



The White Helmets

ANNUAL REPORT

2022



Index

Section one: Emergency response to military attacks	04
Military attacks during 2022	05
Civilian casualties as a result of military attacks	06
Military attacks according to the weapon	07
Attacks on the White Helmets teams	07
Section Two: Emergency Response to Incidents	08
Firefighting operations	09
Response to Traffic accidents	11
Response to Drowning Incidents	12
Section Three: Health Services	13
Ambulance services	14
Health services provided by Women and Family Centers	15
Awareness activities	18
Section four: Community Resilience	20
Section Five: Reducing the impact of unexploded ordnances	23
Sections Six: Program Activities	25
Winterization response	26
Community services	26
Training Activities	27
Section Seven: Justice and Accountability Program	28
Section Eight: Activities of the Legal Department	30
Section Nine: Hero Fund	31
Section Ten: “Al Rased”	32
Section Eleven: Advocacy, communications and media	34

Introduction

In 2022, the White Helmets (WH) volunteers continued their efforts to respond to humanitarian needs in Syria, providing assistance to more than 4 million people in need in 732 communities where we have access, despite the security and logistical challenges, adhering to the principles of humanity, independence, neutrality and impartiality stipulated in international humanitarian law. The volunteers also continued to provide essential services, remove unexploded ordnances, carry out awareness campaigns, and enhance community resilience.

Our volunteers responded to the continued violations of the ceasefire in northwest Syria by the Syrian regime and its allies that continue to claim the lives of innocent people.

The suffering of Syrians in northwest Syria, whether in communities or overcrowded regular and ad hoc camps, continued due to several factors including, the protracted conflict, poor public health and cholera outbreak, the economic crisis, displacement, worn-out infrastructure, coinciding with shrinking levels of humanitarian aid.





Section one:

Emergency response to military attacks

The WH volunteers continued to provide emergency response to the military attacks that targeted civilians and civilian infrastructure in northwest Syria in 2022.

The WH response to military attacks includes providing first aid services to the wounded and injured at the site of the injury and ambulance services to transport affected populations as quickly as possible to medical points and hospitals. Our response to military attacks also includes the task of recovering dead bodies, in addition to technical interventions that may be required for the search and rescue of victims trapped under the rubble. Our teams also provided firefighting services to extinguish the fires resulting from the shelling or explosions that hit the sites. Finally, our teams secure the impacted sites to ensure they are safe and fit-for-use.

The White Helmets teams carry out life-saving operations in full compliance with international humanitarian law, and with full respect for neutrality as a core value that ensures assistance to all victims based on their need for humanitarian intervention without any discrimination.

Military attacks during 2022

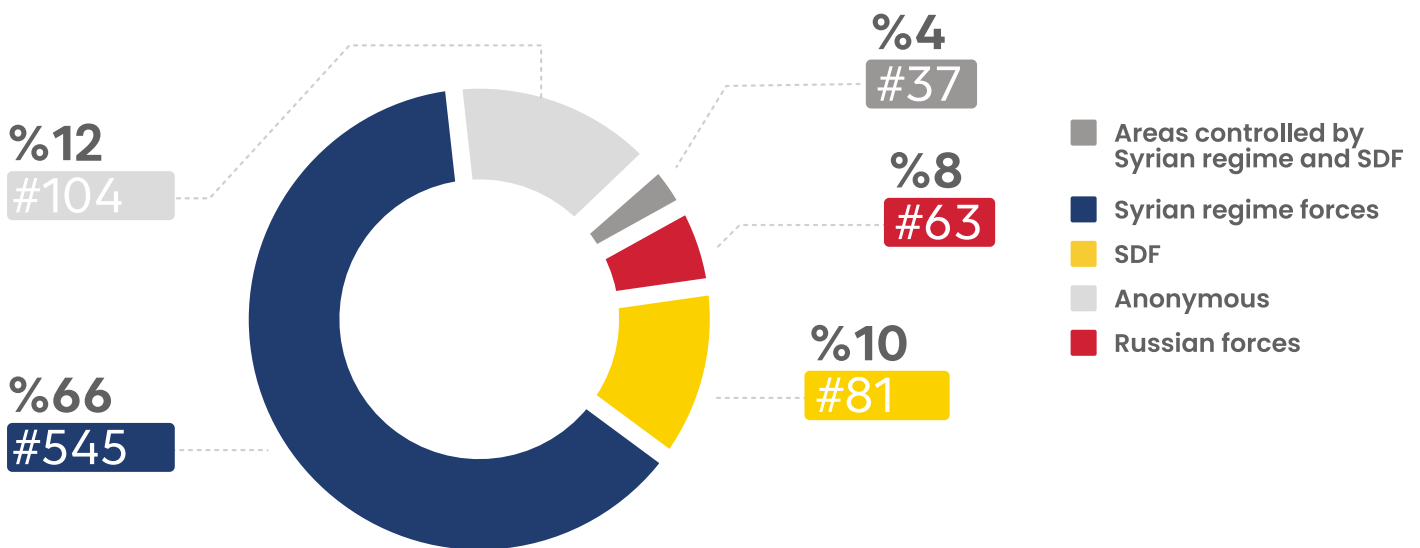
The military attacks by the Syrian regime and Russia continued despite the ceasefire agreement signed on March 5, 2020. In 2022, the White Helmets volunteers responded to 830 military attacks within 183 communities and 12 camps. October witnessed the largest number of attacks (112 attacks), followed by August (100 attacks).

The Syrian regime was responsible for 66 percent of the attacks, while the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) were responsible for 10 percent of the attacks, and the Russian forces were responsible for 8 percent of the attacks, whereas 4 percent of the attacks were launched from areas controlled by the Syrian regime forces and SDF. In addition to 12 percent anonymous attacks.



within 183 communities and 12 camps

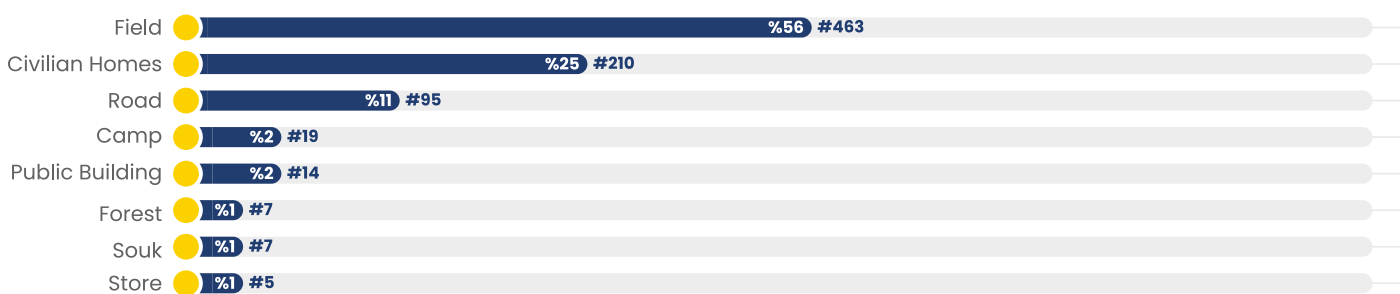
Figure 1: Military attacks according to attacking party



Military attacks according to the targeted location

The attacks targeted various civilian infrastructure aiming to cause the largest number of deaths and injuries amongst civilians. The largest percentage of attacks 56 percent targeted agricultural fields, followed by civilian homes 25 percent, then roads 11 percent. The attacks also targeted camps, public build-ings, markets, and hospitals.

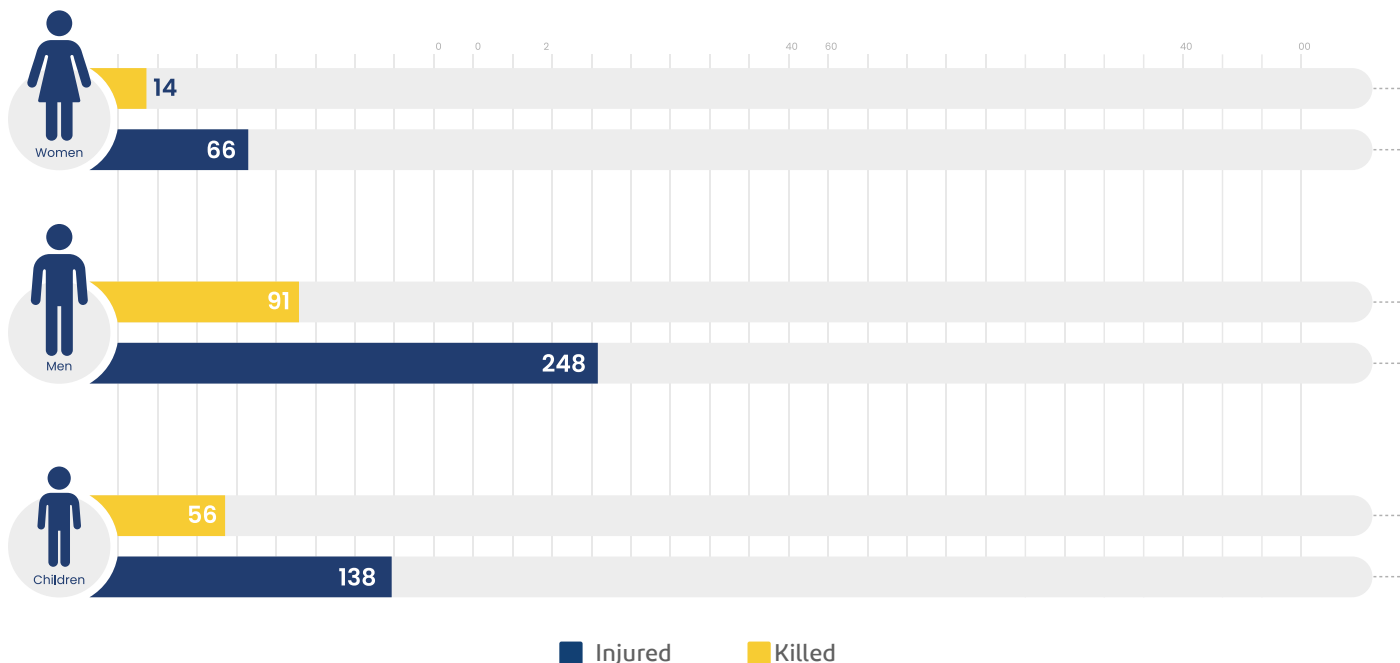
Figure 2: Military attacks according to targeted location



Civilian casualties as a result of military attacks

During their response to the military attacks, the White Helmets volunteers recovered 161 dead bodies, including 14 women and 56 children, and rescued 452 wounded, including 66 women and 138 children. The volunteers faced constraints with humanitarian access to the targeted sites, due to the monitoring of the targeted places by reconnaissance aircraft, and the fear of renewed bombing or double-tap strikes. This significantly hinders our ability to deliver lifesaving emergency and first aid services to the wounded and those stuck under the rubble. The volunteers have received special training on first aid and how to deal with the injured, including women, children and people with special needs.

Figure 3: No. of killed and injured civilians by gender and age



Massacres

The White Helmets volunteers responded to nine massacres, during which they recovered the bodies of 73 killed civilians and rescued 174 wounded. (knowing that a massacre in this context refers to the attack that kills more than four civilians) Syrian regime forces committed two massacres, while the Russian forces committed two massacres, and SDF committed a massacre.

Military attacks according to the weapon

Attacks with artillery shelling recorded the largest percentage of the attacks 69 percent, air raids constituted 8 percent of the attacks, whereas attacks with rocket launchers accounted for 7 percent.

Figure 4: Military attacks by weapon



Attacks on the White Helmets teams

The White Helmets volunteers were targeted with artillery shells fired by the SDF, while they were responding to shelling on a road in the city of Jarabulus on April 18, injuring three volunteers. This violent threat to aid workers is an outright violation of international humanitarian law and puts life-saving assistance and essential services in peril.

White Helmets victims

The White Helmets mourned five volunteers during 2022, bringing the total number of martyrs and deceased among the White Helmets volunteers to 297, as the volunteer Ammar Al-Amin martyred during a firefighting operation, and the volunteers Safwan Khalaf, Muawiya Zaybak, Youssef Al-Mousa and Khalil Haj Khalil passed away after suffering from diseases.



Safwan Khalaf



Khalil Haj Khalil



Muawiya Zaybak



Youssef Al-Mousa



Ammar Al-Amin



Section Two:

Emergency Response to Incidents

(Firefighting and Rescue Operations):

Emergency response in this context refers to the emergency operations carried out by the White Helmets volunteers to manage emergency incidents that are not directly related to military attacks. This includes managing fires, traffic accidents, and rescuing drowning people.

Firefighting operations

White Helmets Volunteers put out

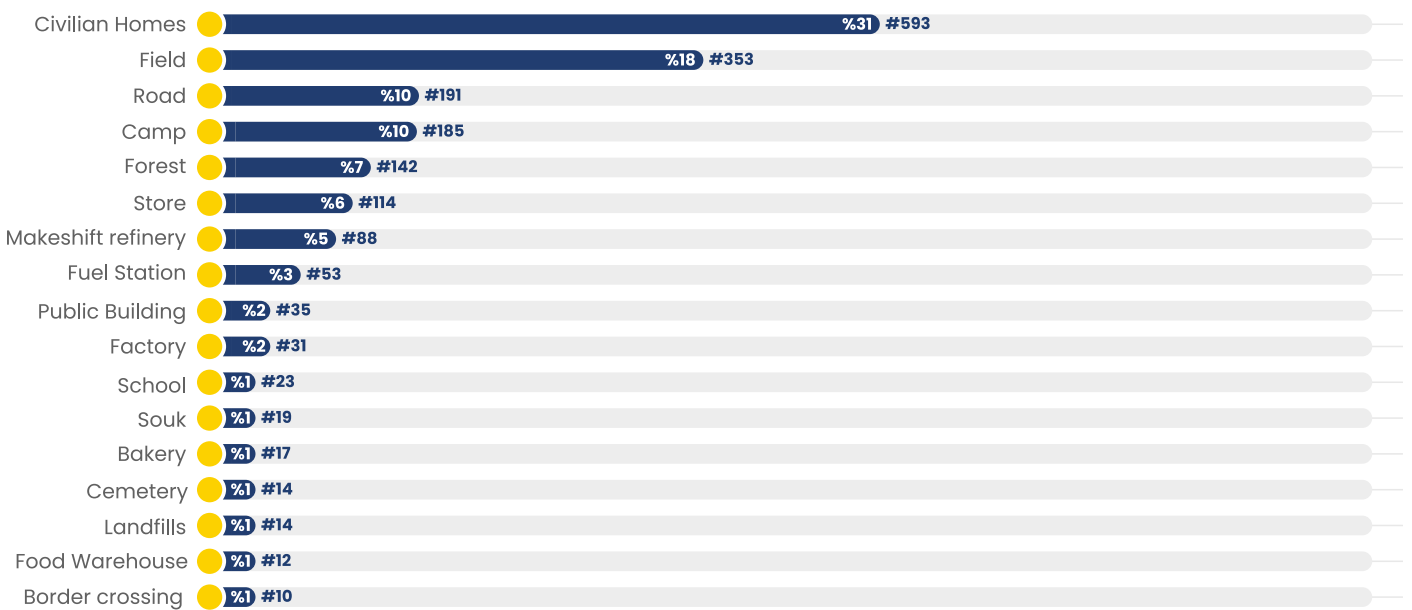
1,929
fires



Firefighting is one of the main activities of the White Helmets centers in northwest Syria, where specialized firefighting teams extinguish fires professionally in accordance with approved standard procedures within the available resources to preserve the lives and properties of civilians.

The White Helmets firefighters extinguished 1,929 fires during 2022. June recorded the largest number of fires (276 fires), followed by July (247 fires). The largest percentage of fires, 31%, broke out in civilian homes, while 18 percent of fires broke out in agricultural fields, 10 percent in camps, 10 percent on roads, 7 percent in forests, 6 percent in shops, and 5 percent in primitive refineries.

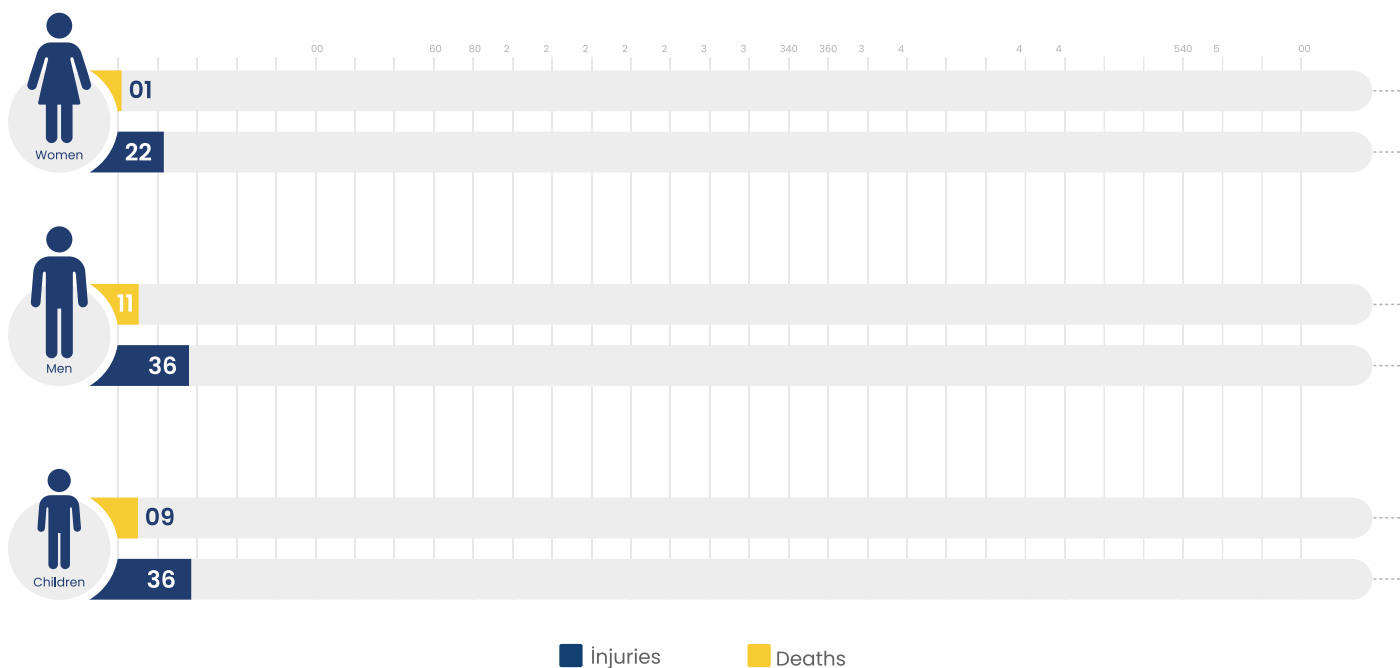
Figure 5: No. of firefighting operations according to the location of the fire



Firefighting operations included 358 communities and 149 camps. During which the volunteers rescued 94 injured, including 22 women and 36 children and they transported the bodies of 21 fire victims, including a woman and nine children.

56 percent of the fires were caused by unknown causes, while 18 percent were caused by fuel leaks, 16 percent were caused by electrical short circuits, and 7 percent were caused by gas leaks.

Figure 6: No. of people rescued during firefighting operations



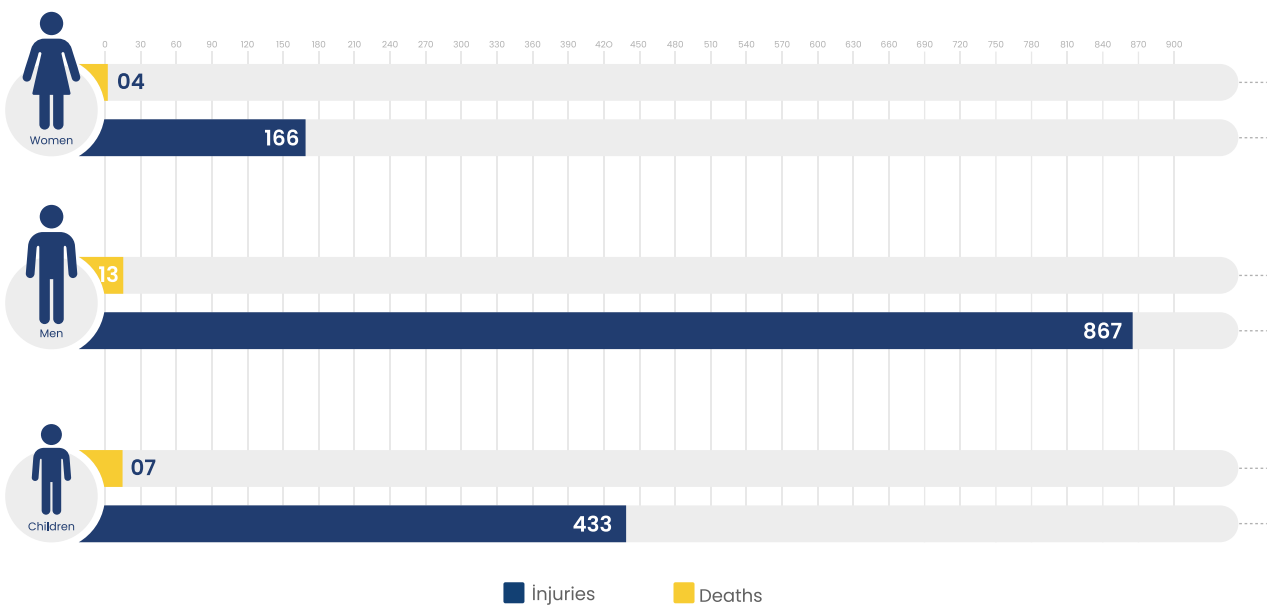
Response to Traffic accidents



The year 2022 witnessed a significant increase in the number of traffic accidents, which are most often caused by the deterioration of road conditions and low road safety standards. In addition to responding to accidents, the White Helmets undertook measures to spread awareness on road safety and mitigate the occurrence of accidents as much as possible.

The volunteers responded to 1,659 traffic accidents during the year, during which they transferred 1,466 injured, including 166 women and 433 children. The volunteers also transported 24 people who died as a result of traffic accidents, including four women and seven children.

Figure 7: No. of people rescued during the response to traffic accidents



Evacuations

The White Helmets evacuated 3,104 people during 78 evacuations, that included evacuations due to military attacks and evacuations from camps following harsh winter storms.

Response to Drowning Incidents



The water rescue teams carried out



operations

The water rescue teams carried out 125 operations in response to drowning cases within 41 communities, where Darkush sub-district witnessed the largest number of drowning incidents, 61, especially in the Orontes River that passes through the sub-district, and Sharan sub-district witnessed 20 drowning cases, especially in Midanki Lake.

It is noteworthy that the deployment the White Helmets' water rescue teams around Midanki Lake and Ain Zarqa reduced cases of drowning there, as the water rescue teams established advanced points during the summer next to Midanki Lake in Aleppo countryside and Ain Zarqa in Idlib countryside to rescue drowning persons and speed up response for any distress call. These points monitor and immediately respond to any incident that may occur, while reminding that these water bodies are dangerous and unsuitable places for swimming.

The spread of the White Helmets rescuers increased the number of people rescued from drowning, as the volunteers rescued 119 people from drowning in 2022, with a marked increase compared to 40 people rescued in 2021. The volunteers also pulled the bodies of 62 drowned persons, as the month of July witnessed the largest number of drowning accidents (56), and the month of August witnessed 35 drowning accidents.

the volunteers rescued

119



people from drowning in 2022



Section Three: Health Services



Ambulance services

The White Helmets teams provide ambulance services through an integrated system that provides first aid to patients and accident victims, in addition to rescuing civilian casualties in the event of military attacks.

Ambulance teams coordinate with other health actors in north-west Syria to ensure a coherent response and contribute to a more effective health system. Ambulance teams have dedicated efforts to enhance and develop paramedics' skills including through training to ensure the safety of patients and the injured.

The White Helmets' ambulance teams transferred 78,973 patients, including 34,870 women and 18,708 children. They also transported the bodies of 1,905 deceased persons, including 540 women and 336 children. Ambulance services covered 667 communities and 1,539 camps.



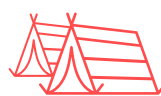
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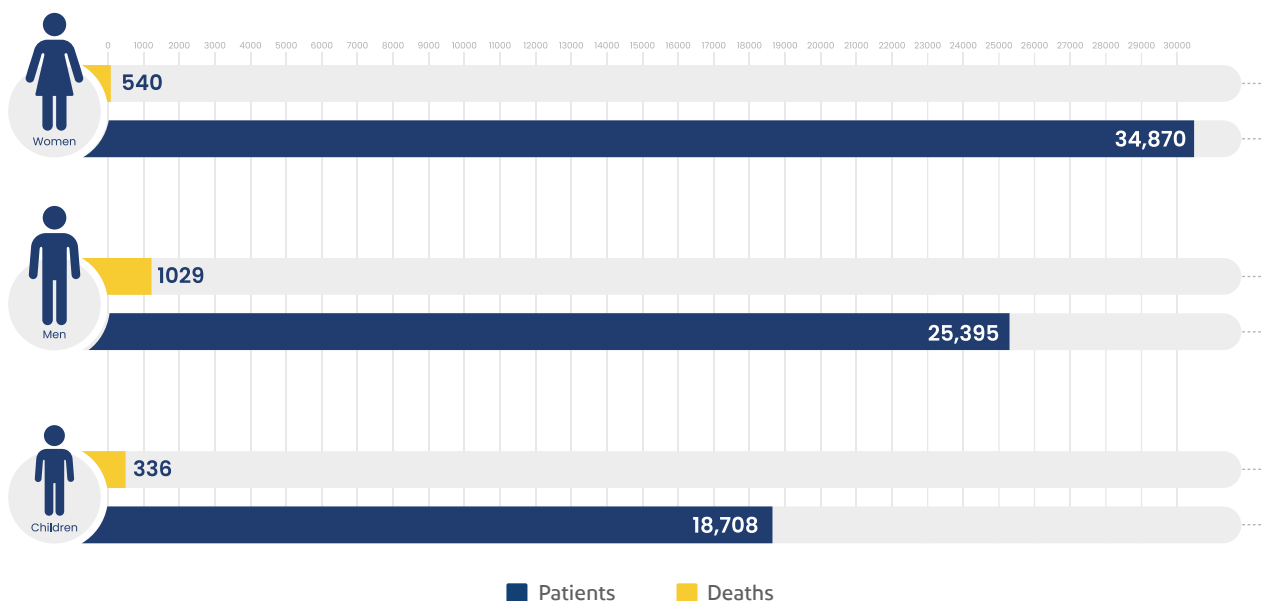


1,539
Camps



667
Communities

Figure 8: No. of people reached with ambulance services according to gender and age



In terms of diagnosis, the volunteers transferred 22,857 internal emergency patients, including 8,033 women and 7,218 children. They also returned 18,793 patients, including 9,564 women and 3,108 children to their homes after receiving treatment. They also transferred 11,278 patients with chronic diseases, including 5,064 women and 1,728 children, and 9,745 people with bruises, including 2,419 women and 3,486 children. The volunteers also transferred 7,077 women with obstetrics and gynecology, including 814 girls under the age of 18.



Health services provided by Women and Family Centers

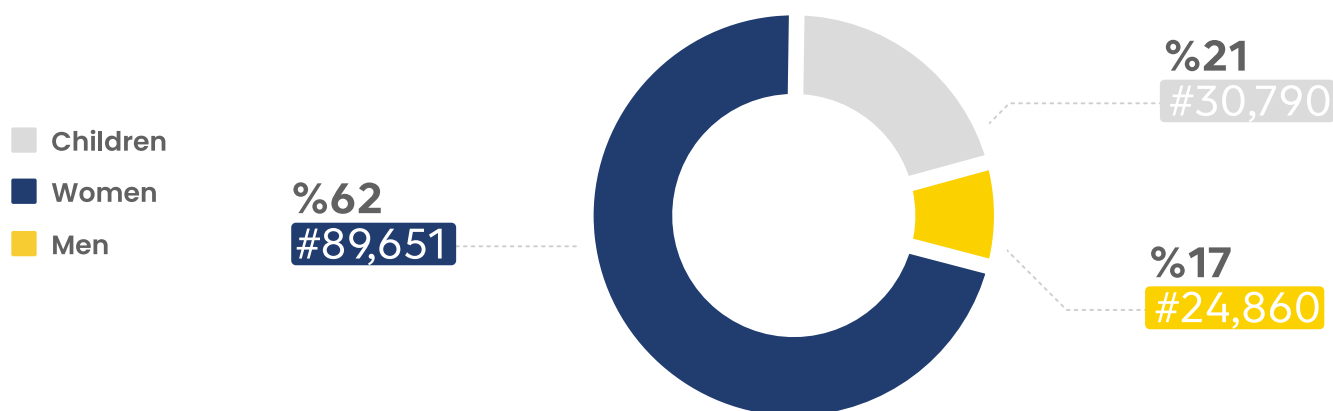
145,301

people received health examinations provided by Women and Family Centers

The White Helmets deliver primary health care services throughout 39 Women and Family Centers which provide general community health services, sexual and reproductive health services, and maternal and child care with a specific focus on the most vulnerable. These centers also provide services that include primary health examinations and medical consultations, in addition to awareness-raising activities both inside and outside the centers.

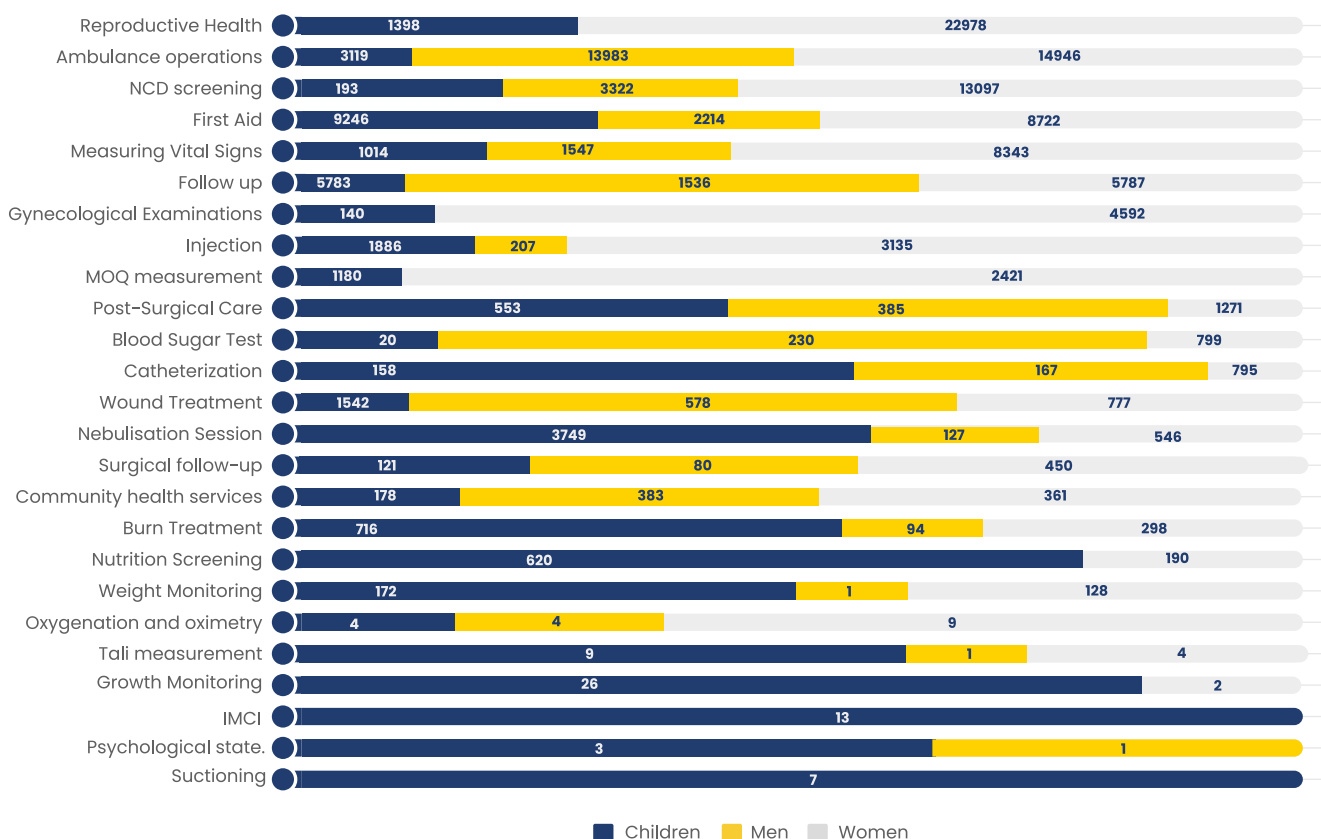
The number of people who received health examinations and consultations provided by Women and Family Centers during 2022 was 145,301 people, including (89,651 or 62%) women, and (30,790, or 21%) children.

Figure 9: No. of beneficiaries of Women and Family Centers according to age and gender



In terms of diagnosis, 32,048 patients, including 14,946 women and 3,119 children benefited from ambulance operations, while reproductive health services were provided to 24,376 women, including 1,398 girls under 18 years old. First aid was provided to 20,182 patients, including 8,722 women and 9,246 children. Meanwhile 16,612 patients, including 13,097 women and 193 children benefited from chronic diseases survey.

Figure 10: No. of beneficiaries of medical interventions provided by women and family centers according to disease

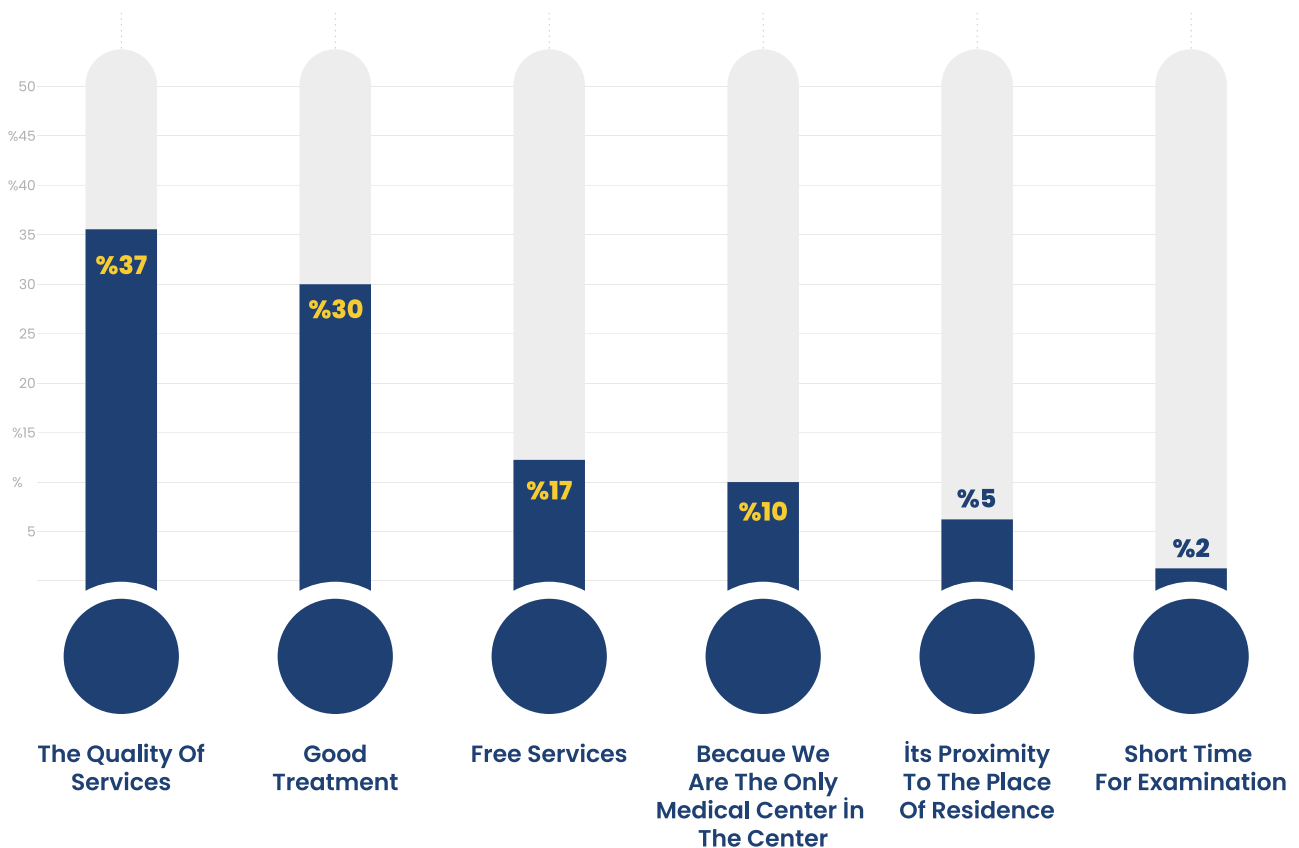


76 percent of the health examinations were provided within the Women and Family Centers, while 9 percent of them were provided within the camps within the framework of the periodic visits carried out by the volunteers to find out about the cases that are unable to reach the centers. In the same context, 9 percent of the services were provided within the patients' homes, including the elderly and those who suffer from mobility difficulties resulting from their health condition, including di-alysis patients.

Within the framework of continuous follow-up of the opinions of the beneficiaries to find out their satisfaction with the level of health services provided, Women and Family centers conducted a survey of the beneficiaries' opinions in order to continuously improve the mechanisms of providing health services and to find appropriate solutions.

The results of the survey showed that the primary reason for choosing the Women and Family centers at a rate of 37 percent is the quality of services provided by the centers, followed by good treatment by volunteers at 30 percent, and 17 percent of the beneficiaries stated that they chose these centers because their services are free, while 10 percent confirmed that the reason is that the center is the only medical point in the region.

Figure 11: The results of the survey, which shows the reason for the beneficiaries choosing the Women and Family Centers



Awareness activities

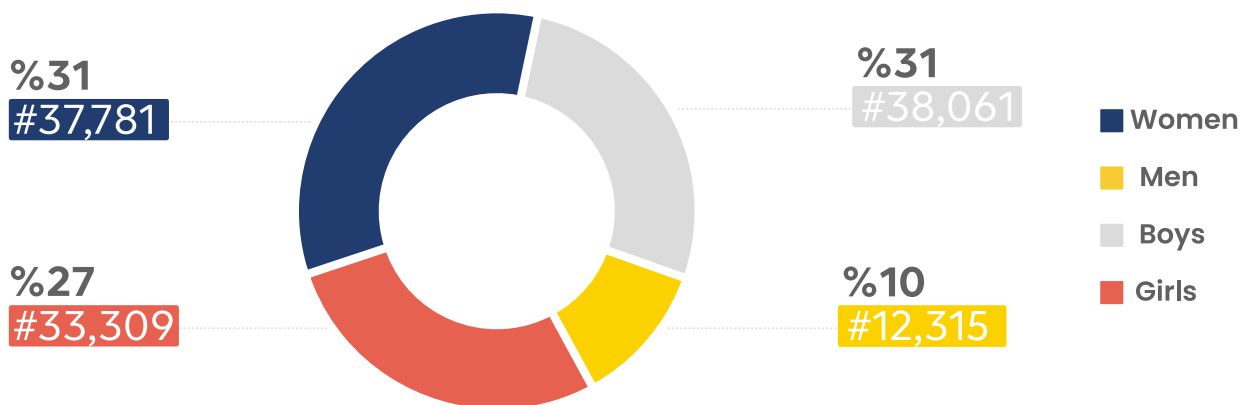
The specialized teams of the White Helmets volunteers organized

7,654 
awareness raising



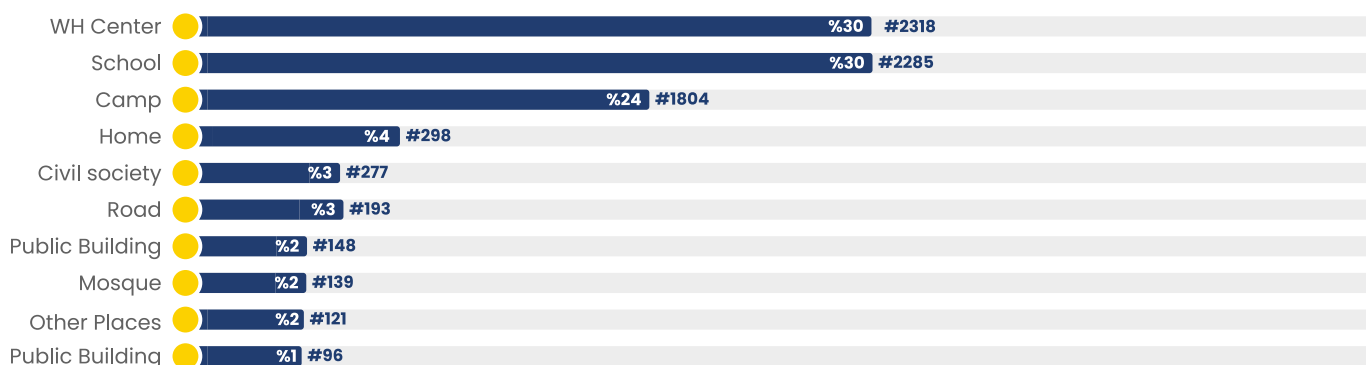
The specialized teams of the White Helmets volunteers organized 7,654 awareness raising activities during the year, benefiting 121,466 people, including (71,370 children, 58%) and (37,781 women, 31%), as the awareness activities enhance the distinguished role of the White Helmets centers within the community, where WH centers invest their access to the members of society, especially women and children to deliver the awareness message in the areas of health prevention and civil protection, within specialized training packages that are constantly updated to keep pace with the ongoing challenges within their local communities. Awareness raising activities included conducting awareness raising sessions, activities for children, and distributing gifts and pamphlets, in addition to placing wall posters in public buildings, especially in schools and educational institutions, in coordination with the education directorates and municipal councils.

Figure 12: No. of people who participated in awareness sessions according to age and gender



The location of these awareness raising activities varied to ensure the widest participation of all segments of society. Whereas 30 percent of the activities were provided within WH centers and Women and Family centers, while the other 30 percent of the activities were provided within schools, and the remaining activities were provided within camps, focusing on topics that are a priority for the internally displaced persons (IDPs) within those camps.

Figure 13: Awareness activities according to place



The centers continued to select topics according to priorities. As 14 percent of the activities raised awareness about cholera prevention in light of the spread of the disease in northwest Syria. In a related context, 8 percent of the activities raised awareness about the cleanliness of the surrounding area, and 9 percent of the activities raised awareness about coronavirus in order to limit the spread of the virus. The awareness sessions also included general awareness, awareness about dealing with emergency cases, and awareness about mental health.





Section four:

Community Resilience

This section includes the operations of the White Helmets that are carried out within various sectors, especially in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), and strengthening the resilience of the local community, in addition to other logistical activities that support public community facilities.

The volunteers conducted 36,333 general service operations during the year within 732 communities and 1,353 formal and informal camps in northwest Syria. In this context, the White Helmets volunteers carried out 5,405 operations to level lands within 406 communities and 732 camps, 3,150 road opening operations within 439 communities and 268 camps, and 2,991 washing and cleaning operations at schools and streets within 423 communities and 43 camps.



Operation Name	No. of Operations	No. of Vill	No. of Camps
Washing And Cleaning (School, Street, ...)	2,991	423	43
Grounds Leveling And Graveling	5,405	406	732
Opening Roads	3,150	439	268
Pulling A Car	2,595	387	140
Backfilling Holes	2,255	318	194
Other community services	2,968	333	255
Digging A Sewer Line	2,072	258	403
Waste Disposal	1,421	244	75
Transfer of materials and residues	1,689	250	178
Debris Removal	2,225	241	69
excavation	747	179	187
Opening Waterways	761	189	181
Digging Graves	1,001	198	9
Digging A Drinking Water Line	482	125	26
Crane works	624	114	40
Water Supply	2,456	219	51
Rehabilitating Of Facilities	488	94	6
Lifting berms for rain water	214	84	63
Disinfection	1,760	143	16
Animal Rescue	143	68	8
Electricity Repair	197	49	3
Planting Trees	332	47	5
Water Suction	58	26	13
Burial	106	37	1
Demolish A Roof Or A Wall	130	46	3
Equipping A Camp	62	36	36
Spraying insecticides	1	1	

Map1: No. of services by village in 2022

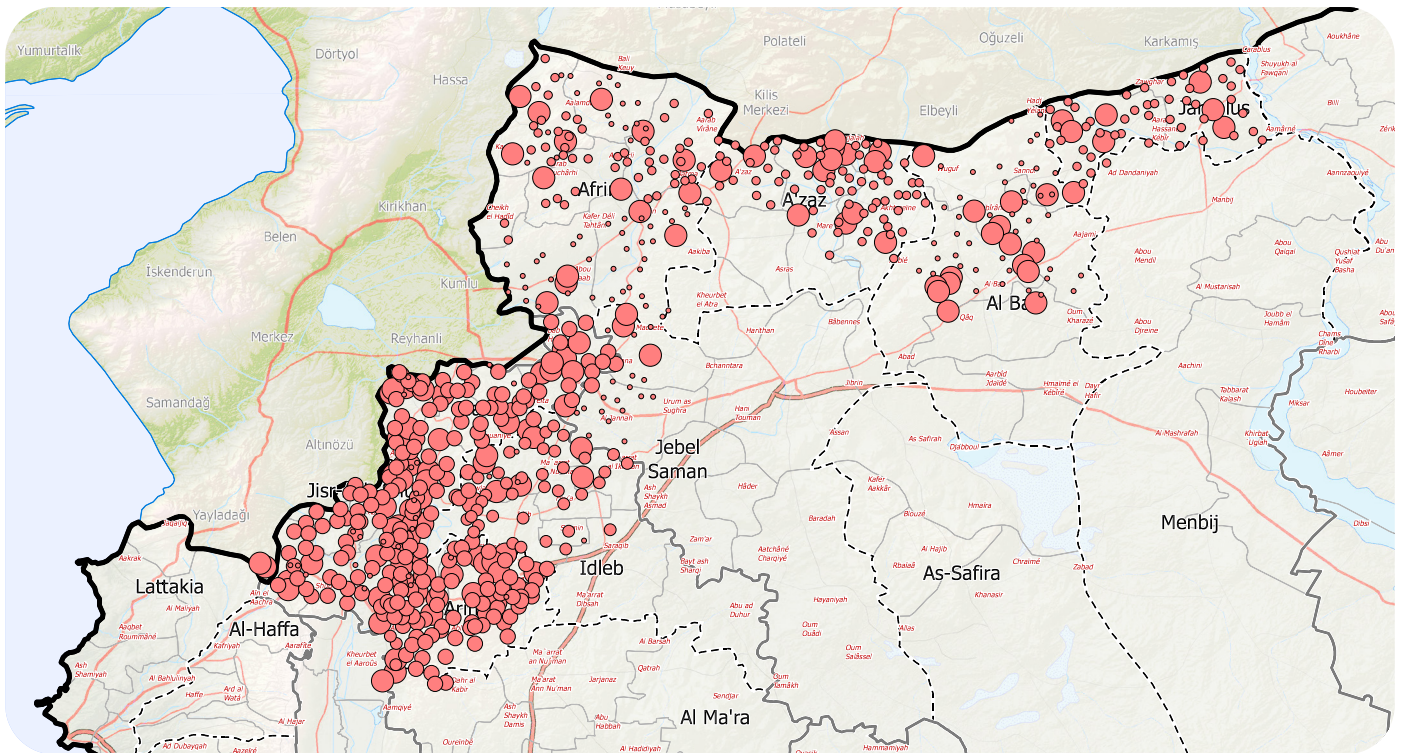
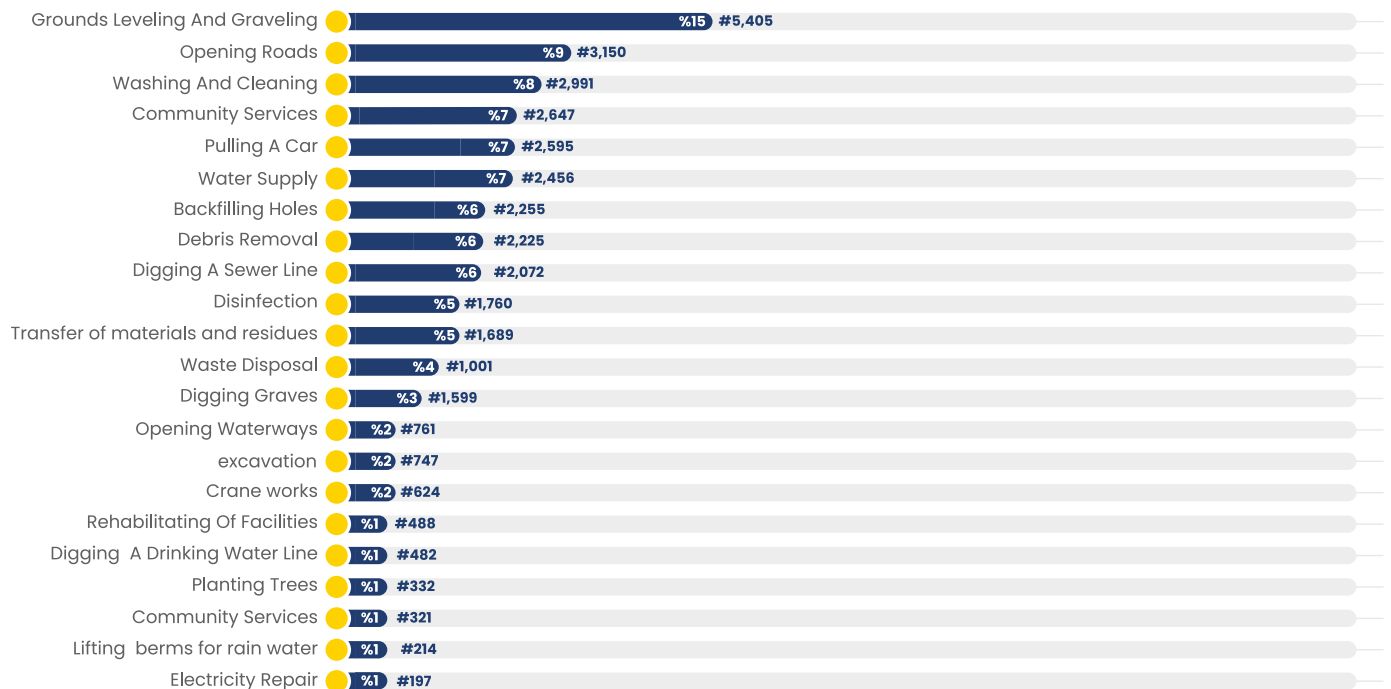


Figure 14: community resilience services





Section five:

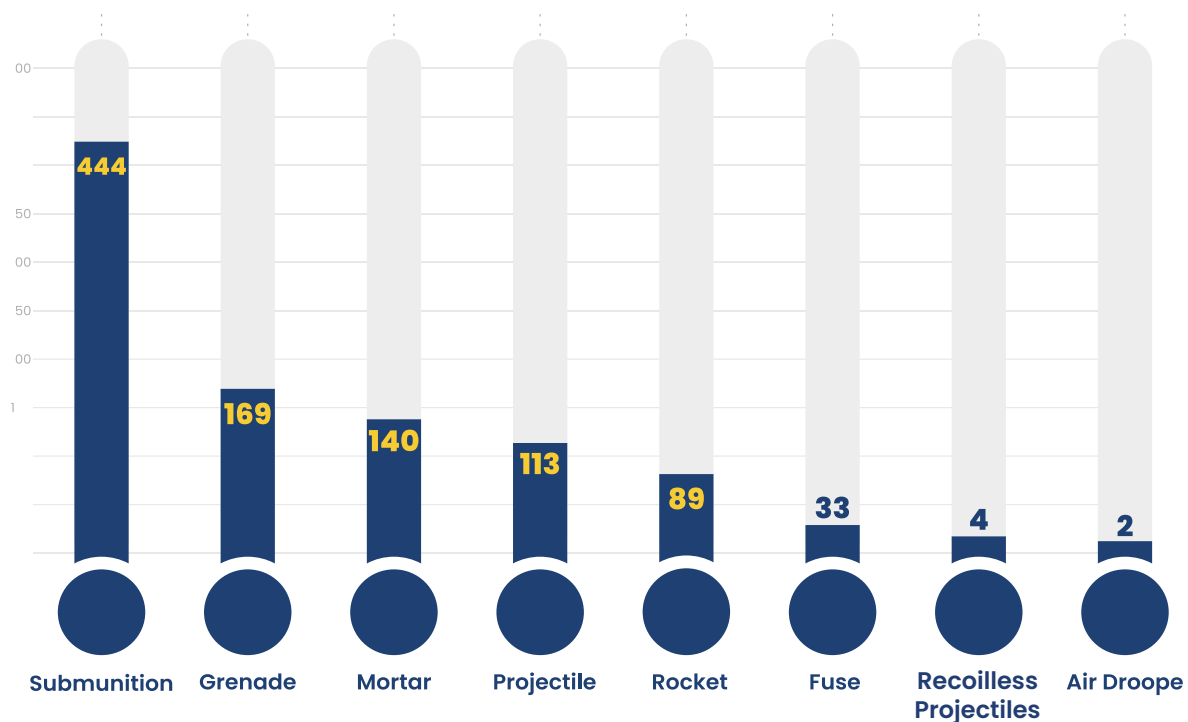
Reducing the impact of unexploded ordnances

Unexploded remnants of war in northwest Syria pose a threat to the lives of civilians. To mitigate this danger, the organisation trained six teams on the mechanisms to deal with munitions and eliminate their dangers. Our teams continue non-technical surveys, in cooperation and coordination with local authorities and civil society, to eliminate the risks resulting from unexploded ordnances (UXO), in addition to educating the local communities about the dangers of mines and UXOs.

In 2022, the WH officially joined the International Campaign to Ban Landmines - the Cluster Munition Coalition (ICBL-CMC) as part of its efforts to clear remnants of war in Syria and to highlight the danger they pose on the populations in Syria as well as the need to remove these remnants and protect civilians from their deadly impact. The ICBL-CMC represents a global network of national and international NGOs in more than 100 countries and works for a world free of landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war; a world where there are no new victims and where the needs of affected communities and survivors are met, and their human rights are guaranteed.

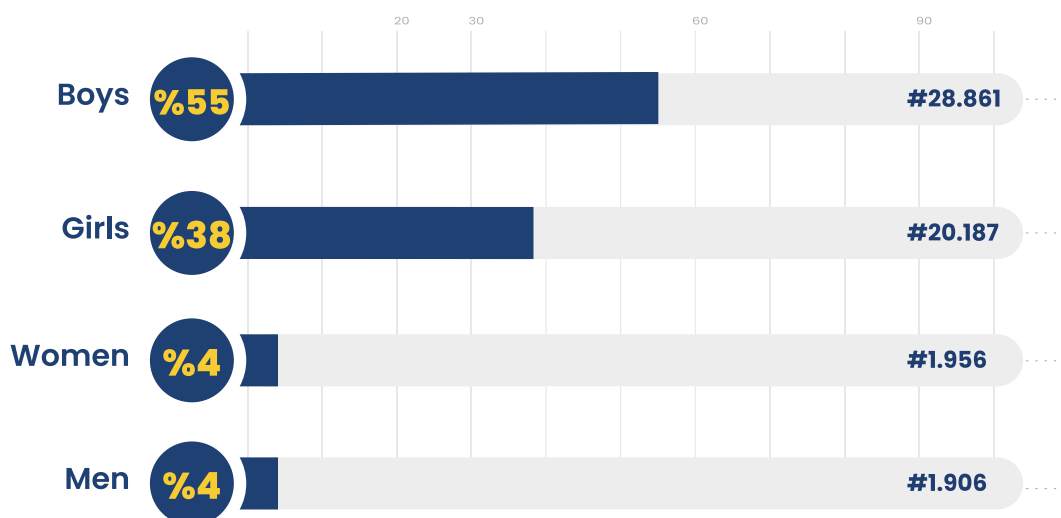
Ordnance survey teams carried out 1,332 non-technical surveys, during which they confirmed the presence of 442 areas contaminated with UXOs. The teams also carried out 915 operations of removal and disposal of war remnants, during which they removed 994 UXOs, including 444 submunitions (cluster bombs), 169 grenades, 140 mortar shells, 113 projectiles, and 89 rockets.

Figure 15: No. of removed UXOs according to type



Mine/UXO awareness teams carried out 2,546 awareness activities at schools, camps and agricultural lands benefiting 52,910 persons, including 49,048 children, as the awareness sessions focused on children due to the great risks to their lives as a result of playing or getting close to unexploded ordnance.

Figure 16: No. of beneficiaries of Mine/UXO awareness activities





Sections Six: Programs Activities

The White Helmets Organisation continued the plan to empower the volunteers, introduce them to the latest academic and practical methods, and to improve their preparedness and response through the local expertise and competencies available within the WH cadres, in addition to seeking external expertise when necessary.

Winterization response



Based on the needs assessment, the White Helmets volunteers paved 36,288 cubic meters with gravel and prepared channels and networks to drain rainwater, to avoid floods, as part of its winterization activities.



Community services

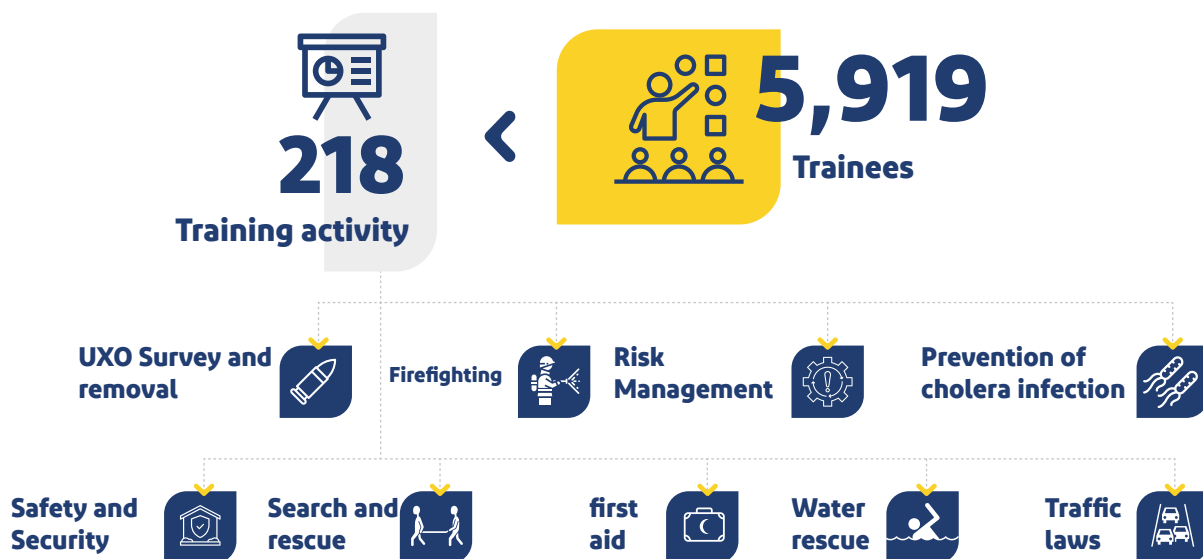
The White Helmets volunteers provided the local communities with safe play spaces for children in the camps, parks and schools in order to draw a smile on their faces, and as part of the community participation activities, the volunteers also implemented wall paintings and banners carrying educational messages

Training Activities



The White Helmets Organisation continued the plan to empower the volunteers, introduce them to the latest academic and practical methods, and to improve their preparedness and response through the local expertise and competencies available within the WH cadres, in addition to seeking external expertise when necessary. Qualified White Helmets trainers continued to provide training courses within specialized training centers, educational and health institutions, and civil society organizations for White Helmets volunteers, non-governmental organizations, and the local community in northwest Syria.

The White Helmets organized 218 training activities for 5,919 male and female trainees. The trainings included many topics, according to an assessment of needs and priorities in northwest Syria, including security and safety, firefighting, water rescue, search and rescue, traffic laws, risk management, first aid, prevention of cholera infection, and surveying and removing unexploded ordnance.





Section Seven:

Justice and Accountability Program:

The Justice and Accountability (J&A) Program aims to strengthen the rule of law and increase opportunities for accountability for human rights violations and war crimes in Syria and contribute to ending impunity and building a culture of accountability. The Program is dedicated to furthering justice by collecting, documenting, preserving and analyzing evidence related to violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law, as well as supporting the efforts of investigative bodies such as the organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the International, Impartial, and Independent Mechanism on international crimes committed in Syria since March 2011 (IIIM).

To achieve these goals, the program continues to pursue the following lines of effort:

Evidence collection and documentation

During 2022, the WH team continued to collect and document a substantial amount of evidence of conflict incidents. This included potential human rights violations and war crimes via video and photo recording of the incidents that the organisation responded to. This digital documentation comes with a solid chain of custody and is of a higher quality than other documentation related to the Syrian conflict. Due to the WH's role as first responders, our volunteers can document incidents in greater detail than others.

In addition, to videos and photos, the WH also collected other types of information through its humanitarian activities which contribute to the J&A Program including: incident reports (including the date of the incident, the location, the type of building targeted, the number of victims, and names of witnesses etc.); specialized reports about the identification and disposal of explosive remanence of war and hazardous materials; and flight logs through the early warning system.

Preservation and archiving

One of the fundamental aims of the WH is to protect and conserve our digital evidence for use in justice and accountability efforts. Therefore, maintaining integrity and a clear chain of custody of the collected data is essential. This process of conservation refers mainly to recording and preserving details of digital evidence from its collection to presenting it to the relevant parties. It ensures that the data provided remains original and authentic without interference. To prepare the visual documentation for use in future legal proceedings, the WH established the VDT Project in 2021. It aims to establish and preserve a searchable archive of potential war crimes and human rights violations. To date the team has processed and catalogued approximately 55,000 WH videos.

Coordination and investigation support

The violations of international humanitarian law and human rights violations and abuses in Syria are of serious concern to the WH. In this regard, the organisation provided investigative support by sharing evidence and visual documentation gathered on the ground to national and international stakeholders, including international organisations, law enforcement authorities, national prosecution services. The White Helmets contributions of physical samples and witness testimony were referenced in two reports of the OPCW Fact Finding Mission (FFM) published in 2022, firstly in the FFM report on the use of chlorine in Kafr Zeita on 1 October 2016, and secondly in the FFM report on the use of sulphur mustard in Marea on 1 and 3 September 2015.

Growing WH justice network

The WH's engagement efforts in the field of J&A also included connecting and networking with local, regional and international stakeholders. In this regard, the organisation consolidated and developed partnerships with public institutions, international organisations, NGOs, universities, research centres, think tanks and credible media outlets. In particular, the WH signed agreements and memoranda of understanding with four Syrian-led organisations including: Syria Justice and Accountability Center (SJAC), Syria Legal Development Programme (SLDP), the Syrian Archive/Mnemonic and The Day After. Through these connections, the WH aims to harness diverse approaches and participative methods to produce projects, reports and research, as well as recommendations on how to strengthen the role of civil society organisations in this field.

Advocating for justice and accountability

The J&A team continued their advocacy work with the aim of influencing the decision-making process, highlighting violations of international humanitarian law and human rights in Syria and mobilizing efforts to ensure the protection of civilians, especially humanitarian workers in Syria and the world, by writing research papers, joint letters and parallel reports and submitting them to relevant international bodies as well as participation in international conferences, meetings and initiatives in this regard.



Section Eight:

Activities of the Legal Department

The White Helmets administration, through the legal department, implemented trainings for volunteers on international humanitarian law during 2022, emphasizing the importance of providing all humanitarian services to all groups in need, regardless of color, race, or beliefs. The volunteers were also trained on traffic law.

The legal department also drafted legal contracts and memoranda of understanding between the White Helmets and other organizations, including: (The Syrian Interim Government (SIG), Syria Immunization Group, Environmental Protection Agency of Syria (EPA-Syria), IDA, Manahel, Watan, and Hope Revival). The legal department also represented the WH before courts and continued to provide legal advice to administrative offices and directorates with regard to the impact of correct work practices, and to coordinate legal work in the WH directorates according to a legal policy and unified procedures. The legal department also continued legal follow up and receiving complaints and objections and addressing them as specified within the approved complaint protocol.



Section Nine:

Hero Fund

The Hero Fund is one of the pioneering solidarity initiatives aimed at caring for the families of martyrs among the White Helmets volunteers who sacrificed themselves to serve the local community and save lives. The Fund also supervises the treatment of wounded and sick volunteers in Syria and within Turkish hospitals until their recovery and rehabilitate them so that they are able to work again, according to the type of injury and its consequences, to ensure a decent life for the volunteers and their families.

In 2022, the Fund provided monthly support to 297 families of the White Helmets martyrs. The financial support includes ensuring a decent living for the martyr's family, in addition to providing the requirements for completing school and university education for their children so that they can live in a better future.

The Hero Fund also provide financial support to volunteers to cover medical treatment expenses. In 2022, the fund provided support to more than 300 volunteers, whose injuries and illnesses included war injuries, heart diseases, orthopedic surgery, and cancer. This support also included follow up treatments for the patients and injured, including four patients with complete paralysis and the maintenance of prostheses for eleven volunteers. Several injured volunteers resumed work within the White Helmets centers according to their physical capabilities after recovery, as their return to work can constitute an essential part of recovery and as it encourages self-reliance and they are able to resume their normal and prove to themselves and their community their continuous ability to work and give. The Fund also provides permanent salaried support to some volunteers if they are unable to work again.



Section Ten: “Al-Rased”

The White Helmets continued to provide “The Monitor” Al-Rased service, which the organisation launched in 2016. Al-Rased is an early warning service developed in partnership with Hala, a company specialized in providing life-saving solutions in conflict areas.

Al-Rased sends warnings related to the overflight of aircraft in Syria before the strikes, in order to warn civilians and reduce the number of victims of air strikes.

Where the Al Rasd service receives aircraft movement observations from reliable civilian observatories and analyzes them to predict the communities that may be targeted and to calculate the estimated time for the aircraft to reach these communities, then it publishes warnings through active channels as quickly as possible.

Al-Rased monitored 28,019 flight sightings and issued 17,759 warnings through the Visual Warning System (VWS) and other devices during the year 2022, as part of its mission to protect civilians before bombing. Meanwhile, Al Rased organized 1,750 awareness activity benefiting 22,305 persons, including 13,412 females.

The vital facilities that benefit from Al Rased Alert System include medical and educational facilities, protection centers and the White Helmets centers. The alert system helps ensure that these facilities continue to operate even in times of conflict. Where Al Rased has installed its alert system within 355 facilities in northwest Syria. The VWS system alerts people in these facilities about the potential risk of aerial bombardment, enabling them to take precautions to stay safe. In addition to awareness campaigns to inform people about the warning system and how to maintain their safety during aerial bombardment by protecting vital facilities and the people who depend on these facilities.

The awareness program also included actual and virtual sessions, in addition to the distribution of educational posters, in order to reach as many people as possible and raise awareness about the warning system and how to stay safe in times of conflict. These efforts helped educate the community about the alert system and the steps they can take to protect themselves and their families.

The Al Rased team conducts maintenance and continuous troubleshooting of the alarm systems in all facilities to ensure that they are ready for service. These processes included checking for low-performance devices due to electrical or internet problems and replacing faulty devices. It performed 646 maintenance and troubleshooting operations and 37 device replacements. These efforts have helped maintain the readiness and reliability of the alert system to protect people who depend on these facilities for essential services.

In addition to using the Internet to deliver alerts, the Al Rased team also works with Hala company to set up radio broadcasts as a way to reach people who do not have access to the Internet, including ambulance drivers and civilians. These devices can be used to broadcast warning messages to people in the affected area to help them stay safe during times of conflict. Where Al-Rased team conducted 62 field follow-up operations to prepare these radio broadcasting equipment, including installing the equipment and reporting on the quality of its coverage. In 2023, these efforts will help ensure that people who may not have access to the Internet can still receive warning messages and take precautions to stay safe.



Section Eleven:

Advocacy, communications and media

Bearing witness and creating spaces for Syrians to be heard

The White Helmets continued to highlight the demands and needs of Syrians in key international fora. Our advocacy demanded principled approaches to cross-border humanitarian access and early recovery, and called for justice and accountability for violations of international human rights and humanitarian law in Syria in more than 120 advocacy meetings.

We pushed member states at the United Nations in New York and Geneva to ensure the continuation of cross-border access to Syria and to hold the regime accountable for violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. We developed relations with states beyond our traditional partners by reaching out to Elected Members of the Security Council in virtual and in person meetings. In all, we engaged directly with 18 UN Member States and sent out policy briefings and updates to more than 150 states throughout 2022. The White Helmets increased its outreach to the UN system, including meeting with the Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, Martin Griffiths.

Our advocacy, communications and media work bore witness to the situation in Syria and countered disinformation. White Helmets media officers documented more than 830 military attacks through our social media platforms, and we publicly released a report highlighting the use of laser guided weapons in Syria. White Helmets staff also provided accounts of the real-world impact of disinformation at events, in research and in media reports, such as in Foreign Policy Magazine. We participated in almost 20 events globally throughout the year, both in person and online to provide real-time accounts of the current situation in Syria and the needs of Syrians.

Our work pushed the needle on justice and accountability issues. We increased our advocacy to memorialise chemical attacks in Syria and advocate for an end to impunity. We developed new relationships with states at the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and continued to provide evidence to support the reports of the investigative teams. White Helmets' representatives participated in events in the UK, in the Netherlands and virtually about chemical attacks in Syria. We also memorialised the victims of chemical attacks in Syria in a campaign that saw public vigils take place across the globe. Coverage of the memorials by Al Jazeera and other Arabic language media outlets ensured that our messages were heard by a broader audience and posts about the campaign received more than 1 million impressions on social media. Our work on justice and accountability was also featured in The Syria Trials podcast.

In 2022, our advocacy and communications activities built bridges between women in Syria and the international community. Two virtual events provided spaces for our women volunteers to reflect on the impact of war and to connect with women in Syria and in other conflict affected countries.

Mentoring and capacity building of women volunteers has led to an increase in the number of women taking the lead in advocacy meetings and events. Media coverage of the work of our women volunteers increased significantly with renewed focus on women throughout the year, including in a campaign for international women's day. Women volunteers received messages of support from international figures, as well as prominent Syrian activists and broadcasters.

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



Syria Civil Defense