



**SEMA**

الرابطة الطبية للمغتربين السوريين  
İNSANI VE TİBBİ YARDIM DERNEĞİ  
SYRIAN EXPATRIATES MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

# Syrian Expatriates Medical Association

Annual Report

**2022**



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## Who we are



Due to the humanitarian crisis resulting from the worsening health conditions and deteriorating infrastructure in Syria, a group of Syrian expatriate doctors decided to take action and establish a medical relief and development organization that aims to meet the emergency needs. This organization, known as the “Syrian Expatriate Medical Association” (SEMA), began its operations in mid-2011.

SEMA is a non-political, non-profit, humanitarian organization, that aims to relieve human suffering by providing relief assistance to those affected by conflict. SEMA believes that aid should be given to everyone in need regardless of his or her political, social, ethnic, or religious identity. SEMA pursues the highest standards of quality and accountability and applies the principles of leadership in health care and humanitarian relief.

SEMA believes in a world, where vulnerable people no longer exist, and provides access to health services while pursuing the highest standards of quality under the slogan: “We Hold Good for All”.

The federation aims to unify the general system and organize cooperation among member associations. It enhances strategic planning for the associations’ work and assists in developing infrastructure and obtaining recognition from international organizations. The federation also provides its member associations with high-level specialized professional support in various fields.

### Vision

Contribute to achieving a world in which everyone enjoys a healthy and dignified life.

### Message

Fulfilling the principle of leadership in medical relief and development to make the utmost use of financial and human resources through improving performance and services, coordination, building partnerships, and developing local potentials, as these resources will be allocated regardless of ethnicity, color, sex or beliefs.

### Values

Accountability, Transparency, Humanity, Cooperation and Partnership

## SEMA in 2022

### 01 January



- SEMA launches an emergency response campaign for the snowstorm in northern Syria.
- "Introducing the modern 'Cooling Therapy' technology at Al-Ikhaa Hospital to save the lives of newborns with oxygen deficiency."

### 02 February



- "35 children with special needs have received mobility chairs.
- The specialized surgical hospital restores hope for a girl disfigured by facial burns.

### 03 March



- For the first time in northern Syria, a successful interventional treatment has been performed in the field of vascular diseases ."
- Academy of Health Sciences takes first place in the Al-Zayri International Award for Educational Excellence

### 04 April



- Malak enjoys a new smile after the removal of the tumor from her upper lip
- With your support, we have expanded the neonatal intensive care unit at Al-Ikhaa Specialized Hospital.



05 May

- Intensive training on dealing with children with disabilities.
- The first exhibition of the 'Blind Hands' center sees the light in Idlib."



06 June

- SEMA shares her experience in responding to COVID-19 at the Gaziantep University Conference in Turkey
- SEMA opens 7 specialized medical clinics at the Surgical Specialized Hospital in Idlib.



07 July

- "Randa, Asmaa, and Mohamed" are triplets who were born after a fierce struggle with death.
- Idlib Surgical Specialized Hospital introduces "Ocular Surgery" to the ophthalmology department.



08 August

- Waseem Hussein Hospital succeeds in saving a critical emergency case.
- A groundbreaking surgical procedure is used for the first time in northern Syria on a young woman with colonic paralysis.



09 September

- The Surgical Specialized Hospital in Idlib is accredited as a training center for pediatric residents.
- "Ahlan Semseme" is a new program within the protection program in SEMA.



10 October

- A new training program in neonatal resuscitation and obstetrics targets 150 trainees.
- Seventh birth of twins within a month at the Maternity Hospital for Women and Children in Bab.



11 November

- SEMA supports the Atiyaf Center to educate more women and girls.
- SEMA opens its third primary healthcare center this year in Jisr al-Shughour.



12 December

- SEMA adds "Darkoush" Hospital to its list of hospitals.
- Sema's educational channel on YouTube reaches over 10,000 subscribers."



## Success Stories

### For the first time in northern Syria: Successful performance of a specialized vascular surgery

The vascular surgery team at Idleb Specialized Surgical Hospital has successfully performed a unique intervention through catheterization for the first time in northern Syria for an 83-year-old patient.

The patient, T. Sh., visited the hospital with complaints of renal respiratory distress, and he was diagnosed with respiratory and renal failure, accompanied by a deep-vein thrombosis in the entire lower limb, along with lower gastrointestinal bleeding (melena) and low hemoglobin levels that hindered therapeutic dilution. Our patient is considered a high-risk case due to the developed thrombotic complications in the veins, which could be fatal.

Immediately, the patient was referred for the placement of an Inferior Vena Cava (IVC) filter to prevent the occurrence of a potentially fatal pulmonary embolus, especially since the blood clots extended to the iliac veins. Consequently, blood clots were filtered and prevented from reaching the lungs, and the procedure was completed successfully.



## Idlib Surgical Hospital brings back hope to a girl disfigured by burns

With a bright face filled with hope and life, the 7-year-old girl (A.B.) departs us after several months of treatment for face and hand burns at the Idleb Specialized Surgical Hospital.

The girl's injury was caused months ago when she was exposed to an explosion from a makeshift heater, resulting in inhalation burns and second and third-degree burns to her face and hands.

Upon her arrival at the emergency department of Idleb Specialized Surgical Hospital, the emergency team immediately provided her with the necessary emergency care before referring her to the burns department, whose team accepted this challenge although it was a double challenge.

The first and immediate challenge was to save the girl's life since the burn was in a life-threatening area. The second challenge was to conceal the scars resulting from the burns. The little girl remained in the burns department for a long period, during which her treatment journey began.

After several months, we have achieved this wonderful result, thanks to Allah and the medical team's care, and made hope shine again on our little girl's face.



## Cooling therapy: A new technique that saves the lives of newborns with hypoxia

Brain injury caused by insufficient oxygen (Hypoxic ischemic encephalopathy) is considered one of the most critical conditions in neonatology. The emergency management and treatment of these cases have a direct impact on the child's life in the first place and on the potential lifelong complications.

Abdullah was one of those newborns who experienced hypoxia around birth. He was transferred to Al-Ikhaa Hospital at the age of five hours after requiring advanced resuscitation and after an endotracheal tube was inserted for him at the referring hospital to assist with breathing and provide assisted ventilation.

Upon arrival at Al-Ikhaa Hospital, a comprehensive management plan was developed, including respiratory support using mechanical ventilation, treatment of low blood sugar, and maintaining the newborn's body temperature within the therapeutic range through whole-body cooling for three days, followed by rewarming to normal body temperature. In addition, accompanying hemorrhagic disorders were managed, and blood infection was treated with the suitable antibiotics.

After twelve days of relentless effort, hope, and continued care, Abdullah was discharged in good health with his parents. He was able to breastfeed naturally from his mother and had a neurological examination with good results, all thanks be to Allah.



## Hind, an 8-month-old baby, recovers from malnutrition

In one of the impoverished camps, the nutrition teams identified the case of Hind, an 8-month-old girl. Her face was gaunt, her body was extremely weak, and she lacked vitality. The initial mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) showed a measurement of 113 mm which indicated severe malnutrition and severe anemia, and that was attributed to the family's poor living conditions.

The appetite test was conducted, and the steps were explained to the mother. She was provided with sterilized water, therapeutic butter, and nutritional supplements (Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food - RUTF) at a rate of 14 sachets per week. After conducting weekly phone follow-ups with the mother, providing her with a MUAC tape, and monitoring the girl's nutritional status, the MUAC measurement in the second visit increased to 128 mm indicating noticeable improvement in the girl's nutrition and anemia.

After the third visit, the MUAC measurement further increased to 134 mm, indicating the recovery phase. We later received a photo of Hind in excellent health, smiling at the camera, and the team was extremely pleased with this outcome. SEMA continues to work on screening, monitoring and managing such cases through its mobile nutrition teams.



## Islam overcomes hearing loss after receiving a hearing aid and a training

Islam, a young girl, was affected by a fever that led to a hearing loss in her both ears. The girl grew with the hearing impairment, which prevented her from developing her skills and integrating into society until she was brought to Amal Protection Center, where she was registered for one of the ongoing protection programs.

After a short period, the child received hearing aids and underwent a comprehensive assessment of her condition and her five developmental skills, including speech, writing, drawing, and listening.

The girl started performing these behaviors effortlessly and her acquired skills became deeply rooted in her daily routines.

Receiving the hearing aid has been the biggest turning point in her life, pulling her out of isolation to integrate with her family, friends, and in the school. She has overcome social shyness and has become closer to everyone, with a lovely smile that reflects her immense happiness and gratitude for all the kindness and mercy shown by our generous supporters.



## Surgical Hospitals Program



The year 2022 was distinguished in terms of the quality of performance in our surgical hospitals, considering the introduction of the latest modern surgical techniques worldwide for the first time in northwest Syria.

This year witnessed the application of several advanced surgical techniques and successful non-surgical interventions for patients with vascular and arterial diseases, and this had a significant impact on the recovery pace and helped in preventing deaths caused by post-surgical complications.

Our surgical hospitals made distinctive and significant advancements in 2022 in terms of expansion. Operating rooms underwent maintenance and expansion to meet the highest standards of hygiene, ventilation,

and lighting. Additional intensive care units and neonatal wards were designated, and more clinics were established and attached to the hospitals.

In 2022, approximately 20,000 surgical operations were performed, ranging from major to minor surgeries, including delicate surgeries that require multiple specialties at the same time, like the cases of vascular deformities.

The number of beneficiaries of secondary health-care services in specialized surgical and reproductive health hospitals reached 555,729 patients, including residents and displaced individuals. This represents around 10% of the overall needs for the services of the hospitals in northwest Syria, where a total population of approximately 5.5 million people reside.

### Locations of the surgical hospitals



Number of hospitals

8



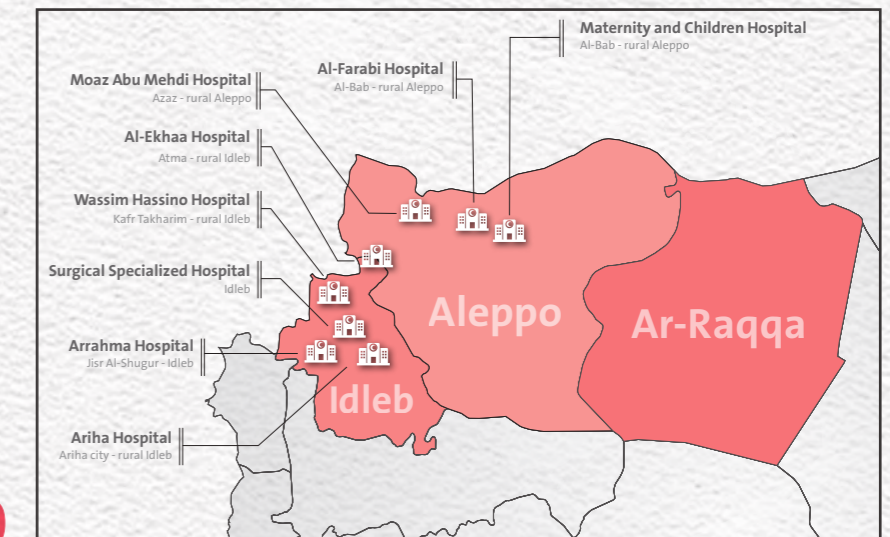
Number of beneficiaries

575,746



Catchment population

1,066,100



## Surgical Operations



**Major surgeries**  
**13,794**



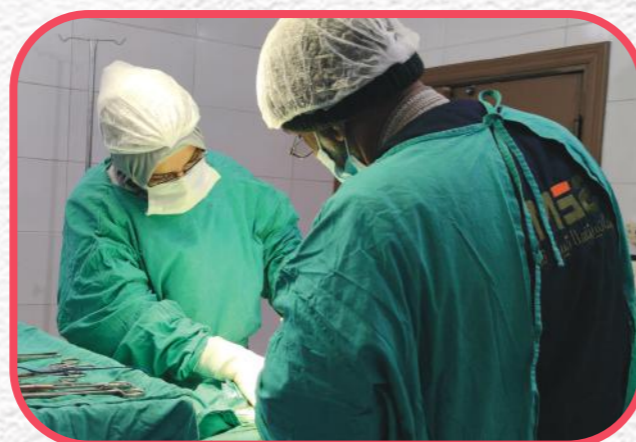
**Minor surgeries**  
**6,223**

## Miscellaneous services

Intensive care	624
Pharmacy department	203761
x_ray department	179341
Laboratory department	346301

## Details of major surgeries

gynecologic surgeries	6416
jaw surgeries	166
ENT surgeries	984
urologic surgeries	941
reconstructive surgeries	1438
general surgeries	2069
orthopedic surgeries	1557
ocular surgeries	59
vascular surgeries	149



## Out-patient clinics



## Total number of beneficiaries

**555,729**

Gynecology clinic	155242
Pediatric clinic	131887
Internal medicine clinic	30364
Emergency and First Aid clinic	149103
General surgery clinic	7422
Orthopedic clinic	23082
ENT Clinic	12984
Urology clinic	13095
Ophthalmology clinic	15791
Cosmetic clinic	3734
Jaw clinic	3987
Dental clinic	2355
Vascular Surgery	5301
Neurology Surgery	1382

## Primary Healthcare Program

During 2022, SEMA continued to provide primary healthcare services, and one of its noticeable achievements under this program was the transformation of two mobile clinics in Atma into fixed centers (Nabd Al Hayat Center, Al-Fayhaa Center) as these centers play a vital role in preventing and combating the spread of diseases in resource-limited and densely populated areas like northern Syria. Additionally, two cholera treatment centers were opened in Idleb and Atma to save the lives of the infected people.

Through a network of 16 Primary Healthcare Centers (PHCs) established by SEMA, equitable access to basic healthcare services was ensured for all affected resident and displaced people. The number of beneficiaries from the provided services reached approximately 250,000.

The PHC services included general medicine clinics, internal medicine clinics as well as the gynecologic, pediatrics, and dental care clinics. The services also included routine examinations, medication refill, and management of chronic conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and respiratory diseases, especially during the outbreaks of COVID-19 and cholera



Number of centers  
**16**



Number of beneficiaries  
**246,517**



Catchment population  
**858,600**



## Children's Clinics

Male beneficiaries	20165
Female beneficiaries	19579
Displaced beneficiaries	30028
Resident beneficiaries	9716

### Total number of beneficiaries

39,744



## Dental Clinics

Male beneficiaries	7356
Female beneficiaries	11169
Displaced beneficiaries	13945
Resident beneficiaries	4580

### Total number of beneficiaries

18,525



## Specialized Clinics

Male beneficiaries	58114
Female beneficiaries	83631
Displaced beneficiaries	113491
Resident beneficiaries	28254

### Total number of beneficiaries

141,745



## Miscellaneous Services

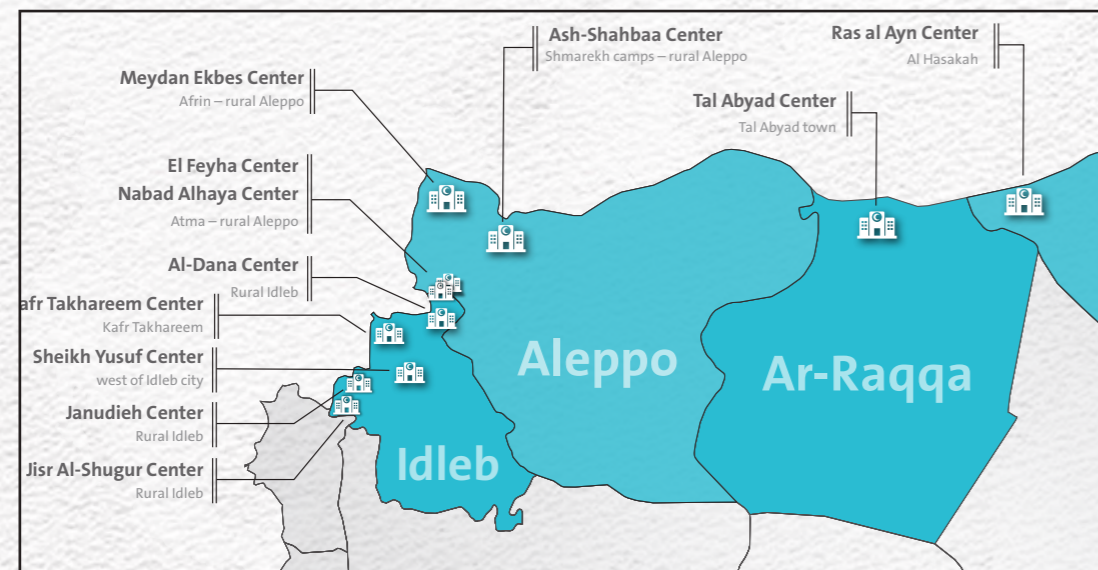
Male beneficiaries	954
Female beneficiaries	161970
Displaced beneficiaries	31719
Resident beneficiaries	22359

### Gynecology clinic

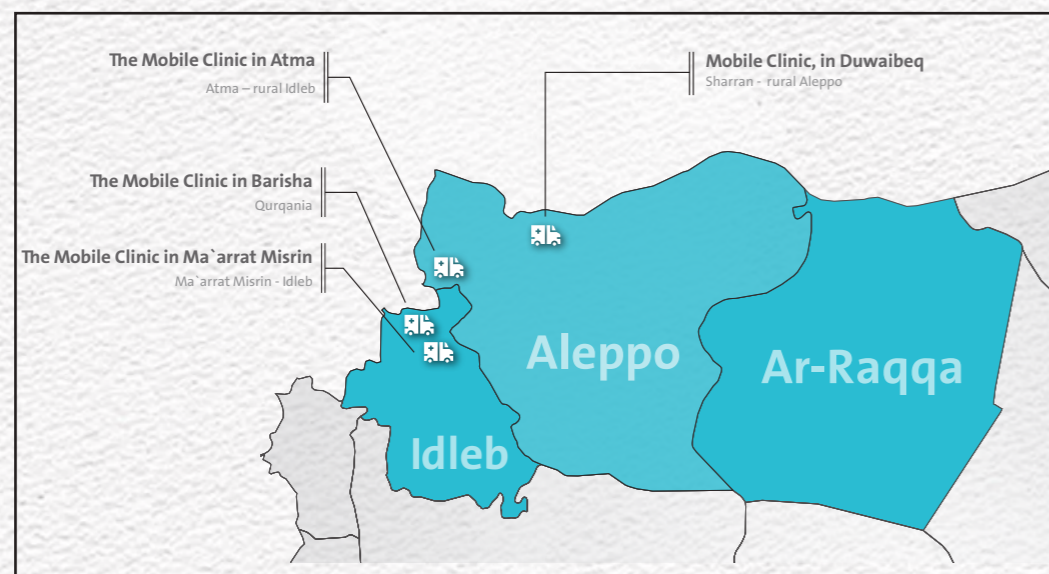
number of beneficiaries	46503
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## Health Centers



## Mobile Clinics

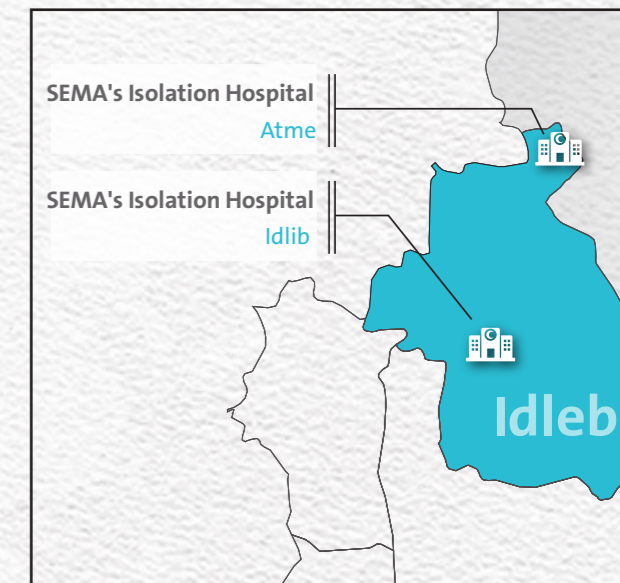


## Isolation Hospitals



Total number of beneficiaries

2,103



## Dialysis Centers



Number of centers

2



Dialysis sessions

5,241



Number of beneficiaries

591



## Medical Education and Training Program



The Medical Education and Training Program in the Syrian Expatriate Medical Association (SEMA) works on qualifying professional health personnel for the purpose of strengthening the national capacity and adapting the education of the health cadres to meet the health needs of the displaced populations. The program ultimately aims to provide the best health services to the most fragile groups, especially in light of the huge gap between the numbers of in-need people and the number of healthcare providers. Through this program, we managed to achieve the highest standards in medical education and provide opportunities for a continued professional development for workers in the healthcare sector. We have also offered an ex-

ceptional educational experience to qualify future nurses and health technicians to specialize in the various health fields, like emergency medicine, rehabilitation, and primary health care.

The Medical Education Program has also activated the translation and studies program and it encourages scientific research. SEMA's Medical Education Program is a distinctive program as it is considered a sustainable project that can create more opportunities for the graduates and secure skilled health labor with international experience for the health sector. Additionally, this program has offered an educational platform that includes a series of educational specialized lectures directed for resident doctors and provided by experienced doctors around the world.

### Academy of Health Sciences

**Location** Qah, northern Idlib, Syria

**Departments** Nursing - emergency - medicine - natural treatment

**Number of students** 114

**Number of graduates** 57

### Residency Program

**Number of residents** 20

**Number of supervisors** 40

### Masters Program in Public Health and Health Policies (Yildirim Beyazit University, Ankara)

**Number of students** 18

### Online lectures 2022

**Number of beneficiaries** 700

**Number of lectures** 32

**Number of watch hours 2022** 16000

**Number of views** 174800

**Number of new subscribers (2022)** 3700

**Total number of subscribers** 10800

## Protection and Psychosocial Support Program



Through the Protection and Psychosocial Support Program, we collaborated with other health programs to improve the lives of vulnerable and marginalized groups in the society. Our focus has been on enhancing their quality of life and well-being through both providing appropriate support and concentrating on all aspects of their lives.

In our joint efforts within the Protection and Psychosocial Support Program, we worked on raising public awareness about Gender-Based Violence, the rights of people with disabilities, and other concepts related to psychological well-being and mental health of the targeted individuals.

Through initiatives and projects that targeted war-affected people under this program, we strived to minimize the effects and risks experienced by children and women. We conducted a series of courses, programs, and social events through our Child Friendly Spaces called "Aamal Centers".

We strengthened the empowerment process for vulnerable and marginalized groups through our integrated system of referral and guidance. We also provided disabled children with tools and equipment to help them achieve independence in their daily lives, such as electric and regular wheelchairs and hearing aids.

Under the Protection and Psychosocial Support Program, we consider the beneficiaries as our partners rather than mere patients. We focus on comprehensively meeting humanitarian needs, whether medical or non-medical, by providing psychosocial support and necessary emergency aid, and creating opportunities for low-income individuals to start their own projects. We also offer training and skills development opportunities for women who do not have any type of skills.

We are proud of the true success stories we have achieved through our program, and we will continue our efforts to achieve more.

### Child Protection Program



Number of  
centers  
**5**



Number of  
beneficiaries  
**36,288**



Number of  
beneficiaries  
**3,215**

### Gender-Based Violence (GBV)



Number of  
centers  
**5**



Number of  
beneficiaries  
**28,028**

## Nutrition and Community Health Program

Our primary focus in this program is on feeding infant and young children under the age of five. We recognize that good nutrition plays a crucial role in their growth and development and promotes good health and strong immunity. Therefore, we work to provide necessary care and resources to ensure the availability of balanced and appropriate nutrition for these children.

Our program and screening teams focus on improving the lives of children and enhancing their growth by concentrating on and managing malnutrition. We specifically target infants and children under the age of two as during this period, optimal nutrition plays an essential role in reducing morbidity and mortality rates, decreasing the risk of chronic diseases, and promoting overall child growth, and this is the core focus of our nutrition program.

SEMA also placed great emphasis on the preventive aspect, including health awareness and providing nutrition support for mothers and children through its various programs. These initiatives were widely acclaimed as they integrate community health and nutrition services, prevention, and treatment of malnutrition, with the provided services in the Primary Healthcare Centers and the hospitals.

SEMA deployed community health teams in over 30 different communities, where these teams provided a comprehensive package of nutrition and community health services. These services include individual and group counselling, distribution of nutritional supplements, and referrals for cases requiring treatment to the specialized centers.

### Nutrition Program



Number of teams

21



Number of beneficiaries

107,651

### Community Health Program



Number of teams

11



Number of beneficiaries

73,833

Total number of beneficiaries



Total number of beneficiaries of all SEMA's programs and projects:  
**1,996,466**

Beneficiaries by program

Surgical Hospitals	575746
Primary Health Care	246517
Specialized Projects	1142
Nutrition and Community Health Program	181484
Protection and Psychosocial Support Program	64316
Mental health program	3215
X Ray	180295
Drugs	365731
lab tests	378020

## SEMA's total expenditures in 2022

Programs	expenditure in USD	%
SRH	3,384,335	25%
Surgical Hospital	3,027,220	22%
Administrative and Operational	2,470,043	18%
Protection and Psychological Support (PSS).	1,950,529	14%
Specialized Projects	1,325,706	10%
(Primary Health Care (PHC	668,392	5%
Medical Education and Training	434,305	3%
Nutrition	342,404	3%
Other	5,412	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,608,347</b>	



## Funding sources for 2022

Donor	received in 2022 in USD	%
OCHA	3,563,843	26%
IRC	2,453,008	18%
SEMA	1,587,404	12%
WorldVision	1,347,348	10%
Americares	898,664	7%
UOSSM	850,384	6%
WHO	692,721	5%
SEMA-Unrestricted	598,102	4%
HelpAge	409,386	3%
QRC	287,843	2%
UNHCR	250,888	2%
Kuwaiti Donors	234,528	2%
GOAL	224,797	2%
MSF	123,664	1%
Other	76,859	1%
<b>Total received</b>	<b>13,608,347</b>	

## Our partners






# SEMA


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