



Lebanon Update

Support to Displaced Syrians

23 March - 30 March 2012



Syrian refugees and Lebanese host families receive food and non-food assistance in Wadi Khaled. © UNHCR – Dalia Khamissy – October 2011

Highlights of the week

Numbers

The number of displaced Syrians currently registered with UNHCR and the High Relief Commission (HRC) in north Lebanon is 8,594.

In the Bekaa, there are approximately 1,200 displaced Syrian families (6,000 people) according to UNHCR and partners. It is estimated that 60 % of the displaced reside in central and west Bekaa. Two concentration points have been identified: one in Saadnayel (over 200 families), and another in Aarsal, north Bekaa (over 350 families). In coordination with local actors and partners, UNHCR is working to improve its mapping efforts to reach out to all displaced people in the area. UNHCR is also providing technical support to municipalities and local actors to strengthen their data management and assessment capacities.

In addition, UNHCR has registered 512 displaced Syrians in Beirut since March 2011.

Protection and Security

Reportedly, Syrian troops fired machine guns into the northern Bekaa border town of Joura during clashes between the Syrian Army and the rebel Free Syrian Army. Several Lebanese families living in the area have fled to safer places.

Lebanese troops have since increased their presence in the area.

This week, 13 wounded Syrians were admitted to hospitals.

Assistance in North Lebanon

Distribution

On Monday, UNHCR and its implementing partner the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) began the regular monthly distribution and have thus far provided 466 families with food, hygiene kits and fuel. Additional sanitary napkins were provided by personal donations for families with more than two females age 11-50, while UNICEF provided clothing for children.

In coordination with the Coalition of Charities, UNHCR and DRC completed the second round of distribution of food and hygiene kits to 220 as yet unregistered Syrian families living in Tripoli, mainly in the Abou Samra, Al Bedawi and Qalamon areas. The distribution will wrap up this Friday and in total nearly 3,000 persons will have been provided with much needed assistance.

Shelter

DRC provided Mouanseh collective shelter with two new washing machines and an electrical amplifier to regulate electricity.

Education

The school enrolment rate has dropped from 53% to 25% at the primary school level (6-11 year old) and as little as 3.6% at secondary school level (12-17 year old). This significant drop is mainly due to the increase in the number of students arriving late into the school year. UNHCR and partners have expanded remedial classes in the North and are planning to launch accelerated summer learning programmes to address this problem.

UNHCR's implementing partner Save the Children Sweden (SCS) conducted two recreational activities over the weekend, which many children attended and which resulted in increased enrollment of 12 students in remedial classes.

Health

UNHCR's implementing partner The International Medical Corps (IMC) conducted the first mental health awareness session in Moaunseh shelter. The topics –helping women overcome sleep disturbance patterns and parenting children with behavioural problems– were selected after conducting needs assessments. Similar sessions will be held in other shelters in the coming weeks.

Many displaced Syrians are dealing with feelings of grief and loss from the recent events in their home country. To meet their needs, IMC hired a psychologist who will meet with Syrians in three hospitals: Tripoli Governmental, Tripoli Islamic, and Rahma.

Assistance in other parts of Lebanon

Distribution

UNHCR and partners accelerated distribution providing food and hygiene kits, mattresses, blankets, fuel coupons, electrical heaters, diapers and clothing through local partners to 589 families (some 3,000 people) in the Bekaa. UNHCR and DRC conducted 148 monitoring and follow-up visits to displaced families in

Aarsal, Al Sahel and Baalbeck to get their feedback on the assistance provided. Distribution and outreach remain a challenge in the area given the dispersion of displaced families between villages in central/west and north Bekaa. UNHCR and partners are planning to provide training and support to local actors and volunteers in order to improve access and follow-up with displaced families.

Coordination

UNHCR convened an Inter-agency coordination meeting on Monday March 26 in the Bekaa to ensure that humanitarian programmes and outreach efforts are coordinated. The meeting was attended by local actors and organizations operating in the field.

UNHCR also established sectoral working groups focusing on distribution, shelter, health, education/child protection.

Shelter

DRC and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) shelter experts continued to conduct shelter assessments in central/west and north Bekaa including mapping capacities of host families and identifying potential collective shelters. DRC will present their initial findings and recommendations next week.

UNHCR and NRC concluded a partnership agreement for the renovation of 18 unused mosques in Aarsal, to be used as collective shelters for a total of approximately 50 families (250 persons). Local contractors have been identified.

Efforts to renovate unfinished houses – including by adding windows and doors and providing basic shelter materials- in Aarsal and Masharie al Qaa were accelerated.

Shelter remains one of the sectors that poses the biggest challenges. Newly arrived displaced families find less and less shelter availability within host houses. In addition, outreach teams have

difficulty accessing remote areas such as Masharie el Qaa due to strict security procedures and the recent security incidents in that village.

Education

The majority of refugee children in the Bekaa are not enrolled in school. This is mostly due to their late arrival into the school year. UNICEF and Save the Children are developing an education assessment/programme catered to the needs of displaced Syrians in the area including the developing of accelerated summer learning programmes. Remedial classes have already been provided to 60 school-aged Syrian children in Aarsal.

Health

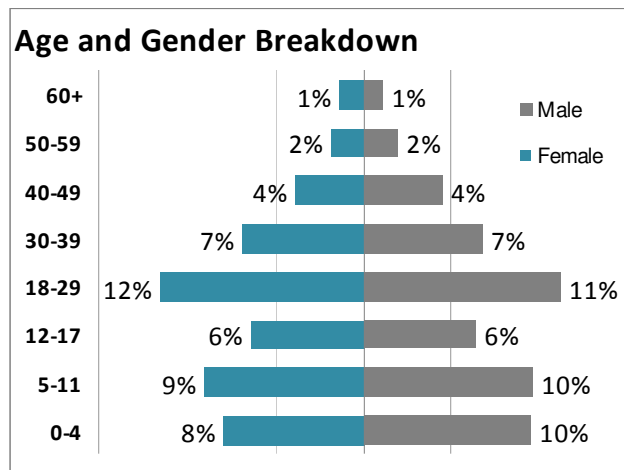
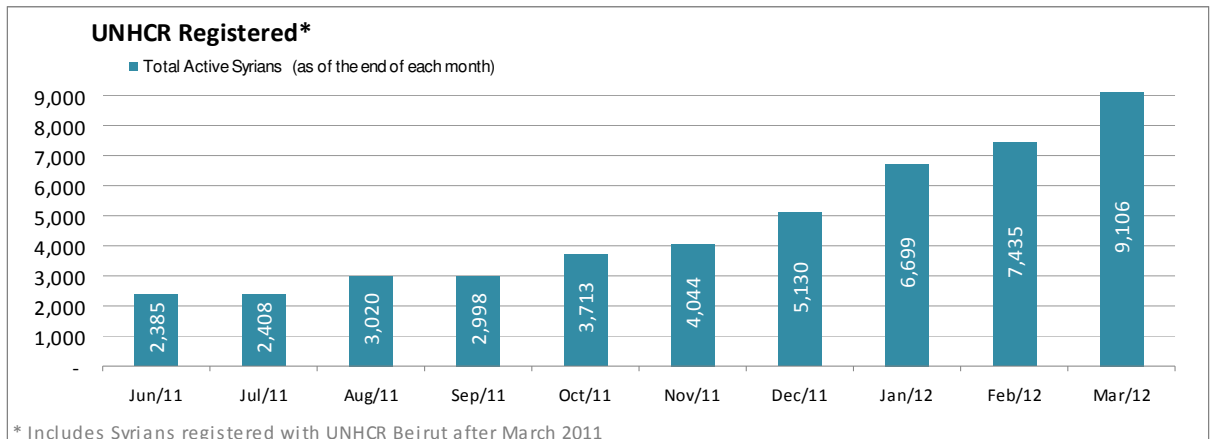
UNHCR's implementing partner IMC is working to identify primary health care

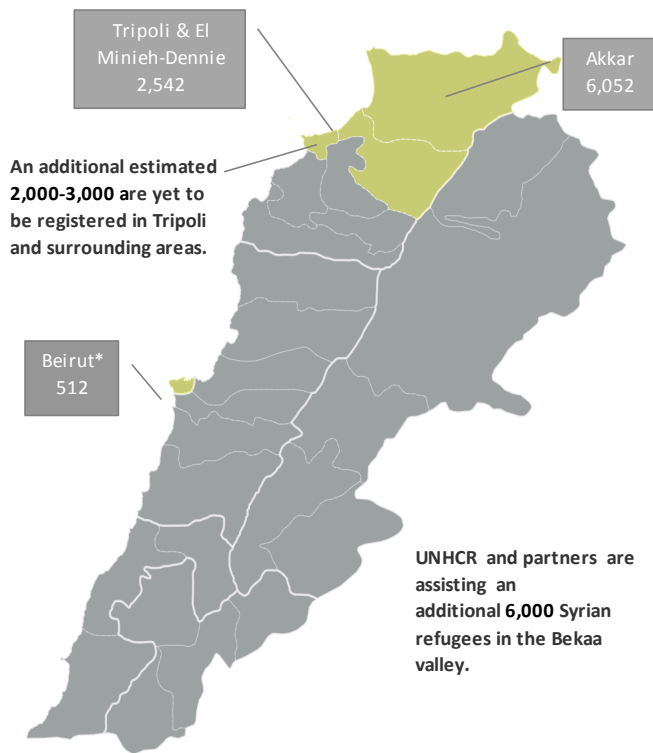
centers, in addition to the three centers in Taanayel, Baalbeck and Aarsal.

Assessments of public health centers in west and north Bekaa showed that they have limited capacity in terms of doctors availability and opening hours, and that there is a shortage of chronic and acute medication supplies for nationals.

UNHCR and IMC will provide recommendations to improve the local health infrastructure in the area and improve access to health services for both the displaced and the local community.

Situational Overview





Beginning in April 2011, Lebanon witnessed an influx of some 7,000 Syrians into north Lebanon. Many subsequently returned to Syria, while others relocated within Lebanon. Cumulatively, since April 2011, UNHCR and the HRC have registered and assisted over 13,000 persons in the north.

Currently there are 8,594 registered people in the North. In addition, there are 2,000 to 3,000 people who are yet to be registered in Tripoli. Local mayors and NGOs have played an active role in referring displaced Syrians to UNHCR-HRC teams for registration.

There are also concentrations of displaced Syrians residing in east Lebanon. UNHCR's latest estimates with partners indicate that there are over 6,000 persons in need in the Bekaa.

There are approximately 1,500 more receiving assistance from UNHCR and partners in other parts of Lebanon (including Beirut and southern suburbs).

Syrians who have entered Lebanon reside

mostly with host families in difficult circumstances. In north Lebanon, some 200 live in collective centres that have been renovated by UNHCR and partners.

Many individuals and families have been deeply affected by the events that caused them to leave and are reluctant to return home until the situation stabilizes.

Protection

The vast majority of Syrians registered with the HRC and UNHCR have come from Tal Kalakh and Homs. The majority of displaced Syrians in the Bekaa region have come from Baba Amr in Homs and Al Qusayr, south of Homs.

The majority of those who have arrived in recent months to north Lebanon have crossed at official border crossings expressing fear of going through the unofficial ones. They also express concern of the reported presence of landmines on the Syrian side of the border. In the Bekaa, the majority of displaced people enter legally the legal Masnaa border crossing while some enter through illegal borders in north Lebanon.

UNHCR maintains regular contact with the Lebanese authorities and civil society representatives to follow-up on the security situation of the displaced populations.

From the outset last April, the Lebanese government has taken a humanitarian approach allowing displaced Syrians to enter Lebanon. There have been very few cases of arrests for illegal entry/stay in the past many months. In all cases, persons were released upon UNHCR's interventions.

The movement of Syrians who entered Lebanon at unofficial border crossings in the North is still limited within north Lebanon.

Records reveal that 347 wounded Syrians have been treated in various hospitals in Lebanon since September. Expenses related to their treatment are covered by the Lebanese authorities through the HRC in north Lebanon or by UNHCR and IMC in the Bekaa. Their treatment and needs are followed-up by UNHCR and partners.

Assistance

Outside of North Lebanon where the HRC is not operational, UNHCR is working to assist refugees through local municipalities, NGOs, and other partners. The Office is now expanding its efforts to meet humanitarian needs of these communities.

In north Lebanon, a very solid coordinated response and positive working relations with the government's HRC and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) were established at the outset to the benefit of the refugees and hosting communities. These partnerships continue and together with other UN and NGO partners, the

needs of refugees and affected communities are being holistically addressed. They include the following:

- Protection interventions to ensure safety, physical integrity and non-refoulement;
- Assistance to meet basic needs;
- Education and remedial classes;
- Provision of medical and psycho-social care.

A common database is in use by the HRC and UNHCR, and referral mechanisms were established to enable the displaced persons to access assistance through specialized partners in the North. Identification and registration occurs on a daily basis by outreach teams. UNHCR and the HRC verify the numbers during the monthly distribution of food/non-food items. Persons found no longer to be in the area are de-registered. Many of these are known to have returned to Syria. UNHCR is currently expanding its operation in order to reach out to more displaced families in Tripoli.

Community Services Outreach workers from the MoSA and DRC continue to visit the displaced Syrians at homes and in schools in Wadi Khaled, Tall Bire, and Tripoli in order to counsel them, assess their needs, and refer newcomers to UNHCR and HRC for registration. A comprehensive referral mechanism to respond to survivors of violence has been established among key stakeholders for identified cases.

Shelter Most of the displaced Syrians reside with host families. Just over 200 persons are accommodated in three (abandoned) schools in the North -Al-Rama, Al-Ibra and Al-Mouanseh schools- and few families are currently accommodated in a mosque in Aarsal. The three above-mentioned schools were initially not well-equipped (with sanitation and hygiene facilities) to receive large numbers of people but have improved and are regularly monitored. Basic renovation of a fourth abandoned school in Halba, the Freidis school, is underway. The hall of Khorbet Daoud Mosque has also been rehabilitated to host displaced families should there be a need in the future.

UNHCR and the HRC initiated the renovation of Al Rama, Al Mouanseh, and Kashlak schools, and the hall of Khorbet Daoud Mosque, while the renovation of the Al Ibra school was undertaken by the Al-Bashaer Islamic Association.

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) together with partner organizations and outreach workers identified host family residences in pressing need of improvement in preparation for the winter in both north Lebanon and the Bekaa. Through this assessment, NRC provided over 90 families with coupons that enabled them to

renovate their homes in the North, allowing for better living conditions for both the local and displaced communities. NRC is implementing similar projects in the Bekaa.

Distribution (Food/ NFI) In north Lebanon, UNHCR along with the HRC, DRC, Caritas Migrant Centre, Islamic Relief, World Vision, and UNICEF distribute food and non-food items to the displaced on a monthly basis. UNHCR continues to provide food and non-food items to newly registered families who were not on the UNHCR-HRC database during the last distribution. Distribution in the Bekaa is facilitated with UNHCR partners through local actors.

North Lebanon

Items Distributed	March 28 th , 2012	Cumulative
Mattresses	0	4,613
Blankets	0	4,857
Food kits	830	8,034
Diapers	151	1,179
Baby milk	0	1,478
Hygiene kits	826	6,024
Hygiene kits by UNICEF for newly comers	0	99
Garments for children by UNICEF	320	558
Women Pads (private donation)	70	178
Torches by UNICEF	0	650
Fuel coupons of 20 liters	570	26,287
Fuel coupons of 20 liters for hosting families	0	164

Bekaa

Items Distributed	March 28th, 2012	Cumulative
Mattresses	589	1,486
Blankets	0	2,000
Food kits	496	796
Food kit private donation	12	100
Hygiene kits by UNICEF for newly comers	63	531
Clothes (private donation)	0	33 packs
Jerry cans of 10 liters	0	1,000
Fuel coupons of 20 liters	228	4,604
Baby diapers (private donation)	0	100
Sanitary napkins	12	12

Education A total of 525 displaced children are currently enrolled in public schools in the North. However, the school enrolment rate in Lebanon is 25% at the primary school level (6-11 year old) and as little as 3.6% at secondary school level (12-17 year old). Reasons vary between the different age groups.

The main reason for low school enrolment rate among primary and secondary school-aged children is Syrian students' late arrival into the school year. Other reasons include: late registration, denial of access by some school administrators, unease over their circumstances and anxiety concerning of the different curriculum. Very low secondary school enrolment is largely due to cultural practices and specifically the expectation that boys from the age of 13 years are expected to work and girls from that age are encouraged to get married.

In the Bekaa, displaced Syrian children are not enrolled in schools due to their late arrival to Lebanon in the school year.

UNHCR is seeking to improve the school enrolment rate and attendance to remedial classes through provision of awareness sessions, remedial classes and accelerated summer learning programmes. UNHCR is also coordinating with other specialized actors such as Save the Children, UNESCO, UNICEF, Terre des Hommes and others to better address this issue. UNICEF and partners are launching a detailed education assessment with a view to expand education programmes in the Bekaa.

Health UNHCR, HRC and UNHCR's implementing partner International Medical Corps (IMC) have established a referral system so that registered displaced Syrians in the North have access to health care services through the most specialized partner.

Primary Healthcare

Primary Health Care Centres, Social Development Centres of the MoSA, and a few NGO-run health care centres in the region are providing primary health care and medication to the displaced in North Lebanon. UNHCR covers the full cost for doctor consultations and diagnostic tests for women and children and up to 85% of diagnostic tests for all displaced persons. Since September 2011, there have been 986 patients who have received primary health care from different health centres and mobile medical units in North Lebanon. IMC is monitoring vaccination records for refugee children.

In the Bekaa, vaccination is being provided to all children in need including displaced Syrian children through national channels. IMC have signed agreements with primary health care centers in Taanayel, Baalbeck and Aarsal to provide doctor consultations, medications including chronics, and diagnostic services to all displaced Syrians. This will expand during the coming period.

Mental Health Care

UNHCR/IMC is integrating primary mental health services at 8 primary health care centres in North Lebanon. MSF are providing specialized mental health care needs through 3 health facilities.

In the Bekaa, MSF Switzerland started a mental health programme. In the absence of HRC's involvement, UNHCR with its implementing partner IMC will contribute to

covering health care services for displaced Syrians.

Secondary Healthcare

The HRC covers the cost of secondary and tertiary health care through local hospitals in the North. UNHCR provides additional support where needed. The HRC and IMC reached agreements with five hospitals for discounted rates in the provision of necessary health care. Since September 2011, there have been 455 hospital admissions, mostly covered by HRC. The past two weeks saw an increase in children being in need of advanced medical care to treat burns, shrapnel wounds, etc that are not available in Lebanon.

WHO and UNHCR are liaising with MoPH, IMC, MSF and other partners to increase the provision of chronic medications and to improve the health referral mechanism and health information at the field level.

In the Bekaa, UNHCR has begun covering the cost of hospital care at three local hospitals through its implementing partner IMC. So far, 24 cases have been covered, mostly deliveries. The International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) is covering the hospitalization costs of all wounded displaced pending their transfer to North Lebanon for complete treatment. Other cases in need of hospitalization will continue to be covered by the HRC if transferred to North Lebanon.

Capacity Building

UNCHR has invested in strengthening the capacities of governments and local partners through:

- Regular coordination meetings and joint plans of action;
- Technical and material support to the HRC in regards to registration, data collection and verification;
- Training and guidance to HRC, MoSA, partners, medical, educational and social service providers in a wide range of areas including:
 - protection of refugees and internally displaced persons;
 - effective registration and monitoring practices;
 - psychological first aid and mental health;
 - remedial class management and positive discipline;
 - computer skills for local health service providers.
- Quick Impact Projects such as public gardens, public library and a cine club;
- Establishment of medical referral mechanisms and training for the systematic entry of data in the health referral system.

Non-Governmental Organizations involved in humanitarian relief for displaced Syrians

North and/or Bekaa

Action contre la Faim – Handicap International – Amel Association – Anera – Arcenciel – Armenian Relief Cross – Bridging the Divide – Caritas Migrant Center – the Coalition of LocalCharities – Cultural Association (Hermel) – The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) – Frontiers – Insan Association – International Committee for the Development of Peoples (CISP) – International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) - International Medical Corps (IMC) – International Organization for Migration – International Orthodox Christian Charities – International Relief & Development – Intersos – Islamic Health Society – Islamic Relief (IR) – Lebanese Aid Society – Lebanese Family Planning Association – Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) – The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) - Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF)– Medecins du Monde –Mercy Corps – Muslim Aid – Premiere Urgence – Relief International (RI) – RESTART – Salam/Peace - Save the Children (SCS) – Terre des Hommes (TDH) – World Vision (WV) - Young Men Christian Association – Zakat Fund –

Implementing partners in the North and Bekaa

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) – International Medical Corps (IMC) – Save the Children (SCS) – The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)

UN Agencies

UNHCR - UNICEF – WHO – UNDP - WFP - UNFPA

For more information on the role of each agency please visit: <http://docs.google.com>

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