



**UNHCR Iraq  
Winter Preparedness  
Factsheet  
Syrian Response  
2013-2014**



*Winter Preparedness for Syrian Refugees in Iraq is an ongoing priority as temperatures drop. @ UNHCR*

**Background**

The number of Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR in Iraq has now surpassed 208,000. Along with partner agencies, the UNHCR has been responding to their needs since December 2011 through registration and protection interventions, shelter, distribution of core relief items and the provision of life sustaining services.

Currently all border crossings for Syrians seeking safety in Iraq remain closed with some exceptional medical and family reunification cases in the Kurdistan region (KR). The current non-camp population remains at about 60 per cent and the remaining 40 per cent are settled in one of 14 temporary or permanent camps in Anbar, Dohuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah governorates. The mid August influx of 60,000 refugees, (of which 42,000 have registered with UNHCR), meant that 11 transit sites and permanent camps were developed within two weeks of their arrival.



*Distribution of kerosene in Kawergosk camp. @ UNHCR/P. Barns*

The tripling of the number of refugees in Iraq since last winter has demanded focused preparation for winter. Relentless exposure to the elements including rain, wind, possible snow, and the reality of Iraq’s clay soil means a muddy and cold winter ahead.

Winter planning began in August with interagency and partner coordination to ensure rapid and maximum coverage for the onset of the winter season. The Kurdish regional and Anbar authorities as well as host communities have played an integral role in the preparation for winter. Refugees have the distribution of winter items.

**Al Obaidy Camp (Anbar Governorate)**

*Camps:* All refugees residing in Al Obaidy camp have received essential winter items. Partners IYL and IRW distributed 544 winterization kits (mattresses, heating stoves, plastic sheeting, kerosene, water jerry cans, quilts, and hygiene kits) to all refugee families residing in the camp. UNHCR completed the raising of 537 tent floors and adding insulation to prevent humidity and cold from penetrating through the tent floor; replacement of old tents and digging of channels for rain water drainage was also completed. Partner ISHO installed a new rub hall with four communal roofs, cemented the school yard, and completed the water drainage system to prevent water logging; UNICEF installed 36 water solar heaters in the women’s latrines. IRW completed the distribution of complementary food items, which will support the purchase of additional and specific winter items desired by families.

Furthermore, 537 light weight tents in Al Obaidy were replaced with durable family tents. In Al Obaidy, 37,100 litres of kerosene have been distributed, equating to 70 litres per household per month (November).

*Non-Camp:* For non-camp refugees, the provision of winter items is underway with 245 kits being distributed per family thus far. The target population for non-camp refugees is 865. UNHCR began distributing Kerosene (70 litres) for non-camp refugees in Al Qa’im with a total of 21,536 litres being provided to date.

*Winterization efforts in Al Obaidy include laying cement in the school yard. @ ISHO*



## Northern Iraq (Dohuk, Erbil & Sulaymaniyah)

COVERAGE OF WINTER ITEMS in the KR (November 2014)			
Population Location	Number of Households	Households reached	Coverage
Camps	15,592	10,626	66%
Non Camps	7,500	1,200	16%

The month of November brought the beginning of rain and low temperatures to northern Iraq with night time temperatures dropping to around 5 degrees.

Thus far, 37 per cent of the planned 15,190 family tents in the KR have concrete slabs, which provide a permanent foundation that alleviates the effects from precipitation. Further, a 60 cm wall around the tent provides further stability from the wind. Similarly, 31 per cent of the 14,829 kitchen areas have concrete slabs as a base. As a temporary measure, tents that have not yet received their slabs are fitted with a polystyrene board covered with felt to provide some protection from the ground.

Infrastructure improvements are a key feature of winter efforts. Construction of road sub bases, drainages culverts and ditches are essential to avoiding flooding in the camps. The Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) has paid particular attention to winter as they continue to support construction efforts in various

All camps with the exception of Domiz have received their winter kits; 66 per cent of the targeted 15,952 families received winter kits. The kits include quilts, stoves, plastic sheeting, separate water and kerosene jerry cans, and thermal blankets. As of end of November 12,998 families received kerosene out of 13,373 in-camp households. It is expected that all camp winter kits will be distributed by 10 December and non-camp shortly thereafter. IOM in particular has distributed additional CRIs in Basirma and Darashakran.

Non-camp support in Sulaymaniyah has excelled and includes the pre-positioning of core relief items; distribution is ongoing. Also, 280 non-camp families in Sulaymaniyah will receive additional winter kits from Mercy Corps as well as 440 litres of fuel. Thus far 198,000 litres of kerosene have been distributed to families in this governorate. Mercy Corps is transferring \$100 per household to a minimum of 500 vulnerable families in Sulaymaniyah.

In Dohuk governorate cash assistance is planned for non-camp refugees. Peace Winds Japan is providing 6,000 winter jackets for school children in Domiz camp of which 2,500 have been distributed. Save the Children distributed 290 winter clothing kits for children (6 -17 years) in Akra. To provide comfort from the cold, ACTED will be giving two folding beds *per household in Arbat, Kawergosk, Basirma, Qushtapa and Darashakran.*

UNHCR will distribute 5,000 winter kits for tents to provide warmth when received from regional stockpile in Amman during the next week. An additional 8,000 have been ordered, which will cover the entire in-camp population.

The KRG of Iraq has been proactive in supporting assistance efforts by providing kerosene at the government rate and, as mentioned above, funding the improvement of road networks in the transit areas and camps.

### From the field: Domiz prepares for its second winter

November 28, Dohuk: In Domiz Camp, which is home to more than 45,000 Syrian refugees, lives 55 years old Shaha Jameel, wrapped with a quilt that she had just received from the UNHCR winterization program. She shared with the UNHCR her harrowing experience escaping from her house in one of the small towns that surrounds Damascus after extensive fighting erupted. *"We could not stay anymore in our town. Bombs were falling anywhere. We left everything behind just to save ourselves"* said Shaha.

It was on one of the coldest January nights in 2013 that she heard her footsteps for the first time cracking the frozen water on a muddy road crossing the Sehela border point to Iraq's Kurdistan. *"Although it was severely cold and we barely could walk, we praised God that we could finally save our souls. It was a perilous attempt to escape safe."* said Shaha.



Shaha with her elder daughter Gule, @ UNHCR/ R. Hussein.

Shaha is the wife of 62 year old Mohammed and parent of a 19 year old son and three daughters, aged 7 to 23 years. Upon their arrival in Domiz camp and settling in Phase 1, they were allocated with a canvas tent, sleeping mats, blankets by UNHCR. *"Despite the limited heating and shortage of warm clothes last winter, we will not forget the efforts and the assistance from UNHCR"* said Shaha.

As the second winter for Domiz is approaching, UNHCR and partners are working hard to meet the refugees' urgent winter needs and tackle the challenges that winter is expected to bring. Development and Modification Center (DMC) which is the main government body in charge of refugee programs in Dohuk Governorate and also Camp Management for Domiz and other camps in Dohuk are working on improving the Domiz infrastructure, such as elevating roads with gravel and asphalt and improving drainages. The distribution of the Winterization Program items started on 25 November. UNHCR and DMC field teams are

working hard to assess the condition of tents in Domiz and issuing new ones as part of the shelter improvement for the upcoming winter.

Between 25 to 28 November, some 1,000 families have already received their winterization packages from UNHCR. Around 3,500 tents are planned to be replaced. Learning from last year winter, Domiz is getting ready. (UNHCR Dohuk, Rasheed Hussein Rasheed)



**Distribution of Winterization items in Domiz Camp. @ UNHCR/ R. Hussein.**

Comparing to last winter, Shaha is hopeful that the coming winter will be easier for them to endure, since they covered their shelter well with additional plastic sheets and have received her winter package. *“I think everything now to make us ready for winter. I’m very delightful to receive these items. I have some blankets from the last winter but the items I just received will keep us even warmer”.*

**Ongoing efforts and challenges**

Several immediate priorities remain to ensure the needs for all Syrian refugee girls, boys, women and men are met before winter sets in. These include continuing digging of emergency drainage in several locations; floor covering for tents; winter clothes for adults including rubber boots and rain jackets; and capacity building for distribution capability for partners.

Several partners noted that the distribution of winter clothes and delivery of other essential items is delayed due to funding and supply issues.

**Winterization Working Group Members**



Erbil Refugee Council



In the KR, UNHCR has chaired 12 meetings since September with the members of the winterization working group. Meeting minutes are available on the UNHCR portal: <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=103>

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# Syrian Refugees Camps / Sites in Iraq

As of 17 November 2013

Total Number of Registered Syrian Refugees in Iraq is 202,976

