

1. Crisis overview

- As we enter the 13th year of the Syrian crisis, the situation not only remains unresolved but increasingly dire. The prolonged conflict, economic downturns, health crises such as COVID-19 and cholera, combined with the [recent seismic disaster](#), have pushed Syrian families and children to the brink as they fight to survive with [90% of the Syrian population currently living below the poverty line](#).
- The need for humanitarian assistance in Syria has reached an all-time high, with [16.7 million people](#) requiring support in 2024, marking the largest figure since the crisis began in 2011.
- Funding shortages have impacted all sectors, with the Humanitarian Response Plan for Syria remaining significantly underfunded at [only 21%](#).
- Syria ranks among the top ten nations globally for the highest number of people facing hunger. The World Food Programme (WFP) estimates that over half of the population, [12.9 million Syrians](#), are currently experiencing hunger in 2024, while another [2.6 million](#) are on the brink of food insecurity.
- The country continues to endure a protection crisis as loss of essential [documentation](#) and [family separations](#) following the earthquake have led to an increase in [child-headed households, child labor, and early marriages](#). In addition, Syria hosts the world's second-largest number of internally displaced persons, [totalling 7.2 million](#), many of whom reside in overcrowded camps.
- The [earthquakes](#) have worsened Syria's dire situation, causing nearly [6,000 deaths and over 12,800 injuries](#), with many families losing their primary earners. This disaster has pushed millions more into inability to meet their very basic needs, highlighting the urgent need for long-term recovery funding and enhanced emergency preparedness.
- Host countries like Jordan and Türkiye are facing [unprecedented levels of need](#) since the crisis began, as they are dealing with increased vulnerabilities, rising poverty, and unemployment. Despite their own economic struggles and limited resources, these governments continue to provide essential public services such as housing, healthcare, legal systems, education, waste management, and WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene). They have been under significant strain, bearing the costs of hosting millions of displaced Syrians for years while also contending with new conflicts and economic challenges in the region.



World Vision Syria Response WASH Coordinator in front of the rehabilitated road that was destroyed by the Syria earthquake. © World Vision Syria Response Partner, ULUSLARARASI INSANI YARDIMLAŞMA DERNEĞİ

2. Area overview

The population in Northwest Syria is 5.1 million, 4.2 million of which are in need of assistance. Among them, 3.6 million are food-insecure, 3.4 million are internally displaced, and 2 million are living in camps. From 2014 to 2023, the cross-border aid delivery mechanism from Türkiye has served as a critical lifeline to people in Northwest Syria. Based on the consent letter dated 13 July 2023, the Government of Syria granted the UN permission to use the Bab al-Hawa border crossing for humanitarian aid delivery into Northwest Syria. This arrangement eliminated the need for a UN Security Council resolution and, since then, the consent letter to deliver aid has been renewed every six months.

The catastrophic earthquake in February 2023 resulted in over 4,500 fatalities in Northwest Syria alone and inflicted extensive damage on infrastructure, leading to mass displacement, crop failures, market disruption, and reduced labor opportunities; the resulting inflation has decreased income and purchasing power.

Additionally, the aftermath of these events has heightened concerns around forced evictions, homelessness, human trafficking, violence, abuse, and exploitation, which led to an increase in internal and external displacements.

A recent Protection Cluster assessment of 259 communities in Northwest Syria revealed limited access to protection services and aid, with 55% of communities reporting no assistance. Another recent assessment conducted by the Education Cluster showed that 54% of schools in the region were affected, with approximately 1,000 schools partially damaged. This has led to an increase in out-of-school children, rising from an estimated 800,000 to 1 million.

The ongoing conflict in the area had already compromised sewage networks due to airstrikes, ground battles, and inadequate infrastructure management. These factors resulted in the destruction of wastewater pipelines, rendering substantial portions of the sewage system inoperable. The earthquake also caused significant damage to vital WASH facilities, including the collapse of water reservoirs, towers, stations, and sanitation systems. A REACH assessment indicated that at least 25% of WASH services in Northwest Syria were damaged.

This exposure to untreated sewage has contributed to the spread of waterborne diseases, including cholera, typhoid, and gastroenteritis; this posed a significant threat to local water sources and public health. The existing WASH infrastructures, already fragile and inadequate, have been further strained by limited funding.

Key challenges and needs specific to the country

- In Northwest Syria, the compounded crises of conflict, earthquake, and funding cuts have created a severe health and nutrition emergency. Nearly 6 million people - mainly children and women - are not receiving essential nutritional assistance; in fact, children comprise a significant 64% of those in dire need. Despite this significant scale of needs, the number of individuals receiving food aid has halved, dropping from 2 million to just 1 million. Healthcare services are in critical condition as they are facing closures and downsizing while there are at least 4,300 active cancer cases in Northwest Syria, many of which require costly treatments in Türkiye.
- The complex emergencies in Northwest Syria have significantly heightened child protection issues which are marked by an increase in child-headed households, child labor, and early marriages following the earthquake. This situation is further worsened by challenges in accessing essential documentation such as birth certificates, which restricts access to vital services and rights. The lack of proper documentation threatens to leave a generation of children without nationality or access to essential services such as education and healthcare. Additionally, the closure of several Women and Girls Safe Spaces due to funding shortages as well as community centres due to security conditions has added to the challenges faced by the affected communities.
- Syria's economic downturn has pushed families into dire straits, with children dropping out of school to face labor or early marriages as survival tactics. Particularly in Northwest Syria, limited services and ongoing violence exacerbate vulnerabilities especially for women and girls at risk of exploitation.

3. Country interventions

Main sectors: Health & Nutrition, WASH, Livelihoods, Protection, and Education

Beneficiary numbers reached per sector during FY24 in this country:



Health & Nutrition: 1,667,000 beneficiaries, including 819,000 children



WASH: 1,400,000 beneficiaries, including 758,000 children



Livelihoods: 58,000 beneficiaries



Protection: 102,000 beneficiaries, including 83,000 children



Education: 353,000 beneficiaries, including 300,000 children

Key WVSR interventions:



Provide psychosocial support sessions.



Establish Emergency Child-Friendly Spaces (ECFs).



Focus comprehensively on preventing sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (PSEAH).



Provide cash assistance.



Distribute hygiene items.



Conduct water trucking.



Rehabilitate WASH facilities.



Support education in formal and non-formal schools.



Train caregivers in positive parenting techniques to support preschool-aged children's learning and development.



Support mobile clinics.



Provide primary and secondary health and nutrition services.



Offer diagnostic and treatment options for communicable diseases (e.g., Cholera).



Provide treatment for non-communicable diseases.



Offer sexual and reproductive health services.



Provide mental health support services.



Identify potential disease outbreaks with pandemic or epidemic risks.

Provide specialized health services for children and women:

- Outpatient and inpatient care for pregnant women, infants, and children.
- Basic and Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (BEmONC, CEmONC).



A child participating in psychological support activities. © World Vision Syria Response Partner, Orange Organisation



World Vision Syria Response during school kits distribution in one of its schools in Syria. © World Vision Syria Response, Zaher Jaber.



World Vision Syria Response conducting a parents meeting. © World Vision Syria Response, Zaher Jaber

Key activities being implemented:

In 2024, World Vision Syria Response continues working in Northern Syria's Idleb and Aleppo (including: Afrin, Maaret Tamsrin, Teftnaz, Azaz, Atareb, Harem, Jisr-Alshougour, Hrim, Ariha, and Jarablus). Through

this year, WWSR reached over 4,242,482 individuals through its various programs, with more than 2,369,657 children.

Sector	Activity	Location
Health & Nutrition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the nutrition cluster's surveillance teams and community-based systems, which have effectively tracked malnutrition rates; this allows for timely interventions. Additionally, implementing key nutrition activities targeting women, infants, and young children. Conducting regular mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) screenings for pregnant and lactating women, as well as children under five. Delivering a range of services including mobile clinic support, primary and secondary health and nutrition services, diagnostic and treatment options for communicable diseases like Cholera, treatment for non-communicable diseases, as well as sexual and reproductive health services. Monitoring potential disease outbreaks, and providing specialized health services for children and women. 	Idleb and Aleppo
WASH 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distributing hygiene items. Conducting water trucking. Rehabilitating WASH facilities. 	Idleb and Aleppo
Livelihoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA), cash assistance is provided to vulnerable families. 	Idleb and Aleppo
Protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing psychosocial support sessions. Establishing Emergency Child-Friendly Spaces (ECFs). Focusing on preventing sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (PSEAH). Offering mental health support services and training caregivers in positive parenting techniques to support preschool-aged children's development. 	Idleb and Aleppo
Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting formal and non-formal schools to ensure continuity in learning, including provision of students and teachers' kits. Enhancing the quality of education by training teachers, introducing innovative teaching methods, and providing digital tools to support the targeted schools. Conducting schools' rehabilitation and providing the targeted schools with the needed furniture in order to provide better learning environments and sustainable access to schools. 	Idleb and Aleppo

4. Security overview

The security situation in Northwest Syria, particularly in Idleb, Afrin, and Azaz, remains volatile and complex as of mid-2024.

In Idleb, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) which is the dominant force faces significant internal and external pressures. Protests have erupted against HTS's harsh rule and poor economic conditions, exacerbated by the collapse of the Turkish lira and ongoing GoS

bombardments. The Syrian government, along with its Russian allies, continues to target the region with drone strikes and artillery shelling, contributing to the instability and civilian suffering.

Afrin, which is controlled by the Turkish-backed Syrian National Army (SNA), has seen frequent clashes and shelling particularly involving Kurdish YPG forces. The YPG, considered by Türkiye to be linked to the PKK, regularly targets SNA-held areas. Turkish forces have responded with artillery strikes. The region also suffers from significant internal displacement, with a large proportion of the population being internally displaced persons (IDPs) from other parts of Syria.

Similarly under SNA control, Azaz experiences periodic violence, including clashes with Kurdish forces and other militant groups. The city's demographic is predominantly IDPs, which contributes to a tense and precarious security situation. The ongoing conflict and lack of stable governance have made life particularly challenging for civilians in this area.

Overall, Northwest Syria remains a patchwork of competing factions and interests, with the humanitarian situation further strained by economic woes and limited aid access. The region continues to be a flashpoint for broader regional and international conflicts.



Inside of one of the World Vision Syria Response supported medical centres in Syria. © World Vision Syria Response Partner, Syrian Expatriate Medical Association

5. Main advocacy messages:

- Call for unwavering, unconditional, and unrestricted humanitarian access to Northwest Syria, stressing the critical importance of ensuring a continuous flow of aid into the region.
- Promptly increase investment in primary healthcare services, emphasizing the restoration of full functionality and improved accessibility, particularly for vulnerable groups such as children, women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.
- Promptly restore and increase funding for food assistance, recognizing that this aid is a fundamental human right and is essential for combating rising food insecurity, malnutrition, and child mortality.
- Focus on facilitating access to legal aid and support for obtaining essential documentation, such as birth certificates, to prevent the emergence of a stateless generation.
- Designate dedicated funds specifically for the improvement and reconstruction of schools and educational facilities.
- Enhance integration across sectors within the education system, particularly by incorporating mental health and psychosocial support for children, teachers, and caregivers, focusing on the post-earthquake context and ongoing crisis.
- Invest in and restore sustainable water and sanitation infrastructure in affected areas, ensuring the availability and continuous operation of clean water and adequate sanitation facilities. This does not only include repairing damaged infrastructures but also supporting the running costs for long-term functionality and maintenance.
- Boost investment in solar power and clean energy infrastructure to diminish dependence on fuel-based energy sources. Aim to promote local community resilience, establish cost recovery mechanisms, and reduce the environmental impact.

6. Appendix:

Reports and publications:

- Advocacy brief: [“Beyond the Rubble: The Impact of the Earthquake on Children in Northwest Syria One Year Later”](#)
- Report: [“Lost and Alone: Addressing the Crisis of Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Post-Earthquakes Northwest Syria and Southern Türkiye”](#)
- Advocacy brief: [“Spotlight on Nutrition, Food Security and Climate Change in Syria and The Host Countries of Lebanon, Türkiye, Jordan and Iraq”](#)