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2.7. Women

For detailed information on women in Syria, see section 1.3.5. Women of the EUAA COI Report Syria: Country Focus (March 2025).

○ (a) General overview of violations against women

Due to the security situation in Syria, women's mobility was frequently restricted and a 'rising' number of arbitrary detentions was reported by the International Crisis Group.[534]During the reporting period, women were victims of arbitrary arrests in areas controlled by the interim government and the SDF[535], and were killed or injured as a result of ongoing confrontations or due to war remnants.[536]

The International Crisis Group noted a growing number of incidents involving the harassment of women. In some instances, restrictive measures, such as the enforcement of gender segregation in public and professional settings, were introduced on the initiative of local authorities. It was noted that in most cases, these measures were subsequently reversed following public backlash.[537]Instances of physical assault against women were documented by the SNHR during some of the mass raids carried out by the SDF in SDF-controlled areas, particularly in northeastern Syria.[538]

The conflict severely disrupted access to essential services for women in areas such as Latakia and Tartous,[539]where all health facilities providing sexual and reproductive health had to be suspended due to the instability.[540]UNOCHA indicated that most women in the newly displaced and temporary shelters were facing significant breastfeeding and child feeding difficulties, including lack of shelter, poor hygiene and sanitation.[541]Domestic violence and sexual exploitation were reportedly on the rise according to the GPC, particularly in IDP camps and shelters where women and girls

faced increased risks of survival sex and forced marriage.[542]

The SOHR reported in April 2025 that a 14-year-old girl was kidnapped outside her educational institute in Lattakia city and later found abandoned in the forest. In another incident, a young woman was kidnapped in Tartous countryside while returning home from work.[543]SOHR also reported that, since the beginning of 2025, 50 Alawite women have gone missing across several provinces, including Homs, Tartous, Lattakia, and Ham.[544]The Beirut-based media outlet Daraj documented multiple patterns in the abduction cases, noting that some girls were kidnapped in broad daylight and non-isolated areas, with some subsequently released, and others contacting their families before disappearing again. In other cases, families were allegedly informed that their daughters had been married or taken out of Syria. Daraj further reported that survivors and families of missing women often remain silent due to fear of social stigma and reprisals, including direct threats from perpetrators who reportedly monitor social media.[545]The Cradle outlet noted that many kidnapped victims come from Druze, Christian, and Alawite communities.[546]

According to UNOCHA, 8.3 million women were in need of humanitarian assistance and less likely to safely access humanitarian assistance compared to men and boys.[547] Intrahousehold food allocation practices, often prioritising adult males, were reported as well, leaving women and children with limited access to nutritious food.[548]Displaced women, especially those without family support were increasingly vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.[549]Female-headed households faced significant challenges in meeting basic needs, including economic exclusion and social stigma, noting that many lacked documentation and remained vulnerable to sexual exploitation with humanitarian aid often difficult to access. Widows and divorced women were particularly vulnerable to housing, land and property (HLP) issues, which further contributed to psychosocial distress and heightened risks of GBV.[550]

According to a report by ACAPS drawing on data collected between November 2024 and March 2025, technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) was a widespread and rapidly escalating concern across Northwest Syria (NWS).[551]TFGBV [552]includes behaviours such as stalking, sexual harassment and exploitation which are carried out using computer and mobile technology.[553]Motivations behind TFGBV included financial and sexual exploitation, revenge, coercion, defamation or reputational harm, or simply to threaten, cause harm to, or harass the targeted individual. TFGBV frequently escalated from digital threats to offline consequences, including physical and sexual violence, so called 'honour killings', and forced marriage. [554]

○ (b) Sexual and gender-based violence

Gender-based violence (GBV) continued to pose a threat to women and girls in Syria. [555] The risk of exposure to violence for women had increased, particularly in areas experiencing a deterioration in the security situation.[556]

According to a UNOCHA analysis conducted at the end of 2024, 93 % of the approximately 8.5 million people in need of GBV assistance are women and girls. Intimate partner violence, domestic violence, economic and emotional violence as well as sexual violence, including rape and sexual harassment, remained widespread concerns. The analysis further noted risks of sexual exploitation, including via online platforms, linked to Syria's deteriorating economic conditions and the use of social media.[557] Social stigma and a lack of accessible protections services were identified as key barriers contributing to the persistent underreporting by the June 2025 UN Security Council monthly forecast. It was noted that funding constraints have led to the closure of 20 safe spaces for women and girls since January 2025, severely reducing access to support services for GBV survivors.[558]Additionally, the termination of US funding was estimated to affect 265 000 people, who were expected to lose access to essential reproductive health services, including maternal healthcare and GBV response services.[559]

A UNOCHA report from March 2025 emphasised that the suspension or closure of Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS) and of other service delivery points has further restricted the availability of and accessibility to lifesaving GBV services, leaving survivors with reduced opportunities to disclose violence and seek support. 560 Distribution areas and humanitarian service delivery points were identified by communities and GBV experts as locations where GBV occurred. Although GBV was reported both inside and outside camps, overcrowded settings were found to increase the risk of exposure to GBV due to limited mitigation measures, including poor lighting, absence of gender separation and absence of trained female staff during distribution. 561

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Technology-facilitated gender-based violence, or TFGBV, is an act of violence perpetrated by one or more individuals that is committed, assisted, aggravated and amplified in part or fully by the use of information and communication technologies or digital media, against a person on the basis of their gender. UNFPA, What is

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