



SYRIA

2024-2025 IFRC network country plan

22 February 2024

Multi-Year Funding Requirement **CHF 307.8M**

In support of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent



14

National Society branches



6,077

National Society staff



9,309

National Society volunteers

People to be reached



2.5M

Ongoing emergency operations



550

Climate and environment



352,000

Disasters and crises



1.1M

Health and wellbeing



53,000

Migration and displacement



30,000

Values, power and inclusion

IFRC network multi-year focus

Emergency response

- Earthquake

Longer term needs

- crisis recovery • climate change adaptation

Capacity development

- humanitarian diplomacy • coordination

Key country data

Population

22.1M

INFORM severity rating

Very high

INFORM Climate Change Risk Index

Very high

Human Development Index rank

150

Funding requirements

2024

2025**

Total 256.7M CHF

Total 51.1M CHF

Through the IFRC

138.2M CHF

Through Participating National Societies

→ **18.5M CHF**

Host National Society

100M CHF

Through the IFRC

42.9M CHF

Through Participating National Societies

→ **8.3M CHF**

**Projected funding requirements

IFRC Breakdown

100M CHF

Ongoing emergency operations (2024-2025)

Longer term needs

426,000 CHF

Climate and environment

1.2M CHF

Disasters and crises

164,000 CHF

Health and wellbeing

36,000 CHF

Migration and displacement

49,000 CHF

Enabling local actors

Hazards



Conflict



storms



Displacement



Earthquakes



wildfires



heatwaves

Participating National Societies

American Red Cross*

Andorran Red Cross*

Australian Red Cross*

Austrian Red Cross

Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan*

Belarus Red Cross*

Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina*

British Red Cross

Bulgarian Red Cross*

Canadian Red Cross Society

Red Cross Society of China*

Croatian Red Cross*

Danish Red Cross

Finnish Red Cross

French Red Cross

German Red Cross

Hong Kong Red Cross*

Icelandic Red Cross*

Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran*

Irish Red Cross Society*

Italian Red Cross

Japanese Red Cross Society*

Kazakh Red Crescent*

Korean Red Cross*

Kuwait Red Crescent Society*

Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan*

Lithuanian Red Cross Society*

Macau Red Cross*

Maldivian Red Crescent*

Red Cross of Monaco*

Red Cross of Montenegro*

The Netherlands Red Cross

Red Cross of North Macedonia*

Norwegian Red Cross

Philippine Red Cross*

San Marino Red Cross*

Saudi Red Crescent Authority*

Red Cross of Serbia*

Singapore Red Cross Society*

Slovenian Red Cross*

Spanish Red Cross*

Swedish Red Cross

Swiss Red Cross

Taiwanese Red Cross*

Thai Red Cross Society*

Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan*

Vietnam Red Cross Society*

IFRC Appeal codes

Ongoing emergency response:

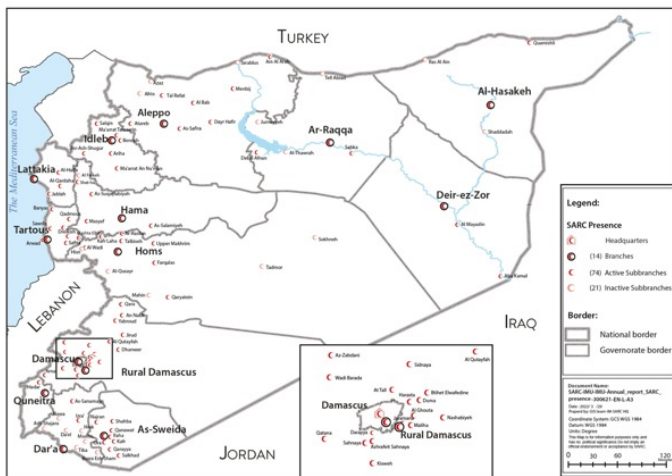
MDRSY009

Longer-term needs:

MAASY002

*National Societies which have contributed only multilaterally through the IFRC in the first half of 2023.

NATIONAL SOCIETY PROFILE



Map of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent branches and sub-branches

Founded in 1942, the **Syrian Arab Red Crescent** is a leading humanitarian agency within Syria. It has a network of 14 branches, one in each of the country's governorates, and 70 active sub-branches. The National Society is renowned for taking a neutral and principled role in the Syrian conflict, enabling it to provide life-saving assistance to millions of Syrians. As mandated by the Syrian Government in 2008, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent acts as Syria's national coordinator for humanitarian aid.

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent proactively responds to humanitarian and development needs, and steers organizational transitioning to prevent or mitigate harm from future crises. In [2022](#), almost half a million people were reached through emergency response, 3.3 million people benefitted from medical services provided by the National Society's health facilities, 5.7 million people received food assistance, 5.5 million people were provided with households

essentials, over 215,000 were supported with livelihoods projects, and over 55,000 with cash and voucher assistance. It is estimated that 80% of the population benefit from the Syrian Arab Red Crescent's water rehabilitation services. The National Society prioritizes people with specific vulnerabilities, including female-headed households and people with special needs.

The National Society's [Strategic Plan 2023-2027](#) identifies three strategic goals and one organizational goal:

- Build community resilience for rapid response and recovery to lessen the impacts of all types of disasters and crises
- Enable communities to lead health and safe lives for physical and mental well-being
- Contribute to reducing vulnerability, social inclusion, and building a safer society to promote positive change for humanity
- Operate effectively as the leading humanitarian actor with enhanced organizational capacity and be future-ready

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent is responding to a significant decline in funding for the Syrian crisis and the decision by many organizations to reshape their responses from relief to resilience-building approaches. This has required the National Society to develop greater insight, agility and flexibility. The development phase of the Strategic Plan 2023–2027 successfully guided this transformation, delivering more agile management and operational structures and more responsive methods to reach those in the country's most vulnerable and hard-to-reach parts.

IFRC NETWORK ACTION

JOINT SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The Syrian crisis, now in its 13th year, has escalated into one of the world's largest refugee crisis. Nearly seven million people remain internally displaced, and almost six million have fled the country. As of 2024, the Syrian population numbers 23.5 million, with 16.7 million in dire need of humanitarian assistance, far exceeding the capacities of both local and international organizations.

In Syria, essential civilian infrastructure, including schools, water systems, health facilities, and housing have sustained extensive damage over the years. The situation is also worsened by a lack of qualified health professionals. Localized hostilities uproot entire families from their homes, damage the basic infrastructure that remains, and limit access to basic services.

Syria's current economic crisis is the worst in the country's history, accelerated by ongoing hostilities, international sanctions, and the decline of the Syrian pound. The regional economic downturn, particularly in neighbouring Lebanon, has significantly reduced the estimated remittances sent to Syria annually.

For Syrian households, their most urgent needs are food and nutrition, electricity, and livelihood support. Vocational training

and innovative income-generation strategies are essential for socio-economic resilience and rebuilding the Syrian economy. Additionally, shelter assistance remains a top need, especially for displaced people and returnees.

The North and Northeast regions of Syria continue to face a severe humanitarian crisis, driven by climatic and human-induced factors leading to drought and critically low water levels in the Euphrates River since January 2021. This affects nearly 4.5 million people's access to water and agriculture. The crisis is further exacerbated by poorly functioning water networks and the depletion of the Tabqa Dam.

Moreover, major earthquakes in February 2023 caused widespread devastation in southern and central Turkey and northern and western Syria. 5,670 deaths were reported, impacting over 8 million people and severely damaging infrastructure. These disasters have compounded the existing vulnerabilities, economic struggles, and limited public services, further straining the capacity of local and displaced populations to cope.

Delivering uninterrupted and needs-based humanitarian aid in Syria remains highly challenging due to its fluid security and political context. With no common political agreement between international actors and the Syrian Government, resources and support for humanitarian work are diminishing, leaving millions of Syrians in an extremely vulnerable situation.



Syria, 10th February 2023. Syrian Arab Red Crescent workers rescue and provide first aid to people after buildings collapse due to the earthquake in Lattakia. (Photo: Syrian Arab Red Crescent)

ONGOING EMERGENCY RESPONSE

For real-time information on IFRC emergencies, visit [IFRC GO Syria](#)

Emergency Appeal name	Syria – Earthquake
Appeal number	MDRSY009
Duration	07/02/2023 to 28/02/2025
People to be assisted	2,500,000
Funding requirement	Funding requirement through the IFRC Appeal: CHF 100M Federation-wide funding requirement: CHF 200M
Emergency Appeal	Syria Earthquake Revised Emergency Appeal
Operational strategy	Syria Earthquake Operational Strategy
latest Operations Update	Syria Earthquake Latest Operations Update

On February 6, 2023, a 7.7 magnitude earthquake struck southern and central Turkey and northern and western Syria. This was followed by a second earthquake with a magnitude of 7.5. Many buildings collapsed amidst already vulnerable living situations and harsh weather conditions in Syria. The Syrian Arab Red Crescent estimates that 5,670 people lost their lives, 11,774 people were injured, and more than eight million people were affected, including more than 300,000 displaced people. The earthquakes impacted local markets (supply, accessibility, etc.) and prices of basic goods. The impacted areas were already affected by the longstanding crises that have majorly affected Syria's infrastructure, provision of essential services, and economic status with a very vulnerable population that has already limited resilience to withstand an emergency of this scale. According to estimates, eight million affected people are at risk and require support to cope with the consequences of the devastating earthquake in Syria, in addition to the impacts of the protracted crisis.

Since the onset of the emergency, the Government of Syria has set up an emergency operation centre, and regular meetings are being held with the active involvement of the main humanitarian actors to coordinate the emergency response operations. The Syrian Arab Red Crescent carries out its work as Syria's national coordinator for humanitarian aid and is engaged in the coordination mechanism. Its response operations are complementing and contributing directly to the government's response plan with the support of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement partners, United Nations agencies, governments of different countries, the private sector, and other parties. The IFRC allocated two million Swiss francs from the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (IFRC-DREF) on 7 February to cover the immediate costs of the initial response, followed by the launch of an Emergency Appeal. The IFRC global surge capacity (Rapid

Response personnel) was activated initially for the roles of the operation management, health in emergencies, shelter, and complemented by support services roles.

Short description of the emergency operational strategy

Through the IFRC emergency appeal, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent will provide assistance to 2.5 million people and the main target groups for this response will include, but will not be limited to, displaced people in displacement centres and host communities (including host communities in governorates not directly affected by the earthquake), and those who experienced a loss of services due to the disaster or the displacement it caused. Priority areas of intervention under the emergency appeal consists of:

Shelter, housing and settlements

Ensure safety of communities in crisis-affected areas through the provision of winterization and relief household items such as thermal blankets, kitchen sets, heating stoves, and mattresses.

Livelihoods

Cover the immediate food needs of people in crisis-affected areas through food assistance in the form of ready to eat meals and standard food parcel allocations, replace household productive assets to recover their source of income, and replenish National Society food parcel stocks.

Multi-purpose cash

Provide affected households with unconditional multipurpose cash assistance to address their basic needs (lifesaving and longer-term) in an accountable and participatory manner.

Health and care

Restore access to affected populations to essential healthcare services by establishing community-based health and first aid in communal shelters, deploy mobile health units and mobile medical teams, and provide secondary healthcare services through ERU mobile configuration and hospitals.

Water, sanitation and hygiene

Reduce the risk of waterborne diseases through distribution of hygiene, cleaning kits, culturally appropriate menstrual hygiene kits, and through the provisioning of water truck services and water bottles. Provide additional support through repair and rehabilitation of water and sewage systems and solid waste management.

Protection, gender and inclusion

Provide essential protection services such as case management, child protection, referral pathway mapping and restoring family links and identify most vulnerable groups.

Community engagement and accountability

Establish a feedback mechanism (feedback desks, phone and internet-based channels) for the response operation in consultation with affected people and update standard operational procedures for community feedback and management to guide CEA integration in the operations.

Migration

Provide assistance and protection to displaced people through the existing and new National Society community centres/humanitarian service points (HSPs) and deliver assistance in line with the IFRC Global Migration Strategy and Movement frameworks.

Risk reduction, climate adaptation, and recovery

Develop relevant scenarios to inform response/resilience planning and procedures and develop plans for disaster management and preparedness.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Climate and environment

Syria's geographical landscape is dominated by desert and characterized by arid and semi-arid environments which feature natural forests covering two per cent and water bodies less than one per cent. Over the last 100 years, average temperatures in Syria have risen by 2 degrees Celsius. Most crops in Syria, particularly wheat, are rainfed and originate from the country's most drought-prone areas. Increasing temperatures and scant rainfall underscore Syria's fragility when it comes to climate change. The frequency and intensity of hydrological and agricultural droughts, especially near the Mediterranean Sea, are expected to increase with rising global temperatures. Drought in the north and north-east of Syria is exacerbating humanitarian crisis in the region. According to the [INFORM Climate Change Risk Index](#), Syria is at very high risk in terms of vulnerability and low readiness to adapt to climate change.

In May 2021, the water levels of the Euphrates River reached critically low levels, with the Tabqa Dam in the Ar-Raqqa administrative district's water supply depleted by nearly 80 per cent. Given that nearly 5 million people in Syria rely on the Euphrates River and its subsidiaries for drinking water, as well as for irrigating crops and sustaining livestock, this water shortage crisis is a huge concern. Low water flow has affected

the water-powered generators of the Tishreen Dam, impacting the electricity supply for more than three million people and limiting access to pumped water, health care, sanitation, agricultural production, food security, and livelihoods across affected areas. With Syrian households forced to turn to unsafe drinking water and limited usage for hygiene and sanitation, the shortage is also affecting public health.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent is part of the IFRC's [Global Climate Resilience Programme](#), which aims to foster an unprecedented scale-up in locally-led climate-smart disaster risk reduction and adaptation efforts to prevent and reduce climate-related disaster impacts and build community-level climate resilience. The programme aims to support 500 million people in 100 of the most climate-vulnerable countries, focusing on the least supported and marginalized communities. This holistic, multi-year programmatic approach consists of four operational pillars: (1) scaling up climate-smart disaster risk reduction, anticipatory action and preparedness; (2) reducing the public health impacts of climate change; (3) addressing climate displacement; and (4) enabling climate-resilient livelihoods and ecosystem services. The Syrian Arab Red Crescent is also a signatory of the [Climate and Environment Charter](#) since 2022, and an active member of the IFRC global [Green Response](#) group.

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent aims to integrate climate risk management, including adaptation and mitigation into all programmes. Its high-level objectives comprise to:

- Build upon its community-based disaster risk reduction technical capacities to support climate change adaptation of the most impacted communities and vulnerable groups
- Invest in anticipatory action
- Adopt an integrated approach by upscaling and mainstreaming climate-smart programming in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)
- Strengthen and increase community livelihoods using climate-smart practices
- Enhance health programming for climate-health threats
- Increase advocacy with the public authorities to take more ambitious actions
- Increase the expertise and knowledge of its staff and volunteers to lead and encourage climate action

Planned activities in 2024

- Conduct community education and awareness-raising activities focused on adapting to and mitigating climate-related risks
- Launch awareness campaigns to inform about the risks associated with climate-related events such as wildfires, and their impact on natural resources in targeted communities
- Initiate awareness sessions targeting heatwave impacts, including the production of educational materials for the public, with a special emphasis on the elderly and adults, as well as resources for branch members
- Conduct enhanced vulnerability and capacity assessments ([eVCA](#)) in high priority areas
- Implement campaigns focused on behaviour change, plastic reduction and clean-ups
- Implement greener solutions in livelihoods and early recovery interventions
- Develop a comprehensive climate change narrative for Syria, encompassing an overview of the impacts, challenges, and opportunities, with a focus on regional variations in climate change effects
- Create a detailed case study on a specific project addressing climate change, [disaster risk reduction](#), or [green response initiatives](#)
- Organize a climate change orientation session as part of disaster management training programmes to promote understanding of climate change impacts among staff and volunteers

- Implement specialized training on climate change for branch personnel to enhance their knowledge and response capabilities

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will provide the Syrian Arab Crescent support in core areas such as training on climate change, climate actions, enhanced vulnerability and capacity assessments, and climate-smart programming at national and branch levels. The IFRC support will consist of components such as developing a case study of Syria under climate change, preparing climate change orientation sessions, develop targets related to the National Society's commitments stated in the Climate and Environment Charter, among others. Support will also include the development of [early action protocols](#) that could receive IFRC-DREF funding for anticipatory action, for climate-related risks such as such as drought, cold-wave, and heatwave. The IFRC will pursue its support to the National Society in environmental sustainability, such as by collecting and disseminating greening practices, ensuring that livelihoods and early recovery interventions adopt greener solutions, and organise training on the [environmental assessment tool NEAT+](#) for staff and volunteers.

The [Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre](#) will assist in assessing and analysing the impacts of climate change across various sectors.

The **Danish Red Cross**, together with IFRC and other partners will support the National Society with foundation activities for anticipatory action, such as research, networking and advocacy, and staff training. Pilot initiatives are also considered. Support will include building solid coordination with national meteorological and hydrological authorities, and local and international actors to model the anticipatory actions and advocacy successfully. The Danish Red Cross will also support the National Society with scaling-up and integrating climate change and environmental considerations into disaster risk reduction work.

The **Norwegian Red Cross** support integrates climate action in all its support to the National Society, with a focus on health and green energy solutions. Targeted action includes raising awareness on climate change through hygiene promotion, in particular on reduced water consumption and coping strategies in drought times. Green energy solutions include equipping the National Society's primary health care centres with solar panels and batteries, and innovative solutions to power large water pumps under rehabilitation such as by generating electricity through the excess of water (hydropower).



Disasters and crises

For information on real-time emergencies, visit [IFRC GO page Syria](#).

Syria faces an alarming deterioration of its socio-economic state, compounded by ongoing conflicts, and natural hazards, including earthquakes, droughts, wildfires, and floods. Close to [17 million people](#) are in need of humanitarian assistance, including 12 million facing acute food insecurity. As of 2023, an additional 2.9 million people were at risk of food insecurity, marking a 51 per cent increase since 2019, before the Lebanese financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Energy shortages at the household level significantly disrupt the public water system and the food supply chain. Electricity scarcity affects families' ability to store and process food safely, forcing changes in consumption patterns and leading to higher food costs. At the same time, fuel shortages, crucial for agriculture and transport, have dramatically increased production costs, particularly affecting smallholder farmers and escalating harvesting expenses by up to 100 per cent year-over-year. Damaged infrastructure remains unrestored or in disrepair in most of the governorates. In areas where hostilities have subsided, families are struggling to access basic services such as drinking water, food, health care services, and livelihood opportunities.

The February 2023 earthquakes displaced hundreds of thousands of people and plunged those most in need into deeper poverty. The impacts from the earthquake were felt nationwide with price escalation, temporary redirection of funding and resources from indirectly to directly affected areas. According to the Syria Earthquake 2023 RDNA, physical damages caused by the earthquake are estimated at US\$3.7 billion, while losses are estimated at US\$1.5 billion, bringing the total estimated impact to US\$5.2 billion. Losses account for reduced output in productive sectors, lost revenue, and higher operating costs in the provision of services. Housing was the most severely affected sector (24% of total damage), followed by transport, environment (the associated cost of clearing the rubble) and agriculture (see also under ongoing emergency response for the earthquakes humanitarian impact).

Climatic and human factors are exacerbating water resource challenges in Syria. Droughts in the north and northeast and [low water levels in the Euphrates River](#) have impacted over five million people, affecting drinking water availability, agriculture, and hydroelectric power generation. In Syria, access to water has become one of the most prominent humanitarian challenges. According to the National Society's severity scale updated in June 2023, all of Al-Sweida's districts were ranked at levels 3 to 5, meaning that they face severe, or critical problem in water needs.

In addition to the severe drought in the Al-Sweida districts, Syria has also been dealing with a number of wildfires,

particularly among them the 15 July 2023 wildfires. The fires initially started at the end of June 2023 and peaked within a few days in areas including Homs, Hama, and Latakia governorates. At least 73 villages, including around 50,000 people, were affected by the wildfire which displaced families from their homes in the affected region.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent's commitment encompasses providing essential, inclusive, and suitably scaled humanitarian aid, ensuring no harm to communities, particularly those most vulnerable to environmental, social, political, or health-related disasters. The National Society has a wide network of warehouses distributed in all governorates with various storage areas. The National Society is enhancing its organizational preparedness, systems, and tools for an effective, efficient, and integrated response.

The National Society will intensify its focus on multi-sectoral [early recovery](#), [risk reduction](#), and resilience interventions. These interventions aim to connect humanitarian response with community development seamlessly, and putting people in Syria on the path towards recovery and self-reliance.

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent livelihoods interventions are focused on food assistance, food security and restoration/ protection of disrupted livelihoods for affected households and communities. The National Society is also scaling up its [cash and voucher assistance](#) programmes, aiming to increase the proportion of aid delivered through these means and ensuring people have the freedom, dignity, and independence to decide on their own recovery. This effort includes continuous digitalization, data protection, accountability, community engagement, and robust monitoring and reporting mechanisms, learning from past experiences.

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent acts as the focal organization for Sphere standards in Syria. Assuming its commitment to the humanitarian principles, it strives to promote and advocate for the application of Sphere standards among all humanitarian partners in Syria.

Planned activities in 2024

- Deliver life-saving assistance, essential and right-sized support to people affected by multiple crises when and where needed
- Provide emergency cash and voucher assistance
- Implement risk reduction and community-based disaster risk reduction programmes in disaster-prone locations

- Support communities and families to protect and/or restore livelihoods through community-based and localized solutions
- Provide support to establish income-generating activities
- Conduct pilot projects in several governorates on cash for nutrition, education, livelihoods and health with a special focus on people living with disabilities
- Provide livestock, agricultural, and fishing inputs and rehabilitate community infrastructures
- Rehabilitate homes and provide them with needed infrastructures
- Build capacity of staff and volunteers to strengthen skills, knowledge, and operational capabilities to be better equipped to support sustainable livelihoods, promote resilience, and contribute to long-term community recovery
- Ensure availability of food and non-food items for 10,000 households for emergency response
- Conduct training of trainers on [Sphere standards](#), focusing on sphere standards and disaster management

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC support to the National Society will enable it to enhance the scale, speed, quality, inclusiveness, and accountability of its services to affected people. Key efforts include enhancing disaster response capacities in hard-to-reach and newly accessible areas with unmet humanitarian needs, provision of livelihoods support, scaling up cash and voucher assistance, and ensuring stock pre-positioning. Through the project funded by the Global Development and South-South Cooperation fund under the China International Development Cooperation Agency, the IFRC will further support the rapid response efforts by maintaining family food parcels for emergencies, demonstrating the importance of pre-positioned stocks for rapid response, as seen after the February 2023 earthquakes. In coordination with other National Societies, the IFRC will continue providing technical support through training programmes on climate-smart agriculture, market assessment, and livelihoods to build the National Society's capacity for implementing livelihood programmes. The IFRC also supports the National Society to use the IFRC Preparedness for Effective Response ([PER](#)) approach and to play its role as focal organization for the Sphere standards.

IFRC mechanisms such as the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (IFRC-DREF) and Emergency Appeals will be drawn on as needed for the National Society to respond to disasters and crises. In 2023, IFRC provided DREF allocations for two

separate emergencies in Syria. The two DREF allocations have been described below:

[IFRC-DREF – Syria Wild Fire 2023](#): the DREF allocation of CHF 500,000 in August 2023 supported the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to assist 10,000 people affected by wild fires which broke out in the areas of Hama, Homs, Lattakia, and Tartous. The National Society will support the targeted people over a six-month period with assistance such as the distribution of ready to eat meals, installing collective water tanks in rural areas to support firefighting efforts, provision of WASH kits, and preparation of shelter kits, among others.

[IFRC-DREF – South Syria Droughts 2023](#): the DREF allocation of CHF 800,000 in August 2023 supported the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to assist 650,000 people affected by drought in Al-Sweida's districts. The National Society will support the targeted people over a nine-month period with assistance such as rehabilitation of boreholes, maintenance of submersible pumps, and procurement and installation of water tanks.

The **British Red Cross** will support the National Society on increasing emergency relief and early recovery interventions delivered through [cash and voucher assistance](#). It also supports the National Society's disaster management department.

The **Canadian Red Cross** aims to support the National Society on key disaster management activities and positions at headquarters and branch levels.

The **Danish Red Cross** will support the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in institutionalizing disaster risk reduction and resilience building, pooling together expertise for a more impactful approach. It will also support structured interventions addressing both immediate humanitarian needs and underlying vulnerabilities, with a focus on conflict-sensitive approaches. The Danish Red Cross will continue to provide operational and technical support to the National Society's disaster management department and sub-branches operating in still-fragile areas. The Danish Red Cross will also support the Syrian Arab in its endeavour to scale up livelihood interventions in close coordination with the IFRC and the IFRC Livelihoods Centre, along with relevant external partners.

The **German Red Cross** will continue to support the National Society in its preparedness and readiness efforts, including for operations support, coordination, operational capacity and analysis and planning. The German Red Cross also supports the logistical capacities of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent.

The **Swiss Red Cross** will support the Syrian Arab Red Crescent's projects for crisis-affected women-headed households to improve income-generating activities and enable crisis-affected people and households to meet basic needs through cash and voucher assistance interventions.



The fragile health system in Syria continues to face concurrent emergencies and chronic challenges which affect the availability and quality of health services across the country, as well as the physical and mental wellbeing of the population. The ongoing hostilities and disasters, such as the February 2023 earthquakes result in deaths and injuries which add pressure on the health system. The health infrastructure is heavily affected by the destruction of facilities and a shortage of qualified healthcare staff, leaving only 59 per cent of hospitals and 54 per cent of primary healthcare centres fully operational. This has led to an increase in both communicable and non-communicable diseases.

Disease outbreaks in Syria include, such as cholera, leishmaniasis, and measles, coupled with the socio-economic decline, restrict access to healthcare. The Syrian Ministry of Health declared a cholera outbreak in September 2022. The outbreak was mainly due to worsening socio-economic conditions and the water crisis in northern Syria, which have led to a significant increase in waterborne diseases across the country.

Disrupted medication supply chains, particularly for non-communicable diseases and psychotropic drugs, contribute to child mortality. Increasing food insecurity and poor diets among women of reproductive age present adverse health outcomes for mothers and children. Over 75,000 children aged 6-59 months are suffering from severe acute malnutrition and 40 per cent pregnant and lactating women have sub-optimal diets. The reliance on negative coping mechanisms highlights the importance of health facilities in providing specialized services for gender-based violence survivors. Prioritizing the repair and rebuilding of health facilities and addressing long-term health needs like mental health and psychosocial conditions is crucial.

In addition, special health care needs have increased, such as physical rehabilitation services due to the conflict. Exposure to violence, extreme stress and the impact of displacement has led to a deterioration in people's mental health and psychosocial well-being. The national mental health system is out of reach for many vulnerable Syrians and Palestinian refugees and remains limited due to a lack of professionals and community-based approaches, further challenged by physical and social barriers.

Water, sanitation and hygiene systems in Syria have also deteriorated due to hostilities, overuse, limited maintenance, and technical staff shortages, worsened by climate change and economic challenges. This has left 13.55 million people in need of water, sanitation and hygiene assistance. Access to safe water, adequate sanitation, and hygiene supplies remains a challenge especially in internally displaced people (IDP) sites where water-trucking is often the sole water source.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent helps to ensure the availability of essential, inclusive, life-saving and life-sustaining health services, particularly where access is difficult. It runs 119 health facilities, including 32 primary health care clinics, 34 mobile health clinics, 16 nutrition clinics, 11 emergency health points, six mental health clinics, and three physiotherapy centres. The Syrian Arab Red Crescent Al-Zahera hospital in Damascus offers a range of specializations and services, including gynaecology, paediatric care, cardiology, and more, and is set to reach a 120-bed capacity in the coming years. The National Society emergency medical service counts 42 First Aid Centres and 112 ambulances and is responsible for ambulance service across Syria. Its large-scale response to the COVID-19 pandemic has also generated extensive specialist expertise. It works to enhance the health system's responsiveness and resilience which necessitates an integrated multisectoral interventions across health, nutrition, WASH, and livelihoods.

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent's priorities include enhancing the quality of health services, leveraging its experience in epidemic preparedness and response to disease outbreaks, and continuing extensive psychosocial support services. These efforts will be supported by developing standard operating procedures, upgrading health information systems, and improving treatment protocols. As part of its priorities, the National Society seeks to further address the growing maternal and child malnutrition through specialized medical intervention and community outreach services, supported by community-based interventions. It will continue to provide extensive psychosocial support services through community centres and mobile teams, establish and expand referral pathways and service provision in selected health/ psychosocial support facilities. Due to increase in healthcare needs, the National Society will focus on providing more rehabilitation services.

The National Society has a well-established water rehabilitation capacity and ongoing programmes, and is recognized as a major emergency and long-term water, sanitation and hygiene service provider, especially in urban settings. It has ramped up efforts in the northern parts of Syria affected by multi-year drought to renovate disrupted public and community-level water systems. The National Society will work towards integrated WASH interventions, including waste management, in order support the smooth function of the health system which is heavily reliant on electricity, water, and road networks.

Planned activities in 2024

- Expand service reach and geographical coverage of primary health clinics, emergency health points, mobile health units, [first aid](#), and ambulance services
- Provide specialized secondary and tertiary health services at the Syrian Arab Red Crescent hospitals with state-of-the-art medical equipment
- Reach out to people in underserved areas with [community-based health and first aid interventions](#)
- Conducting health risk education and integrate health risks in community-based [disaster risk reduction programmes](#) in disaster-prone locations
- Contribute to the national immunization programme, advocating for communities to participate in routine immunization programmes
- Expand nutrition and maternal, newborn and child health services into the health facilities
- Provide physiotherapy services and support persons with disability with needed assistance
- Run specialized mental health services through selected facilities with a focus on improved referral services for advanced treatment and care
- Continue to provide psychosocial support services through community centre and mobile teams
- Support water treatment with equipment and materials for the maintenance and upgrading of the facilities
- Support water, sanitation/sewage, rehabilitation, and solid waste management systems for communities, hospitals, and other essential public facilities such as schools
- Rehabilitate its health centres and provide them with needed infrastructures
- Improve its pre-hospital ambulance care, including with equipment and training first aid staff and volunteers in their use and maintenance

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC support to the National Society wide-ranging efforts to increase access to basic primary health care by assisting the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in delivering integrated primary health services through mobile health units and primary health care facilities. Through the project funded by the Global Development and South-South Cooperation fund under the China International Development Cooperation Agency, the IFRC will support 5 mobile health units (Rural Damascus (2), Quneitra (1), Homs (1), and Deir-ez-Zor (1)) and

3 primary health clinics (Rural Damascus (2) and Homs (1)). The IFRC will also support capacity building and training of community volunteers, enhancing their skills for contributing to local community well-being. Prioritizing care for people with disabilities, the plan includes providing physical rehabilitation services at health facilities, incorporating cross-cutting considerations of age, gender, diversity, and disability. Further support will be provided to the Syrian Arab Red Crescent Al-Zahera hospital in Damascus, equipping it with life-saving medical instruments and equipment. The IFRC will also work with the National Society to leverage its [WASH](#) expertise for the benefit of other National Societies, and of the IFRC global rapid response system, in particular emergency urban WASH.

The **Canadian Red Cross** support to the National Society for the coming years prioritizes public health in emergency, medical emergency response unit adaptation, and health system strengthening.

The **Danish Red Cross** support to the Syrian Arab Red Crescent focuses on accessible and affordable emergency and primary health services for Syrians and Palestinian refugee populations. It will support community-based health activities, with a focus on reaching communities in remote areas with appropriate health information. The Danish Red Cross will also continue to offer technical and financial support to integrate mental health and psychosocial services into health programming, and for community-based psychosocial programming.

The **Finnish Red Cross** continues supporting the Syrian Arab Red Crescent's multidisciplinary health and rehabilitation services, including physical rehabilitation centres and disability mainstreaming activities through the IFRC and through the secondment of disability inclusion specialists to work side-by-side with the National Society dedicated staff.

The **French Red Cross** is supporting the National Society in providing services to earthquake-affected communities by restoring WASH services, reinforcing health and hygiene promotion, and preventing infectious diseases. An integrated approach is followed, supporting schools affected by the earthquake through light and medium rehabilitation work, as well as distribution of hygiene, cleaning and menstrual hygiene management kits combined with hygiene promotion. Support to the National Society also aims to improve infection prevention and control through health care facilities evaluations, training, and supervision in coordination with experts from the WHO; improve maternal and child health outcomes; and increase awareness of antenatal care, safe delivery practices and early postnatal care.

The **German Red Cross** links its support to the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to community engagement, enhancing local communities' readiness, resilience, and coping capacities. It will also support the National Society's reproductive and child health programme in Aleppo on maternal health and

relevant treatments for mothers and children, targeting vulnerable groups.

The **Japanese Red Cross** is supporting the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in health, including contributions to mobile health units, and to IFRC's technical health human resources.

The **Norwegian Red Cross** supports the National Society on primary health care, emergency health points first aid points, and mobile health units with medicine, staff and running costs, equipment, and consumables. It also works with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to protect health staff working in Syria through supporting concrete, practical measures, and operational responses at national and local levels to prevent violence and safeguard health care workers. Together with IFRC and other partners, the Norwegian Red Cross supports the development of a health strategy encompassing elements

of sustainability, and health impacts of climate change. The Norwegian Red Cross will also support the Syrian Arab Red Crescent on safer access to clean water and sanitation.

The **Swiss Red Cross** prioritizes improving the quality of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent's pre-hospital ambulance care and the health status of people in Syria. This includes equipping ambulances and prehospital care centres with automatic external defibrillators and running costs of a first aid centre. Other activities include access to safe drinking water at household and community levels in two communities, and support to clean water handling and personal hygiene.

The **Swedish Red Cross** continues to support the Syrian Arab Red Crescent's health programme and operations, concentrating on primary health clinics, mental health clinics, psychosocial support, and community-based health and first aid.



Migration and displacement

The Syrian conflict and its long-term consequences have led to mass migration to neighbouring countries and population movements within Syria. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), there were 12 million new displacements due to violence and conflict between 2015 and 2021. According to [UN OCHA](#), in 2022, the number of new displacements decreased compared to the previous year, with 130,724 new cases from January to August 2022 compared to 456,000 in the same period in 2021. Disasters also provoke internal displacement in Syria, with a significant spike in 2023 due to the February 2023 earthquakes that forced hundreds of thousands of people out of their homes (see ongoing emergency response section).

Despite the current hardships prevalent in the country, Syria also hosts refugees and asylum seekers from neighbouring countries, mainly from Iraq. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports about [160,000 stateless persons](#) in the Syrian Arab Republic. The country has historically been home to large stateless populations, particularly members of the Kurdish minority population. The nationality law contains gaps that lead to statelessness, including discrimination against women in transferring their nationality to their children.

Further shortfalls in humanitarian funding are expected to worsen the condition of migrants, refugees, and displaced persons. Official reports show that neighbouring countries hosting Syrian refugees want the refugees to return to Syria. This decision will increase the risk of new displacements and intensify the humanitarian crisis in Syria. A return back home is often accompanied by stress and anxiety for migrants,

returnees, and host communities about getting or being offered proper living conditions and livelihoods and lead to gaps in social cohesion and exclusion.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent approach to migration is to provide holistic and unhindered humanitarian assistance and support early recovery and resilience-strengthening interventions for the most vulnerable people affected by hostilities or disasters. This also covers people forced to migrate due to environmental degradation, climate change and economic factors that render traditional forms of life and livelihoods unsustainable and no longer possible.

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent provides shelter, food and non-food items, health care, water and sanitation, psychosocial support, livelihoods as well as restoring family links services to internally displaced people. This includes people in formal camps such as Al Hol and Al-Arish, informal camps, in host communities, and displaced people who have returned to their areas of origin. In [2023](#), out of 6 million affected persons registered by the National Society, 25% were internally displaced persons, 39% returnees, and 36% people from host communities.

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent is also part of the IFRC three-year [Global Route-Based Migration Programme](#) which aims to improve the safety and dignity of people on the move along deadly and dangerous land and sea-based migration routes across Africa, the Americas, Europe, the Middle East,

and North Africa. The programme aims to support 4.7 million people on the move and people in host communities annually through three operational pillars: (1) improving access to assistance and protection, including through humanitarian service points, (2) strengthening National Society capacities, and (3) local to global humanitarian diplomacy.

- Engage in humanitarian diplomacy to address medium to long-term assistance and protection needs of migrants and displaced people and consider the well-being of host communities

Planned activities in 2024

- Support the reconstruction and rehabilitation of shelters, internally displaced people (IDP) centres, buildings hosting IDPs, and essential infrastructure
- Provide a comprehensive training package, including technical, employability, and life skills, to target groups
- Conduct assessments of internal displacement and returns to understand migration perspectives, risks, response gaps, and needed interventions
- Enhance capacities to analyze data, trends, and profiles of people on the move along specific migratory routes
- Increase coordination and interaction on regional migration and displacement issues with relevant stakeholders

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will support the National Society with coordination, advocacy, and assessment of internal displacement and returns, and with the development of durable solutions and comprehensive access to services through integrated programming. This includes among others, livelihoods, cash and household items, information sharing, protection, mental health and psychosocial support and access to other services for internally displaced populations, returnees and residents in host communities. The Syrian Arab Red Crescent, with IFRC support, will participate in regional and global networks and projects such as the Red Cross Red Crescent MENA Migration Network, Children Red Initiative, and global and regional fora.



Values, power and inclusion

The Syrian crisis has gravely exacerbated gender inequalities and increased risks of violence that disproportionately affect specific groups. Women, children, adolescent boys and girls, older persons, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized or socially excluded people face amplified vulnerabilities and additional barriers to accessing services. Out of the 16.7 million people in need, 5 million (30 per cent) are women, 7.5 million (45 per cent) are children, and 2.8 million (17 per cent) are people living with disabilities. The crisis has led to heightened protection risks and vulnerabilities, including psychosocial trauma and disorders, especially among children and vulnerable groups, incidents of kidnappings and forced detention, and a rise in child marriage as a coping mechanism. Additionally, substance abuse, exposure to crime, and experiences of exclusion and discrimination are prevalent.

Harmful gender norms, including gender-based violence, particularly impact women and adolescent girls in Syria. Men and boys face significant risks related to arbitrary detention, forced conscription, and explosive ordnance. For older persons and those with disabilities, there is an increased risk of separation from families and reliance on assistive products. Notably, 32 per cent of males and 27 per cent of females

above the age of 12 in Syria have disabilities, equating to approximately five million people with one or more limitations in functioning. This is notably higher than the global average of 15 per cent. The stigma associated with disabilities further impedes social cohesion and participation.

The deepening poverty in Syria has led to an increase in harmful coping mechanisms, severely straining the capacities of families and communities to protect children, particularly adolescent girls and boys. Child labour, including its most severe forms, is reported in all governorates. Children without official birth certificates and those with disabilities face additional challenges, including marginalization, stigma, discrimination, and heightened child protection risks. According to OCHA's 2023 Humanitarian Needs Overview, early marriage is prevalent in communities, and child labour is a barrier to school attendance in communities.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent community service and protection programme includes community centres and psychosocial support mobile teams reaching remote areas

where public services are barely available. The community centres implement structured and advanced activities for small groups of children or adults, and some centres and mobile teams, as well as selected health facilities, have trained staff and volunteers for case management. The Syrian Arab Red Crescent intends to expand the referral pathways and service provision in selected facilities.

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent's mine and explosive remnants of war risk education interventions aim to increase civilians' resilience to weapon contamination in conflict-affected areas, by promoting risk awareness and safer behaviour. National Society staff and volunteers will ensure that casualties of mines and explosions have access to physical rehabilitation and prosthetic centres.

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent seeks to institutionalize and integrate protection, gender, and inclusion (PGI) and community engagement and accountability (CEA) into its programmes and operations. The aim is to address the needs and protection risks of the most vulnerable women and men of all ages and from diverse backgrounds. The National Society gives a particular focus to improve inclusion and accessibility for persons with disabilities and their families in society, including access to humanitarian services. The National Society is committed to enhancing inclusive structures within the organization, ensuring everyone has equal opportunities and can participate fully and safely. Key initiatives include establishing robust internal protection mechanisms to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation, abuse, and workplace harassment (see also accountability and agility section). A survivor-centred approach is central to these efforts, guided by the expertise of protection, gender, and inclusion focal points. The Syrian Arab Red Crescent is developing comprehensive training for its staff to foster a deeper understanding and application of PGI and CEA principles in their work.

Planned activities in 2024

- Continue to provide community service and protection programmes through community centres and psychosocial support (PSS) mobile teams in remote areas
- Provide specialized services, such as case management, for survivors of violence, discrimination and exclusion, especially in relation to gender-based violence and child protection
- Strengthen community feedback mechanisms
- Organize awareness-raising events for the general public on persons with disabilities, on opportunities, empowerment, and life/success stories of people with disabilities
- Implement communication campaigns focused on risk awareness and safer behaviour to promote community safety and awareness

- Assist mine victims through specialized support and rehabilitation services
- Enhance gender and age data disaggregation for accurate gender analysis, thereby addressing specific needs and vulnerabilities for better access to life-saving services
- Train staff and volunteers on PGI mainstreaming, as well as themes related to gender-based violence and psychosocial support
- Enhance awareness among staff and volunteers on disability inclusion and the rights of people with disabilities including the intersection of disability with gender, age, migration status

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will continue supporting the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in ensuring that any programme, project, operation, or service implemented by the National Society is designed to consider issues of dignity, access, participation, and safety, through a comprehensive PGI analysis and CEA approaches, and in adopting a gender-sensitive approach across its programmes. The IFRC's support will particularly strengthen services for persons with disabilities, focusing on physical rehabilitation, livelihood support, and inclusive humanitarian assistance delivery, fostering independence and socioeconomic participation.

The **British Red Cross** is committed to incorporating CEA and PGI elements into all its support on to strengthening the Syrian Arab Red Crescent's disaster management capacity and cash and voucher assistance preparedness.

The **Canadian Red Cross** will continue to support the National Society for the institutionalization and integration of protection, gender, and diversity into its regular programs and emergency response operations. This includes the dissemination of policies such as child safeguarding and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, staff training, and reporting mechanisms.

The **Danish Red Cross** will support the National Society to include expanding PGI into programmes, building staff and volunteer capacities, conducting PGI assessments, and strengthening the CEA mechanisms.

The **Finnish Red Cross** will support the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in including disability in humanitarian operations and programmes and becoming an inclusive workplace. This will be undertaken in cooperation with the Abilis Foundation and through technical resources provided by the Finnish Red Cross.

The **German Red Cross** will focus on community engagement, enhancing local communities' readiness, resilience, and coping capacities through the Syrian Arab Red Crescent's disaster management and community-based health and first aid teams.

The **Swedish Red Cross** will continue to support the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in developing and rolling out its community engagement and accountability work plan, aligning with its strategy for institutionalizing CEA.

The **Swiss Red Cross** supports the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to incorporate CEA and PGI elements into all its activities.

ENABLING LOCAL ACTORS

To support its strategic shift from emergency relief to longer-term resilience building within Syria, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent has strengthened the National Society development process. The key focus of this process has been on creating a more agile, manageable and sustainable organization, with a clear focus on:

- Integrity, quality, accountability, inclusiveness and transparency
- Developing a more holistic approach to addressing and managing both organizational and reputational risks against a backdrop of constantly changing territorial and political dynamics
- Clarifying the role and responsibility of the National Society's headquarters and individual branches, balancing a desire to give greater responsibility and autonomy to branches, while at the same time ensuring that the organization is working towards a common vision.
- Ensuring financial sustainability despite a decline in funds being directed towards Syria, developing the National Society's own resources and diversifying funding sources.

National Society development-related activities are supported by the IFRC Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) approach-based assessment undertaken at the branch level. The PER approach is a continuous and flexible process that enables National Societies to assess, measure and analyze the strengths and gaps of their preparedness and response mechanisms, and ultimately take necessary action to improve them. This assessment tool was selected for the way in which it emphasizes interconnectivity between the National Society's headquarters and branches.



Strategic and operational coordination

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent aims to establish and strengthen partnerships to expand reach across Syria. It will continue to engage in regular information exchanges and strategic dialogues with local and international actors. This includes to intensify engagement with governorates, to strengthen the National Society's role as a leading humanitarian actor in the country. The aim is to establish and strengthen partnerships to expand reach across Syria. The National Society will focus on developing multi-year sustainable partnerships that benefit programming and development initiatives, including securing funding and piloting innovative and social financing partnerships.

In 2024, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent will build resource mobilization capacity by developing a strategy, mapping existing and potential sources of income and revenue generation, including donor mapping for a diversified funding approach for its branches. It will explore new means of fundraising such as individual giving and private-sector partnerships. This will involve analysing trends to prioritize efforts, identify engagement gaps, and explore digital fundraising mechanisms.

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The **IFRC** will support the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in the following:

- Strengthening the auxiliary role of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent with public authorities by reinforcing its impartiality and independence

- Organizing thematic partnership meetings with IFRC network partners at least twice a year and participating in thematic events at regional and global levels
- Utilizing the specific expertise of respective Movement components to optimize the reach and quality of humanitarian assistance, coordinating activities and promoting common planning and analysis
- Engaging with relevant stakeholders, potential donors and partners to forge longer-term partnerships and promote the National Society as a partner of choice
- Strengthening public and private partnerships for more effective resource mobilization



National Society development

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent has planned the revisioning and endorsement of its National Society development framework, branch development roadmap, and volunteering development approach in 2024. It will also define its core structures, core costs and services to be reflected in its costing policy, with a view to strengthen financial sustainability. The National Society will apply innovative initiatives based on best practices to strengthen its capacity for long-term programmes focused on early recovery and resilience.

Planned activities include:

- Support branches to develop/update and implement annual organizational plans
- Define the characteristics of a well-functioning branch, based on findings of the IFRC PER assessments
- Finalize branch assessments in one remaining branch and implement branch action plans
- Conduct advocacy training courses for volunteers and youth leaders to build their skills to raise and advocate for the challenges they face
- Develop a leadership pathway for youth and volunteers through youth camps, study exchanges, and youth representation at the branch level
- Strengthen mechanisms to protect volunteers and promote their psychosocial well-being, including stress management
- Conduct workshops and training on thematic topics related to strategic thinking and change management at headquarters and in branches
- Conduct leadership competence-building training sessions for branch governance and management representatives, including orientation and dissemination of administrative procedures and protocols

- Introduce new capacity-building initiatives for strengthening systems and structures in human resources, communications, logistics, finance, resource mobilization, and digital transformation in line with the principles of the [IFRC National Society development compact](#)
- Establish an e-learning platform to build staff capacity in policies, Code of Conduct, financial and administrative systems, and the foundations of the Movement
- Enhance internal communication and coordination

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The **IFRC** will provide overarching support to the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in its comprehensive organizational transformation. Key focus areas for 2024 and beyond include strengthening operational systems, enhancing programme accountability, ensuring financial sustainability, and developing human capital, supported by the National Society Investment Alliance (NSIA). The Syrian Arab Red Crescent's transition to a funds transfer system, informed by IFRC capacity review and risk assessment, is part of this modernization effort. The IFRC will also continue to support the National Society's efforts to strengthen its institutional response preparedness, by leveraging past experiences. This includes supporting the Preparedness for Effective Response approach and branch development roadmap.

The **British Red Cross** supports the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in core functions of human resources, monitoring evaluation and learning, and information management. It also provides funding support to the IFRC National Society development delegate.

The **Danish Red Cross** supports the National Society in its institutional foundations and in reviewing its strategic priorities, in various capacity building efforts such as for information and data management, and in implementing

its youth engagement strategy. It also prioritises support to branch development and volunteering.

The **German Red Cross** provides support to the National Society on various development initiatives, contributes to funding the IFRC National Society development delegate, and continues to provide Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) and readiness-based operational support to the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. It contributes through technical training

for the logistics department and capacity building at both headquarters and field levels. It supports the National Society with the finalisation and dissemination of the warehouse manual guide and piloting of a cost recovery mechanism for the Tartus central warehouse.

The **Norwegian Red Cross** actively supports the Syrian Arab Red Crescent by investing in targeted areas of systems and capacity development, such as logistics, human resources, and financial management.



Humanitarian diplomacy

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent seeks to use multi-level relationships to push for collective change and response to humanitarian needs, all underpinned by an evidence-led approach, and backed by a well-resourced communications strategy to position itself at all levels. It aims to enhance public trust and accountability through effective communication and public advocacy. The National Society also works increase its impact on public behaviour, encouraging individuals and communities to protect their health, increase resilience to crises, and foster peaceful, caring, and inclusive communities.

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The **IFRC** will continue to promote a stronger positioning of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, the IFRC, and its membership in the overall response and recovery through strengthened advocacy and humanitarian diplomacy efforts. In coordination with the ICRC, the IFRC will support the National Society and its membership in addressing the highly sensitive communication requirements that come with complex context situations through strategic briefings, discussion papers, and key

messages. A key focus will be to clarify and communicate the auxiliary role of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to the Syrian Government and reinforce the neutrality, impartiality, and independence of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and its humanitarian actions vis-à-vis key local and international stakeholders.

The **British Red Cross** will seek to raise the National Society profile as a strong humanitarian actor through increased engagement with donors, key stakeholders, position papers and a targeted communication plan.

The **Canadian Red Cross** will pursue advocacy and humanitarian diplomacy efforts. It will focus on raising the Syrian Arab Red Crescent profile as a strong local humanitarian actor, and on its unique position and auxiliary role through increased engagement with back donors, the public, and position papers.

The **Danish Red Cross** will work closely with the IFRC and the International Committee of the Red Cross to further position the Syrian Arab Red Crescent as a relevant, reliable, and trustworthy actor in the humanitarian field and strengthen its auxiliary role and humanitarian diplomacy efforts.



Accountability and agility (cross-cutting)

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent prioritizes management accountability, ensuring the effective implementation of decisions from headquarters to branches across the country. Key areas will be talent management, gender equality, diversity, and zero tolerance towards fraud, corruption, sexual harassment, exploitation, and abuse. This commitment extends to enforcing the Code of Conduct and implementing safeguarding approaches, including procedures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and child safeguarding, and ensure whistle-blower protection. The Syrian Arab Red Crescent will also explore building internal investigation capacities and develop a training curriculum and standard operating procedures for assigned staff.

The National Society is committed to provide quality reporting and data analysis, and ensure compliance with financial standards on transparency. It works to instill a risk management culture and implement robust, simplified and more agile processes, such as through an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system at the lowest possible level. The National Society seeks to better integrate innovation, digital and emerging technologies, and pursue its digital transformation.

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will continue to provide the Syrian Arab Red Crescent financial and technical support in core areas of accountability and agility, one of them being the development of a unified reporting system along with comprehensive mechanisms. The IFRC will also continue to support the digital transformation of the National Society, through a grant of the [IFRC Capacity Building Fund](#). This includes implementing the roadmap developed following digital maturity self-assessments conducted in all 14 branches. The roadmap aims to make data accessible, reliable, and timely for all programmes and operations, and develop locally driven digital solutions and processes that enable community-led response.

The **British Red Cross** is focused on enhancing the Syrian Arab Red Crescent's monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL) and information management capabilities.

The **Danish Red Cross** will support the broader initiatives of the Red Cross and Red Crescent partners in Syria, aiming to foster innovation and digital transformation in the Syrian Arab Red Crescent.



Syrian Arab Red Crescent Mobile Health Unit doctor tells about the health situation in Latakia, Syria (Photo: IFRC)

THE IFRC NETWORK

The IFRC

Since the mid-1990s, the IFRC has supported the efforts of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and has played a key role in strengthening the operational and structural capacity of the National Society. The IFRC's support of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent centres on strategic and operational coordination, National Society development, and humanitarian diplomacy. It also supports accountability as a cross-cutting theme. The IFRC has assisted with longer-term sustainability, such as capacity building and organizational development for the National Society's headquarters and regional branches. It also supports the National Society's convener role within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in Syria.

In recent years, the IFRC has supported the Syrian Arab Red Crescent through a number of Disaster Response Emergency

Fund (DREF) and Emergency Appeal operations in relation to complex emergencies, earthquakes, population movement, droughts, wildfires, floods, and disease outbreaks. As of now, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent is addressing a significant earthquake emergency through the Emergency Appeal (MDRSY009).

The IFRC also provides technical support on a wide range of National Society services in Syria, including emergency relief, livelihoods, health, water and sanitation, community services, and community engagement and accountability. The IFRC's humanitarian services and supply chain management provide international procurement services on demand through its established supply chain.

IFRC membership coordination

The IFRC coordination involves working with member National Societies to assess the humanitarian context, humanitarian situations and needs. It involves agreeing on common priorities, co-developing strategies to address issues such as obtaining greater humanitarian access, acceptance and space; mobilizing funding and other resources; clarifying consistent public messaging; and monitoring progress. This also means ensuring that strategies and programmes incorporate clarity in their humanitarian efforts, development assistance, and efforts to reinforce the auxiliary role of National Societies in their respective countries.

In addition to IFRC members channeling overall support to sister National Societies through the IFRC, there are eight participating National Societies present in Syria, providing long-term support to the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. They comprise the British, Canadian, Danish, French, German, Norwegian, Swedish and Swiss Red Cross Societies. Long-term in-country and remote bilateral partnerships include:

The **British Red Cross** focuses its support to the Syrian Arab Red Crescent on disaster management, cash and voucher assistance, and National Society development, including for core administrative functions. The British Red Cross supports the National Society's work on early recovery actions such as livelihoods and food security. The British Red Cross also supports the Syrian Arab Red Crescent's profile as a strong humanitarian actor.

The **Canadian Red Cross** is supporting the National Society in public health in emergency, medical emergency response unit adaptation, health system strengthening, and positioning the National Society among donors and the diaspora community.

The **Danish Red Cross** and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent partnership has primarily included community-based development and emergency programmes. The Danish Red Cross provides support with administrative capacity development and organizational development. It also supports a range of health interventions and resilience building in crisis-affected communities, including for mental health and psychosocial support and access to sustainable and protected livelihoods.

The **Finnish Red Cross** focuses on humanitarian assistance in Syria, including health, relief, and International Humanitarian Law dissemination in cooperation with the ICRC. Its partnership with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent includes a strong focus on protection and disability, and gender inclusion initiatives. This includes supporting high-quality physiotherapy and rehabilitation services, and the longstanding partnership with the Abilis Foundation for disability inclusion in Syria.

The **French Red Cross** is supporting the National Society in providing services to earthquake-affected communities by restoring WASH services, reinforcing health and hygiene promotion, and preventing infectious diseases.

The **German Red Cross** focuses on providing operational support to the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, with a recent focus on planning and analysis, including information management. It also provides support on logistics, community engagement, and reproductive and child health services in the city of Aleppo.

The **Norwegian Red Cross** supports the efforts of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to improve the health and protection of the most vulnerable people who are affected by crises and climate change. It aims to increase safe access to quality health care and first aid services, and to help the Syrian Arab Red Crescent reduce cases of water-borne disease outbreaks, by improving safer access to clean water and sanitation and improving hygiene practices.

The **Swedish Red Cross** supports the Syrian Arab Red Crescent's primary health clinics, mental health clinics, and psychosocial support interventions. It will also continue to support the National Society in developing and rolling out its community engagement and accountability work plan, aligning with its strategy for institutionalizing CEA in 2024-2025.

The **Swiss Red Cross** works with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in the areas of health, including first aid, disaster risk management, and National Society development. The Swiss Red Cross incorporates comprehensive technical and managerial support in its programming, in support of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent.

Participating National Society Support

National Society name	Funding Requirement	Climate	Disasters and crises	Health and wellbeing	Migration	Values, power and inclusion	Enabling local actors
Austrian Red Cross	200,000			●			
British Red Cross	7.6M		●			●	●
Canadian Red Cross Society				●		●	●
Danish Red Cross		●	●	●	●	●	●
Finnish Red Cross				●		●	●
French Red Cross	1.4M			●			
German Red Cross			●	●		●	●
Italian Red Cross	500,000			●			
Netherlands Red Cross	853,000		●				
Norwegian Red Cross	5M	●	●	●			●
Swedish Red Cross	2.9M			●		●	
Swiss Red Cross			●	●		●	

Total Funding requirement

18.5M

Movement coordination

Movement coordination mechanisms between the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, the IFRC and the ICRC are in place at all leadership and management levels. The Syrian Arab Red Crescent ensures that cooperation and coordination with Movement partners is in alignment with the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) principles aimed at improving collaboration, particularly in response to large-scale emergencies and with the [Seville Agreement 2.0](#). These efforts are aimed at facilitating a coherent and complementary response, as well as collective impact, in reference to humanitarian needs, including economic crises, drought, health emergencies, armed conflict, and the current earthquakes. This includes joint planning and analysis,

coordinated activities, and leveraging the specific expertise of respective Movement components to optimize the reach and quality of humanitarian assistance.

The ICRC has been present in Syria since 1967. It currently works to support the most vulnerable who have been affected by over a decade-long conflict. The ICRC carries out its activities in Syria in cooperation with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, to contribute to better access to food, improve access to medical services, rehabilitate water and sanitation networks across the country, and help people gradually restore their livelihoods. Following the February 2023 earthquakes, it has stepped up its response in light of fast-growing humanitarian needs.

Coordination with other actors

In its role as auxiliary to the public authorities, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent acts as Syria's national coordinator for humanitarian aid, as mandated by the Syrian Government in 2008. It is also a key member of the National Humanitarian and Disaster Response Committees at national and governorate levels and an essential partner to several international organizations. The National Society works closely alongside several key government departments, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, the Ministry of Local Administration and Environment, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reforms.

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent collaborates with a wide range of local and international partners. It works with UN agencies

such as UNFPA, UNHCR, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, WFP, and INGOs including Action Against Hunger, ADRA, AVSI, COOPI, Danish Refugee Council, Lutheran World Relief, MEDAIR, Oxfam, Premiere Urgence, Secours Islamique France, Terre des Hommes, Intersos and Triangle.

In addition, the IFRC supports the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in its interventions through partnerships with DG-ECHO, the Government of Japan, Global Development and South-South Cooperation fund under the China International Development Cooperation Agency, the United Kingdom's UKAid and UK Met Office, and private and corporate donors. The IFRC also participates alongside the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in interagency cluster meetings and working groups, including health, shelter and household items, and food security and livelihoods.



The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

is the world's largest humanitarian network, with 191 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and around 15 million volunteers. Our volunteers are present in communities before, during and after a crisis or disaster. We work in the most hard to reach and complex settings in the world, saving lives and promoting human dignity. We support communities to become stronger and more resilient places where people can live safe and healthy lives, and have opportunities to thrive.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- [IFRC Global Plan and Country Plans](#)
- [Subscribe for updates](#)
- [Donor response](#) on IFRC website
- [Live Disaster Response Emergency Fund \(DREF\) data](#)
- Operational information: [IFRC GO platform](#)
- National Society data: [IFRC Federation-wide Databank and Reporting System](#)
- [Evaluations database](#)

This plan reflects the priorities of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent Society, the IFRC and National Societies providing international support, for 2024 and subsequent years. It is aligned with the [IFRC Strategy 2030](#), representing the collective ambitions of the IFRC membership, and is the result of a joint planning process and will serve for joint monitoring and reporting. It will be revised on an annual basis to adjust priorities and funding requirements to the needs in-country.

Contact information

Talal Al Masri

Secretary General
Syrian Arab Red Crescent
T +963 934 888 822
talal.masri@sarc-sy.org
www.sarc.sy

Yara Yassine

Acting Head of Strategic Engagement & Partnerships
IFRC Regional Office for Middle East & North Africa,
Beirut
T +961 79 300 562
yara.yassine@ifrc.org

Mads Brinch Hansen

Head of Delegation
IFRC Country Delegation Syria, Damascus
T +963 959 999 869
mads.brinch@ifrc.org

Sumitha Martin

Lead
IFRC Global Strategic Planning & Reporting Centre
New Delhi
sumitha.martin@ifrc.org