



## Responsive Fund 2025-26 – Syria

### Guidance for funding applicants

The [UK Humanitarian Innovation Hub](#) (UKHIH) seeks proposals for innovative approaches that address urgent and evolving needs in Syria. UKHIH is an independent humanitarian innovation initiative fully funded by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office and hosted within [Elrha](#).

All applications must be submitted by Friday 27 June 2025, 17:00 (BST).

### Introduction

Syria remains one of the world's most acute humanitarian crisis settings, with 16.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, and over 7.4 million internally displaced as of early 2025. The fall of the Assad regime in December 2024 triggered significant new population movements. By May 2025, 1.87 million Syrians — both internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees — had returned to their homes. Projections suggest that 2 million more IDPs and 1.5 million refugees may return by year's end.

Ongoing conflict, insecurity, and infrastructure damage across Syria continue to generate humanitarian needs, including displacement, protection issues, and barriers to humanitarian access. Reconstruction efforts are hindered by unexploded ordnance, economic deterioration, and degraded essential services. Cuts to humanitarian funding have also created additional gaps in coordination, data collection, and information management. Children and women are particularly vulnerable, facing displacement, food insecurity, and disrupted access to healthcare and education.

In response, UKHIH invites proposals for innovative projects that empower affected populations, enhance response efficiency and effectiveness, and generate transferable learning for the wider sector.

The Responsive Fund - Syria will support projects that respond to one or more of the following:

- Pilot or scale innovations addressing critical gaps in the humanitarian response (see priority areas below).
- Actionable research into innovative solutions addressing critical gaps in the humanitarian response (see priority areas below).
- Leverage technology, new partnerships, or novel delivery models.
- Strengthen local capacity and resilience.
- Demonstrate potential for measurable impact and learning.

## Priority Areas for Proposals

This funding opportunity has been informed by our recent report, [\*After Assad: Navigating Syria's Humanitarian Crossroads\*](#) (2025), as well as findings from interviews with humanitarian responders, civil society leaders, and policy actors. The report and follow on analysis identified critical gaps in coordination, data collection, local capacity, and service provision. This Responsive Fund – Syria has been aligned with those findings.

## Key Themes and Sectors

Priority areas for this funding call include:

- **Data Collection and Analysis:** Innovative methods to fill gaps in needs assessment, analysis, or monitoring in the absence of HPC cycles.
- **Coordination:** New models for coordination, decision-making, information management, surge mechanisms, and anticipatory action.
- **Local Capacity Building:** Supporting local Syrian organisations to scale or improve delivery.
- **Contextual Humanitarian Research:** Applied research into drivers, challenges, and actionable solutions.
- **Sectoral Innovation:** Innovations addressing shared humanitarian challenges in:
  - Livelihoods and economic early recovery.
  - Food security and nutrition.
  - Water, sanitation, and hygiene.

## Who Can Apply?

We are interested in receiving applications from humanitarian agencies, networks, and/or researchers. This may include:

- Individual humanitarian agencies and/or research/analysis agencies.
- Relevant networks of humanitarian organisations.
- National or global levels of the humanitarian cluster system.
- Membership or network organisations that support joint learning and action.
- Entities involved in other forms of humanitarian coordination at national or local levels.
- Existing partnerships that have been formed in response to a clearly defined and shared humanitarian problem.

## Funding Details

A total of £45,000 is available for this funding round. All proposals will be considered on a case-by-case basis based on relevance, feasibility, and potential impact.

- **Application process:** Applicants should apply by completing the application form, due diligence information checklist and questionnaire, and budget template available on the UKHIH website.
- **Deadline:** Friday 27 June 2025, 17:00 (BST).
- **Timeline:** Projects must begin within one month of award and conclude by 31 December 2025.
- **Co-funding:** Proposals that integrate with other donor-funded initiatives are welcome.
- **Timeline:** Projects must conclude by 31 December 2025
- **Co-funding:** Encouraged where relevant.

## Application Requirements

To be considered, applications must demonstrate the following:

- **Problem Definition:** Clearly outline the nature of the problem you aim to address and demonstrate that this is a common challenge affecting multiple humanitarian stakeholders across the Syria response. Please see list above for priority list of potential focus areas.
- **Scope of Work:** Detail the activities that can be feasibly undertaken within 3-5 Months.
- **Outputs and Outcomes:** Define expected results and their impact.
- **Stakeholder Interest:** Demonstrate interest from various partners within the Syria response, including those capable of taking sustained action based on the findings.
- **Communications and Engagement Plan:** Outline strategies for disseminating results and engaging stakeholders where applicable.
- **Partnerships:** Propose potential partners for the project or criteria for selecting them where applicable.
- **Budget:** Provide a detailed budget for the proposed work.

## **Project Readiness**

To ensure rapid implementation, successful applicants are expected to begin project activities within one month of the funding decision. Applicants should review the due diligence information checklist and questionnaire and Elrha' Standard Grantee Agreement in advance to confirm that terms are acceptable and ensure readiness to meet Elrha's due diligence requirements.

Applicants must also confirm:

- Availability of key staff and resources.
- Established partnerships or rapid mobilisation capacity.
- Internal systems and structures to support delivery within the proposed timeline.

For further Elrha funding guidance, please see [here](#).

## **Cost Assessment**

The proposed costs will be assessed against a range of value-for-money factors, including the extent of capacity devoted to the work, day rates, and overhead costs.

Applicants should refer to UKHIH's Eligible Costs Guidance for details on what costs can be included in the budget. Please note that overheads should not exceed 10% of the total project costs.

## **Background Information**

Submissions should also include background information on the applying organisation and any partners involved. This information helps UKHIH understand the context and capacity of the organisations participating in the proposed project.

## Assessment Criteria

- **Relevance to well defined needs in the Syria response:** The issue must relate to the priority areas stated above. It may also encompass non-geographically bound emerging trends impacting the humanitarian sector.
- **Uniqueness of Response:** There should be no other donors or actors currently leading work on this specific problem in Syria. This criterion ensures that the UKHIIH supports non-duplicative initiatives, focusing on problems that might otherwise lack funding in the current landscape. However, we are open to leveraging existing partnerships and funding work, which would be a useful supplement to existing grants.
- **Impact Potential:** The proposed work should contribute meaningfully to addressing the problem and provide broader learning.
- **Stakeholder Involvement:** Where possible, the project should involve the participation of local or national agencies, or multiple humanitarian organisations.
- **Collaborative Approach:** Proposals that involve multiple actors, when feasible.
- **Broader Sector Relevance:** Consideration of broader humanitarian challenges such as climate change, resource limitations, power imbalances, and ethical practices.

## Evaluation and Selection

Applications will be subject to:

- **Initial Screening:** Completeness and eligibility
- **Technical Review:** Review by the UKHIIH Advisory Committee
- **Specialist Input:** Additional input where necessary on complex topics
- **Objective Evaluation:** Assessment against criteria

## Due Diligence

All funding is subject to successful completion of Elrha's due diligence checks to ensure compliance and feasibility.

## Next steps

All applications should be sent to the same email address by Friday 27 June 2025, 17:00 (BST). Please use the subject line *Application: Responsive Fund – Syria*. Please note that due to a high level of interest in this opportunity, UKHIIH is unable to host discussions with applicants ahead of submissions.

We look forward to receiving your innovative proposals.