

WORKING **ENVIRONMENT**

Intensified violence, sectarian strife, and an escalation of human trafficking and people smuggling in 2016 led to increasing levels of displacement across the Middle East and North Africa region. Of the estimated 67.7 million people worldwide of concern to UNHCR, more than 28 per cent are in this region, including 2.6 million refugees, 15.1 million IDPs and returnees, and an estimated 372,500 stateless.

In 2016, UNHCR and its partners were faced with the continued imperative to address the needs stemming from three systemwide, Level 3 emergencies (see Responding with lifesaving support chapter and Glossary) in Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria), and Yemen. Providing protection and advocating for protection space, supporting access to asylum, expanding opportunities for durable solutions for refugees and IDPs, and strengthening support for the IDP response, were UNHCR's priorities in 2016. The Office worked with partners to maximize the delivery of assistance and protection to the most vulnerable, providing shelter, core relief items (CRIs), and cash-based interventions in camps and urban settings.

A family displaced by fighting in the village of Shora, 25 kilometres south of Mosul, Iraq, walk towards an army checkpoint on the outskirts of Qayyarah.

MAJOR SITUATIONS

Syria situation

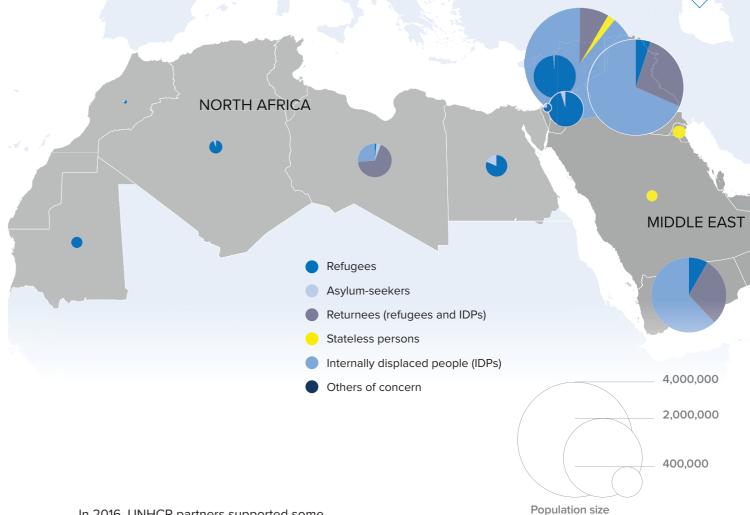
Humanitarian needs in Syria reached a record high in 2016, with 13.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, including 6.3 million IDPs and 2.8 million children. Overall, violations of international human rights and humanitarian law perpetrated mostly with impunity impeded humanitarian access to people in need. An estimated 4.72 million people lived in hard-to-reach and besieged locations inside Syria, and thousands were stranded at the borders, unable to seek safety in neighbouring countries. In addition, intense fighting in northern Syria, especially in Aleppo, resulted in the new displacement of 400,000 people in 2016. The coping mechanisms of IDPs and host communities were all but exhausted, with more than half of Syria's hospitals destroyed or badly damaged; roughly a quarter of schools damaged, destroyed or used as collective shelters; and an estimated 1.2 million houses damaged or destroyed. This left more than 2.4 million people in need of shelter.

As part of the "Whole of Syria" response, UNHCR enhanced its leadership and coordination role in the protection, camp coordination and camp management (CCCM), and shelter/non-food items (NFIs) clusters. The Office delivered protection assistance to more than 2 million people in 11 out of 14 governorates, NFIs to some 4 million people in 13 governorates, and health services to almost 700,000 people in six governorates including in hard-to-reach areas. Cross-line delivery assisted more than 1.1 million people in 39 locations inside Syria.

At the end of 2016, there were nearly 5 million Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries, including in Turkey (2.86 million), Lebanon (1 million), Jordan (685,200), Iraq (261,900) and Egypt (213,900) reflecting the continued strong commitment and generosity of host countries. In London, at the February 2016 conference on "Supporting Syria and the region," the Syrian hosting countries pledged their support to education, livelihoods and employment, which were complemented by donor countries' commitments in the spirit of responsibility-sharing. Examples of progress in these areas included: expanding labour market access to refugees; the reform of regulatory frameworks; improving the business climate to attract more investment; and increasing trade opportunities to support longer-term growth.

Across the region, however, most refugees live below the poverty line and access to food, housing, and health care is challenging. In 2016 in Lebanon, 70 per cent of Syrian refugee households were living below the poverty line, as well as 93 per cent of Syrian refugees living outside of camps in Jordan, 65 per cent in Egypt, and 37 per cent in Iraq.

Together with UNDP, UNHCR continued to lead the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP), a coordinated response of over 240 partners in support of the national response plans of the five main Syrian refugee-hosting countries. The 3RP has been an innovative example of partnerships with development actors in addressing displacement, building resilience and laying the groundwork for solutions.



In 2016, UNHCR partners supported some 294,950 Syrian refugee households with cash-based interventions, provided shelter assistance to over 107,100 Syrian refugee households in need and 919,670 targeted children were enrolled in formal education.

Iraq situation

The humanitarian crisis in Iraq deepened, with the country experiencing successive waves of mass displacement. More than 10 million Iraqis were estimated to need some form of humanitarian assistance. There were at least 3.6 million IDPs in the country, for whom internal displacement remained highly fluid and volatile. As many families experienced multiple displacements, their vulnerability to economic and protection-related shocks increased. Since October 2016, an additional 130,000 became internally displaced from the city of Mosul and its surrounding areas, continuing into 2017.

Libya situation

The volatile security and the political situation in Libya continued to impact civilians, and made humanitarian access even more challenging. Those affected included more than 300,000 IDPs, 450,000 returnees, and 39,000 refugees and asylum-seekers registered inside the country. To reach vulnerable displaced people across the country, UNHCR expanded its partner network, which resulted in the delivery of CRIs and cash grants to over 5,200 IDP families in 2016 around Tripoli, Misrata, Benghazi and Alkhums and the western part of Libya. The Office also stepped up its outreach to refugees and asylum-seekers, with the opening of a third community development centre located in Tripoli, and increased visits to detention facilities.

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In 2016, UNHCR assisted over 8,200 refugee families with CRIs and cash grants as well as provided more than 47,000 medical consultations to refugees and asylum-seekers. UNHCR continued to operate information and reporting hotlines, which responded to more than 3,000 calls.

In 2016, 90 per cent of the more than 181,400 people who irregularly reached Italy by sea departed from Libya. Given the mixed nature of population movements to, through and from the country, IOM and UNHCR established a working group on mixed migration in December 2016 to enhance coordination of responses.

Yemen situation

Some 37,000 Syrian refugees in Jordan and 13,000 in Turkey received work permits The prolonged conflict in Yemen required a sustained Level 3 emergency response. An estimated 18.8 million of the country's 27.4 million people—nearly 70 per cent of the population—needed humanitarian assistance in 2016, particularly food, health and shelter being the most pressing needs. With some 280,000 refugees and asylum-seekers in the country, Yemen remained a generous host. UNHCR provided continued protection and life-saving assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers, advocated for access of refugees to public health and education services, and provided emergency response to over 700,000 of the most vulnerable IDPs and returnees.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

Maintaining protection space and supporting access to national asylum systems

UNHCR conducted individual biometric registration for Iraqi, Syrian and other refugees throughout the region. In Turkey, the Office supported the Government to develop a project to verify and upgrade the registration data of Syrian refugees. Within the framework of the 3RP, the Office prioritized efforts ensuring all refugee births were registered and documented, and that unaccompanied children were identified and assisted.

In line with the commitments made at the London conference, positive developments were made in supporting Syrian refugees' access to livelihoods. For example, work permits were issued to 37,000 Syrian refugees in Jordan and 13,000 refugees in Turkey, and Syrian refugee medical professionals and teachers were permitted to provide services to refugee communities in Turkey.

Community-based protection and two-way communication with refugees were pursued as a means to ensure accountability and promote empowerment.

UNHCR and partners strengthened protection monitoring through systematic data collection by community-based actors, and analysis using innovative technology providing the basis for legal aid, documentation, and support to vulnerable individuals. Across 3RP countries, a network of 250 community centres and 900 community workers worked with support committees and mobile teams in pursuit of sustainable protection responses capable of addressing child protection and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) concerns. New partnerships were forged to address challenges affecting youths' access to tertiary educational opportunities. Interventions by UNHCR and partners were able to significantly reduce the percentage of Syrian refugee children born in the region without any form of identity documents from 35 per cent in 2012 to 3 per cent in 2016.

In North Africa, UNHCR continued to advise and provide targeted training for government officials to gradually put in place a national asylum legislation and hand over registration and refugee status determination processes. In Morocco, refugee status determination of UNHCR-registered asylum-seekers was carried out jointly with Moroccan authorities. In Libya and Tunisia, the organization provided technical training to government officials and civil society actors on rescue at sea.

Strengthening refugee protection in mixed movements

The central Mediterranean route (through North Africa to Italy) remained the main channel used by people trying to reach Europe from Africa. There were more than 181,400 arrivals in Europe by sea in 2016, with the majority departing from Libya to reach Italy. At least 5,000 people were reported to have died or gone missing in the Mediterranean, making it the deadliest year to date. The number of asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants using the eastern Mediterranean route (from Turkey to Greece) in 2016 dropped significantly following the simultaneous effective closure of the Balkans route and the European Union-Turkey statement of March 2016. In view of large-scale irregular mixed movements (see Glossary), and to prevent refoulement, UNHCR worked to safeguard access to territory, ensuring rescue at sea and protection for people of concern.

In Libya, the Office strengthened cooperation with the Libyan Coast Guard and immigration authorities by establishing two additional health posts at disembarkation points, to provide emergency assistance to those rescued at sea. In addition, UNHCR successfully advocated the release from detention of

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In 2016, some 96,000 refugees from the region had their applications for resettlement submitted to 30 countries 578 people in need of international protection and provided life-saving humanitarian assistance at five points of disembarkation, following rescue or interception at sea.

In Tunisia, UNHCR continued to provide capacity building to the authorities to improve monitoring at the border with Libya and strengthen capacity for rescue at sea.

Providing safety from violence and exploitation

Child protection and the prevention of, and response to, SGBV were key elements of UNHCR's operations in the region. In 2016, almost 700,000 girls and boys in the region benefited from the organization's child protection, psychological and social support programmes. Some 131,500 survivors of SGBV, including men and boys, were given access to multi-sectoral services.

Furthermore, UNHCR continued to promote active and equal participation by women in leadership and management structures and equal access to livelihood opportunities, especially for women heads of households. Inside Syria, SGBV awareness sessions reached nearly 100,000 IDPs in collective shelters and community centres in different governorates. A specific focus on children and youth remained an important element of the response throughout the region, including addressing longer-term care arrangements and durable solutions for unaccompanied and separated children, addressing child labour, and improving children's access to safe learning environments.

UNHCR and partners also supported youth-led initiatives in communities and facilitated refugee youths' participation in regional and global events, including youth consultations in Jordan, Morocco and Turkey.

Pursuing durable solutions

Together with resettlement countries and other partners, UNHCR continued working towards durable solutions for an increasing number of vulnerable refugees. In 2016, based on robust and harmonized methodologies to identify the most vulnerable, some 96,000 refugees from the region had their applications for resettlement submitted to 30 countries, including 77,200 Syrian and 12,800 Iraqi refugees.

Furthermore, UNHCR continued advocating alternative pathways for the admission of refugees to third countries, including the use of humanitarian visas, community-based private sponsorship, labour mobility schemes, and family reunification.

Responding to new emergencies

Emergency preparedness and response to fresh instances of displacement continued to constitute essential features of the Level 3 emergency response in Iraq, Syria and Yemen. In Mauritania, UNHCR continued assisting at least 46,000 Malian refugees in Mbera camp and provided emergency assistance to more than 4,000 people fleeing violence, which erupted in September 2016 in Mali, triggering a new influx of refugees towards Mauritania.

Building partnerships with local organizations and civil society

UNHCR enhanced strategic partnerships in the region, including cooperation with regional organizations such as the League of Arab States, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, academic institutions, the media and the private sector. UNHCR's partnership strategy in the Middle East and North Africa region follows the "whole of society approach" under the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (see Glossary) adopted at the United Nations General Assembly high-level meeting in September 2016; and focuses on establishing robust and comprehensive partnerships for a sustainable humanitarian response and a greater beneficial impact on people of concern. The strategy prioritizes partnerships with national and local authorities, international organizations, international financial institutions, regional organizations, and civil society partners, including faith-based organizations, academia, the private sector, media and refugees themselves.

In Syria, UNHCR extended its partnership network to encompass new international and national NGOs, tripled its existing network of community centres, established 25 mobile units to cover new locations and emergencies, and vastly expanded the outreach volunteer programme. The mobile units played an important role in disseminating information on available services, and in identifying needs and providing essential responses, including in evolving situations such as in eastern Aleppo.

UNHCR held consultations with over 150 stakeholders in the region with a view to establish the Middle East and North Africa Civil Society Network for Displacement. It aims to amplify the voice of civil society in the region and to further strengthen advocacy on displacement issues, build national non-governmental response capacities, and share lessons learned on an array of issues, including emergency response and protection. Engagement with academia in the region was also strengthened. The first regional roundtable with academia, including think tanks, research centers and universities was held in April 2016 with a view to reinforce cooperation and involvement in displacement related matters.

CONSTRAINTS

Significant challenges prevailed, as humanitarian needs outweighed the response capacity in 2016. Volatile security environments and the fluid nature of displacement made it difficult to develop long-term sustainable responses.

Limitations on safe and unhindered humanitarian access continued to impact the capacity of UNHCR and its partners to deliver assistance in insecure environments.

A lack of reliable and up-to-date data also made delivering protection and assisting people of concern more challenging.

Lastly, the protracted and uncertain situation for many refugees in the region, notably Syrians, resulted in the ongoing or complete depletion of their financial resources, leading to the increasing use of negative coping strategies.

More detail on individual operations are available in the relevant subregional and country operations pages in the Global focus website (http://reporting.unhrc.org)

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FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The original 2016 budget for the Middle East and North Africa region was \$2.04 billion. By the end of 2016, the revised budget for 2016 increased to \$2.08 billion, mainly because of the dire humanitarian needs in the region, and particularly reflecting additional requirements for the Yemen situation and the Regional Refugee Response Plan (3RP) for Syrian refugees.

The region received a generous level of earmarked funding, amounting to \$1.29 billion, including 7 per cent programme support costs. Despite this generous level of funding—equivalent to nearly a third of UNHCR's voluntary contributions—this still left 38 per cent of the region's needs unmet. UNHCR used an indicative amount of \$47.7 million in unearmarked funding to the region to cover gaps, equivalent to 15 per cent of all unearmarked funds used in the field.

The Middle East and North Africa region continued to incur the highest level of expenditure, amounting to \$1.3 billion and representing 33 per cent of programmed activities.

The funding shortfall severely affected UNHCR's programmes and operations in the region in 2016. The lack of funding available made itself particularly felt in the following areas:

- In Jordan, more than 50,000 of the most vulnerable refugee men, women and children were kept on the cash assistance waiting list, unable to receive monthly cash assistance during 2016. In Iraq, more than 16,000 families were similarly affected due to a lack of funds.
- In Iraq, where only 32 per cent of the operational funding needs were covered, UNHCR was unable to help 14,000 families upgrade substandard dwellings. In addition, 33,000 Syrian refugees were also unable to access empowerment opportunities.
- Funding shortages hampered the provision of essential assistance to vulnerable Sahrawi refugees living in the five camps in Tindouf, Algeria. While 18,000 families were affected by floods, only 2,000 of the most vulnerable families received targeted shelter assistance from UNHCR to rebuild.

EXPENDITURE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA | 2012-2016



BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA | USD

		PILLAR 1	PILLAR 2	PILLAR 3	PILLAR 4	
OPERATION		Refugee programme	Stateless programme	Reintegration projects	IDP projects	TOTAL
MIDDLE EAST						
Iraq	Budget Expenditure	116,487,674 98,771,582	804,241 308,237	26,707,855 1,890,220	402,946,185 237,055,646	546,945,954 338,025,685
Israel	Budget Expenditure	3,079,904 2,672,439	0	0	0	3,079,904 2,672,439
Jordan	Budget Expenditure	318,803,538 218,328,800	0	0	0 0	318,803,538 218,328,800
Lebanon	Budget Expenditure	462,446,931 350,041,934	975,064 804,911	0 0	0	463,421,99! 350,846,84!
Saudi Arabia	Budget Expenditure	4,261,371 3,243,318	225,565 186,954	0	0	4,486,930 3,430,272
Syrian Regional Refugee Coordination Office	Budget Expenditure	28,403,396 23,093,351	0	0	67,799,722 58,273,736	96,203,118 81,367,087
Syrian Arab Republic	Budget Expenditure	52,750,132 23,572,702	194,642 109,320	0	262,745,620 113,817,921	315,690,394 137,499,943
United Arab Emirates	Budget Expenditure	2,674,303 2,290,861	87,620 76,890	0	0	2,761,923 2,367,75
Yemen	Budget Expenditure	48,970,754 27,284,663	0	0	75,092,305 48,949,241	124,063,058 76,233,90
Regional activities	Budget Expenditure	34,601,632 2,068,755	0	0	0	34,601,63 2,068,75
SUBTOTAL	Budget Expenditure	1,072,479,635 751,368,406	2,287,131 1,486,312	26,707,855 1,890,220	808,583,831 458,096,544	1,910,058,452 1,212,841,482
NORTH AFRICA						
Algeria	Budget Expenditure	28,964,766 16,147,245	0	0	0	28,964,76 16,147,24
Egypt Regional Office	Budget Expenditure	82,276,790 45,615,645	0	0	0	82,276,79 45,615,64
Libya	Budget Expenditure	18,820,376 9,796,509	0 0	0 0	5,044,663 2,324,963	23,865,03 12,121,47
Mauritania	Budget Expenditure	19,532,361 14,176,433	0	0	0	19,532,36 14,176,43
Morocco	Budget Expenditure	6,465,549 4,539,494	0	0 0	0	6,465,549 4,539,49
Tunisia	Budget Expenditure	5,050,784 3,599,242	0	0	0	5,050,78 3,599,24
Western Sahara: Confidence Building Measures	Budget Expenditure	7,519,239 1,335,660	0	0	0	7,519,239 1,335,66
Regional activities	Budget Expenditure	1,694,877 90,574	0	0	0	1,694,87 90,57
SUBTOTAL	Budget Expenditure	170,324,742 95,300,801	0	0	5,044,663 2,324,963	175,369,40 97,625,76
TOTAL	Budget	1,242,804,376	2,287,131	26,707,855	813,628,494	2,085,427,850
TOTAL	Expenditure	846,669,207	1,486,312	1,890,220	460,421,507	1,310,467,240

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VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA | USD

	PILLAR 1	PILLAR 4		
Donor	Refugee programme	IDP projects	ALL PILLARS	TOTAL
Andorra			16,816	16,816
Australia	3,541,076	2,288,330	2,600	5,832,006
Austria	3,397,508			3,397,508
Belgium	4,428,427	380,435		4,808,862
Bulgaria		53,079		53,079
Canada	47,461,894	9,730,539	1,573,034	58,765,467
Central Emergency Response Fund	1,992,936	11,044,548		13,037,484
China	2,000,000			2,000,000
Czechia	2,668,319	196,232		2,864,552
Denmark			6,661,374	6,661,374
Ecuador			2,500	2,500
Estonia	83,799			83,799
European Union	73,919,243	18,745,460	6,701,419	99,366,123
Finland	4,048,915	1,132,503	2,165,324	7,346,742
France	9,333,507	1,833,787	3,715,499	14,882,792
Germany	69,159,714	49,403,845	82,177,422	200,740,980
Holy See	15,000			15,000
Humanitarian Pooled Fund		7,461,084		7,461,084
Iceland			2,400,000	2,400,000
Italy	5,917,215	2,581,148		8,498,363
Japan	28,717,182	18,215,830		46,933,013
Kuwait	7,960,000	8,000,000	106,762	16,066,762
Latvia	54,825			54,825
Lebanon Recovery Fund	495,000			495,000
Liechtenstein			302,046	302,046
Luxembourg		273,224	1,703,297	1,976,521
Malta	56,689			56,689
Monaco	276,318		32,787	309,105
Morocco			24,299	24,299
Netherlands			9,994,439	9,994,439
Norway	19,758,033	8,341,760	30,982,260	59,082,053
OPEC Fund For International Development		300,000		300,000
Philippines	5,000			5,000
Poland		853,721	260,322	1,114,043
Private Donors in Australia			2,911,674	2,911,674
Private Donors in Austria			45,231	45,231
Private Donors in Bangladesh	1,061			1,061
Private Donors in Canada	781,918	14,782	333,782	1,130,482
Private Donors in China		55,986	179,795	235,781
Private Donors in Egypt	1,420	265,393		266,813
Private Donors in France	499	239	163,273	164,012

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	PILLAR 1	PILLAR 4		
Donor	Refugee programme	IDP projects	ALL PILLARS	TOTAL
Private Donors in Germany	124,014	2,809,116	3,338,313	6,271,442
Private Donors in India	4,749		218	4,967
Private Donors in Italy	419,445	444,420	1,060,543	1,924,408
Private Donors in Japan	425,250	639,817	247,500	1,312,567
Private Donors in Kuwait	36,185			36,185
Private Donors in Lebanon	76,231			76,231
Private Donors in Malaysia	7,676			7,676
Private Donors in Mexico			4,324	4,324
Private Donors in the Netherlands	3,635,673		50,662	3,686,335
Private Donors in the Philippines		173	9,584	9,757
Private Donors in Qatar	2,788,447			2,788,447
Private Donors in the Republic of Korea			1,528,770	1,528,770
Private Donors in Saudi Arabia	681,053		50,000	731,053
Private Donors in Singapore	38,776		38,935	77,711
Private Donors in Spain	743		348,422	349,165
Private Donors in Sweden	10,505	191,308	1,174,533	1,376,346
Private Donors in Switzerland	674,122		2,114,082	2,788,204
Private Donors in Thailand			24,711	24,711
Private Donors in Tunisia	19,661			19,661
Private Donors in Turkey	6,757		136	6,892
Private Donors in the United Arab Emirates	9,610,925	82,000	211,843	9,904,768
Private Donors in the United Kingdom	417,838	45,644	454,589	918,071
Private Donors in the United States of America	3,718,615	425,189	3,657,100	7,800,904
Private Donors in Ireland			8,650	8,650
Qatar	496,164			496,164
Republic of Korea	500,000	1,000,000	850,000	2,350,000
Romania	62,007			62,007
Russian Federation	300,000	500,000		800,000
Saudi Arabia	5,213,125	5,767,665		10,980,790
Slovakia			170,068	170,068
Slovenia			33,520	33,520
Spain	5,802,940	637,937	60,491	6,501,368
Sweden	6,512,859	6,183,596	2,203,992	14,900,447
Switzerland	5,560,610	1,270,325	1,511,139	8,342,074
United Nations Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict	95,020			95,020
United Nations Department of Political Affairs	2,935,035			2,935,035
United Nations Population Fund	11,527			11,527
United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS			107,000	107,000
United Kingdom	83,720,643	14,718,858		98,439,501
United States of America	233,457,001	84,010,000	207,400,000	524,867,001
TOTAL	653,439,092	259,897,973	379,115,080	1,292,452,146

Note: Contributions include 7 per cent support costs

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