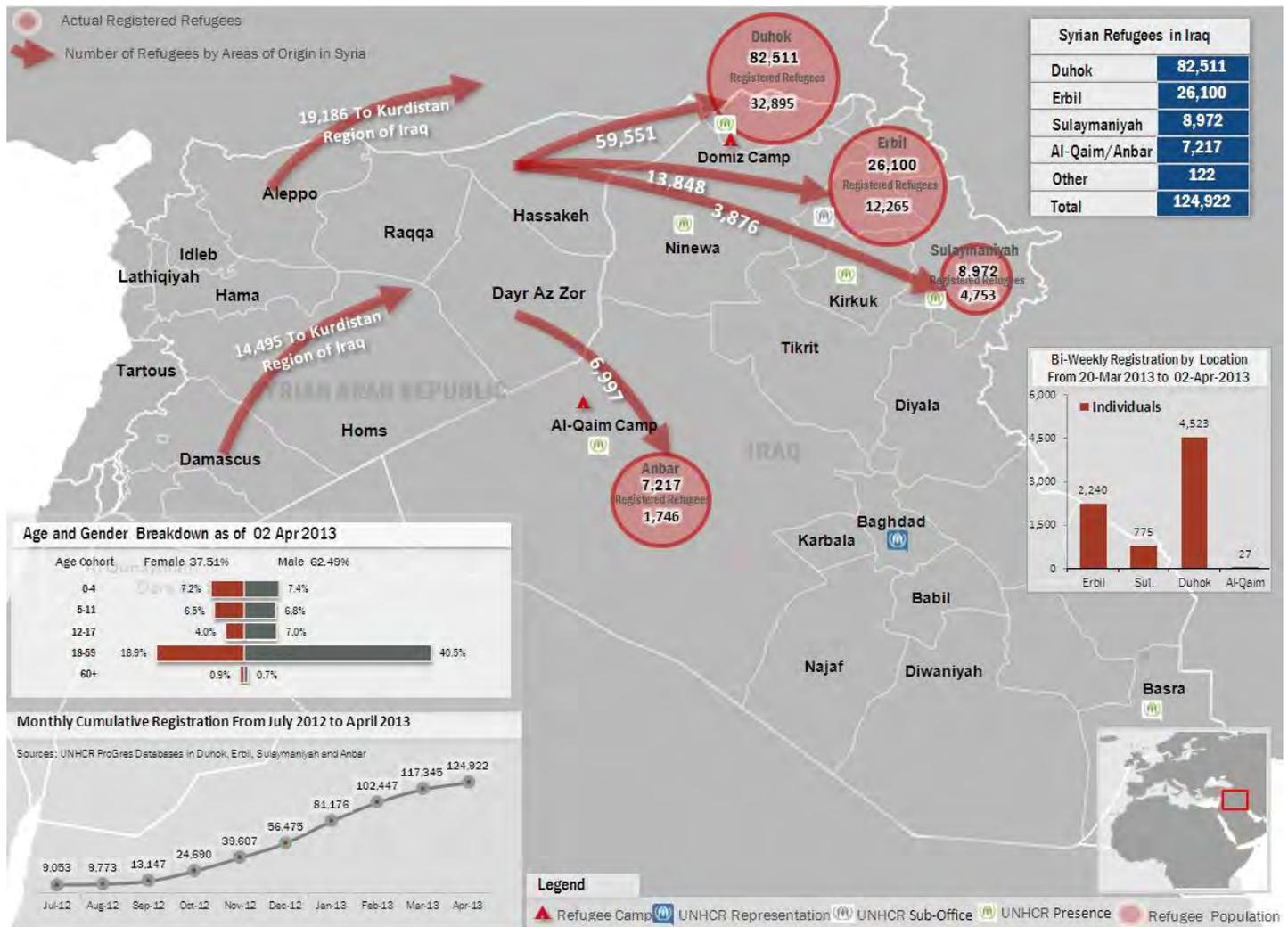


Syria Situation

Bi-Weekly update No. 39

20 March – 2 April 2013



To date the following donors have contributed to the Regional Response Plan Jan-June 2013:

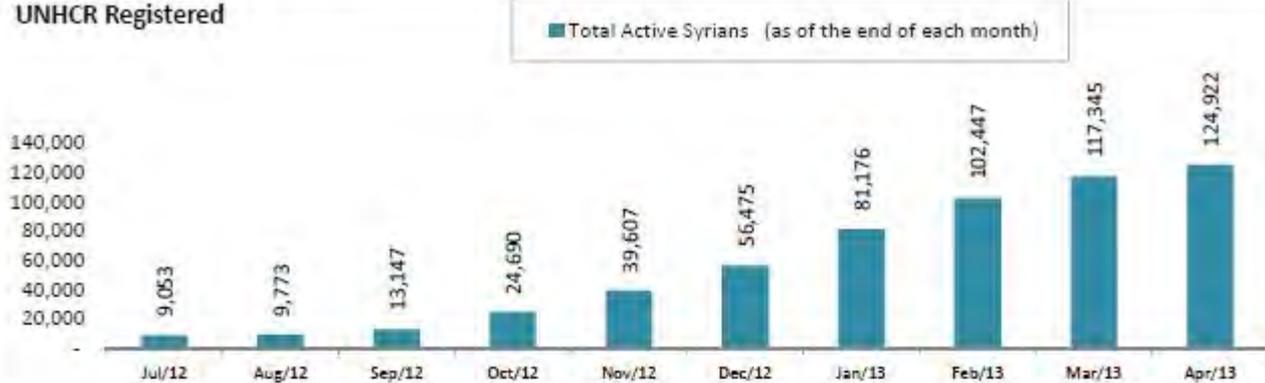


<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/>

iraqpi@unhcr.org

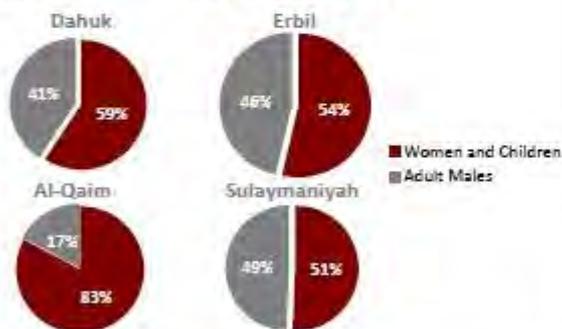
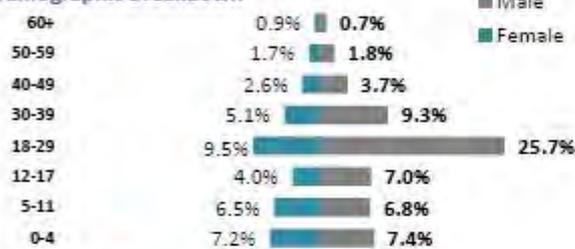
MOMD | DDM | DGC | Local Authorities
 Agencies: UNHCR | UNICEF | WFP | WHO | IOM
 NGOs: IRW | Qandil | ISHO | IRC | HARIKAR | CDO | RIRP | ACTED | Save the CHILDREN | NRC | Muslim Aid | IKL | CDO | CAPNI | Rabin | Asayeesh | MSF | Oxfam | Afkar | Caritas | UPP |

UNHCR Registered



Demographic profile based on 124,922 proGres registered persons

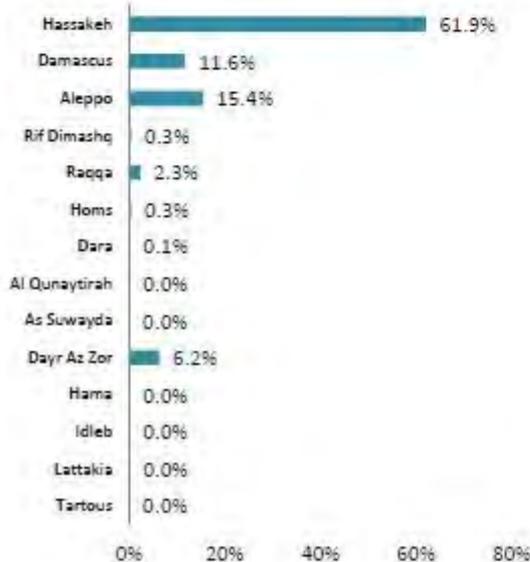
Demographic Breakdown



Localisation of the Registration



Place of origin



Governorate	Persons	House holds	% Total
Dahuk*	82,511	32,895	66.1%
Erbil	26,100	12,265	20.9%
Sulaymaniah	8,972	4,753	7.2%
Anbar	7,217	1,746	5.8%
Other	122	64	0.1%
Total Iraq	124,922	51,723	100.0%

* Includes Syrians registered in Domiz Camp

Camps	Persons	House holds
Domiz**	73,995	28,536
Al-Qaim Camp1	1,772	398
Al-Qaim Camp2	2,545	553

** Note that this figure reflects the number of refugees registered in Domiz Camp. However, a substantial number of refugees relocated out of the camp. The camp population is estimated to be 35,000.

1. Syrian response in Iraq: highlights

- A total of **124,922 Syrian refugees** are now registered in Iraq; 117,705 are in the Kurdistan Region
- The number of new arrivals decreased with 7,538 in the KR with an average of 540 on a daily basis
- Restrictions for Syrians (Syrian side) crossing into northern Iraq have been reported
- In Erbil the KRG agreed to a more in-depth assessment of the land allocated for the new camp
- In Sulaymaniyah UNHCR is still negotiating with the government to approve the land plot
- As of 28 March, the **Al Qa'im border is now closed even for family reunification** with some exceptions for females and minors less than 15 years old
- There are around 15 - 20 families reportedly at the Al Qa'im border hoping to access Iraqi territory

2. Sector updates

2.1 Reception, Registration and Protection

Al Qa'im

In Al Qa'im, Anbar governorate, the Syrian refugee population is 7,216, representing a reduction from the previous reporting period due to return to Syria and refugees who received sponsorship and left the camp. Interviews among new arrivals indicate the reasons for flight are general insecurity and reported abuses coupled with the deteriorating living conditions, the loss of livelihood opportunities and the absence of almost all basic services.

The border at Al Qa'im remains closed except for emergency medical cases. Syrians in need of medical attention are admitted for day-care provided at the health unit established at the border. However, as of 28 March, the border was closed completely by the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) for Syrian family reunification, with exception of females and minors under 15 years old. Males over 15 years old can no longer cross the border into Iraq, as reported to UNHCR.

The number of new repatriation cases is 779, bringing the total number of Syrian returnees to 3,676. Reasons for return continue to be lack of freedom of movement and livelihood opportunities as well as reportedly improved conditions in Al Bukamal. UNHCR continues to counsel those expressing interest in returning but is not facilitating or encouraging repatriation given the lack of conditions conducive to a stable return. Counselling is conducted to ensure the process is voluntary and the applicants are fully informed of the strict government policy not permitting re-admission into Iraqi territory.

UNHCR/IRC interventions led to the successful release of two refugees, of which one was accused of illegal entry into Iraq and the other accused of breaking into a home. The two refugees were relocated to Al Qa'im Camp.

UNHCR was notified of the suspension of granting Iraqi nationality to Syrians who are eligible as per the set criteria. UNHCR is following up with relevant bodies for more details on the reasons of suspension and the expected duration of the suspension. Furthermore, temporary sponsorship, which is usually granted for several days, has also been suspended.



Children playing at the Child Friendly Space, Al Qa'im



Kurdistan Region

Syrian refugee families and singles continue to approach the UNHCR office in Duhok (including Domiz Camp), Erbil and Sulaymaniyah. During the reporting period, UNHCR recorded 7,538 new arrivals which comprises of 1,155 families (5,972 individuals) and 1,566 singles.

- Erbil: 380 families (1,678 individuals) and 562 singles
- Sulaymaniyah: 139 families (610 individuals) and 165 singles
- Duhok: 636 families (3,684 individuals) and 839 singles

There was a sharp decrease in new arrivals during the reporting period; the Niwroz Kurdish holidays may have impacted the trend of arrivals. However, there are other factors. Refugees are reporting that a large number of Syrian Kurds are being stopped (in Syria) from fleeing across the border into the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and only allowing cases with severe vulnerabilities or with family ties (reunification), and specifically for individuals obtained permission in Qamishli and Derik towns. According to new arrivals, these constraints have been in place since 1 April.

The restricted movements were widely reported on the local news in KR. i.e: *“The Kurdish high committee in Syria decided it will prevent the Kurds from Syria to leave their areas in Syria and migrate to north of Iraq. The committee also said there are many Kurds migrating to the north of Iraq which is becoming a concern of the committee and if migrating continues at such a scale it will affect the Kurdish population in Syria and the politics”*, from the Gali Kurdistan newspaper, 1 April, 2013.

The newcomers reported that they had to pay a fee equivalent to 1,000 Syrian Pounds (\$10) per person to cross.

Refugees are also reporting that for the past 20 days there is no network (mobile, internet) between the KR and Syria, impeding contact with friends and relatives.

On 2 April, a working session was held with the Child Protection Working Group to finalize the Child Protection referral framework. Outcomes from the meeting include:

- The necessary formats for consent, intake and referral were agreed upon.
- The development of a tracking database for following up of cases will take place.
- The increasing number of working children who run after cars in the camp and expose themselves to accidents. It was agreed that the issue should be integrated in the regular community sensitization programs with families and parents to raise awareness of their responsibility to counsel and keep their children safe. It was also agreed that the matter should be discussed at the Camp Coordination meeting to ensure agencies take a coordinated approach to assess the needs of working children and their parents and to respond to the problems.

On the same day the SGBV Working Group met and agreed upon:

- Development of a comprehensive referral flowchart including all services for response to SGBV.
- To coordinate prevention, identification, referral and response to SGBV.
- Tracking database will be established for case follow up.



New arrivals continue to receive UNHCR and UPP mass information leaflets about protection and general guidance in the camp. However, according to DMC some 60% of the refugee population is illiterate and face difficulties in accessing information. Also, according to DMC low levels of education within the refugee population is a main cause of various conflicts and illegal actions by the refugees in the camp. DMC drew this to the attention of agencies overseeing education/livelihood to address adult education and awareness.

2.2 Security

Al Qa'im

The overall security context in Al Qa'im, located in Iraq's Anbar Governorate remains tense. Spill over of hostilities from the Syrian side, though isolated, have occurred in addition to a present potential of civil unrest. Recently, insurgents attacked a private company operating in Anbar along the border with Syria, and resulted in the death of two people and the kidnapping of another individual; several vehicles and caravans were burned.

Domiz

NTR

2.3 Assistance Update

Shelter / infrastructure

Al Qa'im

Construction in Camp 3, Al-Obaidy, is complete with final installations for electricity and external lighting remains. A decision was taken to repack collapsed tents and store them in the Rubhall. As a result of the storms there are now 250 collapsed tents.

Domiz

Despite the decrease of new arrivals, the **camp remains critically congested**. In some cases **15 or more refugees have to share one tent**. In addition, refugees continue to spontaneously erect tents in non-demarcated camp areas, which is informally expanding the camp boundary.



Refugees living outside camp perimeters are close to reaching urban areas or are erecting tents near to construction works.

There are at least 3,500 “guest” families who do not have their own shelter, or do not have proper shelter. As a result they have problems accessing services. DMC appeals to agencies to prioritize those families in their activities and assistance projects.

Reception Centre:

Qandil concluded the construction works for the new reception centre that will accommodate a total of 420 individuals in 15 tents and is ready for hand over to UNHCR and DMC in order to establish the final management arrangements.

Transit 7:

The Tent Allocation Committee comprised of DMC, UNHCR, Refugee Representatives as well as Police/Asayeesh, met to develop a work plan for relocating families to Transit 7. The identification will be based on the following criteria:

1. 70% of tents will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis in chronological order starting with those who arrived first in the camp and who currently do not have their own shelter (guest families); and
2. 30% of tents will be allocated to vulnerable persons in accordance with the vulnerability criteria agreed upon by the community services/protection.

Market Area:

Despite the establishment of a new area for the market, many vendors are still operating at the entrance to the camp, which is generating congestion and interfering with vehicle movements along the main route. All varieties of items are being displayed in the market, including toys for children.



The new reception centre in Domiz Camp



The market, Domiz Camp

Land Allocation for New Camps in the KR

A preliminary technical analysis (in terms of land areas, potential camp layout, water drainage, supply and use, electricity, etc) of the newly allocated land for a refugee camp in Erbil was completed. As a follow up, a topographic survey is in process in order to guide and implement the above analysis. The new camp is estimated to accommodate 10,000 -15,000 individuals.

Regarding the new camp in Sulaymaniyah, negotiations are still on-going between local authorities and the local community.

Water and Sanitation

Al Qa'im

Supplements of water continue in Camp 1 and Camp 2 from the water compact unit. UNICEF and partners completed the bill of quantities for the required maintenance of the main water stations, which is pending approval. In Camp 3, the internal water network has been completed and was connected to the main source at Al Obaidy city; they are still negotiating the approval to connect the WASH system for the camps. Some refugees complained of high turbidity of the water; the UNHCR team spoke with UNICEF facilitators who confirmed that the turbidity levels are within the standard limits.

Domiz

DMC continues to provide water for tanks in the camp. MSF provides trucking to the singles area and irregular areas. Some families started to dig channels from septic tanks to dislodge the waste water as the cleaning of septic tanks has been not conducted regularly.

UNHCR and UNICEF regional WASH expert conducted a joint assessment in the camp. Cleaning of septic tanks is one of the main priorities identified. Connection to the water network increased the water flow and as a result the septic tanks have overflowed in all sections of the camp. The capacity of partners is not sufficient to deal with the enormity of the problem. Furthermore, phase 5 septic tanks are not being cleaned by the partner due to a lack of trucks. The issue is recognized as a priority by the WASH Working Group. Pending a more permanent solution to the problem, UNHCR is considering increasing the truck capacity to clean the septic tanks and prevent outbreaks.

UNHCR followed up on the WASH situation in Qamishlo School which remains critical. The DMC is closely monitoring the situation to address solutions.

On 3 April, a WASH Working Group meeting was held in the camp to discuss the following:

- WASH WG structure was improved by establishing technical groups on water supply, sanitation/waste water and solid waste management and hygiene promotion/WASH kits. The objective of creating technical groups was to improve long term and short term responses to challenges in the WASH sector which represents one of the most critical issues in the camp as it is linked to the issue of space in the camp and prevention of health problems.
- Dislodging of septic tanks as a key and immediate action.
- Addressing the latrine situation in congested areas of the camp (especially phases 1 and 2).
- Water management – irregular connection by families to the water network.
- Information management and awareness for the refugees on WASH services to be followed up by IRC through community development/mobilization/awareness programs.



Refugees waiting for trucks to deliver water



Distribution upon the arrival of the water trucks

NFIs

Al Qa'im

UNHCR received 60 wheel chairs from WHO and on 21 March the Danish Refugees Council (DRC), through Al Tadamon League for Iraq, provided UNHCR with another 31 wheel chairs and nearly 50 fifty bathing seats for people with special needs, as well as diapers and hygiene materials for adults. The distribution of the wheel chairs will take place in the next reporting period.

Domiz

UNHCR is finalizing a plan for the distribution of baby diapers. An assessment was conducted in cooperation with IRC (with women community representatives) to determine the number of children for the distribution of diapers:

- Children under 1 4972
- Children under 2 2255
- Children under 3 2137

The baby diaper distribution will also include one 180 gr/piece of soap. UNHCR plans to distribute on 7 April.

IOM is conducting a survey on NFI items needed in the camp and plans to provide some 1,200 kits (900 in the camp and 200 for refugees residing outside of the camp). Qandil continues to distribute NFIs to new arrivals and is assisting those affected by the wind storm on 16 March.



New arrivals receiving NFIs that will support them during their stay in the camp, particularly mattresses while looking for possibilities to share tents.

Food

Al Qa'im

The UNHCR cash food assistance is ongoing. To date 4,157 refugees have received the cash food assistance.

WFP delivered over 10,000 food parcels to Al Qa'im, which is adequate to feed the current population of 4,294 for two months, especially given that between 100 to 200 people are reportedly leaving Al Qa'im camp every week.

Domiz

In collaboration with Islamic Relief Iraq and Barzani Charity, WFP distributed 7,920 family vouchers to a population of 34,547 refugees living in Domiz camp during the month of March. These vouchers are valued at over USD 1.07 million. WFP will scale up its program according to the demand and size of the population in the camp. WFP has secured enough funding to cover the food needs of this population for the month of April and expressed urgent need for additional allocation of funds for May and June, which are estimated between USD 1.7 to 2 million.

The WFP Representative for Iraq met with UNHCR on 27 April and discussed the issue of numbers and the challenges as Domiz camp has reached saturation point. WFP and UNHCR have agreed that WFP will fund the building of a shaded area for the beneficiaries after UNHCR installed a new caravan/container for the distribution of vouchers to refugees in Domiz camp. WFP received the design from Qandil and will soon start the work.

WFP started the school feeding distribution of fortified biscuits enriched with vitamins and minerals. The Ministry of Education in the Kurdistan Region is complementing with milk, juice and fresh fruits. WFP is planning to reach 6,000 children in Iraq by December (4,000 in Domiz and 2,000 in Al Qa'im).



Health

Al Qa'im

The lack of medicines, especially for chronic diseases remains of critical concern. Vaccination against Typhoid through outreach teams is ongoing as well as daily vaccinations for new arrivals.

Due to the lack of data on the nutrition status of children under-five years in Al Qa'im, UNICEF supported a rapid nutrition assessment by a trained team from the Nutrition Research Institute of the MoH from 17-21

March, which targeted 570 children in the two camps. Data analysis is in process and the results will be completed next week.

Domiz

WHO will begin an epidemiological assessment for the measles outbreak. So far 270 cases have been identified with no reported fatalities. A polio vaccination campaign is underway in both Al Qa'im and Dohuk targeting refugees and the host population.

Similar to Al Qa'im, DoH Dohuk with the support from UNICEF is planning a nutritional survey in Domiz camp among children under-five years old.

The Psychosocial Counselling Centre located in the Primary Health Centre (PHC) was opened under the management of MSF psychologists.

MSF-CH is strengthening and expanding their activities in Domiz. They will play an active role in all preventative activities.

Education

Al Qa'im

Schools in both camps are operating with an average of fifty per cent of the registered children. This is occurring as a result of refugee returns to Syria as well as an outbreak of lice, obliging parents to prevent their children from attending school.

The registration of the intermediate school is complete yet classes have not begun, authorization from DoE is pending and UNICEF is working to ensure approval takes place as soon as possible.

Recreational activities are taking place for both girls and boys.



Domiz

The number of students studying at Kar Primary School is 720 students and the number at Qamishlo primary school is 1,430 students. The MoE provided more textbooks for children in the camp schools.

UNICEF organized an exhibition with children's drawings in the Kar School and included the following:

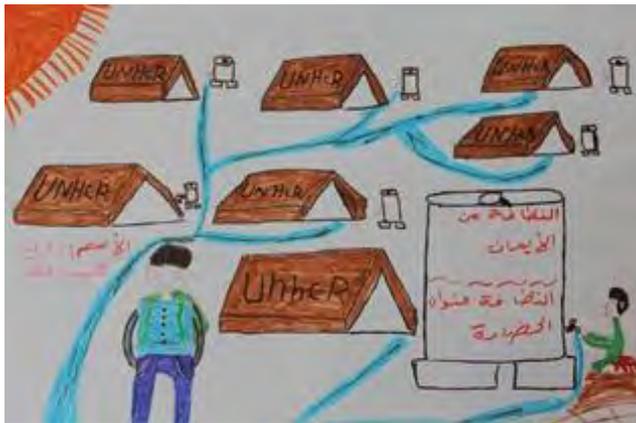


Illustration of tents in the camp



Indicating a land mine



Carrying water buckets after water distribution



Describing the war in Syria

3. Interviews with Syrian refugees

Domiz Camp - One Year Anniversary (April 2012 - 2013)

S. M. is a 27 year old Syrian refugee who owns a female underwear shop in Domiz. She was among the first 37 families who arrived in the camp when it was established the first week of April 2012. S.M is married with two children and has managed to settle into camp life one year later.

“When we arrived there was no camp as such. There were no tents so the government arranged for us to sleep for few days with the Syrians living in houses nearby the camp who arrived in Kurdistan in 2004. The authorities were very welcoming, and also UNHCR, the



S.M. in her shop, Domiz Camp

Red Cross and the local people who were there to receive us.”

S.M and her family lived in Damascus and when the conflict in Syrian started her husband lost his job and they had no money to buy food and take care of their children. Heavy shelling started near their home and they feared for their lives. So, they decided it was time to leave the country. “We heard on the radio that the KRG was going to welcome Kurdish refugees so we took what we could and decided to leave,” she said.

“Our first night in the camp was a day that I will never forget. I couldn’t stop crying. We never experienced fleeing our home, and suddenly here we were, sleeping in unknown people houses and in tents. It was painful. Memories of my family and friends in Syria were persistent and I was afraid for our future,” she continued.

However, after one year in the camp, S.M and her family adapted to the living situations and decided to open a shop. “I needed to do something in order not to get depressed, so I opened this shop with the support and encouragement of other refugees. I am a bit happier now, but I have Syria in my everyday thoughts and I would like to return if the security situation improves.”

Omead, Muhammad and Abdulwahid together with Bushra Halepota, the HOSO, were among the UNHCR staff members who welcomed the first Syrian refugees in the camp. “There was no land properly prepared

yet, and no tents nor toilet or water facilities. I remember we had our first coordination meeting seated on the floor in the camp area together with the KRG and our partner Qandil’ said Omead. “We didn’t know the camp was going to expand as much as it has today, like a small town. Our first priority was to distribute NFIs and tents to the new arrivals that were coming with very few belongings, to register them and to ensure they received immediate critical assistance such as potable water and emergency care.”

“We were in hurry to find immediate solutions for the new arrivals. I was worried that there was no security in the camp. We were having our first meetings with the Governor of Dohuk, the

DDM and other local authorities and we worked together day and night to ensure rapid and proper camp preparations,” said Bushra. “We were giving NFIs even during the late evenings, directly from our trucks, and the children were so happy to receive them,” she continued.



Left: Domiz in April 2012; Right: Domiz one year later



Registration in tents, April 2012



Fumigation in Domiz Camp, April 2012

4. Coordination

Al Qa'im

The protection working group, led by UNHCR, held its bi-weekly meeting on Al Qa'im with the participation of UNICEF, IRC, RIRP, NYL, Save the Children, IRW, WFP, MoMD and MSF. Agency updates were shared and action points identified as applicable.

Kurdistan Region

On 27 March, two reporters from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC Radio) visited Domiz Camp and interviewed several refugees and government authorities working in the camp.

5. Acronyms and abbreviations

DDM	Department of Displacement and Migration
DMC	Development and Modification Centre
DoH	Department of Health
HOFO	Head of Field Office
HOSO	Head of Sub Office
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IPs	Implementing Partners
KR	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
MOMD	Ministry of Migration and Displacement
PARC	Protection Assistance Reintegration Centre
PHC	Primary Health Centre