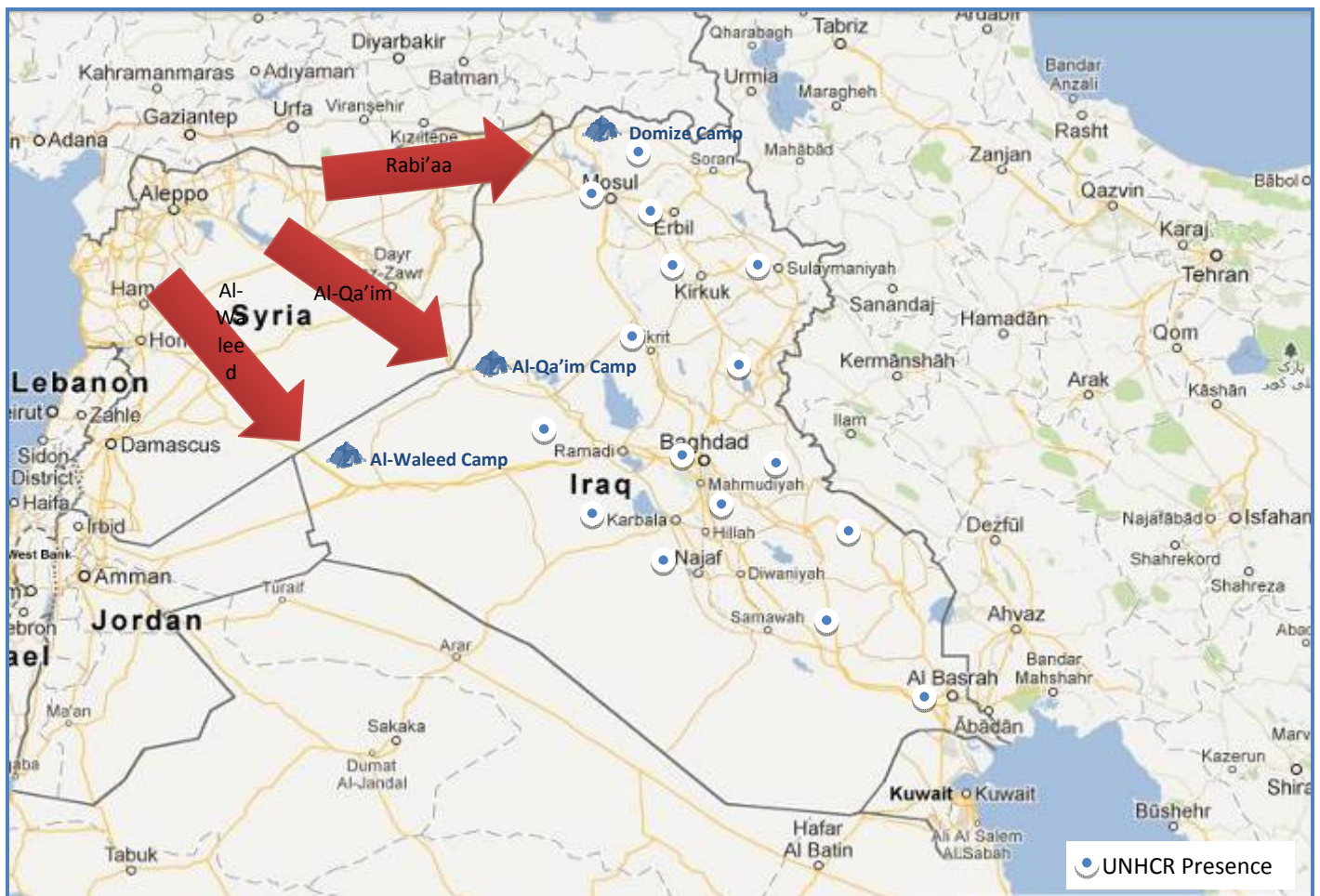


Syria Situation Weekly Update No.19 27 September - 3 October 2012



Topics

| 1 Overview | Syrian Refugee Brief | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| | Location | Totals |
| 2 Statistics | Dahuk | 23,949 |
| | Erbil | 4,859 |
| 3 UNHCR Assistance Update | Sulimanyah | 1,293 |
| | Al-Waleed | 18 |
| 4 Coordination | Rabyaa | 123 |
| | Al-Qaim | 6,253 |
| 5 Iraqi Returnees | By Air | 5 |
| | Total | 36,500 |



Iraqi – Syrian Border Points

MoDM/DDM/Local Authorities
Agencies: UNHCR | UNICEF | WFP | WHO | IOM
NGOs: IRW | Qandil | ISHO | IRC | HARIKARI | CDO

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

iraqpi@unhcr.org

1. Overview

Syrian Arrivals

As the violence escalates yet further in Syria, the flow of refugees into neighbouring countries, including Iraq, has continued.

During the reporting period, a total of 2,796 Syrian nationals have sought refuge in Iraq, the majority of whom (2,207 persons) have entered the Kurdistan Region, and the remainder, 769 persons, entered via Al Qaim. The restrictions on entry via the Al Qaim border point have remained in force. According to the criteria imposed by the Ministry of Interior, entry is limited to around 100 persons per day (women, children under 12 years, men above 50 years) plus emergency cases.

Al Waleed (Anbar Governorate) and Rabi'aa (Nineveh Governorate) border crossing points have both remained open but no Syrian arrivals were recorded through these points.

The total number of Syrians who have sought asylum in Iraq now stands at 36,500 refugees, 30,101 of whom are in the Kurdistan Region. Within Kurdistan, Duhok remains host to the largest number of Syrian refugees, with 23,949 persons, followed by Erbil, with 4,921 and Suleimaniya with 1231.

In Al Qaim, the total number of Syrians accommodated in the camp currently stands at 5,412 (3,185 individuals in camp 1, and 2,227 individuals in camp 2). Official approval from the Government to establish a third camp at Al-Obaidi-Al Qa'im has been obtained. Once established, this camp will be able to accommodate up to 25,000 refugees. The majority of refugees who were accommodated in the public buildings in Al Qaim have now been relocated to the camp; only 58 individuals remain in public buildings. Some 643 persons have been included in the sponsorship programme.

In the Kurdistan Region, some 19,000 persons now reside in Domiz camp.

Iraqi Returnees

Total cross border movements have so far reached 42,860 including 5,997 returnees by air. During the reporting period, a total of 2,771 Iraqis returned from Syria by land, with 1,815 entering through Al-Waleed border point, and 780 through Rabiaa and 176 from Al-Qaim.

Statistics collected at the borders indicate that Baghdad governorate continues to receive the largest number of Iraqi returnees, followed by Anbar and then Ninewa.

A total of 1,602 Iraqis departed from Iraq to Syria during the reporting period, with 1,159 departing through Al-Waleed border point and 443 through Rabiaa.



Establishment of shaded social centre



Small business in Al Qa'im camp



Starting new life in Domiz camp

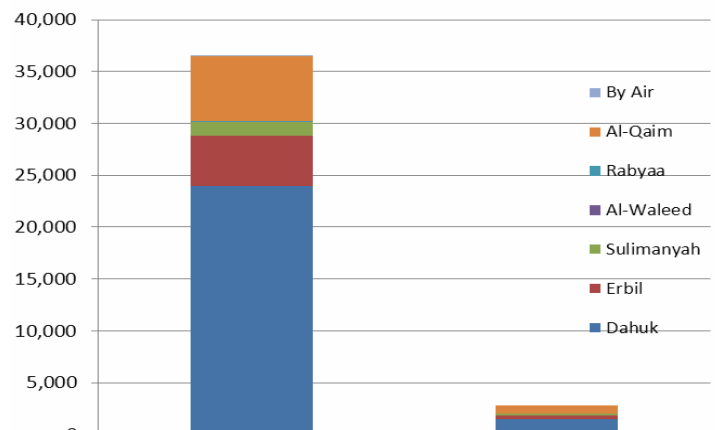


On-going work in Domiz camp

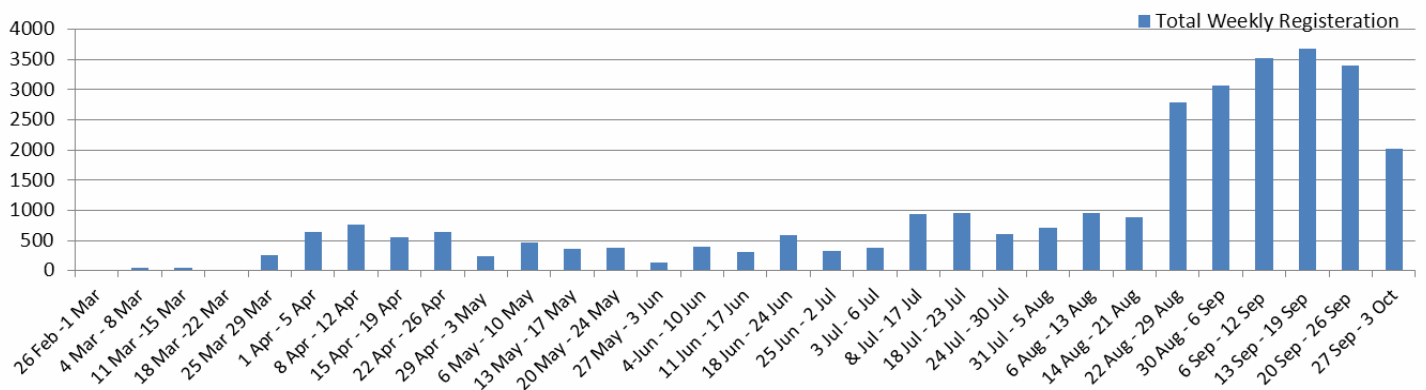
2. Statistics

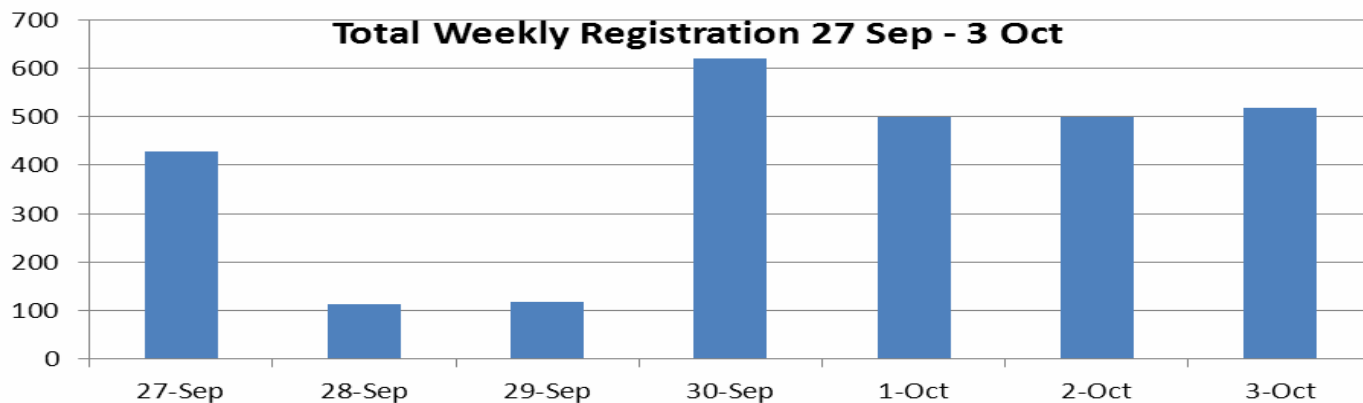
2.1 Syrian Refugees

| Location | Syrian Arrivals between 27 Sep – 3 Oct | Total Arrivals |
|--------------|--|----------------|
| Al-Waleed | 0 | 18 |
| Rabyaa | 0 | 123 |
| Al-Qaim | 769 | 6,253 |
| By Air | 0 | 5 |
| KRG | 2,027 | 30,101 |
| Total | 2,796 | 36,500 |



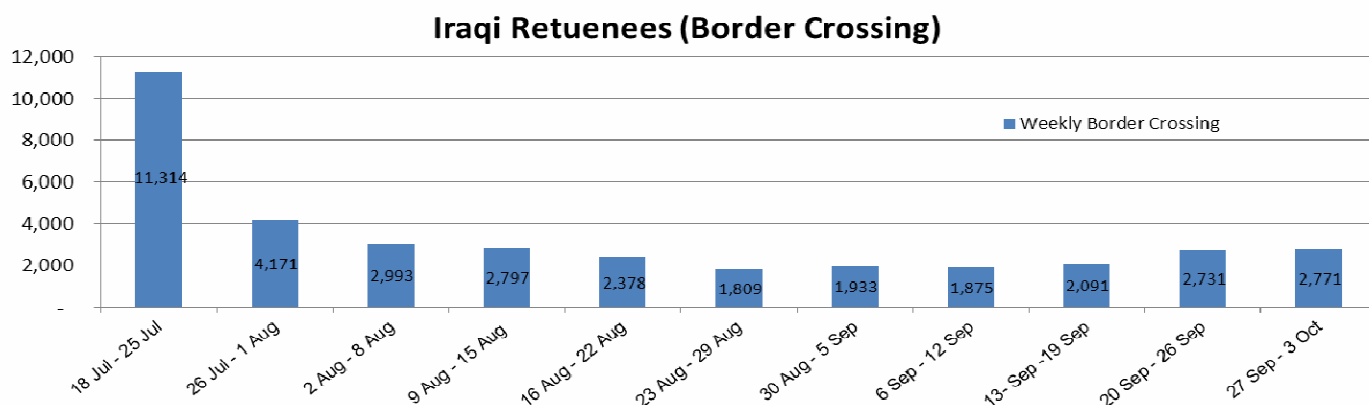
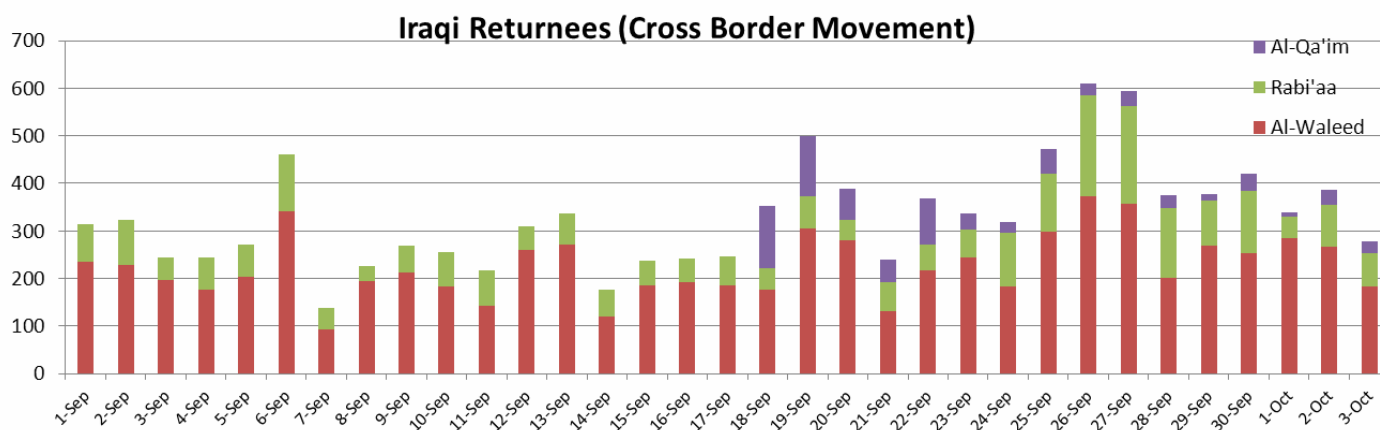
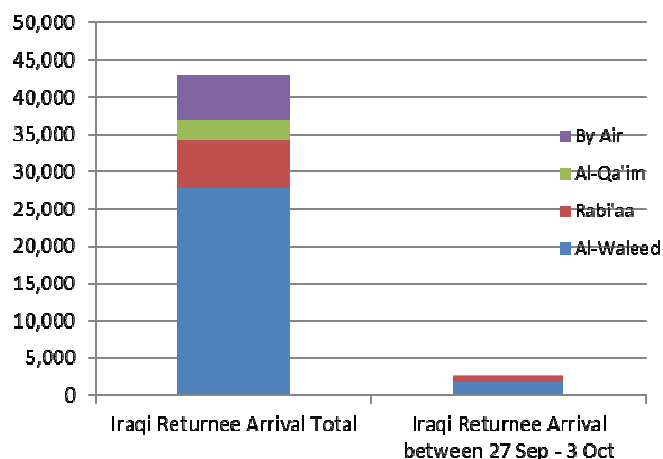
Total Weekly Registration in KRG





2.2 Iraqi Returnees (Cross Border Movement)

| Border Point | Iraqi Returnees between 27 Sep – 3 Oct | Total Arrivals |
|--------------|--|----------------|
| Al-Waleed | 1,815 | 27,742 |
| Rabi'aa | 780 | 6,503 |
| Al-Qa'im | 176 | 2,618 |
| By Air | 0 | 5,997 |
| Total | 2,771 | 42,860 |



3. UNHCR Assistance Update

The reports of Inter-agency missions conducted in Al Qa'im, late August, and in the Kurdistan region, in July 2012, have been finalised and can be obtained upon request. These comprehensive reports form a solid base to adjust needs, gaps and response.

3.1. Protection, Registration and Profiling



General view of UNHCR AL-QA'im camp

Al Qa'im

The process of registration has been on-going during the reporting period. A total of 982 cases / 4,392 individuals have been registered. The total number of verified cases is 261 / 1,271 individuals.

Two additional registration staff have been recruited through UNHCR's implementing partner Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) to expedite the registration.

There is a need to accelerate the sponsorship procedures of the first and second kin as the procedure to obtain approval continues to be subject to delays. Some cases have been under consideration for about 20 days. During interviews conducted by UNHCR, refugees are also concerned about the lack of sustainability of the sponsorship programme, claiming host families are unable to take care of them for longer period of time.

In a positive development on 1 October, the Permanent Committee for Refugees of the MoI has announced that Syrian refugees will be granted a six month residency permit. This should enhance their freedom of movement in Iraq.

Kurdistan Region

Syrian families and single persons continue to approach UNHCR office in Duhok (including Domiz camp), Erbil and Suleimaniya. During the week, UNHCR recorded an additional 2027 individuals which comprises of 271 families (988 individuals) and 1039 singles.

- New arrivals in Erbil: 51 families (191 individuals) and singles are 181.
- New arrivals in Suleimaniya: 32 families (54 individuals) and 118 singles.
- New arrivals in Duhok: 188 families (988 individuals) and 1039 singles.

Statistics shows that the number of new arrivals during the last month of September was higher for the first two weeks with an average of 100/120 families and 350/400 singles, while towards the end of the month the average decreased with some 60/80 families and 150/200 singles on daily basis. During the last week of September the trend significantly decreased with some 1400 new arrivals less than the previous one (3405).

New cabins for 10 offices were installed in order to enhance the UNHCR registration team capacity. 8 new clerks and 3 receptionists were deployed under Harikar and their training on registration (ProGres) will start next week. The new IT equipment has been procured and delivered. These arrangements will double UNHCR capacity and will reduce the waiting time for the registration into ProGres.

3.2. Security for refugees

Al-Qa'im Camp

Iraqi security forces provide the security in the camp; no specific incidents were reported during the past week.

Work to secure the front section of UNHCR camp No. 1 and its administrative area using a 3 metre high sand barrier is nearing completion.



Sand barrier in front of Al Qa'im camp

Domiz Camp

Due to the increasing number of Syrian new arrivals seeking registration and assistance, additional police were deployed to guard the UNHCR cabins and the food/NFI distribution areas for crowd control.

New arrivals pitch their tents near their friends and families residing in the camp pending their relocation to the assigned tent after the completion of phase 3, 4 and Domiz II. This has created congestion and overcrowding in the first two completed phases 1 and 2, resulting in overload on services delivery, camp infrastructure and WASH facilities.

On 2 October, UNHCR and MAG organized a joint site visit to new identified locations within the camp expansion for mine clearance before starting the construction works. Priority is given to three sites: Phase 5, new extended area of the current single area and the new Domiz Single camp located some 2 Km south from Domiz camp. Mine clearance by MAG was completed for the new transit area emerged in the camp.

3.3. Assistance by Sectors

a) Shelter and infrastructure:

In Al-Qa'im

UNHCR has provided 550 tents to the MoDM, which have been erected in the MoDM camp



Installation of Admin caravan

Installation of the administrative caravan (3mx12m) has been completed.

Construction work on the 700 metre road between the 2 camps (UNHCR & MODM) is continuing.

A mosque which was built through the contribution of the ISHO director has been greatly appreciated by the refugee community. As well as providing a place of peace and worship, it is also used to organize awareness sessions and other community activities.

In Camp Number 1 (zone G), work is progressing to establish a shaded social centre and child-friendly space. When completed, these will provide space for children and their families to enjoy recreational activities.

UNICEF is supporting a Child Friendly Space where children are benefiting from recreation and psycho-social activities in a safe space in the camp; activities include painting, drawing, story reading, sport, singing and dancing, which help children cope with the stress of their displacement and experiences. Over 100 children benefit every day.

8 large tents supplied by UNICEF have been erected and allocated as a market including several shops to sell groceries, different kinds of goods to meet the needs of the residents.



Road between the UNHCR and MoDM camp

Domiz Camp

As at 3 October, some 19,000 individuals are residing in Domiz camp (9457 registered). In order to accommodate the increasing number of new arrivals two transit areas have emerged in addition to a large number of new arrival families scattered within the camp. Singles reside in the singles section and in the nearby Mosque.

A total of 1,699 tents have been erected in the family phase 1, 2, of which 220 in transit area and around and 312 tents in the singles section. The Transit 2 area has been extended and 220 tents have been installed.

The new site (Phase 5) plan has been finalized by UNHCR and shared with the DDM for final approval and consequently shared with UNICEF who is currently working on the design of the WASH system for the camp.

As a sharing responsibility during plights between Iraqi and Syrian Kurd nationals, an Iraqi Kurd family decided to host a Syrian Vulnerable family from the camp in their house in Erbil. The hosted family decided to provide them with food and a monthly cash donation. UNHCR closely monitored

the relocation of the family into their new accommodation and is working to identify additional number of hosting families for vulnerable refugees.

b) Water

In **Al-Qa'im**, the camp is being provided with water. Previously, a number of Syrian refugees complained about the quality of drinking water and expressed concern regarding its safety. UNICEF specialists are now conducting regular water quality tests in the camp, so that now the camp has full access to the safe drinking water. UNICEF is securing an additional quantity of water.

In **Domiz**, DDM continues to provide potable water to families and singles by tankers but the distributed amount (between 23 and 44 litres per day depending on the size of the population) does not meet the camp residents' needs due to the sudden increase in the number of the newly arrived Syrian refugees. Therefore, it is urgent to provide the constructed boreholes with chlorine, power supply, diesel and generator operator to cover the shortage of water provided water by tankers. UNHCR and DDM have also raised concerns to the Water Department of delays in water trucking due to the increase number of arrivals.



Water tank –Domiz

The risk of water contamination is high due to the way the water is being handled from the points of extraction (bore holes) to the households.

c) Nutrition

Al-Qa'im: MoDM continues to provide all refugees with meals three times per day. It is planned that the MoDM will replace the meals with dry food. WFP has installed a rub hall and will distribute food baskets for the refugees in coordination with UNHCR.

A coordination meeting was held with Director of Petroleum Products in AL-Qaim to accelerate the distribution of kerosene to Syrians in AL-Qaim to be used for cooking and heating, 20 litres of kerosene per month for each family

Additionally, UNHCR will provide the families through IRW with 30 liters per month for each family as of the mid of the current month.

The results of a rapid nutrition assessment for 580 children under- five are within a normal range. UNICEF is providing supplementary feeding as well as health education on breastfeeding at the nutrition centre at the Al-Qa'im hospital.

Domiz Camp: As of 1 October, the provision of three hot meals a day to the single males by DDM was discontinued. UNHCR and IOM have already distributed cooking sets/stoves.

On 27 September WFP concluded the September food distribution. The next is underway and the food rations will be replaced by food vouchers. The food voucher system will be particularly beneficial for the Syrian refugees residing in the host communities.

d) Sanitation/Hygiene

Al-Qa'im: UNHCR continues to provide hygiene kits and is conducting awareness-raising about sanitation and hygiene issues.

UNICEF is installing the following: 191 latrines, 190 showers, 78 septic tanks, 110 drinking water points, six 10,000 litre tanks, three 45,000 litre tanks, 47 wash basins and 6,500m out of 7350m of water networking are being provided. Forty hygiene mobilizers (50% female) started daily Hygiene Promotion.

Domiz: The sanitation situation in the camp is rapidly deteriorating and the intensity of pollution increasing. In order to find a solution for the uncollected garbage, DDM and Artush Company reached an agreement for proper removal of garbage disposal in all zones of the camp as on 1 October.

UNHCR also expressed concerns about the toilet facilities, which are insufficient for the increasing number of new arrivals. Currently there are 23 persons per toilet and the number is unevenly distributed since the majority are located in phases 1 and 2.

The Government already installed 16 emergency latrines out of a total of 55 planned to be installed in the transit area.

e) NFI Assistance

Al-Qa'im: UNHCR and its partner are continuing the distribution of non-food items to the new Syrian families hosted in UNHCR camp 2.

UNHCR's partner, Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) received an additional 300 NFI packages which are being stored at UNHCR Rub Hall to be distributed according to the need.



NFI distribution

Domiz:

NFI distribution was temporarily suspended from 18 September pending provision of emergency latrines in the DDM identified temporary site for accommodating new arrivals. NFI distribution was resumed upon relocating families in the transit area. NFI distribution will be limited for camp residents only, and other options e.g one time cash assistance will be considered for refugees living in the urban host communities. There is a plan to combine WFP voucher system with the cash assistance for urban refugees. UNHCR is also coordinating with KRG for addressing the needs of Syrian refugees residing in the host community particularly for ensuring access to education and health services.

f) Health

Al-Qa'im: UNHCR held a meeting with the medical personnel at the clinic in Camp 1. The quality of medical services (diagnoses and availability of medication aspects) provided to Syrian refugees was a key issue discussed, after complaints were raised by some refugees on this issue. It was agreed to refer emergency cases to Al-Qaim Hospital.



Click of Al Qa'im camp

IRW will follow up with health directorates to appoint more experienced doctors for the medical clinic in the camp. It was also agreed to accelerate supplying the camp's clinic with chronic disease medications via the health directorate in Al-Qaim. The directorate will provide the camp with the required medications after receiving the final list of patients' names from the clinic.

A tetanus toxoid campaign for pregnant women is planned for the coming weeks, to be undertaken by UNICEF. UNICEF will continue monitoring the status of all children under-five and women in the camps and those who settled with their relatives in the city of Al-Qaim.

Domiz: On 1 October the Minister of Health publically announced a cholera outbreak in Sulemanihya with some cases also reported in Kirkuk.

UNHCR attended an urgent meeting called by the Department of Health (DoH) to prepare for a potential cholera outbreak in the camp. The DoH mentioned that some cases have been reported already in Kirkuk and Sulaimaniya. UNHCR is availing 3 tents for use in as 'stabilization' cholera unit in case needed.

The Department of Health reported that 80-100 patients are received and treated daily. The main reported diseases are upper respiratory tract infection, tonsillitis and diarrhoea, and chronic ailments e.g diabetes, hyper tension and heart condition. There are some reported cases of bloody diarrhoea.

g- Education

Al Qa'im: On 25 September, a UNICEF team visited Al Qa'm to follow up on the recommendations from UNHCR's previous meeting with the Ministry of Education (MoE). It was suggested for MoDM to coordinate directly with MoE in order to facilitate the issuance of instructions and guidelines concerning Syrian students in Iraq.

From 25 – 29 September, in preparation for the start of the school year, UNICEF organized psycho-social support trainings for teachers and DoE personnel. Supplies and stationary for 1000 students and for the school camp were delivered to Al-Qaim and will be distributed at the start of school next week.

UNICEF is supporting the rehabilitation of some of the schools that were occupied by the refugees prior to the relocation to Al Qaim.

Domiz: The enrolment of Syrian refugee children is on-going by DoE, a total of some 4000 school going age children are residing in Domiz as of 3 October. As a special measure to ensure the enrolment of the refugee children for the current school year, the Minister of Education extended the enrolment deadline to 15 October.

On 1 October, HOSO held a meeting with the Governor of Dohuk who agreed to support UNHCR's request for additional land for the new school in order to accommodate the increasing number of school age children, and to start the construction of the "Domiz Single" camp for singles. Following this meeting UNHCR met with the Directorate of Education (DoE) in Dohuk and agreed to: identify new land/site for building a new school with capacity of 24 classes over two shifts; UNICEF together with DoE will ensure the expansion of the current school for a total of 24 classes (some 1200 students in two shifts) by 10 October and ensure its functionality by 15 October.

UNHCR has however agreed with the arrangement of Rubhall and large tents to be utilized as a temporary school in the camp in order to accommodate the students and start the classes in case the expansion of the current school will not be completed by the 10th of October.

Following the meeting with the Minister of Higher Education on 19 September and his willingness to register the Syrian refugees in the national universities, UNHCR met with the refugee committee on 1 October to agree on dissemination of information to the university level refugees for registering for enrolment in the local universities.

h- Employment

In **Al Qaim**, UNHCR's partner, IRW, is recruiting 80% of the workers who are doing the construction works in the camp from amongst the refugee community. Two refugees have opened barbershops inside the camp after they were provided with additional plastic sheet that linked with their tents to serve in providing good space to practice their career.

A number of small businesses and markets have been established in the camp by enterprising refugees. These include a sandwich stall in zone C and a small grocery shop in zone A, as well as a stall selling cigarettes and mobile re-charge cards. The goods are supplied by friends and relatives of the camp residents living in the Al-Qaim area. The businesses are a positive initiative, helping the refugees to cope with their situation and supporting them to regain a sense of normality in their lives.

4. Coordination

UNHCR is collaborating closely with the MoDM, MoI-PC, and Governorate offices. The Office is also engaged in a coordination process with various humanitarian actors/stakeholders, including the Humanitarian Country Team, consisting of UN agencies and NGOs, to ensure necessary support for Iraqi Government's efforts to respond to the returnees' immediate needs. To strengthen cooperation, UNHCR is regularly organising inter-agency meetings to involve more institutions and organisations to provide assistance to the camps.

Al Qaim

The director of Humanitarian Department at MoDM in Baghdad visited the camp on 2 October. A briefing was presented by UNHCR team highlighting the main activities and assistance provided by UNHCR in Al-Qaim for the refugees. His tour inside the camp included the UNHCR registration office, and ended with a briefing by IRW staff on the management of the camp.

Discussion was held with MoDM regarding the proposed MOU between UNHCR and MoDM, to divide the roles between the two parties and expedite the joint management process. The agreement recognises the role of MoDM as the governmental counterpart that will tackle the coordination with other relevant governmental entities to ensure giving required support to UNHCR to achieve all humanitarian goals, whilst UNHCR maintains the role of management of the camps. It has been emphasized also to build the capacities of MoDM personnel in terms of camp management through on job training approach.



Football match in Al-Qa'im

A football match was organized between Al-Qaim UNHCR local team and some young Syrian refugees. The match attended by UNHCR and IRW teams in addition to representatives of Provincial Council and local council in Al-Qaim. The match organized in a nearby yard close to zone H. A like activity help to soothe the hard psychological situation of the refugees. The refugee team won the match 5-1.

Kurdistan

In addition to the existing coordination mechanism through the sector working groups, a daily inter-agency camp coordination meeting has been established in the camp to address the increased coordination needs in the wake of continuous daily influx.

Daily progress and issues, particularly the ones related to camp structural development as well as the needed expansion of basic services will be closely monitored.

On 27 September, HoSO held meetings with the Head of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFR) to brief him on the current refugee situation in the region.

On 30 September a US delegation led by the US Ambassador visited the camp to witness the emergency response efforts in Domiz, joined by PRM, USAID head.

On 3 October, HOSO met with the General Directorate of Nationality and Residency of KRG as requested by the Minister of Interior (MOI) to resolve the problem being faced by Syrian refugees in obtaining their residency permits in Erbil and Sulimanihya. As per the previous instruction of MOI, residency permits were being issued to Syrian refugees only in Duhok. HOSO raised concerns that this created a number of challenges, including lack of financial resources to travel and entry denial back to the other governorates as their residence was restricted only to Duhok.

Following the meeting, the Head of the Residency Department immediately issued orders to the residency departments in Sulimanihya and Erbil to start issuing residence permits for six months to the Syrian Refugees in all three KRG Governorates. Implementation already started on 3 October 2012.

5. Iraqi Returnees

As noted in the Overview, during the reporting period, a total of 2,771 Iraqis returned from Syria by land. Of this number 1,815 entered through Al-Waleed border point, and 780 through Rabiaa and 176 from Al-Qaim.

Information leaflets for returnees continue to be disseminated at the three crossing points at the Iraqi-Syrian borders. The leaflets include contact details of the Returnee Assistance Centres in all governorates, as well as information about the cash assistance provided by the MoMD and UNHCR.

Based on the Ministry of Migration and Displaced (MoMD) instructions of July 25, 2012, Iraqi Returnees who return after June 20, 2012 should be immediately registered with MoMD. Expedited registration and grant distribution processes supposed to be implemented in all MoMD's branches. Registration of Iraqi Returnees in some of the southern governorates is being delayed for 10-15 days for background checking. Up to date a total of 3,782 Iraqi cases households are registered with MoMD. Out of this figure, 793 have received the MoMD grant of (4,000,000 ID).

During the reporting period, 95 Iraqi family returnees approached the 6 UNHCR Registration and Integration Community Centres (RICCS) in Baghdad for consultation. Iraqi returnees' needs include documentation, PDS cards, Jensiya (national ID) documents, shelter, health care and material assistance. A total of 1,822 NFI kits have so far been distributed to returnees in Baghdad, and 184

NFI kits in the following governorates: Al-Anbar, Diyala, Babil ,Najaf ,Kerbala, Wassit and Salahaldin.

Interviews with Iraqi Returnees

Iraqis returning from Syria have continued to report that Iraqis are facing direct threats by armed groups who forced them to leave their houses. Some families stated that they lost some of their members due to violence and direct threats and snipers. Some returnees have reported that Syrian authorities stopped the procedures of granting residency to the majority of Iraqis in Syria for unknown reasons and they were being forced to live illegally. As a result, this prompted many of them to return to Iraq.

However, despite the on-going violence in Syria, many Iraqi returnees have stated that their return to Iraq is temporary, and that they are waiting for the situation in Syria to improve. Other returnees will be assessing the living circumstances and services in Iraq before making their final decision to return home permanently.

Returnees interviewed by UNHCR continue to voice their concern over high living costs in Iraq especially for housing in comparison with Syria. It was also reported that some of the Iraqi returnees reportedly left Iraq again to obtain their cash assistance and to visit their families and friends in Syria. Many returnees have requested assistance in returning to their governmental jobs in Iraq.

Iraqis who were interviewed crossing Al-Waleed border indicated that they were unable to reach UNHCR Syria to obtain the Voluntary Repatriation package. Some Iraqis are still departing to Syria to receive the UNHCR Syria cash assistance and to obtain their children's school certificates.

Individual story

B, 33 years old female, responsible for three children as her husband was killed in Baghdad during the sectarian violence in 2007. "My husband was a policeman, and because of his work he was targeted" she stated. "When my husband was killed I was pregnant with my third child". Fearing for her family's safety, she decided to leave Iraq and seeking asylum in Syria.

Although her resettlement case to Canada was in process; she decided to return back to Iraq as a result of the situation there. "My children and I have no accommodation in Iraq, neither do we have any source of income except for UNHCR Syria cash assistance" B is currently living with relatives while she decides on her future.