

Syria Situation

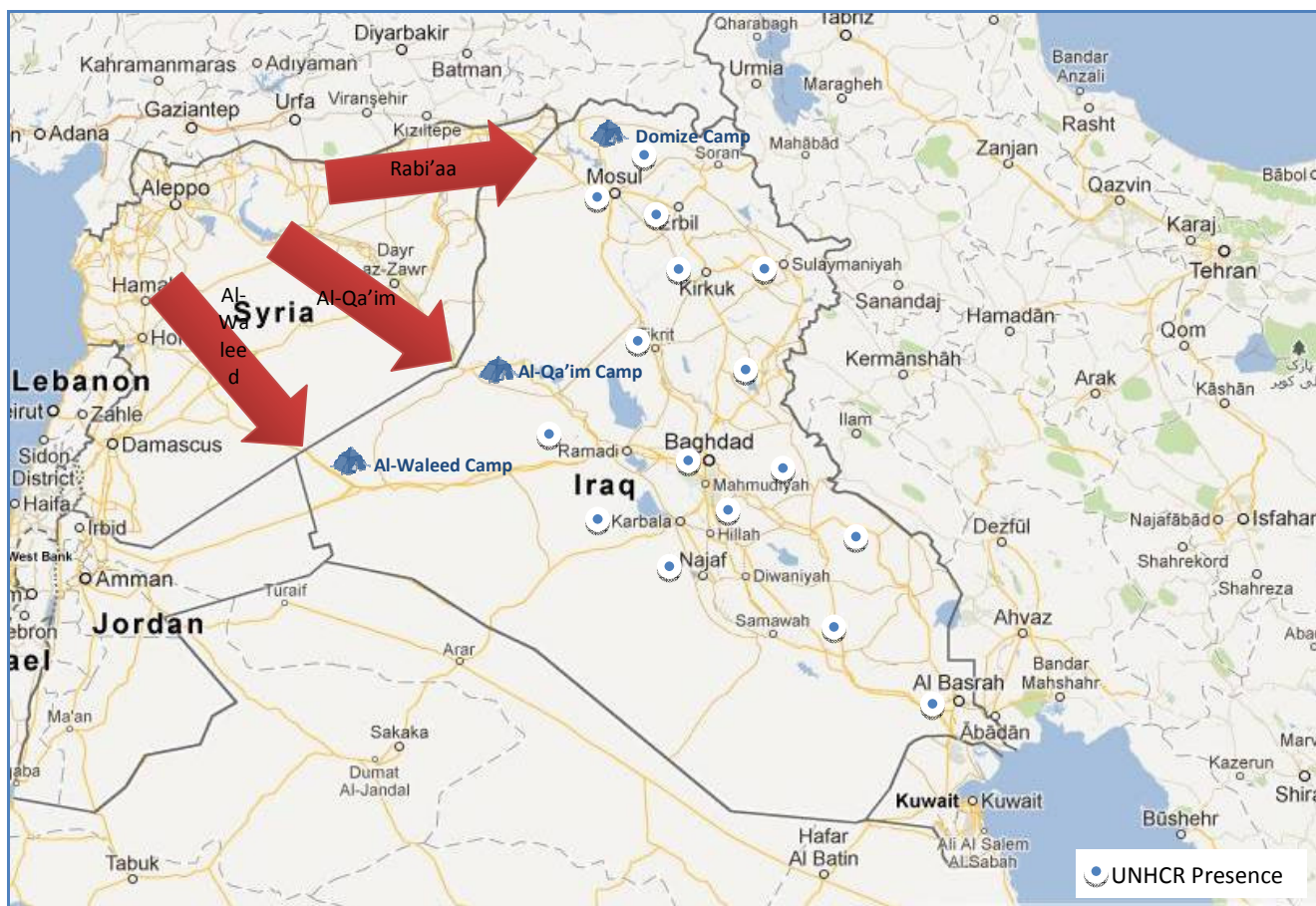
Weekly Update No.15

24 – 30 August, 2012



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Iraqi – Syrian Border Points

MoDM/DDM/Local Authorities

Agencies: UNHCR | UNICEF | WFP | WHO | IOM

NGOs: IRW | Qandil | ISHO | IRC | HARIKARI | CVO

<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>

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1. Overview

According to the latest updates, a total of 18,682 Syrian refugees have now been registered across the country. Out of this figure, 14,410 are hosted in **Kurdistan**, which maintains its open door policy. The Al-Qaim border crossing point has remained closed, and consequently there have been no Syrian refugee arrivals through this point during the reporting period.

During the reporting period, Iraqi returnees continued to enter Iraq from Syria. As of 28 August, a total of 918 Iraqi returnees returned from Syria, with entering 600 through **Al-Waleed** and 318 through **Rabiah** border crossing points. The total number of returnees since 18 July 2012 reached 30,931, including the 5,997 who returned by air, 54 among them headed up to the Kurdistan region, 9 to Duhok, 45 to Erbil and 1 to Kirkuk.

As of 28 of August, **Al-Qaim** camp accommodates 2090 individual Syrian refugees; there are still 1947 individuals accommodated in public building, out of which 1735 in local schools. All of these will need to be transferred in the camp once the later will be completed.

Domiz camp accommodates 3,166 Syrian refugees: 580 families / 2,540 individuals and 426 singles. The population hosted by the local community continues to relocate to the camp as the local resources are becoming drained and the camp capacity is increasing.

In Al Qaim, an instruction to open the border was revoked by the army. Authorities cite the on-going construction of the refugee camp and the need to vacate the schools ahead of the upcoming exams as reasons for the continued closure of the border. UNHCR has therefore continued to discuss various options with the authorities in order to ensure access to territory, includes access to Al Waleed camp or other public building as the health centre in **Al-Qaim** to be used as temporarily collective centres

Representatives from Al-Anbar Branch of Iraqi Human Rights Ministry visited the camp to familiarize with human rights issues in the camp.

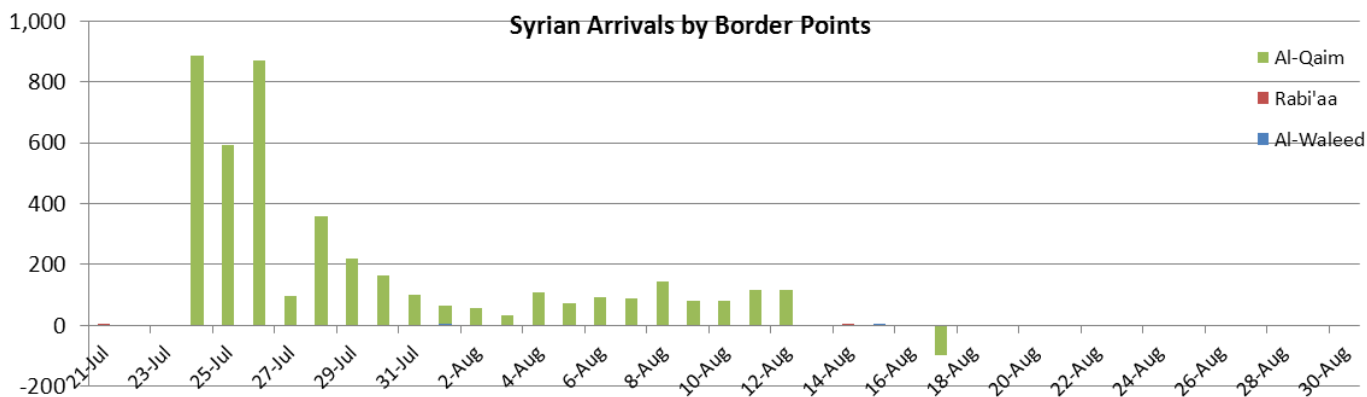
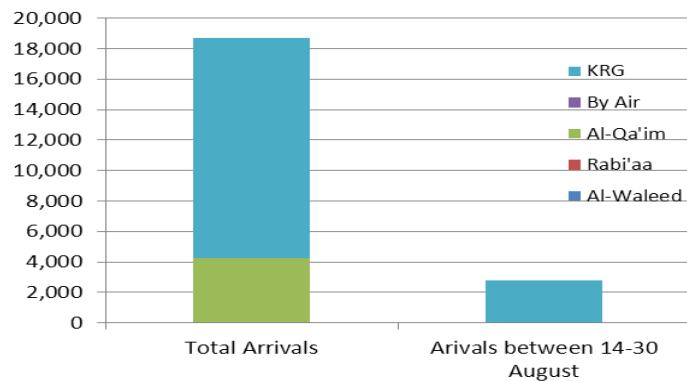
During the reporting period, a mission was conducted in Rabhia, visiting the land allocated for the 100 tents refugees' camp as well as the border. So far, only five refugees families crossed at that point, however, the camp will be ready in case of influx of refugees as anticipated by the Governor.



2. Statistics

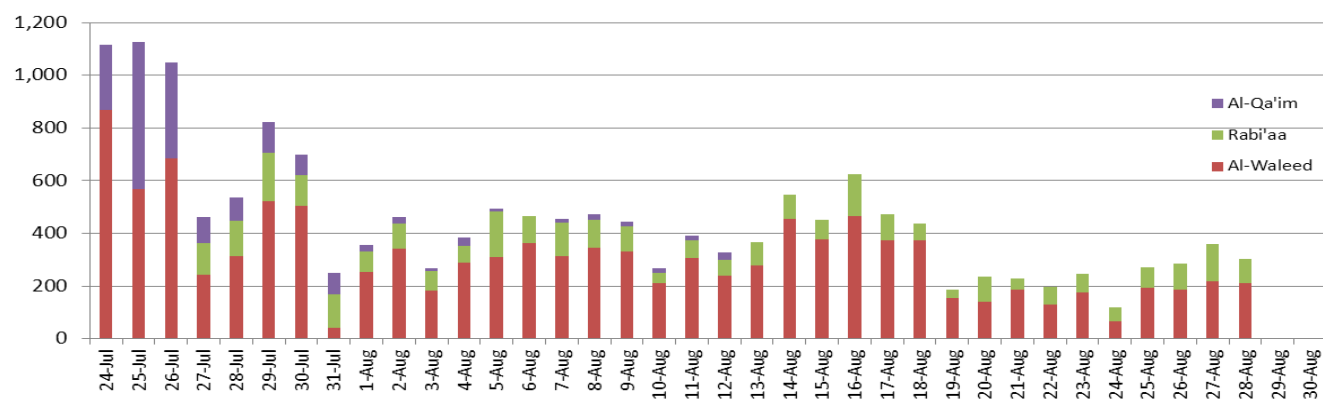
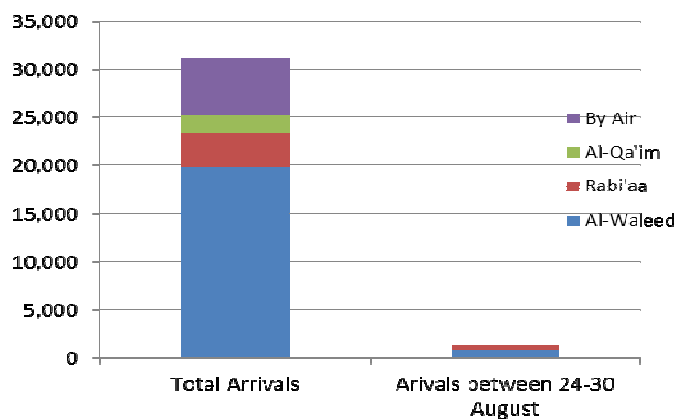
2.1 Syrian Refugees

Border Point	Arrivals on 14-30/08/2012	Total arrivals
Al-Waleed	0	18
Al-Rabi'aa	0	8
Al-Qa'im	0	4,241
By Air	0	5
Arrivals to KRG	2,784	14,410
Total:	2,784	18,682



2.2 Iraqi Returnees

Border Point	Arrivals on 24-30/08/2012	Total arrivals
Al-Waleed	1,052	19,918
Rabi'aa	512	3,700
Al-Qa'im	0	1,844
By Air	0	5,997
Total	1,564	31,459



3. UNHCR Assistance Update

3.1. Administrative institutions and practice

In Kurdistan Region, the issuance of residency permits was on hold due to Eid holiday. Government offices resumed work on 26 August. In **Domiz** camp 7 residency applications were processed for final approval of Residency Directorate in **Duhok**.

Screening interviews for the army deserters continue, so far, out of 1550 screened and interviewed, 430 are army deserters who had renounced military activities and sought protection in Domiz camp. The majority of persons interviewed were found to be young men who were subjected to compulsory military conscription.

UNHCR was informed by the Ministry of Interior Permanent Committee for refugees (MoI-PC) that the GOI is intending to provide a resident card, valid for a period of 6 months through the 'resident directorate' for Syrian arrivals.

The sponsorship program remains in effect in Al Qaim. Advocacy will continue to expand the criteria which would enable more refugees to live with their relatives, and thus decongest the public buildings and reduce the number of persons requiring accommodation in the camp.

According to the latest information received by UNHCR Protection Team, 85 Iraqi returnees received a 4 mln Iraqi dinar cash grant in Baghdad. Total number of 133 registered Iraqi Returnees received the MoDM Cash Assistance of 4 mln ID.

3.2. Protection, Registration and Profiling

In Al Qaim, the level one registration was completed and documents provided to each head of family. UNHCR is registering this initial data in its refugee database (ProGres). To date 25% of the data has been entered. According to the data entered, 17 % are children below 5 years; 56 % of those registered are women/girls.

MoDM has registered 195 Returnee families in all RACs and MoDM branches in Iraq.

In Kurdistan, out of the total population of the Syrian refugees of 14,410 who registered in level one, 7,312 are registered in ProGres, 7,098 are pending level two registration which constitutes 49,25% of the total population. Out of those recorded on ProGres women and children represent 51% while adult males represent 49%. This represents a change in the population demographic – previously adult males were at 70% of the population. This can be explained by the increasing number of families arriving to Kurdistan as compared with single men. Although single men are recorded on ProGres, only those combatants who had joined the Peshmerga and have not renounced military activities are not recorded as per instruction from HQ, DIP. Other civilian singles are registered and issued with documentation.

3.3. Security for refugees

In Al-Qaim, Security of the accommodations is being provided by Iraqi security forces; limited freedom and access of visitors is maintained. Visitors are allowed to enter the camp on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 09.00 am to 12.00.



Security staff have expressed the urgent need for establishing extra fences (4 meters high chain) to ensure adequate security for the camp and its residents. At the request of ISF, outdoor lighting system of the camp will be extended by using an additional generator with 100 KWH capacity. The existing generators with 200 KWH capacity are not enough for lighting system in the surrounding fences.

In Domiz, as absence of adequate security set up in the camp remains a major concern, UNHCR met with the governor to accelerate the presence of required security staff. Proper police deployment was observed on Aug 23rd following the meeting with the Duhok Governor.

The fence around working agencies cabins nearly completed and it still need some additional work to meet

the specification required. The construction of the security cabin near to the entrance of the camp is ongoing and a small cabin provided for police.

During the reporting period, the Community Safety Committee convened two meetings in the camp. UNHCR, DDM Camp Manager, Assaysh in addition to a female and male representing the community attended the meetings.

3.4. Assistance by Sectors

a- Shelter and infrastructure:

Al-Qaim: Construction works are in progress in all zones of the camp. Construction works commenced in Zone D of the camp on 27 August. The erection of 476 tents has been completed and this number will be extended to 700 tents. MoDM will continue providing tents with air conditioners.

Domiz: Some 100 families of 450 individuals are residing in the transit area. A total of 105 tents have been erected in the transit area of which 48 have been erected by UNHCR through Qandil while 57 tents have been erected spontaneously by the Syrian refugees who are waiting shelter to be allocated to them when construction works completes in phase 3 and 4. In Phase 38% of the total construction works planned was completed.



b- Water

In Al-Qaim, local authorities continue providing water to the camp on a daily basis. UNICEF is installing the permanent water system and latrines through its IP. RIRP sent three technical engineers, four plastic water tanks – 500 L, water filters and FI to the camp.

In Domiz, Fayda water department increased the provided potable water quantity to 470,000 Liters per day after 166 water tanks have been distributed by UNHCR and DDM. During the reporting period 23 tanks were distributed among singles and 143 among families. Daily water test is being conducted by Fayda water department at the water source and DDM to the household's water tanks.

The deep well is connected to the storage tanks with 80KV generator, diesel tank and change over board. An additional board is available for protecting the first board in the case of electricity voltage fluctuation. DDM will provide diesel, oil and generator operator for functioning the provided generator.

c- Nutrition

In Al-Qaim, all refugees in the camp are provided with three meals per day. MoDM will conduct a needs assessment to provide baby milk powder. Local community is also donating food to refugees living in the camp and outside of the camp.

In Domiz, WFP food shipment has been received, offloaded and stored in the Rub hall. the food shipments is composed of V.oil 11 mt , sugar 16 mt, salt 2 mt. lentils 16 mt, wheat .flour 92 mt . Due to insufficient space inside the Rubhall , 60 mt of wheat .flour stored outside Rubhall within the fence parameters. WFP confirmed distribution of food will commence shortly as WFP is waiting for rice shipment to arrive so as to start distribution. UNHCR is generating updated lists on actual residents in the camp for the distribution purpose.

DDM continues the provision of two hot meals a day to the single males. IOM was requested to do distribution of cooking stoves and gas cylinder among singles in addition to families who have been arriving since last distribution.

d- Sanitation/Hygiene

In Al-Qaim, latrines and showers 1/20 persons are beginning to be installed by UNICEF. These are emergency and mobile latrines that will be progressively replaced by more long-term ones. 95 out of 122 latrines have been installed, and out of 122 showers have been installed. UNICEF is responsible for sanitation and hygiene in the camp. Hygiene kits are also provided by UNICEF.

In Domiz, DDM continued with the irregular garbage collection and cleaning of septic tanks in phase one, phase two, singles area and the transit area. A number of 9000 garbage bags were distributed among camp residents during the reporting period. DDM conducts garbage collection 5days/week.

There are 154 families (100 families in transit area, 19 groups in single area and 35 families in phase 2) yet have no sanitation units in phase one, two, single area and transit area. The 48 installed tents in transit area have no sanitation units except latrines. The DDM hired tanker continued with cleaning septic tanks on a daily bases.

e- NFIs Assistance

In Al-Qaim, a total of 200 NFI kits are available for distribution now and 68 NFI kits were distributed on 27 August.

No. of NFIs released so far - 660

No. of NFIs distributed so far - 510

No. of NFIs stock in RICCs – 150

In Domiz, 300 packages of NFI with 300 canvas tents for the new arrivals were released by UNHCR. 288 packages were distributed to new arrival families and another 77 packages among new arrival groups of singles. Four tents were distributed among families relocated to Phase 2 of the camp, taking the total number of tents distributed to 219 for 164 families. A total of 100 packages were distributed to families who were already in the camp but had not received NFIs; while the others are all new arrivals who arrived lately during Eid days and onward. The office is clearing the backlog and covering all families with NFIs while ensuring that new comers receive immediate assistance with NFIs. The remaining new arrivals are hosted within the local community and approached the office for registration but had not relocated in the camp waiting for the construction work to complete.



f- Health

In Al-Qaim, all the health activities are carried out under the supervision of Al-Qaim Health Directorate. Two doctors are available in the camp and two nurses (male and female) will be employed in the camp soon to provide medical assistance to the camp. It was suggested to hire the nurses from Syrian refugees groups who hold appropriate certificates. Two female candidates have already been short-listed for the vacancies.

The MoH provides the health unit with two ambulances for 24hours service. HBS antigen is available for the camp workers and refugees. Al-Qaim Hospital will be provided with dialysis machine to be used for the camp residents. Al-Qaim local Health Directorate has launched a vaccination campaign in the camp.

In Domiz, The clinic continued to provide services during Eid holiday. Few Cases of diarrhoea and respiratory infections were reported. A mobile Obs/Gyn Support clinic visited the site so as to follow up on pregnancy cases. The mobile clinic is equipped with ultra sound device to monitor progress of pregnancy. The mobile clinic is visiting the camp every week. The clinic is donated to DoH by Korea Republic

4. Syrian Refugee / Iraqi Returnee Needs

Syrian refugees' needs include documentation, employment, sponsorship programmes and family tracing. In addition, needs for NFIs, water tanks, generators and tents have been highlighted at the locations set to receive refugees in Al-Qa'im and Al-Waleed.

The needs of Syrian refugees living out of Domiz camp in Erbil and Suleimaniya include lack of residency permits, livelihood opportunities and income, access to remedial summer schools, and lack of assistance from the host Government and the international community.

Returnees' needs, however, stretch from documentation, including PDS cards, Jensiya (national ID) document, to shelter (for some), food, health care and cash as well as employment, based on a rapid assessment conducted by UNHCR staff both at the border and at the disembarkation point.

Returnees' needs in **Erbil** and **Duhok** include similarly lack of documentation (PDS and national ID), non recognition of school certificates, lack of cash assistance, income and NFIs. In addition, and based on the protection monitoring conducted by the PARC, many medical cases are reported among the returnees, particularly amongst children, in addition to trauma resulting from the violence in Syria, the arrest of family members by the Syrians and the property left behind.

Many of the returnees interviewed in the KRG originated from Mosul and Baghdad but have opted to relocate to the Kurdistan Region for better security. PARC is monitoring the situation of the Iraqi returnees by conducting house to house visits. NFIs are being provided to those in need and the PARC is referring the cases with medical needs to services providers and ensuring follow up. Therapeutic milk is another need but so far such assistance has not been provided. Discussion with MoDM is ongoing to enhance assistance to the returnees and to ensure cash assistance is received shortly.

5. Interviews with New Arrivals (including Iraqi returnees)

Syrian refugees fleeing into **Kurdistan** reported they continue to flee in fear of chemical weapons that the Syrian Government may use against the rebel groups hidden within the community, especially in Kurdish areas. Whilst most of new arrivals reported Qamishly and Hasaka as their areas of former habitual residence, many Kurdish families have been arriving from Damascus and Aleppo which they fled to Iraq through Qamishly. Large scale destruction and indiscriminate bombardment in Damascus and its suburbs were reported as the main reasons for flight. New arrivals reported that Qamishli capacity to accommodate IDPs is overstretched. IDPs are occupying schools and mosques. The deteriorating economic situation was also reported as a reason of the flight. According to the same group of Syrians, hundreds of families headed up to the Iraqi-Syrian border and knowing about the protection in Kurdistan and the assistance provided will enter the Kurdistan region seeking sanctuary in Domiz camp.

Iraqi returnees interviewed by UNHCR staff have continued to report the dire security situation across Syrian cities. The Damascus suburb of Jaramana District is reportedly extremely tense; many Iraqis who live in this area have decided to move to other secure zones or return to Iraq. Three Iraqi individuals were reported to have been killed by an explosion in Jaramana in recent days and as a consequence, many are planning to return to Iraq.

A group of returnees confirmed that due to unstable situation in Syria and blocking main motor roads inside this country, it is hard to access to Syrian-Iraqi border. Some refugees have instead gathered at Syrian airports and are waiting for possible departure to Baghdad by air.

UNHCR protection staff in Baghdad interviewed a number of Palestinian refugees who have recently returned to Iraq from Syria due to the deteriorating security conditions. They reported that more Palestinians may be planning to return in the coming weeks, although exact numbers are unclear. Staff will continue to monitor the situation, and to follow up on their legal and protection needs.

In Kurdistan, a group of returnees mentioned that their family members were arrested and they were forced to flee Syria leaving behind their property.

6. Coordination

UNHCR is collaborating closely with the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoDM), Mol-PC, and Governorate Offices. In the meantime, UNHCR Office has engaged in a coordination process with various humanitarian actors/stakeholders, including the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) consisting of agencies and NGOs, to ensure necessary support to the Iraqi Government's efforts to respond to the returnees' immediate needs. To strengthen cooperation, UNHCR is regularly organising inter-agency meetings to involve more institutions and organisations to provide assistance to the camps.

In Al-Qaim, a coordination meeting was conducted on 24 August 2012 under the chairmanship of MoDM. Representatives from ISF, Security Committee, Al-Anbar City Council, Power Electricity Supply Directorate, UNHCR, UNICEF, IRI, ISHO took part in the meeting. Participants discussed construction issues related to the camp, supplying water, providing medical service etc.

Visits:

In Domiz, UNHCR received a delegation from the British embassy in Iraq chaired by the British Ambassador on the 27th of August. The ambassador was escorted by UNHCR in a camp tour where he was informed on various services provided in the camp, as well as challenges related to new arrivals influx and need for infrastructure developments and budget constraints. UNHCR and the Ambassador were later received by the Duhok governor where general issues pertinent to government and UNHCR response to the Syrian emergency were appreciated.

Media Coverage:

RTL documentary (German TC channel)I visited **Al-Qaim** camp and prepared several snapshots and video clippings form the camp for German TV stations.

Al-Jazeera Arabic Channel correspondents visited the camp to meet with refugee families in the camp. UNHCR team briefed this TV Channel about ongoing activities and aids provided to refugees.

A team from Japanese NHK TV Company also interviewed separate families in **Al-Qaim** and UNHCR Team.