



SEMA

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



Syrian Expatriates Medical Association

Annual Report **2023**



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Who we are

Medicine is more than just a profession for us, it is a humanitarian mission and responsibility. That is why we were at the forefront of responding to the humanitarian crisis in Syria. As Syrian doctors and expatriates, we established SEMA, a non-profit humanitarian health organization that is not affiliated with any political or religious group. Our journey began in mid-2011.

Over the years, we have been able to change the lives of many individuals in various regions of Syria through our services. We have reached them through a network of hospitals, health centers, and mobile clinics, and we continue to expand our networks to reach newly displaced populations and address their specific needs.

SEMA has been at the forefront of organizations that integrate protection and relief services alongside medical services. We recognize that beneficiaries have multiple needs beyond just medical care. That is why we have established social centers to address cases of violence, special needs children, and women's empowerment.

SEMA provides emergency relief to those affected by hotspots such as recent displacements and earthquake victims. We also provide regular relief services to the most vulnerable families.

message

To apply the principle of innovation in providing medical relief and development, maximizing the use of financial, human, natural, and property resources, as well as information, relationships, and time.

Vision

Our vision is to be recognized as a leading humanitarian health, relief, and development organization by international partners. We aim to achieve this by implementing pioneering projects in humanitarian health relief work.

Values

-  credibility
-  honesty
-  independence
-  community leadership
-  transparency
-  cooperation and partnership

SEMA in 2023



01 January



- For the first time in northern Syria, kidney stones were removed (PCNL) through the flank.
- Al-Ikhaa Hospital saves the life of "Mona," born weighing less than a kilogram.

02 February



- The first response moments of SEMA in facing the earthquake.
- The Chairman of SEMA supervises the care of earthquake victims in northern Syria.
- SEMA completes the preparation of a second shelter center in Kafr Lusin for earthquake victims.

03 March



- Distribution of 100 non-food relief kits to the affected in Afrin and Azaz.
- A successful delicate operation restores a patient's ability to eat.

04 April



- After nearly losing hope, a successful delicate operation restores a patient's ability to eat.
- Eid joy visits the children of "Jindires" who were affected by the earthquake.
- Opening of the intensive care unit at Wasim Hasino Hospital.

05 May



- The first-ever “Awurma” food festival in the Jindir-es area.
- Successful delicate surgery for a neck tumor in a fifty-year-old woman.

06 June



- The first neonatal intensive care specialist in Syria graduates from SEMA doctors.
- New training for the protection of unaccompanied and separated children in Afrin.

07 July



- SEMA provides a mammogram machine at Al-Ikhaa Hospital.
- Psychological first aid training for field workers with representatives from the World Health Organization.

08 August



- A new batch of 54 medical stethoscopes at Amal Sharran and Al-Nour centers.
- A record for the first time at Al-Farabi Hospital: “A birth every hour.”
- New training to qualify more providers of psychological first aid.

09 September



- Distribution of 80 wheelchairs for the elderly in rural Idlib.
- 60 senior beneficiaries receive medical hearing aids.
- A team from the Dutch organization SV conducts a medical field tour in northwest Syria.

10 October



- SEMA opens a new medical center in Kafr Yahmul. Arrival of a CT scanner at the specialized surgical hospital.

11 November



- A thank you note to SEMA from the Ministry of Health in Gaza.
- SEMA provides 6,000 packages of drinking water to earthquake victims in southern Turkey.

12 December



- Successful kidney stone removal surgery for a patient at Al-Rahma Hospital.
- Welcomed a wonderful set of triplets at one of SEMA’s hospitals.
- Special activities organized by Al-Nour Community Center in Salqin for International Day of Persons with Disabilities.



Success Stories

For the first time in northern Syria, a percutaneous nephrolithotomy (PCNL) was performed through the flank.

The patient, (S/A), 40 years old, visited Idlib Surgical Specialty Hospital with a kidney stone that was unresponsive to traditional fragmentation methods (ESWL). After conducting the necessary examinations and investigations, it was decided to perform a minimally invasive surgery through a 1 cm incision in the skin via the flank using the Percutaneous Nephrolithotomy (PCNL) technique.

This is the first time this procedure has been performed in a free hospital in northern Syria. The decision to undertake this surgical intervention

was made due to the high cost of this procedure in private hospitals and the difficulty of referring patients to Turkey.

The surgical team decided to carry out this procedure driven by a sense of humanity and conscience, in line with the general principle at SEMA of providing the highest quality surgeries with minimal impact on the patient. The poor financial situation of beneficiaries should not prevent them from receiving the best services, and this is what we offered to our patient, who was discharged in good health.



A beautiful smile returns to the face of our little girl Amna after tumor surgery on her left cheek.

Our little girl Amna arrived at Al-Rahma Hospital in Darkoush, specifically at the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Clinic, complaining of a tumor in her left cheek that caused pain when chewing, in addition to a deformity that further distressed the child.

The medical team conducted a clinical examination, ultrasound imaging, and a CT scan of the affected area.

The analysis of the results indicated the need for functional cosmetic surgery. Based on this, the

medical team developed a treatment plan with a cosmetic approach that included removing the mass in the left cheek.

Our daughter underwent a precise surgery where the mass was successfully removed without complications. The medical team continued to care for Amna and were delighted to find out that the mass was benign according to the biopsy results. The girl fully recovered, and her smile and confidence returned once again.



You make the difference between life and death.. Mohamed, a newborn, miraculously survives.

From the moment baby Mohamed was born, he found himself in a battle for survival. Born extremely premature at 24 weeks with a weight of 1.150 kg and with the mother suffering from kidney hydrops, it was a risky birth in difficult living conditions that surrounded him and his family from the beginning.

His family could not afford to transfer him to a private hospital, and the mother's pregnancy had not been monitored. The risk of losing the newborn was present at any moment, even after he was admitted to our intensive care unit. He suffered from repeated episodes of apnea, and the medical team exerted every effort to keep the baby alive, closely monitoring him around the clock until their efforts finally paid off.

The parents endured long hours and days filled with fear and hope for 40 days before they received the joyous news of their baby's improved condition and his discharge at a weight of 1.700 kg.

Our mission did not end there! Our team continued to follow up after his discharge, providing the mother with the best care methods. Our little one showed continuous progress, gaining weight at a rate of 30 grams each day.

It was a perilous journey between life and death, and you were the guardian angel for this little one, truly contributing to saving his life.



Ahmeds Transformation Journey: From a Withdrawn Child to a Happy One

At first glance, you wouldn't believe that Ahmed is the same child he was a few months ago.

Ahmed was an orphan, withdrawn into himself, suffering from loss and orphanhood, accompanied by the pain of his hearing and speech impairment.

The protection team found him during one of their field visits and conducted a thorough evaluation of his physical and psychological condition. It was found that he was fatherless, had speech impairments, communication difficulties, and was experiencing severe psychological distress, which exacerbated his situation.

Ahmed was enrolled in special education classes where he was taught the basics of communication, motor skills development, and enhancement of his auditory and visual senses.

All of this transformed Ahmed into an interactive child, changing his life forever. He felt that he was not alone and that there were people by his side, helping him become a better version of himself—mentally stronger, more resilient, and more connected with his community.



Congratulations to Northern Syria on the Graduation of the First Neonatal Intensive Care Doctor

It was a special day for everyone in Northern Syria as the first specialist in neonatal intensive care graduated. The region has completely lacked this specialty while the need for it is extremely high, with countless fragile lives hanging in the balance in intensive care units.

SEMA recognized early on the urgent need to establish the "Neonatal Intensive Care" specialty and created a special "remote" training program for doctors in Northern Syria on neonatology. Dr. Manal Zahran became the first doctor to specialize and graduate in neonatal intensive care.

Dr. Zahran demonstrated exceptional resilience, commitment, and perseverance in overcoming countless obstacles to reach this moment when the dream became a reality. Throughout her years of work with SEMA, Dr. Zahran managed the most critical cases in neonatology, and her efforts led to the successful outcomes of the majority of these cases, culminating in her earning a specialized practical certificate.

We hope her success will inspire others to strive for excellence and prove that with relentless effort, success can be achieved and all small lives can be saved.





Surgical Hospitals Program

The Surgical Hospitals Program provides specialized healthcare for the injured and general patients in northern Syria. This remarkable humanitarian initiative targets 2,450,000 people, with the actual number of beneficiaries reaching 549,320—a notable increase of approximately 50,000 patients compared to the previous year, served across 7 hospitals in key regions and towns of northern Syria.

In addition to treating patients with severe surgical injuries due to ongoing wars and conflicts in the country, there was a notable surge in patient numbers following the earthquake disaster on February 6, 2023. Thousands of lives were saved through urgent and critical surgeries performed swiftly under unprecedented pressure in terms of time, numbers, and resources.

This effort goes hand in hand with the continuous upgrading and expansion of operating rooms, creating an ideal healthcare environment. This includes adding new surgical sections in the hospitals and developing reproductive health hospital departments to meet the highest standards of sterility, ventilation, and lighting.

Our teams comprise doctors, surgeons, residents from various specialties, nurses, midwives, technicians, and supportive and administrative staff.

The year 2023 was a true test of our medical capabilities in facing natural disasters within a resource-limited and exhausted environment in northern Syria. Despite these challenges, we strived to pass this difficult humanitarian test.

Locations of the surgical hospitals



Number of hospitals

9



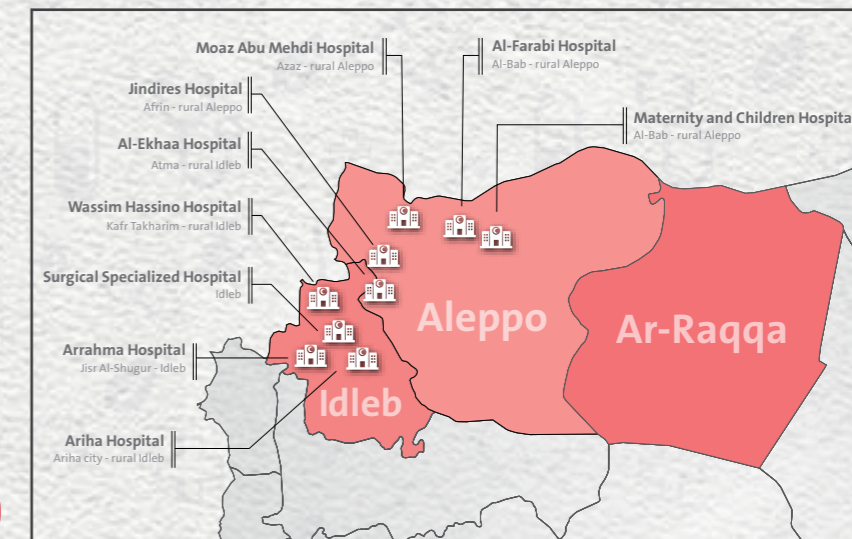
Number of beneficiaries

549,320



Catchment population

2,450,000



Surgical Operations



Major surgeries
12,947



Minor surgeries
10,058

Details of major surgeries

gynecologic surgeries	3991
jaw surgeries	177
ENT surgeries	584
urologic surgeries	1889
reconstructive surgeries	333
general surgeries	2559
orthopedic surgeries	2859
ocular surgeries	298
vascular surgeries	208
Neurosurgery	44



Miscellaneous services

Intensive care	1489
Pharmacy department	217871
x_ray department	119389
Laboratory department	348677

Out-patient clinics

Gynecology clinic	90645
Pediatric clinic	68976
Internal medicine clinic	43882
Emergency and First Aid clinic	202507
General surgery clinic	14805
Orthopedic clinic	32026
ENT Clinic	10510
Urology clinic	15087
Ophthalmology clinic	15421
Cosmetic clinic	1208
Dental clinic	6729

Total number of beneficiaries

501,796

Total admissions

47,524





Primary Healthcare Program

The Syrian Expatriates Medical Association (SEMA) adopts a comprehensive approach to providing essential health services to individuals and communities in an integrated and holistic manner. This is achieved through a network of primary healthcare centers in densely populated cities and towns, as well as mobile medical clinics in remote villages and camps.

Within its general strategy to achieve health and disease prevention, SEMA focuses on early prevention, treatment, and health education for individuals and communities.

These centers offer numerous services including regular check-ups, vaccinations, health education, chronic disease management, primary treatment for minor injuries, tracking and managing malnutrition cases, and providing psychological and social support.

In 2023, the total number of beneficiaries from the primary healthcare centers and mobile clinics reached 303,948. Of these, 270,347 benefited from the 16 healthcare centers, and 33,601 from the 5 mobile clinics.

The Primary Healthcare Program has achieved tangible results by targeting 1,000,000 people, improving public health, reducing preventable and treatable disease-related mortality, and alleviating the burden on hospitals.

SEMA continues to work on building a strong and sustainable health system that comprehensively meets the needs of individuals and communities by continuously expanding the network of healthcare centers in northern Syria.



Number of centers
16



Number of beneficiaries
270,347



Catchment population
1,000,000

Children's Clinics

Total number of beneficiaries

65,317

Dental Clinics

Total number of beneficiaries

22,148

Specialized Clinics

Total number of beneficiaries

111,823

Gynecology clinic

Total number of beneficiaries

71,059

Miscellaneous Services



x_ray
837



Pharmacy
201,981



Laboratory
74,238

Dialysis Centers



Number of centers
2



Dialysis sessions
5,241



Number of beneficiaries
591



Catchment population
300,000



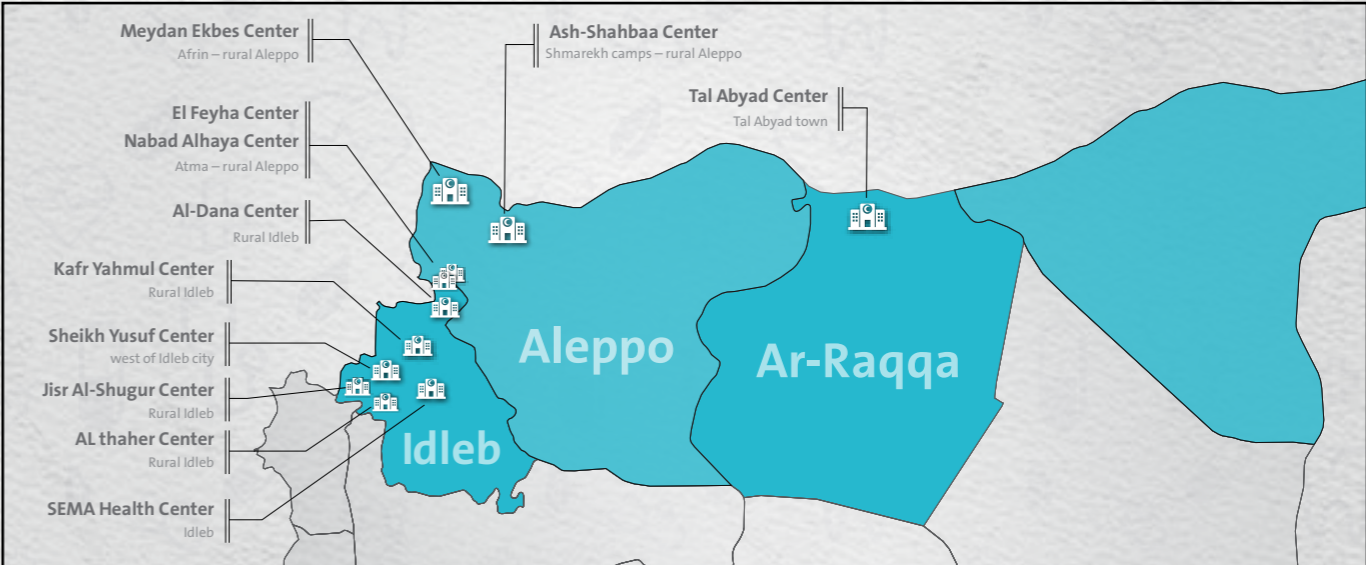


Mobile Clinics & Health Centers

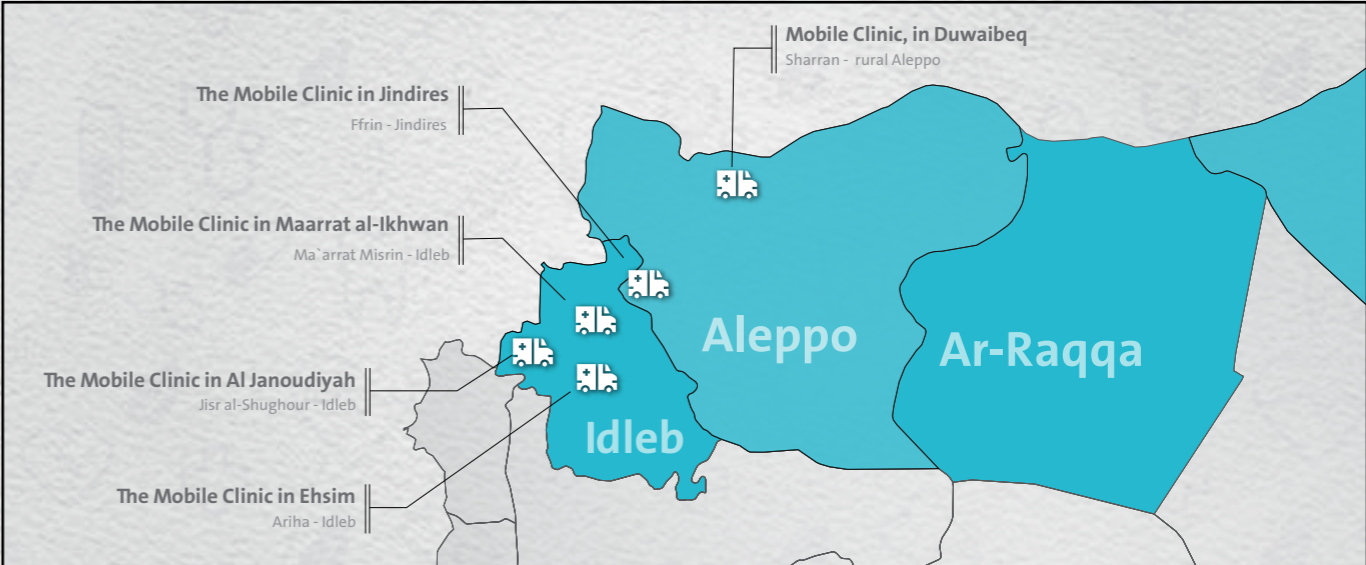
Total number of beneficiaries

303,948

Health Centers



Mobile Clinics





Medical Education and Training Program

The Medical Education and Training Program receives special attention within SEMA's program package as it is a crucial part of developing the healthcare sector and enhancing the competency and skills of medical and healthcare professionals. This attention is particularly warranted due to the significant gap between the number of individuals in need of healthcare and the available healthcare providers.

This program provides continuous training and education for healthcare workers, including doctors, nurses, and technicians, to ensure the delivery of high-quality and safe healthcare services.

The Health Training Program encompasses several aspects, including updating medical and healthcare knowledge, enhancing practical skills, improving patient communication and interaction, capacity building, promoting awareness of

proper practices and health guidance, as well as training on the use of modern technologies in healthcare and the application of the latest medical guidelines and protocols.

The Health Training Program plays a vital role in improving the quality of healthcare services and developing the technical and professional capacities of healthcare personnel. It also contributes to enhancing health performance, disease prevention, and improving the patient experience.

SEMA's educational channel on YouTube serves as the primary medical reference for resident physicians and trainees in Northern Syria. It includes over 400 scientific lectures, with the number of subscribers reaching approximately 15,000 to date, while the channel continues to grow every day.





Protection and Psychological Support Program

Through the Protection and Psychological Support Program, we strive to create a supportive environment that brings together the most vulnerable social groups (children, women, girls, the elderly, and people with special needs).

The ongoing conflict in Syria has led to increased levels of vulnerability, suffering, and psychological difficulties for these groups and families.

The program offers numerous services, including psychological first aid services, case management services, group workshops, group parties for children, vocational rehabilitation and empowerment courses, as well as courses for developing parental social skills, and all trainings and activities that support mental and psychological health.

To achieve this, social centers and protection centers have been established, either independently or affiliated with hospitals, to serve as safe and child-friendly spaces. Additionally, a care center for the elderly, who lack any caregivers, was opened. This center, called

Al-Wafa Elderly Care Center in Idlib, provides a friendly and nurturing environment for the elderly and offers self-care services.

The role of these centers goes beyond what has been mentioned; they have a significant impact on the lives of the beneficiaries. These centers regularly distribute medical hearing aids and wheelchairs to those in need, both children and the elderly, to enable them to live independently.

The protection program also focuses on individuals with visual impairments and supported the establishment of a special center for them called "Seeing Hands." This center aims to develop their skills in handicrafts, master Braille, and actively participate in society through their own art exhibitions, to economically empower them, and provide a safe space for interaction, learning, and hope.

Thus, the protection program in SEMA adds significant value to medical and relief services by targeting the most vulnerable and affected groups, empowering and protecting them.

Psychosocial support



Number of beneficiaries

4,940

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)



Number of beneficiaries

106,257

General protection



Number of beneficiaries

22,756

Child Awareness



Number of beneficiaries

55,871

Case Management



Number of beneficiaries

1,513



Community Health and Nutrition Programs

The Community Health and Nutrition Program at SEMA supports other services of primary health-care centers by promoting general health awareness and monitoring, reporting, and managing malnutrition cases.

In 2023, the Community Health Program benefited 86,000 individuals and conducted over 69,000 field visits by 11 mobile teams throughout the year.

Qualified community health teams conducted hundreds of free examinations and diagnoses monthly for malnutrition cases. Approximately 1,900 children were referred for treatment. Additionally, the nutrition teams conducted 186,115

field nutrition screenings and referred 1,143 children for treatment and follow-up throughout the year.

These teams also run awareness campaigns about prevalent diseases and preventive measures, disseminating educational resources about proper nutrition, healthy lifestyles, and awareness of widespread poor dietary practices. They provide nutritional plans, follow-up, therapeutic nutritional supplements, and some food baskets for the most needy families.

The program works intensively during emergency crises such as displacement waves and the aftermath of the recent earthquake.

Nutrition Program



Number of teams

20

Number of home visits **181909**

Number of collective sessions **8107**

Number of individual sessions **36543**

MUAC **186115**

Referrals **1143**



Number of beneficiaries

226,559

Community Health Program



Number of teams

4

Number of home visits **69433**

Number of collective sessions **3794**

Number of individual sessions **12776**

MUAC **19408**

Referrals **1884**



Number of beneficiaries

86,003



Beneficiaries by program



Total number of beneficiaries of all SEMA's programs and projects:
1,357,846

Beneficiaries by program

Surgical Hospitals	549320
Primary Health Care	303948
Specialized Projects	679
Nutrition and Community Health Program	312562
Protection and Psychosocial Support Program	191337
X Ray	120226
Drugs	419852
lab tests	422915

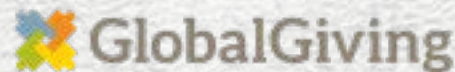
SEMA's total expenditures in 2023

Programs	expenditure in USD
SRH	1,860,016
Surgical Hospital	4,765,839
Administrative and Operational	2,328,050
Protection and Psychological Support (PSS).	2,709,133
Specialized Projects	411,215
Primary Health Care (PHC)	1,831,260
Medical Education and Training	88,656
Nutrition	845,694
MC	66,823
Other	17,151
Total	14,923,836

Funding sources for 2023

Donor	received in 2023 in USD	%
OCHA	4,655,815	31%
IRC	3,054,173	20%
WorldVision	1,740,406	12%
SEMA	1,724,669	12%
HelpAge	1,393,015	9%
WHO	902,651	6%
SV	521,004	3%
Other	363,099	2%
Americares	198,924	1%
MSF	185,820	1%
IF	111,155	1%
UNICEF	105,453	1%
Total received	14,956,184	

Our partners







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