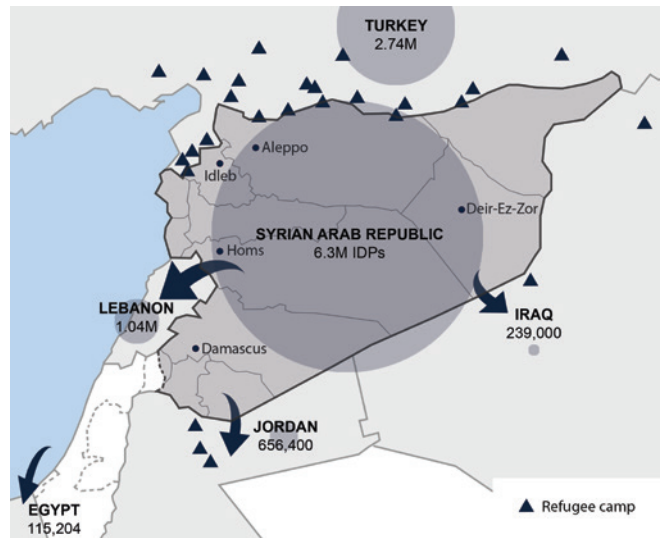


OVERVIEW

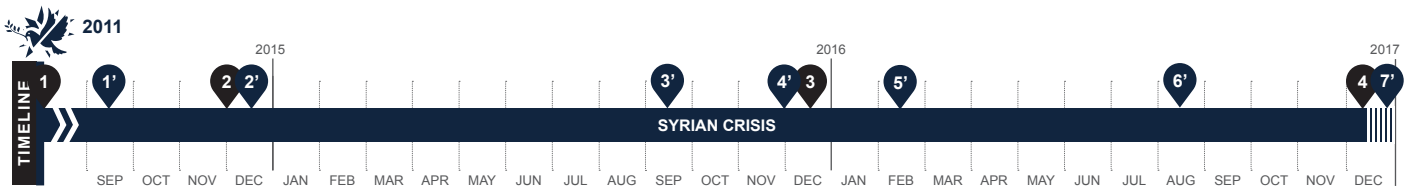
# WHOLE OF SYRIA 2014-2016 / CONFLICT

<b>CRISIS</b>	<b>Conflict, 2011 onwards</b>
<b>TOTAL PEOPLE AFFECTED<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>22.3 million</b>
<b>SYRIAN REFUGEES</b>	<b>6.2 million</b> (total estimated <sup>2</sup> ). 4.8 million registered in neighbouring countries <sup>3</sup> . 303,000 registered elsewhere <sup>4</sup> .
<b>PEOPLE IN NEED WITHIN SYRIA<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>13.5 million</b>
<b>BENEFICIARIES OF THE SHELTER-NFI SECTOR (2015-16)<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>770,400</b> people (Shelter). <b>12.7 million</b> people (NFIs).



Numbers of refugees and IDPs as a result of the Syrian conflict<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> For this overview, see all notes on page 125.



- 1** Mar 2011: Syria Crisis begins; **first 5,000 refugees** (to Lebanon).
- 2** Dec 2014: **3.8 million registered refugees**.
- 3** Dec 2015: **Over 1 million Syrians** arrive in Europe during the year.
- 4** Dec 2016: 3RP for 2017-2018 launched. **4,810,710 registered Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries**.
- 1'** Sep 2014: **Whole of Syria (WoS) Approach** launched.
- 2'** Dec 2014: **12.2 million people in need**.
- 3'** Sep 2015: **13.5 million people in need** (4.5 million in hard-to-reach or besieged areas).
- 4'** Dec 2015: **Humanitarian Response Plan 2016** launched.
- 5'** Feb 2016: **First "cessation of hostilities" agreement**.
- 6'** Aug 2016: **Second "cessation of hostilities" breaks down** after a few days.
- 7'** Dec 2016: **2017 Syria Humanitarian Needs Overview** released. **13.5 million people in need**.

### KEY SHELTER APPROACHES ACROSS COUNTRIES

- **Emergency tents / emergency shelter kits** (plastic sheeting, poles, fixings, tools).
- **Upgraded shelters in camps** (concrete slabs, kitchens, water and sanitation units per family, prefabricated caravans).
- **Sealing off kits** for shelters and unfinished and abandoned buildings, as part of an emergency response, for interim shelter improvements or as part of climatization packages.
- **Climatization packages** for winter and summer, often with complementary shelter and NFI items and materials.
- **Repair, rehabilitation or "durable upgrades"** of inadequate, unsafe or substandard buildings, often with negotiated tenancy agreements.
- **Cash-for-Rent** schemes.

### For shelter projects in the region, see:

- A.16 and A.17 in SP2011-12, and A.31 in SP2015-16: Lebanon, on shelter repairs/upgrades and sealing off.
- A.9 in SP2013-14: Iraq, on cash/voucher programmes for shelter maintenance.
- A.35 in SP2015-16: Iraq, on accessibility upgrades in camps.
- A.10 in SP2013-14: Jordan, on transitional shelter in camps.
- A.11 in SP2013-14: Jordan, on upgrading of unfinished buildings used as refugee rental stock.
- A.12 in SP2013-14: Jordan, on tent recycling projects in camps.
- A.13 in SP2013-14: Lebanon, on sealing off kits.
- A.14 in SP2013-14: Lebanon, on multisector, mixed-modality interventions.
- A.15 in SP2013-14: Lebanon, on conversion of buildings into collective centres.
- A.32 in SP2015-16: Lebanon, on fire retardant insulation kits in informal settlements.
- A.30 in SP2015-16: Syrian Arab Republic, on repairs and winterization of damaged houses.



Given the very different operating environments, different responses took place in different countries. To promote some consistency, the Whole of Syria approach was adopted in 2013. In this picture we see assessment for a housing repair project within Syria.

### THE SITUATION IN THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

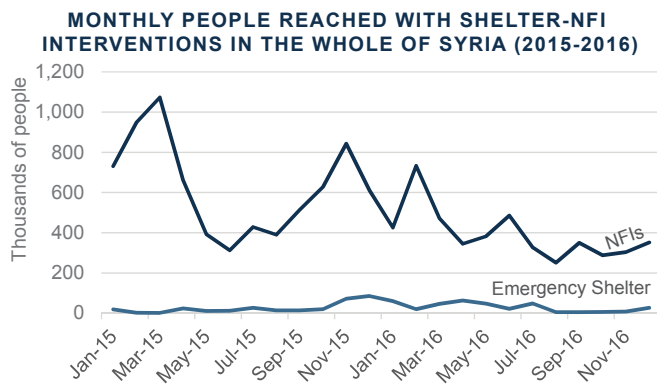
- In 2016, the Syrian population remained the largest provider of shelter support, with **27% of households hosting** people in need in their homes.
- **Multiple and temporary displacements** were frequent. 50% of IDPs arrived in camps in 2015 from another location of displacement.
- **3,030 collective centres** (schools, public buildings, mosques, etc.) have been established in the country.
- **Camps and collective centres were the last resort** for the population, in tented camps (primarily self-settled), collective centres and makeshift settlements. These typically hosted the most vulnerable IDPs (1.1 million people), as all other alternatives had been exhausted. IDPs tended to move out once other options arose.
- 1.2 million housing units have been damaged and 400,000 destroyed. There has been a **28% increase in damage to housing stock since 2014<sup>8</sup>**.
- The high level of damage sustained by residential infrastructure forced populations to reside in **substandard, inadequate and unsafe shelter**, without access to basic amenities such as electricity, water and latrines, and often without windows and doors. Overcrowding (and shelters housing multiple families) increased **protection risks** significantly.
- **Lack of sites and buildings suitable for transitional shelter** solutions that can be implemented by affected populations themselves.
- **Restricted admission to neighbouring countries** left 170,000 people stranded near borders.

For an overview of the shelter situation and response up to 2014, see overview A.8 in *Shelter Projects 2013-2014*.

The challenges faced in accessing people in need across the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria) remained high, six years after the start of the crisis. Increased targeting of civilian infrastructure and humanitarian convoys and workers reduced the ability to provide assistance to populations in greatest need. **Widespread violations and abuses** left populations with little protection, while **bureaucratic and administrative barriers** hindered timely and effective interventions. The scale and length of the crisis resulted in a convergence of severe needs across sectors, requiring an urgent multisectoral response.

To counter some of these huge challenges, **the Whole of Syria Approach (WoS) was developed** in 2013, to coordinate humanitarian actors working inside the country with those operational from neighbouring countries and engaged in cross-border assistance. It also sought to support increased access, particularly to besieged and hard-to-reach areas, and to enable the articulation of protection concerns within the country, through three operational hubs (in Syria, Turkey, Jordan). **Focus on coordination and information management** at sector/cluster level, across hubs and field locations, along with joint analysis, has reduced duplication, inconsistencies, and gaps in services. From January to August 2016, 1.9 million people were accessed in hard-to-reach locations with multisectoral humanitarian assistance (food security, livelihoods, shelter, NFI, CCCM and nutrition), for at least one month, through **a combination of cross-line, cross-border and air-drop operations**.

Simultaneously, the 4.8 million Syrian refugees that were residing in the neighbouring countries of Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt, were requiring ongoing assistance. As their displacement was prolonged, **host systems, services and communities went under increasing pressure**; inflated rents, increased prices for consumer goods and heightened competition for scarce jobs in struggling economies, all led to growing social tension. These countries also needed stabilization and resilience-building, as a mid- to long-term solution, covered under the 3RP (Refugee and Resilience Response Plan).



### SHELTER-NFI RESPONSE IN SYRIA

A primary challenge in Syria resulted from the **shifting conflict and local power dynamics**, which led to changes in security and access contexts from one period to the next. This impacted the ability of agencies to effectively provide assistance in a sustained manner, or to respond to sudden and unpredictable displacement. Complex formal requirements and administrative procedures further limited the ability to operate, and had repercussions on scale, scope and timeliness of interventions<sup>13</sup>. Additionally, shelter programmes require consistent access to sites over a longer period in order to ensure effectiveness, but this was hindered by the **limited number of NGOs** – with constrained operational capacity. Agencies had to adopt a variety of working methodologies, from partnering closely with local organizations, to **integrating shelter programmes** closely with protection, education or hygiene-promotion activities.

The use of shelter construction activities as an opportunity for skills-building and training supported affected families by offering a possible source of income, at a time when unemployment had exceeded 50% and the poverty rate was estimated at 85%<sup>14</sup>. Due to the scale of needs and constrained access in many locations, **prioritizing assistance was necessary** – for example, targeting severely damaged houses for winterization repairs, or tailoring assistance to particularly vulnerable groups (such as child-headed households, Palestinian refugees and the elderly). This needed a joint approach, with the **involvement of all stakeholders, to conduct structured assessments**, which form a key part of the Whole of Syria approach.

The Shelter-NFI Sector in Syria<sup>15</sup> took a dual approach, by **addressing emergency needs while promoting household and community resilience** amongst displaced, hosting and non-displaced populations. This evolved, since the start of the crisis, from distribution of shelter material (as part of a core relief package), to improving collective shelters and into upgrading unfinished private buildings, in various stages of completion.

Throughout 2016, the Shelter Sector focused on **more durable solutions**, by supporting owners and tenants to rehabilitate the premises to achieve adequate shelter, targeting houses with minor damage in beneficiaries' places of origin, while restoring main services and utilities in neighbourhoods for the benefit of the wider community.

In parallel, the Shelter Sector continued to make provisions for **contingency planning and emergency response**, through tents and kits. Additional areas of the response included strengthening awareness among affected communities of Housing, Land and Property rights through awareness sessions, and supporting ongoing capacity development to enhance governmental response to the IDP crisis<sup>16</sup>.



In Lebanon there was a no camp policy, and some families settled in temporary structures, often built with salvaged, improvised, materials.

A Shelter Technical Working Group (based in Gaziantep, Turkey), was established in late 2015 to develop technical designs, standard operating procedures and improve coordination around shelter programming.

### SITUATION IN LEBANON (1.04M refugees)

- **Lebanon is extremely diverse**, religiously, environmentally and politically. The country's socio-political dynamics are complex and fragile, tensions between communities led to polarized ideological and political views, and remained high since the last civil war. The relationships with its neighbours, Syria and Israel, are equally complex.
- Despite being an upper middle-income country, **a noticeable proportion of the population lives in poverty**. Community vulnerabilities were further compounded by the State's inability to provide blanket cover of basic resources and services evenly across the country.
- Limited government housing-development policies, lack of affordable housing supply and market regulations, and real estate speculation resulted in an **ongoing housing crisis for the past few decades**.
- The large influx of refugees increased rental prices and **saturated the limited market of adequate and affordable shelters**, compounded by the absence of formal camps and the wide dispersal of displaced persons. This resulted in a **large proportion residing in substandard or overcrowded conditions**, such as garages, work-sites, unfinished buildings, informal settlements and collective shelters, often lacking basic services, protection from the climate and security of tenure.
- 80% of the displaced population was living in **urban areas**, as of 2016. The informal rental market offers little protection for vulnerable tenants in these areas.
- In 2016, there was a 13% increase in the number of **informal settlements**<sup>9</sup>.
- **Other groups who needed shelter assistance** were: vulnerable Lebanese, Lebanese returnees from Syria and Palestinian Refugees, both from Syria and from Lebanon. The latter hosted most of those from Syria in their camps and adjacent areas. Conditions in camps were typically overcrowded and lacked adequate shelter and infrastructure. The remaining Palestinian refugees settled in areas inhabited by impoverished and vulnerable Lebanese communities, with limited service provision.



Almost one in three people in Lebanon in 2016 was displaced from Syria or was a Palestinian refugee<sup>17</sup>. The significant increase in population (37% since the Syria crisis began) burdened existing service provision, infrastructural systems (such as energy and water) and household economies. The most vulnerable Lebanese also started requiring support, as competition for low-cost housing drove rent prices higher. Furthermore, this situation posed a risk to exacerbate existing social tensions within the country's fragile context.

#### SHELTER-NFI RESPONSE IN LEBANON

An integrated stabilization and humanitarian approach was developed, to reach a broader scope of vulnerable individuals and institutions in need of support, with significant measures for capacity development of institutions and national organizations<sup>18</sup>.

The Shelter Sector aimed to ensure access to adequate shelter, through maintaining or improving shelter standards, improving living conditions within temporary settlements and poor urban areas characterized by large populations of displaced and vulnerable groups, and ensuring public and private institutions were aware of (and responsive to) the shelter situation of these groups. This was undertaken through:

- **Minor repairs or enhancement** to shelters, apartments and houses to meet minimum standards, including prevention and preparedness measures (insulation, fire protection kits, raising of floors).
- **Effectively combined winterization support** for both household items and shelter insulation and weatherproofing, including identification of alternative fuel and stove / heating sources.
- **Cash-for-Rent schemes** to encourage selection of adequate shelter befitting household size.
- **Shelter rehabilitation** in exchange for affordable and secure occupancy.
- Assisting households living in makeshift shelters and informal settlements to **weatherproof shelters and protect against other risks**, to ensure minimum humanitarian standards at settlement level. This included water and sanitation upgrades, drainage, levelling and improving streets and paths, upgrading water points and soakaway pits, and decommissioning defunct latrines.



*In Lebanon, the shelter strategy included minor repairs and rental assistance for those who could find buildings to live in, and water and sanitation upgrades, drainage and site improvements for families living in temporary shelters. Some of these were in urban areas (including Beirut, Mount Lebanon and Tripoli), while others in more rural or peri-urban ones (such as in the Bekaa). As the crisis continued, agencies began to make direct repairs of shelters (with negotiated lease agreements) in urban and rural areas.*

- Supporting neighbourhoods and vulnerable communities with **shelter and infrastructure projects, through holistic and innovative approaches** that aim to strengthen social cohesion and dialogue. This could be achieved through site-level improvements, upgrading and maintaining little-used buildings as collective centres, establishing Collective Site Management and Coordination structures or neighbourhood committees, or conducting community training on referral systems, conflict mitigation and Housing, Land and Property rights.
- **Enhancing the technical capacity of local institutions** to participate in and support shelter assistance activities.



In Jordan, 83% of Syrian refugees were living outside of camp. However 120,000 people were sheltered in Azraq and Za'atari refugee camps.

#### SITUATION IN JORDAN (654,400 refugees)

- 120,000 people were living in the **two refugee camps of Azraq and Za'atari**, with another 10,000 people in other camps, as of 2016.
- **83% of Syrian refugees were living outside of camp settings**, with the areas containing the highest proportion of Syrian refugees characterized by severe vulnerability.
- **17% increase in the cost of rent** and higher prices for consumer goods impacted the host population as well. **Overstretching of public services and competition for jobs** compounded growing resentment and alienation.
- **Lack of housing:** 91,300 housing units were required in Jordan in 2015 to meet demand from refugees and migrant workers, compared to an estimated annual requirement for 32,000 units<sup>10</sup>.

#### SHELTER RESPONSE IN JORDAN

Taking a similar approach to Lebanon, **Jordan evolved its response to the refugee influx into a resilience-based comprehensive framework**, that tied in directly to mid- and long-term national and governorate-level development plans. It aimed to address the key issues facing the estimated 1.4 million Syrians residing in Jordan, of whom 750,000 had already been living there before the crisis. However, as the crisis prolonged and return to Syria was not possible soon, **the burden on social structures, public services and host communities began to show**, especially as macroeconomic performance was poor. Oversupply of housing at the middle and upper end of the market led to an **acute shortage of affordable housing**. It contributed significantly to tensions between refugee and host communities<sup>19</sup>, and to the deterioration of living standards, with exploitative subdivision of existing units and conversion of buildings into rental accommodation, with little consideration of household size or standards.

**Within camp settings**, the main focus was on maintenance and upgrading of existing shelters, facilities and infrastructure, including winterization. Some expansion or relocation could be foreseen, as shelters were upgraded to “permanent” prefabricated caravans.

The 2015 inter-agency **Shelter and Settlement Strategy aimed to promote a resilience-oriented approach** to both urban and rural settings in Jordan, with a Shelter Task Force developing guidelines for activities. These included conditional cash-for-rent, upgrading substandard shelters, increasing the number of habitable housing units through the upgrading of unfinished buildings, provision of home adaptation and sealing-off kits (particularly for winterization), and raising awareness of rental rights and obligations. In some cases, energy saving measures, such as solar panels, insulation and water savings fixtures, were integrated into the shelter response. This provided additional incentives to landlords to assure adequate, safe, shelter for refugees. Simultaneously, municipal services and infrastructures were strengthened, with prioritization of areas with highest population stresses.

However, with the shelter sector comprising less than 2% of the plan's budget, **a private-sector funding approach was required to provide a source of income** for Jordanians (as owners) and vulnerable Syrian refugee and Jordanian families (as renters), accompanied by a programme of legal, institutional and policy reform. **The Jordan Affordable Housing Programme commenced**, with extensive land, market and financial sector surveys completed. A national design competition was held, and model houses were planned, while workshops with developers were arranged to secure their interest.



Syrian refugees in Turkey often seek shelter in unfinished and abandoned structures, as well as in shared accommodations. Humanitarian organizations started to implement winterization, repair, and cash-based interventions to support refugees in these situations.

### SITUATION IN TURKEY (2.74M refugees)

- In 2016, approximately 91% of refugees were residing within the host community, while 9% lived in 25 camps.
- Despite a change in regulation in favour of integration, **the large number of refugees accessing social services stretched national structures and capacity** to the utmost, particularly in areas which host a high proportion of Syrians; especially in the border provinces and towns.
- While the government provided comprehensive assistance inside camps, including shelter, NFIs and winterization, **those living within the host community in urban or rural settings struggled to meet their basic needs**, including accommodation, NFIs, electricity and heating.
- The average reported income remained well below the minimum wage<sup>11</sup>. Cost of rent and food accounted for a high proportion of expenditure, meaning that **households often resorted to negative coping strategies to make ends meet** and prioritized food and rent over their winterization needs.
- **Refugees continued to inhabit poorly structured buildings**, with about 60% living in shared accommodation, and around 10% in unfinished buildings, barns, shops and other forms of inhabitable dwellings. **Approximately 35% of shelter types were in need of some form of repair** or rehabilitation, and 82% of households were found in need of winterization assistance<sup>12</sup>.

As with other countries involved in the humanitarian crisis, Syrian refugees in Turkey found themselves in the situation of progressive destitution, as their displacement continued. Unable to become self-reliant due to difficulties in accessing the formal labour market, refugees continued to work informally (often on low salaries), with dependence on assistance from both the government and aid agencies.

### SHELTER-NFI RESPONSE IN TURKEY

Multiple and repeated interventions were required in order to provide access to minimum standards, key services and to meet basic needs. Shelter actors operated under the Basic Needs and Essential Services sector, tying together shelter, NFI, sanitation and hygiene and public infrastructure support.

**At the start of the crisis, a vast quantity of Core Relief Items was mobilized by the government** to respond to the new arrivals, supplemented by partners. This evolved into 3RP partners creating and maintaining emergency stocks of tents, food, NFIs, medicines and equipment for potential influxes, as part of an inter-agency contingency plan. **The gov-**



**ernment continued to play the lead role** in the response to Syrian refugees in Turkey.

**In the refugee camps**, 3RP partners supported shelter, NFI and camp infrastructure in close coordination with the government. **Outside of camps**, however, due to partners' lack of access to refugee registration and vulnerability data, the identification of needs among Syrians in host communities remained the biggest challenge. As the crisis continued, organizations began to provide assistance to refugees living outside of camps through NFI distributions and cash-based responses, and more recently direct repairs of shelters (with negotiated lease agreements) in urban and rural areas. Assistance packages comprised emergency, regular and seasonal assistance, with resilience activities focusing on the host community relating to education, livelihoods and social cohesion.

From 2016, winterization support and cash-based interventions were scaled up for refugees outside of camps.

### SITUATION AND RESPONSE IN IRAQ

*For information on the crisis in Iraq and the shelter-NFI response, see overview A.33.*



Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries live in a variety of accommodation types, often in urban areas, such as in this apartment block in Lebanon.

## LOOKING FORWARD

In early 2017, **hosting countries** were increasingly looking to stabilize the situation of refugees, as the conflict continued and the opportunity for safe return remained unfeasible. **Two-thirds of funds were allocated towards shelter and upgrades outside of camps**, for refugees and vulnerable host community members. Mobilizing partnerships to **incentivize the supply of affordable housing** was another key approach, alongside increasingly durable upgrading and rehabilitation work, including climatization measures, to ensure multiseason habitability. NFI provision was going to target the poorest and most vulnerable refugee populations, with a **scaling up of cash-based assistance** (e.g. through multipurpose cash grants)<sup>20</sup>. In addition, there was a **shift towards providing mid- to long-term support**, supplementing existing governance structures and social capital, as host governments and primary duty bearers developed strategies to address the new and increasingly established refugee populations within their jurisdictions.

**Within Syria**, host communities remained the largest provider of shelter assistance, highlighting the need for community-focused solutions<sup>21</sup>. Local authorities also expressed the need for more durable shelter options along with emergency shelter support, focusing more on a resilient-oriented type of assistance. In late 2016, the sector also started designing a winterization shelter kit, to be tested during the winter and included in the 2017 shelter response<sup>22</sup>. NFI needs continued to be not uniform and required more flexible and specialized responses, including alternative modalities (e.g. cash and vouchers) where the existing local markets could be supported.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Excludes 3.2 million IDPs displaced within Iraq as a result of internal conflict. Calculated as follows: 4.8 million (refugees) + 4 million (affected communities as a result of refugee crisis) + 13.5 million (PiN in Syria – IDP + host/non-displaced)
- <sup>2</sup> Includes government estimates and unregistered refugees. From 3RP Regional Strategic Overview 2017-2018.
- <sup>3</sup> Registered refugees, OCHA, December 2016.
- <sup>4</sup> Registered refugees and asylum seekers in 120 other countries (excluding 3RP countries), as of June 2015. From 3RP Regional Overview 2016-2017.
- <sup>5</sup> OCHA, December 2016.
- <sup>6</sup> Data reported to the Shelter-NFI Cluster.
- <sup>7</sup> Data from Syria Humanitarian Needs Overview 2017, UN-OCHA Dec 2016.
- <sup>8</sup> Syria Humanitarian Needs Overview 2016-2017.
- <sup>9</sup> Inter-Agency Quarterly Dashboard: Shelter, January – May 2016.
- <sup>10</sup> According to the Sector Vulnerability Assessment (May 2015), in the Jordan Response Plan for the Syrian Crisis 2016-2018.
- <sup>11</sup> As per the minimum wage of Turkey at the time of writing (TRY 1,273). On average Syrians earned 35% below minimum wage. This amount used to be lower in rural areas compared to urban.
- <sup>12</sup> Assessment carried out between Sep-Dec 2016 by IOM field staff for winterization assistance of 17,500 households, representing 96,386 individuals in Gaziantep, Hatay, Sanliurfa and Adiyaman provinces.
- <sup>13</sup> Syria Emergency Shelter Sector Factsheet, August 2016.
- <sup>14</sup> Syria Humanitarian Needs Overview 2017. 69% of affected people in 2016 were living in extreme poverty and 35% in abject poverty.
- <sup>15</sup> Activated in 2012, the Shelter Sector in Syria consisted of 20 partners as of October 2016, covered 30 out of 272 sub-districts in Syria and completed 147 shelter projects (Syria Hub Shelter Sector Profile Sheet, Oct 2016).
- <sup>16</sup> Syria Emergency Shelter Sector Factsheet, August 2016.
- <sup>17</sup> Palestinian refugees residing in Lebanon may have either been displaced from Syria (where they were also refugees) during the recent conflict, or may have experienced historic displacement to Lebanon directly from the Palestinian territories.
- <sup>18</sup> Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) 2015-2016.
- <sup>19</sup> An assessment in June 2014 indicated that “housing was the most commonly cited sector linked to community tensions by respondents with a total of 81 per cent”, cited in the Jordan Response Plan for the Syrian Crisis 2016-2018.
- <sup>20</sup> 3RP 2017-2018.
- <sup>21</sup> Syria Humanitarian Needs Overview 2017.
- <sup>22</sup> Shelter Sector monthly update October 2016.