

Arsal Emergency Response

Due to the increase in violence in the Qalamoun area of western Syrian, a large number of Syrian refugees arrived in Arsal, a municipality located in eastern Bekaa, as of the middle of November. The population in Arsal has more than doubled since the start of the conflict and there are now estimated to be 35,000 residents, 20,000 refugees registered prior to November 2013, and 20,000 refugees registered beginning November 15th. It is estimated that up to 80% of the refugees are originally from Homs and were internally displaced before arriving in Lebanon. International Medical Corps staff have been heavily involved in the emergency response mechanisms in the area, which continues to be coordinated with other actors to prevent duplication and meet all of the needs.

Health: International Medical Corps has been supporting a primary health care (PHC) clinic in the area since February, 2012. Additional support was provided to this clinic in November in terms of medication and medical supplies in order to support the 30% increase in patients being seen at the clinic; 75% of the total case load is now Syrian. Based on coordination with other health actors and an assessment of the needs in the area, International Medical Corps will be commencing a Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) in early December to meet the needs of those living in collective shelters and informal tented settlements (ITS). Immediately after the influx the health education team provided 540 family hygiene kits, with the support of UNHCR, to the newly arrived families living in collective shelters and ITS. Health education and awareness sessions continue to be provided at the supported clinic and the community level, with additional community health workers operational in the area to meet the increased need.

Mental Health: Case Management (CM) staff from across the Bekaa were relocated to the Arsal area to aid in the response, which commenced with a multi-sectoral assessment aimed at identifying prevailing health and mental health conditions, the use of medications, prevailing chronic conditions, vaccination coverage, and rates of morbidity. WASH and shelter needs were also evaluated. International Medical Corps staff assessed 66 families living in settlements, coordinating with other actors to ensure coverage of all families. Throughout the assessment referrals were made to, and received from, other actors.

Given the large influx, social workers have been completing outreach work, including in coordination with the MMUs, to increase the screening process for MH disorders. Through both the outreach process, as well as referrals from other organizations, International Medical Corps provided treatment to 40 patients with chronic MH disorders, existing prior to the start of the Syrian conflict, including mood disorders, bipolar, schizophrenia, and epilepsy. These patients were provided with psychosocial support and psychotherapy, as well as psychotropic medications when needed. All detected moderate and severe MH cases were provided with treated after proper clinical consultations.



Informal Tented Settlements after rain in Arsal; Member of the health education team providing services in a supported clinic

**Health:**

Primary Health Care: International Medical Corps continues to support the provision of PHC services across Lebanon through an increasing number of PHC clinics. In November **32 PHC clinics and six MMUs** were supported and provided a total of **17,917 consultations** for Syrian refugees, covering antenatal care (ANC) for pregnant women, growth monitoring and vaccination for children, and family planning services, etc.

Secondary Health Care: In November, International Medical Corps admitted **2,690 patients** to **15 supported hospitals** across the country. The top cause for hospital admissions continues to be deliveries, which accounted for more than half (51%) of the inpatients this month.

Polio Vaccination Campaign: In November, International Medical Corps' supported PHC facilities and MMUs actively participated in the first round of the Poliomyelitis vaccination campaign that was administered by the MoPH, in coordination with WHO. International Medical Corps participated through the volunteering of the staff, including Health Officers, Community Health Educators and Workers. Over the 7-day campaign period, International Medical Corps assisted in the **vaccination of 22,562 children** under the age of 5.

**Mental Health:**

Case Management: International Medical Corps continued to support case management (CM) services through **11 CM teams** across the country. In November, **3,133 consultations** were provided for Syrian refugees, Iraqi refugees, and vulnerable Lebanese. Of these, 310 had psychotherapist consultations while 217 had psychiatrist consultations. CM teams continue to coordinate and collaborate with national and international organizations in order to both receive and facilitate referrals.

Awareness Raising: International Medical Corps' social workers continue to work towards raising awareness on mental health issues such as depression, psychosomatic illnesses, paranoia, etc. In November **1,004 individuals** participated in awareness sessions focusing on various topics including Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

Training: In October International Medical Corps provided a ToT session for social workers on Psychological First Aid (PFA). As part of the on-the-job training, these social workers have started leading their own training sessions. In November an International Medical Corps' social worker provided a PFA **training for 17 community members**. Providing the training to community members helps build the capacity of this group, sensitizes them to some of the issues being faced by the population, and provides a resource within the community. International Medical Corps aims to continue working with this group in order to create mental health focal points within these areas, aiding in the identification and referral process. Another social worker, from DRC, provided this **training to seven others** within the DRC.

Gender-Based Violence: This month, International Medical Corps in the Bekaa and North areas took part in the "**16 Days of Activism against GBV**", run by UNHCR. Throughout the period, International Medical Corps provided various trainings and awareness sessions, such as a workshop on Stress and Anger Management for both men and women.

This month International Medical Corps provided services for **30 GBV cases**.