

# SYRIAN AMERICAN MEDICAL SOCIETY FOUNDATION UNITED KINGDOM

England & Wales · Charity number 1185540

## Details

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Other names	SYRIAN AMERICAN MEDICAL SOCIETY FOUNDATION, SAMS UK
Status	Registered
Legal form	CIO
Registered	2019-09-27
Register	<a href="#">View on the Charity Commission register</a>

## Contact

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## Activities

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**Objects:** THE OBJECT OF THE CIO IS: THE ADVANCEMENT OF HEALTH AND THE SAVING OF LIVES, BY PROVIDING MEDICAL SERVICES, MEDICAL TRAININGS AND MEDICAL EDUCATION FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT, TO SAVE LIVES, PREVENT AND RELIEVE SICKNESS, DISEASE, AND HUMAN SUFFERING THROUGH DIGNIFIED MEDICAL CARE PROVIDED TO EVERY PATIENT IN NEED.

**Activities:** Makes Grants To Organizations Provides Services Provides Advocacy/advice/information Education/training/research

## Classification

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- **How:** Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, Disability, Human Rights/religious Or Racial Harmony/equality Or Diversity
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, People Of A Particular Ethnic Or Racial Origin, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies

## Geography

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- Bangladesh
- Greece
- Iraq
- Jordan
- Lebanon
- Syria
- Turkey
- Ukraine
- Throughout England

## Finances

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Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees	
2024-12-31		£0	£0	-	-
2023-12-31		£0	£0	-	-
2022-12-31		£0	£0	-	-
2021-12-31		£0	£0	-	-
2020-12-31		£0	£0	-	-

## Trustees

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Name	Role	Appointed
DR MEHNAZ MEHBOOB		2019-09-27
DR TAMER MONLA HASAN		2019-09-27
Dr Maher Azzouz		2019-09-27

**SYRIAN AMERICAN MEDICAL SOCIETY FOUNDATION UNITED KINGDOM**

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# Accounts

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# SAMS

# 2024

## ANNUAL REPORT



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# Reflecting on 2024: A Year of Resilience and Renewal

A message from  
**SAMS President**

**Dear Supporters,**

The year 2024 ended as one of the most defining moments of our lives - and one of the most meaningful of mine. After 14 years of struggling to save lives in besieged hospitals and clinics under relentless attacks by the Syrian government - mourning 62 of our colleagues who refused to give up - our nightmare finally ended.

After years of scrambling for just enough funds to keep going, healthcare prevailed. And after questioning whether our efforts were enough, sometimes believing that hope was all we had left to offer, we could finally exhale - if only for a moment.

In December, SAMS staff and our 1,500+ members reaffirmed our unwavering commitment to providing dignified, high-quality healthcare for all Syrians. We pledged to serve in every corner of Syria, working toward a brighter, more unified, and peaceful future by delivering equitable healthcare to the most vulnerable survivors of the 13-year war.

This commitment would not be possible without our incredible members, who dedicated countless volunteer hours in 2024 - joining life-saving medical missions in Syria, Gaza, Jordan, Morocco, Egypt, Lebanon, and Greece. They provided critical medical education to over 1,000 healthcare professionals in the Syrian region and beyond, both in person and virtually.

They served on key committees, offering academic support in the U.S. and conducting research on cutting-edge medical advancements. They also helped organize three dynamic medical conferences and advocated for justice against attacks on healthcare.

The dedication of our members, alongside the heroic work of our staff, continues to inspire us all to do even more for a free and thriving Syria. While we have much to be proud of, our work is far from over. Rebuilding Syria's healthcare system is just beginning, and we are more determined than ever to succeed - because failure is not an option.

Thank you for your unwavering trust and support in SAMS. We couldn't do it without you!

**Dr. Mufaddal Hamadeh**  
SAMS President



## Dear SAMS Members, Donors, and Supporters,

As we reflect on 2024—a year of resilience and transformation—I am honored to share how we stood together to deliver life-saving care, strengthen healthcare systems, and advocate for sustainable solutions. Your unwavering support made this possible.

### A Year of Impact

Thanks to you, SAMS provided:

- 4.4 million free medical services
- 144 medical facilities sustained
- 4,015 healthcare workers supported
- A transformative vision to heal Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Gaza, and beyond

In times of crisis, we remained on the frontlines. Aya, a five-year-old from Aleppo, suffered severe burns in a winter fire. With SAMS' support, she received urgent treatment—a second chance at life.

### A Historic Turning Point

On December 8, 2024, Syria entered a new era of hope. For the first time in years, SAMS expanded beyond Northwest Syria into Damascus, Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Daraa, and Latakia—bringing millions access to dignified, high-quality healthcare.

We are meeting this moment by:

- Restoring and expanding medical facilities
- Developing sustainable healthcare strategies
- Forging local and global partnerships
- Enhancing stroke care and specialized services

At the center of this vision is SAMS Medical City—a state-of-the-art complex for care, education, and research.

### A Personal Reflection

Visiting Damascus after December 8 was one of the most profound moments of my life. I saw joy and hope on the faces of children, mothers, and elders. Meeting healthcare workers and medical leaders reaffirmed that we are truly entering a new chapter for Syria's healthcare.

### Honoring Our Supporters

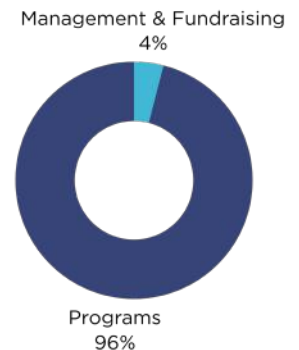
To our healthcare workers, volunteers, donors, and leaders—thank you. I'm especially grateful to our Board and leadership teams for guiding SAMS with vision and integrity.

To our donors: You are the backbone of this mission. Your generosity fuels every life saved, every facility restored, every life rebuilt. Together, we can transform healthcare and build a future of healing and hope.

With deepest gratitude,

**Dr. Abdulfatah Elshaar**  
SAMS Foundation Chair

A message  
from **SAMS**  
**Foundation**  
**Chair**





# A New Dawn for Syria



After over a decade of war, suffering, and unimaginable loss, the word liberation carries more than just political meaning—it signifies the return of dignity, the revival of life, and the rekindling of hope. Syria is finally beginning to breathe again.

With the fall of the oppressive regime and the slow but steady path toward sovereignty, a new chapter begins. Streets once silenced by conflict now echo with children’s laughter. Communities once divided by destruction are daring to dream again.

**And in the heart of this national revival stands SAMS, ready to help rebuild not just health systems, but the spirit of a people who never gave up.**



# SYRIAHEALTH



## Restoring Hope, Rebuilding Health

In this historic moment, SAMS is launching one of its most ambitious efforts to date: Syria Health 2030—a transformative vision to heal the wounds of war and establish a resilient, self-sustaining healthcare system for all Syrians.

### From Emergency to Empowerment

For years, SAMS was on the frontlines, providing emergency relief in the darkest hours of the crisis—dispatching mobile clinics, saving lives through trauma care, and reaching the unreachable. This was Phase 1: survival. Now, as Syria takes its first steps toward recovery, we are entering Phase 2: restoration and reconstruction. SAMS is rehabilitating damaged hospitals, restoring pharmaceutical supply chains, training the next generation of Syrian doctors, and rebuilding public health infrastructure—laying the foundation for long-term resilience.

### Looking Forward: Medical Centers of Excellence

As part of Phase 3, SAMS is planning state-of-the-art centers in critical fields such as oncology, pediatrics, and cardiology—specialized institutions that will not only treat but also teach, lead, and innovate for Syria’s future. These centers will be symbols of what’s possible when a nation rises from the ashes.





## Why It Matters Now More Than Ever

16.7 million Syrians still need humanitarian aid. Entire cities remain without adequate medical services. Chronic illness, mental health crises, and disease outbreaks remain a daily threat.

Liberation is not the end of the journey—it is the beginning of healing. And health is the first building block of peace.

# SYRIA

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE



NOVEMBER – DECEMBER 2024

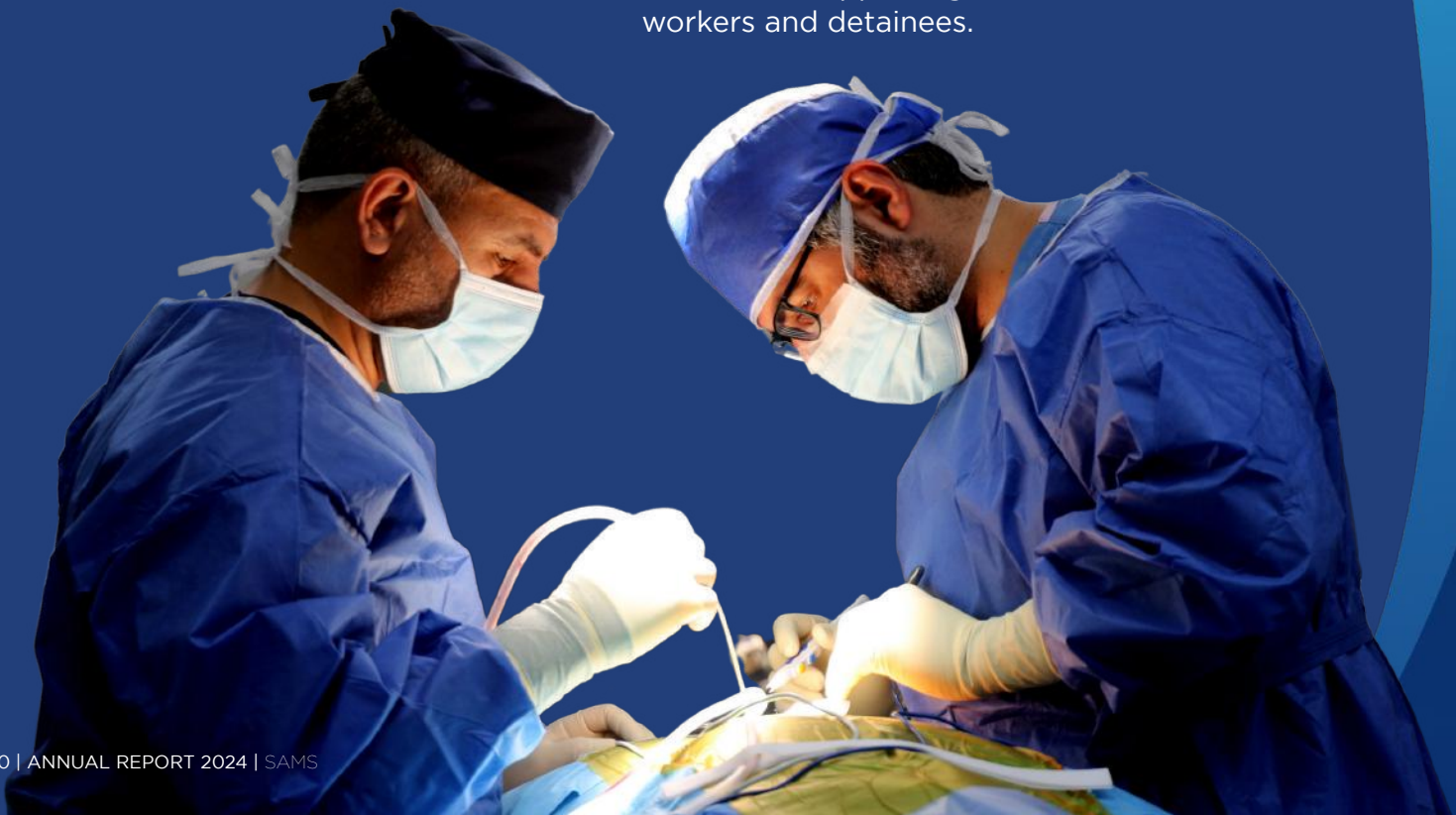
As violence escalated across Syria, SAMS swiftly mobilized to provide critical emergency relief. Our teams worked tirelessly to maintain life-saving care despite mounting humanitarian challenges.

Within days, ambulances were deployed to Aleppo, Idlib, and Hama, while Mobile Medical Units delivered emergency care in Idlib and Ar-Raqqa. ICU capacity was expanded in Idlib hospitals, two damaged facilities were partially rehabilitated, and staff were trained for chemical and biological attacks.

In November and December, SAMS-supported facilities delivered 549,000 treatments across 30+ sites, and supported emergency obstetric care at Ashtar Maternity Hospital in Aleppo. SAMS also provided 100,000 bread bundles to vulnerable populations in Aleppo, Damascus, Homs, and Hama from December 10, 2024, to February 3, 2025.






Dialysis kits reached Al Za'im Hospital, and mental health teams aided displaced people and released detainees. Needs assessments spanned Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Latakia, and Damascus.

SAMS remains committed to expanding emergency care, rehabilitating hospitals, boosting telemedicine, launching blood drives, and supporting healthcare workers and detainees.



# Syria Emergency Impact Overview

November and December 2024







	Medical services provided	549,000
	Hospitals and clinics supported	30+
	Hospitals in Idlib partially restored	2
	Individuals Served through Bread Distribution (Dec 24 - Feb 25)	134,895
	Number of needs assessments conducted	5



# 2024

## AT A GLANCE


In 2024, SAMS made a profound impact across multiple countries, reaching millions with essential healthcare services.


	Total Beneficiaries	1,463,533
	Total Medical Services Provided	4,440,364
	Medical Workers	4,015
	Total Facilities	144
	Total Surgeries	163,721
	Total Deliveries (Including C-section)	22,052




From Syria to Greece, our dedicated teams worked tirelessly in clinics, hospitals, and mobile units, ensuring that even the most remote communities received the care they needed.




 **1,367,591**  
beneficiaries


 **4,279,796**  
medical services




 **24,293**  
beneficiaries


 **49,495**  
medical services




 **8,179**  
beneficiaries


 **8,179**  
medical services




 **26,478**  
beneficiaries


 **28,008**  
medical services




 **6,674**  
beneficiaries

 **20,931**  
medical services



 **13,734**  
beneficiaries

 **34,643**  
medical services



# SAMS

## SPECIAL PROGRAMS

### COCHLEAR IMPLANTS



## Syria & Lebanon

SAMS operates one of the few comprehensive cochlear implant programs in Syria, offering life-changing care to children with hearing impairments. In 2024, 23 cochlear implants have been provided, along with more than 2,300 specialized speech therapy sessions. Currently, 42 children are enrolled in ongoing speech rehabilitation, helping them develop essential communication skills and integrate more fully into their communities.

In June 2024, SAMS held its first Cochlear Implant Medical Mission in Lebanon, performing 10 surgeries for children ages 1-6 in partnership with Rayak Hospital and Right to Hear. Despite logistical and regional challenges, the mission restored hearing and hope, strengthened partnerships, and laid the groundwork for future care.

## Hearing Hope: Amin's Journey

At just 10 years old, Amin Al-Khatib faced the challenges of both hearing and vision loss caused by Usher Syndrome. Though he exceeded the typical age limit for the procedure, SAMS approved his case for a cochlear implant at Bab Al-Hawa Hospital due to his urgent needs and high chances of success.




"Post-surgery tests showed excellent results," said Dr. Hamze Sayd Hassan, the ENT specialist who led the procedure. "He'll now begin advanced speech therapy to support his communication."

**"This is the second cochlear implant SAMS has done for my son," Amin's father shared. "I'm filled with gratitude for their support and compassion."**

To date, SAMS has performed 51 cochlear implant surgeries in northwest Syria, bringing the gift of sound—and hope—to children like Amin.



# Impact Overview

	Cochlear implant recipients	23
	Number of children in speech rehab	42
	Speech therapy sessions	2,332



# DOWN SYNDROME SUPPORT



## White Heart Center in Syria

Established in 2020 in Idlib by a local nurse, and with SAMS partnership in 2024, the White Heart Center supports children with Down syndrome through psychological, educational, and therapeutic services. Its mission is to foster rehabilitation, school integration, and community awareness.

Despite limited resources, the center provides:

- **Psychosocial Support:** Individual and group sessions to improve behavior, build confidence, and engage families.
- **Education & Life Skills:** Four classrooms teach daily living, academic, social, and basic vocational skills tailored to each child's developmental level.
- **Speech Therapy:** Individualized plans improve language skills and pronunciation using the Apraxia curriculum.
- **Physical Therapy:** Customized programs enhance mobility, strength, and independence.
- **Community Engagement:** Awareness campaigns, workshops, and caregiver sessions promote inclusion and rights advocacy.

## Raise Your Voice: Rayan Mashhal's Story

Rayan Mashhal, 13, joined White Hearts Center after struggling with severe speech difficulties and limited access to specialized support. Following thorough assessments, she began a six-month speech therapy program targeting language skills and speech muscle strength.

By the end, Rayan spoke more clearly, with improved vocabulary and sentence formation. Her progress was boosted by integrated support across classes and group sessions, alongside her family's dedicated involvement in practicing skills at home.

Rayan's journey shows how tailored therapy and strong community support can empower children to find their voice.



# Impact Overview

	Educational sessions	3,072
	Total Beneficiaries	60
	Specialist Therapy Sessions	1,440
	Specialist Speech Support Sessions	300





# HELPING HAND

## Supporting Youth Resilience in Jordan & Lebanon

SAMS' Helping Hand program supports adolescents (ages 12-17) in Jordan and Lebanon with psychosocial care to address trauma, anxiety, bullying, and depression.

In Jordan, **369 youth** attended ten group sessions focused on emotional health and coping skills using cognitive behavioral techniques—81% reported improved well-being and reduced symptoms. A key resource is SAMS' free digital mental health game, which addresses stress, trauma, and self-expression through role-play, journaling, and videos. To sustain the program, SAMS trains educators and social workers to lead sessions and refer high-risk youth, strengthening a local mental health network.

In Lebanon, **900 adolescents** and their caregivers attended awareness-raising sessions on mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) topics and enrolled in the program. Of those, 675 adolescents completed the full course, with all showing at least a 30% improvement in psychological well-being assessments.

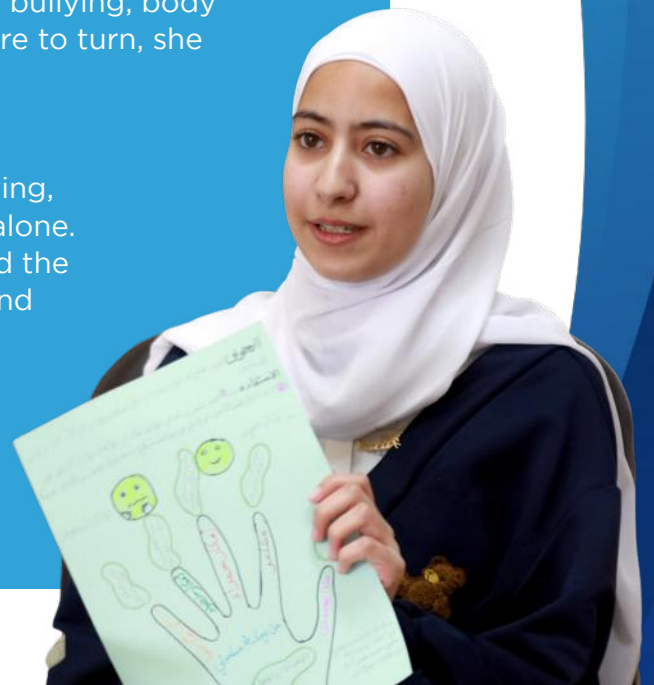
SAMS Lebanon also provided **240 counseling sessions** for identified cases and recruited 90 youth to join the expanding Peer Leadership Network. This group offers feedback on program development and helps introduce the initiative to new communities.

### Nurturing Confidence in Irbid



A 14-year-old girl from Irbid, had long struggled with bullying, body image, and low self-esteem. Isolated and unsure where to turn, she hesitated to speak to her parents—until her mother encouraged her to join the Helping Hand program.

Through sessions focused on body acceptance, bullying, and confidence-building, she discovered she wasn't alone. Over the course of ten group sessions, she developed the tools to express herself, form healthy relationships, and rediscover her self-worth.

***“I found my voice. I realized I'm not defined by what others say—I'm stronger than I thought.”***



# Impact Overview

	Total Beneficiaries	1,269
	Counseling Sessions (Lebanon)	240



# CENTER FOR AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER



## Empowering Children with Autism and Their Caregivers in Turkey

In partnership with Take My Hand (TMH), SAMS supports children with autism and their caregivers in Istanbul through tailored, evidence-based services that promote long-term development and school readiness. In 2024, the program reached **910 beneficiaries**, with equitable access provided to both boys and girls (45% female, 55% male).

Children receive weekly one-on-one therapy sessions based on Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), focusing on speech, self-care, play, motor skills, imitation, social skills, and literacy. In small group settings, children practice food etiquette, play rules, and social interaction. Monthly sensory integration therapy helps address processing challenges, while caregivers benefit from monthly support sessions that offer education, self-care tools, and a sense of community. The program also includes ongoing assistance for transitioning children into public schools, as well as quarterly caregiver check-ins to reinforce home-based ABA strategies.

### A Journey of Progress and Possibility

A 7-year-old girl with autism and motor delays came to TMH struggling with anxiety, limited speech, and poor motor control. With structured therapy, she began to eat, drink, and use the bathroom independently, communicate through gestures and simple words, and engage socially. Her mother expressed deep gratitude for the life-changing impact. Her care now focuses on further building routine, speech, and independence.



# Impact Overview



Total Beneficiaries

910



# YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DIABETES



In partnership with Life For A Child, SAMS designed and implemented an educational and training program for youth and children living with type 1 diabetes, and their caregivers in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Syria. Through this project, patients received a diabetes home management kit, including a one-year supply of lancets and strips, and educational materials. They also participated in workshops on blood glucose self-monitoring, attended presentations on the importance of nutrition, lifestyle and correct use of insulin for their well-being, and learned the signs and symptoms of complications caused by the disease or by incorrect management practices.

## A Fighting Chance: Abdullah's Journey with Diabetes in Zaatari Camp

For seven years, Abdullah has bravely lived with diabetes. But in Zaatari Camp, access to essentials like insulin and glucose test strips is a constant struggle. Thanks to the support of Life for a Child and the dedicated team at SAMS Medical Center, Abdullah now has a glucometer and test strips—helping him better manage his condition and pursue the life he dreams of.

Dr. Musab Abu Khait shares: “Children like Abdullah deserve consistent access to care and supplies so they can avoid life-threatening complications and just focus on being kids.”

***“I love sports and studying, and all I wish for is to be cured of my illness.”***



# Impact Overview



Total Medical Services Provided

6,417



Total Beneficiaries

2,650



Facilities Supported

53



# SAMS GENERAL PROGRAMS

## PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND TERTIARY CARE



Primary healthcare is essential for early diagnosis, patient empowerment, and disease prevention and management. It also provides access to broader services, including mental health support, higher-level care, and referrals for nutrition and protection. We also conducted numerous simulation lab trainings.

Secondary and Tertiary care: SAMS remains a pivotal secondary and tertiary medical care source, offering essential services to internally displaced Syrians, refugees, and host communities in neighboring countries. Syrian physicians employed at specialized hospitals in Syria provide critical procedures such as dialysis, cardiac catheterization, chemotherapy, and advanced surgeries.

### Staying to Heal: A Doctor's Commitment Amid Conflict

Dr. Ahmad Al-Abdo, a dental specialist at Batbo Primary Health Care Center, began working with SAMS in 2015. He values SAMS for enhancing medical expertise through training and modern equipment.

Amid the war, Dr. Ahmad faced many challenges, including the bombing of medical facilities. He recalls a devastating airstrike on the Zerbeh clinic that forced a temporary closure and left patients without care.

Despite multiple opportunities to leave Syria, Dr. Ahmad chose to stay.

***“I decided to remain to provide medical care and help ease people’s suffering.”***



# Impact Overview



Total Medical Services

4,440,364



Beneficiaries

1,463,533



Facilities Supported Across 7 Countries

144



Education/Training Sessions

including 150 lectures and training via medical missions, as well as numerous simulation lab sessions

432



# MATERNAL AND NEWBORN CARE



In 2024, SAMS' robust network of maternal and child healthcare facilities, including Al Dana Hospital, Qah Maternity Hospital, Raju Hospital, Al Shifa Hospital in Afrin, and the Specialized Maternity Hospital in Idlib, celebrated the arrival of 22,052 newborns. These facilities focus on childbirth and deliver comprehensive antenatal and postnatal care across northwest Syria.

In Greece, SAMS mobile medical team continued providing maternal care to refugees and migrant women in camps and clinics in the Attica region.

In Lebanon, SAMS continued supporting a financial assistance project to help cover the cost of hospital care for infants and newborns from refugee communities, reaching 1,021 beneficiaries by the end of 2024.

## Born from Resilience: Maya's Journey Back to Hope





Despite the hardships, Maya insisted on returning from Homs to Idlib to deliver her baby at Idlib Maternity Hospital—the place that supported her throughout her pregnancy. Bombings had left the hospital damaged and operating with minimal resources, yet Maya was undeterred.

On the day of delivery, the medical team faced serious challenges. But with skill—and critical surgical sutures provided by the IHP grant—they safely performed a C-section, ensuring a healthy outcome for both Maya and her baby.

Idlib Maternity Hospital is more than a building; it is a sanctuary of resilience, where every tool, every act of care, helps rebuild the future. Resilience, where every tool, every act of care, helps rebuild the future.



# Impact Overview

	Total Medical Services Provided	137,334
	Total Beneficiaries	91,556
	Facilities Supported	9
	Education/Training Sessions	5



# REHABILITATION SERVICES



In 2024, SAMS rehabilitative services included cochlear implants, physical therapy, movement assistive devices, and speech therapy in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkiye. Nearly 21,881 services were delivered across five specialized facilities, enhancing the lives of those with disabilities.

## The Strength to Stand: Mohammad's Journey

Mohammad was born prematurely in the seventh month, and from his very first moments, he faced a difficult challenge—cerebral atrophy. At the age of two, his family brought him to the Termanin Physical Therapy Center in Termanin. At the time, he was unable to sit or walk, and he had no control over his head or upper limbs.

Thanks to his family's determination and the dedication of his therapist, Nour, at the center, Mohammad began an intensive and comprehensive rehabilitation program. Step by step, with patience and perseverance, Mohammad embarked on his journey toward improvement.

Today, after a year and a half of continuous effort and training, Mohammad stands strong—able to walk independently. He has achieved a milestone that reflects the power of will and the greatness of determination.

Mohammad's story is not just a medical journey; it is a living testament that hope and relentless effort can make the impossible possible.



# Impact Overview



Total Rehabilitation Services Provided

21,881



Total Beneficiaries

3,681



Facilities Supported

11



Education/Training Sessions

3



# SPECIALIZED CARE: STROKE UNITS IN SYRIA



In Idlib Central Hospital, our specialized stroke unit manages acute ischemic and hemorrhagic strokes, prioritizing rapid admission and critical assessment. With 15 ward beds, six ICU beds, and CT capabilities, it offers comprehensive care, including thrombolysis, rehabilitation, and physiotherapy tailored to individual needs. A dedicated clinic within the unit supports continuous diagnosis and monitoring, along with an intensive care area for emergency transfers. SAMS expanded these services and launched a stroke unit at Al Shifa Hospital in Afrin with four ICUs and six ward beds. The unit follows four essential thrombolysis protocols to provide personalized care across diverse locations.

## A Race Against Time: How Jamila Survived a Stroke


At 46, Jamila—her family’s sole provider—suffered a sudden stroke during the night. Strokes demand immediate treatment to prevent serious complications like paralysis or death.

She arrived at the SAMS-supported Idlib Central Hospital seven hours after symptoms began—beyond the ideal window for clot-dissolving medication. Dr. Ahmad Mutlaq and his team opted for cerebral catheterization to remove the clot, a decision that proved life-saving.

Jamila recovered quickly, with no lasting symptoms, and resumed her role as the backbone of her family. Her story highlights the urgent need for stroke awareness and rapid medical response to save lives and restore futures.

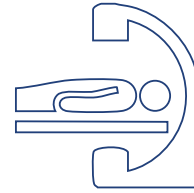


# Impact Overview

	Total Stroke Unit Services Provided	4,678
	Total Beneficiaries	2,837
	Facilities Supported	2
	Education/Training Sessions	8



# SPECIALIZED CARE: CATH LABS IN SYRIA



In 2024, SAMS expanded its cardiac care services through three fully equipped Cath Labs in Al Bab, Afrin, and Al-Ziraa Hospital, offering emergency and elective procedures such as diagnostic catheterizations, interventional treatments, pacemaker implantations, and follow-up care. Al-Ziraa Hospital also launched a new Electrophysiology (EP) Program, enhancing care for complex arrhythmia cases.

Over the year, SAMS conducted 1,343 procedures, including 393 emergency interventions, 540 interventional procedures, 48 pacemaker implantations, 8,192 cardiac consultations, and 784 EP consultations. Innovations included a consumables tracking system to prevent supply shortages, upgraded patient records to monitor quality indicators like door-to-balloon time, standardized cath lab protocols, and approved radiation safety measures to protect staff.

To meet the growing need for surgical care, SAMS began establishing two cardiac surgery units at Al-Bab and Al-Ziraa Hospitals, fully outfitted with ICU beds and surgical equipment. These departments will perform procedures such as ASD/VSD repairs, valve replacements, CABG, and aortic surgeries. While the facilities are under construction, SAMS partnered with Al Razi Hospital in Idlib to carry out 62 urgent cardiac surgeries. The new departments are set to open in early 2025, significantly expanding access to advanced cardiac care in Syria.

## A Second Chance: **Ali's Story**



At 55, Mr. Ali A., a displaced resident from Abu al-Zuhur living in Jindires, began suffering severe chest pain that returned multiple times. Unable to afford private care, he sought help wherever he could—until he arrived at Al-Ziraa Hospital in Idlib.

There, SAMS doctors diagnosed a heart attack and life-threatening arrhythmia. The team stabilized him and, with support from a specialist, performed an emergency catheterization and placed two stents. After 42 hours in the ICU, Ali made a full recovery.

***“Words can’t express my thanks,” he said. “They saved my life—without charging me anything.”***



# Impact Overview

	Procedures	1,343
	Cardiac Consultations	8,192
	EP Consultations	784



# SPECIALIZED CARE: ONCOLOGY CLINICS IN SYRIA



In 2024, SAMS conducted **34,887 oncology services** across its five cancer care clinics in northwest Syria: Idlib Central Hospital, Bab Alhawa Hospital, Alshifa'a (Afrin) Hospital, Al Bab Clinic, and Jarablus Clinic. A slightly higher proportion of consultations were for female patients, largely due to the high incidence of breast cancer. Most patients were adults aged 24 to 64, followed by elderly individuals over 64, with children representing a smaller share.

The most commonly treated cancer types included breast cancer with 2,817 consultations, ovary cancer with 509, lung cancer with 985, colon cancer with 944, prostate cancer with 786, lymphomas (both Hodgkin and non-Hodgkin) with 236, and leukemias (lymphoid and myeloid) with 211. Cases of multiple myeloma and plasma cell neoplasms were also managed, along with other cancer priorities such as gastrointestinal, respiratory, and skin cancers.

## From Homs to Idlib: Ahmed's Journey to Healing

With treatment costs so high, many cancer patients are finding hope at the Idlib Central Hospital's Oncology Center, supported by SAMS. The center offers free, quality care and has become a trusted place for patients from across Syria.

"I've been getting treated here for four months—every 21 days I come in for a session. Thank God, things are much better now. At first, I couldn't sleep or move from the shortness of breath and coughing, but the doctors really helped turn things around."

Dr. Aiham Jammo, the oncologist overseeing Ahmed's care, explained that he was diagnosed with lung cancer, which can be tough to treat. He finished six rounds of chemo and responded well. Now they're moving on to radiation therapy, and are hopeful for a full recovery.



# Impact Overview



Oncology Services

34,887



Operational Cancer Care Facilities

5



# IMPACT BY COUNTRY

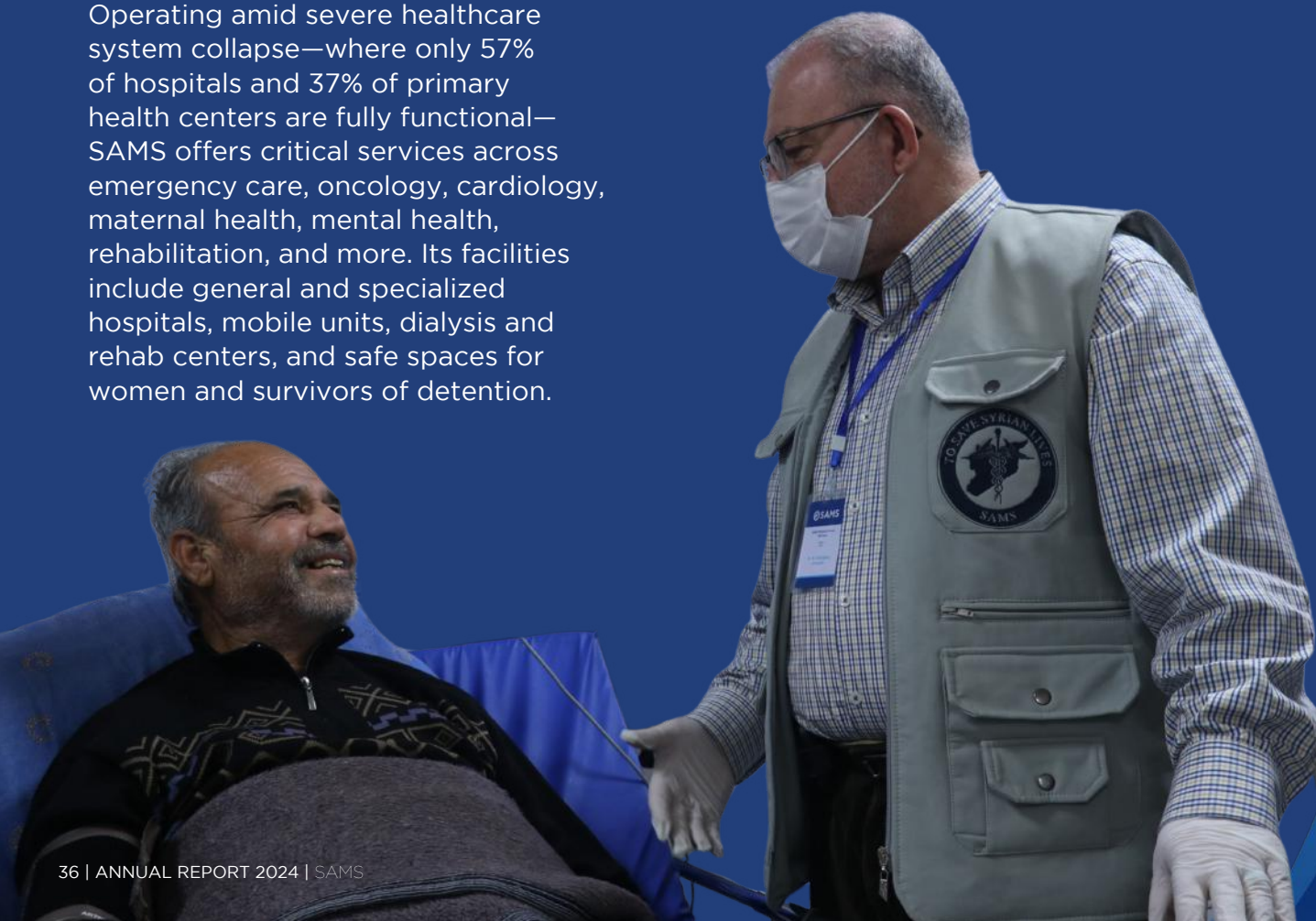
## SYRIA IMPACT 2024



In 2024, SAMS remained a vital lifeline in Syria, delivering **4,279,796 medical services** to **1,367,591 beneficiaries** through a network of **83 medical facilities** and **2,295 healthcare staff**. On average, SAMS provided 356,649 services each month to 121,094 individuals—61% of whom were internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 55% women.

Through its network of diaspora physicians, SAMS supports local health worker training and medical missions, helping build sustainable, high-quality care in some of Syria's most vulnerable communities.

Operating amid severe healthcare system collapse—where only 57% of hospitals and 37% of primary health centers are fully functional—SAMS offers critical services across emergency care, oncology, cardiology, maternal health, mental health, rehabilitation, and more. Its facilities include general and specialized hospitals, mobile units, dialysis and rehab centers, and safe spaces for women and survivors of detention.



# Impact Overview

	Total Beneficiaries	1,367,591
	Total Medical Services Provided	4,279,796
	Medical Facilities	83
	Medical Staff	2,295



# TURKEY

## IMPACT 2024



In 2024, SAMS provided critical health and psychosocial services to **13,734 beneficiaries** in Turkey, delivering a total of **34,643 medical services** to communities affected by the Syrian conflict and Turkey-Syria border crises.

The Physical Therapy (PT) Center provided **18,800 rehabilitation sessions**, supporting elderly patients and those recovering from injury or surgery. Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Centers in Kilis and Gaziantep delivered **16,414 mental health services**, including therapy, counseling, and psychoeducation. At the TMH Center, children with autism and developmental delays received personalized care and motor-sensory therapy. SAMS also supported **9,526 refugee care services**, in partnership with organizations like RASAS, to expand access to primary and mental healthcare for displaced populations.

## Overcoming Trauma: Kilis MHPSS Center

A 45-year-old woman who had endured years of domestic violence came to SAMS seeking support for panic attacks and depression. With no family support, she felt isolated and overwhelmed. Over 14 sessions, she received psychoeducation, cognitive behavioral therapy, and relaxation training. As a result, her panic attacks ceased, her mood improved, and she regained the ability to care for her home and venture outdoors. Her therapy has empowered her to navigate future challenges with resilience and strength.



# Impact Overview

	Total Beneficiaries	13,734
	Total Medical Services Provided	34,643
	Physical Therapy	18,800
	MHPSS Services	16,414



# JORDAN IMPACT 2024



In 2024, SAMS provided **49,495 medical services** to **24,293 beneficiaries** across Jordan through three medical facilities staffed by 14 healthcare professionals. This includes our medical center in Zaatari Camp, which offers general medical and dental care for both adults and children, as well as vaccination services, ophthalmology care, and laboratory testing.

SAMS continued providing care to vulnerable patients by ensuring access to life-saving and life-changing diagnostics and treatments, including interventional cardiology, specialized surgeries, retina disease management, and advanced medical consultations through international medical missions. Physical therapy for adults and children was also offered by local teams in 2 locations for refugees and host communities in need.

Under our psychosocial support program, SAMS's multidisciplinary team designed community development initiatives, vocational training, and skills-building activities for women, youth, and families—fostering resilience and opportunity in underserved areas like Irbid.

## A Mother's Stand for Her Son's Future

In Irbid, 59-year-old M.O., a mother of seven, joined a SAMS partner-led skills program to support her blind son's education. She not only participated in parenting and skills workshops but sat for the national Tawjihi exam alongside him—and later, enrolled in university with him.

Through her dedication, M.O. became a source of inspiration in her community, encouraging other women to pursue education and empowerment. "I did all of this to make my son happy," she shared. Her story reflects the powerful ripple effect of determination, education, and family support.



# Impact Overview

	Total Beneficiaries	24,293
	Total Medical Services Provided	49,495
	Dental Services	6,914
	Medical Facilities	5
	Medical Staff	14



# LEBANON

## IMPACT 2024



In 2024, SAMS provided **28,008 medical services** to **26,478 people** in Lebanon, supporting Syrian refugees, Lebanese nationals, Palestinians, and other vulnerable groups through integrated health and psychosocial programs.

- **Dental Care:** In Partnership with Miles for Smiles and MAPS, SAMS delivered 18,453 dental services and reached 7,800 people through oral health campaigns. Hygiene kits with toothbrushes and toothpaste sets were distributed to promote dental care.
- **Winterization:** SAMS held 50 awareness sessions in 9 areas, reaching 542 caregivers and youth. A total of 1,333 winter kits and over 6,000 preparedness flyers were distributed in Bekaa and Aarsal.
- **Secondary Health Care:** 751 patients—including psychiatry patients, migrants and non-Syrian refugees—received hospital admission support, ensuring access to critical secondary care.

## A New Start for Two Sisters

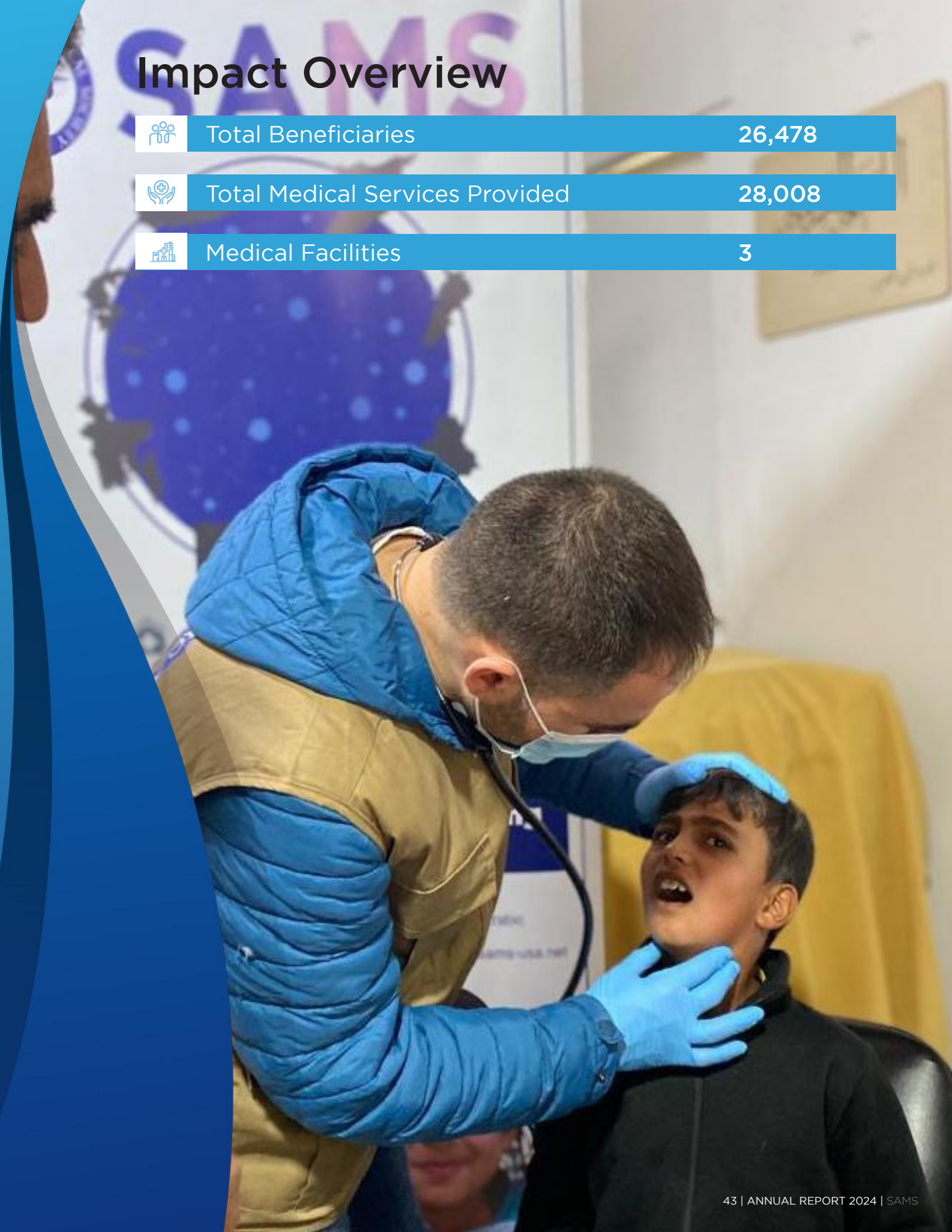
During a September visit to Al Noor Center in Bar Elias, SAMS met sisters Ghona and Hoda, both suffering from dental pain and infections. After careful evaluation, the affected teeth were extracted, and remaining teeth were treated with Silver Diamine Fluoride (SDF) to stop and prevent further decay.

Following their treatment, the sisters attended a dental hygiene awareness session where they learned the importance of daily oral care. They left smiling—relieved of pain and happy to receive toothbrushes and toothpaste, promising to take better care of their teeth moving forward.



# Impact Overview

	Total Beneficiaries	26,478
	Total Medical Services Provided	28,008
	Medical Facilities	3



# IRAQ

## IMPACT 2024



In 2024, SAMS continued its commitment to providing essential dental care in Iraq through our SAMS Dental Clinics, supported by the SAMS Private Fund. This initiative operated across five refugee camps—Domiz 1, Domiz 2, Bardarash, Koya, and Gawilan—bringing critical oral health services to displaced individuals and families.

Our dedicated dental teams delivered compassionate care and preventive services, ensuring that refugees had access to quality oral health support in often-overlooked settings.

### World Humanitarian Day in Gawilan Camp

On August 19, 2024, to mark World Humanitarian Day, SAMS held a special awareness event in Gawilan Camp in partnership with the Lutes Flower Child Protection Center. The event focused on teaching 52 children aged 6-9 about oral hygiene as they prepared for the new school year.

**Activities Included:**

- **Two awareness sessions** led by SAMS dentists, engaging children in conversations about oral hygiene, the importance of regular checkups, and healthy dental habits.
- **Dental screenings** for all participants, with referrals issued for children needing further care at the SAMS dental clinic in Gawilan.
- **Gift bag distribution** with essential items like toothbrushes, toothpaste, and educational flyers to reinforce healthy habits at home.

This event not only promoted oral health but also created a safe, welcoming space for children to learn and feel cared for—one smile at a time.



# Impact Overview



Total Beneficiaries

8,179



Total Medical Services Provided

8,179



Medical Staff

10



# GREECE

## IMPACT 2024



Since 2020, SAMS has provided essential healthcare to refugees, migrants, and vulnerable populations in Greece through its Mobile Medical Team (MMT) initiative. In 2024, SAMS delivered **20,931 medical services** to **6,674 beneficiaries**, offering primary health, women’s health, pediatric care, and mental health support across camps and urban centers.

- **Primary Health Care in the Camps**  
SAMS provided pediatric and women’s health services in refugee camps like Ritsona and Malakasa, treating illnesses and administering 875 childhood vaccines in partnership with Greece’s National Public Health Organization. Care was delivered using mobile pharmacies and portable equipment, with high-risk cases referred to hospitals. SAMS also led a medical mission to Lesbos, offering pediatric, cardiology, and OBGYN care to children and unaccompanied minors, covering medication and transport costs for vulnerable patients.
- **Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)**  
In July 2024, SAMS Hellas launched the MHPSS Umbrella program in central Athens, offering counseling, social work, and group sessions for adults, including undocumented individuals. With support from the Municipality of Athens and local partners, the program addressed issues like gender-based violence and elderly care, providing 593 services to 216 people in its first six months.

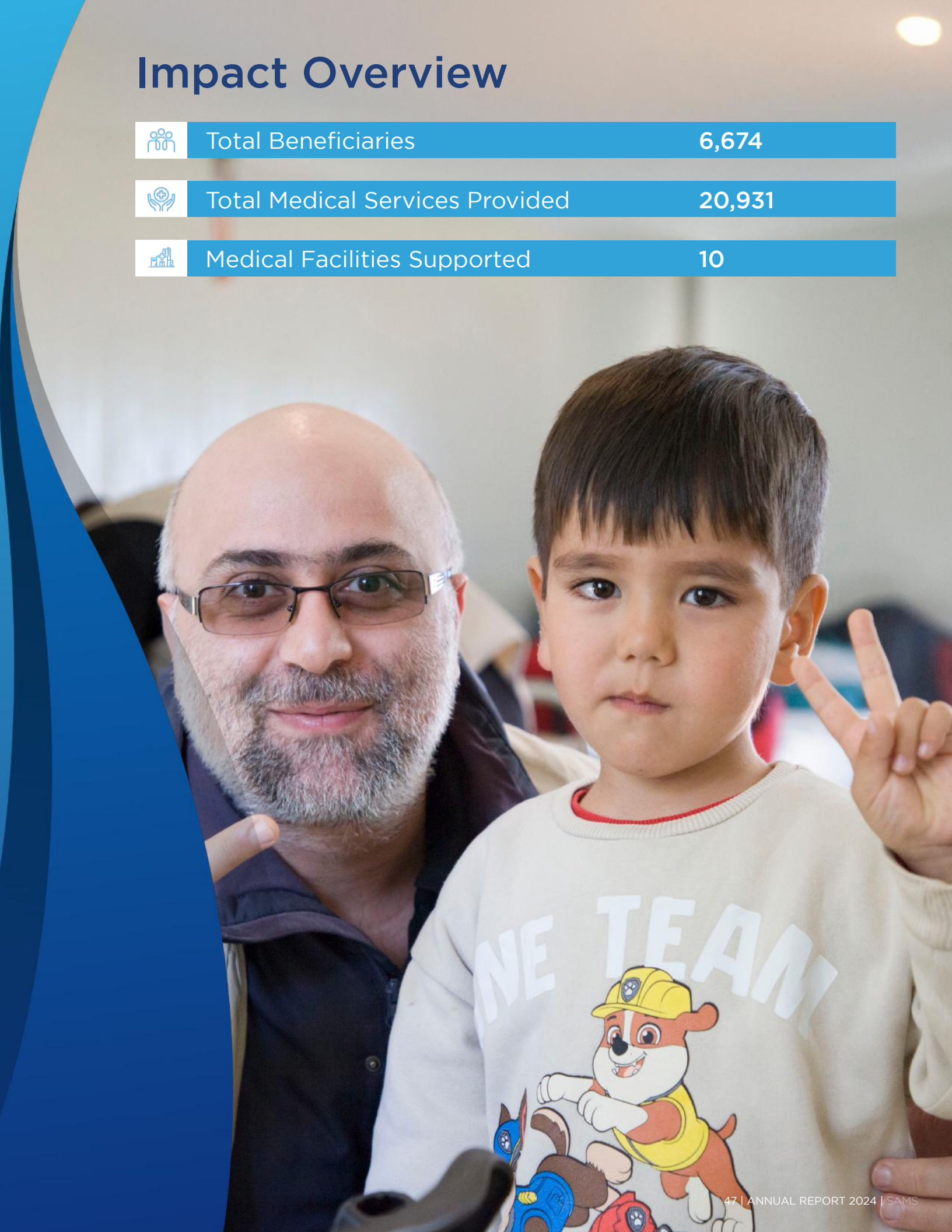
## A Lifeline in Ritsona

In Ritsona refugee camp, the SAMS Pediatric Team remains a lifeline for families navigating complex health challenges. One family, whose youngest child lives with a chronic condition requiring frequent hospital visits and specialized medication, has come to rely on SAMS as their only consistent point of contact with the health system. SAMS Hellas supports the family with medication coverage, hospital referrals, and weekly follow-ups, offering not only medical care but also emotional reassurance.



# Impact Overview

	Total Beneficiaries	6,674
	Total Medical Services Provided	20,931
	Medical Facilities Supported	10



# GLOBAL RESPONSE



## Gaza: A Global Response of Hope and Healing

After years of conflict, Gaza faces catastrophic destruction with 1.9 million displaced and over 47,000 lives lost. SAMS launched its Gaza Relief Strategy in October 2023, mobilizing teams from the U.S., Turkey, Jordan, and Egypt to respond to urgent medical and humanitarian needs.

SAMS delivered life-saving care at European Gaza Hospital, provided emergency ICU support, and operated two Maternal & Child Health Mobile Units to reach vulnerable populations. In partnership with Mersal and Anera, SAMS delivered critical medical supplies through Rafah and Jordan. In addition, a dental clinic was opened in Nuseirat to expand access to essential oral health services.

In partnership with United Palestinian Appeal (UPA), SAMS also supported food and winter clothing distributions between December 2023 and February 2024. Through local partner PARC, SAMS reached **9,177 individuals**—distributing customized winter clothing to **2,850 people** and fresh food parcels to 6,327 individuals across shelters in East Jabaliya and Deir al Balah.

These interventions addressed the escalating humanitarian crisis in Gaza and laid the groundwork for longer-term recovery and resilience.



# Impact Overview

October 2023 through December 2024

	Total Beneficiaries	43,960
	Total Medical Services Provided	17,361
	Psychosocial support	2,599
	Food and clothing assistance	24,000



## Libya: Healing After the Floods

Following the 2023 floods, SAMS and Ayadi Al Khair supported **867 displaced families** across four cities. In Derna, SAMS and Speetar launched trauma-informed mental health services, providing **1,337 consultations**—58% to women—and referring 129 patients. Sixty-six providers were trained to support long-term care.

## Ukraine: Resilience on the Frontlines

SAMS supported Ukraine's healthcare system while under duress of war.

- Trained 128 providers in 39 hospitals, improving emergency care times by 50%.
- Reached 1,152 healthcare workers, reducing burnout by 22% and distress by 16%.
- Enabled 16 surgeries, 32 consultations, and trained 700+ providers in key specialties.

## Lebanon: Emergency Medical Relief Amid Escalation

In response to escalating violence, SAMS launched Mobile Medical Units on October 4 to deliver consultations and health sessions to displaced populations. Winter kits were distributed, and psychosocial support for children began with varying participation levels. SAMS also engaged IDPs as community focal points.

## Morocco: Healing After the Earthquake

In response to the 2023 earthquake, SAMS delivered psychosocial care in Al Haouz and Al Hoceima. From April to September 2024, **18 workshops reached 553 women and 354 children**. In December, a Dental Caravan treated **780 children** in Tadart, concluding with a traditional Ahwach celebration.





# MEDICAL MISSIONS



## Syria

In 2024, SAMS carried out five major multispecialty medical missions across Idlib and Aleppo, delivering high-impact care and training to vulnerable communities. The January mission focused on pediatric orthopedics, cardiology, oncology, and ICU care—featuring critical surgeries, emergency catheterizations, and advanced pain management procedures.

In March, teams provided neurosurgical, ophthalmologic, gastrointestinal, and cardiac interventions, restoring mobility and vision for numerous patients while training over **100 healthcare providers**. The April mission was among the most extensive, with 11 open-heart surgeries, 15 cardiac device implants, and 140 oncology consults. This mission also marked the launch of SAMS's Simulation Center and a new Stroke Unit in Afrin.

The September mission exceeded expectations with 285 procedures and 1,427 consultations across multiple specialties. It also introduced a lung cancer screening program and hosted a Pediatric Specialties Conference. Despite disruption from military escalation, the November mission still delivered 104 specialized procedures, **285 consultations**, and intensive training for 99 medical professionals.

Additionally, smaller missions by individual volunteers throughout May, July, and December offered consultations and trained **77 doctors**—underscoring SAMS's year-round commitment to medical support and capacity-building in the region.

## Jordan

SAMS conducted two major missions in Jordan and one local mission reaching refugee populations and underserved communities across multiple governorates. The January mission deployed 83 volunteers to 10 governorates, offering care in over 15 specialties. The team performed 491 surgeries and thousands of consultations, with financial support from volunteers enabling life-saving procedures like cleft palate repair and brain tumor removal. In July, SAMS expanded its reach to 11 governorates, involving 374 international and local volunteers. This mission provided over 2,434 consultations and 344 surgeries across specialties like ophthalmology, cardiology, and pediatrics. Training sessions and lectures further strengthened healthcare capacity among Jordanian providers. In October, SAMS also held a local mission that covered 91 surgeries; cardiology, ophthalmology, dental surgeries, pediatric GI- endoscopy and OBGYN. The team also served 33 individuals in Zaatari, cardiology and GI screening.





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# Lebanon

In Lebanon, SAMS partnered with MAPS and local institutions to deliver three specialized missions. The Orthopedic Mission (March–May) provided **31 surgeries** for children suffering from hip dislocation and clubfoot, with thorough follow-up care ensuring patient safety. The groundbreaking Cochlear implant Mission in June marked Lebanon’s first of its kind, offering 10 surgeries to patients, primarily children, from Syrian, Lebanese, and Palestinian backgrounds. The Dental Mission in May served 947 beneficiaries—mostly children—across clinics and schools, delivering **275 procedures** and administering Silver Diamine Fluoride treatments to over 500 school children. SAMS also delivered oral hygiene education and explored partnerships with universities to sustain long-term dental health outcomes.

# Morocco

In December, SAMS deployed a Dental Mission to earthquake-affected communities in the Al Haouz Province. A team of Moroccan and international volunteers provided dental care and education to **780 children** through exams, extractions, restorations, and preventive treatments. The mission also promoted oral hygiene through community outreach and cultural exchange, partnering with the High Atlas Foundation and the Kuwaiti Dental Mission to support recovery and strengthen local health systems.

# Gaza

SAMS members participated in 2 medical missions to the European Hospital in Gaza in partnership with the Palestinian American Medical Association, PAMA, and the Jordanian American Physician Association, JAPA. The participants in March mission included a facial and orbital reconstructive surgeon, a trauma surgeon, a vascular surgeon, and a surgical critical care specialist. The May mission was co-led by SAMS representative who is a critical care specialist and provided valuable capacity building to the local medical teams in addition to direct life-saving patient care. Both missions carried medical equipment, surgical and anesthesia supplies, drapes and gowns, wound care kits, antiseptics, and medications to help provide the care the injured civilians need and replenish the depleting stock in the hosting hospitals’ wards, critical care units, and emergency departments.

## Additional Missions in 2024

- **Egypt – April 2024:** A cardiology-focused mission led by three international volunteers, delivering specialized care to patients with advanced heart conditions.
- **Greece – October 2024:** A pediatrics-focused mission provided essential consultations and care to refugee children living in camps and urban areas.



# MENTAL HEALTH



## Advancing Mental Health Education in Syria

In 2024, SAMS officially launched its Advanced Quality Learning initiative, funded by the EU, in partnership with Free Aleppo University and Al Sharq University. The initiative supports three academic programs: a 2-year master's in Clinical Psychology (led by Dr. Ahmad Alsheikh, University of Jordan), and two 1-year diplomas in Psychiatric Nursing (led by The Hashemite University) and Psychosocial Support (led by PoMA, global mental health services organization), along with non-academic trauma training for current mental health professionals.

At Free Aleppo University in Azaz, 20 students graduated from the psychiatric nursing program, with 15 graduates and one faculty member also completing leadership training. 14 students enrolled in the Clinical Psychology program completed their coursework and began thesis work and practicum training at hospitals supported by UOSSM, PAC, and Sened.

At Al Sharq University in Ar-Raqqa, 12 students graduated from the nursing diploma and 27 students from the psychosocial support program. Nine Clinical Psychology students completed their courses, with practicum placements at facilities supported by MEHAD, Salam, IRC, and others.

In August 2024, 19 mental health providers from Azaz and Al-Dana completed trauma training in Children's Accelerated Trauma Technique (CATT), led by ACTI. Trainees began supervised implementation, with top performers set to join a future training-of-trainers cohort.



# Six Years of Impact with the Schooner Foundation



Now in its sixth year of partnership with the Schooner Foundation, SAMS Foundation continues to advance community-based mental health services in Jordan, focusing on Syrian refugees and displaced populations in urban areas and, most recently, in Zaatari camp. In 2024, the project covered 9,201 individuals, including 14,506 services. This collaborative effort supports national and international frameworks, including the JRP and WHO recommendations, by strengthening local capacity for mental health and psychosocial support. Through a combination of individual therapy and community reintegration programs, the initiative promotes sustainable recovery, resilience, and social cohesion among those most affected.



# HEALTH RESEARCH



## Health Research in Crisis

In 2024, SAMS strengthened its research function to advance studies on conflict-driven health crises, improve healthcare access, support accountability efforts, and guide humanitarian responses. A newly established Research Committee—comprising experts in public health, epidemiology, conflict medicine, and humanitarian research—led these efforts. Through collaborations with leading institutions, SAMS continues to generate critical evidence that informs policy, governance, medical education, and innovative healthcare solutions in conflict settings.

## Key Research Highlights in 2024

- **Cancer Care in Conflict: Barriers and Solutions**

A SAMS study, in collaboration with Yale University, explored the experiences of women with breast cancer in Northwest Syria. The study revealed significant barriers related to sociocultural norms, gender roles, financial limitations, and restricted access to radiotherapy. Findings highlight the need for localized cancer treatment services to reduce reliance on cross-border care.

- Marzouk M, Hamze M, Debel J, et al. *“Accessing breast cancer care in a protracted conflict: qualitative exploration of the perspectives of women with breast cancer in northwest Syria.”* Social Science & Medicine, 2024.

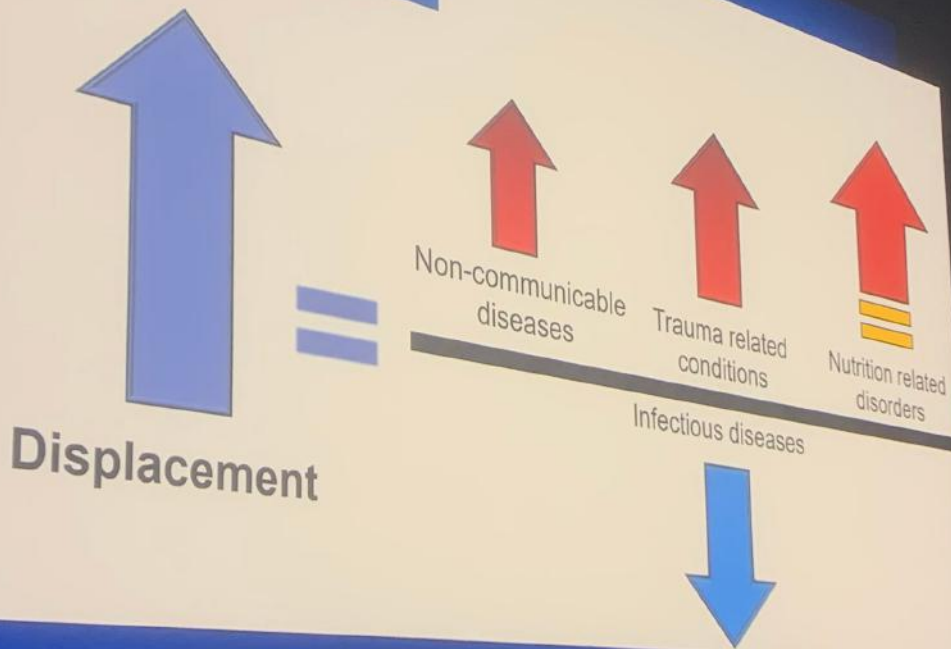
- **Pediatric Healthcare and Forced Displacement**

A retrospective analysis of 2.6 million pediatric consultations (2018–2022) in Northwest Syria revealed that displacement increased risks for trauma, chronic malnutrition, and mental health conditions. This research was presented at global conferences, emphasizing the need for targeted child health interventions in conflict settings.

- Kampalath V, Patel MV, Hamze M, et al. *“An analysis of paediatric clinical presentations in Northwest Syria and the effect of forced displacement, 2018–2022.”* Global Epidemiology, 2024.



# Results summary:



- **Quantifying the Effects of Healthcare Attacks on Health Service Utilization**

SAMS, in collaboration with the University of California, Berkeley, and Johns Hopkins University, assessed the impact of attacks on healthcare facilities in Northwest Syria (2017–2019). The study demonstrated a sharp decline in outpatient visits (-51%), trauma consultations (-38%), and facility births (-23%) following attacks.

- Burbach R, Tappis H, Abbara A, et al. *“Quantifying the effects of attacks on health facilities on health service use in Northwest Syria: a case time series study from 2017 to 2019.”* BMJ Global Health, 2024.

- **Conflict Intensity, Displacement, and Healthcare Attacks**

A retrospective analysis examined the relationships between conflict intensity, forced displacement, and healthcare attacks in Syria (2016–2022). The study found that healthcare attacks increased displacement for up to three months, revealing the destabilizing impact of violence on civilian populations.

- Tarnas MC, Hamze M, Tajaldin B, et al. *“Exploring relationships between conflict intensity, forced displacement, and healthcare attacks: a retrospective analysis from Syria, 2016–2022.”* Conflict and Health, 2024.

- **Respiratory Health in Conflict Settings**

A SAMS-led scoping literature review examined the impact of conflict on respiratory diseases, including asthma management, and respiratory tract infections. The study underscores the need for improved respiratory disease diagnosis, smoking cessation programs, and public health interventions in conflict-affected regions.

- Basha L, Hamze M, Socarras A, et al. *“Respiratory health and the Syrian conflict: a scoping literature review.”* Medicine, Conflict and Survival, 2024.

- **Policy and Outreach: Sharing Evidence for Action**

SAMS presented research findings at major international conferences, including:

- **MSF Scientific Days (London):** Highlighting the sacrifices of Syrian healthcare workers.
- **Royal College of Pediatrics and Child Health (Glasgow):** Presented findings on the impact of forced displacement on pediatric health.
- **Consortium of Universities for Global Health (Los Angeles):** Highlighted the effects of attacks on health services.



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# ADVOCACY FOR SURVIVORS



## SAMS' Commitment to Justice and Empowerment

SAMS remains at the forefront of advocating for survivors of conflict, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), torture, and detention in Syria. Through direct support, awareness efforts, and survivor-led initiatives, SAMS ensures their voices are heard locally and internationally. In 2024, SAMS produced evidence-based reports on human rights violations, collaborated with global justice mechanisms to share survivor testimonies, and trained survivors to become advocates in transitional justice and policy reform.

### Empowering Women Through Skills and Support

SAMS also empowers conflict-affected women through vocational training and psychosocial support. In partnership with SALAM, SAMS trained 80 women in sewing, hairdressing, and dairy production to promote economic independence. Women received counseling and case management in safe spaces and were encouraged to join local advocacy efforts focused on gender equity and survivor protection.

### Survivors Leading the Way

Through the Syrian Women Advocacy Network (SWAN), SAMS supports female survivors in leading advocacy campaigns. SWAN formed three advocacy groups focused on the inclusion of war-disabled individuals, protection of female healthcare workers, and women's participation in decision-making. Despite security disruptions, these efforts are expected to resume when conditions allow.

### A Call for Support

SAMS urges continued support to expand vocational programs, strengthen survivor-led advocacy, and build global partnerships for justice and accountability—ensuring survivors are not only heard but empowered to lead meaningful change.





# SAMS IN THE NEWS



## A Year of Impact and Advocacy

In 2024, SAMS remained a global leader in healthcare advocacy, delivering lifesaving services amid Syria's ongoing crises. From emergency care in conflict zones to rebuilding efforts post-regime change, SAMS' work was spotlighted by major international media.

**Attacks on Idlib Hospitals:** The Guardian reported on airstrikes that damaged SAMS-run facilities, forcing evacuations and causing critical shortages, including the deaths of two ICU patients.

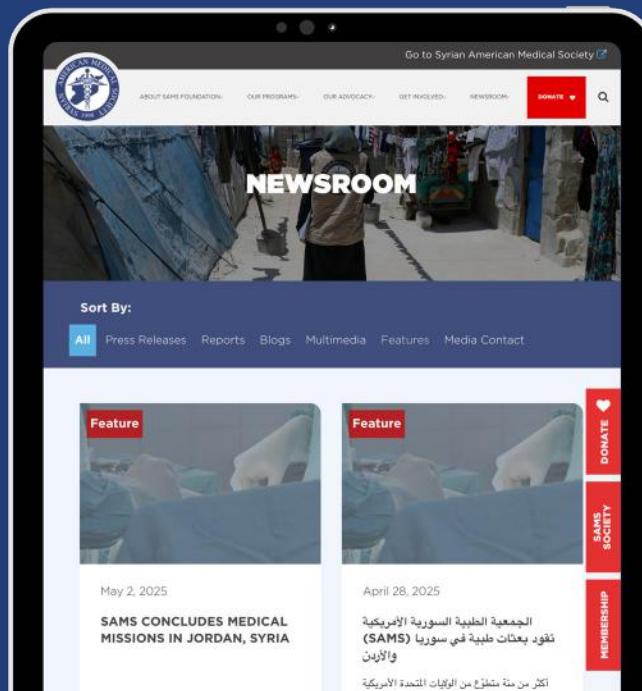
**Commitment Amid Political Transition:** Following the Assad regime's collapse, SAMS reaffirmed its mission to provide free, high-quality healthcare and rebuild a unified health system for all Syrians.

**Strategic Recovery Plans:** Health Technology Insights highlighted SAMS' post-conflict initiatives—deploying ambulances, expanding ICUs, and launching rapid health assessments across Syria.

**Support for Torture Survivors:** TRT World showcased SAMS' medical and psychological aid to survivors, reinforcing its role in healing individuals and communities.

**Impact of U.S. Aid Freeze:** AP News covered the closure of clinics in northern Syria due to a U.S. aid suspension, leaving 35,000 without care and underlining the vital role of SAMS and other NGOs.

Through escalating violence, funding challenges, and political change, SAMS stood as a pillar of hope—committed to care, recovery, and a healthier future for Syria.







# SAMS Institute

## Advancing Medical Education in Conflict Zones

Launched in 2023, the SAMS Institute supports medical professionals affected by conflict, aiming to rebuild healthcare infrastructure in Syria and beyond through high-quality education and training.

### Simulation-Based Training in Syria

In early 2024, SAMS established a simulation lab at Qah Hospital in northwest Syria, benefiting over **220 healthcare professionals** and improving care for an estimated **75,240 patients** over six months. Trainings included BLS, ACLS, and PALS, integrated into SAMS residency, midwifery, and nursing programs to enhance clinical performance and confidence.

### Postgraduate Medical Training

SAMS continued its fellowship and residency programs in critical care, hematology/oncology, neurology, pathology, and expanded into internal medicine, pulmonology, cardiology, and more. Thirty-seven residents and fellows were enrolled across three SAMS facilities, with a cardiothoracic surgery fellowship starting at Al Ziraa Hospital. One doctor began training in radiation oncology in Jordan. In 2024, **6 fellows graduated** from the Adult ICU program and are now working in northern Syria. New programs in OBGYN, radiology, endocrinology, and pediatric specialties are planned for 2025.

### Education During Medical Missions

During medical missions, SAMS delivered hands-on and theoretical training across northern Syria. **269 doctors** trained in procedures like painless delivery and ICU care; 161 participated in ICU rounds; and 208 joined intensive crash courses in nephrology, retina care, and more. Eighteen lecture sessions reached 925 participants, and two major conferences drew 904 attendees, covering specialties such as cardiology, neurology, and pediatric care.





## Scholarships for Future Healthcare Providers

Since 2016, SAMS has provided scholarships to over **100 Syrian students** in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, and Bosnia, supporting studies in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, nursing, psychology, and more. Forty students have graduated, and 40+ remain supported. SAMS also helps students access internships and training in the U.S.

## Medical Technical Institute

Established in 2017, the SAMS Medical Technical Institute has graduated **250 nurses** and **100 midwives**, helping address regional healthcare workforce shortages through programs in general and specialized nursing, midwifery, and adult ICU nursing.

## Mental Health Education

In January 2024, SAMS launched a two-year master's degree in clinical psychology and one-year diplomas in psychiatric nursing and psychosocial support for **83 students** in northern Syria, supported by regional and international partners.

## SAMS Annual Conference 2024

Held in Istanbul, the SAMS Conference gathered hundreds of global health professionals to discuss healthcare quality in conflict settings. Over **120 medical students** participated in leadership, public speaking, and clinical skills workshops.

## Community Engagement & Looking Ahead

SAMS launched a private Facebook group to connect over **2,500 students and professionals** with ongoing educational content. SAMS remains committed to expanding programs in postgraduate education, allied health, and mental health training—empowering healthcare workers as key drivers of sustainable, high-quality care.





# SAMS SOCIETY & MEMBERS



## 1,500+ members strong!

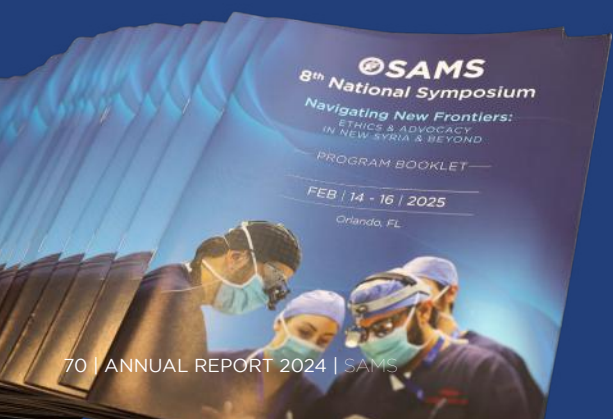
Throughout 2024, SAMS organized influential events, including the 7th National Symposium in Clearwater, FL, which focused on “*Innovations & Transformations in Healthcare*,” and the Labor Day Conference in Washington, DC. These events brought together medical professionals and thought leaders to advance dialogue around healthcare innovation and global humanitarian response.

SAMS also held two additional conferences in 2023: the 21st International Conference in Vancouver, which addressed “*Research in Armed Conflict: Evidence into Practice*,” and the 12th National Conference in Dearborn, Michigan, focused on “*Medical Practice in the US: Paradigm Shifts and Arising Challenges*.” These conferences were pivotal in advancing professional development, strategic healthcare planning, and providing platforms for networking and member engagement.

SAMS continues to provide ongoing virtual lectures and webinars on critical health topics. In the past year, notable sessions included “*How to Survive in Private Practice: Reality Vs. Expectations*,” and updates on the earthquake response in Türkiye and Syria, demonstrating SAMS’ commitment to timely and relevant medical education.

Internationally, SAMS enhances healthcare inside Syria by offering advanced training and support across various specialties, significantly impacting local healthcare capabilities. Additionally, SAMS organizes medical missions in neighboring countries, focusing on comprehensive patient care, volunteer recruitment, and community partnerships to ensure integrated health services.

Moreover, the organization supports emerging medical professionals through its SAMS Young Professional Committee, aimed at fostering future leadership. SAMS also continues to support Syrian graduates who have relocated to the United States in their pursuit of postgraduate residency programs by offering mentorship, application support, and small interest-free loans. Further, SAMS published four volumes of its open access, peer-reviewed online scientific journal, *Avicenna Journal of Medicine*, featuring a wide range of articles on topics such as the cholera outbreak in Syria, gaps in nursing services in the U.S., and COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy and effectiveness.



# SAMS' 2024 LEADERSHIP

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## Society Board of Directors

Dr. Mufaddal Hamadeh | President  
Dr. Ammar Ghanem | Vice President  
Dr. Aref Rifai | Treasurer  
Dr. Nidal El-Wiher | Secretary  
Dr. Amjad Rass | Former President  
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Dr. Amjad Rass | Member  
Dr. Wareef Kabbani | Member  
Dr. Sawsan Rashdan | Member  
Dr. Ahmed Al Hazzouri | Member  
Dr. Anas Kawayeh | Member

## Senior Staff

David Lillie | Executive Director  
Dr. Randa Loutfi | Director of Programs  
Safaa Aladham | Director of Finance  
Dr. Mazen Kewara | Regional Director



# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS OF DEC 31, 2024



<b>Asset</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 7,418,417	\$ 24,789,301
Investment	17,148,559	6,879,443
Grant And Contribution Rec.	6,185,873	5,910,672
Medical students loan receivable	120,077	143,203
Other Receivables	422,368	90,469
Prepaid expenses and other asset	334,399	285,000
Property and Equipment's	2,061,319	2,018,058
ROU Assets - Ope. Lease	50,935	88,522
<b>Total Asset</b>	<b>\$ 33,741,947</b>	<b>\$ 40,204,668</b>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>		
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Account Payable	3,376,323	4,069,618
Refundable advances	2,224,620	3,454,182
Lease Liability	61,559	105,823
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 5,662,502</b>	<b>\$ 7,629,623</b>
<b>Net Asset</b>		
Without donor restriction	27,363,659	24,144,463
With donor restriction	715,786	8,430,582
<b>Total Net Asset</b>	<b>\$ 28,079,445</b>	<b>\$ 32,575,045</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Asset</b>	<b>\$ 33,741,947</b>	<b>\$ 40,204,668</b>

# FINANCIALS & DISBURSEMENTS

<b>Revenue and Support</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
Grants	\$ 28,211,701	\$ 33,833,011
Contributions	9,390,626	27,954,198
In-Kind contribution	25,346,094	40,337,567
<b>Total revenue and support</b>	<b>\$ 62,948,421</b>	<b>\$ 102,124,776</b>

## **Expenses**

Program services:

Medical relief program	(65,574,974)	(82,371,226)
<b>Total program services</b>	<b>\$ (65,574,974)</b>	<b>\$ (82,371,226)</b>

Supporting services:

Management and Fundraising	(3,036,947)	(2,897,218)
<b>Total supporting services</b>	<b>\$ (3,036,947)</b>	<b>\$ (2,897,218)</b>

<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$ (68,611,921)</b>	<b>\$ (85,268,444)</b>
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<b>Change in operating net Asset</b>	<b>\$ (5,663,500)</b>	<b>\$ 16,856,332</b>
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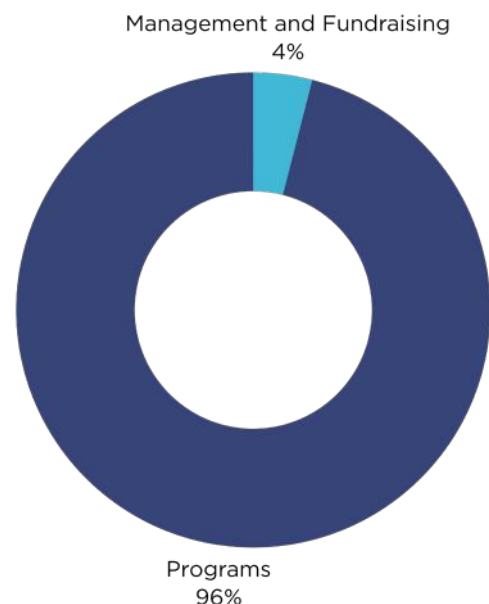
Other Income	26,828	500
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Investment Income	1,141,072	364,234
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<b>Change in net Asset</b>	<b>\$ (4,495,600)</b>	<b>\$ 17,221,066</b>
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Net Assets, beginning of year	32,575,045	15,353,979
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<b>Net Assets, end of year</b>	<b>\$ 28,079,445</b>	<b>\$ 32,575,045</b>
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# SAMS



SAMS-USA.NET

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**SYRIAN AMERICAN MEDICAL SOCIETY FOUNDATION UNITED KINGDOM**

England & Wales - Charity number 1185540

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# Accounts

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# SAMS

## 2023 Annual Report





# Message From **SAMS** President

Many years ago, our very capable members came together to establish a foundation of medical expertise with the capacity to aid hundreds of thousands of daughters, sons, fathers, and mothers who did not know the next time they would be able to receive the medical support they needed. To see what has been accomplished by this commitment is nothing short of a miracle. Thankfully, we have successfully built a network of diverse providers, life-changing programs, and millions of beneficiaries. Previously we discussed our new shifts toward medical education, mental health, and psycho-social services that chart a new path toward sustainability for our beneficiaries. The shift has paid dividends, the fruits of which include the new opportunities made possible by providing occupational therapy to many who want to head into the workforce as well as many new projects being maintained by dedicated staff.

With your help, a new avenue of aid and services has been introduced. Now for the first time in years, the future looks bright and full of hope. Your help in alleviating their concerns allows them the opportunity to see past their current conditions and focus on things like caring for loved ones, pursuing careers, and getting an education.

As advocates for the vulnerable and voiceless, your efforts have solidified border-openings and access for aid to reach those in dire need. SAMS is now recognized not only as an aid provider, but also as a champion of change.

Our tomorrow is brighter than ever because of your support and for that we extend our warmest appreciation and congratulations for being at the forefront of life-changing service.

Dr. Amjad Rass | SAMS President



# Message From **SAMS** Foundation Chair

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Dr. Basel Termanini | SAMS Foundation Chair

# Northern Syria's Earthquake

In February 2023, a severe earthquake and subsequent aftershocks marked the start of new challenges for humanitarian and medical relief actors that significantly affected SAMS, sparking a global mobilization of its staff and volunteers. Despite personal losses, responders in Syria and Türkiye provided uninterrupted, essential services, with SAMS facilitating 177,690 earthquake related interventions throughout the year.

SAMS faced unprecedented challenges, including severe damage to healthcare facilities and equipment, urgent surgical and dialysis needs, staff trauma, logistical hurdles in addressing the surge in supply chain demands, patient transportation, and restricted access to advanced procedures in Türkiye amidst escalating mental health concerns.

Immediately after the disaster, SAMS-supported hospitals were critical points of care for victims brought in by the local search and rescue teams as they managed 3,887 trauma cases and performed 1,690 surgeries. SAMS established eight mobile clinics in temporary settlements for the tens of thousands made homeless by the earthquake, providing over 27,895 services. In Türkiye, these clinics also offered mental health support to 580 individuals in Hatay.

Within a couple of weeks SAMS started dispatching US medical volunteers, reaching over 70, thus bringing much needed expertise to support exhausted local medical providers in north-west Syria. This was backed with 157 aid shipments worth over \$26 million. .

Specialists in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Türkiye provided psychosocial support, focusing on children and adolescents. Damaged facilities were quickly repaired, enhancing services like adult and pediatric ICU capacity, expanding specialized treatments such as oncology, and establishing new units for physical rehabilitation and mental health at Idleb Central Hospital, including adding seven new ambulances.

In collaboration with organizations like the Syrian Forum, Big Heart Foundation, Ghiras Alnahda, Saed, and Ihsan Relief, SAMS established emergency shelters and distributed essential non-medical aid, including food, hygiene kits, and clothing, to hundreds of families in Syria and Türkiye.



# Northern Syria's Earthquake



# Our Programs: Primary Care & Outreach

Primary healthcare is essential for early diagnosis, patient empowerment, and disease prevention and management. It also provides access to broader services, including mental health support, higher-level care, and referrals for nutrition and protection.

In 2023, SAMS delivered crucial healthcare and education in Greece, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria through static facilities, mobile medical teams, and community outreach. The organization conducted 16,451 consultations using 11 mobile units. Outreach teams also distributed numerous health education messages on key topics such as infant feeding, mental health awareness, chronic disease management, and hygiene promotion, enhancing community health literacy and well-being.

## Meet Bilasan

Bilasan, an 8-year-old girl from the town of Salwa in the countryside of Idlib, was experiencing pain in her lower back with frequent urination, so her mother took her to SAMS' Salwa Primary Healthcare Center.

Bilasan was diagnosed with a severe urinary tract infection and given an appropriate treatment plan. After a period of treatment, Bilasan's condition improved, and new tests confirmed her recovery.

Bilasan's mother was overjoyed and shared, "Thanks to the treatment, Bilasan is back to her usual energetic self! We are so grateful for the healthcare professionals at SAMS' Salwa Primary Healthcare Center for their exceptional care and support."





# Our Programs: Secondary & Tertiary Care

SAMS remains a pivotal secondary and tertiary medical care source, offering essential services to internally displaced Syrians, refugees, and host communities in neighboring countries. Syrian physicians employed at specialized hospitals in Syria provide critical procedures such as dialysis, cardiac catheterization, chemotherapy, and advanced surgeries.

Additionally, SAMS coordinates medical missions in Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon with volunteer specialists and establishes partnerships with a network of hospitals in Lebanon to further enhance the availability of specialized care.

## Resilient Abu As'ad

Meet the resilient Abu As'ad, a 41-year-old man originally from the southern outskirts of Aleppo with a history of #cardiac issues.

Six years ago, he underwent a life-saving procedure in Lebanon, receiving two heart stents. However, he recently experienced intense pain in his left arm and slight chest discomfort, prompting a quick visit to SAMS-sponsored Al Shifa Hospital in northwest Syria.

Dr. Khaled Al Hajji, our skilled cardiologist, said: "Given his history of heart issues and previous stent placements, we swiftly conducted an emergency catheterization, uncovering a severe injury in the artery." Further treatment and more surgery may be necessary, Dr. Al Hajji said.

Abu As'ad expressed his genuine relief for having access to free cardiac care by saying, "Without the support of SAMS, I would have been lost. Bless you all for your help."

Such a sense of relief is what keeps us going. Thank you for all your support and donations.

# Our Programs: Maternal & Newborn Care

## Hello, Baby Laith!

“Thank God, my son has come back to me. I feared I might lose him and that I would never be able to hold him in my arms again.”

- Leith's mother

Leith was born prematurely at just 30 weeks in SAMS' Al Dana Maternity Hospital in northwest Syria with a bluish tint to his skin. The pediatrician on duty diagnosed him with a severe case of Respiratory Distress Syndrome (RDS). He was immediately taken into the neonatal intensive care unit where the medical team worked tirelessly to save his life.

By the second day, Leith's condition worsened, and he developed exaggerated acute respiratory distress. The team performed a bilateral chest decompression, which thankfully regulated his heartbeat and oxygen levels. Regular blood gas tests showed that his condition had stabilized.

The following day, Leith experienced a critical electrolyte imbalance and renal failure. A CT scan also revealed cerebral edema. The medical team addressed the blood infection, the renal failure, and, fortunately, Leith pulled through this critical phase.

After 25 days of intensive care, he was discharged in good health, much to everyone's relief.

In 2023, SAMS' robust network of maternal and child healthcare facilities, including Al Dana Hospital, Qah Maternity Hospital, Raju Hospital, Al Shifa Hospital in Afrin, and the Specialized Maternity Hospital in Idlib, celebrated the arrival of 20,934 newborns.

These facilities focus on childbirth and deliver comprehensive antenatal and postnatal care across northwest Syria. Additionally, following the devastating earthquake, SAMS facilities in northwest Syria provided vital support to new mothers and infants, distributing thousands of postpartum kits to aid their recovery during this challenging period.

In Greece, SAMS mobile medical team continued providing maternal care to refugees and migrant women in camps and clinics in the Atica region, and in Lebanon, SAMS launched a financial assistance project to help cover the cost of hospital care for infants and newborn from the refugee communities.



# Our Programs: Rehab Medicine & Services

In 2023, SAMS broadened its healthcare outreach by integrating various rehabilitative services, including cochlear implants, physical therapy, prosthetics, and speech therapy in Syria, Jordan, and Turkiye. Nearly 58,000 services were delivered across five specialized facilities, enhancing the lives of those with disabilities.

In response to the earthquake in northwest Syria, a new physical rehabilitation center was opened at Idlib Central Hospital in June, while services expanded at Termanin Physical Rehabilitation Center.

## Super Firas

Sixteen-year-old Firas' life changed drastically when a bomb exploded at a market in Aleppo, Syria, severely injuring his right hand and foot. Forced to move to Afrin with his family due to the conflict, Firas faced limited job opportunities and the loss of his older brother.

Firas began physical therapy and was transferred to SAMS-supported Al Shifa Hospital for mental health support. Hooraa Atoura, a mental-health supervisor, noted his severe depression and social difficulties. The team created a treatment plan, and after 2.5 months of counseling and medication, Firas showed significant improvement.

His mother observed, "He was isolated and used a crutch to walk. Now, he walks unaided and has made new friends at a sports club. He has returned to his normal life."



# Winterization Response

In Lebanon, our teams partnered with local authorities and organizations to prepare families for winter, distributing essential winterization kits—including LED lights, blankets, and hygiene products—to 6,665 individuals. Meanwhile, starting in January 2023 in Syria, we collaborated with Ghiras Al Nahda to provide heating fuel to 574 displaced families in Azaz. Subsequent partnerships with Saed for Relief and Development expanded our aid, reaching vulnerable families across three IDP camps and heating educational and residential facilities in Jandarisi, benefiting over 12,250 people during the harsh winter months.



# Duty of Care for Health Workers

In 2023, SAMS solidified its commitment to supporting health workers amid challenging circumstances. Efforts included financial and psychological aid to staff in Syria and Turkiye following a devastating earthquake, helping those displaced or suffering losses.

Moreover, SAMS enhanced its advocacy for protecting health workers in conflict zones. In a significant collaboration in Ukraine, SAMS joined forces with the Revival Institute for Future to establish mental health break rooms in 27 front-line hospitals, providing much-needed respite for health professionals.

# Specialized Care: Cath Labs

## Abu Mohammed's Heart

Abu Mohammed recently suffered chest pain and difficulty breathing. He went to the SAMS-supported Bab Al Hawa Hospital, where he was diagnosed with acute coronary syndrome. He was then transferred to the cardiac catheterization unit at Al Shifa Hospital in Afrin, also supported by SAMS.

Dr. Nader Rahmun said that upon arrival, Abu Mohammed received immediate care. "We quickly performed a diagnostic cardiac catheterization with favorable results. By God's grace, he was discharged in excellent condition," he noted.

Grateful, Abu Mohammed expressed his relief. "In Idlib, there are no affordable cardiac catheterization facilities, only expensive private hospitals. The procedure gave me peace of mind, and now my condition is excellent. I hope more cardiac catheterization centers are established in Idlib to help locals."

In Syria, our teams operate three cath labs at Al Bab, Afrin, and Al Ziraa Hospital, equipped with advanced medical devices for comprehensive cardiac and vascular care. These centers provide critical services, including diagnostic and interventional catheterization and pacemaker programming, accommodating emergencies, and routine procedures.

Addressing numerous cardiac needs, Afrin Hospital recorded 629 consultations, treated 590 unique beneficiaries, and conducted 322 cardiac catheterizations last year. Al Bab Hospital also played a crucial role, with 2,494 consultations, benefiting 2,270 individuals and completing 342 cardiac catheterizations. These efforts are vital for managing conditions like angina and myocardial infarction, ensuring timely and essential care for those affected.



# Specialized Care: Stroke Unit

In Idleb Central Hospital, our specialized stroke unit manages acute ischemic and hemorrhagic strokes, prioritizing rapid admission and critical assessment. With 15 ward beds, 6 ICU beds, and CT capabilities, it offers comprehensive care, including thrombolysis, rehabilitation, and physiotherapy tailored to individual needs.

A dedicated clinic within the unit supports continuous diagnosis and monitoring, along with an intensive care area for emergency transfers. In 2023, the unit recorded 3,581 consultations and 644 hospitalizations.

SAMS is expanding these services to launch a stroke unit at Al Shifa Hospital in Afrin with 4 ICUs and six ward beds. The unit will follow four essential thrombolysis protocols to provide personalized care across diverse locations.

## Um Abdullah's New Life

I was feeling unwell and sensed something was seriously wrong. My son, Abdullah, came rushing home the moment he heard about my critical condition. Without a second thought, he quickly got me to the SAMS-supported Idleb Central Hospital in NW Syria.

As we reached the emergency department, I started experiencing numbness and a tingling sensation on my left side, along with difficulty speaking. Fear and uncertainty gripped me, but knowing I was already at the hospital brought some relief.

The medical staff acted swiftly and professionally, providing me with the urgent care I needed. Thanks to their prompt attention and expertise, my life was saved that day.

# Specialized Care: Oncology

In 2023, SAMS provided over 39,000 oncology services to patients in northern Syria and Lebanon.

In northern Syria, SAMS has been the sole NGO offering free comprehensive cancer services since 2018, including diagnostics, surgeries, medications, chemotherapy, and management of complications for various cancers such as breast cancer, lymphoma, colon cancer, and pediatric leukemia. Following the February 2023 earthquakes many Syrian cancer patients lost access to treatment in Türkiye including radiation therapy and immunotherapy and SAMS expanded its services by providing 1,000 cancer consultations monthly across four Hematology and Oncology Clinics: Idlib Oncology Center, Al-Bab Oncology Center, Jarablus Oncology Center, and Bab Al-Hawa Oncology Center. SAMS is also committed to training future oncologists, having graduated seven fellows and with three more expected to graduate in August 2024.

In Lebanon, SAMS supported Syrian refugee cancer patients by funding surgeries, diagnostics, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, and medications. Patient selection was based on cancer type and stage, age, treatment prognosis, availability of treatments, and cost.

SAMS' dedicated members, including oncologists and pathologists, provided remote and in-person support throughout 2023, leading training sessions and collaborating with colleagues in Syria and Lebanon to deliver essential cancer care.

## Hanan's Smart Decision

A year ago, I discovered a painful lump in my breast. Initially, I didn't think it could be serious. That changed when I decided to visit the SAMS Oncology Center at Idlib Central Hospital. After necessary tests and imaging, I was diagnosed with breast cancer.

Now, I am undergoing treatment with a dedicated oncology team closely monitoring my progress. My journey highlights the critical importance of early detection, which enhances recovery chances, reduces treatment doses, and minimizes complications.

Despite the challenges, I remain hopeful. With the support of my medical team and loved ones, I am determined to beat this and emerge stronger than ever.

# Special Focus

## Care for Children



# Special Focus: Cochlear Implants

In 2023, SAMS successfully completed two cochlear implant missions, resulting in 28 children receiving life-changing cochlear implants. With this new accomplishment, the program has achieved significant milestones since its start in 2022 : 79 children were equipped with cochlear implants, and 1,071 follow-up speech therapy sessions were conducted to ensure optimal post-operative care. Plans are underway to extend this initiative to perform an additional 50 surgeries in 2024.

Each child's journey is supported by a dedicated team focused on personalized auditory rehabilitation, demonstrating our commitment to enhancing hearing and communication abilities for those with severe auditory impairments.


## Mohammed's First Hearing Moments

Five-year-old Mohamed's life, along with his family's, was deeply affected by his hearing loss. However, hope blossomed when he joined SAMS' Cochlear Implant Program for hearing-impaired children in northern Syria.

After undergoing a Cochlear implant surgery, Mohamed is now in the third stage of his treatment journey where he undergoes extensive hearing and speech therapy.

This heartwarming photo captures the magical moment when Mohamed heard sounds for the very first time.





# Special Focus: Center for Autism Spectrum Disorder

In Istanbul, SAMS partner Take My Hand/ focuses on providing exceptional, tailored support to children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders. In 2023, we assisted 220 children, 182 in-person and 38 remotely with tele consultation, through 38,357 individual lessons, 5,910 group activities, and 3,909 sensory-motor sessions, all aimed at enhancing cognitive and physical development.

The center also ensures a seamless transition into mainstream education, with 16 children successfully enrolling in public schools last year. This highlights our dedication to preparing children for broader educational settings through personalized developmental programs.

## Marah's New Joy

When Marah was 10 months old, her parents noticed she wasn't meeting typical developmental milestones. Concerned, they took her to a specialist who diagnosed her with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

For five years, the family searched for specialized care and eventually found the SAMS' Take My Hand Center in Istanbul, Türkiye. Our specialists created a personalized plan for Marah to improve her social skills and self-confidence.

After months of dedicated care, Marah has made remarkable progress. She can now walk on her own and communicate with those around her, bring-

# Special Focus: The Helping Hand

Since 2020, SAMS has partnered with Dr. Solfrid Raknes and Attensi to implement and expand “The Helping Hand,” an engaging model of psychosocial support program for adolescents.

The helping Hand helps develop problem solving and coping skills that can be applied throughout all life stages. It includes a digital mental health game specifically designed for teenagers in the Middle East, featuring playable scenarios that address relatable topics such as bullying, traumatic memories, social anxiety, and suicidal ideation. Adolescents gather in peer groups each week to play the game and engage in activities and discussions led by SAMS facilitators.

In 2023, the program reached over 1,100 teenagers in Lebanon and Jordan, underscoring our commitment to providing crucial mental health support to youth in the region. SAMS also developed a training-of-trainers manual and conducted the first training of future Arabic-speaking trainers in the region.

## Raghad’s Journey of Hope

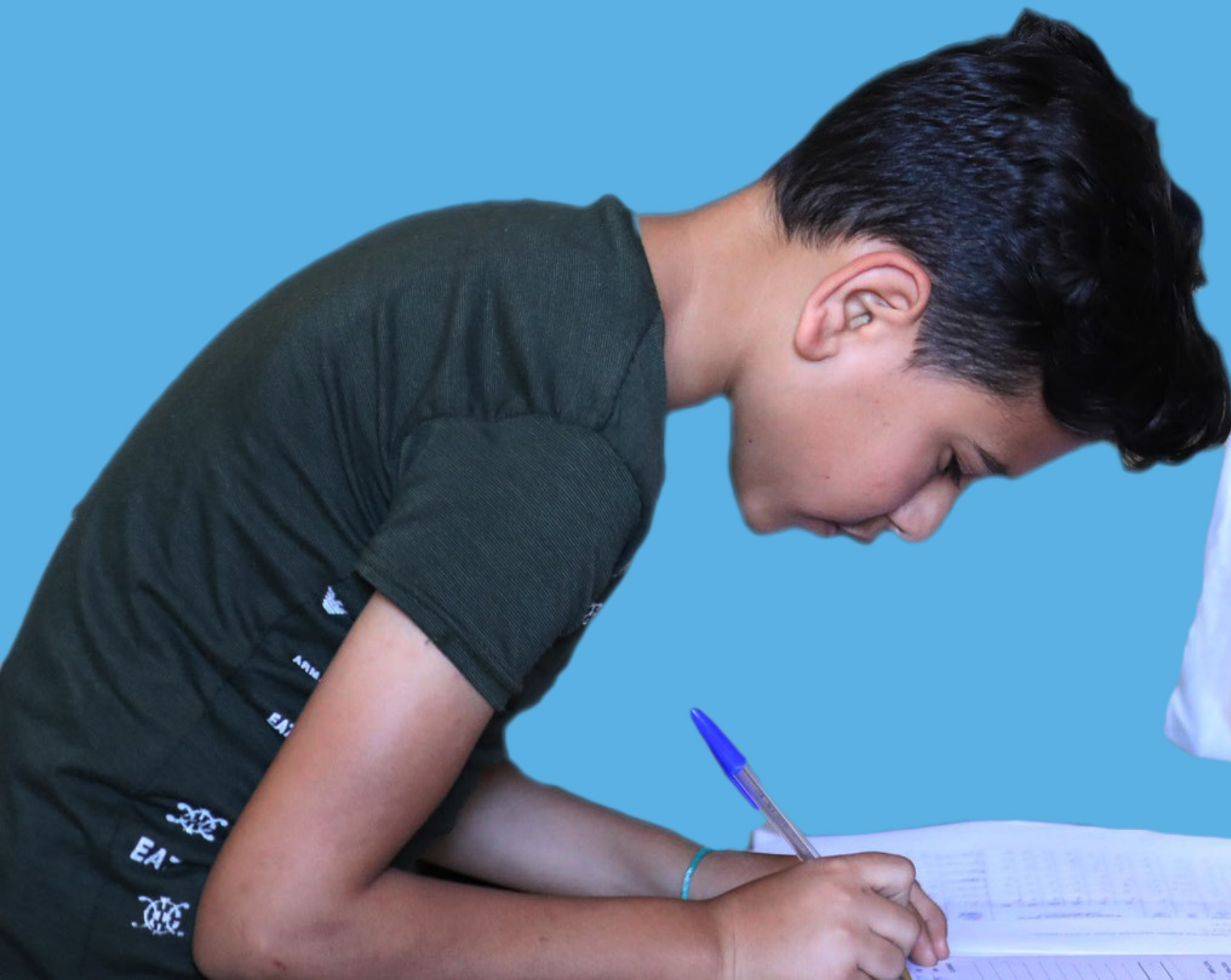
My name is Raghad, a 14-year-old student from Lebanon. I used to feel very lonely and was often bullied, even contemplating suicide. Everything changed when I joined the Helping Hand program with SAMS.

Through their sessions, I rediscovered my love for life and built up my self-confidence. SAMS helped me break free from social isolation, and I started participating in group activities, which empowered me to engage more with my classmates.

My story shows the power of resilience and personal growth. I hope my journey inspires others to overcome their challenges. Please share my transformation and help spread hope. Together, we can make a difference.



# Special Focus: Support for Young People with Diabetes



In partnership with Life For A Child, SAMS designed and implemented an educational and training program for youth and children living with type 1 diabetes, and their caregivers in Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq.

Through this project, xxx patients received a diabetes home management kit, including one year supply of lancets and strips, and educational materials. They also participated in workshops on blood glucose self monitoring, attended presentations on the importance of nutrition, lifestyle and correct use of insulin for their well being, and learned the signs and symptoms of complications caused by the disease or by incorrect management practices.

## Yazan is In Control

Yazan, a young Syrian boy living in Lebanon, faced the challenges of type 1 diabetes with resilience.

Thanks to a partnership between SAMS and Life For A Child, Yazan and his mother joined an educational and training program designed to empower youth with diabetes. He received a diabetes home management kit, complete with a year's supply of lancets, strips, and educational materials.

Through engaging workshops, Yazan learned how to monitor his blood glucose, the importance of proper nutrition and lifestyle, and the correct use of insulin. This comprehensive support helped Yazan understand and manage his condition, ensuring a healthier and more confident future.

# Country Programs: Syria

In Syria, our dedicated teams have significantly advanced health-care delivery, managing 48 inpatient and outpatient facilities across five governorates in northern Syria . These facilities offer emergency consultations for acute conditions, appointments for ongoing care for chronic diseases, laboratory and imaging tests to help in diagnosis, and pharmacies that dispense essential medications.

Last year, we reached over 1.4 million beneficiaries with more than 3.4 million services, marking an increase from the previous year. Our staff of 3,145 healthcare, administration, and management professionals has been instrumental in this expansion. Our mobile clinics have been especially crucial, providing over 135,188 services to remote areas.



# Country Programs: Syria

Our ongoing initiatives, including expanded program on immunization in partnership with WHO, cholera outbreak case management and response, emergency interventional cardiac care, standards for adult and pediatric critical care units, nutritional assessment of vulnerable populations, and subspecialties like ENT, ophthalmology, neurosurgery and pediatric surgery, continue to improve the well-being of countless individuals.

SAMS intervention extended beyond direct medical services to include community health awareness and education sessions, mental health screening and referral for psychosocial support, empowerment of survivors of violence and detention, and winterization assistance for displaced families in the camps.

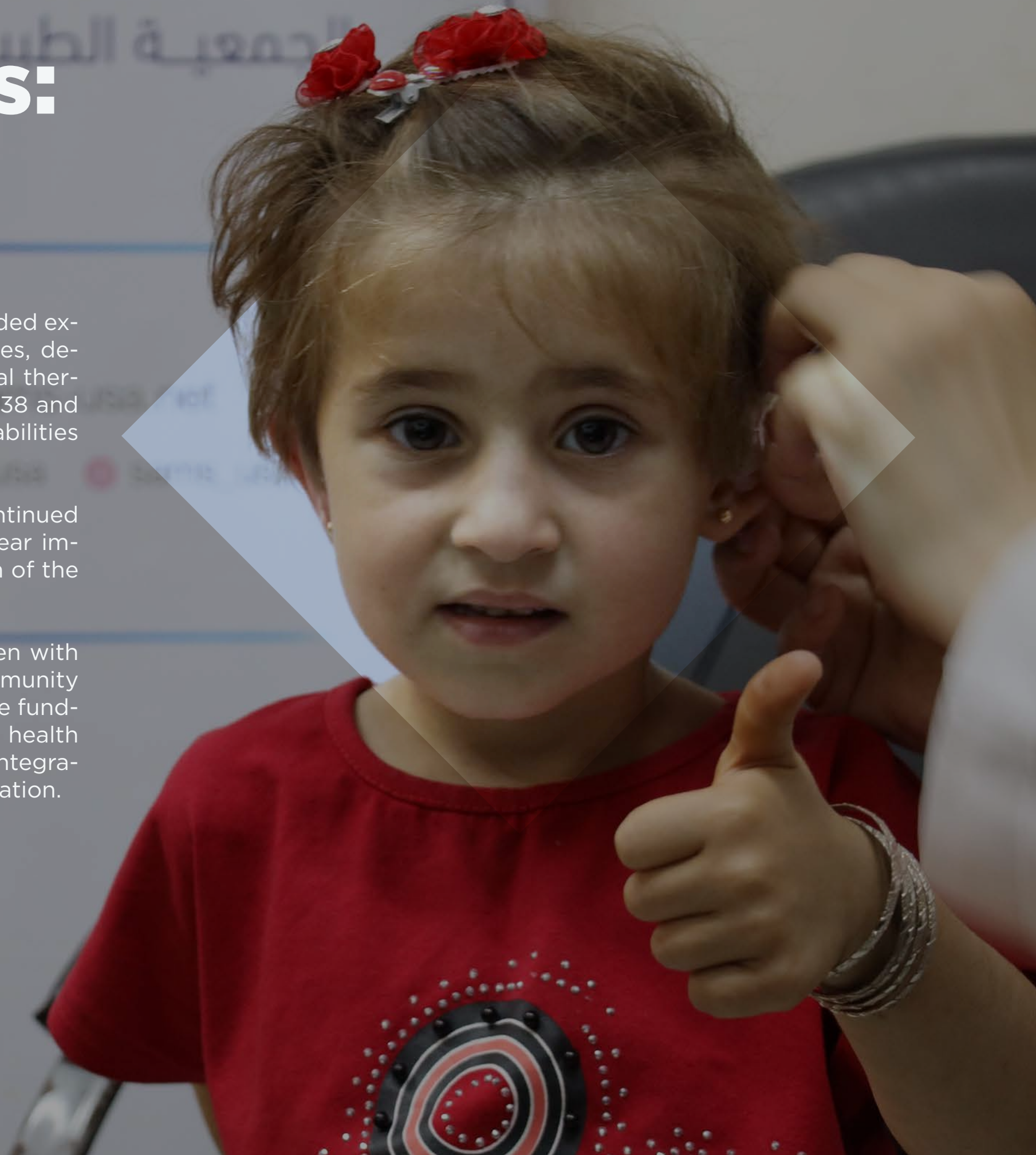


# Country Programs: Türkiye

In Türkiye, our dedicated teams across six facilities provided exemplary healthcare and support to over 14,000 refugees, delivering more than 91,000 services. Our flagship physical therapy and psychosocial support programs have seen 24,438 and 67,451 services rendered catering to individuals with disabilities and those affected by recent earthquakes.

Our specialized audiologists and speech therapists continued to support the children in SAMS hearing aid and cochlear implant program, offering follow up testing and calibration of the devices and 1,071 specialized rehabilitation sessions.

Additionally, we support an education center for children with autism spectrum disorders, enhancing family and community well-being. This year, with added US Department of State funding, we awarded scholarships to 86 Syrian medical and health sciences students, in preparation for facilitating their integration through internships and job placements after graduation.





# Country Programs: Jordan

Our dedicated team of 56 staff members in Jordan has provided over 49,216 services to 29,415 beneficiaries, including 20,500 psychosocial services that significantly enhanced mental well-being. Our experienced MHPSS team designed a new program focusing on parental skills and techniques to offer guidance for parents on setting boundaries, teaching values, creating a safe and nurturing environment, encouraging positive behavior, and providing emotional support, while navigating the challenges refugee families face.

SAMS medical center in Zaatari camp, including medical, vaccination, and dental clinics, alongside the Wadi-Seer rehab center, have filled crucial gaps in the public health system, especially in physiotherapy and psychosocial support, serving 4,909 individuals.

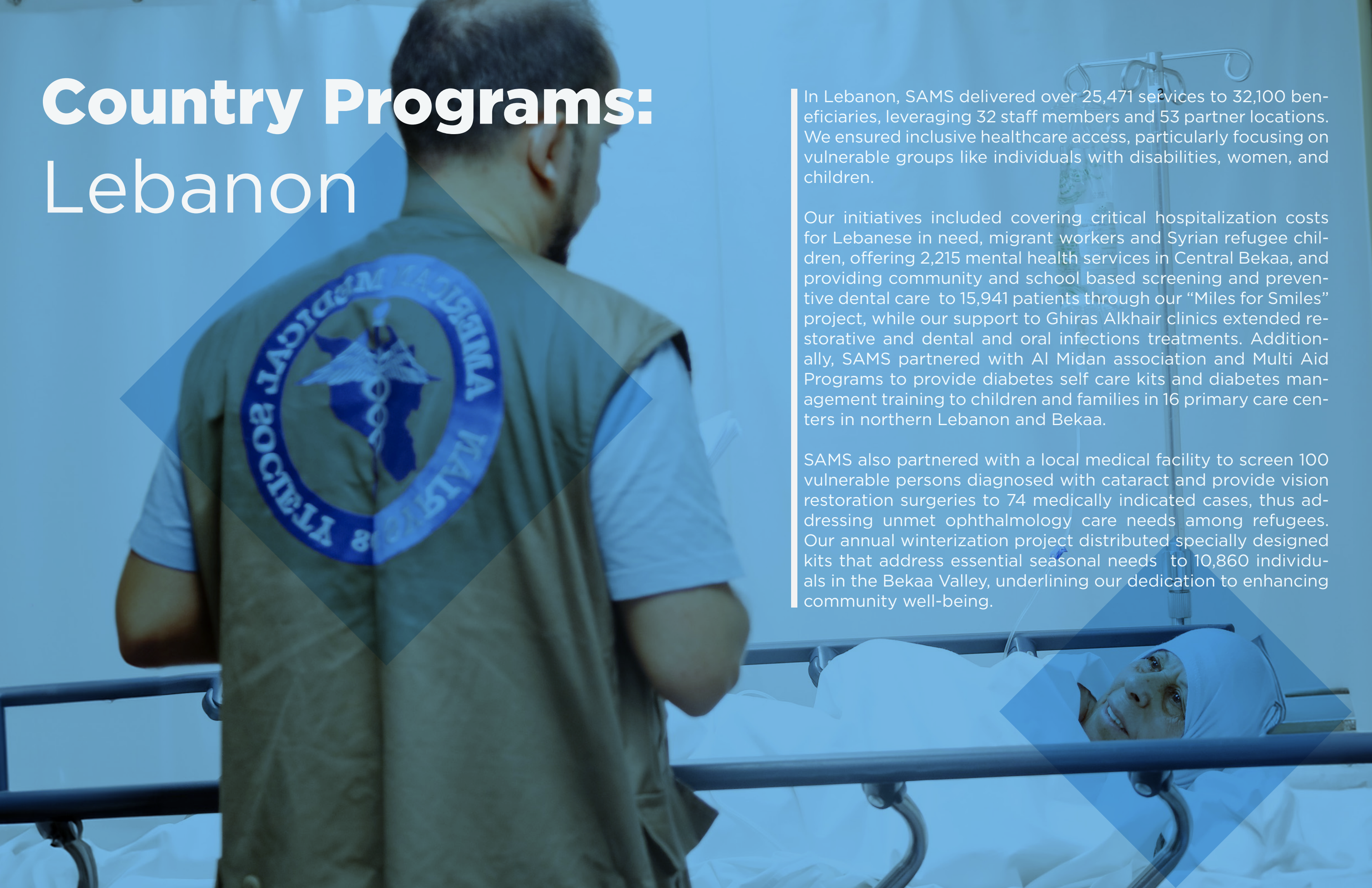
In 2023, SAMS continued to host major multi-specialty medical missions in Jordan, offering treatments like pediatric dental surgeries, cardiac catheterizations, endoscopy services and ophthalmology interventions. Our comprehensive approach underscores our commitment to delivering essential healthcare and making a lasting impact on the communities we serve.

# Country Programs: Lebanon

In Lebanon, SAMS delivered over 25,471 services to 32,100 beneficiaries, leveraging 32 staff members and 53 partner locations. We ensured inclusive healthcare access, particularly focusing on vulnerable groups like individuals with disabilities, women, and children.

Our initiatives included covering critical hospitalization costs for Lebanese in need, migrant workers and Syrian refugee children, offering 2,215 mental health services in Central Bekaa, and providing community and school based screening and preventive dental care to 15,941 patients through our “Miles for Smiles” project, while our support to Ghiras Alkhair clinics extended restorative and dental and oral infections treatments. Additionally, SAMS partnered with Al Midan association and Multi Aid Programs to provide diabetes self care kits and diabetes management training to children and families in 16 primary care centers in northern Lebanon and Bekaa.

SAMS also partnered with a local medical facility to screen 100 vulnerable persons diagnosed with cataract and provide vision restoration surgeries to 74 medically indicated cases, thus addressing unmet ophthalmology care needs among refugees. Our annual winterization project distributed specially designed kits that address essential seasonal needs to 10,860 individuals in the Bekaa Valley, underlining our dedication to enhancing community well-being.



# Country Programs: Iraq

In Iraq, SAMS supports Syrian refugees, internally displaced Iraqis, and other vulnerable groups. Our dental program in Bardarash refugee camp provided over 2,300 services, including extractions, restorative treatments, preventative care, and oral hygiene instructions. The program was extended to Gwailan and Domiz refugee camps later in the year.

In 2023, SAMS also strengthened women's health services by training 60 midwives in the Nineva Governorate in collaboration with the Public Health department, addressing standards in basic and emergency obstetric and newborn care and identifying and managing high risk pregnancies. This program was followed by training 100 community health promoters on community engagement and health awareness, , infection prevention, disease control, risk communication , and promoting healthy lifestyles.

In collaboration with the Health Directorate, SAMS provided diabetes testing kits and conducted awareness-raising sessions for diabetes management to over 900 children and youth at Laila Qassem Specialized Center for Diabetic Patients in Erbil

# Country Programs: Greece

In Greece, SAMS delivered 12,627 services to 4,773 beneficiaries in 2023 amid a significant rise in refugee arrivals. Our dedicated mobile medical team services including obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, childhood vaccination, nursing, and Arabic and Farsi/Deri interpretation, operated across 7 refugee camps in the Attica Region and 3 clinics and community centers in Athens, providing services for over 50 nationalities. This reflects our commitment to ensuring accessible healthcare for all vulnerable populations.

SAMS also distributed donated clothing items to new arrivals, and procured and donated equipment, consumables and essential items for the front line responders from the Hellenic Fire Brigade of Boeotia to contribute to the huge needs that arose during the devastating fires in the summer of 2023.

As one of the main medical relief organizations with access to vulnerable displaced populations in Greece, SAMS participated in the ITHACA Project on preserving the narrative of the refugee population and delivered a presentation at the Panhellenic Conference on Health Economics and Policy on Solutions for Inequalities in Access to Health Services.



# Country Programs: Ukraine

Throughout 2023, SAMS robustly supported Ukrainian health workers amidst the ongoing conflict, expanding its hospital preparedness program to 39 facilities across eight frontline regions.

SAMS enhanced emergency response capabilities through WHO-standard Mass Casualty Management courses in collaboration with the Ukrainian Health Union and Revival Institute for Future. Additionally, SAMS launched a Mental Health and Psychosocial Support initiative to combat healthcare worker burn-out, introducing well-being rooms in hospitals for therapeutic activities.

We also continued supporting volunteer physicians plan and conduct cancer and general surgery and training missions to fill gaps in tertiary care while local doctors are consumed by the demands of caring for war related trauma, demonstrating our commitment to delivering vital healthcare services during challenging times.



# Country Programs: Libya

In response to severe flooding in eastern Libya, SAMS partnered with the Sheikh Al-Taher Al-Zawi Charitable Foundation (STACO) to swiftly deliver crucial aid. Together, we distributed 110 essential family size food baskets in Derna and provided hygiene kits, cookware, clean water, and basic clothing to improve the lives of those affected.

Additionally, our collaboration with the Ayadi Al Khair Foundation (AKS) enabled the provision of necessary household supplies at reduced prices, significantly easing the financial burden on 481 families. This effort reflects our commitment to delivering comprehensive humanitarian aid during unprecedented emergencies.



# Country Programs: Morocco

In response to the earthquake in Morocco, SAMS, in partnership with the High Atlas Foundation, delivered critical aid to 37 villages, reaching 13,986 individuals, including 5,595 children. The aid included 22,797 food and essential items.

Restoration efforts in Tamguist involved rebuilding water infrastructure crucial for the community's agriculture. Additionally, 110 baskets with treats for children and 360 water bottles were provided. In Taroudant's remote villages, essential supplies and non-food items were distributed to 141 families, benefiting over 400 residents.

This comprehensive aid reflects our commitment to supporting communities through immediate relief and sustainable recovery efforts.



# Country Programs: Gaza

SAMS response to the Gaza crisis was immediate by contributing to the local response through sponsoring the procurement and distribution of medical supplies to facilities receiving victims of the armed conflict. SAMS joined a coalition of international organizations in Egypt to share information, logistics support, need assessment and cross border shipments information, while establishing alternative ways to deliver aid through partners in Jordan.

As the humanitarian needs escalated, SAMS collaborated with the United Palestinian Appeal, reaching vulnerable and displaced communities, distributing essential food and non-food items. In East Jabaliya, 500 winter clothing items were provided, benefiting 2,850 individuals, while in Deir al Balah, Middle Gaza, 1,110 food parcels supported the same number of families, impacting over 6,300 people.

Furthermore, SAMS offered financial assistance to 129 Palestinian students in Türkiye, reinforcing its commitment to immediate relief and sustained support for affected communities through impactful humanitarian efforts.



# Medical Missions Syria

In 2023, SAMS implemented a comprehensive series of 12 medical missions across Syria, involving 73 physicians who delivered specialized healthcare consultations and services to 2,733 individuals. Based on an immediate need assessment by SAMS leadership and Turkey and regional offices staff, the first mission was deployed 2 weeks after the first earthquake on February 6 .

The missions spanned a variety of services, including advanced cardiac, orthopedic, oncology and neurosurgical treatments and procedures, among 22 different medical and surgical interventions.

This successive flow of medical teams brought highly needed expertise to address the survivors of earthquake injuries and subsequent complications, hand deliver donated and much needed medical supplies, and extend support to exhausted medical providers, who, once again, lost members of their families and had their own lives shattered.

The missions became a way to compensate for the interruption in the referral system of advanced and critical cases to Turkiye.

Additionally, SAMS conducted 28 training sessions, enhancing local healthcare capabilities through hands-on activities and multidisciplinary rounds, benefiting 925 healthcare participants.

This strategic integration of direct medical care and educational initiatives maximized the immediate impact and sustainability of healthcare services in the region, ensuring significant advancements in medical practice amidst challenging circumstances.



# Medical Missions

## Jordan

## Lebanon



In 2023, SAMS executed four medical missions across Jordan, impacting thousands of vulnerable Jordanians and Syrian refugees from camps and urban settings. Throughout the missions' weeks, specialized teams conducted over 1,200 surgeries and engaged in countless secondary consultations, benefiting over 10,000 individuals.

These missions, supported by over 150 international volunteers, covered various medical specialties, including endoscopy, interventional cardiology, ophthalmology, dentistry and oral surgery, endoscopy, and pediatric care.

Alongside clinical services, SAMS strengthened local healthcare capabilities through extensive training programs and health awareness campaigns in partnership with local health ministries, academic institutions, and international organizations. SAMS affirmed its commitment to providing immediate relief and sustainable health development in Jordan.

In 2023, SAMS executed two crucial medical missions in Lebanon. The first, a multispecialty mission in March, featured 15 physicians across ten specialties, aiding 588 individuals with 117 interventions in the Bekaa and Akkar regions.

The second mission in May focused on dental and cranio-maxillofacial (CMF) services, involving 24 physicians and benefiting 2,473 people through 460 interventions in Bekaa. It highlighted Lebanon's first utilization of advanced innovations such as surgical virtual reality and 3D printing to treat complex conditions including temporomandibular joint replacement (TMJ), post traumatic facial reconstruction, selected congenital deformities, and a variety of tumor excisions.

Effective data management through the JotForm (HIPAA) database significantly boosted the mission's organization and impact.



# Medical Missions

## Greece



In 2023, SAMS conducted three medical and dental missions in Greece. Our dental mission in March 2023 brought together seven volunteers from 3 countries, who provided 506 preventative, restorative, and curative dental procedures for refugees and asylum seekers residing in central Athens.

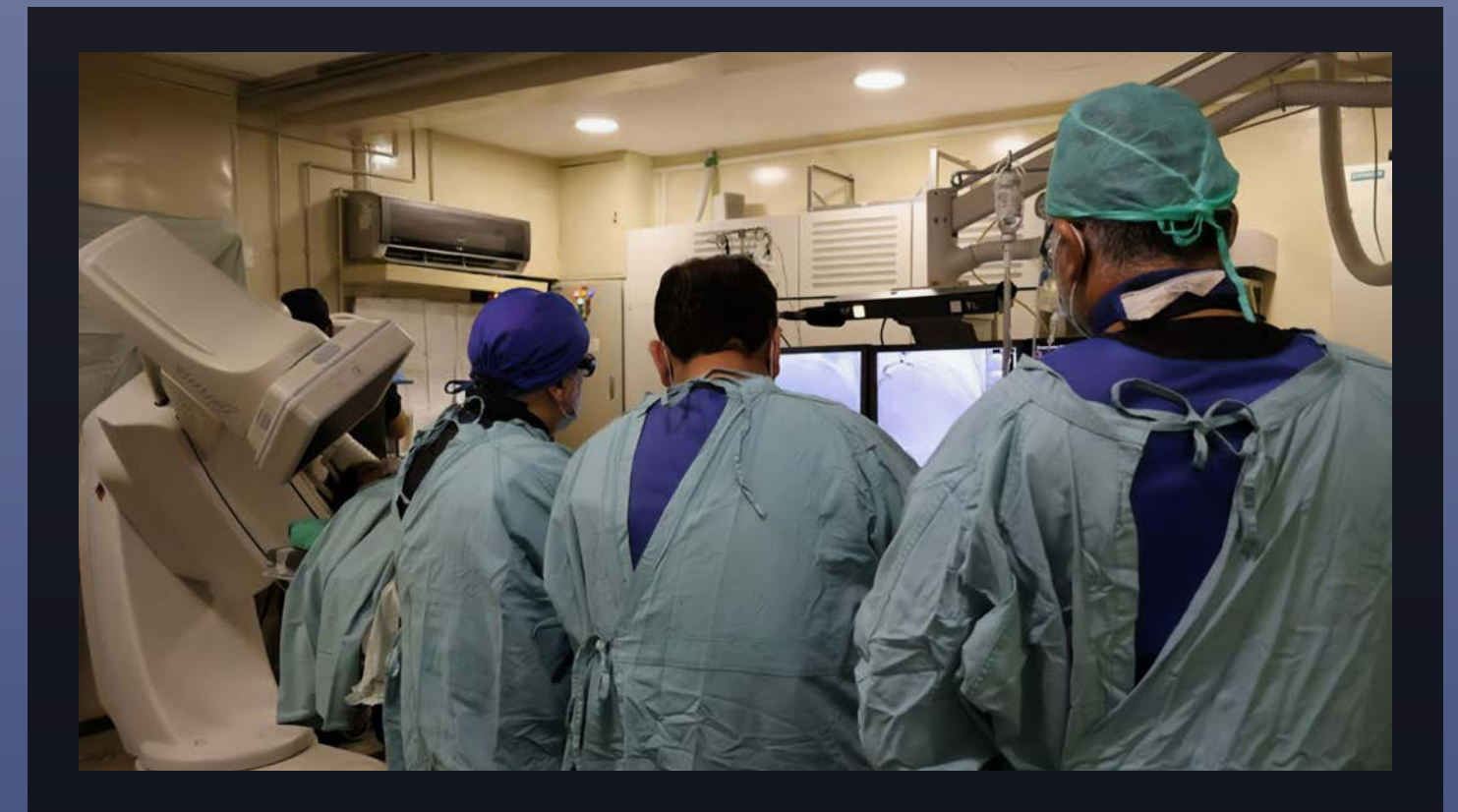
Notably, the team coordinated with shelters for unaccompanied minors to provide care for particularly vulnerable youth who have no family support system in Greece. SAMS' mission model in Greece also includes longer-term volunteer placements where individual volunteers deploy to augment the work of our Greek-based mobile medical team, sometimes for longer periods.

This included a one-month deployment for an American pediatric dentist and an American pediatrician in September 2023.

## Pakistan

In October 2023, SAMS partnered with Indus Teaching Hospital to conduct a focused cardiology mission in Karachi, Pakistan. Over five days, three cardiologists performed 20 cardiac catheterizations, placed 27 stents, and conducted eight electrophysiology studies with pacemaker insertions, providing life-saving treatments for advanced coronary artery disease and arrhythmias.

Local cardiology fellows actively participated, benefiting from SAMS volunteers' expertise through hands-on learning and multidisciplinary rounds. This strategic blend of direct medical care and educational initiatives ensured significant advancements in medical practice and enhanced healthcare sustainability in the region.



# Mental Health

Over recent years, SAMS has developed extensive mental health, psychosocial, educational, and training programs across Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkiye. Collaborating with Syrian NGOs, SAMS offers specialized services for individuals, including children with autism and those suffering from severe disorders. The team comprises specialized psychiatrists, psychologists, and counselors and provides diverse care, such as therapy for trauma and depression, empowerment programs, and specialized support for gender-based violence survivors. In 2023, SAMS delivered nearly 220,000 services in MHPSS and physical rehabilitation, alongside training for healthcare workers in conflict-impacted regions.

## Syria

In recent years, SAMS has significantly advanced mental health and educational programs in Northern Syria, supported by the European Union. We've developed a master's program in clinical psychology, diplomas in psychiatric nursing and psychosocial support, and specialized training in trauma therapy, aiming for 180 graduates by 2026. Our partners include Free Aleppo University, Hashemite University, and PoMA Global, with efforts focused on strengthening the mental health workforce and sustainable education.

Our Child CETA Counselor Training utilizes approaches developed by Johns Hopkins University and has enhanced our capacity to provide mental health services for children and adolescents, particularly after the 2023 earthquake. We plan to expand this training further.

SAMS operates the sole specialized outpatient MHPSS center in Al-Dana, offering comprehensive services and telepsychiatry. In 2023, we integrated mental health services into 48 health facilities in Idlib and western Aleppo and supported seven safe spaces, enhancing protection and empowerment for vulnerable groups.

SAMS delivered nearly 220,000 services in 2023, demonstrating our commitment to improving health and education in conflict-affected regions.



# Mental Health

## Jordan, Lebanon & Turkiye



Since 2020, The Helping Hand program, backed by Grand Challenges Canada and the Clinton Global Initiative, has empowered Syrian refugee youth in Jordan and Lebanon through psychosocial support.

Integrating cognitive techniques with learning technology, it features a digital mental health game tailored for Lebanese youth, accessible through a free app. This game fosters socio-emotional support and reduces mental health stigma.

Nearly 3,000 participants have engaged with this initiative through group sessions and digital interactions, enhancing community-led mental health advocacy.

In Jordan, SAMS has delivered comprehensive MHPSS services since 2019, including individual and group therapy, medication management, support to survivors of gender-based violence, parenting skills workshops, and specialized trainings for students, government officials, and community organizations.

In 2023, through 20,500 services, over 11,000 individuals benefited. Community and capacity-building efforts focus on sustainable support across non-camp areas.

Supported by the U.S. Department of State, SAMS extends robust MHPSS services across Turkiye through specialized mental health centers and mobile units. In Istanbul, partnerships expand services to include mental health support, counseling, and integration assistance for children with Autism. These initiatives underscore SAMS' commitment to improving mental health and fostering resilience among refugees and host communities.

# Medical Education

SAMS recognizes the urgent need in northern Syria to enhance the quality of medical education, boost local healthcare capacity, and advance sustainably. The 2023 established SAMS Institute, an executive committee and members consultants, fosters educational excellence among health professionals affected by conflict and addresses the significant gap left due to the exodus of senior healthcare professionals. The Institute offers scholarships and advanced educational programs, including residencies, fellowships, and specialized training that extend to doctors, dentists, students and allied health professionals.

Below are key educational initiatives supported by the SAMS Institute, each contributing to the strategic development of healthcare in the region.

## Scholarship Programs for Future Healthcare Leaders

Started in 2015, SAMS Scholarship program rigorously selects healthcare students based on academic merit, financial need, and commitment to medical relief. In 2023, SAMS supported over 85 medical and health sciences students in Türkiye and expanded its assistance to Jordan and Lebanon through collaboration with Women for Humanity (WFH).

## Midwifery and Nursing Education Initiatives

SAMS has established midwifery and nursing programs in response to regional needs, aligned with international standards. These programs have filled critical gaps in healthcare staffing, with initiatives like the specialized Adult ICU Nursing Diploma adapting to the changing community needs.

- Most of it is in the history, history, history
- ... bit in the examination
- ...and investigations have to be chosen, timed and interpreted appropriately.

# Medical Education

## Postgraduate Medical Training

SAMS manages robust fellowship and residency programs, fostering the development of specialists in critical areas like ICU care, adult and pediatric oncology, pathology, and neurology. These initiatives are vital for developing skilled medical professionals in conflict-affected regions.

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# Health Research

Over the past year, SAMS continued to address critical health issues affecting vulnerable populations. This summary outlines SAMS's pivotal research and collaborations, emphasizing their influence on health policy and practice.

## SAMS' 21st International Conference: Research in Hybrid Crisis

SAMS's 21st International Conference in Vancouver convened members, researchers, and humanitarians, focusing on "Research in Hybrid Crisis." It highlighted innovative solutions to complex healthcare challenges and recognized significant contributions in the field, offering valuable perspectives from medical students involved in conflict zone healthcare.

## Health in Conflict: Challenges of Providing Oncology Care

SAMS explored the oncological challenges in Northwest Syria, publishing findings on the dire circumstances for cancer patients and collaborating on a report detailing the barriers faced by women seeking breast cancer treatment. These efforts underscore the urgent need for enhanced cancer care infrastructure in conflict settings.

## Health in Conflict: Impact on Respiratory Health

A SAMS study in *BMJ Open Respiratory Research* analyzed consultations across 48 facilities, uncovering a high incidence of respiratory diseases, particularly among children. The research highlights the healthcare access challenges in conflict zones, aiding in developing targeted health strategies.

## Attacks on Health: Impact on Health Workforce and Services

SAMS, in collaboration with the University of California, Berkeley, highlighted the impacts of attacks on healthcare through studies focusing on the psychological and service access challenges faced by healthcare workers. These findings have informed advocacy and policy discussions at various international forums, emphasizing the critical need for protective measures for health services in conflict zones.

Additionally, SAMS partnered with the International Rescue Committee (IRC), SPHR, and SRD to issue a report on sexual and reproductive health in Northwest Syria, revealing concerning data about the increase in C-sections among displaced women due to ongoing hostilities.

# Advocacy

## US Government Collaboration

SAMS has intensified its advocacy with U.S. government partners. Maintaining strong ties with its major supporter, the Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance at USAID, SAMS, has also engaged closely with the State Department and Congress. Regular interactions, including meetings and events with policy committees and the National Security Council, facilitated by staff and returning doctors, have helped communicate the critical humanitarian needs of the region. This effort underscores SAMS' commitment to advocating for Syrians amid broader crises, aligning with its global humanitarian mission.

## European Collaboration

SAMS has enhanced its European and UN advocacy, conducting three tours of European capitals in 2023 to strengthen ties with funding agencies and parliamentary overseers. At the Brussels conference, SAMS focused on accountability and actively participating with its staff. Leveraging its ECOSOC advisory status, SAMS contributed testimonies to the UN and engaged with WHO leaders, reinforcing its commitment to global humanitarian missions and intensifying its international advocacy efforts.

## Research and Communications

In 2023, SAMS refocused its advocacy to tackle declining donor budgets in the West, launching a significant research project on sustainable and alternative financing in healthcare. This effort collaborates with USAID and other partners and aims to develop pilot projects for sustainable finance. As 2024 begins, SAMS continues to champion the Syrian people's voices, relying on the invaluable insights of our members and staff to influence global policy. We look forward to enhanced collaboration in the coming year.



# SAMS Society & Members

Throughout 2023, SAMS organized influential events, including the 7th National Symposium in Clearwater, FL, focused on “Innovations & Transformations in Healthcare,” the 21st International Conference in Vancouver, which addressed “Research in Armed Conflict: Evidence into Practice.” and the 12th National Conference in Dearborn, Michigan, addressing “Medical Practice in the US: Paradigm Shifts and Arising Challenges. These conferences were pivotal in advancing professional development, strategic healthcare planning, and providing platforms for networking and members engagement.

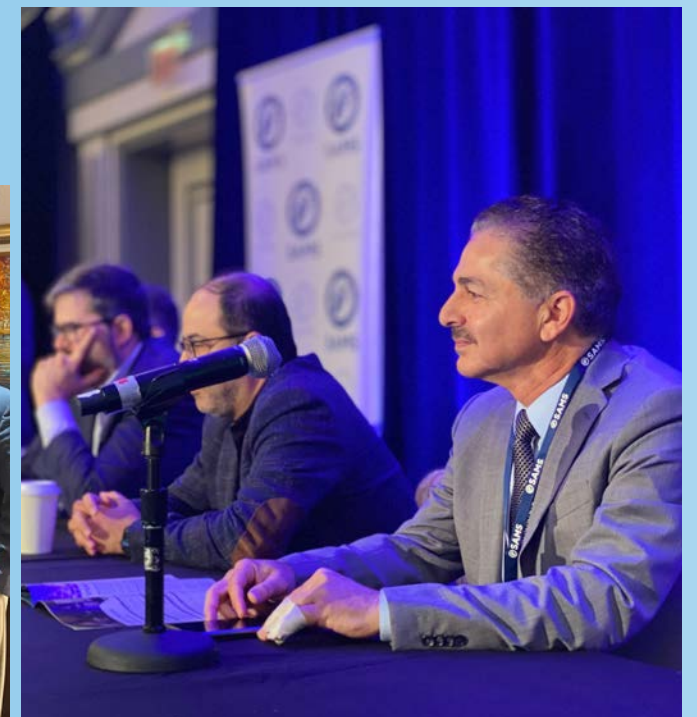
SAMS also provides ongoing virtual lectures and webinars on critical health topics. In the past year, significant sessions included “How to Survive in Private Practice: Reality Vs. Expectations” and updates on earthquake response in Türkiye and Syria, demonstrating SAMS’s commitment to timely and relevant medical education.

Internationally, SAMS enhances healthcare inside Syria by offering advanced training and support across various specialties, significantly impacting local healthcare capabilities. Additionally, SAMS organizes medical missions in neighboring countries, focusing on comprehensive patient care, volunteer recruitment, and community partnerships to ensure integrated health services.



Moreover, the organization supports emerging medical professionals through its SAMS Young Professional Committee, aimed at fostering future leadership, and continues to support Syrian graduates who relocated to the United States in their search for postgraduate residency programs by offering mentorship and applications support, in addition to small interest free loans. SAMS continues to publish four volumes annually of its

open access, peer reviewed, online scientific journal, Avicenna Journal of medicine, introducing a vast variety of articles addressing topics like cholera outbreak in Syria, nursing services gaps in the US, and COVID vaccine hesitancy and effectiveness, as few examples.



**SYRIAN AMERICAN MEDICAL SOCIETY FOUNDATION UNITED KINGDOM**

England & Wales - Charity number 1185540

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# Accounts

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# SAMS

ANNUAL REPORT  
2022



our doctors are COOL!  
#JustSaying



fresh floride cleanse = awkward smile...





## Message From **SAMS** President

Many years ago, our very capable members came together to establish a foundation of medical expertise with the capacity to aid hundreds of thousands of daughters, sons, fathers, and mothers who did not know the next time they would be able to receive the medical support they needed. To see what has been accomplished by this commitment is nothing short of a miracle. Thankfully, we have successfully built a network of diverse providers, life-changing programs, and millions of beneficiaries. Previously we discussed our new shifts toward medical education, mental health, and psycho-social services that chart a new path toward sustainability for our beneficiaries. The shift has paid dividends, the fruits of which include the new opportunities made possible by providing occupational therapy to many who want to head into the workforce as well as many new projects being maintained by dedicated staff.

With your help, a new avenue of aid and services has been introduced. Now for the first time in years, the future looks bright and full of hope. Your help in alleviating their concerns allows them the opportunity to see past their current conditions and focus on things like caring for loved ones, pursuing careers, and getting an education.

As advocates for the vulnerable and voiceless, your efforts have solidified border-openings and access for aid to reach those in dire need. SAMS is now recognized beyond just aid providers but champions of change.

Our tomorrow is brighter than ever because of your support and for that we extend our warmest appreciation and congratulations for being at the forefront of life-changing service.

**Dr. Amjad Rass**  
**SAMS President**



## Message From **SAMS** Foundation Chair

In 2022, the most profound impacts of the COVID pandemic subsided, and SAMS emerged from the global crisis stronger and wiser. We resumed our role as a major health care provider to a population of 4.5 million in NW Syria providing nearly 3 million medical services, including more than 100,000 surgeries.

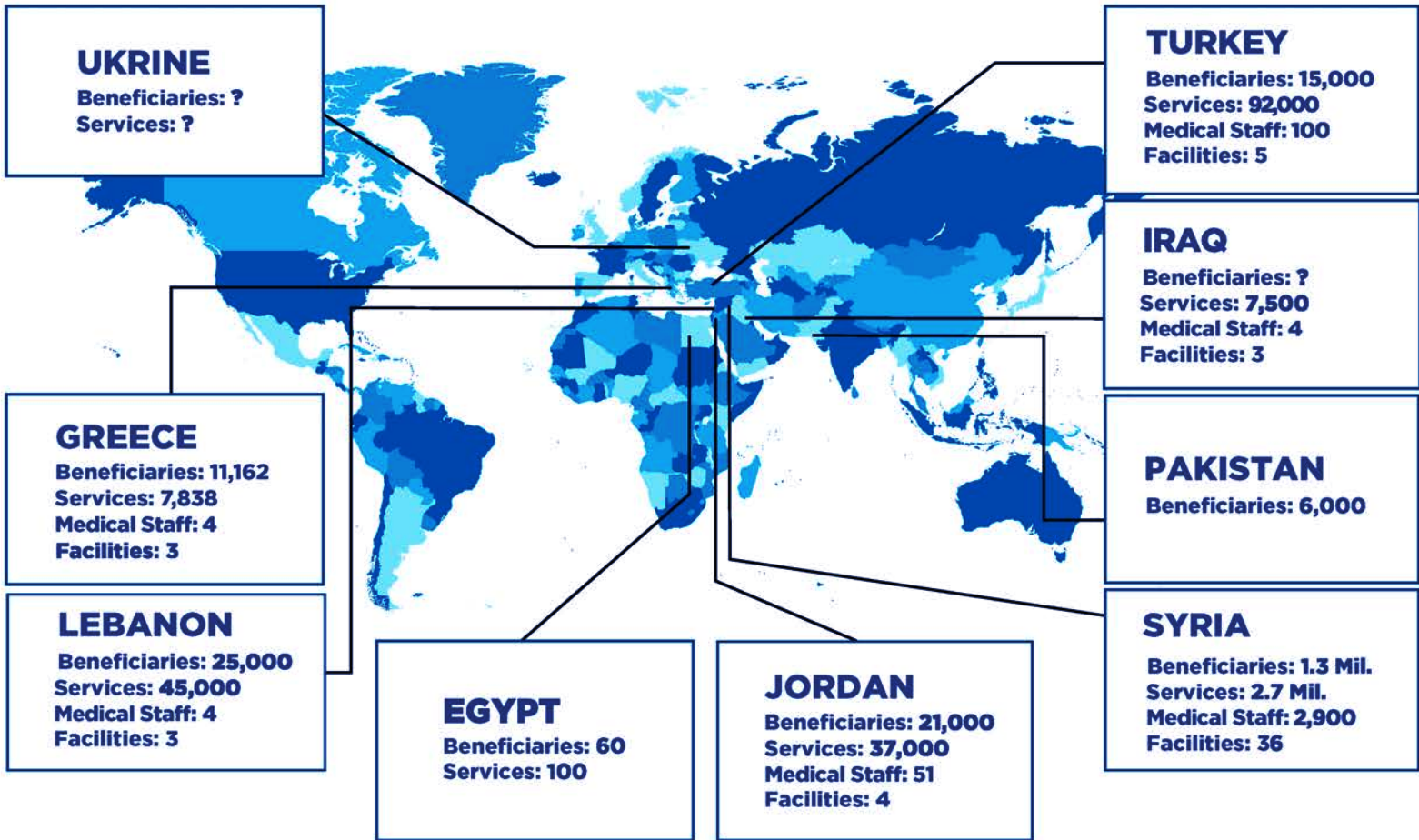
With each crisis comes new opportunities. SAMS experience treating critically ill patients in the newly established COVID ICUs enabled us to start a new badly needed ICU fellowship program in NW Syria with the help of SAMS ICU committee in the US. We also expanded our existing and unique as cancer center in NW Syria and started few one of a kind “signature” programs such as cochlear implant at Bab AlHawa hospital, cardiac catheterization in Afrin and AlBab-hospitals and the stroke unit in Idlib Central hospital.

I had the opportunity to witness first hand the resilience and hard work of our staff and providers during my visit to NW Syria in the fall of 2022. I saw complex life saving pediatric surgeries at Bab AlHawa hospital, the critical stroke patients cared for at Idlib central hospital ICU, the very busy neonatal ICU at Avicenna hospital in Idlib, and the high risk pregnancies managed at AlUmuma hospital in Idlib. I also visited the recently rehabilitated and expanded Alaterab cave hospital and Afrin hospital which were both attacked viciously in 2021 with casualties among staff and patients. I also visited SAMS’ oncology centers in Idlib and Al Bab, the only such centers in NW Syria, that were as busy as ever. The highlight of my trip was visiting the new, one of a kind SAMS cath lab in Afrin hospital and soon to be installed cath lab in Al Bab hospital.

We all should be proud of SAMS impact on the ground.

**Dr. Basel Termanini**  
**SAMS Foundation Chair**

# 2022 IMPACT AT A GLANCE



**2.9 Mil.**  
MEDICAL SERVICES



**54**  
FASCILITIES



**3063**  
MEDICAL WORKERS



**1.4 Mil**  
BENEFICIARIES



**?**  
SURGERIES IN SYRIA



**?**  
DELIVERIES IN SYRIA

**In 2022, SAMS provided +2.9 Mil. medical services to those in acute need, with an average cost of \$15 per service.**



# OUR PROGRAMS



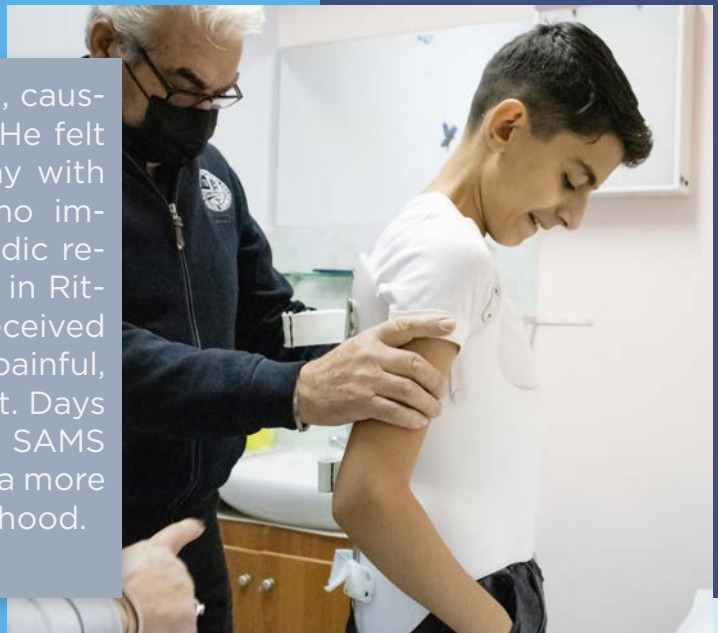
# Our Programs: Primary Care & Outreach



It's expected that displacement will disrupt day-to-day life for refugees. At SAMS one of our primary goals is to help them restore their health and well-being. At times it can mean the difference between life and death. Our mobile clinics put medical services like primary care within easy reach for our beneficiaries. Mobile clinics complement the traditional fixed clinics or medical centers and act as a bridge to the standard care. Primary care accessibility also means preventative care accessibility. Diseases, injuries, and common ailments can be remedied with ease because mobile medical services act as a first line of defense.

## Pushing Past the Pain

At 12, Hakeem was diagnosed with kyphosis, causing his spine to curve and chest to jut out. He felt shame and pain, making him unable to play with peers. Despite hospital visits, there was no improvement. In September 2022, an orthopedic referral led him to a SAMS Hellas pediatrician in Ritsona refugee camp. After a few fittings, he received a custom orthopedic corset. Initially, it was painful, but with guidance, he grew accustomed to it. Days into the treatment, his mother thanked the SAMS team, sharing Hakeem's progress. Now, with a more normal spine, Hakeem is reclaiming his childhood.



## Our Programs: Secondary & Tertiary Care

Care for chronic illnesses is all too often a casualty of the crises Syrian refugees face year-to-year. In the face of acute health issues, health facilities struggle to provide services for cancer treatment, for example. Therefore, not only is SAMS the only NGO serving the population with comprehensive services, including for chronic illness, but the treatment is free-of-charge for all. Our Al Bab Multispecialty Health Center in Idlib and the oncology unit at Jarablus Primary Health Center work in unison to ensure countless patients are not overlooked. Surgeries, dialysis, and internal procedures are a part of but not limited to the secondary and tertiary services provided by SAMS staff.



### Mustafa's New World



Mustafa al-Kabi believed in what he saw, yet his vision was fading. Despite being uprooted from East Ghouta, he remained playful like other children. But in a family camp in Afrin, his sight worsened, concerning his family. At Bab al-Hawa Hospital, neurosurgeon Dr. Mohamed Al-Jisri diagnosed him: complete vision loss in the left eye and severe deterioration in the right. An MRI revealed fluid pressure on half his brain. Dr. Al-Jisri noted, "After quickly conducting surgery, his condition stabilized. Had the fluid burst, it could've harmed his brain." Post-surgery, Mustafa began regaining vision, bringing immense joy to his father.

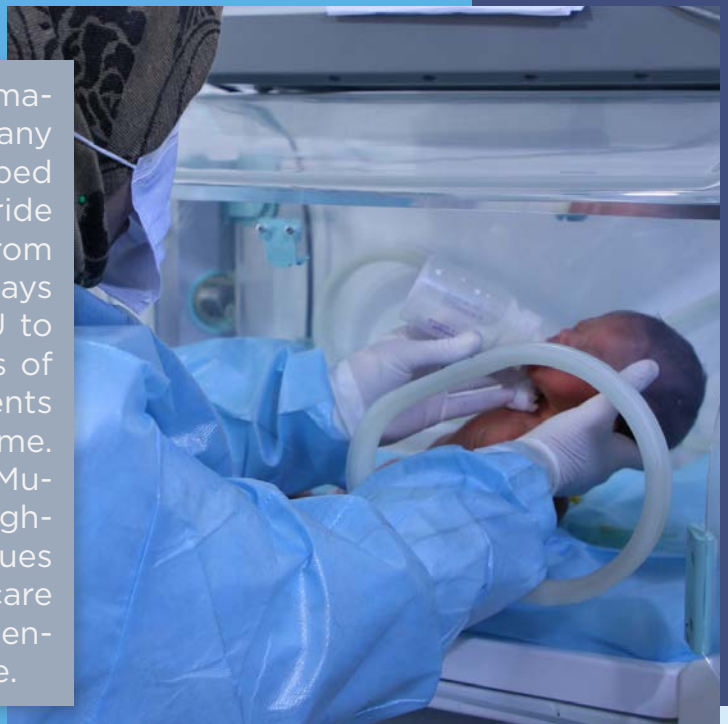
# Our Programs: Maternal & Newborn Care



Maternal mortality and morbidity is an unfortunate consequence many displaced and refugee women face. Access to prenatal and post-natal care can mean the difference between life and death. As mothers carry precious life within their wombs, SAMS medical staff work daily to bridge the medical gap that have been created by prolonged conflict and regional instability. Hospitals and localized clinics support these mothers and their infants from the first sonogram to the baby's first doctor's visits and thereafter.

## New Life for Muhammad's Family

Muhammad Rustom Maafa was born prematurely at Qah Maternity Hospital. And like any family that has a newborn, his parents hoped to be able to leave quickly with their new pride and joy. But his feeble state prevented him from going home with his mom. For the next 45 days Muhammad would stay in the neonatal ICU to receive treatment. After nearly two months of regular visits with their son, his proud parents were finally able to take their baby boy home. Because of the help of SAMS supporters, Muhammad has overcome the challenge of a high-risk premature birth. Their new life continues on. With our staff providing the follow-up care children like Muhammad might need, they ensure have access to dignified life-saving care.



# Our Programs: Rehab Medicine & Services

Many overlooked areas of treatment for people occur because of the lack of funding and qualified providers of affordable care. Due to this, medical problems that can be addressed by strategic care over time are ignored. Bringing this concern to the forefront has allowed SAMS to support services like Physical and Occupational Therapy, Hearing Loss Interventions, and Speech Therapy. Removing the barriers to these services gets children back to school, parents back to breadwinning, and those in critical areas in public service back to their stations.



## Getting Khadijah Back on Track



When Khadijah was diagnosed with Quadriplegia at 44, her whole life threatened to change. The unknown condition's severe weakness bouts had alarmed her. At the SAMS Physiotherapy Center in NW Syria, she struggled with walking, transfers, balance, and muscle fatigue. Tests showed she could only stand for 12 seconds with open eyes, explaining her difficulty in daily tasks.

At the center, her treatment plan involved electrical devices for pain relief and muscle strengthening, alongside therapeutic exercises for flexibility. After just seven sessions, Khadijah's condition significantly improved. What began as a health crisis transformed into a challenge she was helped to conquer.

# Mental Health



Mental health support within the displaced and conflict-affected communities has emerged as a vital lifeline for those grappling with the profound and sometimes debilitating psychological effects of conflict and displacement. These initiatives have made important strides in recognizing that mental well-being is deeply interconnected with physical health, and treating it is just as crucial. SAMS implements a range of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) programming for affected populations across Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Türkiye. Highlights from 2022 include the programs below:

## Mental Health: Psycho-Social Centers



SAMS continued to offer comprehensive mental health support through six specialized centers in Amman and Irbid (Jordan), Idlib (Syria), and Gaziantep, Kilis, and Istanbul (Türkiye). SAMS teams - which include community outreach workers, social workers, clinical psychologists, and psychiatrists - offer in-home assessments and referrals, individual and group psychotherapy, psychiatric care and medication, case management for survivors of gender-based violence, support groups, educational workshops, technical trainings for government workers and community-based organizations, and internship supervision for university students. SAMS also operates multiple safe spaces in Syria and has integrated mental health services in its facilities through physicians trained in WHO mhGAP interventions.

# Mental Health: Psycho-Social Training

Throughout 2022, SAMS partnered with Johns Hopkins University to train and certify 13 women in Syria as mental health counselors for children and youth within their communities. The women were trained and supervised using an evidence-based intervention called CETA, which was designed to help non-specialists provide safe, high-quality mental health care in low-resource settings where specialists are scarce. During the training program, 95 children and adolescents completed a full round of supervised CETA sessions, and 79 caregivers received additional support from the counselors. 100% of the participants showed a clinically significant reduction in mental health symptoms after participating. The trained counselors are currently part of SAMS psychosocial team and continue to provide mental health services for families in Syria.



# Mental Health: Psycho-Social Assessment



SAMS commissioned an in-depth study of the mental health landscape in northern Syria. This study delved into aspects such as salaries, job satisfaction, educational backgrounds, facilities, and available training. Notably, it featured specific reports on Clinical Psychology and Psychiatric Nursing, offering strategic guidelines for their development. Through SAMS's mental health initiatives, professionals create safe environments for trauma victims to heal. By addressing the hidden scars of war, these programs not only assist in trauma recovery but also enhance emotional, mental, and physical well-being. Such support instills a sense of agency, community, and hope, ultimately uplifting the overall quality of life for individuals.

# Outbreak Response



Despite its decline in the headlines, the effects of COVID-19 on the everyday lives of program participants are constant. ICU beds are open to any new cases resulting from the Delta and Omicron variants. SAMS is at the forefront of community-wide vaccination campaigns, case management, and is an important fixture in the NW Syria COVID-19 taskforce. Cholera also remains a threat to vulnerable populations and remains a focal point by SAMS staff. The treatment facilities are a valuable resource for community members seeking preventative and emergency care.



# Non-Medical Crisis Response

Incredible non-medical humanitarian aid has been extended to Syrian refugees, showcasing the strength of compassion and solidarity. Various organizations and individuals have stepped up to provide essential support, ranging from shelter and food to education and psychological assistance. Additionally, provisions such as clothing, hygiene supplies, and clean water contribute to restoring dignity and well-being. The outpouring of non-medical aid reflects the global community's commitment to standing together and making a positive impact on the lives of Syrian refugees, reminding us of our shared responsibility to uphold the principles of empathy and humanity.



Across rural areas of Idlib, in January and February 2022, SAMS supported the distribution of winterization kits for 1,303 families, together with implementing partner, Mercy Without Limits. The kits included warm blankets, stove heaters, and fuel, and brought much needed warmth during winter snowstorms for those residing in camps and informal settlements for the displaced. In December 2022, SAMS supported the first of three rounds of fuel distribution for 574 displaced families residing in Azaz and Salama districts of Aleppo, together with implementing partner, Ghiras Al Nahda. In all of these distributions SAMS and partners prioritized households that were particularly in need of assistance during the cold winter months – families with young children; older persons; persons with disabilities; households with chronically ill family members; and women and child headed households.



In Lebanon, SAMS volunteers distributed 1,000 winterization and hygiene kits to Syrians residing across informal tented settlements in the Beka'a and Arsal, where SAMS already conducts community health and psychosocial support interventions. Based on feedback from camp residents on most needed items, kits contained winter blankets, socks, gloves, diapers, feminine hygiene pads, toothbrushes, tooth paste, and rechargeable LED lights.

In Greece, in late November 2022, SAMS Hellas staff distributed 147 pairs of shoes for adults and children arrivals by sea, hosted in long-term accommodation centers that are served by the mobile medical team.



# SPECIALIZED CARE



## Specialized Care: Cardiology

Based on the continuing needs to fill the gap in advanced cardiology services, SAMS established and supported the catheterization unit in Al Shifa Hospital in Afrin. The need for these services were confirmed based on SAMS communication with the Turkish Health Directorates, which showed that a huge number of referrals were being conducted to hospitals in Türkiye to receive the cardiac catheterization services due to the scarcity of this service within NW Syria. The activation of this Cath lab was critical to ensure the availability of this life saving intervention and contribute to the reduction of morbidity and mortality in NW Syria. Providing catheterization services inside NW Syria relieved patients of the burden of travel and the high cost of the procedure when they seek medical care from the private sector, or in government control areas, and avoid the potential deterioration in medical status when enrolling in long waiting lists to receive it in Türkiye.

Activated in June 2022, cardiac catheterization was provided by a well-trained Cath team which consisted of 4 cardiologists, 3 Cath technicians and a nurse, with the support and consultation of SAMS cardiology committee in the US. The average number of recipients of care under this project is 35 patients per month. These patients also received follow up care, medications and information on prevention and lifestyle modification, including instructions on smoking cessation and committing to a healthy diet.

In addition to their role in providing the cardiac Cath services, the cardiologists provided cardiology consultations for patients in the other departments when needed and performed other procedures such as electrocardiogram and echocardiography. SAMS procured an additional cardiac Cath equipment to establish and operate a second Cath lab in another facility in NW Syria in 2023.



# Specialized Care: Stroke

Stroke is one of the leading causes of death and disability worldwide. About one third of patients die from stroke and one third live with severe impairments. The best chances for recovery from stroke are given when patients are treated in specialized wards known as stroke units. In 2022, SAMS established a stroke unit in one of its hospitals in Idlib city to provide a multidisciplinary team approach including specialist nursing staff and well-trained neurologists with the support of telemedicine from experts in the field. The unit offers continuous monitoring of patients for early identification and treatment of potential complications, provision of thrombolytic treatment when indicated, and facilitation of early mobilization and rehabilitation. A stroke clinic in the facility ensures secondary prevention measures are integrated in patients follow up management, like treatment of comorbidities and patients' education.



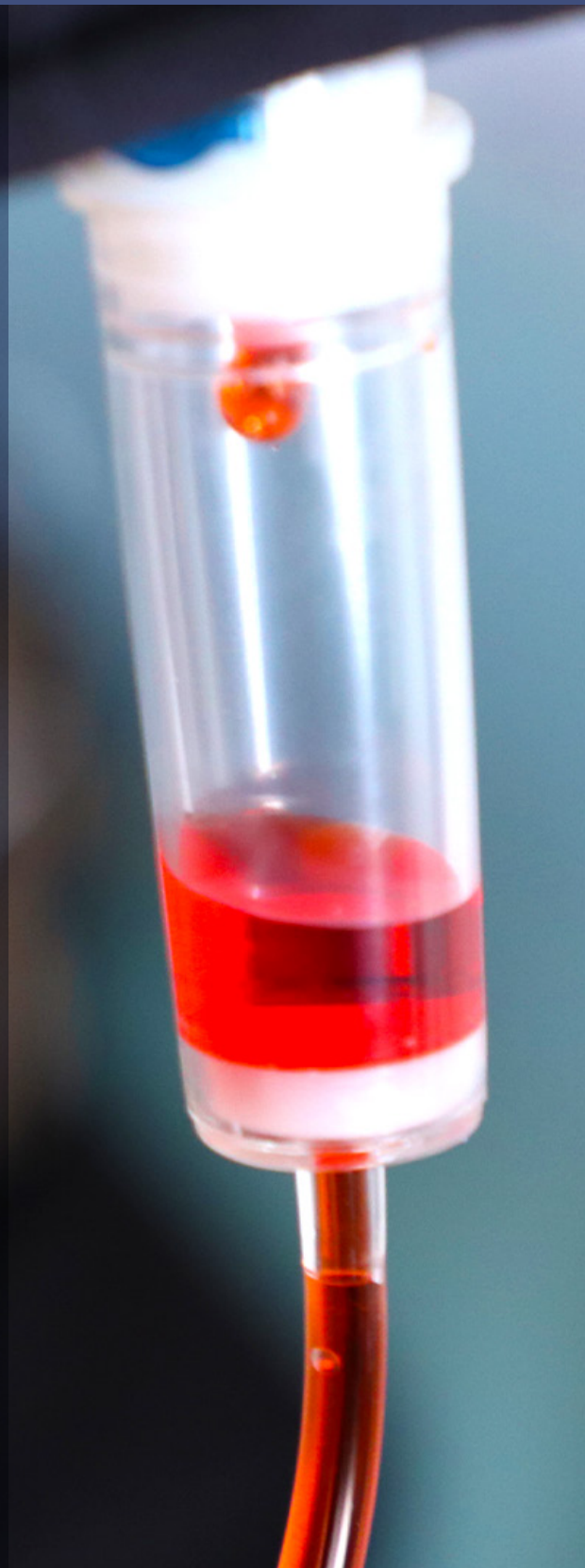
# Specialized Care: Oncology

Cancer patients in Syria struggle to access care and are more likely to be diagnosed when their disease has already reached an advanced stage, making treatment more difficult and reducing their chances of survival.

SAMS life-changing oncology program in Syria has been a beacon of hope for those battling cancer since 2018. In 2022, 2779 patients were assisted through specialized medical teams in 3 clinics in Idlib, Al Bab and Jarablus cities, with the remote support of a dedicated SAMS committee of over 20 specialists in adult, and pediatric oncology and pathology always available for consultation and advice on the management of challenging and advanced cases and sharing up to date medical information.

The oncology program covers a full range of services, such as laboratory and pathology tests, diagnostic imaging including CT scans and mammograms, surgeries, chemotherapy infusion and management of side effects, blood transfusions, psychosocial support and nutrition counseling, all free of charge. Chemotherapy medications of breast cancer, lymphomas, colon cancer, gonads cancer, and pediatric leukemias are always fully covered, in addition to infusion services for other types of cancers where the medications are secured from outside sources. SAMS oncology team is also active in the assessment and referral of selected cases to Turkish based oncology centers for advanced treatments and radiation therapy that are not available in northern Syria.

To improve the capacity of the local physicians, SAMS completed the training of 7 internists in adult oncology and hematology, started the training of 2 pediatricians in childhood cancer and blood diseases and is planning to launch a training program in pathology in 2023. SAMS also facilitates in person training and assessment visits whenever possible by its committee specialists.



# Specialized Care: Oncology

By providing advanced medical treatments, expert care, and emotional support, SAMS transformed the lives of cancer patients and their families. This program not only addresses the medical needs of individuals but also offers comprehensive assistance, including counseling and rehabilitation services. Its impact reaches far beyond medical outcomes, empowering patients to face their diagnosis with courage and determination. Through this program, the community has witnessed the power of innovation and compassion in improving the quality of life for oncology patients, demonstrating the potential to bring positive change even in challenging circumstances.

SAMS also continues to work on building a strong framework of a multidisciplinary approach that coordinates between primary care physicians, the surgeons, interventional procedures providers, social workers, and the referral network and further developing the patients' electronic medical record system that improved data exchange among all participants in oncology patients care.

## Ali's Resilience & Healing

At 21, Ali turned to the SAMS Oncology Center in Idlib, where hope began. Despite his lymphoma diagnosis, he embraced chemotherapy, stating, "Even with challenges like hair loss, the diminishing pain and masses showed me the power of perseverance." When faced with another abdominal cancer diagnosis, Ali remained resilient until the cancer was treated. We're inspired by his journey and privileged to empower and heal him.



## SPECIAL FOCUS: CARE FOR CHILDREN



# Care for Children: Cochlear Implants



Cochlear implants wield transformative power for people with severe -to-profound sensorineural hearing loss where cells in the inner ear are damaged and cannot detect sound properly.

A cochlear implant system has two main components. The externally worn audio processor detects sounds and sends them to the internal implant, which is placed just under the skin behind the ear. By bypassing damaged parts of the ear, the cochlear implant directly stimulates the auditory nerve, and restores the hearing experience, thus fostering speech and communication skills development. This breakthrough technology has opened up new avenues of interaction, education, and employment, empowering those with hearing loss to lead fuller lives and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

In 2022, SAMS invested in these ingenious devices and the surgical tools needed for the implant surgeries, to restore the gift of sound and enable 35 hearing impaired children in Türkiye and Syria to have a chance at an enhanced life experience and reconnect with the world around them. Through collaboration with visiting surgeons and audiology experts, the program in Syria included several virtual and in person hands-on training to ENT surgeons and other specialists with the goal to build local capacity and establish the Cochlear Implant Surgery as a service that can be provided in North Syria by local medical teams. The training included hearing evaluation techniques, post-surgery calibration of the hearing aid, speech therapy approaches, and developing post-surgery individualized rehabilitation plans.

# Care for Children: Cochlear Implants

In this touching photo, Abdulkareem is experiencing the sensation of hearing for the very first time. The hope and promise of a brighter, more fulfilled future can be seen clearly in his eyes. He is among five fortunate children to receive cochlear transplants, generously funded by SAMS, at Bab Elhawa Hospital. Now with his sound transmitter in place, Abdulkareem is ready for his next journey to Termanin's Center, where he'll undergo speech therapy. Dr. Hamza, our leading ENT specialist in Syria, assures that from evaluation to training, every step is fully covered by SAMS.



"While waiting outside the operating room, the stress and fear I felt for my daughter were unparalleled. I just wanted her to be okay," Ghazal's father shared. At 3, tests in Syria confirmed her hearing impairment. A doctor suggested a hearing aid and speech therapy. At the SAMS center in Termanin, she was diagnosed with severe sensorineural hearing loss, leading to a recommendation for cochlear implant surgery. Recently, she was approved for the SAMS cochlear program at Bab Al Hawa hospital. After thorough preparations, she underwent the surgery. "When doctors confirmed its success, I was overjoyed," her father exclaimed.

The SAMS Cochlear Implant program at the University Hospital in Gaziantep, Türkiye, assists children with hearing impairments. Recently, we met Zakaria and his father pre-surgery. The father shared, "My son was born deaf. We discovered it at 18 months. Seeking a cochlear implant took over a year, but SAMS provided hope." He expressed a wish for all in need to receive help. After a successful surgery, Zakaria is recovering well. Soon, he'll get his external hearing aid and start speech therapy at the SAMS Physical Therapy Center in Gaziantep.



## Care for Children: Autism Center



In collaboration with Take My Hand Social Assistance Association, SAMS has supported over 100 refugee children with autism in Türkiye, expanding to offer mental health, psychosocial support, and protection. Mainly serving Syrians, the program also helps Palestinians, Egyptians, Iraqis, and others. Our Arabic-speaking specialists provide ABA therapy-based special education. This includes individual, group, and sensory-integration sessions vital for public school enrollment. Parents and caregivers also receive consultations.

Take My Hand, the sole provider of this special education in the area, has over 200 children waiting. To aid more children, especially outside Istanbul, SAMS and Take My Hand launched online sessions in 2022.

## Autism & Alphabets: Hisham's Breakthrough

At 4, Hisham was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, evident in his pronounced emotional reactions, distinct speech delay, limited interaction with peers, and specific food aversions. Soon after the diagnosis, his family sought assistance from the SAMS-supported Take My Hand Center in Istanbul. A devoted team of specialists delved deep into understanding Hisham's unique needs. Their primary focus was enhancing his Turkish language skills, particularly since Hisham had a multilingual background, and they aimed to prepare him for integration into a Turkish school setting. Through curated sessions, combined with the unwavering support from his family and teachers, Hisham showed significant improvement. He transitioned from merely recognizing words to confidently constructing complete sentences. He successfully cleared his entrance exams for a Turkish public school. We are proud of Hisham's accomplishments and look forward with optimism to his future journey.

# Care for Children: The Helping Hand



SAMS implements a psychosocial support program for adolescents in Jordan and Lebanon called The Helping Hand, which features a digital mental health game designed to help youth navigate life's challenges. The game was developed specifically for Syrian refugees and vulnerable youth in the region, and facilitators use the game as a tool for teaching youth how to respond to common experiences such as bullying, traumatic memories, heartbreak, and social anxiety. In 2022, 698 adolescents in Lebanon and 321 adolescents in Jordan participated in the program. Some have also received training to become youth leaders who will share the game with their peers and develop psychosocial activities for their communities.

## Joud's Fresh Start



15-year-old Joud has been a victim of bullying by her classmates due to the shape of her teeth, which impacted her confidence and self-esteem. One day, she mastered the courage to start fresh and joined the SAMS-supported Helping Hand program in Jordan. Through various interactive games and activities, she could tackle the triggers of her trauma and cognitively address them. She realized she was not alone and managed to stand up for herself. Joud wants to be a doctor to help others heal.

# Care for Children: SAMS Medical Missions

In 2022, SAMS incorporated Children surgical dental services as a standard component in its missions with teams consisting of pediatric dentists, periodontists, and dental surgeons, continued its dedication to pediatric strabismus care (squint surgeries) in every mission, sponsored pediatric orthopedic surgical mission for congenital cases like dislocated hip and club foot, and conducted the first pediatric cardiovascular surgery mission where Syrian and Lebanese children with congenital heart disease underwent lifesaving operations in Beirut performed by a visiting expert team.



## Duha's New Future



Duha's mass on the spinal cord affected her ability to move and made walking difficult. It also affected her external appearance, causing her many social challenges. SAMS performed the necessary examinations and referred her to Dr. Hugh J. Garton, who was part of SAMS's neurology mission to Jordan. Duha's surgery lasted 9 hours and was a success, painting a new future for Duha and bringing happiness and hope back to her parents.



## OUR COUNTRY PROGRAMS



# Syria

With the help of our donors, advocates and field staff SAMS was able to serve over 1.3 million beneficiaries with over 2.7 million total services rendered. SAMS staff in Syria combined with our facilities and partners placed approximately 2,900 service providers in the fields of health care, administration, and management. Through them, SAMS operated 36 facilities in NW Syria providing a variety of medical care including delivering babies, general and specialized surgeries, interventional procedures, physical therapy, dialysis sessions, blood transfusions, vaccinations, diagnostic tests and imaging, dental services, psychosocial support, inpatient and critical care, and chemotherapy. Covid-19 is still a lingered force which caused over 1,800 patients needing care. Other ongoing services were but not limited to: cholera treatment, ophthalmology surgeries, PPE distribution, winterization assistance, cardiac care, and speech therapy. Mobile clinics have been a prized resource providing over 56,000 services.



# Türkiye



SAMS' commitments in Türkiye have continued as many refugees work daily to regain footing in their lives. Over 92,000 services in total were delivered to refugees in Türkiye to more than 15,000 beneficiaries. Our services providers totaled over 100 field staff in 5 facilities. Türkiye's hallmark programs are physical therapy and psychosocial services. Physical therapy specialists in Türkiye provided 19,000 services for people with disabilities, while mental health and psychosocial support programs supported 72,000 adults and children with individual and group treatment options, as well as free medications prescribed by psychiatrists. SAMS also continued to support a special education center for children with autism spectrum disorders, providing support to both young people and their caregivers. Finally, speech therapy was provided for more than 1,100 people.

# Jordan

In Jordan, over 37,000 services were rendered to more than 21,000 beneficiaries by a support staff that just surpassed the 50-member mark. Psychosocial services had the most activities with more than 17,000 beneficiaries in across Jordan. SAMS conditioned to operate its rehabilitation center in Wadi Seer, a suburb of Amman, and a medical center in Zaatari camp with an emphasis on dental care for adults and children. SAMS also organized and hosted international multi specialty medical missions that regularly provided pediatric dental surgeries, ophthalmology screening and interventions and life saving cardiac catheterization, in addition to other types of surgical interventions based on the needs assessed among the refugee and host communities.



# Lebanon

SAMS interventions in Lebanon totaled over 45,000 in service and reaching around 25,000 beneficiaries. More than 40 SAMS field staff operated in at least 3 locations in Lebanon and through many partners, providing psychosocial support, sponsorship of diagnostic tests and oncology treatments. SAMS also contributed to the cost of secondary and specialized care for those in need in multiple hospitals in all 5 regions of the country. Our community based dental project “Miles for Smiles” provided over 15,000 services, and the PPE distribution project secured 523,000 masks. In 2022, SAMS Lebanon continued implementing its winterization activities through the distribution of blankets, personal needs kits, winter clothes items, and rechargeable portable lights. International medical missions included specialists in pediatric orthopedics, pediatric cardiovascular surgery and maxillofacial reconstruction.



# Iraq

Iraq and KRI remain a part of SAMS priorities. In 2022, our 12 staff supported activities that provided over 7,500 services to people in need in health and dental care. SAMS well equipped dental clinic with its 2 dentists and assistants performed over 3,065 interventions in dental care to refugee camp residents and the surrounding host community. Together with Life for a Child and the Layla Qassim Center for Diabetes in Erbil, SAMS also provided health education and glucose monitoring supplies for 430 young people with diabetes. In partnership with Human Appeal, SAMS also distributed hundreds of thousands of dollars of essential medical supplies and equipment to public health facilities in Dohuk and Erbil, where tens of thousands of Syrian refugees and displaced Iraqis continued to reside. Many of these supplies came at a critical time to meet the demands of COVID-19 suspected cases.





# Greece



A staple program for SAMS has been support of refugees in Greece. As they work to regain stability each intervention is provided to ensure short and long time thriving. Over 12,000 services were provided to more than 7,700 beneficiaries. Projects supported interventions in vaccinations, mobile clinic services, PPE distribution, and winterization assistance. Mobile clinic services remained a dominant program having over 9,000 services delivered in 8 camps in the Atica regions and 2 clinics in Athens serving refugees and migrants from over 30 nationalities. Since November 2020, SAMS Hellas Mobile Medical Team (MMT) has provided outpatient medical consultations (pediatrics, OB/GYN and general medicine), health education activities, and COVID-19 vaccination strategies via delivery of vaccine awareness activities.

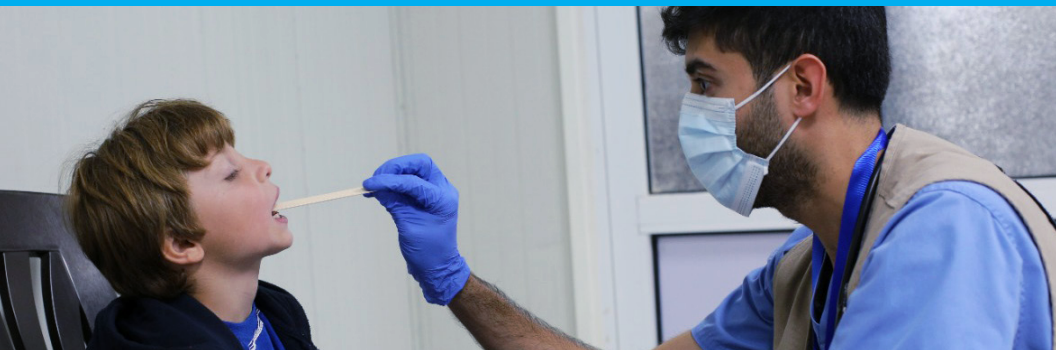
# Ukraine

SAMS' response to the war in Ukraine started in March 2022 by procuring and delivering medical equipment and supplies to Bovary Hospital in Kyiv suburb, followed by facilitating missions by selected surgeons in the field of orthopedic, hand, and craniofacial reconstruction to assist in trauma related cases among survivors of war injuries. To better address the need for dependable and timely supplies delivery, SAMS partnered with United Health Ukraine, a US based diaspora medical organization, and the Revival Institute in Ukraine and designed a project to procure and deliver pharmaceuticals and medical commodities as standardized kits for surgical interventions to up to 22 frontline hospitals, based on real-time needs, and build the capacity of frontline health services providers, through the delivery of a tailored training program and development of Mass Casualties Incidents (MCI) preparedness and response plans.





# MEDICAL MISSIONS



# Medical Missions: Syria & Beyond

SAMS organizes medical missions to serve refugees and host communities in need. licensed volunteer health care providers from the US and abroad participate in these missions, provide primary and specialized medical care, offer peer to peer hands-on training, and distribute needed medication and supplies, all in collaboration with local facilities and health care authorities. In 2022 over 20 medical missions were serviced.

SAMS's medical mission program developed into one of the most engaging for members and volunteers, regularly serving in Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, and Greece, and including specialized medical consultations, surgical interventions, dental services, and primary care days, all free of charge for the beneficiaries. SAMS also



built relationships with local volunteer physicians in these countries who would screen and refer cases for upcoming missions, provide follow up care when needed and conduct interventions in between the international missions.

With the eruption of the war in Ukraine, SAMS contributed to the planning and the logistics arrangement of medical missions to help respond to the increase in needs for selected surgical skills in orthopedics, oncology surgery and craniofacial interventions.





# MEDICAL EDUCATION



# Med. Ed. : Supporting Future Learners



The SAMS Scholarship program for students pursuing degrees in healthcare fields is a hallmark of development work for Syrian refugees in neighboring countries. All selected students passed an evaluation and screening process which considers academic excellence, financial need, and history of support in medical and humanitarian relief work inside Syria.

Since 2015, SAMS has provided financial support and educational assistance for over 50 students enrolled in universities in Türkiye. SAMS has also provided full financial support for 6 Syrian refugee students enrolled in medical school in Bosnia. In Jordan and Lebanon, SAMS has provided financial support for over 10 students. Lastly, in the United States, SAMS provided interest free loans to Syrian medical graduates seeking medical training in the United States. More than 150 graduates reaped the benefits of this initiative, with loans totaling over \$350,000 disbursed. Through these targeted programs, SAMS aims to expand educational opportunities for Syrian students and help them advance their education and careers despite the ongoing conflict.

## Med. Ed. : Allied Health Scholarship



In 2018, SAMS established two midwifery training programs in NW Syria that align with global standards for reproductive health and midwifery education. These programs have been adapted to reflect the context in NW Syria by SAMS specialists, and graduates of these programs have credentials that are recognized by WHO, UNFPA, and the local health sector. The first program is an 18-month intensive course, during which students who already hold nursing degrees receive theoretical and practical training to become midwives. As of late 2022, a total of 75 new midwives, all of them women, had graduated from this program.

The second program is a three-year midwifery course that students with a high school diploma are eligible to attend. These students receive theoretical and practical training that includes topics such as basics of nursing, anatomy and physiology, microbiology, and clinical assessment, as well as specialized courses in midwifery, including antenatal care, natural delivery, newborn care, and postpartum care.

## Med. Ed. : Nursing Program



Since its inception in 2015, SAMS has graduated over 200 nurses and nursing assistants in uniquely tailored nursing programs designed to fit the needs of the community. In 2018, after observing nursing shortages across health facilities, SAMS began offering a two-year nursing program that has graduated 106 nurses (50% male, 50% female) between 2018 and 2021.

In 2022, Responding to the needs of critical care, SAMS developed a curriculum for a specialized nursing diploma in Adult ICU Care, which is currently lacking in Syria. Once implemented, the Adult ICU Diploma nursing curriculum will be made available across the region, as a reference and building block to promote standardization within this field of nursing.

# Med. Ed. : Postgrad Medical Education



To build capacity of the local health workforce and sustainability of the fragmented health system, SAMS directly manages and implements many fellowship and residency programs in northern Syria, which have become a growing priority in recent years. These programs include Pediatric Oncology, Adult Oncology, Neurology, Pathology, Adult ICU, and currently in development: Gastroenterology, Adult Cardiology, and Pediatric Cardiology.

Since September 2018, SAMS started supporting the resident doctors project in partnership with the Syrian Board of Medical Specialties (SBOMS), targeting 20 physicians within the project who are now receiving their training in a variety of specialties under the supervision of specialized doctors distributed over 9 facilities. SBOMS has an independent legal and financial identity and is recognized by the Syrian Interim Government Ministry of Health (MoH).

SAMS will be supporting 15 residential doctors to start or resume their specialties studies in a variety of fields such as cardiology, endocrinology, gastroenterology, nephrology, obstetrics and gynecology, ophthalmology, orthopedic surgery, pediatric, urology and vascular.

In addition, and in collaboration with SBOMS committees, SAMS Technical Committees with the SBOMS scientific committees were able to develop a robust standardized curriculum for the training centers that has been utilized starting from the last phase.

SAMS and SBOMS collaborate in providing medical education services to resident physicians in Syria based on the principle of providing technical and general administrative and financial support by SAMS, and scientific follow-up by SBOMS. A new memorandum of understanding was in place between SAMS and SBOMS in 2022.

### Safaa Succeeds



After our displacement from Homs, starting anew was daunting. My husband and I were desperate for work, but opportunities seemed scant. As we grappled with the emotional weight of our struggles, I came across a lifeline: a program for nursing graduates at a SAMS-supported Midwifery Institute in Termanin.

This 18-month course not only aligned with my long-held dream but also provided a monthly stipend. Recognizing the chance to support our family and further my education, I took the leap and was elated to be accepted.

Our cohort began with 20 students, each with our own challenges.

For many of us, the major hurdle was navigating through the English references. Fortunately, I was provided a tablet, a tool that became invaluable for translation, research, and understanding. As the months went by, my confidence grew, and I honed numerous skills, most notably, the art of communication.

Upon completion, my journey came full circle as I found a position as a midwife in the very hospital where I trained. My heart swells with hope that all women in the health sector can tread a path towards their dreams.



# ADVOCACY



## Advocacy: US Government & Congress

SAMS maintains strong relationships with the US Government, including Members of Congress, USAID, the White House, and the State Department. SAMS leadership and staff hold regular meetings with these stakeholders to discuss the humanitarian situation in Syria. During 2022, Advocacy increased its presence on the hill with three major hill weeks engaging both members and staff on Syria related issues. HQ Advocacy regularly provides Congressional offices with reports from the field and submitted SAMS reports into the record for Congressional hearings on multiple occasions.

In addition to this Congressional work, SAMS Advocacy also conducted regular coordination with USG officials inside State, USAID, and the National Security Council, including arranging regular calls with Deputy Secretaries and SAMS' leadership.



## Advocacy: European Union



In 2022, Advocacy arranged four tours of European capitals to strengthen our partnership with European governments and increase funding levels from these partners. Capitals visited included Paris, London, Berlin, Brussels, Geneva, the Hague, Rome, Athens and Luxembourg. The major outcomes of these trips included increased funding from European partners, the process of registration as an organization eligible for direct funding in several European states and a presentation in the German parliament. European governments have been particularly generous in the wake of the earthquake in 2023 and we look forward to working with these partners even more in the coming year.

## Advocacy: United Nations

SAMS' Advocacy also maintains active partnerships with several UN missions, providing regular consultation on the status of cross-border aid and developments related to the management of the cross-border mechanism. In 2022, SAMS also convened several roundtables with UN missions in partnership with ARCS and Guernica 37 to present the Syrian NGO perspective on how the cross-border mechanism could be made more sustainable and effective.



## Advocacy: Reporting

During 2022, Advocacy took part in three major reports. The first and most important of these was the A Heavy Price to Pay Report on attacks against healthcare in Syria. This report was briefed both at the UN and in European capitals and has been distributed to partners at policy institutions and inside USG. The report tracks attacks against health facilities and health workers between 2015 and 2021 and is in the possession of the IIM and other bodies that are pursuing accountability for Syrians who are the victims of war crimes. The reports' findings were also presented directly at the UN by advocacy staff and hosted by the Canadian Mission.

SAMS Advocacy also completed a major research report on disability and accessibility at our facilities across Syria. The report is the first of its kind, and includes interviews with doctors, nurses and persons with disabilities. We are currently in the process of briefing the report to partners in the disability space and will likely have a launch event in Europe and DC this summer.

SAMS HQ Advocacy also participated in the rollout of the Legal Report commissioned by ARCS and drafted by Guernica 37, which examines alternative aid mechanism to the UN Security Council resolution that currently enables cross border aid. Advocacy arranged a launch event for this report at CSIS and has also briefed the report to over a dozen government partners both at the UN and in capitals.



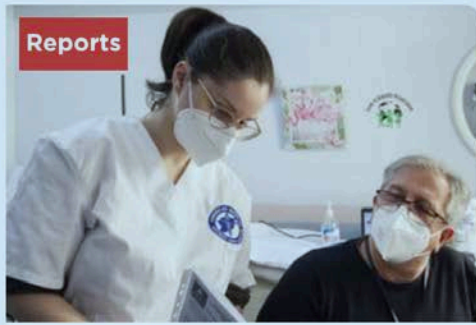
Reports

October 7, 2022

### THE USE OF INDISCRIMINATE WEAPONS IN SYRIA

International organizations have regularly condemned warring parties for carrying out indiscriminate warfare in Syria, including by using allegedly indiscriminate weapons...

[READ MORE](#) >



Reports

September 13, 2022

### A HEAVY PRICE TO PAY (TURKISH VERSION: ÖDENEN AĞIR BEDEL)

The Turkish version of our Report: A Heavy Price to Pay: Attacks on Healthcare Systems in Syria 2015-2021.

[READ MORE](#) >



Reports

August 4, 2022

### LESSONS FROM INTERNATIONAL COURTS FOR DOCUMENTERS OF ATTACKS ON MEDICAL FACILITIES IN SYRIA

The law of armed conflict, or international humanitarian law ("IHL"), has long protected medical personnel and facilities.<sup>2</sup> The first article...

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# HEALTH RESEARCH



May 16, 2022

## A HEAVY PRICE TO PAY: ATTACKS ON HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS IN SYRIA 2015-2021

# Health Research in a Complicated Conflict

As the Syrian crisis unfolds, the role of health research grows clearer. SAMS is at the forefront, enhancing our research capacity with a team of skilled doctors. In partnership with academic entities, we established a research department in 2022. Our research aims to inform decisions, aid advocacy, and optimize response by disseminating knowledge and best practices, while also narrating Syria's health situation for future interventions.

SAMS proudly advances its Avicenna Journal of Medicine, emphasizing our dedication to research and better health-care in Syria and the broader region.

## **SAMS Research in 2022 at a Glance**

- **6 Peer-reviewed papers in 2022**
- **3 Evidence based grey literature reports**
- **12 Events and Conference participations**

## **Peer-reviewed publications featuring SAMS**

- (2022) Protracted armed conflict and maternal health: A scoping review of literature and a retrospective analysis of primary data from NW Syria. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2021-008001>
- (2022). The impacts of the Syrian conflict on child and adolescent health: A scoping review. *Journal of Public Health (Oxford, England)*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fdac132>
- (2022). Cancer Diagnoses during Active Conflict: Experience from a Cancer Program in NW Syria. *Avicenna Journal of Medicine*. <https://doi.org/10.1055/s-0042-1755331>
- (2023) Investment in Cancer Prevention and Care for Forcibly Displaced Syrians Is an Urgent Priority | *JCO Global Oncology*. <https://ascopubs.org/doi/10.1200/GO.22.00382>
- (2022). Just responses of the kidney community in man-made crises. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.kint.2022.08.033>
- (2022). Telemedicine interventions in six conflict-affected countries in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean region: A systematic review. *Conflict and Health*.

## **Thematic priorities for SAMS health research in Syria**

### **- Health research in conflict**

Covers medical specialties like pediatrics, maternal health, dental care, diseases, mental health, nephrology, and oncology.

### **- Health systems and the triple Nexus**

Focuses on cost-effectiveness, care models, sustainability, and innovative intervention themes.

### **- Attacks on health and IHL violation**

SAMS collaborates with John Hopkins, Harvard, and Berkley on documenting health system attacks, deconfliction, advocacy, IHL violations, health access impacts, and relief operations.

### **- Health workforce, Medical Education**

Examines Syria's health force in asylum and internal control areas, assesses workforce gaps, and explores medical education enhancement.



# SAMS SOCIETY & MEMBERS



# SAMS Society: Networking & Peer Support



SAMS brought together its members from around the world in 2022 for its conferences where hundreds of members got to meet, learned about cutting-edge topics, planned for the future of SAMS, and more. SAMS organized two conferences: the 20th International conference that took place in Istanbul, Türkiye which focused on “Closing the Equity Gap in the Pandemic Era and Beyond Through Innovation”. And the 11th National conference in Chicago theme “Promoting Healthy Communities Through Medical Sciences, Policy and Interventions”.

In 2022, SAMS members also contributed to the quality of care at SAMS’ medical facilities in Syria through specialized committees that provided peer-to-peer consultation, clinical guidelines and best practices, online lectures, interactive webinars, and educational courses. They also had a major role in expanding medical training for healthcare professionals in Syria to continue well-established fellowship programs in neurology, pediatric oncology, advanced neonatal intensive care, and pathology programs.



# SAMS Society: Member Contributions



Serving as medical mission volunteers in 2022, SAMS Members supported refugees and vulnerable host-community members in multi-specialty missions in Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Ukraine, and a multi-purpose mission to NW Syria in November. The members not only worked with staff to identify the medical needs of the refugees, recruited skilled local volunteers, and helped raise funds, but they also took time off to provide high-quality medical services to those who might not otherwise have been assisted. Often, the members remained involved long after the mission to ensure that patients received adequate follow-up care.

Supporting new healthcare professionals is also a priority for SAMS members. Through its networks across the United States and beyond, SAMS' Education Committee spearheaded collaborative educational programs to support medical professionals inside Syria and elsewhere by providing opportunities to expand their knowledge and experiences. The committee also provided medical students of Syrian descent with scholarship opportunities to pursue their education and residency programs in the United States, a career journey interrupted due to the conflict. Further, members worked on reviewing young physicians' medical residency applications and improving their interview skills by conducting mock interviews workshops.

Research is another avenue in which many of SAMS' members contribute in 2022. Since the start of the Syrian conflict, SAMS has been engaging with impactful research projects and researchers that are in line with its aims of improving the health and h-



umanitarian situation for Syrians and other vulnerable populations. In 2022, SAMS' members had an active research committee that oversaw SAMS' research activities with the main aim of supporting high quality, operational research to benefit Syrians and others affected by humanitarian crises.

Company and subsidiaries  
Data and prognosis of activity

# FINANCIAL STATEMENT



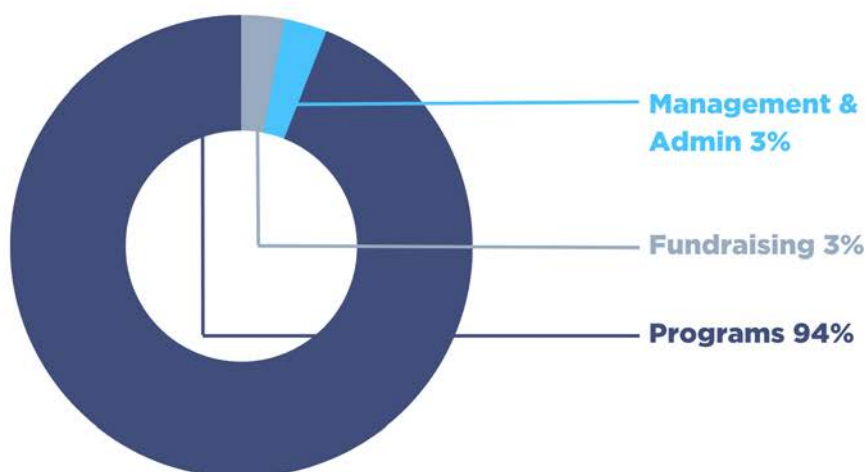
# 2022 Financial Statement

<b>SUPPORT AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
Contributions	7,589,368	7,286,778
Grants	30,458,483	29,503,604
Gift in Kind	4,615,207	4,662,349
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>42,663,058</b>	<b>41,452,731</b>

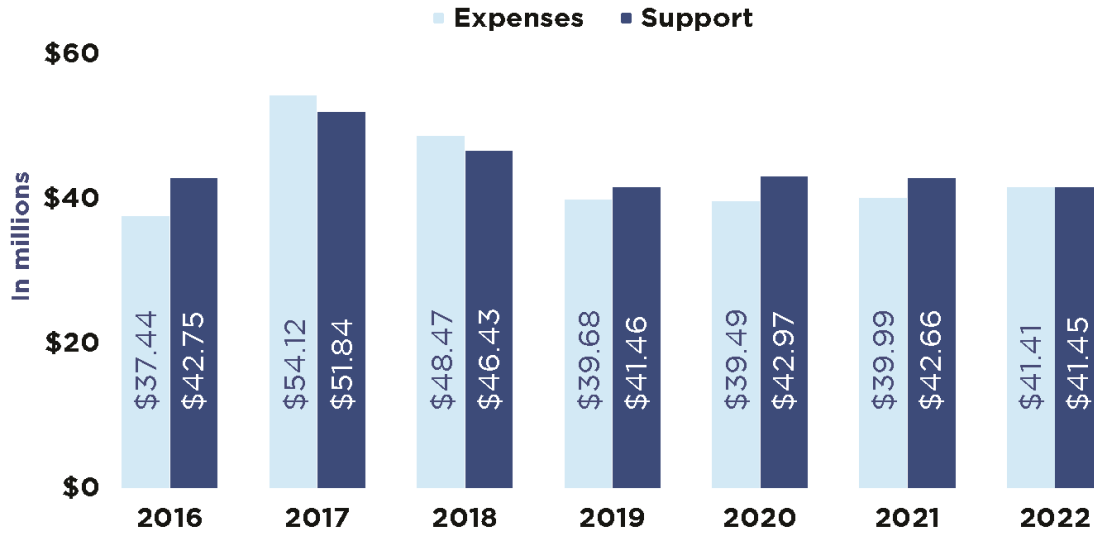
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Program Service</b>		
Medical Relief Programs	38,114,088	38,892,431
<b>Supporting Services</b>		
Management and General	929,999	1,217,957
Fundraising	942,760	1,295,606
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>39,986,847</b>	<b>41,405,994</b>
<b>Net Asset</b>	<b>15,307,242</b>	<b>15,353,979</b>

2022 DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENSES

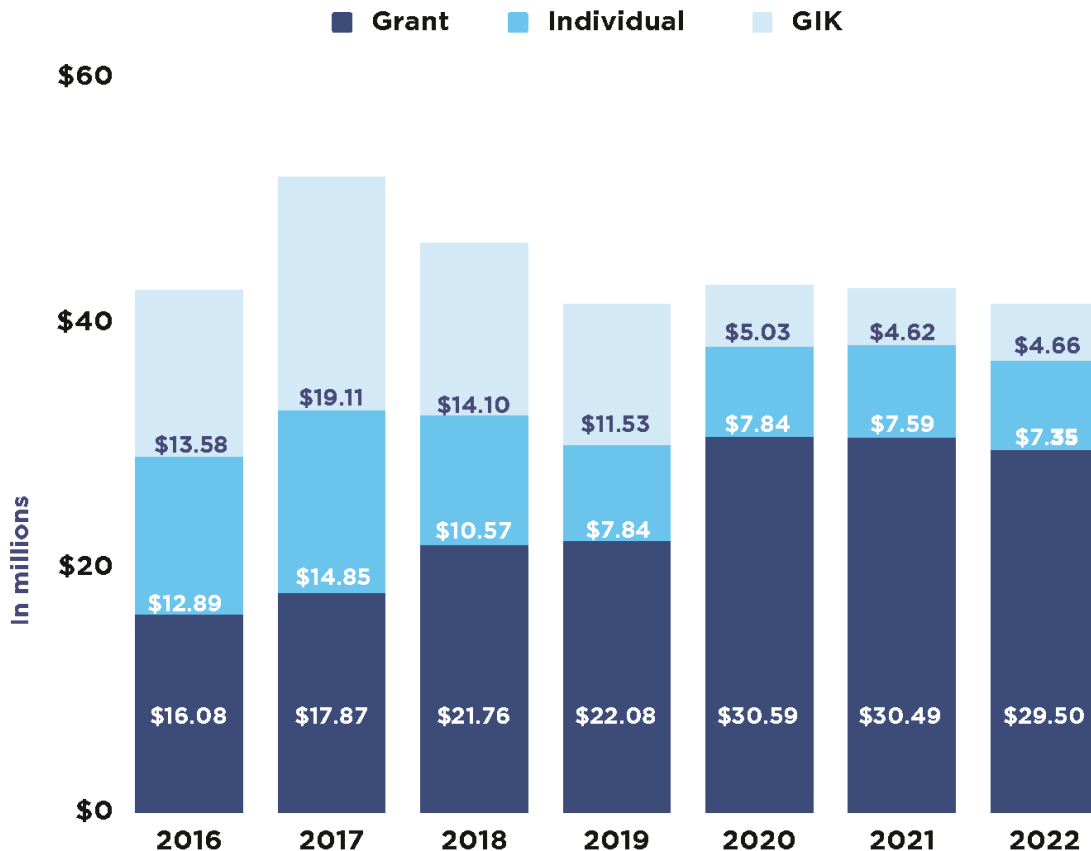


# 2022 Financial Statement

## Financials Over 7 Years



## Source of Financial Support





# MEDIA

SLATE News & Politics Culture Technology Business Human Interest Po

REVERBERATING IN A CAVERNOUS GLASS BUILDING

THE WORLD

## “Fractured Bones, Mangled Limbs, Blast Wounds”: An American Surgeon’s Experience in Ukraine

BY MARY C. CURTIS OCT 19, 2022 · 4:04 PM

An injured soldier waits to be treated at a hospital in Donetsk on Oct. 8. Paula Bronstein/Getty Images

- International Rescue Committee**  
[The International Rescue Committee to honor the work of the ...](#)  
 The International Rescue Committee to honor the work of the Syrian American Medical Society with the Freedom Award at 2022 Global Virtual Event, called Hope...  
 Jun 21, 2022
- UN Press**  
[Economic and Social Council Grants 209 Non-Governmental ...](#)  
 ... Syrian American Medical Society Foundation; and Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. The United States' delegate pointed out that those organizations had been waiting...  
 Jul 21, 2022
- University at Buffalo**  
[UB Global Miles for Smiles delivers crucial dental care](#)  
 The program has partnered with the Syrian American Medical Society to open several dental clinics at refugee and displaced person camps in several countries...  
 Nov 1, 2022
- United States Mission to the United Nations**  
[Remarks by Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield at a UN ...](#)  
 Farida Almuslem and the entire Syrian American Medical Society. Your statement is an important reminder that millions of Syrians still lack access to even...  
 May 20, 2022
- Direct Relief**  
[Operational Update: Responding to Hurricanes Ian and Fiona ...](#)  
 Direct Relief has been in contact with Syrian American Medical Society since the first cholera cases were reported and shipped an initial consignment of...  
 Oct 8, 2022

Listen to What Next: [Apple Podcasts](#) [Spotify](#) [Stitcher](#)

TWEET

SHARE

The war in Ukraine is dragging on. And I've been wanting to understand the toll of Russia's bombardment from someone who has witnessed the brutality up close. So, late last week, I called up Dr. Samer Attar. Attar is an orthopedic surgeon. Most of the time, he practices in Chicago. But earlier this year, he traveled to Ukraine as the Russian invasion began. "I was in

# SAMS in the Media

**David Miliband**  
@DMiliband

We honoured the incredible work of @sams\_usa, a proud partner of @RESCUEorg in the Syria region, with our Freedom Award. SAMS is a true messenger of hope behind the headlines. Pictured here with me is their president Dr. Amjad Rass.



**Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield**  
@USAmbUN

Today, Member States overwhelmingly voted to grant @UN accreditation to two U.S. organizations working on human rights, freedom of expression, and humanitarian issues: @Wikimedia and @sams\_usa.

We will continue to fight to ensure civil society voices are heard at the UN.

1:23 PM · Jul 21, 2022

**Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ranking Member**  
@SenateForeign

As @sams\_usa confirms, #Russia & #Assad bear responsibility for the vast majority of attacks on #Syrian medical facilities & continue to do so with impunity. The fact that #Moscow has exported the same horrific tactics to #Ukraine underscores the urgent need for accountability.

**UN Humanitarian**  
@UNOCHA

Join us for a live conversation on the humanitarian situation in north-west #Syria and cross-border aid with @MarkCutts from the @UN, @Sherinelbrahim from @CARE\_Turkey.TR and @DimaMarrawi from @sams\_usa.

## In 2022, SAMS:

- was mentioned in **87** news pieces.
- gained a total of **23.1k** new social media followers.
- posts reached **59.2k** views and **25.9** hours of video content.

**Clinton Global Initiative**  
@ClintonGlobal

On #WorldMentalHealthDay and every day after, CGI Commitment-Makers like @DidiHirsch, @sams\_usa, @thestevefund, and @TCPofAmerica are taking action to make an impact from Los Angeles to Syria.



**Arab News** @arabnews · July 19, 2022

Replying to @arabnews @sams\_usa and @HamadehMufaddal

#LISTEN: New refugee challenges created by conflicts in the #MiddleEast and the war in #Ukraine have shifted the world's attention away from Syrian refugees, @sams\_usa board member @HamadehMufaddal said Wed on the @RayHanania Radio Show | Full story: arab.news/9zvb2



**Dr. Mufaddal Hamadeh**  
Syrian American Medical Society Board Member

The international community chose to turn a blind eye to what happened in Syria.

**THE RAY HANANIA**  
RADIO SHOW

# SAMS LEADERSHIP 2022

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# SAMS

## ANNUAL REPORT 2022



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**SYRIAN AMERICAN MEDICAL SOCIETY FOUNDATION UNITED KINGDOM**

England & Wales - Charity number 1185540

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# Accounts

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# SAMS

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

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# Message From the Foundation Chair

Dear Supporters,

2021 was a challenging year for all of us. We lost many dear friends and relatives, and faced a number of global crises that made our work more difficult. In the conflict zones served by SAMS Foundation, these crises were made even more extreme by the conditions inflicted by war: poverty, malnutrition and even the targeted destruction of civilian infrastructure essential for basic services. We also faced challenges related to financial and logistical difficulties imposed by the global supply chain disruption.

But the SAMS team rose to meet these challenges, delivering world class COVID treatment with four newly established COVID hospitals complete with 100 ICU beds and state of the art equipment like ventilators, monitors, and oxygen generators. By using innovative technologies, SAMS' physicians were able to share the knowledge they gained treating difficult COVID cases in the U.S. with their colleagues in Syria through online lectures and workshops as well as daily remote online rounds. Our 1,400 dedicated and selfless medical providers in Syria continued to risk their lives to help those in need. Our staff in the U.S. and around the world were able to come together and overcome the logistical and funding challenges through innovation and teamwork.

The end results are the amazing numbers you see in this report. Our team provided more than 2.3 million services, including 74,000 surgeries and life-saving procedures for 3,300 critically ill COVID-19 patients. In 2021, we continued to serve the displaced and needy in northern Syria and the refugees in the surrounding countries, treating their acute and chronic illnesses, accommodating disabilities, and addressing their medical education needs. We continued to expand our signature programs such as our cancer centers and midwifery schools, and improved the services and increased capacity at our one-of-a-kind autism center in Istanbul. With the help of our selfless volunteers, we were able to deliver these services in a cost effective manner with an average cost of less than \$15 per service.

We are grateful to our dedicated partners in the UN, governments, and international NGOs for their trust and support. And we are especially indebted to our private donors who continued to trust us with their charitable contributions despite the very difficult year.

We are looking forward to 2022 and continuing to help those in need everywhere. And we look forward to sharing more about the exciting new programs we have coming up soon, Inshallah.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Basel Termanini  
Foundation Chair



# Message From the President

To Our Members and Supporters,

COVID-19 presented challenges to all areas of SAMS' work in 2021, including challenges in meeting donors and partners as well as fundraising in the U.S. We also faced challenges in providing services in Syria due to the dramatic effects of the pandemic. As we come out of this arduous period with the full support of our members, SAMS is in a stronger position for 2022.

Our greatest asset are our hundreds of members who bring their expertise and excellence in all realms of the medical profession. Over the past two years, we utilized this experience in a new way, connecting our doctors virtually with patients, trainees, and healthcare providers in the field. This transition was a success, and we can now continue utilizing the knowledge gained as we return to in-person interventions from our members and volunteers. For instance, we are thrilled that as we entered 2022, we successfully resumed our international medical missions to Jordan and Lebanon.

SAMS, in partnership with our members, has accomplished a lot despite the challenges of the pandemic, but one of our strengths has been the ability to adapt and change along with the conflict and the donor environment. We are entering a new phase in Syria, one in which the primary needs of our beneficiaries are no longer dominated by war injuries, but by the need for longer-term, sustainable medical care. And this is why SAMS is developing new focus areas in medical education, mental health, and psycho-social services. Not only does SAMS have the staff and capacity to manage this transition, we also have you, our members, who possess immense relevant expertise and an unending supply of generosity for those in need. We know we have asked a lot of you over the years, and we will keep asking as long as the people of Syria are suffering.

Accountability and access remain profound challenges to the successful provision of humanitarian and medical aid. While both of these processes are still far from resolved, SAMS has pushed relentlessly both at the UN and with government partners to explore avenues for further accountability and expanded cross-border access. Commitment to these goals remains a key part of our work for 2022.

Please accept our sincere thanks, whether you have donated money, participated in a field visit, offered online training sessions or any other contribution, we truly couldn't do it without you. Many of you were directly involved in providing SAMS' services in the field, and even more of you made sure our 10th National Conference (September 3-5, 2021) and second International Symposium (July 23, 2021) were vital learning experiences for all who attended, virtually or in person. We will ask even more of you in 2022 because we know you want to help and that we couldn't do it without you. Thanks again for all your efforts.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Amjad Rass  
President



REBUILDING LIVES. RESTORING HEALTH.

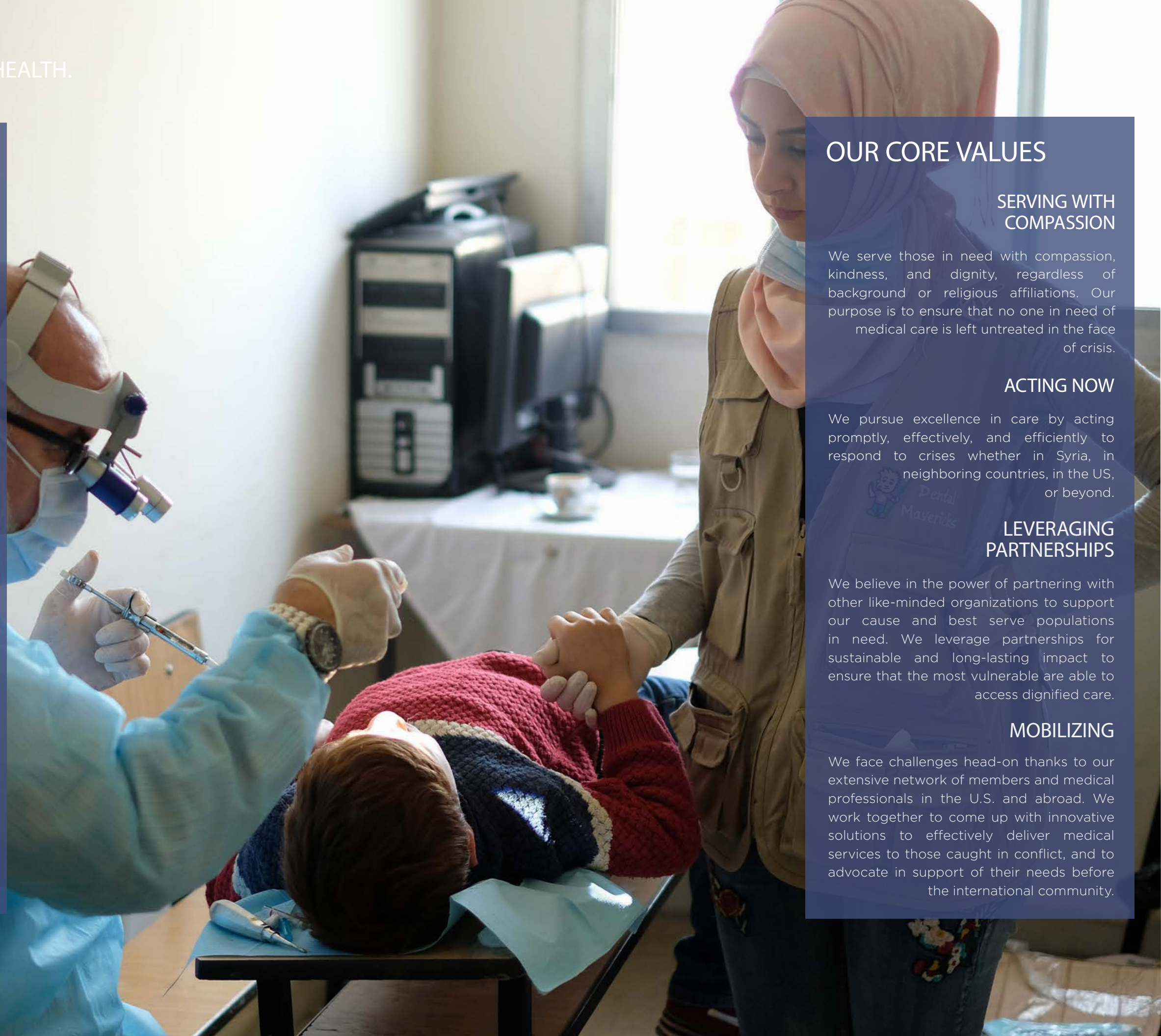
The Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS) was founded in 1998 as a professional society to provide networking and educational opportunities to medical professionals of Syrian descent across the United States. The charitable arm of SAMS, SAMS Foundation, was launched in 2007. With the eruption of the conflict in Syria, SAMS Foundation has become one of the most active medical relief organizations working on the frontlines of crisis relief in Syria, neighboring countries, and beyond.

### OUR MISSION...

is dedicated to delivering life-saving services, revitalizing health systems during crisis, and promoting medical education via a network of humanitarians in Syria, the US, and beyond.

### OUR VISION...

is to strengthen the future of Syria's healthcare, delivering dignified medical relief where needed, fortified by a dedicated medical community.



## OUR CORE VALUES

### SERVING WITH COMPASSION

We serve those in need with compassion, kindness, and dignity, regardless of background or religious affiliations. Our purpose is to ensure that no one in need of medical care is left untreated in the face of crisis.

### ACTING NOW

We pursue excellence in care by acting promptly, effectively, and efficiently to respond to crises whether in Syria, in neighboring countries, in the US, or beyond.

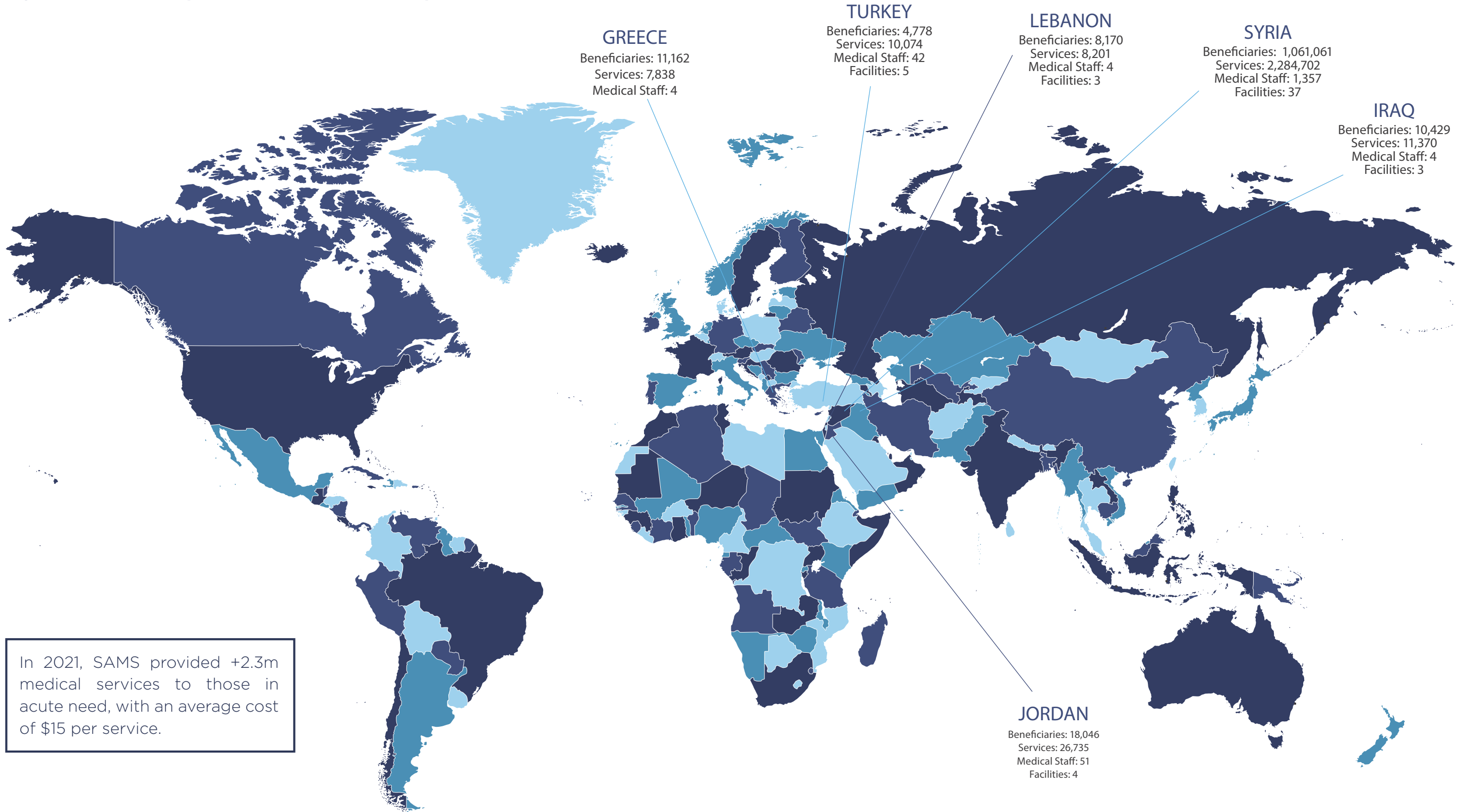
### LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS

We believe in the power of partnering with other like-minded organizations to support our cause and best serve populations in need. We leverage partnerships for sustainable and long-lasting impact to ensure that the most vulnerable are able to access dignified care.

### MOBILIZING

We face challenges head-on thanks to our extensive network of members and medical professionals in the U.S. and abroad. We work together to come up with innovative solutions to effectively deliver medical services to those caught in conflict, and to advocate in support of their needs before the international community.

# 2021 IMPACT AT A GLANCE



In 2021, SAMS provided +2.3m medical services to those in acute need, with an average cost of \$15 per service.



2.3 Mil  
MEDICAL SERVICES



1.1 Mil  
BENEFICIARIES



74,831  
SURGERIES IN SYRIA



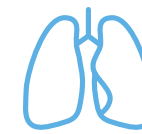
50  
FACILITIES



1,418  
MEDICAL WORKERS



22,717  
DELIVERIES IN SYRIA



3,394  
COVID-19 PATIENTS TREATED



## MEDICAL RELIEF WORK: SYRIA

In Syria, at least 13.4 million people need humanitarian assistance, including 6.7 million internally displaced people. These displaced communities have limited access to basic life necessities and healthcare. SAMS is one of the most trusted NGOs on the ground in Syria, delivering urgently-needed medical care free of charge to people in need.

In 2021, SAMS facilities and projects served more than 1 million beneficiaries amid conflict and despite many challenges. The various healthcare activities included surgeries, deliveries, dialysis, laboratory and imaging tests, vaccination, mental and psychosocial support, and dental care, among many others. SAMS staff and volunteers provided more than 2.2 million services to one of the most vulnerable populations living in dire conditions.

SAMS supported 37 health facilities throughout 2021 and added a new facility in December to reach a total of 38 across 5 governorates in northern Syria. These SAMS-supported facilities included 12 hospitals, 15 primary health care centers (PHCs), 2 mobile clinics, 4 specialized COVID-19 hospitals, a COVID-19 isolation unit for children, 2 dialysis units, 3 mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) centers, 3 oncology and hematology centers, 4 physical rehabilitation centers, an ambulance system, and one midwifery and nursing school.



## Mental Health

SAMS has established robust mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) programs in Syria, where MHPSS teams provide different means of care and support for beneficiaries, including therapy for individuals struggling with conflict or violence-related trauma, anxiety, PTSD, and depression. In 2021, these programs provided 12,511 MHPSS services.

**80% of Syrian refugee children had suffered a family death, and 60% have endured physical attacks. More than half of all Syrian children have PTSD symptoms. (UNHCR)**



## MHPSS Center

SAMS supports an MHPSS center in Idlib governorate that provides telepsychiatric services for individuals with advanced mental health and neurological problems. The local team – which consists of two doctors trained in mhGAP, four psychologists, a psychiatric nurse, and a pharmacist – receives remote support from a roster of bilingual, western-trained psychiatrists. These professionals help SAMS local providers assess, diagnose, and manage patients through set clinic hours and an on-call schedule. Medication management is an essential part of this program, and the medications are given free of charge. This MHPSS center, along with other health facilities throughout the northwest managed by SAMS, also implements mental health assessment, psychosocial support, and training in mhGAP, as well as the establishment of a secure supply chain of psychiatric medications.

## Safe Spaces

SAMS manages eight safe spaces for women and girls, which provide them with psychosocial support, protection services, women's empowerment training, and case management for those affected by gender-based violence (GBV). In two of these centers, psychiatrists work alongside the physiotherapy team to provide MHPSS support for survivors of explosive hazards incidents and other war-related injuries.

## CETA Training

Building sustainable mental health services is crucial to the process of supporting Syrian civilians. With close to half of all children showing symptoms of PTSD due to the constant state of conflict, it's clear that to secure Syria's future, the mental health of the youth must be a priority. This goal is impeded by a lack of available mental health professionals and lack of access to the most up-to-date practices. To mitigate this issue, SAMS partnered with experts from Johns Hopkins University's Bloomberg School of Public Health to adapt a transdiagnostic intervention program called Common Elements Treatment Approach (CETA) for remote implementation in Syria. SAMS has translated and adapted the Child CETA curriculum into Arabic and recorded new, Arabic language training videos so the material can be presented in an engaging, culturally appropriate way. These materials will be used by bilingual CETA instructors to train women living in the governorates of Aleppo and Idlib to be mental health counselors. Once trained, these counselors will provide psychosocial support for children and adolescents within their communities.



## COVID-19 Response

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued into 2021, the Delta and Omicron variants presented new challenges and stretched the limits of the health system's ability to accommodate large numbers of patients and generate adequate supplies of oxygen. SAMS provided ongoing support to the four primary COVID-19 designated hospitals in northern Syria and remained a crucial member of the NWS COVID-19 Task Force, serving as a focal point for the case management group that led critical coordination efforts among health actors in NWS. SAMS also coordinated closely with the Risk Communication and Community Engagement pillar of the response to maintain best practices for COVID-19 case management.

With the health system stretched thin by ten years of conflict, SAMS utilized all available resources to maintain service capacity as the pandemic quickly tested the limits of the health system. Hospital-based isolation units (HBIUs) established by SAMS composed 52% of ICU beds and 39% of the overall bed capacity in NWS to treat COVID-19 patients in critical condition.

In addition to utilizing resources on the ground, SAMS conducted daily telemedicine rounds and consultations for COVID-19 patients in isolation hospitals with the help of SAMS Members. These consultations were provided by US-based SAMS Members and professionals to increase the local staff's ability to treat a larger number of COVID-19 patients, helped elevate the standard of care, and provided opportunities for Syrian health workers to receive on-the-job learning about COVID-19 best practices.



In August 2021, the Delta wave of COVID-19 surged in NWS, and more pediatric cases required hospitalization. SAMS created an isolation ward at the Avicenna Hospital in Idlib with 15 beds, including 3 ICU beds. Pediatric critical care specialists joined the telemedicine rounds team extending their expertise and support.

The COVID-19 vaccine arrived in NWS in 2021, and SAMS participated in the vaccination campaign, which began on May 1. Vaccination rates remained low during the initial campaign, so SAMS launched a campaign to encourage vaccination and provide accurate information about inoculation. Initially prioritizing health staff, SAMS conducted individual and group sessions to encourage vaccination and took administrative measures to improve vaccination rates among the staff. There is now an almost 100% vaccination rate among SAMS staff, protecting staff and patients alike. SAMS continues to educate the civilian population about the importance of vaccination.



SAMS also developed and implemented case management training for the majority of health workers in the isolation centers of NWS. SAMS Members and professionals led these trainings which included the development of COVID-19 hospital admission criteria, the management of complications and superimposed infections such as mucormycosis, as well as recommended infection prevention and control (IPC) measures. Additionally, SAMS IPC committees at each health facility continually monitored the implementation of IPC measures and offered technical assistance to hospital staff.

SAMS participated in strengthening the surveillance system in coordination with the Early Warning, Alert, and Response Network (EWARN), through training all SAMS facilities' staff on standard operating procedures (SOPs) for case detection and reporting. Furthermore, SAMS dedicated five ambulances equipped with ventilators and ensured they were staffed 24/7 to transfer suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases to the appropriate facilities.



## Specialty Programs

### Cancer Treatment

While conflict-related medical services are an essential need of Syria's health system, chronic conditions continue to impact the population and are often overlooked and under-resourced. Amid the ongoing conflict and displacement, cancer patients in Syria are more likely to be diagnosed when their disease has already reached an advanced stage, making treatment more difficult and reducing their chances of survival. SAMS is the only NGO on the ground in northern Syria offering a full range of cancer services and chemotherapy free of charge to patients in need at three specialized facilities: the Oncology Center in Idlib, an oncology unit in Al Bab Primary Health Center, and an oncology unit in Jarablus Primary Health Center.

In November 2021, SAMS launched a mammogram screening program at Idlib Central Hospital. This program expands the hospital's ability to detect breast cancer early in communities where access to cancer screening services is rare. Through this program, patients can access proper diagnostic imaging that increases early detection, improves prognosis, and saves lives.

In northern Syria, SAMS provides dignified, quality cancer care through more than 1,000 consultations per month, managing patients with colon cancer, Hodgkins and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, pediatric leukemia, and breast cancer, and bridging the gap in accessible cancer care for underserved populations.

#### Impact Story

The Oncology Center in Idlib continues to provide critical medical services to cancer patients in NW Syria. Yusra Al-Awada is a patient who struggled to find the proper treatment for breast cancer after being transferred to numerous hospitals across the region.

She finally received care at SAMS Oncology Center in Idlib after the arduous process of finding a facility that could help her. Doctors at the center confirmed the stage of her disease, planned the treatment course, and provided her with the medications and care she needed, free of charge. SAMS Oncology Center also arranges for selected cases to go to Turkey to receive advanced and specialized forms of treatments that are unavailable inside Syria but significantly improve the patients' outcomes.



### Dental Clinics

Amid conflict and displacement, dental care is a part of general health that often goes neglected. SAMS supported 15 dental clinics in 4 governorates last year. In 2021, SAMS-supported dental clinics offered dental care for 58,903 patients. The clinics' services include management of dental emergencies, oral infections, gum disease, cavity filling, and root canal therapy.

### Nephrology

SAMS supported two dialysis units for kidney disease patients: one in Bab Al Hawa Hospital in Idlib and one in Al Fardous Hospital in Aleppo. The two dialysis units provided medical care and treatment for 802 patients in 2021. Throughout 2021, these facilities also secured free medication for 114 patients with advanced kidney disease, providing them with a lifeline to managing chronic conditions at a time when medications for such illnesses are increasingly expensive and in short supply.

## SAMS Winterization Response

Winter presents an annual threat to the 2.8 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) of northern Syria. With generous support from its donors and supporters, SAMS partnered with local organizations to deliver lifesaving winterization assistance. The first intervention phase in 2021 was fuel distribution in 87 schools in 4 different districts Azzaz, Al-Bab, Jarablus, and Afrin, bringing warm school days to 31,850 students.

In addition, SAMS and local NGO partners complemented their winterization campaigns by implementing WASH interventions in selected IDP camps to reduce the risk of flooding. The project targeted 5 IDP camps in Idlib, excavating and applying gravel on the ground of the camp. This intervention leveled the tents and established a drainage system in the camps to decrease the risk of seasonal flooding for the 1,015 residents of the five camps.



## Attacks on Health

Attacks on health facilities have been a hallmark of the Syrian conflict. In 2021, SAMS recorded a total of 12 attacks on health facilities. On March 21st, 2021, the Al Atareb Hospital was targeted by missile attacks, killing six patients and injuring 17, including five medical staff. The hospital suspended its services following the attack from March 21st to March 26th, 2021. Patients were referred to the nearest health facilities with appropriate services; repairs started immediately, allowing the hospital to return to service within a week.

On June 12th, two missiles hit SAMS-supported Al-Shifaa Hospital in Afrin. The first missile hit the emergency room, and the second missile hit the labor and delivery room. As a result, the emergency room, delivery room, outpatient department (including MHPSS, safe space, and physiotherapy units), and the laboratory and radiology units were destroyed. Reports confirmed the death toll to be 15; of this number, 2 were hospital staff, and 2 were ambulance drivers. Eleven hospital staff were injured, including one midwife who was in critical condition at the time.

Al-Shifaa Hospital is one of the largest medical facilities in northern Syria, providing an average of 15,000 medical services each month, including 350 newborn deliveries and 250 specialized surgeries. SAMS started rebuilding the destroyed sections of Al Shifa Hospital and the hospital will become fully operational again in 2022.



# Jordan

Jordan remains one of the countries most impacted by the ongoing conflict in Syria. With over 672,000 registered Syrian refugees, and an estimated 700,000 more unregistered, needs in Jordan are high among both refugees and vulnerable Jordanian citizens. SAMS has been active in Jordan since 2012. Despite the numerous challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, we continue to work with our partners to provide medical relief and mental health support to the vulnerable communities that we serve.

**In Jordan, SAMS reached a total of 18,046 unique beneficiaries in 2021, providing 26,735 medical and MHPSS services.**



## Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

With continued support from the Schooner Foundation, SAMS successfully provided mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and gender-based violence (GBV) outreach, awareness, and support response in central and northern Jordan for vulnerable Syrians and local communities. Overall, MHPSS activities served 16,577 beneficiaries in 2021. The provided services include individual therapy, medication management, and a series of group support sessions and psychoeducation workshops hosted at community centers. The workshops cover various topics such as emotion management, sleep problems, bullying, self-esteem, and communication skills.

Through these initiatives, SAMS builds strong and long-lasting relationships within the communities it serves, including local government offices and community-based organizations (CBOs). This year, SAMS conducted an assessment of training needs at the Jordanian Ministries of Health and Social Development and local CBOs, followed by a series of trainings on topics ranging from self care and ethics to psychological testing and clinical interviews. These trainings served to build capacity and improve the quality of community-based care and local providers.

In 2021, thanks to a partnership with InterAction, SAMS worked with Jordanian CBOs to develop and contextualize facilitation guides, policies, and tools for frontline staff related to adult and child safeguarding and survivor-assistance. These partnerships, as in years past, have remained critical in our efforts to increase and improve access to MHPSS and GBV support for refugees and the host communities in Jordan.





## Outreach Services

SAMS team of MHPSS specialists based in Amman and Irbid provided outreach and referral services in 5 geographical locations for refugees living outside the camps and their host communities. The services include in-home assessments of vulnerable households to determine the most critical needs related to mental health, general health, nutrition, education, and family violence. Individuals were then referred for essential services, including those offered within SAMS MHPSS centers. The team also referred beneficiaries for other needs such as protection and financial support and arranged for appropriate medical care, including interventions by SAMS organized medical missions. The outreach team visited 1,747 households in 2021.

## Combating Gender Based Violence (GBV)

SAMS' Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) counselors and GBV specialists, in collaboration with local Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) hosted GBV activities in centers in Zarqa, Ramtha, Salt, Irbid, and Amman, utilizing their networks to educate on and improve access to GBV services among the most vulnerable. SAMS coordinated with local CBOs to identify vulnerable beneficiaries with whom to conduct in-home assessments and consent-based referrals as needed for GBV case management, counseling, and psychoeducation activities to improve knowledge around GBV, mental health services, and conflict resolution. Taking safety issues and principles of 'do no harm' into account, SAMS case managers evaluate if it is safer to offer counseling for the survivors

remotely or in person.

SAMS organized 80 Gender-Based Violence (GBV) awareness workshops for women, youth, and children, addressing topics such as physical and verbal violence, early marriage, sexual harassment and assault, and unbalanced power relationships. SAMS also participated in the campaign "16 Days of Activism Against GBV". This is an annual international campaign that kicks off on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and runs until 10 December, Human Rights Day, posting messages with the themes of GBV prevention as a moral imperative and GBV as an obstacle to equality, and conducting awareness sessions on signs of abuse, and responding sensitively to survivors to 80 university social work students.

## Partnership with Jordanian Universities

SAMS MHPSS program continued to offer internship experience to graduate students studying Counseling, Social Work, Psychology, and other related fields at major Jordanian universities like Yarmouk University and the University of Jordan. These interns attended orientation and training on conducting field visits, communication skills, and psychological work ethics before they were integrated into our Outreach Teams.



## SAMS Medical Center in Za’atari Refugee Camp

Since 2017, SAMS has offered dental services to Syrian refugees at its Zaatari Refugee camp medical center. In 2021, the center provided over 3,178 dental services free of charge 3 days a week, including routine dental services such as simple and surgical extractions, root canal treatments, and radiographs for treatment assessment and diagnosis. For some of the most complex cases, SAMS organized pediatric oral surgery missions. Activities for screening, prevention, and education were introduced to the outreach programs in the camp in 2021.

The center adopted infection control procedures, the use of protective equipment, appointment-based services, triaging, and social distance to ensure the protection of patients and providers. The dental team continues to offer desperately needed dental treatment despite the COVID-19 outbreaks.

SAMS imaging service in the medical facility is the only continuously running one in the camp in 2021. It produced over 4,500 images operating in two daily shifts—the regular and the nighttime shifts—six days a week. Additionally, the medical center added a new component to its ongoing work, holding 3 awareness sessions about oral hygiene for children to promote dental health and develop healthy habits.



## Wadi Al Seer Comprehensive Medical Center

In 2021, SAMS expanded its efforts to improve the mental and physical health of Amman residents through its Rehabilitation, Physiotherapy, and MHPSS Unit at Wadi Al Seer Comprehensive Medical Center.

According to recent studies, there is no integration of PT/OT and MHPSS into public primary and comprehensive health care facilities, and the prevalence of disability among Syrian refugees aged 2 years and older is estimated to be 22.9%. This project promotes access to comprehensive rehabilitation and MHPSS services for vulnerable refugee and host community populations and Ministry of Health (MoH) medical centers.

SAMS also aims to link rehabilitation services with MHPSS services by co-locating these services and creating a referral pathway between both, so patients can get the care they need when an injury or illness also impacts the patient’s mental health.

During the clinic’s establishment in October 2021, SAMS coordinated with Humanity and Inclusion (HI) to evaluate the center and provide the technical support needed. The MoH also supported arranging the space and assessing the equipment needed for the target population.

SAMS coordinated with UNHCR, HI, the MoH and local CBOs in Wadi Al Seer to create a comprehensive referral system for patients and arranged meetings with other CBOs to ensure we reached the largest number of patients possible.

The rehabilitation clinic provided services six days a week, including physical therapy and the distribution of assistive devices serving 205 beneficiaries. SAMS provides MHPSS services free of charge in a private room, including consultations for refugee and Jordanian PWD and non-PWD for one day a week. The psychologist provides individual treatment sessions for patients suffering from depression, PTSD, and anxiety, while more complex cases are referred to SAMS psychiatrists for medication management.

## Medical Missions Project

In 2021, SAMS continued our newly implemented program of internal medical missions in Jordan, where SAMS collaborates with local surgeons to provide life-changing care for refugees and local underserved populations. SAMS initiated this program in 2020 to continue providing high-impact services and fill the gap created when SAMS international missions were put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

SAMS worked with multiple local Jordanian surgeons and specialists in ophthalmology, pediatric otolaryngology (ENT), and pediatric urology. In total, SAMS organized 12 local medical missions providing 365 life-changing procedures such as cataract removal, corrective surgery for pediatric squint cases, tonsillectomy and adenoidectomy, and procedures for children suffering from undescended testes and hernias. The team in Jordan continued the retinopathy care program, providing screenings, follow-up care, and vision-saving Avastin injections and laser treatments for 47 patients suffering from retinal vascular abnormalities.



### Impact Story

“ I feel happy when I meet with the doctors and talk to them because at this difficult time, it’s hard to find good ones who listen and care, and I’m so glad that I have.”

This is how Mr. Ezzat, a retinopathy patient, described his experience with SAMS doctors and staff.

Due to the pandemic, SAMS’ international missions were postponed. However, in coordination with local hospitals, SAMS continued to provide care for those in need.

## Lebanon

Lebanon hosts over 1.5 million Syrian refugees. Throughout 2021, SAMS Lebanon and its local partners successfully organized and led two medical mission programs in Lebanon. Despite the restrictions and challenges presented by the COVID-19 Pandemic, SAMS was able to provide 8,201 medical services in Lebanon in 2021.



### Filling the Gap in Secondary Care

SAMS identified secondary health care as a major gap in access for vulnerable populations in Lebanon. In response to this gap, SAMS implemented a 13-month project in 2021 to cover life-saving hospital care for refugees and vulnerable Lebanese who could not otherwise afford such care. Because of the immense need among Syrian refugees and Lebanese in particular, the number of people provided with hospitalization support exceeded the initial target of 1,000. Ultimately, SAMS served 1,173 Syrian refugees under 18 years of age, 435 Lebanese patients who required admission for urgent care, and 96 Palestinians under 18 and over 60 years old who were otherwise unable to cover the full cost of cardiovascular interventions.

This project was supported by UN OCHA’s Lebanon Humanitarian Fund (LHF), and addressed the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan’s objective of improving access to hospitals and advanced referral care. The project was implemented across Lebanon and provided financial support for vulnerable patients who are unable to cover the heavy costs of necessary hospitalization by facilitating a timely and safe referral to life-saving hospital services. The project also decreased protection concerns faced by beneficiaries during hospitalization and increased their sense of safety and well-being.

SAMS coordinated closely on this project with UN agencies (UNHCR and UNRWA) and the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health.

SAMS proposed and received support for another one-year LHF-funded project that started in August 2021. This project addressed the critical, life-saving needs of the most vulnerable Lebanese and migrant workers due to the pandemic and Lebanon's declining socioeconomic situation. SAMS provided financial top-up contributions to support the patient share, diagnostic care, and the non-covered medical costs to vulnerable Lebanese and migrant workers. Lebanese patients in need of psychiatric hospital admission were also supported by SAMS under this project. All activities were closely coordinated with key stakeholders within the health sector, and SAMS implemented a complementary activity by supporting five hospitals - one per governorate - with personal protective equipment (PPE).



## Medical Missions in Lebanon

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions, SAMS international medical missions were temporarily paused. In response, SAMS organized medical missions utilizing local Lebanese surgeons that allowed us to continue to provide life-changing services.

In August and September, SAMS organized two ophthalmology missions, performing screenings and cataract removal surgeries free of charge for over 100 beneficiaries in Lebanon's northern governorates. The missions were conducted in collaboration with Phoenix Ophthalmology Group in Tripoli.

## Helping Hand Program

In 2021, SAMS piloted The Helping Hand psychosocial support program for teens in Lebanon. The program combined evidence-based cognitive behavioral techniques with groundbreaking learning technology to provide young people with accessible and engaging emotional support. With trained teachers and psychosocial workers acting as facilitators, the project uses an application with playable simulations that provide a safe environment to prepare youth for life's challenges and facilitate dialogue about key psychosocial themes to address in a population impacted by violence and the trauma of war and displacement.

The project's main objective is to introduce emotional management, relationship components, and structure to children who have been impacted by violence, trauma, and displacement. Through this program, children learn to interact with each other in a safe space and acquire critical skills, including problem-solving.

SAMS expanded its robust psychosocial support program to reach new locations in Tripoli using a remote model of assessment and awareness sessions targeting children and caregivers in the Dar Al Ataa' center, where the team helped over 150 beneficiaries. Topics included self-esteem, recognizing the signs of stress, positive coping mechanisms, critical thinking, and how to talk about different emotions.



**"In Lebanon, SAMS' Helping Hands program continues to change children's lives, giving them the space and tools they need to reclaim their mental health.**

**A participant of the program, Heba Junaid, shared her recent experience, explaining how afterward she could more comfortably share and speak with her family and friends, use her talents to express herself, and utilize other techniques she learned to help her reclaim her mental health.**

## Food Baskets

In January 2021, SAMS began its Food Basket project in partnership with FoodBlessed, providing food assistance across nine governorates in Lebanon. This initiative included the recruitment and training of volunteers, procurement of food items, packaging of food boxes, and delivery to beneficiaries across the country. Throughout 2021, SAMS and FoodBlessed prepared and delivered a total of 5,000 food boxes to 29,945 beneficiaries in 5,000 households.



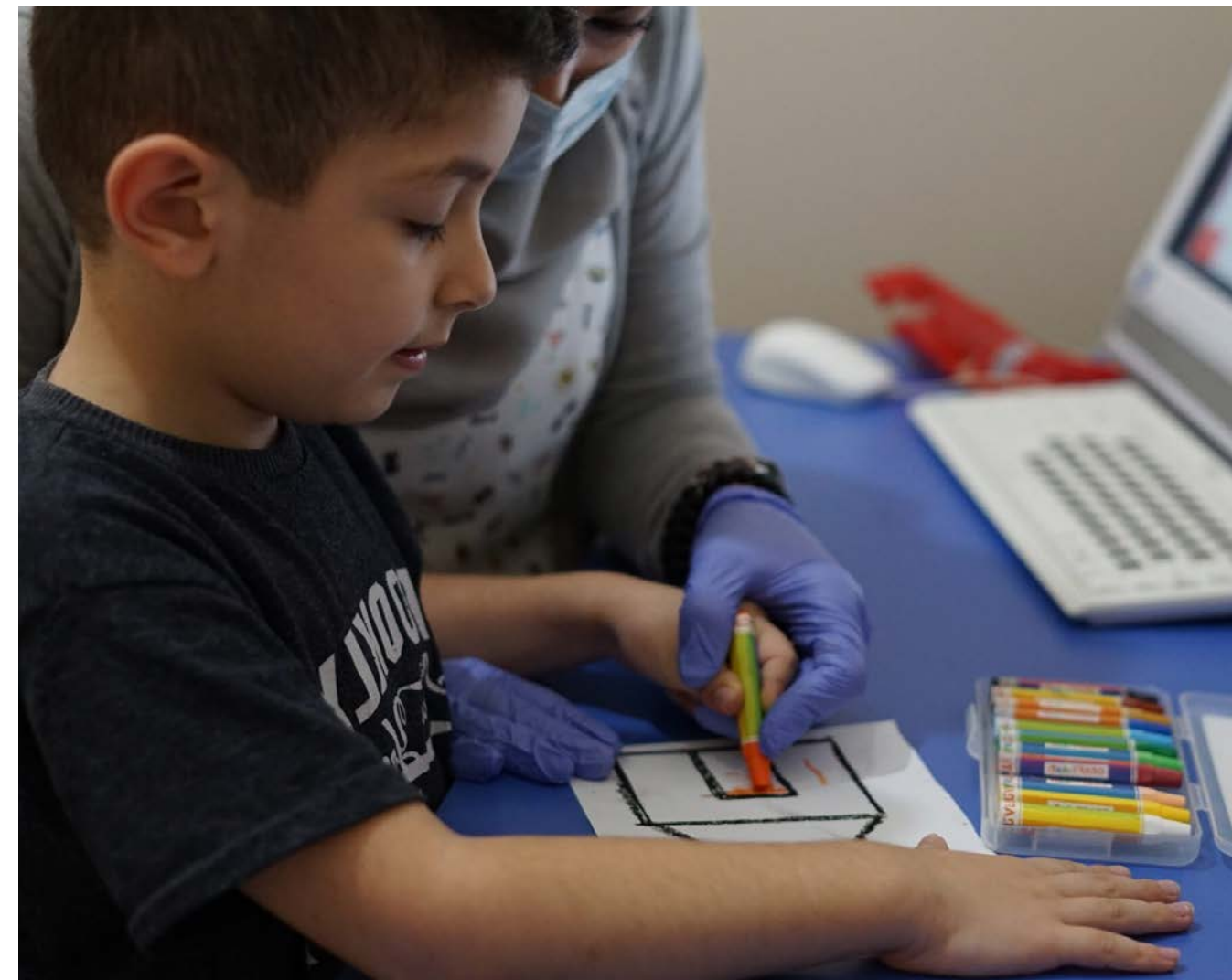
## Winterization Efforts

In 2021, the region faced harsh winter storms, and in Lebanon, the extreme winter conditions increased the hardships faced by refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants from Syria and other countries.

SAMS teams worked to deliver crucial winterization supplies such as blankets, rechargeable lights, and other essentials to more than 1,000 households in Beirut, and 11 informal settlements in the Beka'a Valley, to help support them through the season.

## Turkey

In 2021, SAMS reached 4,778 beneficiaries and supported 110 medical and non-medical workers in Turkey. SAMS provided 10,074 services and 2,661 consultations free of charge through all 5 of its facilities: MHPSS and Physical Rehabilitation centers in Gaziantep and Istanbul, an Autism Spectrum Disorders center in Istanbul, an MHPSS center in Kilis and a youth center in Reyhanli.



## MHPSS Centers In Southern Turkey

Throughout 2021, SAMS continued providing services in its Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Center in Gaziantep, Turkey. The center's services included individual and group counseling sessions, group activities, and workshops for vulnerable individuals who had experienced trauma as a result of the ongoing conflict in Syria. In addition, SAMS expanded its operations in Turkey with the support of the US Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) by opening a second MHPSS Center in the Killis governorate. The new center serves as a resource to support the large population of Syrian refugees in Kilis as they seek support for their mental health needs.

## Physical Rehabilitation Center

To improve access to physical therapy services for Syrian refugees in Turkey, SAMS established a specialized rehabilitation center in Gaziantep where people with disabilities and mobility challenges can receive treatment. Services included consultations for and management of spinal cord injuries, post-operational amputations, and peripheral nerve injuries. During these consultations, beneficiaries were assessed, and treatment plans were developed, including physiotherapy treatment sessions and the provision of mobility aids and orthotics as needed. In 2021, this center provided services to 6,772 beneficiaries

## Take My Hand Special Education Center

In 2021, SAMS continued to work with its partners to implement specialized educational, behavioral, and physical support services to Syrian refugee children in Istanbul with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The program reached 100 children in 2021, providing each of them with development and learning sessions that are tailored to their needs. Depending on the child's learning plan, these sessions included developing expressive speech, self-care, play, activities to develop gross and fine motor skills, imitation and other social skills, and literacy. The program also included group therapy sessions and activities, sensory integrative therapy to help the children process sensory inputs more effectively, educational sessions on ASD, and consultations for the children's caregivers. SAMS facilitated remote communication and technical exchange between the center's team and experts at the Princeton Child Development Institute (PCDI) in the US, a non-profit program that offers science-based services for children and youth with autism. Collaboration has focused on professional training and the application of new quality treatment approaches.



## MHPSS and Rehabilitation Center in Istanbul

In November 2021, SAMS expanded its services in Istanbul by partnering with the Refugee Assistance and Solidarity Association (RASAS), with additional support from PRM. The newly-available services included the provision of specialized MHPSS consultations, as well as individual and group PSS sessions through two facilities in Istanbul. SAMS also supported RASAS in providing physiotherapy, prosthesis, and speech therapy at its facilities to 3,302 beneficiaries.





# Greece

In 2021, SAMS' Greece office, known as SAMS Hellas, continued its own local medical missions to ensure that the communities we serve have access to high quality care. Throughout the year, SAMS Hellas teams on the ground and local partners strived to ensure that initiatives such as our Mobile Medical Program, pediatric vaccination campaign, pediatric residency partnership, and our continued work with IOM were successful and served a total of 11,224 beneficiaries.

**Despite the challenges, including COVID-19 restrictions and beneficiary status (registered/unregistered), among numerous others, the SAMS Hellas team provided 7,838 Medical Services and reached 11,162 beneficiaries in 2021.**

## Mobile Medical Program

SAMS Hellas' Mobile Medical Team program began in 2020 and continued throughout 2021. The team consisted of two pediatricians, a nurse, an OB/GYN specialist, a midwife, and Arabic and Farsi interpreters who provided health care services to the communities in 6 refugee camps in the Attica region and 2 clinics in the center of Athens. Through this program, SAMS served outpatient clinics offering primary health care for women and children, health awareness sessions, school physical, vaccination campaigns so refu-



-gee and migrant children can be admitted to local schools and resume their education. The team also arranged referrals for advanced medical care and monitored patients' progress through follow-up care for chronic illnesses. The Mobile Medical team program added a general practitioner later in the year to meet the increased demands and expand to new locations. It served 7838 beneficiaries throughout the year.

SAMS Hellas established successful relationships with the Ministry of Migration & Asylum for approvals, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the National Public Health Organization

(NPHO- EODY), the International Organization of Migration, and the Camps Managements.

### Impact Story

“Anisah’s mother brought her in for a checkup at SAMS’ pediatric clinic in Ritsona. With the help of an Arabic translator, pediatricians at the clinic could access Anisah’s medical records, address her flu symptoms, and give Anisah the routine vaccinations she needed. Staff also provided Anisah and her mother with the information and resources they needed to keep Anisah healthy. Anisah and her mother are one of many families that have benefited from SAMS’ vaccination campaign.”

### Partnership with Attikon University

Beginning in October 2021, SAMS established a partnership with Attikon University Hospital that facilitated the inclusion of the hospital’s pediatric residents in SAMS clinic’s activities for 2-week rotations. In addition to supporting the clinics’ ongoing work and supporting pediatric residents with new opportunities to learn, this initiative also created a strong line of communication with the hospital for cases that needed specialized medical care, such as patients with chronic illnesses or those who required specialized medical examinations that cannot be provided with the equipment available in refugee camps.



# Iraq

In Iraq, the medical system is under significant strain following years of conflict, financial crisis, and a surge in refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs). As a result, SAMS extends relief services to those in need of medical care and helps to lessen the suffering of vulnerable communities. In 2021, SAMS reached 10,429 beneficiaries, offering 11,370 services.

## Dental Clinic

The Bardarash refugee camp in Iraq is home to approximately 18,000 Syrian refugees who have few options for basic medical care. A SAMS-supported dental clinic for Syrian refugees in the Bardarash refugee camp started in September 2020, and throughout 2021, it continued to offer its services to 3591 beneficiaries.

SAMS medical staff continue to conduct daily assessments of services provided, to improve access to quality health care for refugees and displaced populations. Additionally, SAMS distributed dental supplies and held oral hygiene awareness sessions and screening and prevention campaigns for children.



## Partnerships and Collaborations

On 24 April 2021, a fire at the Ibn Al-Khateeb hospital in south Baghdad left at least 82 people dead and 110 injured. The fire started with the explosion of oxygen tanks designated for COVID-19 patients. Through partnering with Direct Relief and Give To The World, SAMS provided vital life-saving medical supplies, 70 portable fire extinguishers, and held remote educational workshops in moderate to severe COVID case management in response to the fire.

Equipment like oxygen cylinders, monitors, ECG machines, CPAP machines, and others ensured that the Ministry of Health (MOH) reopened the COVID floor immediately to curb the rise in Covid-19 cases, while remaining in compliance with required safety and fire prevention guidelines. Ibn Al Khateeb Hospital, which treats an average of 100-150 patients each month, continues to utilize this equipment.

## Winterization Efforts

For refugees and displaced populations, winter can be the most challenging time of the year. In 2021, SAMS provided life-saving winterization assistance in the form of heaters, fuel, and blankets for 1000 beneficiaries, thanks to the kind generosity of its donors and supporters. This effort extended directly needed relief for 200 families.



“ We were living a normal life. I was able to work and treat my sick son up until the war started. We were forced to leave and seek refuge in Iraq. We have lost everything.

Ahmed Ibrahim, a Syrian resident of the Gawilan camp in Dahouk, Iraq.



# SAMS Medical Education Programs

Over a decade of conflict has severely eroded the human resources of Syria's health system. With at least 945 health workers killed in Syria since the start of the conflict, a lack of qualified medical professionals is one of the most significant barriers for civilians in accessing quality health services. Therefore, SAMS prioritizes the training and retention of new health workers to meet the growing needs of the Syrian people.

To achieve this goal, SAMS has worked to support medical education over the past decade. SAMS prioritized this mission over the past year by allowing medical students to continue their education and use their learned skills to give back to their communities. One of SAMS missions is to equip the next generation of health care providers with the skills and tools to face any challenges and prepare them to give their patients top-quality care. It is achieving this goal through SAMS Midwifery Institute, Nurse Training program, residency opportunities in diverse medical specialties in Syria, and similar programs. The 6 months fellowship program for midwifery graduates and the virtual training in critical care for physicians are good examples of the SAMS initiative's value.

## Medical Residency Program

In 2021, SAMS continued its investment in developing residency training opportunities for medical graduates who could not complete their specialization due to conflict. In collaboration with other health actors in NWS, SAMS' Resident Doctors Program aims to provide financial and technical support for physicians in training within different specialties. The resident doctors are supervised by SAMS facilities specialized doctors under the Syrian Board of Medical Specialties (SBOMS) academic, training, and curriculum standards. SAMS Technical Committees of US-based doctors also support the program by conducting periodic lectures and clinical case management sessions. SAMS supported more than 50 medical residents in 14 Specializations at 14 hospitals in 2021.



## SAMS Scholarship Program

As part of its expanding education programs, SAMS renewed scholarships to 28 Syrian students, in the fields of medicine, dentistry, and in pharmacy in 2021. The majority of the recipients of these competitive awards are students who started their studies in Syrian-accredited universities but were interrupted by the conflict. These students participated in the provision of medical and humanitarian care in the areas in which they resided in Syria before continuing their studies. Between January 2016 and December 2021, 16 students completed their studies and obtained their medical degrees.

For the academic year 2021/2022, SAMS started a new type of scholarship sponsorship for the tuition of high school graduates from among the refugees in Jordan and Lebanon who got accepted into health sciences colleges (nursing, nutrition, psychology, physical therapy, and rehabilitation). 13 students were enrolled.

## SAMS Midwifery Program

SAMS has developed and implemented midwifery education curricula and programs in Syria since 2018. These programs, which have received accreditation from UNFPA and WHO, are aligned with the Midwifery Capacity-Building Strategy for Northern Syria, to which SAMS is an active contributor, as well as relevant global standards, such as the International Confederation of Midwives Global Standards for Midwifery Education. To promote the integration of gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response within sexual and reproductive health care, SAMS midwifery programs provide students with training in GBV Basic Concepts, Clinical Management of Rape, screening of GBV cases, gender sensitivity, and Psychological First Aid, among others. Student midwives are also afforded the opportunity to spend some of their clinical rotations working within SAMS-supported safe spaces for women and girls, which are typically hosted within or near health facilities.

The Midwifery programs are managed by a team of experienced physicians and midwives on staff in medical facilities in Syria; in-person theoretical, practical, and clinical training are provided by trained clinical teaching staff, while technical assistance (curriculum review, remote and in-person technical training in the latest methods, and one-on-one mentoring) is also provided by committees of Arabic-speaking specialists among SAMS membership, mainly based in the United States.

Over the past three years, SAMS has graduated 85 midwives from its midwifery education programs, many of whom have gone on to find employment within the northwest Syria health sector, filling a critical gap in sexual and reproductive health care. In 2021, the SAMS medical training institute in Al-Atareb in Aleppo governorate enrolled 13 nurses in an 18-month program track that allows

them to gain the required knowledge and skills to practice as midwives.

Donors of SAMS' midwifery education activities include the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Government of Luxembourg, as well as private donors.

### Impact Story

**Radiya received her degree after three years at SAMS Health Institute in Idlib, where she was able to follow her dream of “developing experience, learning more about medicine, and helping as many mothers as possible.”**

**Radiya now works as a midwife at the Maternity Hospital in Idlib. Her work exemplifies the crucial nature of these education programs in communities facing a severe shortage of health workers. SAMS and its partners are working hard to ensure that the medical sector in NW Syria is strengthened by a new generation of health workers.**



## Nursing Program

SAMS has operated nursing training programs since 2015, first graduating 93 nurse assistants. Seeing ongoing gaps, we transitioned in 2018 to a two-year program which has graduated 108 fully-qualified nurses to date. The nurses in this program receive 30 hours a week of theoretical training, as well as clinical lessons under the supervision of qualified trainers. The graduates receive diplomas recognized by the Idlib Health Directorate, and many go on to work in SAMS facilities.



## Innovative Programs

To guarantee that the communities it serves and the medical professionals have access to the best treatment and resources, SAMS continued its awareness-raising and educational initiatives, focusing on fellowship training in medical subspecialties.

In March of 2021, SAMS launched a pilot program for Adult Critical Care Medicine for 11 physicians in 3 SAMS-supported hospitals in NWS. This program covered various topics, including basic ICU management, assisted ventilation, cardiac, respiratory, and neurological emergencies. It also covered renal replacement therapy and infection prevention and control. The 6 months pilot program came to an end in August 2021.

Applying new and innovative training methods was a major achievement in 2021 and remains a goal going forward. SAMS organized virtual daily rounds, training, and peer-to-peer support management in SAMS' five COVID-19 facilities, totaling 1,350 hours. Additionally, SAMS offered over 200 hours of

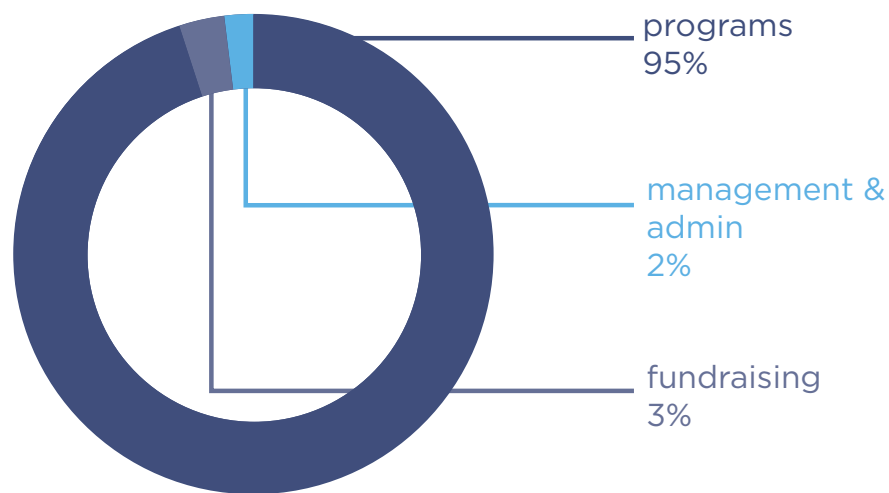
interactive webinars on COVID-19 management, critical care, radiology, stroke, and obstetrical care. In these webinars, US-based specialists and the field medical teams worked together in developing and implementing management protocols, treatment guidelines, assessment and prevention of complications, and discussions on lessons learned and discoveries. The success of this interaction paved the way to expand into other specialties. This process resulted in the formation of a library of medical lectures in adult and pediatric ICU, OB/GYN, radiology, and neurology.



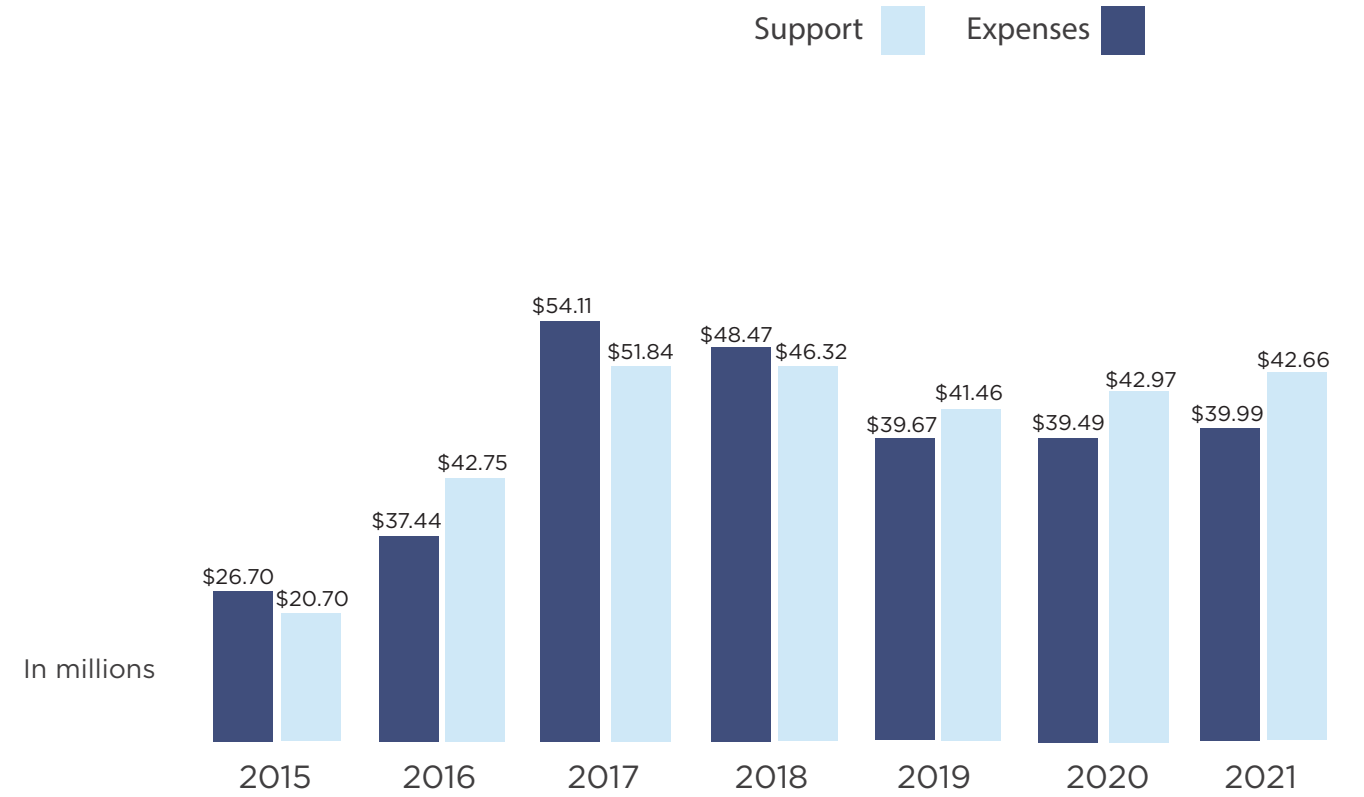
# FINANCIAL REPORT

SUPPORT AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS		
	2020	2021
Contributions	\$7,348,466	\$7,589,368
Grants	\$30,594,621	\$30,458,483
Gifts in Kind	\$5,031,591	\$4,615,207
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$42,974,678</b>	<b>\$42,663,058</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
	\$12,631,031	\$15,307,242
EXPENSES		
	2020	2021
<b>Program Services</b>		
Medical Relief Program	\$37,972,640	\$38,114,088
<b>Supporting Services</b>		
Management and General	\$689,203	\$929,999
Fundraising	\$828,466	\$942,760
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$39,490,309</b>	<b>\$39,986,847</b>

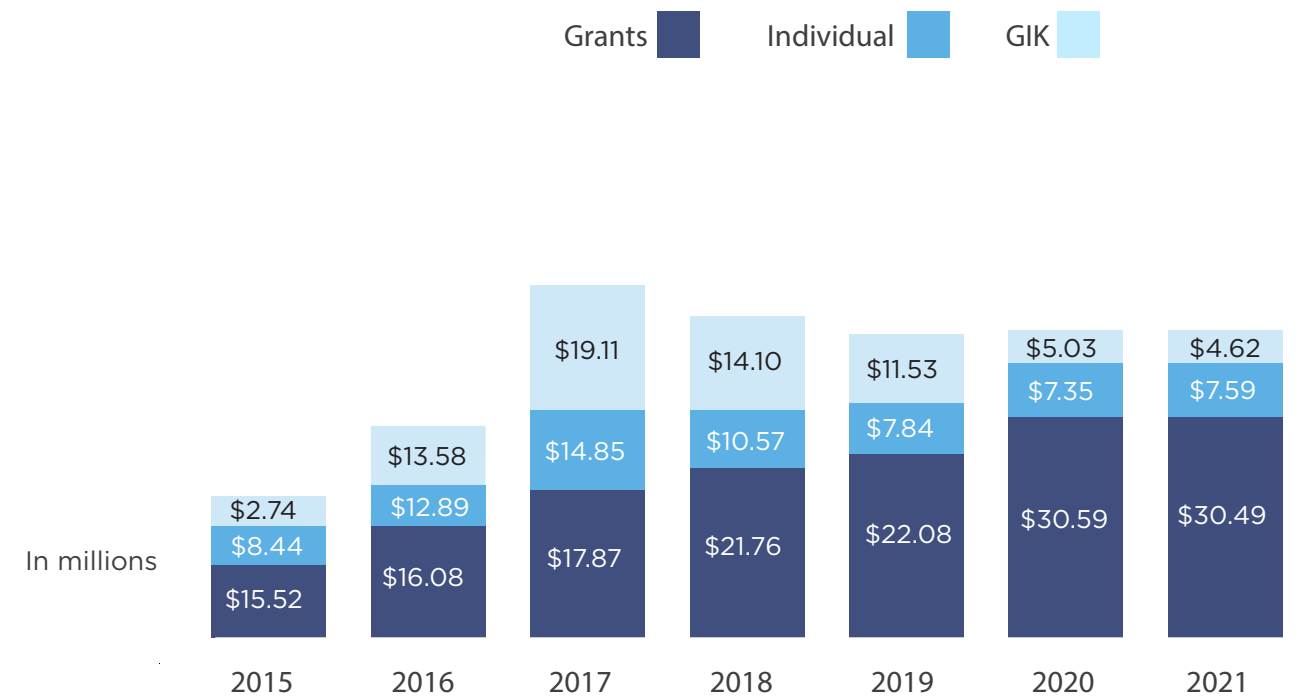
2021 DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENSES



## FINANCIALS OVER 7 YEARS INCLUDING GIFTS IN KIND



## SOURCES OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT



# Advocacy

SAMS advocacy efforts seek to amplify the voices of Syrian health workers and civilians alike and to highlight the humanitarian needs facing Syrians and other vulnerable populations in the communities we serve. We also advocate for policy commitments to provide dignified, quality health care and protection to health workers and their patients in conflict-affected areas. To pursue these goals, SAMS meets with policymakers worldwide, engages with senior UN officials, and collaborates with Syrian and international NGOs to amplify our voices. This past year included a heavy focus on securing greater support for the COVID-19 response in Syria, new donor contributions for chronic care and medical education programs, and continued advocacy supporting the UN cross-border mechanism.

## UN Advocacy

SAMS engages regularly and extensively with the UN, prioritizing the protection of health facilities and the continuation of cross-border aid access. SAMS holds regular meetings and events with UN member states, as well as engages with UN coordination mechanisms and accountability mechanisms at the working level.

In July 2021, SAMS played a leading role in successfully advocating for the renewal of the Security Council's cross-border aid resolution, which has been renewed annually or bi-annually since its adoption in 2014. The cross-border aid mechanism is a vital lifeline for over 4 million people in northern Syria who face deteriorating economic conditions, ongoing conflict and displacement, and the perils of the COVID-19 pandemic. SAMS partnered with other NGOs to advocate for the renewal and also facilitated meetings between UN member states and SAMS staff on the ground in Syria so that policymakers could hear about the impact of the resolution directly from the people who rely on it.

## US Government and Congressional Advocacy

SAMS maintains strong relationships with the US Government, including Members of Congress, USAID, the White House, and the State Department. SAMS leadership and staff hold regular meetings with these stakeholders to discuss the humanitarian situation in Syria.

In March, SAMS partnered with other NGOs and CSIS to develop a series of thematic reports examining the state of Syria a decade into the conflict. SAMS co-authored the report on attacks on health and participated in meetings with government officials to discuss these reports and explore pathways to fill gaps in the humanitarian response and end impunity for attacks on health. As the COVID-19 pandemic saw cases surge in October, SAMS held meetings with the State Department, USAID, and Congressional offices to discuss the dire impact of vaccine shortages in the COVID-19 response.



## EU Advocacy

In 2021, SAMS continued to expand its relationships with the EU and its Member States. SAMS undertook extensive advocacy efforts in Brussels and national capitals in support of increased support for the COVID-19 response, humanitarian assistance, accountability for attacks on health, and protection of refugees and vulnerable populations. Throughout the year, SAMS engaged with the governments of Ireland, Norway, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and Malta.

Many of this year's advocacy efforts before the EU focused on responding to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. SAMS held high-level meetings with senior officials in key capitals to advocate for donating more vaccines to Syria, additional medicine, and funding for specialized health facilities. As a result of these efforts, the government of France sent a large donation of medical supplies to SAMS facilities in NW Syria, and Italy made a large donation of vaccines to the COVAX mechanism for distribution in Syria.

As part of SAMS ongoing commitment to pursuing justice and accountability for attacks on health and violations of international humanitarian law, extensive briefings were held with officials in key capitals and included the participation of humanitarian workers from inside Syria. This provided

donors and policymakers with the opportunity to hear directly from the victims of such attacks.

During the Fifth Brussels Conference for Syria, SAMS hosted a virtual side-event focused on “Rethinking the Provision of Health Services in NW Syria after ten years of Crisis.” Dr. Mufaddal Hamadeh, SAMS President, and Dr. Mazen Kewara, SAMS Turkey Country Director, delivered presentations focused on the need for donors to prioritize support for chronic illnesses and capacity-building. Several SAMS staff from inside Syria also participated and provided a detailed overview of the current humanitarian needs, as well as the ongoing challenges faced by health workers. SAMS also participated in a side event organized by the Syrian Civil Society Networks Platform titled “Why Durable Solutions Inside Syria Remain Untenable after a Decade of Conflict.” During this event, Dima Marawi, SAMS Advocacy Officer, gave a presentation on MHPSS, arguing that there is a need for more comprehensive services to be available to the population in NW Syria.



## Regional Advocacy

In Lebanon, SAMS is a member of the Lebanon Humanitarian INGO Forum (LHIF), and works with OCHA and UNHCR on increased protection and humanitarian assistance for Syrian refugees. SAMS also worked with local Lebanese NGOs to serve both refugees and local Lebanese.

In Jordan, SAMS is a member of the Jordan INGO Forum (JIF) and Syria International NGO Forum (SIRF), where we contribute to collective NGO efforts to provide high-quality research, fact sheets, and humanitarian needs assessment to policy makers and donors. We also work closely with UNHCR to advocate for increased support for Syrian refugees in Jordan, and we partner with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation on humanitarian work in the country.

In Turkey, SAMS is a member of the Northwest Syria NGO Forum and the Syrian NGO Alliance (SNA). SAMS also actively participates in the UN OCHA-led humanitarian cluster coordination mechanism and provides input and policy recommendations thanks to its membership in the Health Cluster, Protection Cluster, Humanitarian Liaison Group (HLG), and the advisory board of the cross-border humanitarian fund (HF).

SAMS advocacy in 2021 focused heavily on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. SAMS advocated for humanitarian access for health personnel and medical supplies policy, provided recommendations for COVID-19 testing and case management, and prepared assessments to import oxygen to Syria. SAMS also advocated for more integration of specialized health services and improved referral mechanisms across the borders.

SAMS also collaborated and shared information with accountability mechanisms to support the goal of ending impunity for attacks on health, including the Commission of inquiry (CoI) and the International Independent and Impartial mechanism (IIIM) for International Humanitarian Law Violations in Syria.

# SAMS Community Efforts

## Board Members

SAMS Community Outreach (SCO) empowers SAMS members across the United States to engage with individuals and communities who face socioeconomic barriers to receiving adequate health-care. SCO's flagship project is SAMS Midwest Free Specialty Clinic. Located in Willowbrook, IL, the clinic provides free subspecialty services in cardiology, pulmonology, endocrinology, and gynecology services for low-income individuals. In 2021, SAMS Midwest Free Specialty Clinic provided 95 free consultations for 53 patients.

The clinic is run entirely by SAMS Member volunteers, including seven physicians, two administrators, and dozens of medical and health professions students. In 2021, the clinic entered its third year of operations. SAMS is proud of our Members' commitment to the health and wellbeing of their communities and looks forward to continuing to design impactful community health programs in the US.

## Conferences and Events

After nearly two years of being unable to hold in-person events due to the COVID-19 pandemic, SAMS organized two major conferences: SAMS 2nd International Symposium in Trabzon, Turkey, and SAMS 10th National Conference in Chicago, IL.

In Turkey, the one-day symposium focused on the theme of "COVID-19 Pandemic: Lessons Learned Moving Forward" and brought together over 100 physicians, allied health professionals, trainees, and SAMS staff and Board Members. The symposium held a fundraising gala, attended by nearly 200 SAMS Members, honored guests, sponsors, and staff.

In Chicago, SAMS 10th National Conference was held over Labor Day Weekend. The conference themed "Global Challenges and Breakthroughs in Healthcare Delivery and Disparities Through the Pandemic" was attended by over 100 medical professionals, humanitarians, and SAMS staff. The keynote lecture was delivered by Dr. Safwan Halabi, who discussed developments in artificial intelligence in medicine and their multiple impacts on healthcare disparities. SAMS was especially thankful for the support and attendance of honored guests, including messages from the Chicago Mayor's Office, Administrator of USAID Samantha Power, US House Representative Marie Newman, and many more.



## Speaking Engagements

SAMS Members also contributed immensely to advancing SAMS humanitarian mission by presenting SAMS' work in academic conferences and media. In February, SAMS volunteer medical missions leader Dr. Hend Azhary presented on SAMS Jordan Missions at the Friends of David Nott Foundation Society (FDNF) conference, a virtual event organized at Manchester University in the UK. Dr. Bachir Tajaldin, Senior Programs Manager in SAMS Turkey office, also presented on SAMS response to COVID-19 in Northwest Syria. Additionally, in late 2021, SAMS Former Chairman Dr. Maher Azzouz participated in a webinar series by the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Dr. Azzouz shared SAMS experience as a diaspora organization and how its members have a unique position and opportunity to organize culturally appropriate, impactful humanitarian assistance in their countries of origin and others.

SAMS Mental Health Specialist Dr. Dana Townsend represented SAMS at the Global Forum on Humanitarian Health Research, hosted by the National Institutes of Health and the UK Medical Research Council. Dr. Townsend shared SAMS' experiences developing the telepsychiatry program in Idlib and working to strengthen mental health capacity in Northwest Syria. The presentation also focused on the challenges of resource management in humanitarian contexts and the importance of designing operational research that is focused and actionable.

## Medical Research and Scientific Publication

SAMS' Research Committee Members represented SAMS at various national and international meetings focusing on research on healthcare in conflict and new advancements in global health spheres. They published on different aspects of healthcare in the context of the Syrian conflict with a focus on advocacy in academic venues such as the Lancet Global Health, British Medical Journal, SAMS own journal, the Avicenna Journal of Medicine and Conflict, and Health.

SAMS also continued to analyze routinely collected data in close collaboration with the teams in the region and to support talented Syrian researchers to develop their skills and present their work at international events. Examples of research activities are analyzing the data on more than 77,000 deliveries in SAMS facilities in northwest Syria and examining trends of C-sections and under-age pregnancies, the analysis of over 5 million consultations in SAMS projects that showed 24% were of respiratory presentations, highlighting the importance of adequate preparation for the management of this category of illnesses to decrease their morbidities and mortality, and a retrospective review of specialist referrals for refugees into Greece's health system. Findings from selected research studies were presented at academic events like the European Public Health Association, the Consortium of Universities in Public Health, and MSF Scientific Days.

SAMS continued to promote excellence in medicine by supporting the Avicenna Journal of Medicine in 2021. This journal is an open access, peer-reviewed online medical journal with an editorial board of 30 international members that publishes 4 issues annually.

## Members Engagement

The Syrian American Medical Society is a member-driven professional organization of healthcare providers of Syrian descent and their colleagues who share similar goals of advancing medical education and dignified healthcare in the US and beyond.

Members contributed to enhancing the quality of care and capacity building at SAMS facilities in Syria through SAMS specialized committees provision of peer-to-peer consultation, clinical guidelines and best practices, online lectures, interactive webinars and educational courses. This engagement helped establish the oncology and pathology programs, advance neonatal critical care, manage patients with chronic kidney failure or kidney transplant, and conduct Tele-psych sessions for beneficiaries in Idlib. It also advanced the quality of dental services in SAMS primary care clinics, sharing up-to-date information on best practices in COVID-19 case management and starting the planning of interventional cardiac services.



Members are a great support to planning SAMS internal medical missions in neighboring countries with SAMS country teams. They help identify the medical needs of the refugees, recruit skilled local volunteers, and ensure adequate financial resources are available. Another valuable input is establishing patient selection criteria, proper screening and follow-up procedures, and building relationships with local health clinics so mission services complement their services to the beneficiaries and the host communities.

Selecting specialized medical staff in specialized projects and facilities falls mainly on the members. They offer support by drafting job descriptions, establishing required credentials and conducting online interviews of candidates in similar fields of medicine alongside the country team representative.

Many members conduct field visits to SAMS' projects and facilities in the region and inside Syria to help assess the need in the camps and urban areas, evaluate the level and quality of care, and witness the results of targeting healthcare facilities and rehabilitation work.

Member support for the medical students and new graduates is immense. They help them identify different career pathways, learn the residency application process and interview skills, and provide mentorship on research projects. Furthermore, member representation of SAMS in media engagements and academic conferences are of great value as they share SAMS' experiences and accomplishments at diaspora, NGO and international meetings.

# SAMS IN THE NEWS

Syrian refugees forgotten as attention shifts to new conflicts, expert says



Here's What New Gutter Guards Should Cost You.

EUROPE

Seeing parallels, doctors apply lessons from Syria to their work in Ukraine

September 4, 2022 · 5:17 PM ET

Heard on All Things Considered

TIM MAK

3-Minute Listen

WSJ | OPINION

Home World U.S. Politics Economy Business Tech Markets **Opinion** Books & Arts Real Estate Life & Work Style Sports

servicenow

OPINION | COMMENTARY

*Treating Ukraine's Wounded Civilians, I Saw Horror and Hope*

The injuries they suffered in Kharkiv brought back memories of my experience as a volunteer in Syria.

# LEADERSHIP

Foundation Board of Directors (As of January 1st, 2022)

- Dr. Basel Termanini (Chair)
- Dr. Ammar Ghanem (Vice Chair)
- Dr. Samer Al-Khudari (Treasurer)
- Dr. Abdulfatah Elshaar (Secretary)
- Dr. Maher Azzouz (Former Chair)
- Dr. Jihad Alharash
- Dr. Amjad Rass
- Dr. Wareef Kabbani
- Mr. Ismail Aajoukah

Society Board of Directors (As of January 1st, 2022)

- Dr. Amjad Rass (President)
- Dr. Ihsan Mamoun (Vice President)
- Dr. Samer Al-Khudari (Treasurer)
- Dr. Hala Nas (Secretary)
- Dr. Mufaddal Hamadeh (Former President)
- Dr. Hend Azhary
- Dr. Wareef Kabbani

Senior Staff

- David Lillie, Executive Director
- Dr. Randa Loutfi, Director of Programs
- Safaa Aladham, Director of Finance



# SAMS

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sams\_usa



Syrian American Medical Society



Syrian American Medical Society-SAMS

[www.sams-usa.net](http://www.sams-usa.net)

**SYRIAN AMERICAN MEDICAL SOCIETY FOUNDATION UNITED KINGDOM**

England & Wales - Charity number 1185540

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# Accounts

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# SAMS

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

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# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND FOUNDATION CHAIR

Dear Supporters,

This past year was undoubtedly the most challenging for healthcare workers around the globe in their fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, yet it brought us together in ways we couldn't even imagine and showed us the best of humanity.

We, at SAMS, tackled this unprecedented crisis head-on and got to expand our operations to relieve the suffering of vulnerable populations in Syria and beyond, all while supporting and sending aid to countries struggling to cope with an influx of COVID-19 cases.

Like many humanitarian organizations around the world, SAMS launched a global COVID-19 response, procuring personal protective equipment (PPE) for hospitals, establishing four COVID-19 centers in northern Syria, and conducting ongoing training for medical staff abroad to help curtail the spread of the coronavirus.

We admit that it wasn't easy. But in many ways, we are very fortunate to have an extensive network of members across the United States who have gone beyond the call of duty to help save lives here at home, as well as in Syria and beyond. In 2020, SAMS provided nearly 2 million services, including mental health and psychosocial support, while also responding to the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States, Syria, neighbouring countries, and beyond.

The global health crisis wasn't the only challenge we faced in 2020. Systematic attacks on healthcare continued with impunity. Massive waves of civilian displacement have plunged millions of internally displaced persons into an even more dire situation amid COVID-19 and a worsening economic crisis. This includes a steep rise in hunger across the whole of Syria, with an estimated 6 million children going without food and 12.4 million people at risk of food insecurity. Despite these unfathomable and unprecedented challenges, SAMS has continued to expand its operations, increasing access to healthcare, along with other humanitarian necessities for those in need amid displacement, strife, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ten years of loss of life, displacement, and violence-- a stark reminder of the failure of the international community to intervene and put an end to the worst humanitarian crisis of our time, but also, a testimony to the enduring bravery and selflessness of medical workers in Syria.

We continue to advocate wholeheartedly for unfettered humanitarian access and the renewal of border crossings that have become a lifeline for the millions of vulnerable people in northwest Syria. We continue to address mental health and trauma for those who have been impacted by the conflict and feel they have been forgotten.

While we are proud of our resilience during one of the most difficult challenges our organization has faced in the past decade, we continue to remain focused on the organization itself as well, building capacity, restructuring its governance, and refreshing our infrastructure to support the growth of our services and meet the toughest international standards. This is all done to propel SAMS into the next phase, aligning with our vision to become one of the most impactful international relief organizations.

SAMS endurance and growth is a testimony to the adherence to our core values with the help of our donors and partners in the U.S. and across the world who continue to provide the most valuable guidance and support.

Again, we would like to thank all of our members, donors, volunteers, and staff who have always stood by our side as we continue to save lives and strengthen our shared altruism in the face of humanitarian crisis.

Sincerely,

**Dr. Mufaddal Hamadeh**  
SAMS President

**Dr. Maher Azzouz**  
SAMS Foundation Chair

## REBUILDING LIVES. RESTORING HEALTH.

The Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS) was founded in 1998 as a professional society to provide networking and educational opportunities to medical professionals of Syrian descent across the United States. The charitable arm of SAMS, SAMS Foundation, was launched in 2007. With the eruption of the conflict in Syria, SAMS Foundation has become one of the most active medical relief organizations working on the frontlines of crisis relief in Syria, neighboring countries, and beyond.

### OUR MISSION...

is dedicated to delivering life-saving services, revitalizing health systems during crisis, and promoting medical education via a network of humanitarians in Syria, the US, and beyond.

### OUR VISION...

is to strengthen the future of Syria's healthcare, delivering dignified medical relief where needed, fortified by a dedicated medical community.



## OUR CORE VALUES

### SERVING WITH COMPASSION

We serve those in need with compassion, kindness, and dignity, regardless of background or religious affiliations. Our purpose is to ensure that no one in need of medical care is left untreated in the face of crisis.

### ACTING NOW

We pursue excellence in care by acting promptly, effectively, and efficiently to respond to crises whether in Syria, in neighboring countries, in the US, or beyond.

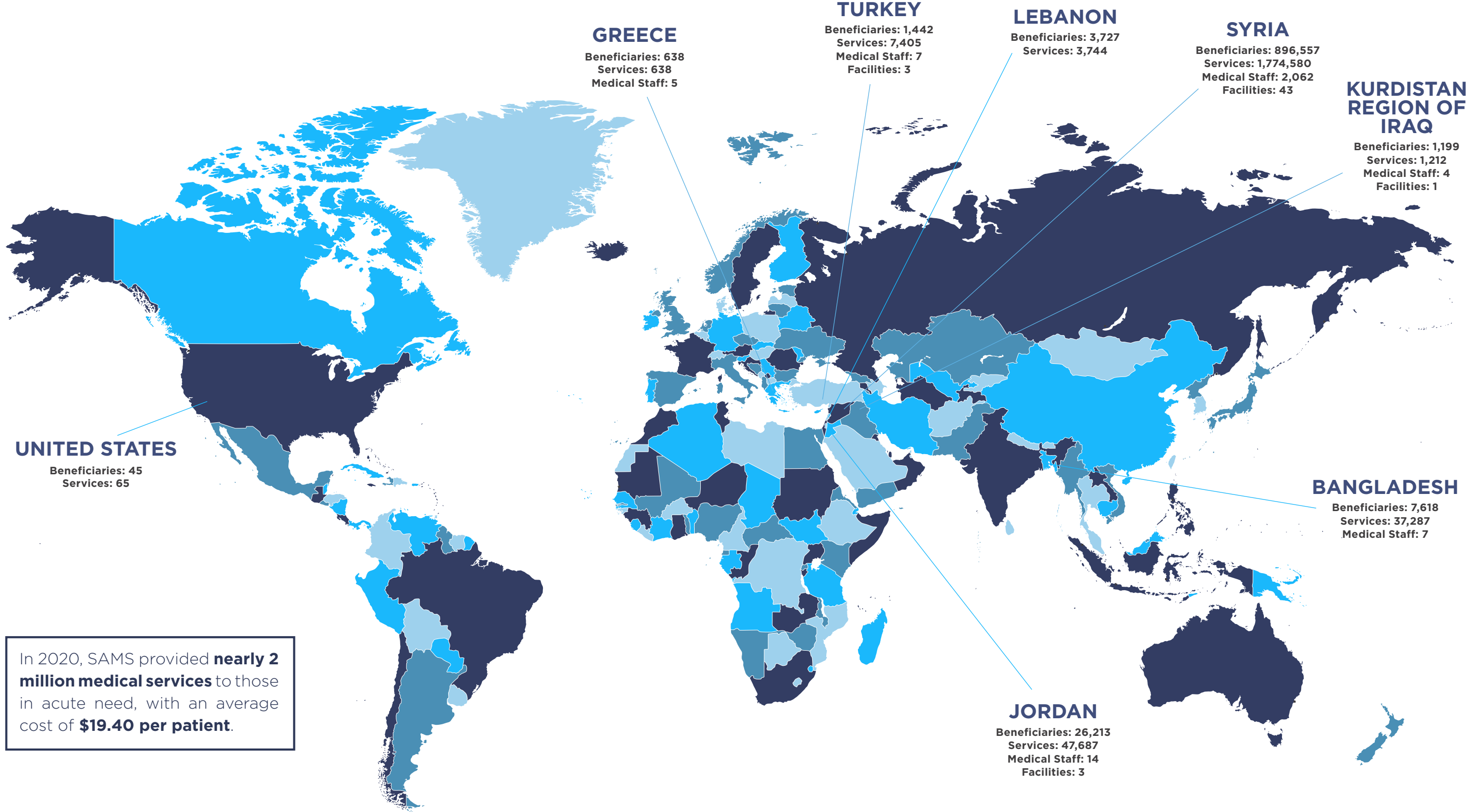
### LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS

We believe in the power of partnering with other like-minded organizations to support our cause and best serve populations in need. We leverage partnerships for sustainable and long-lasting impact to ensure that the most vulnerable are able to access dignified care.

### MOBILIZING

We face challenges head-on thanks to our extensive network of members and medical professionals in the U.S. and abroad. We work together to come up with innovative solutions to effectively deliver medical services to those caught in conflict, and to advocate in support of their needs before the international community.

# 2020 IMPACT AT A GLANCE



In 2020, SAMS provided **nearly 2 million medical services** to those in acute need, with an average cost of **\$19.40 per patient**.



**NEARLY 2 MIL**  
MEDICAL SERVICES



**NEARLY 1 MIL**  
BENEFICIARIES



**52,821**  
SURGERIES IN NW SYRIA



**50**  
FACILITIES



**2,099**  
MEDICAL WORKERS



**19,724**  
DELIVERIES IN NW SYRIA



**724**  
COVID-19 PATIENTS TREATED



# MEDICAL RELIEF WORK: SYRIA

In 2020, SAMS supported 43 healthcare facilities, including 16 fully-equipped hospitals in four Syrian governorates: Aleppo, Idlib, Ar Raqqa, and Al Hasakah.

**SAMS reached 896,557 unique beneficiaries in northwest Syria in 2020, providing a total of 1,774,580 medical services** - including 1,242,781 consultations, 19,724 deliveries, 52,821 surgical procedures, 8,376 dialysis sessions, and 1,178 cancer treatments - and employing 2,062 medical workers.

In 2020, SAMS expanded its operations in Syria to two new governorates (Ar Raqqa and Al Hasakah). In Ar Raqqa, SAMS launched a new medical facility in Ein Issa sub-district in the Ar-Raqqa governorate, providing primary and reproductive health care services to the targeted population, many of whom are internally displaced persons (IDPs). The center provides a range of services, including general health consultations for communicable and non-communicable diseases, reproductive health (including antenatal care, postnatal care, and family planning), pediatrics, and dental services. In Al Hasakah, SAMS launched a new healthcare facility in Ras Al-Ain, Makhtalah, providing primary and reproductive healthcare services to a population of about 10,000 people that previously did not have access to care.

With the support of WWE Superstar Sami Zayn in June 2020, SAMS launched a new Sami For Syria mobile medical clinic, a specially modified vehicle, fully equipped with examination rooms and medical equipment, and staffed by medical personnel and a pharmacy assistant. Sami's mobile clinic is traveling to several internal displacement camps per week to ensure displaced individuals in northwest Syria receive regular, consistent access to basic medical care and essential medications. Furthermore, through the implementation of partners on the ground, SAMS supported a total of 19 Women and Girls

Safe Space (WGSS) centers, and 10 vaccination centers as part of the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI). SAMS continued its efforts to uphold the human rights of one of the most marginalized segments of the population in Syria by spotlighting the status of victims of torture and detainees. This project was launched in 2020 and will continue through 2021 as SAMS and partners continue to mobilize their efforts into documenting violations of international humanitarian law and human rights. Additional milestones in 2020 include:

- 23 SAMS facilities provided psychosocial support activities to patients
- 10 SAMS facilities provided nutrition activities
- 19 facilities were integrated with gender-based violence awareness (GBV) activities
- 10 facilities implemented noncommunicable diseases (NCD) protocols
- 24.8% of deliveries provided were C-sections, with about 5% improvement from the previous year.

## Cancer Treatment

In 2020, SAMS continued to support the oncology center at Idlib Central Hospital and launched a new oncology center in Al Bab. These two centers are the only facilities in northwest Syria that provide treatment free of charge for colon cancer, Hodgkin and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, pediatric leukemia, and breast cancer. **In 2020, SAMS provided vital care to 5,814 cancer patients who otherwise wouldn't have access to these life-saving services.**

## Pathology Services

In November 2020, SAMS established a specialized type of testing at the pathology department in Al-Rai Hospital. This testing is essential for advanced diagnosis of cancer subtypes and planning proper therapy.





This center is the only one of its kind in northwest Syria, providing free pathology services to communities in need. In less than two months, the pathology department achieved immunohistochemical (IHC) stains for 93 cases, including 29 males and 64 females, with the patient age averaging 45 years old.

## SAMS Emergency and Winterization Response

In 2020, SAMS continued to support mobile medical clinics in northwest Syria to ensure that dignified, quality care was delivered to those most in need. Our mobile clinics fall under the SAMS emergency response campaign which strives to meet growing medical needs of IDPs in northwest Syria who struggle to access basic healthcare. Each mobile clinic consisted of a general physician, a nurse, a midwife, a pharmacist, and a member of our health community team. **In 2020, these mobile clinics provided 76,152 services to IDPs living in ill-equipped camps and informal settlements across the Turkish border.**

In an attempt to reach the most vulnerable during the winter season, SAMS partnered with local organizations to deliver winterization kits and humanitarian aid to IDPs. This included heating fuel, blankets, hygiene kits, and heaters. The first batch of winterization kits reached 2,000 IDPs in Al-Atareb and Al Dana sub-districts. The second batch of heaters and heating fuel was distributed to 170 vulnerable households living in informal settlements or unfinished buildings in Sarmada and Al-Dana.

In response to the unprecedented economic crisis across Syria, SAMS partnered with Ihsan Relief and Development to distribute one million loaves of bread to vulnerable civilians struggling to make ends meet. Through these efforts, SAMS reached a total of 3,391 households, equivalent to 16,575 individuals in Idlib and Aleppo.

As part of our ongoing efforts to support IDPs, SAMS provided 154 shelter units to vulnerable displaced households in Azaz. These shelter units were completed by mid-2020 and occupied by displaced families shortly thereafter.

## Medical Education and Training

As part of our ongoing efforts to support the already-fragile healthcare system in Syria, SAMS continued to support the professional development of healthcare workers through the sponsorship of midwifery and nursing schools in northwest Syria. SAMS also conducted training and workshops for medical workers on the ground.

In 2020, 24 students graduated from both midwifery institutes in Termanin and Idlib after completing their third phase of the 18-month program designed for certified nurses to become midwives. SAMS' ongoing support for the two-year nursing program at the Termanin Nursing School in Idlib continued in 2020, with 39 students in both their first and second year and 23 newly enrolled students. In 2020, 16 students successfully graduated from this program.

Additionally, as part of SAMS' strategic goal to increase the capacity for reproductive health care professionals in northwest Syria, SAMS launched the Midwives Fellowship Program, employing 33 midwives who graduated from SAMS' midwifery schools in 2019. As part of this program, these midwives underwent thorough, hands-on training at SAMS health facilities in northwest Syria to ensure the quality of services.

For medical students whose education was interrupted due to the crisis, SAMS launched the Resident Doctors Program in 2020 to provide financial support and training to medical residents to begin or resume their specialties. In 2020, SAMS supported 20 medical residents in 12 specializations within 11 hospitals. The specializations included OB/GYN, ENT, ophthalmology, vascular surgery, general surgery, orthopedics, pediatrics, gastroenterology, internal medicine, pulmonology, neurology, and cardiology. Moreover, during the course of this program, SAMS continued to supervise the quality of implementation through the provision of both technical and scientific consultancies. This was overseen by both the SAMS advisory and technical committees in Turkey and abroad.

# JORDAN

In 2020, the Jordan team continued to implement a range of services to support vulnerable, displaced populations, as well as underserved host communities who struggled to access the much-needed care amid the COVID-19 pandemic and displacement. **In Jordan, SAMS reached 26,213 unique beneficiaries in 2020, providing 47,687 medical and MHPSS services.**

## Mental Health & Psychosocial Support

With generous support from the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Near-Eastern Affairs' START Program and the Schooner Foundation, SAMS led mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) programs, youth empowerment, and gender-based violence (GBV) outreach and awareness activities in Amman and Irbid in 2020. These activities were designed to encourage positive coping mechanisms among youths and their families, especially among displaced communities. Amid recurring lockdowns due to the pandemic, SAMS was able to adapt its MHPSS and GBV programming to minimize disruption through remote implementation modalities, in addition to other COVID-19 mitigation measures. This was particularly significant because many MHPSS and GBV concerns have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

## In-Home & Remote Assessment

Prior to the announcement of the pandemic by the WHO in March 2020, the MHPSS team in Jordan conducted in-home assessments in three locations (Irbid, Amman, and Al-Zaatari Refugee Camp). Due to the advent of the pandemic, the team began conducting these assessments remotely. During these outreach efforts, our team identified a number of mental health issues experienced by our beneficiaries, including

stress, anxiety, sleep disorders, depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), and bedwetting in children. Our MHPSS team devised treatment plans and referrals for each of the patients following needs assessments.

## Individual Therapy and Medication Management

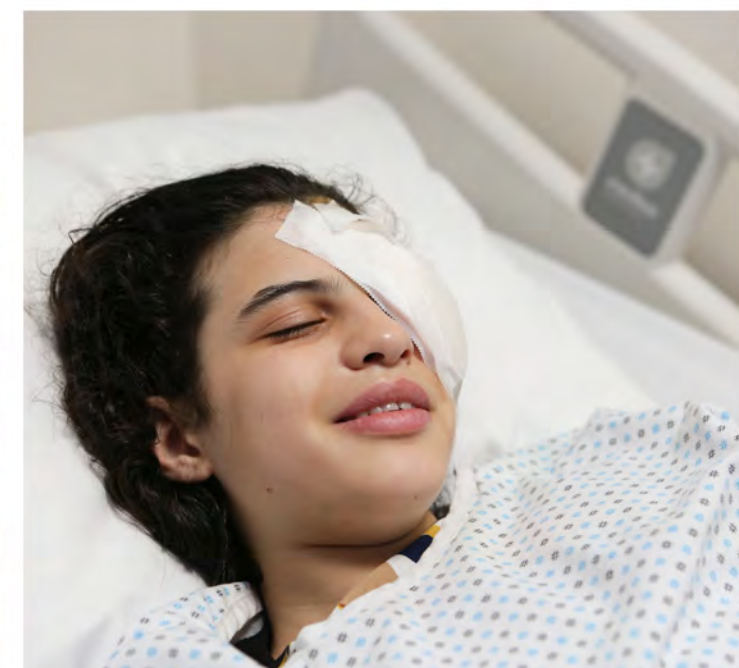
Individual therapy sessions were conducted in Irbid and Amman for patients experiencing moderate and severe psychological disorders, such as depression, PTSD, and anxiety. The length of treatment varied depending on the complexity of the patient's needs from eight sessions per week to several months of ongoing care. The cases were identified based on previous in-home visits, followed by beneficiary assessments, case management, and referrals.

## Group Support Therapy

Group support therapy sessions were designed to target displaced youth and their family members in order to provide a community-based support network for those who may otherwise feel isolated in the face of negative experiences. These sessions included cognitive-behavioral techniques to enable mothers to support and communicate effectively with their children. This program treated memory disorders among adults and aggression, anti-violence, anxiety and depression among children and adolescents. They also taught coping strategies for children and child protection and safety.

## Psychoeducation Workshops

The MHPSS team in Jordan provided psychoeducation workshops in cooperation with local community-based organizations to beneficiaries from a range of different age groups. Topics were chosen based on the beneficiaries' needs, including stress, sleep disorders, and emotional and thought management. Participants were able to access these psychoeducation workshops through referrals from SAMS' in-home assessments and local partners. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these workshops were held remotely.



## Gender-Based Violence Awareness

Through multiple workshops that were convened at local community centers, SAMS conducted a number of GBV awareness sessions throughout the year. These workshops were led by SAMS' certified social workers and psychiatrists to support survivors by providing coping mechanisms and tools.

In addition, these workshops were designed to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, establishing self-sustaining support networks for women and adolescent girls in Jordan who had been subjected to exploitation amid displacement and difficult circumstances surrounding the conflict. Due to COVID-19, these workshops were conducted remotely and included various topics, such as cyber violence, violence against women and teenagers, sexual abuse, and postpartum depression. SAMS partnered with both Al-Yarmouk University and Jordan University to participate in the UN's 16 Days of Activism campaign to raise awareness about GBV, the different types of violence, the psychological impact of conflict, and how to address GBV cases.

## Peer-to-Peer Project

The Peer-to-Peer project was designed to engage adolescents and help them become peer educators. SAMS MHPSS teams in Irbid and Amman conducted interviews with a large group of adolescents in order to select participants for the training of trainers (ToT) program. The team used a set of criteria to select the right candidates. In total, 28 volunteers, including 11 Syrians and 17 Jordanians, participated in intensive training on effective communication skills, public speaking, conflict management, stress management, and preventing violence against women and teenagers. Once the training was completed, volunteers were split into groups to provide additional hands-on training. These sessions were also held remotely and in-person under strict guidelines due to the pandemic.



## Capacity Building Training for Ministry of Health

The SAMS MHPSS team conducted a four-day training for the Jordanian Ministry of Health focusing on Psychological First Aid (PFA) for those affected by crises. The dignity and cultural sensitivity of patients was taken into careful consideration for this training.

## Medical Center in Al-Zaatari Camp

Throughout 2020, SAMS continued to operate a medical center in Al-Zaatari Refugee Camp, home to nearly 80,000 Syrian refugees. The center provides general medicine, emergency, lab and radiology services, dental, family planning, vaccinations, and medications. **In total, SAMS provided 24,087 services to 6,780 Syrian refugee patients residing in the camp throughout 2020.**

In March 2020, following the stay-at-home order nationwide, the medical center remained open under strict guidelines as part of the camp's health system response to the pandemic, mainly providing emergency, radiology, and lab services. To respond to the growing needs, the facility operated 24/7, implemented triage and screening protocols, and established a patient hotline. The pharmacy also remained open for operation.

In Al-Zaatari, SAMS continued to support a 13-year-old thalassemia patient with blood transfusions and medications.

## Medical Missions

In January 2020, SAMS conducted a 10-day medical mission to Jordan in which all services were provided free of charge. Fifty-four medical and non-medical volunteers from around the world came together to serve Syrian refugees and underserved locals. During the mission, volunteers provided a range of services, including neurology, dental, oncology, dermatology, cardiology, ophthalmology, pediatrics, nephrology, endocrinology, orthopedic, internal

medicine, and pulmonology. In total, SAMS Volunteers served 3,623 beneficiaries who otherwise wouldn't have access to much-needed, life-saving care.

Due to the pandemic, SAMS' missions to the region were halted. As a result, SAMS partnered with local medical professionals and partners to support those in most need in order to ensure that displaced populations in Jordan continued to receive care, especially in terms of secondary and tertiary healthcare provision. Through these partnerships, SAMS provided cataract and urology surgeries. Treatment and follow-up services for diabetic retinopathy were also provided for patients every three months by administering Avastin injections and performing laser surgeries.

SAMS also organized free clinics for adults with chronic diseases and dispensed proper NCD medications. Beneficiaries were referred to SAMS by UNHCR and other relief organizations. These missions were possible thanks to cooperation with the Ministry of Social Development and other charitable organizations. In 2020, SAMS supported 37 patients who underwent kidney transplants and needed medications.

**“ I am so grateful for SAMS for helping my son to be able to hear again. If it weren't for the support we get from SAMS, I wouldn't be able to afford his treatment. ”**

*- A Beneficiary's Parent in Jordan*

## Medical Residency Project

In 2020, SAMS continued to support three Syrian medical residents at the Islamic Hospital and one resident at the Jordan Hospital as part of our ongoing efforts to support Syrian medical graduates whose education was interrupted due to the conflict in Syria. One of the resident physicians, an internist, finalized his residency in 2020 at the Islamic Hospital.



# TURKEY

In 2020, SAMS supported 1,442 beneficiaries in Turkey, providing 7,405 medical and MHPSS services. SAMS supported three centers, a MHPSS center in Gaziantep, an autism center in Istanbul, and a youth center in Reyhanli.

## Mental Health & Psychosocial Support

Throughout 2020, SAMS continued to operate the MHPSS Center in Gaziantep, providing individual and group counseling sessions, group activities, and workshops to vulnerable displaced Syrians who endured various traumatic experiences caused by conflict, including displacement, lack of essential resources, and desperate living conditions. The center is supported by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM).

SAMS also provided specialized behavioral support services to Syrian refugee children living in Istanbul suffering from autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The program served a total of 52 children, providing development and learning sessions tailored specifically to meet their needs. When the sessions started, there were only 20 children enrolled; the number of students was more than doubled with our support.

Depending on their learning plan, these sessions included developing expressive speech, self-care, play, gross motor skills, fine motor skills such as drawing and coloring, literacy, and imitation as well as other social skills. The program also included group sessions for caregivers (which were awareness sessions focused on self-care and issues relevant to children with ASD).

## Migrant Health Clinics Support

In addition, SAMS procured and distributed essential medical equipment and supplies to the Directorates of Health in southern Turkey for their Migrant Health Centers, indirectly benefiting 152,300 Syrian refugees who frequent these centers every month.

In 2020, SAMS sponsored a community center in Reyhanli for Syrian youth to equip them with tools to better process trauma caused by conflict and displacement. The center held workshops based on the participants' interests and needs, including group studio workshops, a STEM virtual exchange program, psychoeducation workshops, group support activities, GBV awareness sessions, unstructured psychosocial activities, mentorship, and college preparedness sessions.

## Medical Scholarship Program

As part of our efforts to expand educational programs in Turkey, SAMS supported 28 Syrian medical students in continuation of our scholarship program. Recipients of these competitive awards were students who started their medical studies in accredited universities in Syria but were forced to halt their studies as a result of the ongoing crisis. In addition to academic achievements, these students participated in medical relief and humanitarian efforts in Idlib, Aleppo, East Ghouta, Dara'a, northern Homs, southern Damascus, and Daraya.



Between January 2016 and December 2020, 12 students completed their studies and obtained their bachelor's degree, seven of whom graduated in 2020. Twenty-three students are still receiving tuition support from SAMS.

## Healthcare Cluster Coordination

In Turkey, SAMS is an active member of the following clusters: Health, Nutrition, Protection and GBV, Mine Action sub-clusters, and Technical Working Groups. SAMS is also a leading member of the COVID-19 Task Force in Turkey, and the focal point for the case management pillar.

In addition, SAMS participates in the NGO Forum, Syri Crossborder Humanitarian Fund (SCHF) Advisory Board, and the Syrian NGOs Alliance. SAMS also coordinates regularly with the Turkish government, including the Turkish

Health Directorates and the Turkish Task Forces responsible for coordination in Afrin, Azaz, AlBab, Tell Abiad, and Ras Alain areas.

SAMS is in constant communication with key governmental and NGO stakeholders through the Health Sector Working Group, as well as the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Family Labor and Social Services, the Health Directorates, and different municipalities in Turkey.

**“ Before receiving help from SAMS, I was constantly worn out and my life was in disarray. I had no confidence in myself. I fixated on all the traumatic and negative events I experienced in Syria and it seemed like there was nothing I could do to change how I felt. I'm very grateful for your support. It's only made me more determined to try and get better.**

- Beneficiary, SAMS MHPSS Center in Gaziantep

# LEBANON

In 2020, SAMS continued to lead a number of medical relief programs in Lebanon, in addition to responding to the explosions that rocked Beirut on August 4, 2020, and the COVID-19 pandemic. **SAMS reached 3,727 unique beneficiaries in 2020, providing 3,744 medical services across Lebanon.**

## Support for Urgent Hospitalization

In 2020, SAMS launched a 12-month program to provide financial subsidies to displaced and underserved populations in Lebanon, who struggled to access specialized care due to the prohibitively high cost of treatment. This program was funded by the Lebanon Humanitarian Fund (LHF), in partnership with United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Under this program, SAMS provided financial support to Syrians and Lebanese under the age of 18 in need of urgent hospitalization. SAMS also continues to support Palestinian patients over the age of 60 and under the age of 18 in need of cardiovascular interventions.

**“It was fast and reliable; this is how I would describe my experience with SAMS. They are not only paying for Hisham’s medical bills, but they were also very cooperative. I am forever grateful for their support.**

*- Nabil, a Beneficiary’s Parent in Lebanon*

## Psychosocial Support

In 2020, with support from the Center for Disaster Philanthropy, SAMS continued its psychosocial support (PSS) programming in Lebanon.

## Helping Hands Program for Children

In 2020, SAMS continued the implementation of the Helping Hands program, our ongoing psychosocial support program in Lebanon designed for children between the ages of 5 to 12. This project aimed to introduce emotional management and help children acquire new skills such as problem-solving and coping mechanisms for social rejection. This project helped children learn how to express their feelings, share their thoughts in a safe environment, and connect with one another. The project’s facilitators provided beneficiaries with mechanisms to reconstruct negative thoughts into positive ones. These mechanisms helped guide beneficiaries to find concrete solutions for the problems that they were experiencing. **In 2020, 519 beneficiaries participated in this program.**

## STEP Program for Adolescents

In 2020, SAMS launched the STEP Program which is designed to increase awareness among adolescents between the age of 13 and 18. During these awareness sessions, beneficiaries discussed topics related to the physical, psychosocial, and traumatic experiences they had endured amid ongoing conflict and displacement. Additionally, these sessions raised issues related to chronic anxiety and depression.

This project helped adolescents to understand the changes that occurred during this pivotal phase in their young lives. The project also helped them find the necessary tools to deal with these changes and provided them with new adaptive skills and coping mechanisms. **In 2020, 98 adolescents participated in this newly-established STEP program.**





## Winterization Response

SAMS launched its annual winterization campaign in order to reach vulnerable displaced families and underserved Lebanese struggling to survive amid freezing temperatures. SAMS targeted displaced Syrian families residing in informal settlements in Al Marj in the Beka'a Valley, as well as vulnerable Lebanese families in Beirut who were affected by the explosions on August 4, 2020. SAMS' winterization support included the distribution of fuel specifically for families in the Beka'a Valley, blankets, rechargeable lights, diapers, sanitizers, feminine hygiene, and waterproof boots for children. **In total, 145 vulnerable individuals benefited from these efforts in 2020.**

## KURDISTAN REGION OF IRAQ

After years of conflict, financial collapse, and an influx of refugees and IDPs, medical infrastructure in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq has been placed under considerable pressure. As a result, SAMS continues to operate in the area to help alleviate suffering and support those in need access healthcare.

## Dental Project for Syrian Refugees in Dohuk

**In September 2020, SAMS launched dental services in Bardarash Refugee Camp for Syrian refugees, providing 1,212 services from September to December 2020.** As part of SAMS' efforts to improve access to quality care for displaced populations, SAMS established a robust monitoring system that consisted of daily needs assessment and an ongoing monitoring mechanism to ensure the quality of services provided. Additionally, SAMS distributed dental supplies for refugees, while providing ongoing awareness sessions about the importance of oral hygiene.



# GREECE

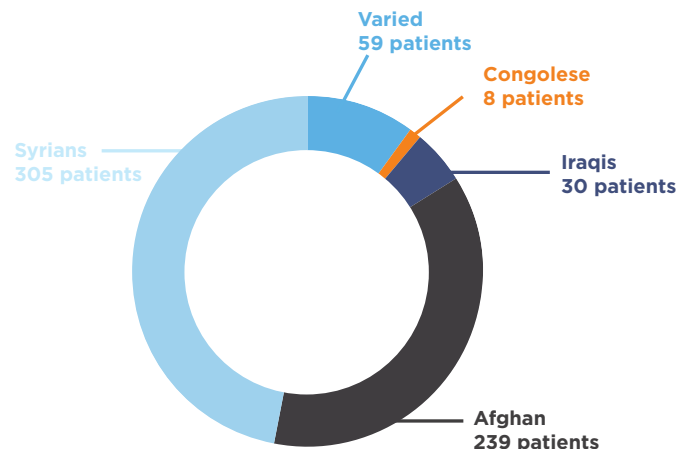
SAMS resumed its operations in Greece in October 2020. Thanks to a grant from the Center for Disaster Philanthropy, SAMS launched mobile clinics to support refugees and migrants in Greece providing a range of services, including routine vaccinations, primary healthcare, reproductive health, and pediatrics. These medical mobile units deployed a team of two pediatricians, an OB/GYN doctor, a midwife, a nurse, and Arabic and Farsi/ Dari interpreters.

SAMS operated one center in Metaxourgeio, Athens that provided pediatrics, OB/GYN, and reproductive health services. In addition, SAMS medical teams were deployed in five refugee camps (Schisto, Skaramagkas, Ritsona, Malakasa 1.0 and Elefsina), where access to care was limited or non-existent.

This project allowed SAMS to develop a presence at these sites and respond to the urgent medical needs of unaccompanied minors and pregnant women. The SAMS team in Greece, embodying medical professionals with abundant experience in the humanitarian field, identified the gaps and promptly responded to growing medical needs, liaising with both state and local actors in order to achieve the best possible outcome of delivering dignified medical care to those who need it most.

In partnership with the National Public Health Organization (EODY) and the Ministry of Migration & Asylum, SAMS operated in IOM accommodation centers for refugees and asylum-seekers to provide much-needed medical assistance to displaced families, single parents and single adults. SAMS also forged partnerships with active and local partners operating in camps, including Seeds of Humanity, IOM, Terre des Hommes, and Arsis NGO, while cooperating with all the other NGOs in the field.

In the first quarter of 2020, SAMS organized dental and ophthalmology missions to Greece that were halted due to the pandemic. **In total, SAMS provided services to 638 patients, including 279 pediatrics patients, 152 OB/GYN patients, 97 dental patients, 71 optometry patients, and 39 patients from November-December 2020.**



Patients included 305 (~47%) Syrians, 239 (~37%) Afghans, 30 (~5%) were Iraqis, 8 (~1%) Congolese, and the remaining 59 (~10%) were from a variety of other countries, including Pakistan, Bangladesh, Yemen, Palestine, Morocco, and Kuwait. Of these patients, 313 (~49%) were children.





# SAMS RESPONSE TO COVID-19

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) characterized COVID-19 as a global pandemic. SAMS was uniquely positioned to respond to this global health emergency through its extensive networks of healthcare providers in the United States, Syria, and neighboring countries. SAMS' immediate response to the crisis was led by a newly-established SAMS COVID-19 Advisory Group composed of SAMS Members who specialize in medical fields essential to the management of COVID-19 disease and its spread. As a result, the SAMS COVID-19 Advisory Group implemented the following measures:

- Improved surveillance, communication, and reporting among its facilities and project stakeholders;
- Conducted risk assessments to prioritize the location of response activities and identify the required resources needed;
- Contributed to community awareness campaigns about the virus and how to prevent its spread;
- Prepared training for medical and non-medical staff on prevention, detection, response, and treatment;
- Bolstered existing infection, prevention, and control (IPC) measures in SAMS facilities;
- Procured and distributed appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for frontline medical workers in Syria and beyond;
- Added triage areas and screening protocols within SAMS health facilities; and
- Established, operated and supervised inpatient COVID-19 units in northwest and northeast Syria.

## Syria COVID-19 Response

As part of SAMS' preparedness and response plan for COVID-19, SAMS established an internal

COVID-19 task force on 11 March, 2020 and became a part of the northwest Syria COVID-19 task force. In July 2020 with the emergence of the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Syria, SAMS established three isolation and specialized centers for the treatment and management of moderate to severe cases for patients with critical symptoms and underlying chronic conditions.

SAMS Hospital-Based Isolation Units (HBIUs) constituted 65% of case management capacity to receive critically ill COVID-19 patients in the area and provided almost 70% of the dedicated ventilator capacity. In collaboration with the team on the ground, SAMS Members conducted daily telemedicine consultations for COVID-19 patients in our three isolation facilities. This approach enhanced the capacity of the isolation hospital staff and improved the quality of services provided. SAMS was a key member of the COVID-19 Task Force and served as a focal point for the case management pillar while coordinating closely with the Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) unit.

SAMS designed and issued information, education, and communication (IEC) material which was distributed to each health facility, including distribution to community health workers and PSS teams to conduct ongoing awareness sessions and workshops to help mitigate the spread of the coronavirus. SAMS followed the COVID-19 Task Force recommendations to reduce the number of visits to health facilities and to avoid overcrowding by limiting its operations to only urgent and life-threatening cases.

SAMS healthcare facilities set up triage and observation tents outside the building; the staff were trained on triage questionnaires, case definition and IPC measures. The IPC core team underwent rigorous training for staff. SAMS coordinated closely with EWARN and other referral focal points to facilitate the diagnosis through testing conducted by the former.



SAMS participated in the development of all case management protocols, including triage, patient pathway protocol, and COVID-19 suspected cases and the admission criteria of confirmed patients. Additionally, SAMS conducted case management training for health staff working in all isolation hospitals, including online training sessions. **SAMS Members volunteered more than 51 hours of their time to provide 11 training sessions, reaching 774 participants.**

SAMS also implemented the recommended infection prevention and control (IPC) measures, developed the required standard operating procedure (SOP), participated in developing the IPC materials to train all healthcare workers, and distributed PPE to all of its healthcare facilities and SOPs to promote correct usage. In addition, SAMS formed IPC committees in each facility to provide technical support for implementing IPC measures.

SAMS participated in strengthening the surveillance system in coordination with EWARIN by training all SAMS staff and reporting SOPs. Additionally, SAMS dedicated five ambulances equipped with ventilators and 24-hour working staff to transfer suspected and confirmed COVID-19 cases.

In December 2020, SAMS launched a 6-month project, establishing a COVID-19 Center in Deir ez-Zor with 10 ICU beds and 30 hospital beds. The hospital served a population of nearly 1.4 million people.

**“ The medical workers at this hospital work like a beehive. I couldn’t help but marvel at the extensive care they provide to every patient all throughout the day. Thanks to their efforts, I’m now fully recovered. This has given hope to others who are still suffering from this dangerous disease.**

*- Amin, 44, COVID patient at Al-Amal Hospital*

## Jordan COVID-19 Response

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak in Jordan, SAMS:

- Provided financial support and medical supplies to both the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Health (MoH) to curtail the spread of the coronavirus;
- Launched a campaign to raise awareness and ensure that residents follow the MoH guidelines to prevent and contain the spread of COVID-19 in Al-Zaatari Refugee Camp;
- Established hotlines to respond to the needs of beneficiaries by providing ongoing virtual counseling and psychiatric services; and
- Organized a series of MHPSS webinars in Arabic offering useful tools and coping mechanisms to help individuals manage stress and anxiety during challenging and unprecedented times.

In addition, SAMS extended the hours of operations of SAMS Medical Center in Al-Zaatari Refugee Camp in order to respond to COVID-19 by taking the following actions:

- Created a new isolation room to examine patients with respiratory infection or suspected cases;
- Limited the services provided to avoid overcrowding and maintain social distancing precautions by only offering urgent care services;
- Raised awareness about COVID-19 and how to prevent its spread;
- Provided hand sanitizers and masks to patients; and
- Created a hotline to receive calls from patients regarding questions about the coronavirus, general medical consultations, and follow-ups.



The MHPSS team took several prevention measures as well, including:

- Modified training materials to fit remote settings;
- Started the implementation of awareness sessions remotely and according to patient's needs;
- Provided individual sessions remotely and the provision of psychological medication via home delivery; and
- Conducted webinar sessions to raise awareness of the psychological effects of the coronavirus and provide members of the community with mechanisms to cope with the spread of COVID-19.

**“ I’d like to express my sincere gratitude to SAMS. They helped me get back on my feet. Before joining, I was going through a lot of personal problems. If it weren’t for SAMS, I would have quit. I’ve become stronger and more resilient. SAMS was the beginning of the end.**

- Ammar Abu Azza, one of our Training of Trainers volunteers in Jordan





## Turkey COVID-19 Response

SAMS procured and delivered psychosocial support and hygiene kits to 766 households through a grant from PRM. These households were also receiving services at the SAMS MHPSS Center in Gaziantep. Moreover, SAMS prepared five Arabic TV episodes on COVID-19 awareness for social media, targeting refugee communities in Turkey to help raise awareness and mitigate the spread of the virus.

The episodes covered the following topics:

- COVID-19 prevention and mitigation;
- The immune system and fighting infectious diseases like COVID-19;
- The negative effects of obesity and inactivity, especially during quarantine;

- Pregnancy and COVID-19; and
- Integration of preventative measures into daily life.

SAMS also distributed over \$175,000 worth of medical and non-medical supplies, including PPE to 41 medical health centers in Gaziantep, Hatay, and Kilis to respond to growing needs reported by Health Directorates. These centers served mainly Syrian refugees.

SAMS partnered with Direct Relief to deliver hygiene and COVID-19 prevention kits, as well as psychosocial support kits to Syrian refugees and underserved local communities living in Gaziantep. In total, 2,204 hygiene kits and 4,408 PSS kits were distributed to Syrian refugees and underserved Turkish families.



## Lebanon COVID-19 Response

In Lebanon, SAMS implemented the following response to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Supported local hospitals across Lebanon that faced supply shortages due to the pandemic, an unprecedented economic crisis, and the Beirut blast;
- Supported frontline medical workers as they continued to cope with a steady surge in COVID-19 cases across the country in partnership with Heart to Heart International. In addition, SAMS distributed medical supplies, equipment, and PPE to more than 10 hospitals across the country;
- Raised awareness about the COVID-19 pandemic and how to help curtail its spread as the number of cases continued to increase while distributing masks and hand sanitizers to vulnerable civilians in neighborhoods across Beirut;
- Promoted awareness and prevention information sessions and distributed more than 4,000 masks and hand sanitizers from August 2020 until December 2020; and
- Distributed 370 hygiene boxes to displaced families in collaboration with Child International and local organizations. The hygiene kits contained household cleaners, personal and feminine hygiene products, hand sanitizers, and masks.

In light of the COVID-19 situation in Lebanon and during the stay-at-home order, SAMS launched a virtual project, entitled “Tamnouna Ankom” (In English: Let Us Know How You Are Coping), using phone and group video conferences to reach families in informal settlements in the Beka’a Valley.

The team checked on the physical and psychological well-being of these families during the lockdown nationwide and reinforced positive coping mechanisms, such as how to establish a daily routine, how to develop a positive outlook, and how to productively spend time with your children.



These virtual workshops created a safe space for refugees and members of the host community and helped provide coping tools during these difficult times. The Tamnouna Ankom project included the following sessions:

**COVID-19 Mitigation and Psychosocial Support for Refugees in the Beka'a Valley and Arsal:**

Funded by the Center for Disaster Philanthropy, SAMS launched a new program in September 2020 to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in refugee populations in eight informal and underserved settlements in the Beka'a Valley and one informal settlement in Arsal. This project's activities included:

- The provision of health education sessions to communities residing in these settlements including specific topics about COVID-19 symptoms and prevention measures;

- The provision of specialized psychosocial support; and
- The distribution of PPE.

The primary goal of this project was to deliver essential services to more than 1,500 refugees residing in the Beka'a Valley in light of the COVID-19 outbreak in Lebanon. These sessions were conducted by 14 peer-to-peer educators and specialized PSS team members.

**Psychological Support:**

SAMS conducted remote PSS workshops. These workshops aimed to identify psychological pressure, symptoms, and issues. Also, these workshops helped beneficiaries discover the extent of their condition and its impact on their day-to-day lives while offering new techniques to mitigate the effects of trauma.





## Bangladesh COVID-19 Response

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the already-strained health system in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar, home to millions of Rohingya refugees struggling to access care amid COVID-19 outbreaks, displacement, and movement restrictions. Recognizing the gap in health services, SAMS partnered with Relief International (RI) to launch the COVID-19 Preparation and Mitigation project in Cox's Bazar.

The program aimed to provide specialized medical care, including reproductive health and mental health for those residing in refugee camps by deploying a well-equipped mobile medical unit. This project played an important role in effectively supporting the underserved population in Cox's Bazar and reducing coronavirus-related morbidity and mortality rates by expanding access to quality, vital health services.

From July 2020 until its completion in December 2020, SAMS reached 7,618 patients, mainly displaced individuals in four communities (Dorgahbil, Patabari, Gucchogram, Lombaguna) through the mobile clinic unit, and community health workers providing COVID-19 awareness, education and emergency medical services. This filled the existing and growing gaps in healthcare provision among impoverished and overcrowded communities living in hard-to-reach areas. In order to enhance the community-based surveillance and monitoring mechanisms in refugee communities, the mobile clinic team introduced counseling and patient referrals in isolation facilities and trained 71 community health workers.

In total, SAMS and RI conducted 78,517 household visits and referred 48 people with COVID-19 symptoms to the RI Severe Acute Respiratory Infection Isolation and Treatment Center (SARI-ITC), reached 130 community beneficiaries that had other health-related issues who were then referred to specialized medical

centers, provided awareness-raising sessions to 59,543 community members, and delivered medical care to 14,838 patients through the mobile clinic unit.

## KRI COVID-19 Response

In November 2020, SAMS distributed PPE and other essential medical supplies to the Directorate of Health (DoH) in Dohuk to support the governorate's COVID-19 response to help support facilities and mitigate the spread of the coronavirus. **In total, SAMS provided 500 KN95 masks, 400 protective safety gown isolation bodysuits, 100 packs of latex gloves, 100 packs of surgical masks, and 600 face shields.**

Once SAMS distributed PPE to the DoH, it was then dispersed among three COVID-19 centers across Duhok that were struggling to cope with soaring COVID-19 cases and acute shortages of protective gear for medical staff. Through these efforts, SAMS served 1.4 million individuals in Duhok. This support was made possible thanks to the generosity of our partner organization Give to The World.





## The United States COVID-19 Response

When the pandemic started, SAMS Members across the United States stepped up to the plate in response to this global health crisis. Several members went beyond their call to action working on the frontlines of the coronavirus here at home to volunteer their time and skills to raise awareness about how to mitigate its spread. They also provided training and conducted webinars with their counterparts in Syria and neighboring countries.

In 2020, SAMS launched virtual medical rounds for physicians working at its COVID-19 facilities in northern Syria. Twelve US-based Syrian-American specialists among SAMS Members were available for daily virtual medical rounds with physicians in northwest and northeast Syria, with a multi-specialty team assigned to each facility.

Specialists developed clinical protocols for management of complex cases in limited-resource settings, including critical care pulmonologists, pediatric ICU specialists, internists, cardiologists, nephrologists, hematologists, and radiologists. A total of 415 virtual rounds were conducted over a 6-month period, with at least 50 physicians inside Syria. In addition to these virtual medical rounds, SAMS convened over 95 webinars on specialty subjects between March 2020 and February 2021, which totaled over 80 hours of high-quality educational content.

A total of 1,810 individuals attended these live webinars, with attendees spanning from 39 other countries. The recordings of these webinars

gathered another 140,167 views when shared on SAMS social media platforms.

**SAMS held a total of 85 COVID-19 webinars hosted in both English and Arabic with 103,596 views across social media platforms.**

From the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States, SAMS Community Outreach (SCO) has been committed to supporting frontline healthcare workers across the country. SCO identified health facilities in dire need of personal protective equipment and support for staff working under extreme conditions. SCO procured PPE for hospitals, provided meals for COVID and intensive care units staff, and awarded cash appreciation awards for nurses working in some of the hardest-hit hospitals. Several SAMS Members supported these efforts, many of whom had transitioned to providing care to COVID-19 patients in ICUs and COVID units.

From April to December 2020, SCO distributed 54,268 items of PPE, provided 5,530 meals for frontline healthcare workers, and gave appreciation awards to 315 COVID-19 and ICU nursing staff. Notably, SCO not only supported impacted urban centers, but also worked with multiple Native American tribes and communities in rural areas, experiencing chronically under-resourced health systems and severe COVID outbreaks.

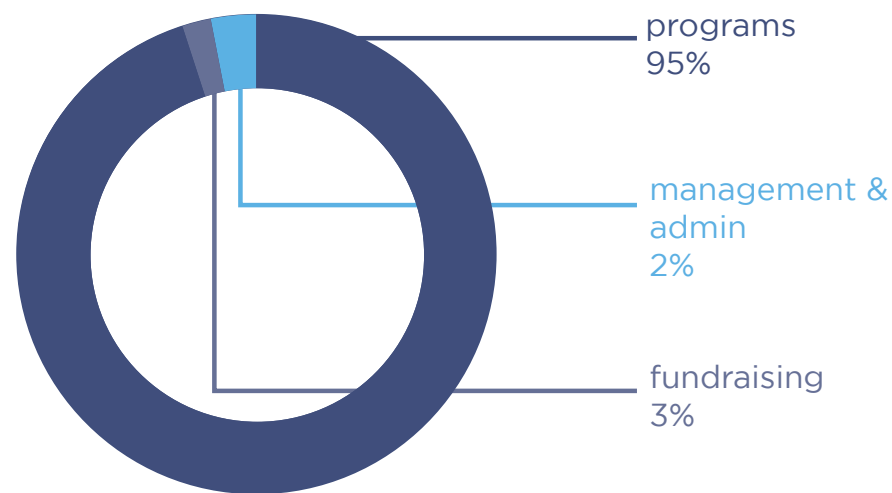
**In total, SCO supported 44 healthcare facilities in 18 cities and four Native American Reservations.**



# FINANCIAL REPORT

SUPPORT AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS		
	2019	2020
Contributions	\$7,844,969	\$7,348,466
Grants	\$22,083,941	\$30,594,621
Gifts in Kind	\$11,533,958	\$4,687,191
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$41,462,868</b>	<b>\$42,630,278</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
	<b>\$9,654,234</b>	<b>\$13,361,278</b>
EXPENSES		
	2019	2020
<b>Program Services</b>		
Medical Relief Program	\$37,961,408	\$36,807,189
<b>Supporting Services</b>		
Management and General	\$865,215	\$774,888
Fundraising	\$848,488	\$1,162,332
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$39,675,111</b>	<b>\$38,744,410</b>

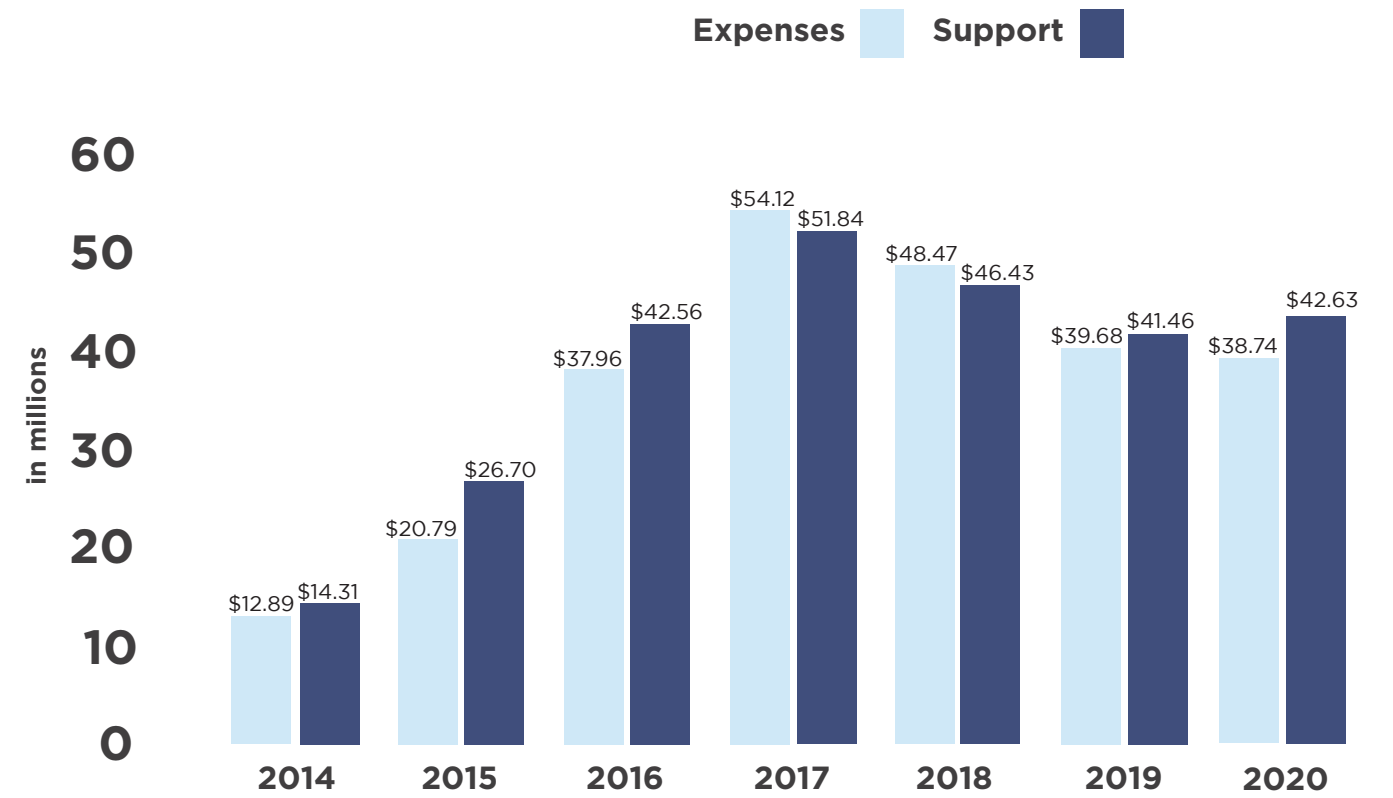
2020 DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENSES



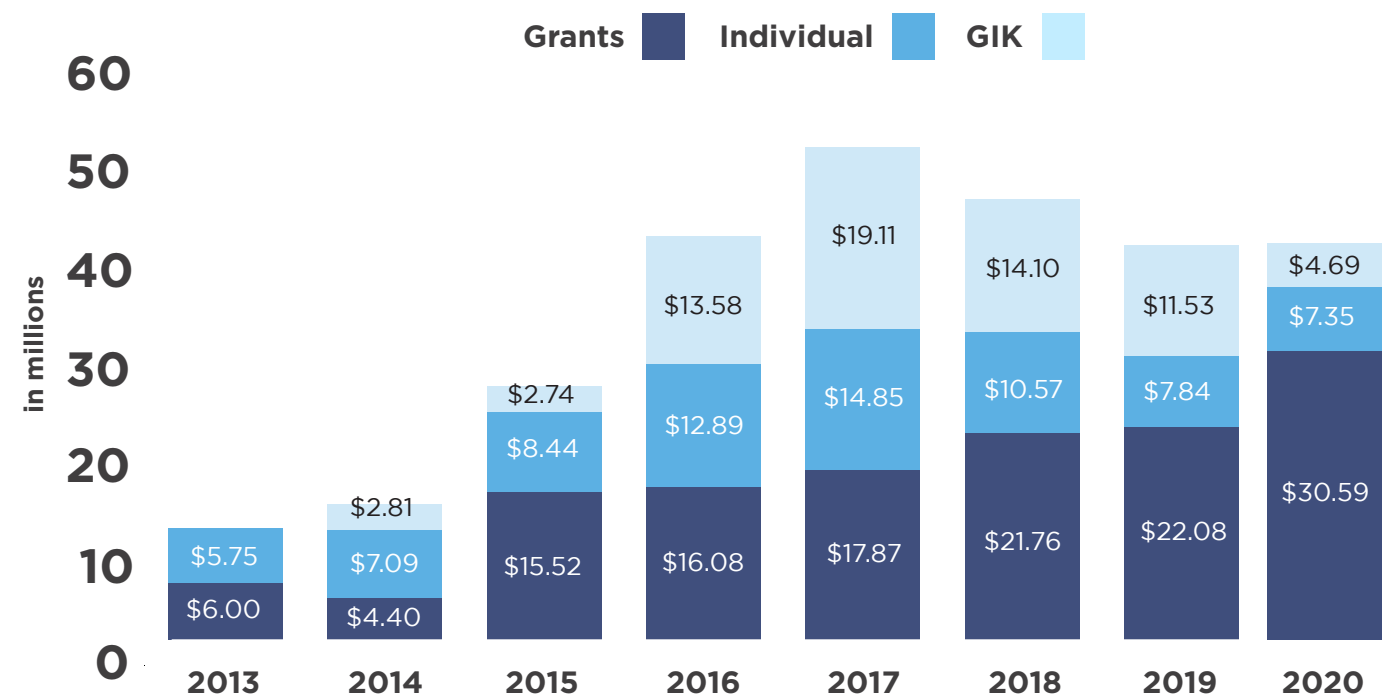
\* Numbers for FY 2020 are still preliminary.

## FINANCIALS OVER 7 YEARS

INCLUDING GIFTS IN KIND



## SOURCES OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT



# SAMS COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

Through its extensive network of members across the United States, SAMS Community Outreach (SCO) launched a number of projects in 2020, providing free medical care for individuals and communities in need. In an attempt to reduce barriers to healthcare, SAMS developed and utilized high-quality, culturally-appropriate, sustainable models of free healthcare.

## SAMS Midwest Free Specialty Clinic

Founded in April 2019 by members of the SAMS Midwest Chapter, the SAMS Midwest Free Specialty Clinic provides free outpatient subspecialty consultations, including cardiology, pulmonology, obstetrics, gynecology, and endocrinology, as well as medication management. Chronic disease screenings were also provided in the western suburbs of Chicago in DuPage County. The clinic is located within a local elementary school and shares space with a primary healthcare center, partnering to provide needed specialty and primary health care services to the community. Patients receive discounted prescriptions, free lab services and assistance through local partners. The clinic is staffed and managed entirely by volunteers, the majority of whom are members of the SAMS Midwest Chapter.

The clinic is a member of the National Association of Free and Charitable Clinics and the Illinois Association for Free and Charitable Clinics. It also partners with the Compassionate Care Network and other local charitable clinics for referrals to services not currently offered by the clinic.

In the first quarter of 2020, the clinic provided in-person services as part of its regular operations. With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, the clinic temporarily suspended in-person services and launched telehealth services for both existing and new patients, which allowed the continuity of care, including clinical consultations and

management of chronic diseases. This was the first time SAMS had conducted free telehealth services to beneficiaries in the United States. In coordination with local health authorities, SAMS re-opened the clinic for in-person consultations in August 2020, equipping medical staff with PPE, implementing social distancing, following CDC guidelines and other CDC-recommended coronavirus prevention measures.

In Q4, the clinic resumed in-person visits, increasing its capacity to provide specialized testing and care for diabetes patients and those at risk of developing the disease through a partnership with the Middle Eastern Pharmacist Association, a student pharmacist association at Midwestern University.

SAMS also responded to Hurricane Laura, providing direct cash assistance to 50 families to cover medications, medical supplies, and hygiene items in heavily impacted areas of East Texas and South Louisiana. We also provided 1,000 cloth masks to families impacted by the Hurricane.

## Education Committee

Through its network across the United States and beyond, SAMS Education Committee spearheads collaborative educational programs that seek to support Syrian medical professionals and students by providing opportunities to expand their knowledge and experiences.

SAMS Education Committee members are volunteers who dedicate a considerable amount of their time to meet and study the target audience's needs and create specific educational programs accordingly. The committee consists of 21 dedicated SAMS Members who meet on a monthly basis and lead major educational projects.

## Residency and Training Program

### Applicant Support Program

In 2020, the SAMS Education Committee launched the Applicant Support Program for the 2021 Match to connect Syrian physicians applying for residency positions in the United States with Syrian residents and faculty members. In total, 48 applicants submitted their documents and registration forms; 49 residents and faculty members participated in this program. The committee established 30 connections, bringing together applicants to residents and faculty members in various specialties, including internal medicine, pediatrics, radiology, neurology, and anesthesiology. Through these connections, applicants received the support they needed to improve their residency applications.

### Web-Based Interview Skills Workshop

In 2020, the SAMS Education Committee hosted a new edition of the SAMS Annual Interview Skills Workshop that took place in October 2020 and was adapted to the post-pandemic phase of virtual interviews for US medical residency applications. Targeting an audience consisting predominantly of the International Medical Groups (IMG), this 15th edition helped applicants practice and conduct mock interview experiences starting with submitting applications, assigning applicants to volunteer interviewers, performing an average of three to four interviews per applicant, and lastly receiving individualized feedback. The committee kicked-off the event by hosting a webinar to provide initial guidance to applicants. The most important factors of a successful interview were highlighted during this webinar, with an emphasis on teaching skills essential for acing virtual interviews. The event was concluded with a Q&A session led by the interviewers. In total, there were 142 interviews conducted by 34 interviewers.

### Application Review Program

The SAMS Application Review program was launched to connect NRMP Match applicants

with physicians interested in volunteering to review and edit ERAS applications and personal statements. All reviewers were recent graduates of residency and/or fellowship programs with impeccable language and communication skills. The reviewers were provided with the applications, then turned over anonymously to the applicant through one of the committee members. In total, there were 26 applicants from July 1, 2020 through October 14, 2020. In total, 24 physicians, students, and administrative volunteers donated 385 hours in 2020 to SAMS Midwest Free Specialty Clinic.

SAMS Midwest Free Specialty Clinic Services Provided by Specialty	
Specialty	Services
OB/GYN	22
Cardiology	20
Endocrinology	21
Pulmonology	2
<b>Total Patient Visits</b>	<b>65</b>

## Avicenna Journal of Medicine

In 2020, SAMS continued to support the Avicenna Journal of Medicine, a quarterly, peer-reviewed, open access and Pubmed-indexed medical journal. The journal promotes excellence in medicine and covers all aspects of comprehensive healthcare including preventive, curative, and rehabilitative care along with medical education topics. The journal focuses on promoting research and editorial skills among Syrian researchers.

Since its launch in 2011, the journal has received over 2,100 submissions and published 271 articles from these submissions. Publications were distributed in 37 issues, including 121 original articles and brief reports, 80 case reports, 39 review articles, and 31 editorials. The published articles were submitted by authors from 29 different countries.

# ADVOCACY

**“This was not fiction. This is happening every day, every moment in Idlib. It happened in Ghouta, in Aleppo, in Dara’a. It’s easier not to watch The Cave, but it’s more difficult to watch it.”** - Dr. Mufaddal Hamadeh, SAMS President

SAMS advocacy efforts seek to provide a voice for health workers and civilians in Syria, highlight humanitarian needs on the ground, seek new policy commitments related to the protection of humanitarian workers, and provide more dignified care and support for Syrian refugees around the world. These efforts involve meetings with senior UN officials, travel to capitals around the world to meet with government ministers and key policymakers, significant engagement with US Government Officials and Members of Congress, and collaboration with leading NGOs to amplify our voice. These efforts resulted in additional financial commitments from governments for the humanitarian response in Syria, renewed attention from UN officials on the protection of humanitarian workers, and made positive contributions to the UN Security Council’s renewal of the cross-border resolution.

## UN Advocacy

SAMS engages in extensive advocacy activities before the UN on the issues of humanitarian assistance, protection of humanitarian workers, and accountability for violations of international humanitarian law. This has involved regular meetings and events with UN Member States, UN agencies, and UN accountability mechanisms. SAMS is also a member of NGO working groups and task forces involved in the Syria cross-border mechanism and protection of civilians in conflict.

In January, SAMS played a leading role in successfully advocating for renewal of the Security Council’s cross-border resolution, which serves as a vital lifeline for the nearly 4 million civilians living in northwest Syria. We met with

Security Council members, UN Secretariat staff, and partnered with other NGOs to make a strong case for renewing the resolution.

In February, SAMS partnered with Dr. Amani Ballour on a series of high-level meetings, including with the Ambassadors of the US, UK, Germany, Spain, Vatican, and Turkey. These meetings focused on the need for increased support for the humanitarian response in Syria, dignified treatment for Syrian refugees, and the protection of humanitarian workers. SAMS and Dr. Ballour also met with Mark Lowcock, the UN Under-Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator. In this meeting, the humanitarian situation in Syria and ideas for how best to deliver aid to populations in need were discussed. In addition, there was also discussion surrounding the need for greater accountability of attacks on health, and for the UN to scale up its support for children in Syria.

Later in February, Dr. Mazen Kewara, SAMS Turkey Country Director, visited New York and met with UN officials and members of the Security Council to discuss the cross-border operation in northern Syria, the UN cluster system, and the growing health needs on the ground.

In June, as part of advocacy efforts around the next renewal of the cross-border resolution, SAMS partnered with IRC, Save the Children, and World Vision on joint initiatives directed towards the non-permanent members of the Security Council. SAMS worked collaboratively on organizing expert briefings, sending a formal letter to the Security Council with sign-on from the NGO community, and arranging media interviews to discuss the importance of renewing the resolution. SAMS also joined thirteen other NGOs in releasing a new report on the humanitarian situation in Northwest Syria entitled “Don’t Leave Them Alone: The Future of the Cross-Border Response in Northwest Syria.”



## US Government and Congressional Advocacy

SAMS continues to build and maintain strong working relationships with US Government officials and Members of Congress. SAMS leadership, members, and staff hold regular meetings in Washington, DC, including with officials from the White House, State Department, and US Agency for International Development.

SAMS has provided expert advice to Congressional committee staff as well as to Administration policy makers on key issues such as humanitarian assistance, protection of humanitarian workers, and accountability. SAMS has also conducted joint advocacy activities with other NGOs as part of its membership in the InterAction working groups on Syria, Iraq, Protection, and GBV.

In March, Kelly Craft, the US Ambassador to the UN, made her first visit to Turkey. While there, she met with SAMS' Dr. Farida to discuss the health situation in Syria, particularly for women and girls.

In April, SAMS leadership met with Ambassador Jim Jeffrey, the US Special Envoy for Syria, where they discussed the humanitarian situation in Syria, the need for increased US financial support for the crisis, as well as continued US leadership on the protection of humanitarian workers and accountability. They also discussed the growing threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, in addition to tangible ways in which the US Government could support the delivery of health services to civilians in Syria.

In May, Ambassador Craft joined SAMS Ramadan virtual event, where she delivered a message of hope following her visit to the Turkey-Syria border in March 2020 where she met SAMS doctors working under precarious conditions.

In June, as part of ongoing advocacy efforts

**“I personally want to express my gratitude to those individuals, those women and men, especially the medical professionals who have chosen to provide life-saving aid and comfort to the Syrian people. We are all touched by the bravery of medical workers who put themselves in harm’s way to save the lives of others. This work is vital. It is honourable and I know that Syrian people will not forget it.”**

- Ambassador Kelly Craft, March 2020

around the renewal of the cross-border resolution, SAMS briefed staff experts from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Later that month, Dr. Farida participated in a panel hosted by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee as part of the release of their new report on global forced migration. In this event, which was hosted by Senator Robert Menendez, she spoke alongside Former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Former Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs Lloyd Axworthy. Dr. Farida spoke about her own experience of forced displacement, and the need for the international community to prevent the continuation of forced migration. She also talked about the worsening humanitarian situation in Syria, as well as ongoing threats to humanitarian workers safety.

**“After the bombardment of Aleppo, the bombardment of my hospital, I lost my house, my clinic, and my medical devices in the city. I left my memories, my photographs, everything. It is not simple for anyone to lose [their] home. It is not simple. It is not that easy and not just about money... It is about a piece of you, a piece of your family.”**

- Dr. Farida,

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Event on Global Forced Migration, June 18, 2020



In July, SAMS planned and led a roundtable at InterAction on stigma surrounding COVID-19 in refugee and displaced populations, which was attended by US Government officials and Congressional staff. The event helped to shine a light on the challenges which COVID-19 had caused for these populations, and offered solutions to mitigate the challenges.

In August, SAMS partnered with the US Institute of Peace to hold a webinar event on the impact of COVID-19, entitled “Coronavirus and the Conflict in Syria: Battling COVID-19 in Syria and Among Syrian Displaced Populations.” SAMS Executive Director, David Lillie, and SAMS Northern Syria Relief Committee Chairman, Dr. Amjad Rass, were among the participants in this event, which explored challenges faced on the ground as a result of the pandemic, as well as ideas for how the US government can support the efforts of humanitarian workers to respond to the growing crisis.

Following the tragic explosion at the Port of Beirut in early August, SAMS undertook extensive advocacy efforts in support of the affected communities. We held multiple meetings with the State Department, USAID, and National Security Council staff, and also participated in expert briefings with staff from the House Foreign Affairs Committee. In addition, we contributed to joint NGO statements and papers calling for more international support for humanitarian assistance and the recovery efforts.



## EU Advocacy

In 2020, SAMS undertook extensive, high-level advocacy efforts in EU capitals on key issues including humanitarian funding, protection of humanitarian workers, and accountability.

These involved meetings in countries including France, Germany, Belgium, UK, Italy, Ireland, Luxembourg, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, and The Netherlands.

In March, SAMS partnered with Dr. Amani Ballour on a media and advocacy tour through key European countries. SAMS leadership met with senior EU Commission officials, members of the European Parliament, the Foreign Ministers of France and The Netherlands, and major foundations including the King Baudouin Foundation and IKEA Foundation in Brussels, Paris, Geneva, and The Hague. These engagements resulted in new financial commitments for the Syrian crisis, increased public awareness of the worsening humanitarian situation in Syria, and strengthened government policies on protection of civilians and humanitarian workers.

In June, SAMS participated in the EU's Fourth Brussels Conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region. Dr. Mazen Kewara participated in a US-sponsored side-event on "Ensuring Accountability and Civilian Protection in Syria," in which he discussed the need for greater support from the international community for efforts to hold perpetrators of attacks on health accountable. SAMS also partnered with ARCS and SRD to host a side event on the humanitarian situation on the ground, titled "A Call to Action: Supporting Healthcare in Northwest Syria in Light of the COVID-19 Pandemic."

In December, SAMS participated in the 5th French National Humanitarian Conference, taking part in sessions on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and international humanitarian law.



## Regional Advocacy

SAMS regional advocacy work includes supporting more protection and access to health for refugees, providing opportunities for refugees to study medicine and health sciences, and facilitating access to mental health and psychosocial support. We also advocate for increased international support for host governments, and to ensure that refugees receive dignified treatment by host communities. SAMS also works extensively with UN agencies, International NGOs, and local NGOs in support of refugee populations.

In Lebanon, SAMS is a member of the Lebanon Humanitarian INGO Forum (LHIF), and works with OCHA and UNHCR on increased protection and humanitarian assistance for Syrian refugees. SAMS also worked with local Lebanese NGOs in order to serve both refugees and local Lebanese, which demonstrates our commitment to the accessibility of dignified, quality healthcare.

In Jordan, SAMS is a member of the Jordan INGO Forum (JIF) and Syria International NGO Forum (SIRF), where we contribute to collective NGO efforts to provide high-quality papers, fact sheets, and humanitarian needs overviews to policymakers and donors. We also work closely with UNHCR to advocate for increased support for Syrian refugees in Jordan, and we partner with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation on humanitarian work in the country.



In Turkey, SAMS continued extensive engagement with Turkish authorities and humanitarian organizations.

This past year included a significant amount of advocacy in support of continuing humanitarian operations amidst the pandemic, as well as securing essential items such as oxygen and PPE. SAMS also successfully advocated for access to medical referrals into Turkey that were suspended due to the pandemic, which resulted in cancer patients' resumption of treatment.

In addition, we improved coordination with local health authorities in Southern Turkey, as well as Turkish humanitarian agencies, including AFAD and the Turkish Red Crescent. We also undertook regular, high-level engagements with officials in the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labor, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

SAMS leadership also undertook several visits to Turkey and northern Syria. In January, SAMS President, Dr. Mufaddal Hamadeh, visited a number of SAMS-supported medical facilities in northwest Syria. This included several IDP settlements stranded near the Turkish border to assess the situation on the ground and ensure that beneficiaries have access to quality care in the face of ongoing humanitarian crisis.

**“ Seeing firsthand the profound impacts of the 10-year conflict, we are committed now more than ever to continuing our life-saving mission and extending our reach to as many beneficiaries as possible.**

*- Dr. Mufaddal Hamadeh,  
SAMS President, following his trip to Idlib  
in January 2020*

# SAMS IN THE NEWS



Babies dying in Idlib hospital and child admissions from camps triple after another brutal week in Syrian conflict



BGP British Journal of General Practice

Br J Gen Pract. 2018 Oct; 68(675): 487.  
doi: 10.3398/bjgp18069223

**Volunteering with Syrian American Medical Society: in Lebanon's Bekaa valley**

Stakeholder: Imperial GP 873  
Author information • Copyright and License information • Disclaimer

*"If you truly believe that all humans are created equal, you can't sit back and watch people live lives of utter desperation and suffering, for no reason but the circumstance of their birth."*

Nervously, she lifted her scarf to reveal her nearly bald head. Only threads remained. Her husband had been shot by a sniper while on his way to buy bread for the family. Heartbroken, she brought her children to the clinic in search of cures for their anaemia, faltering growth, and night terrors. Stress had taken its toll; her body cried the tears she could not shed in front of her five fatherless children.

# LEADERSHIP

## Foundation Board of Directors - 2020

- Dr. Maher Azzouz (Chair)
- Dr. Mufaddal Hamadeh (Society President)
- Dr. Tarek Zetoune (Treasurer)
- Dr. Mohamad Al-Hosni (Secretary)
- Dr. Basel Termanini
- Dr. Abdulfattah Elshaar
- Dr. Jihad Alharash
- Dr. Ammar Ghanem
- Mr. Ismaail Aajoukah
- Dr. Mohammad Saleh

## Society Board of Directors - 2020

- Dr. Mufaddal Hamadeh (President)
- Dr. Maysoun Alhariri (Vice President)
- Dr. Tarek Zetoune (Treasurer)
- Dr. Adeeb Alshahrour (Secretary)
- Dr. Ahmad Tarakji
- Dr. Mazen Issa
- RPh. Lara Zakaria

## Senior Staff

- David Lillie, Executive Director
- Dr. Randa Loutfi, Director of Programs
- Safaa Aladham, Director of Finance





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Syrian American Medical Society



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