



Syria Humanitarian Crisis

10-Year Report

Since war broke out in March 2011, Syria's infrastructure has been decimated and its economy shattered, leaving more than 6 million people internally displaced and more than 5 million seeking refuge in neighboring countries. Engagement from the international community is critical to continue to address the urgent needs inside Syria and support host communities struggling to provide basic services, including health care, for those displaced by the conflict. Worsening economic crises over the years, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, have exacerbated the urgent humanitarian needs in the region. Americares began responding to the crisis in 2012 and continues today, saving lives and improving health for families displaced within Syria, refugees and host communities.

Increasing Access to Medicine

Americares provides critically needed medicines, including life-saving antibiotics and intravenous fluids, as well as PPE for health workers, who are at increased risk for COVID-19. Since 2012, Americares has provided enough medicine to fill more than 1 million prescriptions as well as 2 million medical supplies in Syria and neighboring countries. Americares support includes over 300,000 protective supplies including masks, gloves and disinfectants for health care providers in Syria and Lebanon during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Americares has also provided medicine and supplies for 88 trips by U.S.-based medical teams traveling to the region to provide primary care services, surgeries and training for local health workers. Americares supports volunteers like Dr. Humam Akbik, a Syrian-American physician from Ohio, who organizes trips to Jordan twice a year. He carries suitcases full of medications donated by Americares on every trip to provide refugees with diabetes and hypertension a two or three-month-supply of medicine.

"We have the manpower, but we need the supplies," said Dr. Akbik, who brings together dozens of volunteers on six-day missions that provide medical and dental care to as many as 5,000 patients. "Those donors make everything possible."

Over \$23 million in
total aid including:

39

emergency shipments

1M

prescriptions

2M

medical supplies

88

volunteer medical
trips supported

Restoring Health Services

Syrian health workers and health facilities have been targets throughout the war, with 595 documented attacks on health facilities in the country. Since 2012, emergency funding from AmeriCares has helped to keep hospitals, ambulances and mobile clinics operating in Syria, with funding for fuel, staffing and facility improvements.

AmeriCares concentrates its support in northwest Syria, where nearly 40 percent of health facilities have ceased operating. Mobile clinics operated by AmeriCares local partner Shafak provide essential health services for families, who otherwise, would not have access to care.

The health facilities AmeriCares supports provide critical, life-saving care for patients like Jamilah,* a university student with lifelong kidney problems who needs dialysis three times a week.

“So far the doctors have treated me well and tried to help me as best they can,” Jamilah said. “If not for these hospitals, today not only I would not be able to go back to school, I also would be probably among the dead.”

*name changed to protect patient privacy



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In some villages there are no roads, a lack of transportation and a very bad economic situation. And many have no ability to provide medicine for their children, and sometimes, even for themselves.”

—Dr. Ayman Kasem, Shafak Mobile Clinic physician, Syria

Supporting Refugees and Host Communities

In Lebanon—home to more than 865,000 Syrian refugees—AmeriCares partnered with Caritas to provide emergency cash assistance to families in need of urgent medical care. In 2020, AmeriCares expanded its support to include families unable to work or afford food during COVID-19 lockdowns. AmeriCares also provided training in psychological first aid and psychological support for the case managers working directly with the families—many of whom have suffered trauma.

Since stress and trauma can worsen, or even trigger, chronic diseases, AmeriCares collaborated with the Royal Health Awareness Society in Jordan to incorporate mental health awareness sessions into a chronic disease education program for Syrian refugees and host community members. Participants who attended health education and mental health awareness sessions and incorporated stress-reduction activities into their daily routines saw the greatest health improvements, including lower blood sugar, cholesterol and body mass index.



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Sometimes I get depressed and I don't feel very well psychologically...and that's when both my diabetes and blood pressure spike up again. I follow the instructions on self-care and diet and exercise and things do get back to normal again, and I have better health.”

—Mustafa, Syrian refugee and patient, Jordan



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AmeriCares is a health-focused relief and development organization that saves lives and improves health for people affected by poverty or disaster. Each year, AmeriCares reaches 90 countries on average, including the United States, with life-changing health programs, medicine, medical supplies and emergency aid. AmeriCares is the world's leading nonprofit provider of donated medicine and medical supplies.



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