

REGIONAL ANALYSIS SYRIA

28 August 2013

This Regional Analysis of the Syria conflict (RAS) is a light version updating the [July RAS](#) and provides information on key developments during the month of August while continuing to highlight the priority concerns.

The next full version of the RAS will be published at the end of September.

The RAS seeks to bring together information from all sources in the region and provide holistic analysis of the overall Syria crisis. The Syria Needs Analysis Project welcomes all information that could complement this report. For more information, comments or questions please email SNAP@ACAPS.org.

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Overview

- **Syria:** Reports of the use of chemical weapons on 3 districts in the suburbs of Damascus have refocused the international community's attention on Syria. Doctors from the areas affected, each of which have been under opposition control and besieged by Government of Syria (GoS) forces, confirmed 355 deaths from 3,600 treated in hospitals with symptoms consistent with exposure to chemical toxins. UN investigators were allowed to visit an attack site five days later, although the mission has been obstructed by security incidents. The opposing parties to the conflict accuse each other of using chemical weapons while international Governments and media outlets have been quick to take sides. Amid reinvigorated international rhetoric concerning an intervention in Syria, several countries, including the US, are preparing for possible military action. Reports on 28 Aug indicated an increased movement of civilians to the Lebanese border. The talks scheduled in preparation of the Geneva II conference have been postponed.
- Meanwhile, the humanitarian situation continues to further deteriorate. The threat of an international intervention has further depreciated the Syrian pound, reducing access to basic needs. During August, the hottest month of the year, access to clean drinking water has been severely limited in certain areas and while there is limited information available on the WASH situation, anecdotal information from specific locations indicate an increase in hygiene related diseases, particularly in IDP camps.

- With the breakdown of law and order in many areas, the GoS recently legalised armed private security companies for the purposes of individual, installation and asset protection. While this reveals the tremendous pressure faced by Syrian security forces, particularly the police, it may introduce new and potentially unaccountable arms bearers in an already highly fragmented playing field, opening the way for further human rights abuses.
- **Host countries:** The continuing hostilities in Syria and the lack of basic services displaced thousands to neighbouring countries in recent weeks. The number of registered refugees is close to reaching 2 million. August witnessed the largest mass exodus of Syrians as 46,000 people fled into the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I) in just 10 days following the opening of the Peshakapor border crossing on the 15th. People reportedly fled as a result of both the on-going hostilities between Kurdish groups and Al Qaeda-linked elements and economic hardship. This unprecedented influx of people has been met with a swift humanitarian response, though many thousands are accommodated in temporary shelters awaiting more adequate solutions.
- As the political situation in Egypt remains deeply unstable, Syrians have endured hostilities from the host community and have been subject to tighter restrictions on its movements. UNHCR has reported a surge of Syrians coming forward to be registered, in the hope of being afforded greater protection. There has been a sharp increase in passengers flying from Cairo en route to Syria, suggesting that many are choosing to return rather than remain in Egypt amid the unrest and lack of basic protection.
- On 23 August 2 bombs in the Lebanese city of Tripoli killed 47 people and wounded over 500. The attacks came just over a week after an attack in Beirut's southern suburbs in which 30 people died, the second in this district in recent months. This deteriorating security situation is heightening the tensions that have been simmering across the country as the host community and the Syrians continue vying for jobs, accommodation and resources.

Possible developments

- Irrespective of any international military intervention, the conflict within Syria will continue around the strategic urban centres (Damascus, Al-Hasakeh, Aleppo, Deir-ez-Zor and Homs). Displacement within Syria will continue and across the borders into KR-I and Lebanon. Meanwhile tensions between host communities and refugees in Lebanon will rise.
- Short term international military intervention in Syria is unlikely to have significant consequences for the humanitarian situation in the short term. Although any changes in the balance in the power may change the dynamics of the conflict, similar humanitarian needs and constraints will remain.
- Humanitarian access within Syria will continue to be constrained by insecurity and political restrictions at a local level. The most effective interventions will be with or through national organisations, flexible enough to take advantage of windows of opportunity.

Overview - Syria

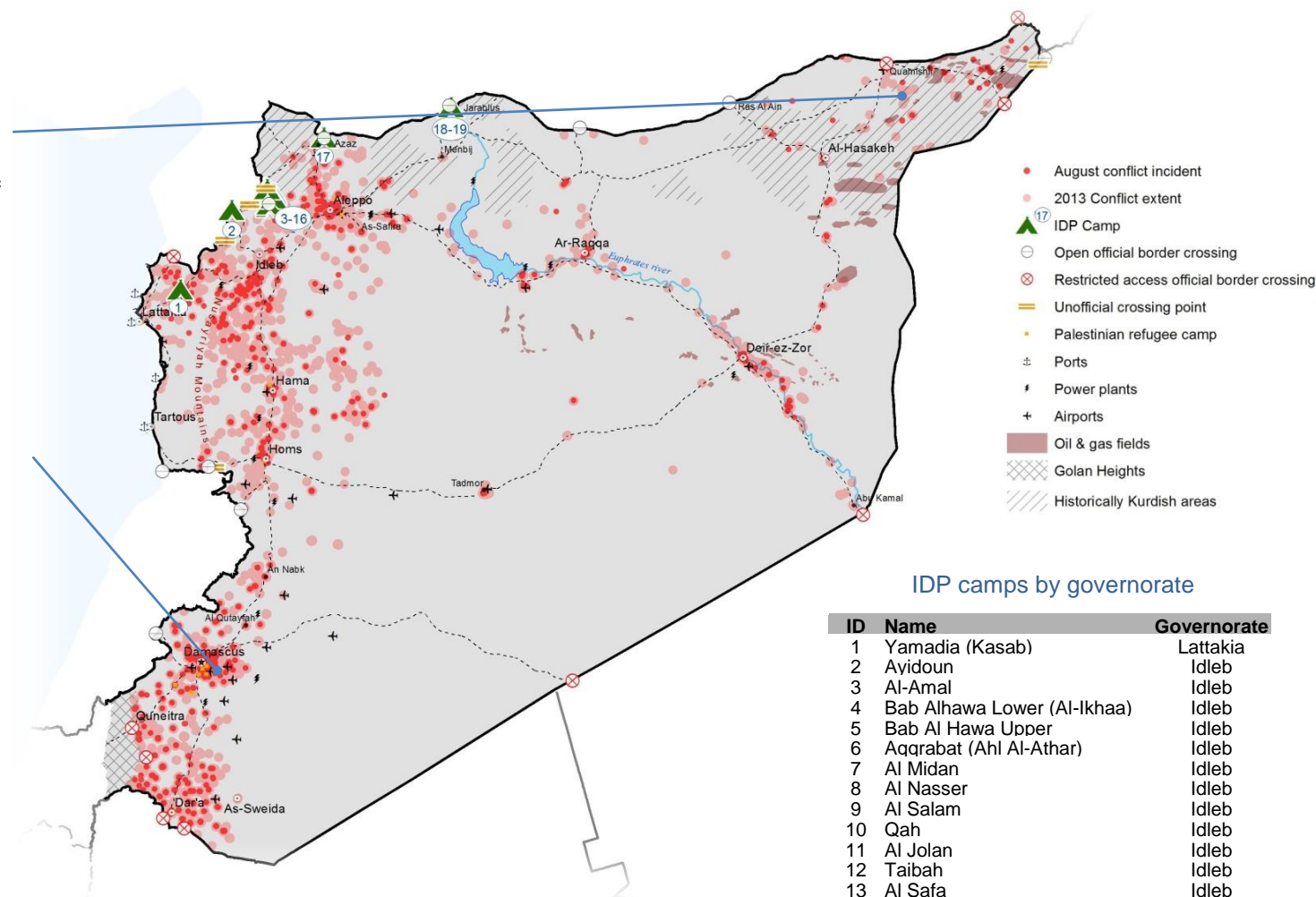
August 2013

Fierce clashes between Al-Qaeda and Kurdish factions have erupted at several flashpoints in majority Kurdish Al-Hasakeh and there are unconfirmed reports of an increase in kidnappings, summary executions and the expulsion of entire communities from villages. Following the opening of the border crossing to Kurdish Iraq on 15 August, over 46,000 fled to KR-I.

Eastern Ghouta, the site of recent alleged chemical attacks and home to an estimated 1 million people, has been subject to fierce clashes and aerial bombardment since 2012. GoS forces have besieged opposition-controlled towns since early 2012 and there is a shortage of electricity, water, fuel, medical supply and food. Even before the latest attack, humanitarian access was very limited, despite several official requests from the UN.

Lattakia, Deir-ez-Zor, Homs, Aleppo and Rural Damascus face a deterioration of the already fragile health situation as violence spreads. The GoS has increasingly restricted the delivery of medical supplies to opposition-controlled areas, while medical aid delivery missions have been subject to looting and insecurity. Reduced vaccination coverage has been highlighted as a major risk.

The WASH situation remains of great concern throughout the country, with reported cases of leishmaniasis, scabies, lice and skin infections.



Possible developments - Syria

- **Increase in the use of chemical weapons:** The use of chemical weapons in Eastern Ghouta on 20 August changes the dynamics of the conflict. While their use has often been referred to as a 'red line', any international intervention triggered by the recent attack is likely to remain restricted to targeted attacks on alleged chemical production sites and/or Syrian Air Force assets and bases. This solution is unlikely to eliminate all chemical weapons and chemical attacks will continue albeit limited in scale. Any such intervention would impede humanitarian access in the short term. However, if the recent attack fails to elicit a firm response, it is likely that there will be an increase in chemical weapons usage, with parties to the conflict trying to control and use these weapons to their advantage. This will lead to a significant number of casualties and large scale displacement.
- **Further disruption of education:** As a large number of schools are either occupied by IDPs or damaged and since the school year is due to start on 15 September, some children, already having missed 2 years of education, will remain without proper schooling.
- **Stranded IDPs:** The continuing conflict coupled with restrictive border policies will increase the number of people stranded at the Jordanian and Iraqi borders. Humanitarian actors have only limited presence on the Syrian side of the border and, as a result, these IDPs remain highly vulnerable, with limited access to services.
- **Lack of fuel and electricity:** The lack of fuel and electricity is one of the main factors that will influence the humanitarian situation during winter. The on-going conflict has depleted coping mechanisms and the economic situation, including sanctions and depreciation of the currency, makes it more difficult to import fuel and electricity. This will result in a shortage of fuel for cooking, heating, transport and commercial bread baking and lead to a situation far worse than last winter. In addition, armed groups have been targeting critical infrastructure, including oil refineries, leading to further fuel shortages and electricity cuts.

Operational constraints

- The on-going security constraints continue to heavily impact service provision and affect access, transportation and travel, with areas such as Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa, Deir-ez-Zor, Dar'a, Rural Damascus and besieged areas being particularly difficult to reach. The threat of abductions is also increasingly affecting aid workers' willingness to travel to remote areas within Syria. The presence of the group 'Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)' along Syrian-Turkish border crossing points, particularly Jarablus, has limited the presence of international, though not Syrian INGO staff, in those areas. At the same time, the GoS has increased restrictions on the delivery of medicines and
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medical equipment to opposition-held areas, compounding the healthcare crisis in many areas. (IRIN 2013/08/07, OCHA 2013/08/14, WFP 2013/08/23)

- The GoS has approved 79 national NGOs with whom the UN and registered international NGOs are permitted to partner. An increasing number of international organisations are working through local partners. However, there is little coordination among international organisations on this issue. As a result, there is little information on who is doing what where and local organisations are sometimes vetted by a multitude of actors at the same time. For northern Syria, actors are trying to address this issue by introducing Syrian and Turkish NGOs at the Humanitarian Coordination Meetings. (PI 2013/08/20, Trusted source 2013/07/31)
- Lack of funding is endangering the provision of food relief. The Red Crescent has said that without more funding 150,000 people may have to go without food aid from October and have cited this issue as their number one priority. In some places food parcels are already being split to feed two families instead of one. The humanitarian appeal for the response within Syria is currently funded at 43%, having received only around \$600m of the \$1.4bn requested. (British Red Cross 2013/08/21)

Operational constraints currently affecting humanitarian operations

Access of the affected population to aid	●
Active hostilities	●
Lack of funding	●
Restriction of movement	●
Violence against, personnel, facilities and assets	●
Diversion of aid	●
Government impediments to entry	●
Lack of fuel and logistics	●
Presence of mines and IED	●

Assessments

- **Assessments published August:** Apart from a brief summary from an IOM assessment on the situation in collective shelter and displacement sites, no assessment findings from Syria were published in August. In Tartous, UNICEF recently conducted an initial assessment in four IDP shelters to determine priority concerns and develop appropriate response options.
- **Assessments planned/expected:** Field data collection for the Joint Humanitarian Assessment (JHA) is planned for September, subject to GoS approval and results expected by 30 September. The JHA will be accompanied by a Humanitarian Needs Overview, which will include an update on the number of people displaced and in need per governorate.
- In order to track key macroeconomic and social changes in Syria during the current crisis, UNRWA commissioned five quarterly reports from the Syrian Centre for Policy Research (SCPR). The first was published in July 2013 and covered the period January – March.
- The Opposition Coalition's Assistance Coordination Unit is planning several assessments in the framework of an Early Warning Alert and Response Network, a Dynamic Monitoring System, a school survey and a 3W of Local relief actors in Syria.

August conflict pattern

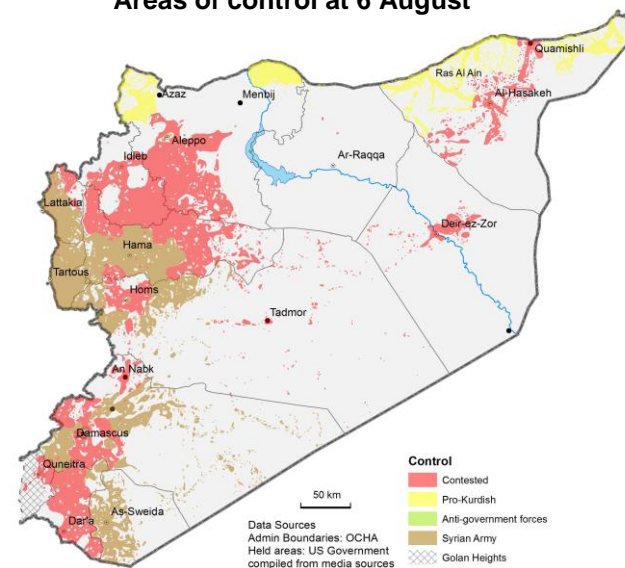
- **Key issues:** On 21 August, opposition forces claimed that chemical weapons had been used in opposition-held Eastern Ghouta region of Rural Damascus killing between 500 and 1,300 people, 2 days after the arrival of UN chemical weapons' investigators in Syria. Although opposition groups have, on previous occasions, claimed that chemical weapons have been used, the scale of the alleged use is unprecedented. An inquiry is underway to establish who was responsible for the most recent attack. Earlier this year, evidence emerged that the GoS as well as opposition parties may have used chemical weapons, although conclusive findings were not reached. (*Independent* 2013/05/26, *Al Jazeera* 2013/08/28)
- Meanwhile, August saw intense fighting around Damascus, Al-Hasakeh, Deir-Ez-Zor and Aleppo. In Lattakia, the stronghold of President al-Assad, opposition forces attacked villages in the north of Lattakia as part of their 'battle to liberate the coast' which started in August. Meanwhile, in the northern governorates, the conflict, already significant in July, flared between the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and Kurds.
- **The north:** ISIS is increasingly present in northern governorates and is reported to have played a crucial role in the capture of Mennegh military air base in Aleppo on 6 August. The Free Syrian Army (FSA) has distanced itself from the Islamist groups and FSA leaders have acknowledged that fighting between their brigades and Islamist rivals has reached a critical stage. On 14 August, ISIS fighters expelled the FSA from of Ar-Raqqa city and on 19 August, Jabhat Al Nusra killed a leader of the FSA in Salqin, Idlib. In addition, an offensive by Islamist groups reportedly started against several Kurdish majority areas of northern and north-eastern Syria. The scope of battles between the Democratic Union Party (PYD) and Islamists has widened after the attack on the Kurdish towns of Tal 'Arn and Tal Hasel (Aleppo) at the start of August. On 31 July, a Kurdish leader was killed in the town of Qamishli leading to a further deterioration of the situation. On 19 August the Syrian Armed Forces (SAF) bombed sites in the Kurdish border-town of Malkiyeh in Al-Hasakeh, a message perceived as sent against possible KR-I intervention inside Syria. (*AlJazeera* 2013/08/16, *SANA* 2013/08/19, *Al-Akhbar* 2013/08/21, *Al-Monitor* 2013/08/14, *Financial Times* 2013/08/18)
- **The east:** In the city of Deir-ez-Zor, where clashes continue in many districts, Al-Qaeda Islamists have allegedly made advances in the district of Hweika, home to several GoS buildings. Only some neighbourhoods of Deir-ez-Zor city and the airport remain under GoS control. (*Al Modon* 2013/08/11, *SANA* 2013/08/11, *AlJazeera* 2013/08/14, *SANA* 2013/08/19, *Daily Star* 2013/08/12)
- **The centre:** Hostilities diminished in the capital with sporadic shelling in several districts. The Syrian Army Forces (SAF) continue to tighten their grip on Eastern Ghouta. The most notable incident during August was the poisonous gas shelling on Eastern Ghouta suburbs (Ein Terma, Zamalka, Irbin, Saqba) on 20 August. GoS forces were also accused of using chemical

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weapons in Adra on 4 August. (*SANA* 2013/08/08, *AlJazeera* 2013/08/15, *Daily Star* 2013/08/21, *SANA* 2013/08/11, *Al-akhbar* 2013/08/13, *Daily Star* 2013/08/13, *AlJazeera* 2013/08/20, *PI* 2013/08/22, *BBC* 2013/08/22)

- The SAF continues to progress its campaign in Homs taking control of Khaldiyyeh neighbourhood on 29 July. Opposition forces launched several rockets on weapons' depots in Homs on 1 August resulting in significant explosions. The opposition strongholds, particularly Bab Houd, and parts of Old Homs, are analysts expect that the SAF will retake these areas, even if the battle takes a long time. Hama governorate remained relatively calm although with some escalation of violence in the east. (*SANA* 2013/08/08, *AlJazeera* 2013/08/15, *Daily Star* 2013/08/21, *SANA* 2013/08/11, *Al-akhbar* 2013/08/13, *Daily Star* 2013/08/13, *AlJazeera* 2013/08/20)
- **The south:** Although the southern region has over the last year seen significant opposition gains, the SAF still controls fortifications encircling villages and towns (As-Sanamayn, Nawa, and strategic Dar'a city etc.) and has increased offensive attacks in August. This month, opposition forces took control of the town of Buser Al Harir and a key SAF post near the border. In rural Quneitra, the FSA controlled the village of Rweheineh and Breiga close to Occupied Golan. However, the SAF have succeeded in severely reducing opposition access to the Jordanian border thereby reducing the ease by which munitions and goods may enter Syria. (*AlJazeera* 2013/08/20, *Daily Star* 2013/08/16, *SANA* 2013/08/15, *SANA* 2013/08/20, *AlJazeera* 2013/08/14)
- **The west:** On 4 August, opposition groups controlled more than 10 Alawite GoS villages in Lattakia countryside in an attempt to 'liberate' the Syrian coast. However, the SAF was able to regain control of all these villages before the end of August, except for Salma region, the strategic area along the borders with Turkey. (*Daily Star* 2013/08/07, *Al-Akhbar* 2013/08/20, *ISW* 2013/08/22)

Areas of control at 6 August



Displacement

IDPs

- There has been no update to the estimate of internally displaced since April, when over 5.1 million people were estimated to be displaced within Syria. However, information became available for several areas:
 - **Al-Hasakeh:** in Al-Hasakeh governorate, approximately 250,000 people have recently been displaced. ([OCHA 2013/08/14](#), [UNHCR 2013/08/20](#))
 - **Dar'a:** amid heavy shelling and armed clashes in Al Harra and Nawa in Dar'a governorate, it is estimated that the majority of the residents have been affected and up to 75,000 people displaced and by 1 August, more than 27,000 new internally displaced people had been registered in neighbouring towns and villages. ([OCHA 2013/08/14](#), [WFP 2013/08/25](#))
 - **Idleb:** Atmeh Camp, the largest in northern Syria, recently registered a decrease in population from roughly 25,000 to 15,000 individuals. This is thought to be a combined result of Ramadan, harvest season, and families either moving to less congested camps or possibly returning to areas in which hostilities have ceased. (Atmeh Camp Council 2013/08/14 Camp Management Working Group 2013/08/22)
 - **Lattakia:** a large movement of people from around 30 villages was reported on 3 and 4 of August in Lattakia, after villages came under heavy fighting. As a result an estimated 5,000 IDPs settled in Lattakia city and a further 3,000 were expected. ([IOM 2013/08/09](#), [WFP 2013/08/09](#), [UNICEF 2013/08/24](#))
 - **Tartous:** Tartous governorate continues to record an inflow of displaced persons from other governorates at a steady pace. ([OCHA 2013/08/14](#))
- By the end of July approximately 235,000 Palestinian refugees (PR) were displaced in Syria. Nearly 18,000 PR have been identified or approached UNRWA in camps having fled from other areas. ([UNRWA 2013/08/13](#), [UNRWA 2013/07/22](#))

Returnees

As there is no displacement tracking system in place, it is unclear how many people have returned to their place of origin following displaced within or outside Syria. However, as the humanitarian situation in host countries continues to deteriorate and while several areas in Syria remain relatively stable, it is likely that a significant number of people have returned. The GoS reports that by June, over 800,000 IDPs had returned to their places of origin. ([GoS 2013/06](#))

Sectoral developments August

Protection

- Human rights violations, including forced disappearances, summary executions, arbitrary detentions and torture, continue to be perpetrated on a large scale by many parties to the conflict. This month, there were unconfirmed reports of the expulsions of entire communities from different villages in Lattakia, Aleppo and Al-Hasakeh. A number of people have been kidnapped or killed as a result of their alleged political allegiances. ([Al Jazeera 2013/08/01](#), [Daily Star 2013/08/12](#), [AFP 2013/07/31](#), [Al-Akhbar 2013/08/05](#), [Daily Star 2013/08/05](#))
- Indiscriminate attacks and the use of heavy weapons on densely populated areas are common, with some areas experiencing shelling on a daily basis. On 21 August, opposition groups claimed that a poisonous gas attack occurred in Zamalka, Arbeen and Ein Terma, the eastern suburbs of Damascus. Doctors stated they had received over 3,600 patients displaying neurotoxic symptoms in three Médecins Sans Frontières supported hospitals. The GoS denies having used chemical weapons. The use of chemical weapons was reported by opposition groups on at least 5 previous occasions, in areas of Damascus and Aleppo. This prompted the establishment of an UN team to investigate the claims. The team arrived in Syria on 8 August, and while access to the site of the most recent attacks has been granted, the mission has been hampered by security conditions. ([BBC 2013/08/21](#), [Huffington Post 2013/08/21](#))
- GoS forces and opposition groups have systematically besieged certain areas across the country. Sieges hamper the free passage of foodstuffs and other essential supplies and severely limit the mobility of civilians. Areas currently under siege include neighbourhoods of the cities of Homs ([Hamidiyeh](#), [Bostan Al Diwan](#), [Bab Houd](#), and [Al Warshah](#)), Idleb, Aleppo (Western Part of the city, [Nabul](#) and [Zahraa](#)), Eastern Ghouta towns ([Duma](#), [Zamalka](#) etc.) and [Salma](#) region in Lattakia. In addition, the Palestinian refugee camp Yarmouk has been under siege for several weeks.
- An unknown number of third country nationals are stranded in Syria and face gaps in legal protection mechanisms, confiscation of passports, absence of diplomatic representation in Syria, higher exposure to physical, verbal, sexual abuses and limited access to basic healthcare. ([IOM 2013/07/29](#), [OCHA 2013/08/14](#))

Health

- Acute diarrhoea continues to be the main cause of morbidity recorded by the Early Warning Alert and Response System among 142 sites in Syria. Cases of acute jaundice, typhoid fever and acute bloody diarrhoea/Shigellosis (respectively 54, 88 and 104 suspected cases, all since the end of Ramadan) were reported in Menbij, Aleppo governorate. A high incidence of Leishmaniasis patients was also reported by clinics serving the Idleb area.

However, only limited information pertaining to morbidity and outbreaks is available and a comparison with a baseline over the previous year is mostly lacking, partly because of the relatively recent establishment of health monitoring systems. ([WHO 2013/07/20](#), [ACU 2013/08/22](#) PI 2013/08/22)

- Large parts of the health infrastructure have been damaged or destroyed. A July Ministry of Health report stated that up to 60% of public hospitals have limited or no capacity. In Aleppo, Deir-ez-Zor and Idlib governorates, 70% of health centres are either damaged or out of service. About 80% of ambulances have been damaged. In addition, there is a shortage of qualified medical staff. One source reported that around 50% of doctors in Homs city had left. Reports in June of measles in the northern governorates signal a breakdown in routine vaccinations. ([OCHA 2013/08/14](#), [IRIN 2013/08/07](#), [Al-Akhbar 2013/08/06](#))
- The financial sanctions and closure of factories have resulted in shortages of medicines and prices have significantly increased because of currency depreciation. Meanwhile, the GoS has increasingly restricted the delivery of medical supplies to opposition-controlled areas in recent months, refusing to approve medical deliveries; taking medical supplies out of aid convoys; and requiring case-by-case negotiations for the delivery of surgical kits. In addition, medical aid delivery missions face the possibility of aid convoys being hijacked, a trend attributed to armed opposition groups and criminal elements. ([IRIN 2013/08/07](#))
- Some of the besieged areas, such as the eastern suburbs of Damascus, are under heavy attack, and supply of medicines and medical equipment has been limited due to the blockade. Evacuation of injured civilians is often hampered. Many children in Doma and surrounding villages in East Ghouta are not vaccinated, and Syrian Arab Red Crescent teams have not been able gain access due to the blockade. ([UNICEF 2013/08/24](#), [OCHA 2013/08/14](#))

Weather forecast (in °C) - WMO

	August day	August night	October day	October night	December day	December night	
Aleppo	36	21	27	12	12	3	
Damascus	36	17	28	9	14	1	
Dar'a	33	19	28	13	15	5	
Deir-ez-Zor	40	25	30	14	14	3	
Homs	33	20	27	13	13	4	
Lattakia	30	25	27	18	17	10	
Palmyra	38	22	28	14	14	4	
Qamishli	40	23	28	15	13	4	

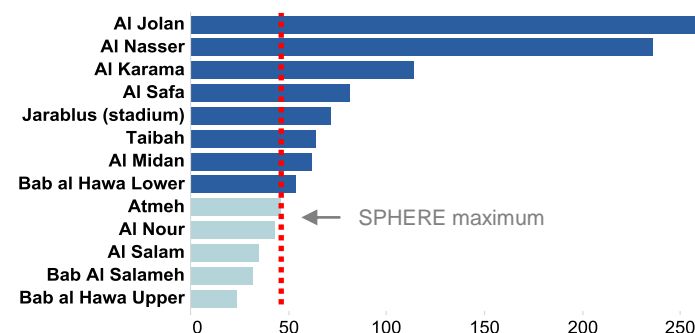
WASH

- In August, temperatures across the country reached 40 °C and shortages of potable water sources are expected given the damage to WASH infrastructure, obstacles to its maintenance and repair, power outages and

difficulties in acquiring water purification chemicals. However, only limited information is available on the water situation. Residents in Rural Damascus (East Ghouta) reported cases of water contamination and increasing occurrence of typhoid fever in some of the villages. One source reported a severe shortage of drinking water in the cities of Al-Hasakeh and Qamishli. In Idlib and Lattakia, a number of water stations now function for only around 2 hours each day and the lack of management, and hence village consensus, impedes rehabilitation efforts. Conversely, costly water trucking has been reported, often from unsafe sources. ([UNICEF 2013/08/24](#), [PI 2013/08/22](#), [WMO n.d.](#), [Tishreen 2013/08/5](#), [SANA 2013/08/14](#))

- The breakdown of collection services in some areas; a lack of inputs such as garbage trucks; and a lack of movement due to military operations is hampering the collection of solid waste. ([Tishreen 2013/08/06](#), [Eqtesad 2013/07/29](#))

Number of people per functioning latrine per IDP camp
ACU 2013/08/12



Shelter

- According to various sources, an estimated 20-30% of the total number of buildings in the country have been damaged or destroyed. ([Al-Akhbar 2013/08/01](#), [AFP 2013/07/06](#), [OCHA 2013/04/08](#))
- Although some collective shelters have been set up by the GoS, 95% of IDPs reside outside these shelters, mostly with host families. Others reside in schools, unfinished buildings or have pitched tents on vacant lots. As the conflict continues, both IDPs and host communities' coping mechanisms have been severely overstretched. This has led to an increasing number of Syrians living in inadequate public or private shelters. In relatively safe areas such as Damascus city, IDPs renting accommodation face significant rent increases. ([IOM 2013/07/29](#), [Assafir 2013/08/01](#), [Tishreen 2013/07/31](#))
- An assessment among collective shelters in Homs, Lattakia, Damascus and Rural Damascus indicated that most collective centres are overcrowded and unsanitary. In Lattakia for instance, the situation in the 3 collective shelters

continues to deteriorate and families are reportedly in urgent need of humanitarian aid. ([IOM 2013/07/29](#))

- An IOM assessment among 160 displacement sites showed that there is a need for basic relief items such as house cleaning kits, hygiene kits, mattresses, blankets, pillows and quilts, mosquito nets. ([IOM 2013/07/29](#))

Livelihoods and food security

- Food shortages are becoming more apparent, especially in contested areas where access to food is limited. In Idleb city, roughly 400,000 people are reportedly at risk of food shortages, while 1.2 million people in hard to reach areas in Rural Damascus face food shortages. ([UN Radio 2013/07/30](#))
- In an assessment of 13 camps in Idleb and Aleppo governorates with a total of around 47,000 IDPs, food intervention was identified by over half of IDPs as the top priority. The quantity of bread delivered per person per day was also comparatively lagging in the following camps, as opposed to other camps: Al-Jolan, Al-Karama, Al-Midan, An-Nasser, An-Nour, As-Safa and As-Salam). ([ACU 2013/08/12](#), [ACU 2013/07/16](#))
- An assessment covering 89 bakeries in eastern, opposition-held Aleppo reported that while 85 were operational, 15 of these had suffered some damage either from air strikes and/or ground clashes. At the same time, 37 bakeries have experienced disruptions due to the lack of flour; 11 cited problems linked to the conflict intensity; and 1 cited both. Of the ovens running below capacity, 48 attributed the cause to the lack of constant flour supply whereas another 3 combined this with damaged ovens. 70 bakeries cited rising fuel prices, more than anything else, as a daily problem. ([PI 2013/08/19](#))
- A separate assessment conducted in Harem district, Idleb governorate, reported that large government bakeries were operating at lower productivity (67% of pre-crisis levels) mainly owing to the lack of flour or fuel, whereas smaller private bakeries were operating at full capacity (often because they were opened in the course of the crisis). While GoS bakeries continued to receive flour at subsidised prices, private bakeries received their stock either from private donors (including both armed groups and humanitarian organisations) or purchased it themselves. Flour and diesel fuel were indicated as priorities for bakeries. ([Goal 2013/07](#))
- It is becoming increasingly difficult for Syrians to afford basic goods. One source reports that a family of 5 needs around SYP 30,000 per month to secure its nutritional needs. An estimated 80% do not have access to sufficient resources to reach this basic minimum. The unemployment rate is estimated to be as high as 60%. However, as with other available figures, statistics on the economic impact of this conflict should be interpreted with caution as the lack of security hampers any nationwide surveys. ([Al-Akhbar 2013/08/15](#), [Economist 2013/08/10](#), [Al-Akhbar 2013/08/10](#))

- Damage to economic infrastructure, the flight of capital and human resources and widespread insecurity including looting continue to negatively impact economic productivity. Recent GoS figures indicated that 2 of the 4 industrial Syrian cities (Deir-ez-Zor and Aleppo) are almost entirely out of service. ([Zaman-Al-Wasl 2013/08/14](#), [Al Watan 2013/07/27](#))
- The exchange rate of the Syrian Pound continues to fluctuate. After a GoS intervention at the start of the month, the black market rate was reported at 195 Syrian Pound to the US dollar. In March 2011, the exchange rate was 47 Syrian Pound to the dollar. Depreciation of the currency is hampering imports at a time when the import of basic needs is critical in order to substitute declining national production. On 4 August, a Legislative Decree was issued banning dealing in currencies other than the Syrian Pound as a means of payments "to prevent the dollarization of the economy". ([Al-Akhbar 2013/07/31](#), [SANA 2013/08/04](#), [Hurriyet 2013/08/05](#))
- The increasing number of checkpoints, damage to the transport sector, lack of fuel and general insecurity are hampering trade routes. In addition, the closure of borders is hampering trade to areas which rely on these crossings for the import of goods. The closure of Nusaybin crossing between Turkey and Syria, for instance, has had a severe impact on the availability of goods on the market in Qamishli. ([Assafir 2013/08/05](#))
- The high costs of diesel fuel have led to diminished use of irrigation water pumps, which in turn affects summer agriculture (wheat, potato, corn etc) in the so called 'Green Triangle' (*al Muthalath al-Akhdar*) area spanning Aleppo, Idleb and Hama's rural hinterland. ([PI 2013/08/22](#))

Education

- The school year will start again on 15 September. However a large number of schools are non-functional. UNRWA reported in August that of 22,000 school buildings, 16.5% are damaged or destroyed or being used as shelters by displaced families. At the end of April, the Ministry of Education reported that 22% of schools are damaged or destroyed or being used as shelters by displaced families. It is unclear where this discrepancy comes from. ([UNICEF 2013/08/12](#), [UNICEF 2013/08/12](#))
- According to Ministry of Education data, an estimated 1.9 million children have dropped out of basic education (Grade1-9) between 2012 and 2013, which is a revision of the previous estimate of 2.8 million children having dropped out of basic education in 2013. ([UNICEF 2013/08/24](#))
- In addition, education facilities continue to be exposed to attacks, with at least 64 schools attacked since the start of the year. ([Tishreen 2013/08/15](#))

Overview – Host countries

August 2013

Turkey

Syrian refugees residing outside camps now outnumber those in camps, with around 200,000 Syrians residing in 20 camps and over 240,000 outside. Over 45,000 IDPs are staying in 22 camps on the Syrian side of the Turkish border.

Lebanon

Insecurity and tensions are on the increase in Lebanon, with the severe escalation of the situation highlighted by the explosion of several car bombs, one in south Beirut in on 15 August killing over 20 people and two in Tripoli causing over 40 deaths

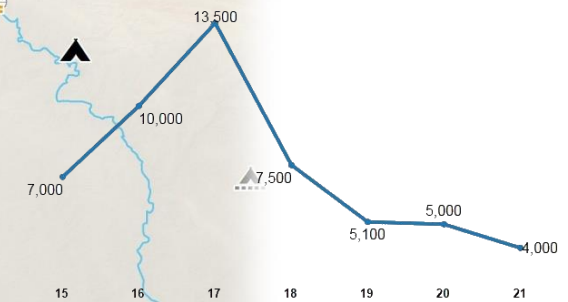
Egypt

The unrest in Egypt continues to negatively affect the Syrian population; they have suffered hostilities from the host community, are subject to arbitrary arrest and aid delivery programs have been disrupted.

Jordan

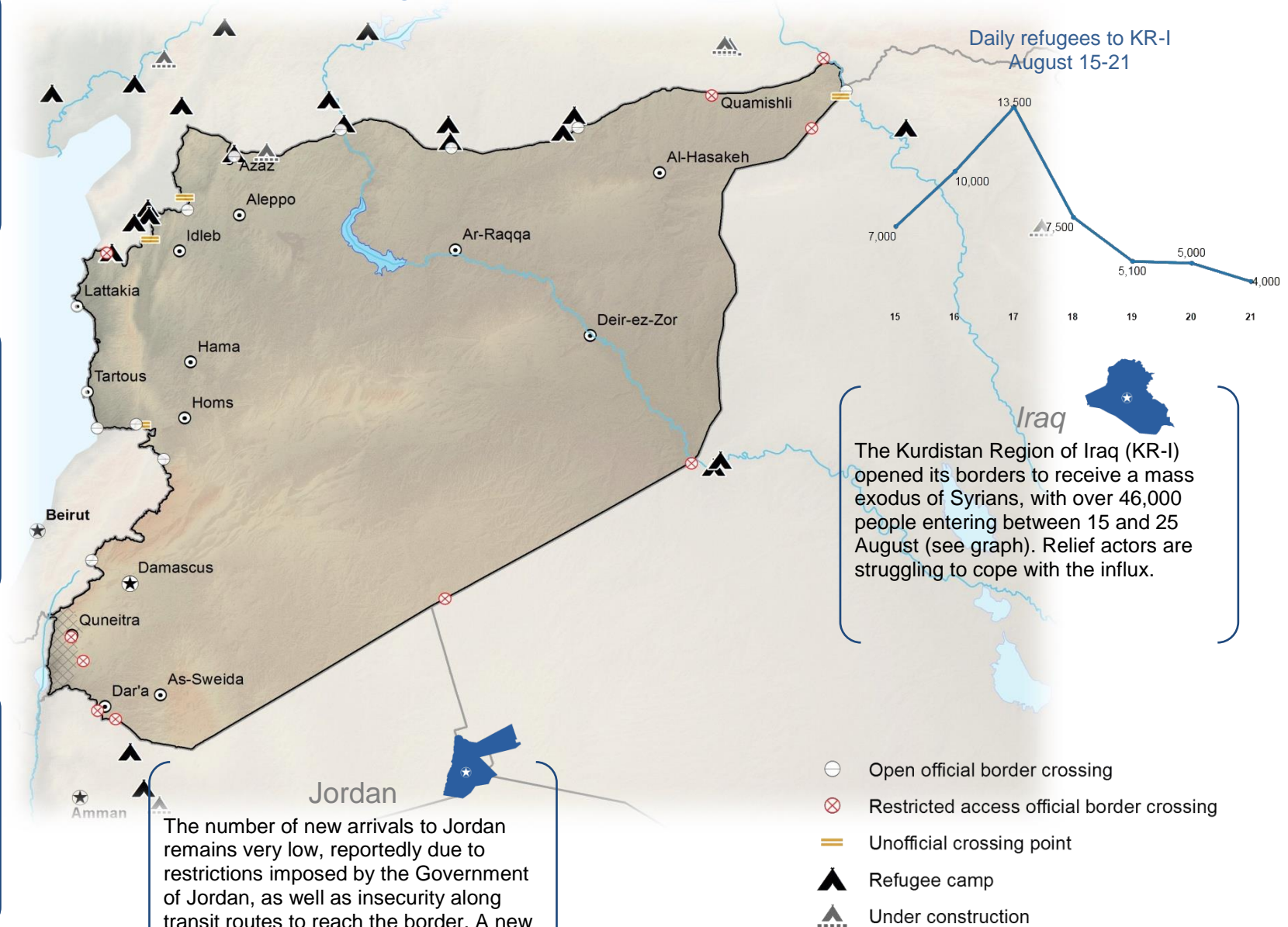
The number of new arrivals to Jordan remains very low, reportedly due to restrictions imposed by the Government of Jordan, as well as insecurity along transit routes to reach the border. A new camp, Azraq, scheduled to open in September will eventually have the capacity to host 130,000 refugees.

Daily refugees to KR-I
August 15-21



Iraq

The Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I) opened its borders to receive a mass exodus of Syrians, with over 46,000 people entering between 15 and 25 August (see graph). Relief actors are struggling to cope with the influx.



Possible developments - Host countries

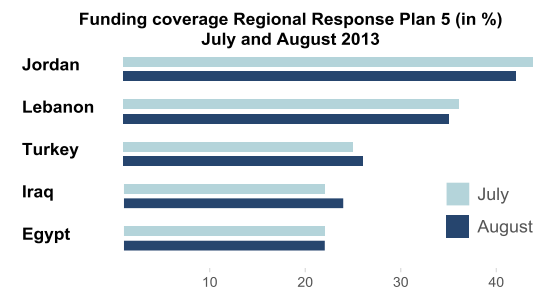
- **Deteriorating security environment in Lebanon:** More car bombs and IEDs will follow the deadly bombings in Tripoli and south Beirut in August. The attacks, which will most likely occur in Sunni and Shia strongholds in North and South Lebanon as well as the outskirts of Beirut, will continue to cause casualties and will negatively impact economic growth. As the Syrian conflict is seen as the main direct trigger for the attacks, Syrian refugees in Lebanon will face increasing harassment and discrimination.
- **International military intervention in Syria:** The humanitarian impact of an intervention on the region will be limited, unless it lasts long enough to provoke retaliation from regional actors such as Hezbollah.
- **Displacement refugees:** Insecurity in Lebanon, including continued shelling of the border region, the volatile protection situation in Egypt and a general deterioration of the humanitarian situation during the winter months will prompt refugees to displace multiple times in search for safer or better serviced areas. Within host countries, areas previously relatively unaffected by displacement, such as the southern areas of Jordan, will see an increasing number of Syrians. While some refugees will return to Syria if conditions allow, others will move to Northern African and European countries.
- **Ease in restriction on border crossings into Jordan:** A new camp, Azraq camp, designed to provide refuge to over 130,000 Syrians, is planned to open in September in Jordan. Once Azraq is opened, Za'atari camp will close to new arrivals. It is likely that the current restrictions on border crossings into Jordan will ease temporarily, as long as space is available within the camp. Azraq camp is remote and those residing in the camp will be subject to the harsh desert climate. As a result, many Syrians will not remain in the camp but will rather search for opportunities in urban areas.

Operational constraints

- **Lebanon:** In addition, to the already existing constraints, the GoL has indicated that humanitarian actors are not allowed to provide vocational training to Syrian refugees, to avoid competition with Lebanese citizens. It is unclear what the exact definition of vocational training is and if this would include life skills trainings.
- **Jordan:** The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) has issued a new requirement for humanitarian organisations to solely target refugees registered with the Ministry of Interior, which would exclude vulnerable refugees leaving the camps illegally or those who lack identification documents. A lack of clarity in obtaining MoPIC approval for specific projects has been reported. The Government of Jordan's (GoJ)

requirements for conducting large-scale assessments beyond areas approved for aid intervention are similarly vague.

- **Turkey:** INGOs in the northern Syrian border area are required by the GoT to undergo a lengthy registration process, which renders humanitarian operations very difficult.
- **Iraq:** Due to the worsening security situation in Iraq, access to Al Qa'im remains difficult. Delivery of assistance is often grounded due to precautionary measures that are required for the safety of staff.
- **Egypt:** The incredibly tense political and social situation in Egypt is disrupting the delivery of humanitarian services and new restrictions on movement have been imposed.



Assessments published in August

- **Regional:** UNHCR and NGOs published a joint real time evaluation of UNHCR's response to Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and northern Iraq. ([UNHCR 2013/08/05](#))
- **Lebanon:** Several monitoring and reporting systems have been put in place in Lebanon including a Gender-based Violence Information Management System and an eviction tracking tool. ([UNHCR 2013/08/16](#))
- **Jordan:** The GoJ Ministry of Health and WHO conducted a joint rapid assessment of 331 health facilities in northern Jordan to determine the impact of Syrian refugees on Jordan's public health services. The final report is expected to be launched in August. ACTED published a food security and livelihoods assessment of Syrians and Jordanians in northern host communities. ACTED also conducted a rapid shelter assessment in Mafraq, Irbid, Jerash and Ajloun governorates in August to identify needs for winterisation assistance among Syrian refugees and host communities. ([ACTED 2013/08/25](#))
- **Turkey:** IHH (the Humanitarian Relief Foundation) recently published a report on the situation in Syria and surrounding host-countries including Turkey, covering the period from May 2011 to June 2013. At the time of this report, needs assessment information from IHH had not yet been made available.
- **Iraq:** NRC published an assessment of access to education for Syrian refugee children and youth in urban areas of KR-I, highlighting the fact that the vast majority of non-camp refugee children are not receiving any formal education.

Lebanon

Individuals affected

Syrian registered refugees and awaiting registration	708,046
Unregistered Syrians	~100,000
Palestinian refugees from Syria	92,000*
Syrian migrants	~300,000
Syrian returnees	Unknown
Lebanese returnees	>49,000
Host communities	1,200,000

[UNCHR 2013/08/26](#), [IA 2013/07/31](#), [PRS 2013/07/29](#)

*UNRWA Lebanon is currently undertaking a head count of PRS and anticipates that there are fewer than 92,000 PRS actually residing in Lebanon.



Key developments August

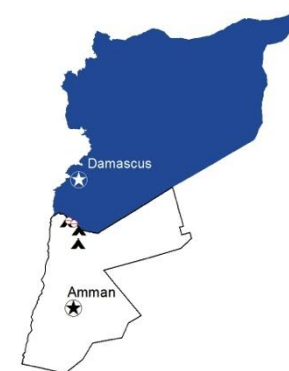
- **Insecurity:** Lebanon is facing increasing threats to its security and stability. At least 47 people were killed by 2 IEDs in the northern city of Tripoli on 23 August, a week after a car bomb killed over 30 people in south Beirut. Shells continue to hit Lebanon's border areas and tit-for-tat kidnappings are common. ([BBC 2013/08/23](#), [Daily Star 2013/07/31](#), [Daily Star 2013/08/15](#))
- **Humanitarian concerns:** 72% of the registered population was identified as vulnerable during a Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees. As of October/November, UN NFI assistance and food aid will target these specifically vulnerable individuals. The lack of adequate shelter remains one of the major concerns. A Consumer Price Index monitoring system reported a 44% increase in rental prices between June 2012 – June 2013. Over 450 informal tented settlements, of which 232 in Bekaa, have been identified, where Syrians are living with little access to services. ([Winterization group 2013/08/02](#), [IA 2013/08/06](#), [CAS 2013/06](#), [Inter-Agency 2013/08/05](#))
- **Restrictions to entry:** Since 22 July 2013 the General Security Office imposed stricter border controls that require Syrians above the age of 15 to present full, undamaged documentation. A number of people have been turned back, including 200 Palestinians. Those who are denied entry receive a stamp indicating that they will not be able to enter Lebanon for 1 year. ([Daily Star 2013/08/08](#), [UNHCR 2013/08/16](#), [IA 2013/08/06](#))
- **Protection:** The lack of legal status remains of concern. A large proportion of refugees are projected to be unable to afford the USD 200 required to renew their residency permit. This will impact, amongst other things, freedom of movement and birth registration. Without legal status, Palestinian refugees will have difficulties accessing several Palestinian camps where a permit is required. Other protection concerns include an increase in evictions and negative coping mechanisms such as survival sex and hazardous child labour. ([IA 2013/08/06](#), [IA 2013/08/06](#))

Jordan

Individuals affected

Syrian registered refugees and awaiting registration	520,287
Of which in camps	24%
Unregistered Syrians	Unknown
Palestinian refugees from Syria	8,430
Syrian returnees	Unknown
Syrian migrants	600,000
Host communities	Unknown

[UNHCR 2013/08/27](#)



Key developments August

- **New arrivals:** The number of new arrivals to Jordan remains very low and the number of those registered or awaiting registration is 517,168 as of 26 August. There are an estimated 123,000 registered refugees in Za'atari camp. This is a population decrease of 6.3% between 1 Aug and 26 Aug, due to refugees moving outside the camps, those returning to Syria (although many are expected to return to Jordan after checking on property or bringing family members), and the de-activated registrations of refugees who have not claimed assistance in the preceding 8 weeks. In the first half of August, 33 new PRS sought assistance from and were registered by UNRWA yet there are continued reports of refoulement of PRS by the GoJ. 192 PRS are held in Cyber City transit facilities and are not permitted to live in urban areas or refugee camps in Jordan. ([UNHCR 2013/08/26](#), [UNRWA 2013/08/21](#), [Amnesty 2013/07/29](#))
- **Humanitarian concerns:** Azraq camp is being prepared to open on 1 September. However UNHCR has made changes to the design of the temporary shelter structures, which will likely cause delays to completing the planned number of shelters by 1 September. ([UNHCR 2013/08/18](#))
- The low number of refugee arrivals is attributed to restrictions imposed by the GoJ and facilitated by armed groups, as well as insecurity along transit routes to reach the border. The unofficial restrictions have resulted in an estimated 7-20,000 people stranded along the border. The vast majority of new arrivals are now using routes through the eastern border region to enter Jordan. ([Amnesty 2013/08/19](#), [Washington Post 2013/07/23](#), [Human Rights Watch 2013/07/01](#), [Jordan Times 2013/07/13](#))
- A recent ACTED assessment indicated that overcrowding among Syrians in host communities is increasing, from an average of 4.1 people per shelter in March to 7.1 in late May. ([ACTED 2013/08/14](#))
- **Host community concerns:** Tensions between host communities and refugees outside the camps remain high. On 20 August, locals in Mafraq violently protested outside Za'atari camp causing aid workers to evacuate. (PI 2013/08/22)

Turkey

Individuals affected

Syrian registered refugees & awaiting registration	458,837
% registered in camps	46%
Refugees in camps	201,041
Refugees outside camps	224,631
Unregistered Syrians	Unknown
Syrian returnees total	160,000

Source: [UNHCR 2013/08/27](#)



Key developments August

- Syrian refugees residing outside camps now outnumber those in camps. In Gaziantep governorate where the largest number of refugees is located, 75% reside outside camps. Non-camp proportions are also significant in Hatay (75%), Kilis (49%) and Mardin (90%). By contrast, 71% of Şanlıurfa's registered refugees live in camps. ([UNHCR 2013/08/22](#) [UNHCR 2013/08/15](#)).
- UNHCR intends to gradually refocus assistance on urban hosting. The more vulnerable among non-camp residents continue to access cash and food assistance by applying to the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation, which undertakes enumeration exercises alongside the Turkish police. ([UNHCR 2013/08/19](#) [UNHCR 2013/08/15](#) [UNHCR 2013/08/12](#) [UNHCR 2013/07/31](#) [Hurriyet 2013/08/06](#)).
- Based on a recent AFAD (Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency of Turkey) agreement with Şanlıurfa's Pharmacists Union, registered urban refugees in the province will only bear 20% of medical costs. ([UNHCR 2013/08/21](#)).
- Owing to hostilities between Syrian Kurds and Jihadist groups in Tel Abyad and Ras al-Ain, some 3,000 Syrians were admitted into Turkey at one go, and the Turkish authorities have reportedly approved entry for as many as 1,500 individuals daily, mainly to Akçakale and Ceylanpınar camps. ([UNHCR 2013/08/20](#) [UNHCR 2013/08/15](#) [Radikal 2013/08/13](#)).
- The number of reported Turkish casualties in Ceylanpınar due to fighting across the border at Ras al-Ain has risen to four – 3 of which resulted from small arms fire. ([Hurriyet 2013/08/03](#) [Reuters 2013/08/03](#)).
- Humanitarian assistance solidarity convoys intended for north-eastern Syria were not permitted to cross from the Turkish side of the border. ([Assafir 2013/08/03](#) [Al-Monitor 2013/08/05](#) [Hurriyet 2013/08/03](#)).
- The Government of Turkey has begun talks with the Syrian Kurdish PYD amid its own sensitive peace process with the PKK – of which the PYD is a part – and the prospects of further instability on its south-eastern border. ([VOA 2013/08/12](#)).

Iraq

Individuals affected

Syrian registered refugees and awaiting registration	159,503*
% registered in camps	30%
Unregistered Syrians	Unknown
Syrian returnees	Unknown
Iraqi returnees from Syria	85,000
Host communities	Unknown

Sources [UNHCR 2013/08/13](#), [UNHCR 2013/08/26](#)

*This figure does not include recent influx



Key Developments August

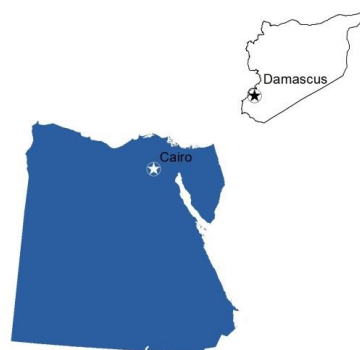
- Having had its borders closed other than for medical emergencies and family reunifications since May, the Regional Government of Kurdistan opened them on 15 August allowing over 46,000 people to enter the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I) between the 15 and 25 August. ([UNHCR 2013/08/20](#)).
- Many of the newly arrived Syrians have been moved to the new camp in Erbil governorate, which is not yet fully completed and lacks some basic services. Others are being housed in transit camps, mosques, and other forms of temporary accommodation. ([UNHCR 2013/08/20](#)).
- A committee of Kurdistan region parliamentarians was formed and entered Syria in order to investigate the reports of Kurdish women and children being killed within Syria by groups affiliated with Al Qaeda. The president of the Kurdistan region, Massoud Barzani, has announced that KR-I is willing to act to defend the civilians in Kurdish Syria. ([Local media 2013/08/14](#)).
- The security situation in Anbar province is unstable and a rise in security incidents has been noted in Al Qa'im. Delivery of humanitarian assistance has been disrupted as a consequence. ([UNHCR 2013/08/05](#)).
- **Humanitarian Concerns:** Domiz Camp in Dohuk governorate continues to suffer from extreme over-crowding. The authorities have announced plans to construct a new camp in the governorate to relieve the saturation of Domiz, but lack of funds is an obstacle. Throughout KR-I, lack of shelter continues to be critical. ([UNHCR 2013/08/16](#)).
- An NRC report on access to education for Syrian refugees in the urban communities in KR-I found that around 90% of refugee children in non-camp settings do not participate in formal education. ([NRC 2013/07/24](#)).
- As the number of refugees increases, and their savings are depleted, competition for work has increased and economic opportunities are harder to come by. Refugees reported being exploited by employers, including being paid sub-standard wages. ([NRC 2013/07/24](#)).

Egypt

Individuals affected

Syrian registered refugees and awaiting registration	110,041
Palestinian refugees from Syria	8,000-12,000
Unregistered Syrians	190,155
Syrian returnees	Unknown
Syrian migrants	Unknown
Host communities	Unknown

Source: UNHCR 2013/07/27, *Daily News Egypt* 2013/05/19



Key Developments in August

- A month-long state of emergency was announced in Egypt on 14 August. The unrest has seen a dramatic surge in the number of Syrians coming forward and registering with UNHCR. Since the beginning of the crisis, more than 107,000 Syrian refugees have approached UNHCR for registration and assistance, already surpassing the figure of 100,000 expected by December. (UNHCR 2013/08/16)
- The turbulence has led to the closure of health services offices and facilities, disrupting service provision. (UNHCR 2013/08/14)
- There are increasing reports of arbitrary arrests and detention of Syrians in Egypt amid the country's current unrest. This trend reflects the growing tensions between the host community and the refugees, with anti-Syrian statements having been made on radio and television broadcasts. (UNHCR 2013/08/07, Reuters 2013/07/26)
- **Humanitarian constraints:** Syrians registering with UNHCR are expected to obtain a residency permit from the Government of Egypt (GoE) on their UNHCR Yellow Asylum-seeker card, or transfer their existing residency to the card. There have been a number of cases recently of the GoE refusing residency renewals over failure to adhere to this requirement. (UNHCR 2013/08/16)
- There have been reports of employers considering firing all the Syrian employees and Syrian children being refused access to schools in the wake of the anti-Syrian rhetoric being spread amid the unrest. (Guardian 2013/07/24)
- Due to the insecurity, WFP delayed its August food voucher distributions to Syrian refugees across Egypt. (WFP 2013/08/26)
- Mid August saw an 80% increase in passengers flying from Egypt to Syria as Syrians chose to return rather than face the growing restrictions imposed on them and the risk of arbitrary detention. (World Bulletin 2013/08/20)

Previous SNAP reports

- Regional Analysis for Syria (Part I and Part II) January – July 2013
- Thematic reports
 - Aleppo Governorate Profile April 2013
 - Legal Status of Individuals Fleeing Syria June 2013
 - Impact of the conflict on Syrian economy and livelihoods July 2013
- Scenarios February 2013

All reports can be found on: <http://www.acaps.org/en/pages/syria-snap-project>

Forthcoming SNAP reports

- RAS (Part I and Part II) September 2013
The RAS report will be updated on a monthly basis
- Scenarios September 2013
- Thematic report: Lessons Learned Assessments September 2013
- Border crossings September 2013

Map data sources

Conflict: UNDSS and UNMAS. Conflict data presented is collected from open sources and has not been verified by the United Nations. The data does not claim to be a complete record of all incidents across Syria. **Oil and gas:** Copyright Lynx Information Systems Ltd, not to be reproduced without permission of the owner. **Infrastructure:** Global Energy Observatory, OCHA. **Administration:** OCHA Common Operational Datasets. Displacement: UNRWA, IOM, UNHCR. Refugee camp locations: US Department of State Humanitarian Information Unit.

Methodology – This desk study presents estimations of scale, severity and likely impact of a disaster. It aims to inform decision making for preparedness and emergency response and intends to complement and integrate assessment-related data from other agencies. Feedback to improve the RAS is welcome (snap@acaps.org).

Disclaimer – Information provided is provisional as it has not been possible to independently verify field reports. As this report covers highly dynamic subject, utility of the information may decrease with time.

References – ACAPS and MapAction would like to thank all organisations who have provided input to this report. Please note that all sources which are available online are hyperlinked (underlined, in brackets). Information sourced as 'PI' refers to personal interviews with persons unknown to the SNAP project. Information sourced as a 'Trusted Source' refers to information received from an actor known and trusted by the project.

