

2018-2019 Regional winterization programme progress report

December 2018 / Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt

With the generous contributions received so far, UNHCR will provide winterization assistance to **3.5 million vulnerable Syrian and Iraqi internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt**. As temperatures dipped during December, UNHCR expedited its winter programme.

As of **31 December 2018, 2.7 million Syrian and Iraqi IDPs and refugees have been reached** with winterization assistance, mainly in the form of winter cash payments, shelter materials and winter specific core relief items.

UNHCR, in coordination with local authorities and partners, has developed emergency and preparedness response mechanisms to respond to any emergency situations. The winterization programme covers the period from **September 2018 to March 2019**.

3.5 million Syrian and Iraqi IDPs and refugees assessed to be in need of winterization assistance.

2.7 million (77%) people reached with winter assistance as of 31 December 2018. This includes 2.3 million Syrians and over 400,000 Iraqis.

70% of the winter assistance will be delivered in the form of cash directly to IDPs and refugees.

FUNDING*
USD 180 million
requested

Unfunded
2%
USD 4 million



*The funding level varies from country to country



Displaced people in Al-Areesha camp (Al-Hassakeh Governorate, Syria) have been badly affected since December 2018 by heavy rains and widespread flooding. UNHCR along with partners have moved tents to higher and safer locations and provided emergency winter assistance. An estimated 10,000 displaced people are currently residing in Al-Areesha camp. © UNHCR/Hisham Ararat

UNHCR's winterization strategy focuses on three broad areas of intervention:



Provision of seasonal cash assistance for vulnerable families to meet their additional needs during the winter months.



Provision of core relief items specific to winter such as high thermal blankets, plastic sheets, heaters and gas cylinders, and winter clothes.



Winterization of shelter including shelter weather-proofing and repairs, and improvements to drainage systems and other infrastructure in camps and informal settlements.

The winterization programme is implemented through UNHCR's own staff, government agencies, partners, and community outreach volunteers in coordination with the broader inter-agency response platforms.

Country Updates

SYRIA

Persons of concern planned vs reached

Syrians*



Out of **1.35 million** targeted so far **817,799** were reached

Iraqis**



Out of **27,484** targeted so far **18,340** were reached

Type of assistance

in-kind
100%

cash
100%

*Includes 1.25 million Syrian IDPs planned to be reached by UNHCR operations inside Syria and 100,000 IDPs through cross-border operation from Turkey

**The figures for Iraqis include refugees of other nationalities

- UNHCR Syria began its 2018-2019 winterization programme on 1 September and aims to reach 1.25 million IDPs, returnees, members of host communities and affected population across the country. As of 31 December, 762,799 IDPs (152,559 families) were provided with winterization items such as high thermal blankets, solar lamp, extra plastic sheeting, and winter clothes kits in 13 governorates. Supplementary winter items such sleeping bags and winter jackets are also being provided to Syrians living in sub-standard shelters.
- Assistance is being prioritized for newly displaced vulnerable families (including people displaced multiple times), people living in hard-to-reach areas and in sub-standard shelters, spontaneous and self-organized returnees, as well as people in newly accessible locations who have not been assisted in the past. A contingency stock of 35,000 winter kits will be maintained throughout the country for emergency response. By December, UNHCR has also distributed seasonal cash assistance to 18,340 refugees and asylum-seekers from Iraq and other countries (3,668 families).
- During December 2018, UNHCR cross-border operation in Gaziantep (Turkey) trans-shipped 2,000 winterized core relief item (CRI) kits to support 10,000 individuals (2,000 households) in Idlib Governorate. By the end of 2018, in total 55,000 individuals (11,000 households) have been assisted with winterized CRI kits.

- Due to heavy rain and storms, many IDP camps/sites in northern Syria were flooded in late December. In north-east Syria, UNHCR is replacing damaged tents and distributing additional CRIs in Al-Areesha and Mabrouka camps (Al-Hassakeh Governorate), and in Ain Issa camp (Ar-Raqqa Governorate). Meanwhile, through cross-border operations from Gaziantep (Turkey), UNHCR has assisted 8,985 individuals (1,797 families) affected by flooding in north-west Syria with winterized CRI kits within the first two weeks of January 2019. In addition, 28 tents in three camps have been replaced by UNHCR and its partner. The flood emergency response has been coordinated closely with the Shelter/Non-Food Item and Camp Coordination and Camp Management Clusters. UNHCR cross-border operation in Gaziantep trans-shipped 2,500 emergency CRI kits in the first week of January 2019 and will be sending additional 2,000 emergency CRI kits during the month to ensure that sufficient emergency capacity is in place.

LEBANON

Persons of concern planned vs reached		Type of assistance
Syrians 	Out of 892,594 targeted so far 892,594 were reached	 cash 100%
Iraqis 	Out of 9,540 targeted so far 9,540 were reached	 cash 100%

- By the end of December 2018, UNHCR finalized the delivery of winter cash assistance to vulnerable refugees across the country. Each vulnerable refugee family received USD 375, corresponding to USD 75 per month (total for five months). The winter package was prepared by UNHCR and other Basic Assistance actors assisting refugees to mitigate the socio economic shock that winter conditions generate on the families' resources. UNHCR used the most updated vulnerability criteria to deliver assistance to the most in need. In total, 165,971 Syrian refugee families (some 892,000 Syrian refugees) and 2,519 refugee families of other nationalities (some 9,500 refugees) were assisted.
- To avoid the delays in provision of assistance, UNHCR worked simultaneously on validation of beneficiaries, card and pin distribution and loading of winter assistance onto ATM cards. UNHCR transferred assistance in three tranches within a 40-day period. In order to ensure uninterrupted provision of information to refugees during this crucial time, the call centre worked extended hours (from 8 AM to 8 PM) with some 50 operators' support to address queries and provide feedback related to winter assistance in addition to maintaining the regular service for the refugee population.
- UNHCR distributed weatherproofing kits and shelter materials to vulnerable refugees challenged with substandard shelter conditions, and living in informal settlements across the country. As of 31 December, 28,000 Syrian refugee households (142,000 individuals) now live in warm, safe, and protected shelters.

JORDAN

Persons of concern planned vs reached

Type of assistance

Syrians  Out of 340,674 targeted so far 340,530 were reached	cash 99% in-kind 1%
Iraqis**  Out of 28,600 targeted so far 26,379 were reached	cash 100%

**The figures for Iraqis include refugees of other nationalities

- UNHCR Jordan began its one-time winterization uploads in October 2018 in order to allow for time to stagger payments throughout the month of November and December. The first upload of winterization payments was given to UNHCR's monthly welfare beneficiaries. In urban areas, 231,991 Syrian refugees (about 53,424 families) have received a one-off cash assistance (per family) from October to December 2018 through the multi-agency Common Cash Facility system. UNHCR and its partners will undertake regular monitoring of project activities, and engagement of cash beneficiaries will be part of UNHCR's post-distribution monitoring mechanism.
- Distribution of winter assistance to vulnerable Syrian refugees in Zaatari and Azraq camps began in October. UNHCR has reached 108,539 individuals (about 24,052 families) with cash for gas to cover the cost of gas refills and cash for winterization to address shelter maintenance. Distribution of heaters and high thermal blankets in both camps reached 48,900 individuals.
- For the Iraqis and refugees of other nationalities, a one-off cash assistance at household level has been provided to 26,379 individuals (about 14,300 families) from October to December 2018 through the Common Cash Facility system.

IRAQ

Persons of concern planned vs reached

Type of assistance

Syrians  Out of 228,000 targeted so far 134,855 were reached	cash 81% in-kind 19%
Iraqis  Out of 656,100 targeted so far 361,050 were reached	cash 72% in-kind 28%

- UNHCR aims to reach some 656,100 IDPs including returnees (109,350 families) and 228,000 Syrian refugees (45,600 families) with winterization assistance in the form of cash and winter appropriate CRIs. A one-off cash assistance grant of USD 200 per family will be provided to IDPs living in camps and in urban areas. For Syrian refugees, USD 400 per family will be provided to both those in and out of camps. CRI kits are composed of high thermal blankets, heating stoves, plastic sheeting, and kerosene jerry cans.
- The distribution of CRIs first began in November and as of end December a total of 495,905 persons had been reached, including 361,050 IDPs and 134,855 refugees. Registration by financial service providers of individuals identified to receive winter cash assistance continued throughout the month of December and the first disbursements of cash were successfully effected.

- In all, 97,641 Syrian refugees and IDPs received their one-off cash grant in December. Cash grants are delivered through a mobile wallet, which is created by the financial service providers when registering identified refugees and IDPs. Individuals can then cash out the grants through certified mobile money agents. Hotlines have been set up to allow beneficiaries to seek assistance or report any complaints or problems faced in receiving their grants. Registration for cash assistance will be finalized, and remaining payments disbursed, in January.
- During November and December, severe storms and heavy rains affected thousands of vulnerable displaced families across the various governorates in Iraq including in Anbar, Duhok, Erbil, Kirkuk, Ninewa and Salah al-Din governorates. Hundreds of tents were destroyed and many families lost their possessions. As part of its response, UNHCR and its partners assisted close to 2,000 families with emergency assistance. Tents were replaced in many camps and 1,687 families were provided with CRIs including plastic sheeting, mattresses, blankets and heating stoves. Contingency plans were developed and followed, evacuation locations set, families moved to safer locations, and CRIs prepositioned in some camps, as needed.

EGYPT

Persons of concern planned vs reached

Type of assistance

Syrians 	Out of 94,400 targeted so far 78,308 were reached	
Iraqis 	Out of 1,200 targeted so far 304 were reached	

- In December 2018, UNHCR Egypt commenced disbursement of the one-off cash assistance of USD 34 per person for the targeted 92,000 Syrian refugees (34,293 families) and 1,200 Iraqi refugees (675 families). By end December, 78,308 Syrian refugees (27,379 families) and 304 Iraqi refugees (148 families) had collected their grant, making the collection rate equal to 85 per cent for Syrians and 25 per cent for Iraqis. Due to the low collection rate in December, the collection period has been extended until end of January. The assistance is being paid through the Egypt Post Office and refugees have time until the end of January 2019 to withdraw their cash grant from one of the over 4,200 branches of the Post Office spread across Egypt. Main distribution areas are those with high concentration of refugees, namely Greater Cairo, Alexandria and Damietta.

Donors:

UNHCR is grateful to the donors who have contributed to the winterization programme for the Syrian and Iraqi IDPs and refugees with unearmarked and earmarked funds as well as those who have contributed directly to the operations.

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