

ACT SYR231 Appeal: Key Conclusions and Lessons Learned

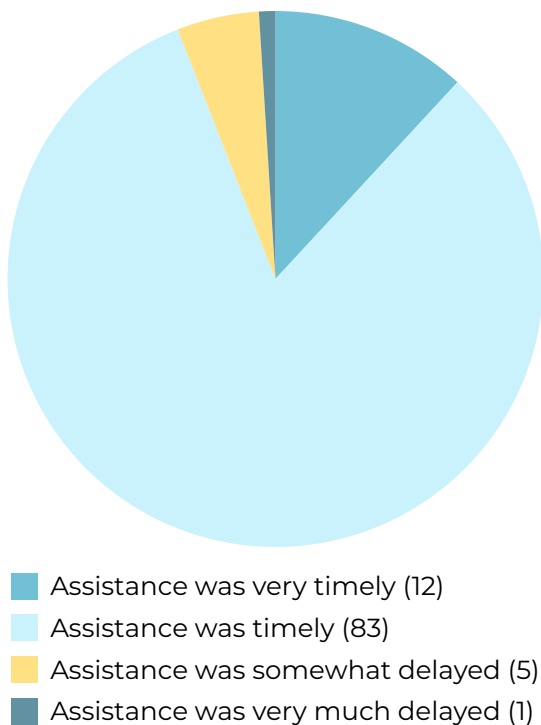
Overview

The ACT SYR231 Appeal was launched to address the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Syria and revised in early 2023 to include earthquake response in Syria and Türkiye. The appeal delivers multi-sectoral support—including health, WASH, food security, shelter, education, and livelihoods—while aiming to strengthen community resilience through both emergency aid and recovery. Key activities include distributing food and hygiene kits, providing medical and psychosocial care, rehabilitating schools and bakeries, and supporting livelihoods through vocational training and cash-for-work. The response prioritizes vulnerable groups and operates across several Syrian governorates and Hatay in Türkiye, guided by a results framework and regular monitoring.

Results

Adaptive Programming

The SYR231 Appeal showed strong capacity to adapt in a complex and fast-changing context. Needs assessments—though primarily qualitative and not always systematically documented—were conducted at multiple points, guiding program design and updates. Organizations adjusted sectoral focus areas and budgets in response to real-time needs and contextual shifts (e.g., scaling up vocational training and expanding health interventions). Strengthening lightweight and context-adapted tools could further enhance traceability and support adaptive program design.



Flexible Funding Gains

The funding structure allowed for both earmarked and unremarked funds, supporting responsiveness and some degree of redistribution to underfunded actors. Savings from exchange rate gains and streamlined operations were reinvested in community infrastructure (e.g., bakeries, rehabilitation sites), contributing to longer-term impact.

High Sectoral Impact

The appeal achieved strong results in key areas such as health access, psychosocial support, and vocational training. Vocational and business start-up training improved employability and personal confidence. Skills development led to practical gains like household income generation and reduced reliance on external support. However, participants who received short-term or one-off support—such as MPCA or CFS—reported more limited longer-term gains.

Positive Impact



Efficiency via Local Resources

Field teams used cost-effective strategies such as operating with small teams, reallocating savings, and working through local staff. Practical tools and timely training materials were appreciated by participants. However, the late arrival of some funds limited the time available for full implementation. Coordinated strategies to optimize cost-efficiency were limited. Collective efforts—such as joint procurement or shared assessments—could have enhanced reach and minimized duplication.

ACT SYR231 Appeal: Key Conclusions and Lessons Learned

Results

Fragmented Coordination

Coordination efforts progressed early on, with active engagement in regular meetings. However, as the response evolved, consistency in engagement diminished. The absence of a full-time appeal coordinator and lack of centralized tools for service mapping and communication contributed to fragmentation. In some locations, activities such as cash assistance overlapped due to parallel planning, indicating missed opportunities for shared planning and cost-efficiency.

Participation and Accountability

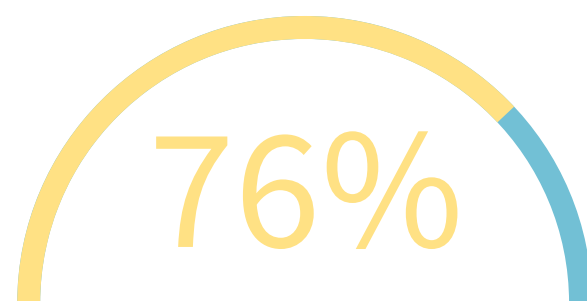
The appeal demonstrated a genuine commitment to community participation and accountability, with encouraging signs of awareness and intent among implementing teams. However, structured participation was inconsistently applied across contexts and population groups. While many respondents expressed satisfaction with services, 79% reported they were not consulted in planning, and 99% had not provided formal feedback—indicating limited space for meaningful engagement. Women and marginalized groups faced additional barriers due to fear of repercussions, language constraints, or unclear communication. These gaps underline the need for more inclusive, proactive, and trusted participation mechanisms.

Mixed Inclusion Outcomes

Efforts were made to disaggregate data by gender, age, disability, and displacement status, ensuring inclusive design. However, perceptions of inclusion varied: while most men reported feeling encouraged to participate, some women and minority groups expressed lower levels of engagement. Children and caregivers valued inclusive child-friendly spaces, while refugees cited the need for stronger accountability and trust in feedback systems.

Sustainability Needs Alignment

Many appeal-supported activities—such as vocational training, infrastructure rehabilitation, and solar systems—were designed with long-term benefit in mind. However, the absence of a joint sustainability or exit plan limited opportunities for shared learning and cross-organizational reinforcement. A more coordinated strategy, anchored in long-term funding models and reporting tools, is recommended to enhance sustainability and reduce fragmentation.

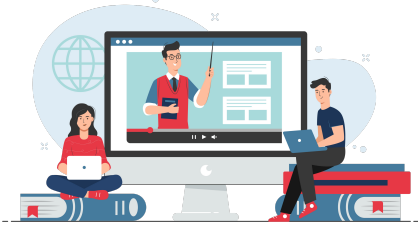


of respondents believed that the results would last beyond the project

ACT SYR231 Appeal: Key Conclusions and Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

1 Integrate Services for Sustainable Impact



Sequencing interventions—such as moving from PSS to livelihoods support and then market access—helps sustain progress. This approach also builds community trust and supports long-term resilience.

Communities need to understand who the services are for and how to safely raise concerns. Feedback channels should be simplified, culturally appropriate, and well-communicated, especially to women, older people, and persons with disabilities. Trusted local actors play a vital role in this process.

2 Document and Share Needs Assessment Processes



Establishing templates and protocols for documenting assessments (initial, real-time, and final) can improve transparency, inform decision-making, and help track program relevance over time. This is particularly important in fast-moving contexts with high population mobility.

Models that demonstrated high impact and satisfaction—such as vocational training with toolkits, multi-session PSS, and critical health interventions—should be expanded. Linking them with child protection or community services can increase inclusion and program depth.

3 Use Resources Collectively Where Feasible



Shared tools, monitoring systems, and resource hubs (e.g., warehouses) can reduce duplication and free up funds for direct services. Piloting such approaches on a small scale could pave the way for more coordinated efforts.

As part of appeal planning, include a shared exit and sustainability framework across partners. This should be supported by predictable funding, shared monitoring tools, and periodic review mechanisms to ensure continuity, avoid fragmentation, and promote long-term outcomes.

4 Prioritize Inclusive Communication and Feedback



5 Build on What Works—Then Scale



6 Develop Joint Sustainability and Exit Strategies

