, MAKASSED, Imam Sadr Foundation (ISF).

**In Jordan:** Institute for Family Health (IFH), Ministry of Health (MOH), Society Aid Health Jordanian (JHAS), Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), the National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA), National Women’s Health Care Centre (NWHCC), Questscope, Higher Population Council (HPC), Generations for Peace (GFP), Health Care Accreditation Counsel (HCAC), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Royal Health Awareness Society (RHAS), the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW), and Save the Children Jordan.

**In Iraq:** AL Massela, Harika, Zhian and Civil Development Organisation.

**In Egypt:** UNHCR, Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP), Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS), and Etijah.

**In Türkiye:** ASAM (Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants); KAMER (Women’s Centre Foundation); Eskisehir Osmangazi University; Harran University; YAHA (Youth Approaches to Health Association); PLA (Positive Living Association); Red Umbrella Sexual Health and Human Rights Association, HASÜDER (Public Health Specialists Association), Mdm (Doctors of the World / Médecins du Monde). For the service units that are under direct implementation, UNFPA is collaborating with Sanliurfa Municipality.

**Türkiye Cross-Border:** Relief International (RI), Shafak, Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS), Ihsan for Relief and Development (IhsanRD), and their sub- implementing partners AMAL (Ihsan RD), Women Support Association (IhsanRD), Hope Revival Organization (Ihsan RD), Medina (Shafak), Relief Experts Association- UDER (Relief International) and Syria Relief and Development (Relief International).

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**United Nations:** OCHA/CERF, UNDP, SCHF, OCHA Syria Humanitarian Fund (SHF) and UNFPA Emergency Funds.

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## RELEVANT RESOURCES

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