

LAND AND CONFLICT IN THE ARAB REGION: ADVANCING HOUSING, LAND AND
PROPERTY (HLP) RIGHTS OF DISPLACED PERSONS

SAFEGUARDING HLP RIGHTS OF SYRIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON AND IRAQ

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Introduction

- Housing, Land and Property rights (HLP) are about having a home or a land that offers **shelter, safety**, the ability to secure **livelihood** and a **dignified life**. They are central to **protection, peace, reconstruction and development**.
- Over **13 million Syrian displaced** inside and outside Syria (UNHCR, 2025), including 6.2 million refugees and asylum seekers hosted mainly in five nearby countries and Europe. Most of them left behind **houses, businesses and lands**.
- High number of properties being occupied without consent, illegally bought / sold, damaged or destroyed, contaminated by explosives.
- Most displaced Syrians indicate that the **lack of secure access** to their properties, particularly housing is hindering their willingness to return.
- Clarifying, securing and restoring HLP rights is essential to foster voluntary, safe and dignified **return, enable repair and reconstruction** of properties, and ensure overall adequate **housing for all**.

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Project overview

Project duration:

April 2020 – June 2025

Phase 1: Apr 2020-July 2021

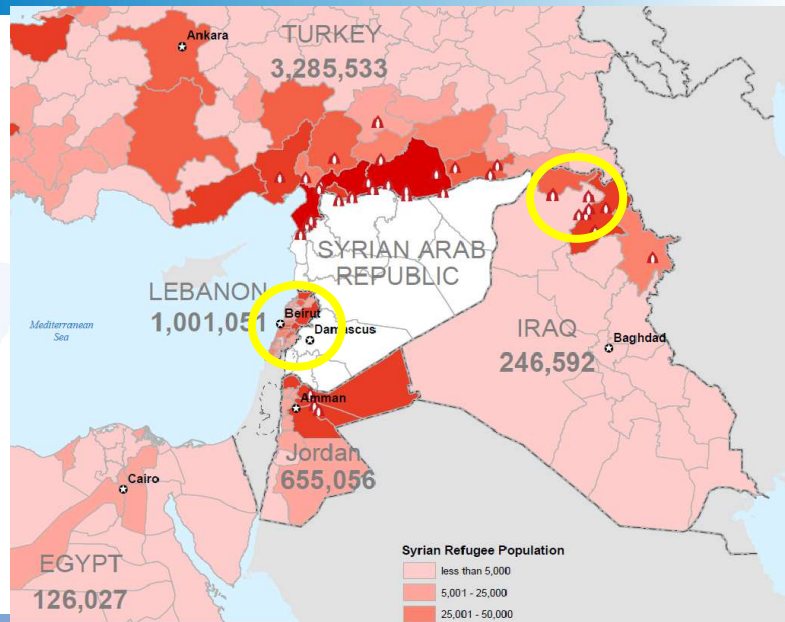
Phase 2: Nov 2021 – June 2025

Objective

Safeguard Housing Land and Property rights and evidence of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Iraq

Beneficiaries

Syrian refugee households in Lebanon and Iraq



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Project overview

- **Record the claims** of Syrian refugees to their houses and lands back in Syria.
- **Collect and safeguard copies of existing supporting evidence.**
Examples: title deeds, rental contracts, utility bills, testimonies, etc.
- **Create of a digital database** that can be used for disputes' resolution, tenure security and restitution of properties to the legitimate owners (or compensation), using STDm.
- Include **all the members of the household** in the property claims (not only the head of household), to improve **gender equality** and facilitate the process of claiming back the properties to the **heirs**.

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What is a HLP claim?

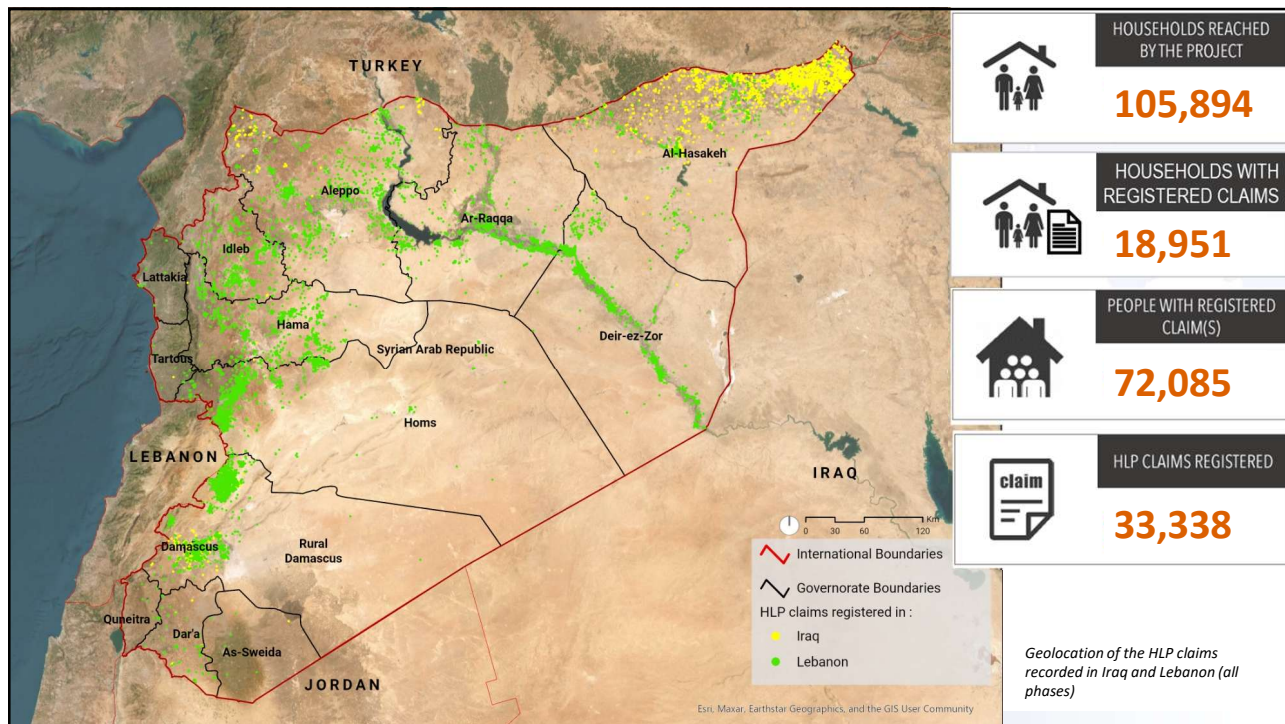
- Housing, land and property rights (HLP) claims are the **assertion of a claimant's HLP rights** through the submission of a claim record supported, when available, by **relevant HLP evidence**.
- HLP claims are submitted by the **person with the stronger tenure relationship** to the property claimed. **All household members** are listed in the claim.
- The collection of HLP claims and evidence is a first step for **re-affirming or regaining access to HLP**, by establishing a HLP restitution and/or compensation process, preparing the baseline for repair / reconstruction of houses, support disputes resolution mechanism, repossess illegally transacted properties, etc.

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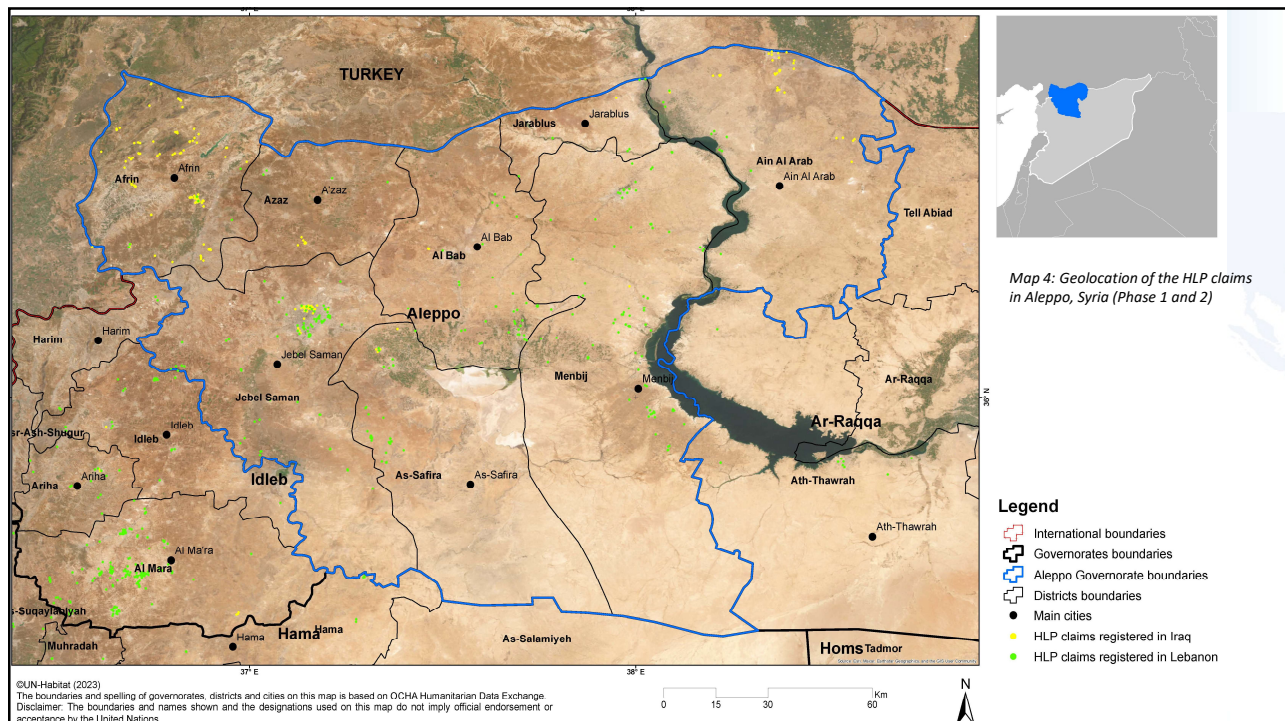
HLP evidence collected

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Title deed | 26. Industrial and commercial permits |
| 2. Real-estate statement | 27. For commercial properties in industrial zones:
Municipality plot allocation statement |
| 3. Real-estate statement from temporary register | 28. Well digging permit |
| 4. Irrevocable power of attorney | 29. Other private contracts (e.g. contract of pledge,
investment contract, partnership contract etc.) |
| 5. Court decision | 30. Residency certificate from Mukhtar |
| 6. Judicial declaration of transfer | 31. Bill of quantity (from the municipality) |
| 7. Caveat record statement | 32. Building blueprint and plans (ratified by the municip.) |
| 8. Sale contract- General establishment for Military Housing | 33. Property tax bill |
| 9. Consensual sale contract | 34. Utility bill |
| 10. Financial statement | 35. Internet bill |
| 11. Statement of membership in a housing cooperative | 36. Tax declaration from the Ministry of Finance |
| 12. Housing cooperative's book of installments | 37. Receipt In exchange for a service (usually, cleaning
services) |
| 13. Document from Public Housing Corporation | 38. Police report |
| 14. Public Housing ownership statement | 39. Decision on property seizure |
| 15. Registered lease agreement on public or private lands | 40. Shari'a Determination / Legal Determination of Heirs |
| 16. Agricultural use permit | 41. Warrant circular |
| 17. Usufruct agreement | 42. Security clearance of buying/selling procedures in border
areas |
| 18. Sharecropping agreement | 43. Building Violation penalty |
| 19. Unregistered lease agreement | 44. Address on ID card |
| 20. Long-term <i>Awqaf</i> lease (<i>Akd Ejaar Awqaf</i>) | 45. Pictures |
| 21. Registration of historical property with DGAM and/or the
Directorate of Old Cities (Damascus) | 46. Testimonies |
| 22. Report of demarcation/ adjudication process | 47. Others |
| 23. Record of acquisition through public auction | |
| 24. Mortgage contract | |
| 25. Building permit | |

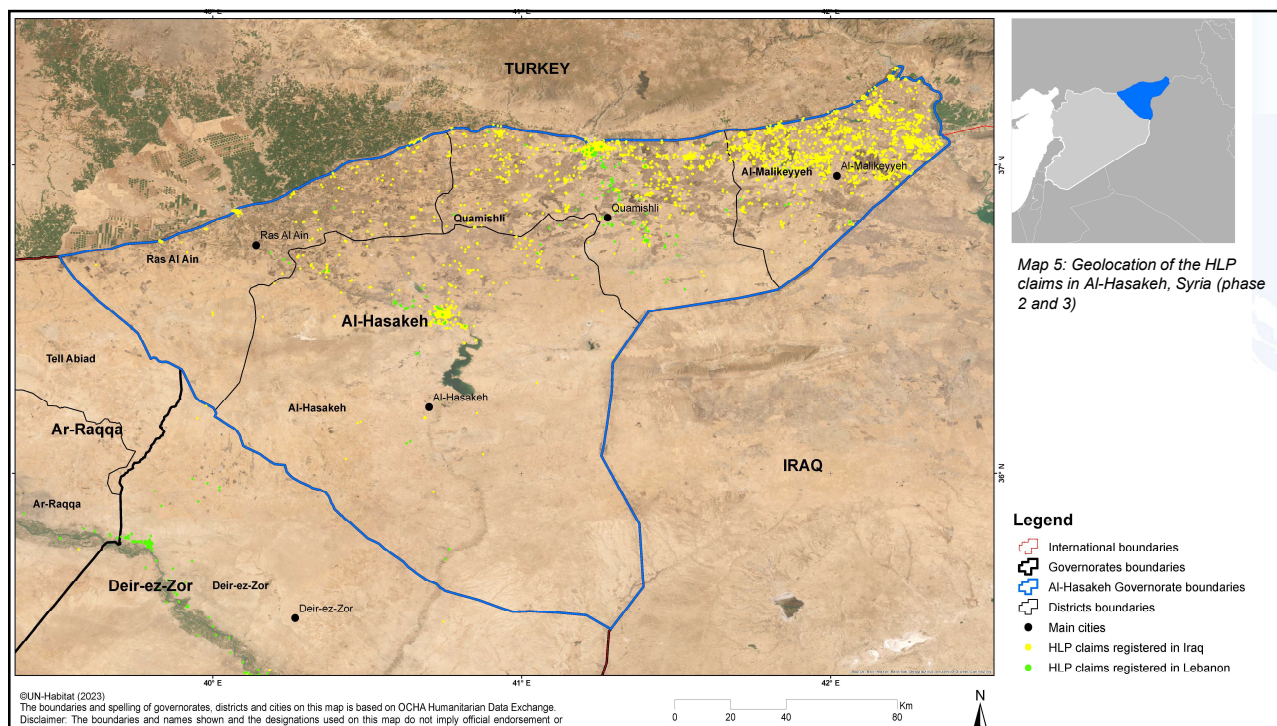
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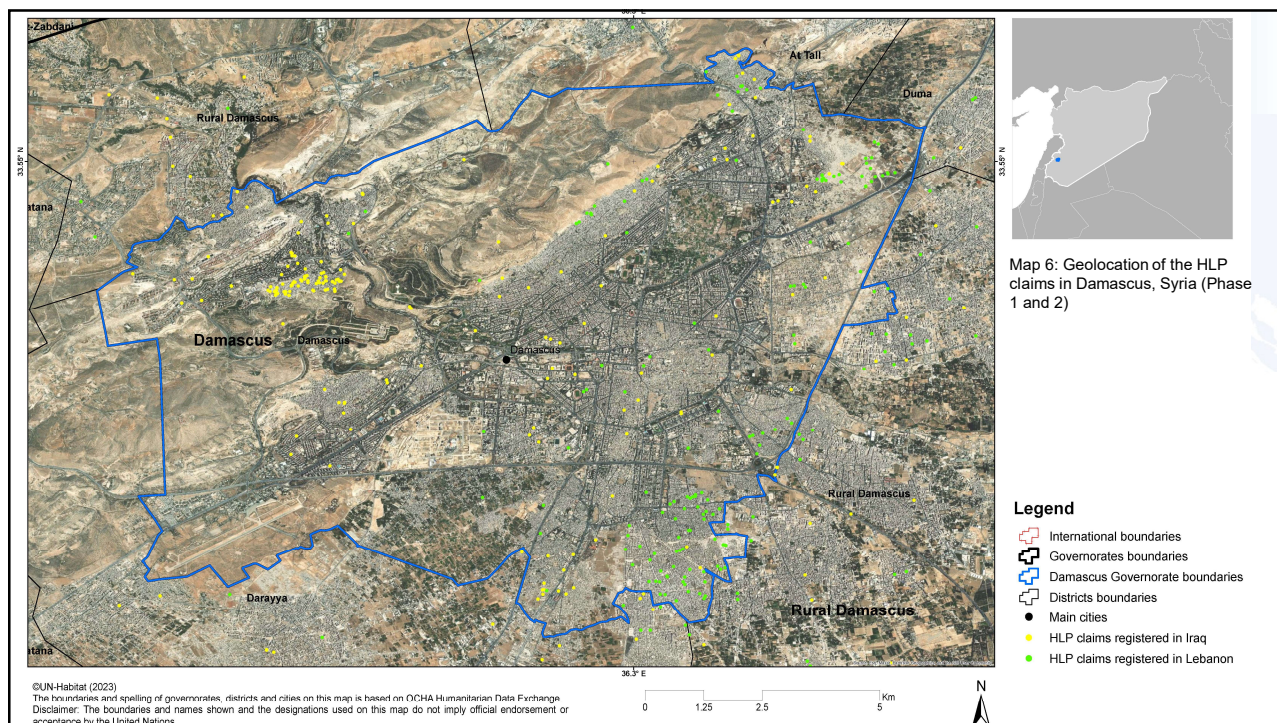
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Distribution of certificates

- Over 33,000 HLP claims certificates distributed

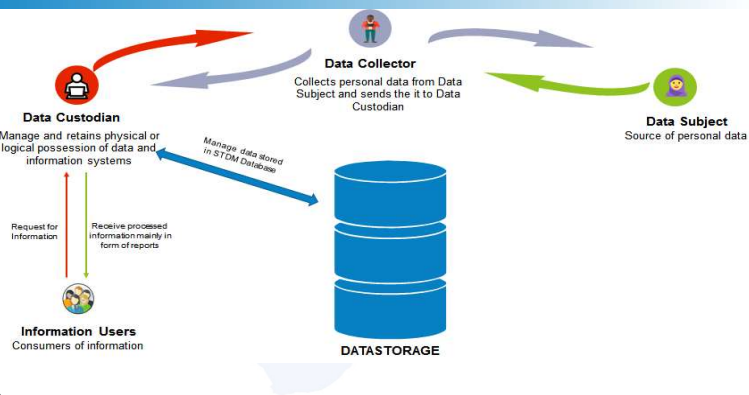
Distribution of certificates
in Iraq



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Data

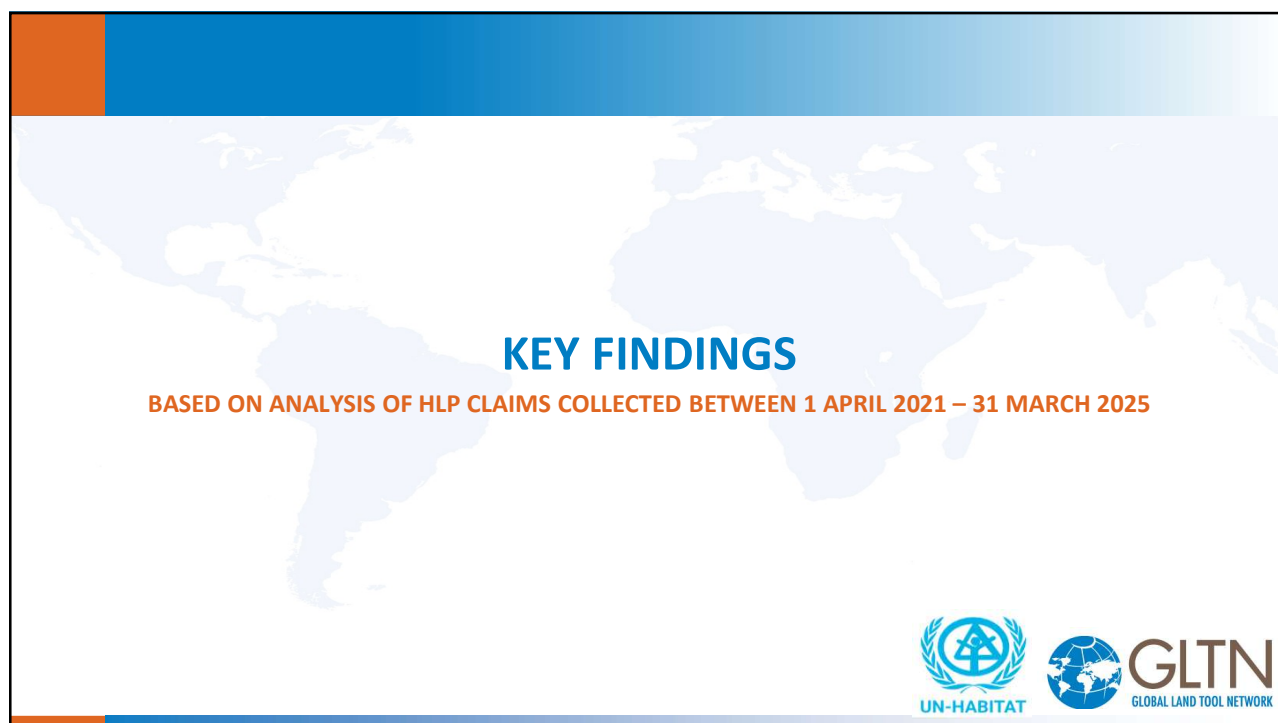
- **Data management and protection protocol** describes how project information and data must be **collected, handled and stored** in line with key international data protection standards.



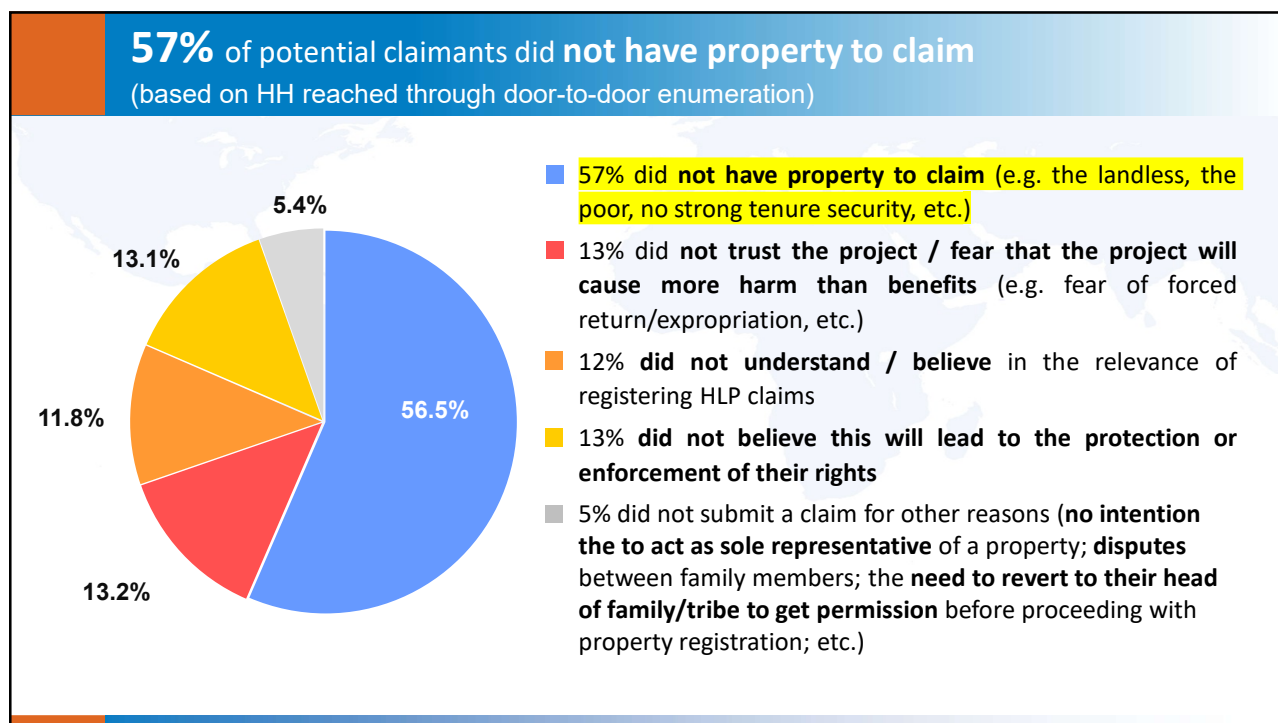
- **Data sharing agreement** between UN-Habitat and IOM to **store HLP data** collected through this and other processes in one place (IOM in the interim).



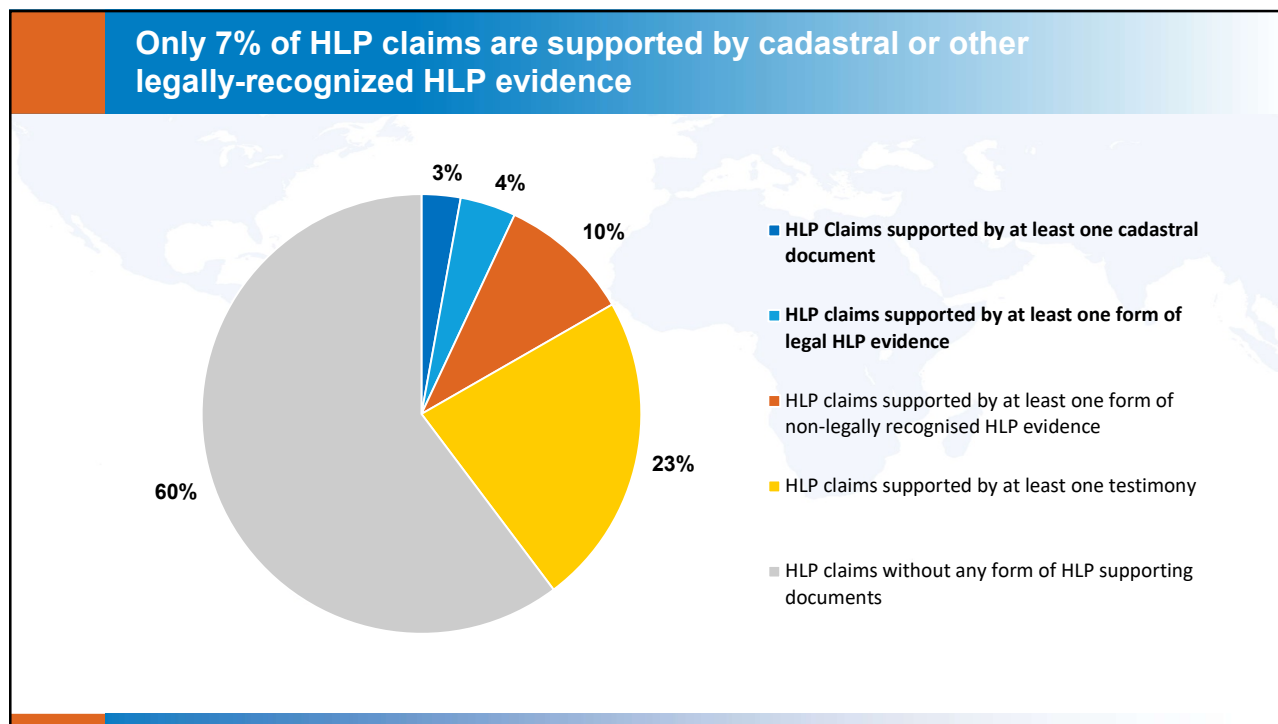
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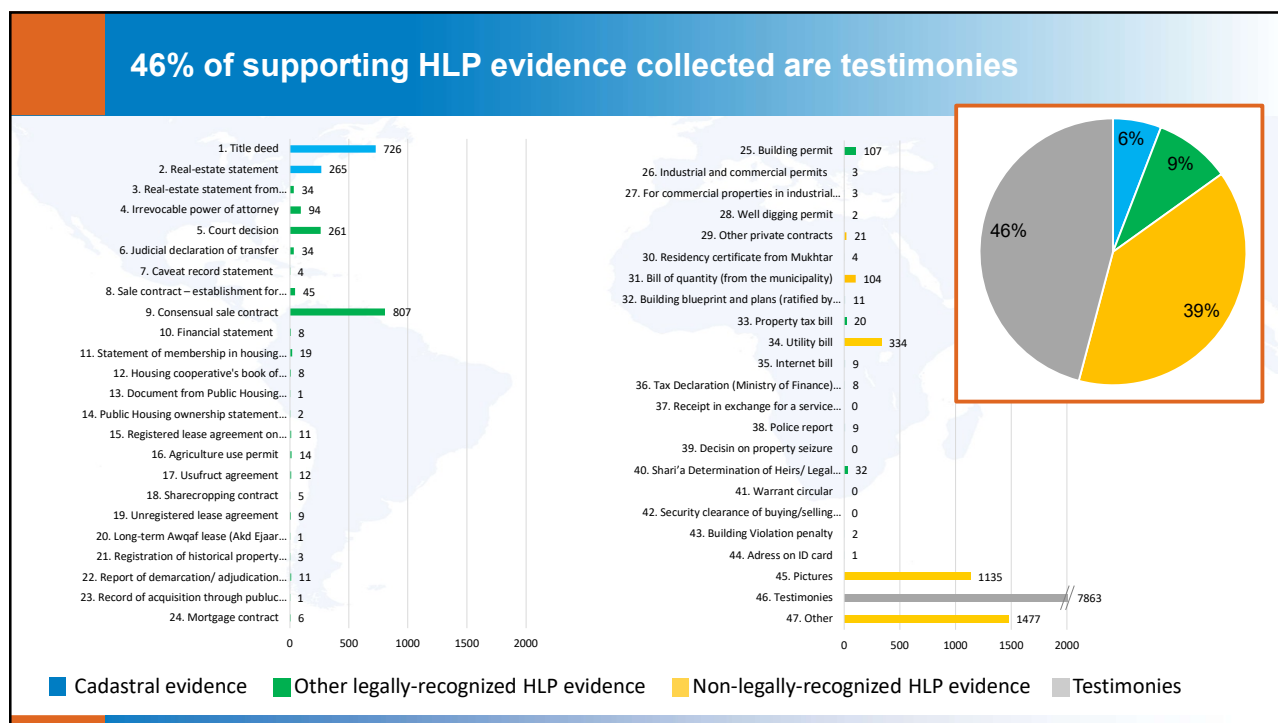
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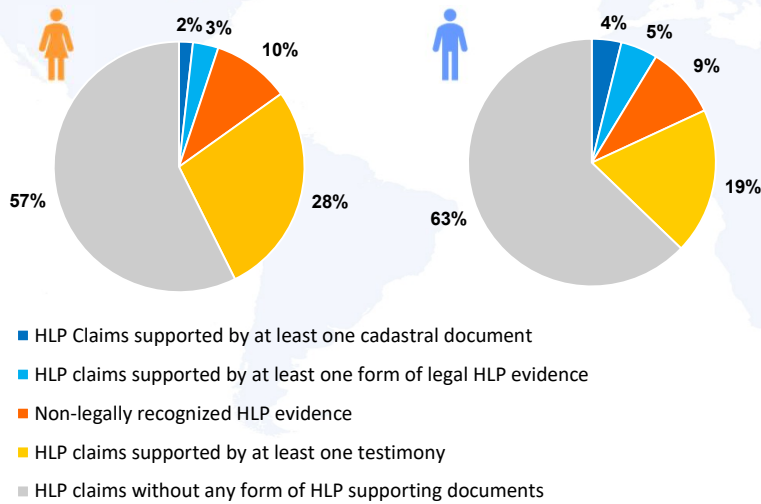


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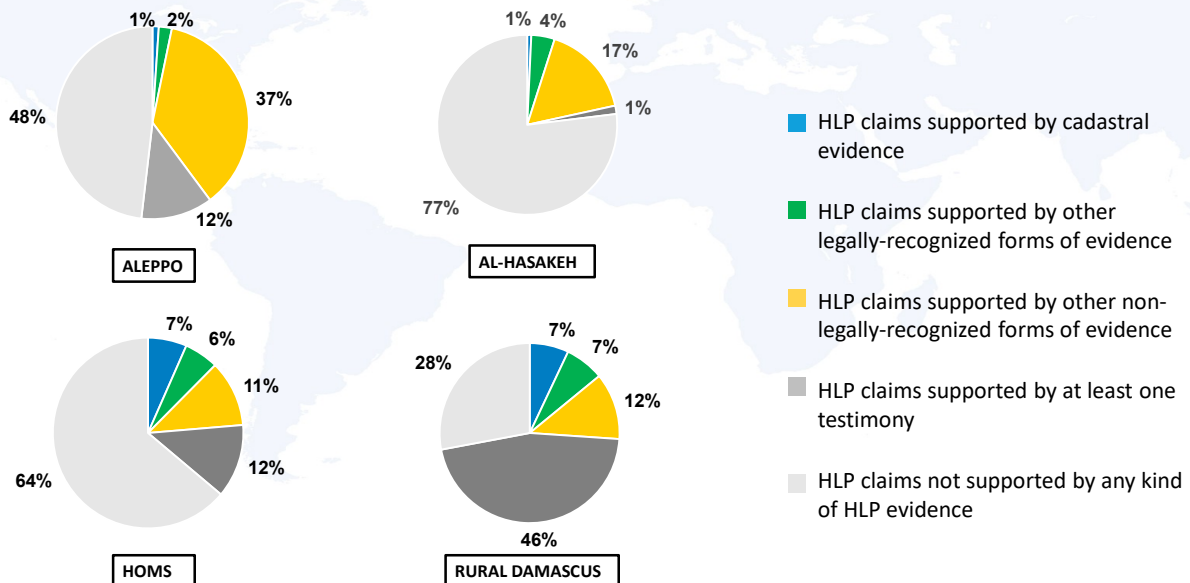
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Men are nearly twice more likely to have cadastral and legally recognised documentation compared to women

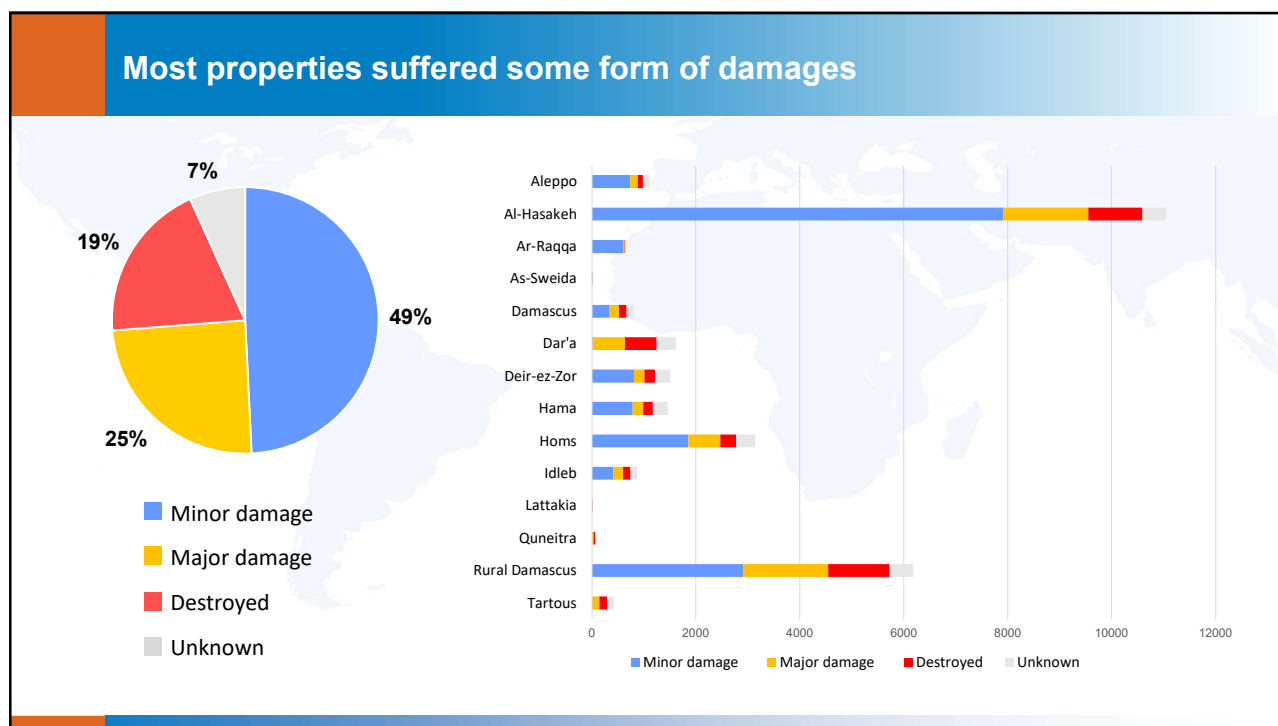


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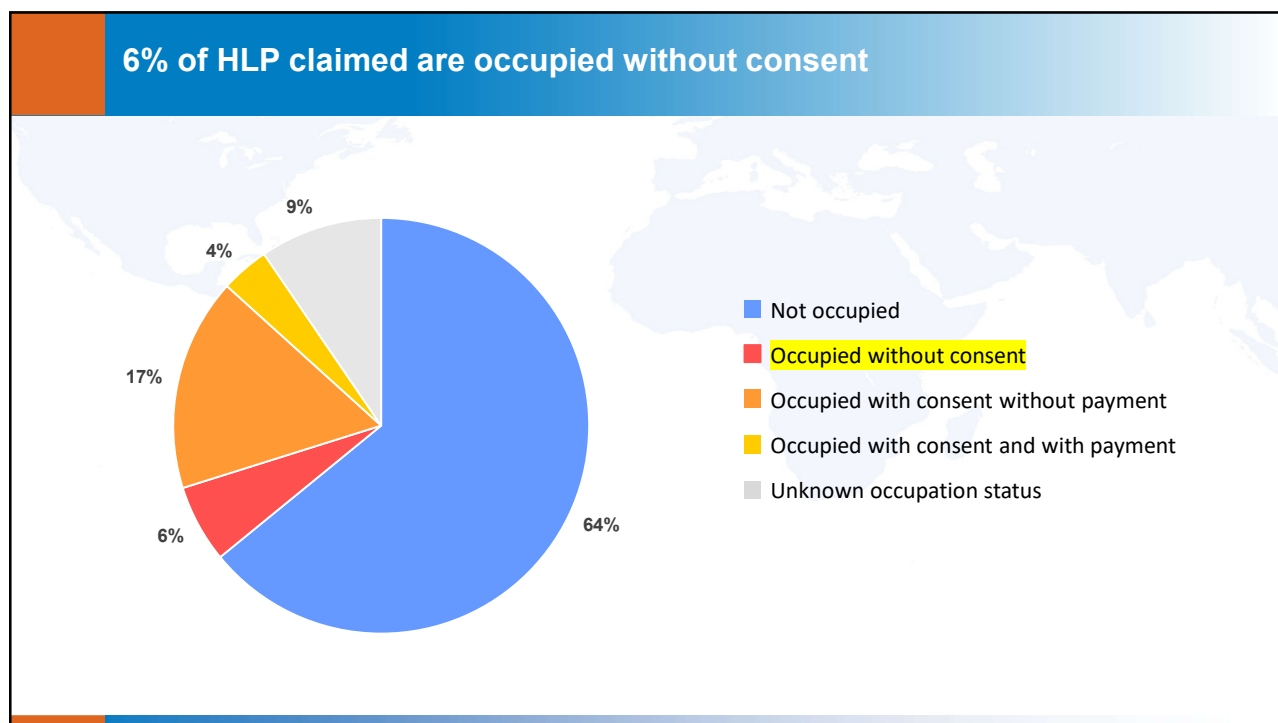
Refugees from Al-Hasakeh and Aleppo are less likely to have cadastral or legally-recognized HLP evidence



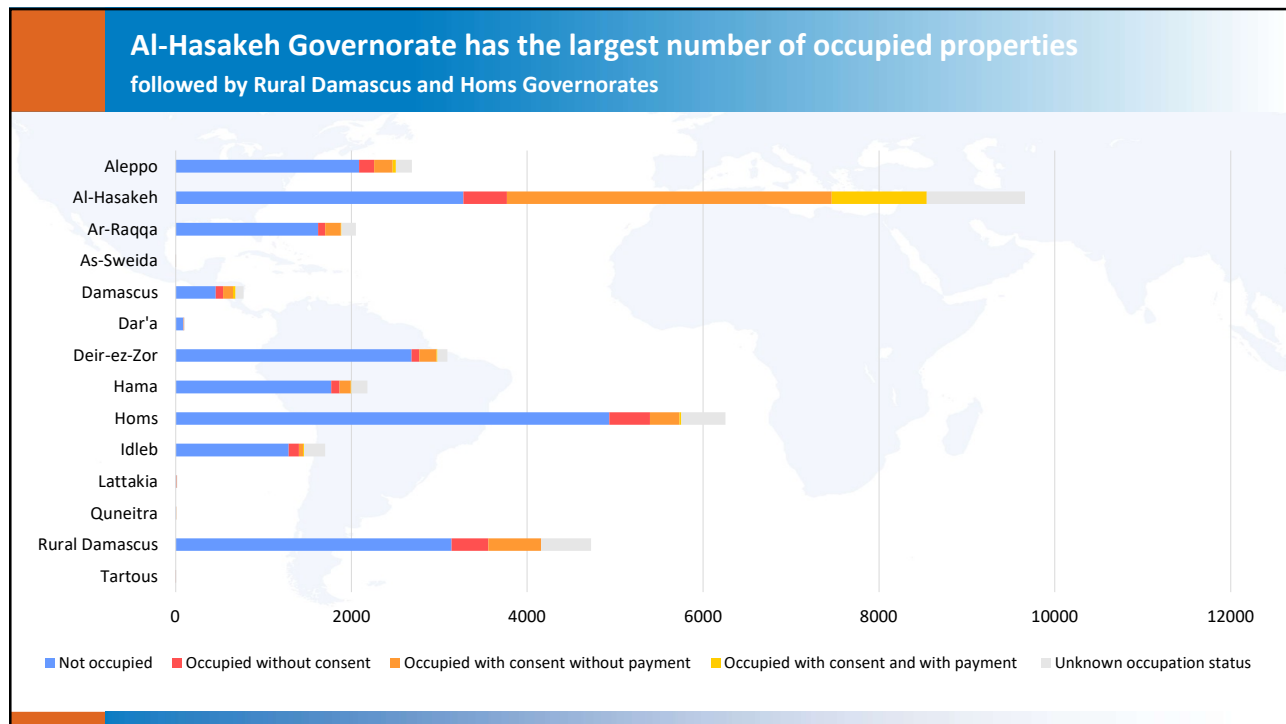
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HOW CAN THIS DATA BE USED?

UN-HABITAT

GLTN
GLOBAL LAND TOOL NETWORK

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Support HLP transitional interventions in Syria aiming at restitution and compensation, and the **resolution of disputes** on HLP rights for housing repair/reconstruction, clearing mines, etc.

Analysis to understand trends, criticalities, entry points and possible bottlenecks to:

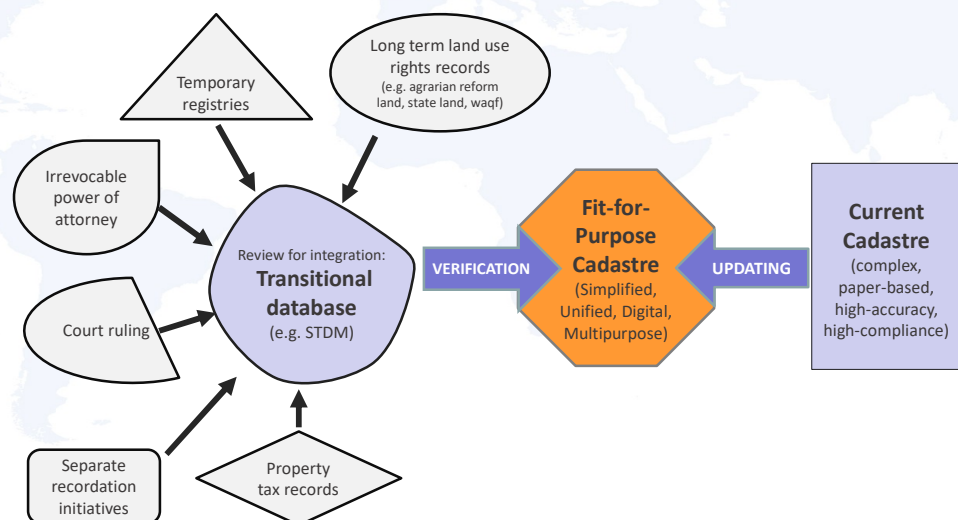
- Inform the housing strategy and land administration choices.
- Conceptualise housing, land and property interventions (repair, reconstruction, disputes resolution, etc.)
- Conceptualise restitution and compensation mechanisms

Shape follow up actions

- Scale up HLP registration for Syrian households currently in Lebanon
- Replicate the approach in other neighbouring countries (e.g. Jordan).
- Adapt the approach to Syrian households in in selected European countries (e.g. in Germany and Sweden).

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Temporary repository of HLP documents



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THANK YOU!

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For more information visit:
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