



Key Figures

- 281,836**
Treatment courses provided
- 1,250**
Trauma cases delivered
- 2,887**
Healthcare providers trained
- 21,082**
Outpatient consultations provided
- 56,14**
Tonnes of health supplies delivered
- 93.2 %** of sentinel sites submitted weekly disease surveillance reports
- 95%** of disease alerts were responded to within 72 hours



WHO Regional Director, WHO Representative, and the Minister of Health attended the official inauguration of the burns care unit at Al-Razi Hospital in Aleppo

Top four morbidities reported by Early Warning Alert and Response System (EWARS & EWARN)

- Influenza-like illness (ILI)
248,717 (62%)
- Acute Diarrhea (AD)
130,283 (33%)
- Leishmania
9,261 (2%)

Highlights

- During the week of 12th of May, Dr Hanan Balkhy, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, conducted her first official visit to Syria. Dr Balkhy visited the country to gain a better understanding of the situation, the needs, and the challenges facing WHO’s humanitarian work on the ground. Over the course of her 5-day visit, she met with the WHO team, health partners, beneficiaries, and key Syrian officials and witnessed firsthand the challenges the health system and the people are facing, as well as the impact of WHO’s work on the ground.
- On 13 May, a ceremony was held in Damascus with His Excellency the Minister of Health and the Regional Director, for the signing of a four-year Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS). The CCS outlines and strengthens WHO’s long-standing partnership with the Syrian Ministry of Health (MoH), and sets the path forward.
- On 22 May, WHO, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and H.E. Mr Peter Krois, Ambassador of Austria to Syria, co-hosted a side event ahead of the Brussels VIII Conference to support the future of Syria and the region. The event was titled “My Health, My Right: Who is Left Behind in Syria?” The discussion focused on the health challenges and the human cost of underfunding.

Security and Access Situation

- The security situation within WHO Syria's area of operations remained unstable in several hotspots, including northeast (Al Hassakeh, Ar-Raqqa, and Deir-ez-Zor), Dara'a, Quneitra, Aleppo, Idleb, Lattakia, Hama, and Homs.
- Hostilities continue in rural areas of NES, causing instability and security threatening both civilian populations and security forces. Similar to the previous month, ISIL attacks average around 1 attack per day and remain elevated in comparison with the same time in 2023. To date, UN activities have not been directly affected.
- In Deir-ez-Zor (DeZ), the number of security incidents has increased, leading to an unstable security situation. During May, several locations in Al Mayadin and Abu Kamal cities, Ayyash village, and Al Qosour neighborhood in Deir-ez-Zor city were targeted, resulting in several civilian casualties. Clashes persist in Deir-ez-Zor, with ongoing small-scale fire attacks and shelling on the East Bank of the Euphrates. Additionally, the UN Hub in DeZ City continues to be affected by conflict, with work-from-home modalities intermittently activated when necessary.
- On 9 May, WHO was notified that its access to Al Hol Camp in Al Hassakeh Governorate had been revoked by the Camp Administration as a result of the suspension of referrals support. WHO utilized public and private channels to raise awareness that its activities in the camp extend far beyond support to secondary health care referrals, that it continues to work diligently to mobilize resources to resume referral support, and to advocate for the restoration of access to enable the agency to fulfill its public health mandate.

Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI)

- Different committees held their regular meetings, including the GAVI, Vaccine Alliance Coordination Committee, Certification Committee (NCC), Cold Polio Committee, Environment Surveillance Committee, and Measles Committee.
- Multiple training workshops for rotavirus surveillance were conducted in various governorates, including Damascus, Aleppo, Deir-ez-Zor, Hama, and Lattakia.

Primary Health Care (PHC) and Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

- With WHO support, 300 health workers from the Directorate of Health (DoH) of Damascus, Rural Damascus, Homs, Hama, Tartous, Lattakia, Aleppo, Quneitra, and As-Sweida received training in various areas, including patient safety, elderly care at home, tobacco cessation services, oral health integrated services in reproductive health interventions, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) risk approach and management, cancer registry, primary health care (PHC) quality assurance, and accreditation.
- To mark 2024 World No Tobacco Day, the Syrian Ministry of Health, in coordination with WHO organized an exhibition of paintings and sketches created by children. The theme of the exhibition was "Protecting children from tobacco industry interference". The event was attended by the National Committee on Tobacco Control and various stakeholders, school children performed a show, and an artwork highlighted the harmful effects of tobacco products on health.

Secondary Health Care (SHC)

- WHO supported the training of 75 health workers, health professionals, and infection, prevention, and control (IPC) staff from public hospitals in Damascus on patient safety, quality assurance, hospital resilience, preparedness, and response planning.
- WHO dispatched
 - Life-saving medicines, surgical medication, and 58 pieces of medical equipment to hospitals under the MoH and the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE).
 - IPC supplies, including environmental cleaning solutions, disinfection indicators, and personal protective equipment (PPE), to public hospitals in Damascus, Idleb, and NES.

Trauma Care

- WHO provided and installed three oxygen-generating stations in Hama National Hospital, Al Asad Hospital in Deir-ez-Zor, and Al Hafeh Hospital in Lattakia, as part of its continued effort to enhance health systems in crisis-affected areas.

These oxygen generators will support the lives of hundreds of critically ill patients, including those with cardiac and respiratory conditions, and those in need of intensive care.

- WHO supported a training for 100 health workers from the Ministry of Health (MoH), specialized in physical rehabilitation and on disability-related subjects through four training workshops at the Center for Artificial Limbs and Physical Rehabilitation in Damascus.

Nutrition

- A total of 72,321 children under the age of five were screened for malnutrition across 983 health centers.
- A total of 2,076 cases of acute malnutrition were identified, including cases of 448 severe acute malnutrition (SAM) and 1,628 moderate acute malnutrition cases (MAM).

Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support (MHPSS)

In partnership with 2 local non-governmental organizations (NGOs):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8,136 different MHPSS services were provided, including recreational activities and vocational training. - 962 beneficiaries received GBV awareness sessions. - 919 beneficiaries received MHPSS awareness sessions.
Primary health centers (PHC), outpatient clinics, and specialized facilities provided:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 6,402 psychotropic medication treatment courses. - 21,061 mhGAP and specialized consultations at the PHC level. - 24,255 basic psychosocial support services and 461 therapeutic psychological interventions - 430 therapeutic psychological interventions were delivered, with 11 cases referred to psychiatrists.

Tuberculosis (TB) & HIV

- In cooperation with MoH and the National AIDS Program (NAP), WHO organized a psychosocial support session for people living with HIV (PLHIV) to address their needs and the challenges they face during the treatment.
- WHO organized a two-day workshop for the Family Planning NGO. The workshop was attended by 25 community health workers to prepare for their project of supporting people living with HIV together. The project will be implemented with the support of WHO and the national AIDS program.
- WHO facilitated an online meeting with its Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO) and NAP to discuss national guidelines for diagnostic tools in Syria.

Health Systems Strengthening

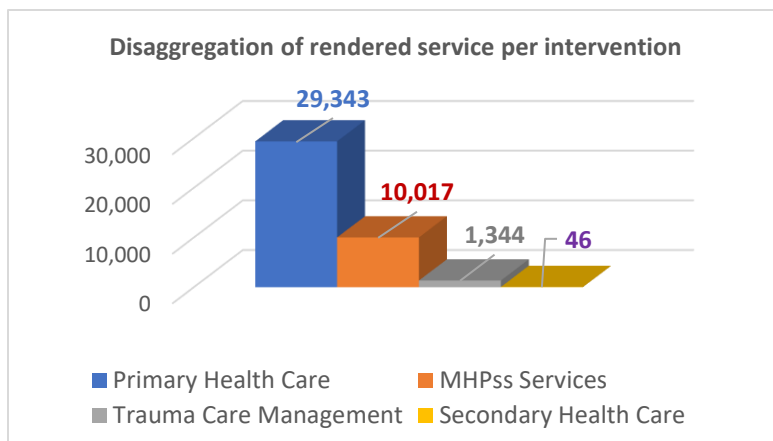
- WHO supported the MoH in completing the cost assessment of the Essential Health Service Package in Syria. A WHO consultant finalized the package and shared the findings with all relevant stakeholders. The report will be crucial for the discussions regarding the health benefit package and the efforts to achieve universal health coverage in Syria.

Preventing and Responding to Sexual Misconduct (PRS)

- The PRS team in Syria carried on its activities in training, and sensitization of partners and personnel.
- During her visit to Syria, WHO's Regional Director met with the PRS staff and Country Coordinator and signed the PRS pledge.
- Additionally WHO initiated engagement with the national health sector by conducting an introductory session for 35 health sector partners and circulating a tip sheet to support them in mainstreaming PRS in their health activities.
- A successful workshop was held with 35 participants from the MoH and other key ministries. The focus was on developing PRS policies. The meeting involved the participation of the MoH PRS focal point, the Deputy Minister of Health, as well as the Deputy Minister of Justice, and an exchange of ideas, discussion of issues, and making recommendations for the path forward. A promotional video, to showcase the work of the PRS team in Syria was also circulated (<https://youtu.be/ZGwRmWmbtk>).

Community Engagement (NGOs)

- 2 WHO implementing partners operated 1 static medical point, 2 medical mobile teams, and 1 community well-being center in Lattakia and Damascus providing primary, secondary, and trauma care, as well as MHPSS services to underserved populations.
- A total of 40,750 healthcare services were supported during the reporting period. Further breakdown is shown in the chart to the right.



National Health Sector Coordination

- In May, the Health Sector contributed to the preparation of an overview of the impact of sanctions in Syria.
- Additionally, the Health Sector contributed to high-level meetings and documents, including:
 - Brussels VIII Conference Syria and Region, including the impact of underfunding and a side event organized by WHO and UNFPA and co-hosted by the government of Austria.
 - WoS Health cluster information management deliverables.
 - WHO Syria presentation for the donors' briefing (16 May 2024)
 - 2023 Whole of Syria Health Sector Annual Highlights Snapshot
- Health Sector, together with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), updated the key findings and recommendations of the context-sensitivity in the Syrian health sector profile.

WHO Syria Sub-Offices

<p>Aleppo Hub</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Regional Director, WHO Representative for Syria, and the Minister of Health attended the official inauguration of the burns care unit at Al Razi Hospital. This unit, which was newly renovated and equipped by WHO, with the support of Japan, is the only specialized unit in northern Syria. It can now attend to cases from Aleppo, Idleb, Ar-Raqaa, Deir-ez-Zor, and Al-Hassakeh. • According to the education sector, 12,000 students traveled to Aleppo City from the hard-to-reach areas on 20 May 2024, for the final national exams. WHO in coordination with the Directorate of Health provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3,270 medical consultations ○ 37 emergency response ○ 2,643 treatment courses ○ 3,026 group psychological interventions ○ 455 recreational activities ○ 43 individual psychological counseling sessions • WHO conducted 4 workshops for community health workers to enhance their skills in addressing major health risks in the areas affected by the earthquake.
<p>Lattakia Hub</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70 health workers from Lattakia and Tartous received training covering various interventions including Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI), Early Warning Alert and Response (EWARS), and strengthening the national capacity on infection prevention and control (IPC) and quality assurance standards at the primary health centers (PHC). • WHO supported one implementing partner to reach 54,367 beneficiaries with different services, including primary and secondary health services, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), and physical consultations for people with disabilities. • WHO delivered 29,500 kilograms of medicines, medical supplies, and equipment to public health facilities in Lattakia and Tartous.

Homs Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHO supported one implementing partner working in the Sqelbiyah district in Hama, to deliver 5,173 medical consultations and 2,860 MHPSS services. • On 22 May, WHO organized the Health Sub Sector meeting in Hama governorate, which included an update on the current mapping of health services and initiating mapping for the provision of health services for people with disabilities. • Additionally, on 27 May, the Idleb Health Sub Sector meeting included updating the current mapping of health services. • WHO participated in an inter-sector assessment coordination mission to Jeb Ej-Jarah sub-district in Homs to assess the health situation on the ground.
Deir-ez-Zor Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHO supplied the DoH and Al-Assad Hospital with four NCD basic kits, including glucagon hypo kits. • Due to the recent security developments in Deir-ez-Zor and the increase in traumatic injuries, WHO coordinated plans to establish emergency points linking ambulance services to hospitals in high-risk and hard-to-reach areas, such as in the villages of Mahkan and Ashara. This collaborative initiative with the Syria Pulse Association aims to improve coverage within the health services map.
Northeast Syria (NES) - Qamishli Hub	<p><u>EPI</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On 5 May, WHO conducted a field visit to Al-Hol camp to further discuss the implementation of the Big Catch-up vaccination activity. • WHO conducted four awareness sessions at Al-Hol camp for 43 healthcare workers from the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the Kurdish Red Cross (KRC). Posters and brochures were distributed to enhance the implementation of the BCU. • Additionally, on 6 May, WHO organized a field visit to Al Hassakeh camps (Al-Areasha, Talaee, and Tweina) to conduct the same assessment of the Big Catch-up (BCU) activity. <p><u>Camps:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHO provided technical support to Al Hol camp administration and the operation desk to streamline the external referral process in the absence of a clear referral pathway and supporting partners. WHO closely monitored and documented the impact of the suspension of external referrals at the camp level. • WHO conducted 50 in-depth interviews with camp residents, including parents, healthcare workers, and community leaders, as part of a qualitative survey on immunization barriers. <p><u>Other humanitarian response activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On 21 May, WHO conducted a mission to Al-Hassakeh and met with the DoH to discuss cross-cutting issues and ongoing WHO activities • WHO provided guidance on managing exam stress to education sector partners and caregivers concerning the final national exams, emphasizing coping strategies. • WHO distributed 9 tonnes of medical supplies to Al Hassakeh DoH and health partners. • Water quality monitoring was carried out in more than 100 locations in NES. A total of 531 water samples were tested where 6 samples of bacterial contamination were detected. <p><u>Sub National Health Sector Coordination Qamishli/NES:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On 30 May, WHO held the NES (Raqa/Al Hassakeh) sub-national health sector coordination meeting, and also convened the MHPSS national technical working group meeting on improving the emergency response in NES. • WHO presented technical updates on WHO activities in Al Hol, Roj, Areasha, and NES camps coordination meetings. • WHO worked with the Whole of Syria (WoS) and Northeast Syria (NES) health working group to address issues related to the humanitarian access to NES camps by health sector partners, including continuity of services, referrals, as well as water quality monitoring.

Situation Update

- The security situation in northwest Syria has remained unstable with an increase of hostilities, which continue to endanger civilians in northwest Syria, including women and children.
- Since the beginning of 2024, at least 17 people, including six children, were killed by hostilities, and 75 others were injured, including 27 children and nine women according to data provided by local health authorities.
- 102 flooding incidents affected nearly 100 IDP sites, damaging more than 4,100 tents. The UN and partners have responded to 78 IDP sites by distributing emergency items. NGOs will address the remaining gaps. Additionally, humanitarian partners are preparing for extreme heatwaves impacting over 2 million people in crowded northwest camps.

Northwest Syria Response

- Since January 2024, WHO has delivered 45 truckloads of emergency kits and essential medicines to northwest Syria. In addition, WHO continues to conduct cross-border missions into northwest Syria, averaging two missions per week.
- The lack of funding presents an ongoing challenge for the sustained provision of health care services. Many health facilities are being forced to downsize operations, close departments or reduce working hours. Nearly 160 health facilities, including 46 hospitals, will be forced to suspend operations by the end of June if additional funding is not secured. The Health Cluster estimates that if the funding situation continues, 50% of all functional health facilities in



The maternity ward at Moaz Abu Madhi Maternity and Child Hospital remains empty

northwest Syria will fully or partially suspend operations by December 2024.

- Moaz Abu Madhi Maternity and Child Hospital had to shut down in January 2024 due to the lack of funds to continue operations. It is one of the oldest hospitals in Azaz; located in an area with the largest concentration of displaced people in the northern countryside of Aleppo, serving a catchment population of 100,000 people.

Responding to a scabies outbreak with support from the European Commission Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)

- A comprehensive scabies community survey exercise carried out by WHO in December 2023, revealed that a significant number of camps and communities had a high prevalence of scabies lesions that surpassed the WHO-recommended 10% community transmission threshold. WHO plans to implement a large-scale permethrin-based mass drug administration for over 180,000 people in 70 camps and 7 communities that are considered the most affected with the financial support of EUR 450,000 from the European Union Humanitarian Aid.
- In addition, community health workers and hygiene promoters will be trained and equipped to conduct clinical screenings and administer necessary medications. In parallel, campaigns to raise awareness about how to prevent scabies will also be conducted.

Harmonized health facilities assessment

- In May, the Harmonized Health Facilities Assessment (HHFA) collected primary data from 360 health facilities. This ongoing exercise, which began in February, aims to support population-based planning for health needs and verify the self-reported data on HeRAMS. Once completed, WHO will be able to validate the accuracy of existing data from The Health Resources and Services Availability Monitoring System (HeRAMS), 4Ws, and other WHO and Health Cluster platforms.

Standardizing pharmaceutical lists for health facilities

- A consultative scientific workshop was held with 26 medical specialists to standardize the pharmaceutical

list, aiming to select the most suitable medications to meet the populations' healthcare needs.

Capacity building efforts

- In collaboration with WHO Health Emergencies Programme's Health Information and Risk Management unit at WHO EMRO, WHO Gaziantep Field Presence Office held a 3-day physical training for 19 experts in surveillance and disease outbreak response. Prior to the training, about 106 sites were identified to be used as open sources for epidemic events.

- WHO organized a workshop on prosthetic and orthotic care in order to pinpoint issues and obstacles in providing of prosthetics and orthotic services in northwest Syria. The objective was to strengthen collective efforts to improve accessibility for those in need of these services.

Useful links

[HeRAMS public hospitals](#)

[HeRAMS public health centres](#)

[WHO-Syria Summary of HRP indicators reported through the 4Ws](#)

[WoS key performance indicators](#)

[MHPSS dashboard](#)

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