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Funding for Syrians in crisis

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Zaatari Refugee Camp in Jordan. Photo credit: Samantha Crago/GHA

At least 2.5 million Syrians are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance as brutal violence engulfs their strife-torn homeland. More than 310,000 people, many of them women and children, have fled to neighboring countries, arriving with little more than desperation.

Within Syria, even everyday chores have become life threatening; people standing in line for bread can be attacked. More than 1.2 million people have been displaced from their homes.

Basic needs are numerous and pressing for those inside Syria as well as those who have escaped its borders: food, water, sanitation, shelter, and emergency medical assistance. Winter's approach is complicating matters further, as heat, warm clothes, and related necessities will be required.

Additionally, UNICEF, Save the Children, and other humanitarian organizations have expressed alarm about the special needs of children who will suffer particularly acute emotional trauma without support systems such as schools.

Bob LaPrade, Head of Emergency Response for [Save the Children](#), tells MediaGlobal: "I've just returned from a refugee camp in Jordan, where I met dozens of Syrian children who were forced to leave their homes, their schools, their communities and, in many cases, had lost a family member in this violent conflict."

The United Nations estimates that at least \$347 million is required for relief within Syria. Nearly \$500 million will be required for refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, and Iraq. The number of people in need has more

than tripled in three months and continues to increase as 1000 refugees cross Syria's borders daily. The UN anticipates refugees will total 700,000 by year-end. For the latest UN data, [click here](#).

Funding appeals are underway but still far from their goals, according to [a report](#) issued by [Global Humanitarian Assistance \(GHA\)](#), which provides impartial access to data and information regarding humanitarian aid. The two largest, The Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan and The Regional Refugee Response Plan, both overseen by the UN, are both well short of current known needs.

Individual NGOs have sprung into action. Save the Children, International Rescue Committee, Islamic Relief and others are focused on assisting refugees, according to the GHA. The Red Cross and the Red Crescent are supporting the Syrian Arab Red Crescent's efforts within Syria.

According to the GHA report, relief efforts have been hampered not only by under-funding but also by an international humanitarian law, which requires that governments invite external agencies to provide assistance. Since Syria has not extended such an invitation, the UN is unable to operate there.

As large-scale human rights violations increase inside Syria, its people and its neighbors face desperate conditions. Humanitarian assistance is needed not only to relieve immediate human suffering but also to prevent trauma that may intensify the conflict for years to come.

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