

# INTER-AGENCY REGIONAL RESPONSE FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES

Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey

28 March - 3 April 2013



This update provides a snapshot of the inter-agency regional response in full coordination with host Governments and 61 partners across the region. Published weekly on Thursday, the next update will be available on 11 April 2013.

## REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- The majority of the refugee population (75 per cent) are women and children. Protection against sexual and gender-based violence and prevention and response services for child protection are key priorities. Humanitarian response partners continue to implement comprehensive mechanisms to prevent, identify and assist the most vulnerable and provide psychosocial support, referrals and follow-up.
- Almost three quarters of refugees are living in host communities who are themselves struggling to make ends meet. It is vital that local services are maintained and supported by the humanitarian response to minimize the impact on local communities from accommodating the ongoing influx.
- Over 33,000 Palestinian refugees who have fled to Lebanon from Syria and a further 5,000 to Jordan have approached UNRWA for assistance. UNRWA continues to provide material and psychosocial support including shelter, health care, education and cash to address vulnerabilities.
- Underfunding continues to be a major constraint on scaling up the regional response and meeting urgent, growing needs. There is an urgent need to see the generous pledges made at the International Humanitarian Pledging Conference for Syria on 30 January 2013 in Kuwait turned into concrete contributions.

## IN THIS ISSUE

- Registration is vital for the protection of new arrivals and refugees previously not in need of assistance, p2
- Targeted urban assistance required as local hosting capacity become increasingly exhausted, p2
- Rising numbers pose urgent challenge of finding suitable shelter, p3
- Host Governments and partners implement integrated health response to meet primary needs, p4

## REGIONAL FIGURES

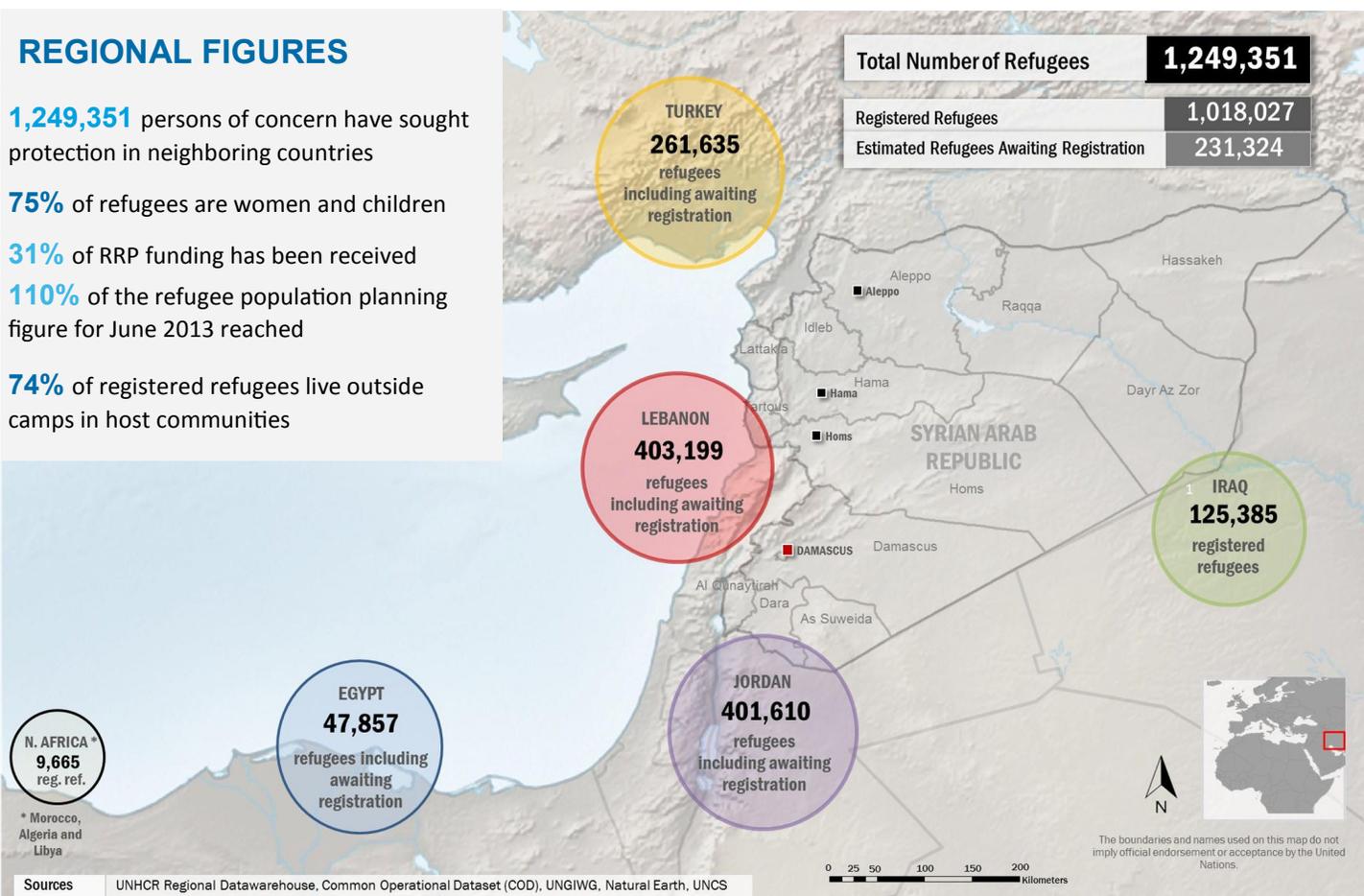
**1,249,351** persons of concern have sought protection in neighboring countries

**75%** of refugees are women and children

**31%** of RRP funding has been received

**110%** of the refugee population planning figure for June 2013 reached

**74%** of registered refugees live outside camps in host communities



Refugee population as of 3 April 2013, based on available data. For updated figures visit <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees>

## Registration is vital for the protection of new arrivals and refugees previously not in need of aid

- Registration remains the key mechanism through which persons of concern are identified, protected and assisted. Vulnerable new arrivals with specific needs, including people with disabilities and serious medical conditions, female headed households, the elderly and unaccompanied minors continue to be prioritized for assistance.

- UNHCR has introduced extra-ordinary measures to expand registration capacities, including establishing new registration centres, double shifts and emergency procedures, to significantly reduce waiting periods.

- Lebanon - Increased efforts to reduce waiting times and quicken registration resulted in 10,000 more refugees registered in March over February. A notable decrease in registration waiting periods was achieved across the country: halved in Beirut and Mount Lebanon and reduced by one third in the Bekaa. In the North, the average waiting time has reached 27 days.

The new registration premise in Tyre is scheduled to open mid-April week and in Beirut, the newly constructed registration prefabricated cubicles helped triple the number of people registered on a daily basis, going from 200 to over 600 people each day.

- Iraq - UNHCR has increased material and human resources at protection centres to strengthen the registration capacity of scattered urban refugees, mainly present in Baghdad, Najaf and Karbala. UNHCR continues to advocate with relevant authorities for residency and freedom of movement to both the urban and camp-based refugees.

- Egypt - A mobile registration exercise began in Alexandria on 1 April and will continue for ten days. A brochure summarizing all provided services is distributed in Greater Cairo and Alexandria to address information gaps.

- Jordan - Support to new arrivals are also provided by phone through a dedicated registration info/hotline. Phone calls were received from Syrians who were mainly inquiring about services such as financial assistance, how and when they could benefit from assistance, and the requirements of registration.



*An elderly refugee in a wheelchair is helped into an ambulance by Jordanian troops at an undisclosed location along the Syria-Jordan border. UNHCR | J. Kohler*

## Targeted urban assistance required as local hosting capacities become increasingly exhausted

- The whole Syrian refugee population in Lebanon and Egypt, as well as 75 per cent of the refugee population in Jordan are residing outside camps in host communities who are themselves struggling to make ends meet. In response, humanitarian partners are seeking to maintain and support local services to meet the needs of refugees and the local community who are experiencing the strain of accommodating and supporting the continuous influx.

- Urban refugees are more difficult to target with assistance and battle additional challenges including high rents and limited space. Partners are working to identify the most vulnerable and target them with income generation, assistance programs, documentation and other programs to assist people in meeting their basic needs.

- Lebanon - Throughout March, humanitarian response partners worked to expand the provision of vocational training, remedial classes, and agriculture-based projects to provide alternatives and training to unemployed adults and out of school youth. UNDP and UNHCR have also started to implement quick-impact projects to provide needed improvements to hosting communities in impacted areas. Agencies are now working to identify additional development opportunities to benefit both hosting communities and Syrian refugees in order to preempt tensions and provide much-needed assistance to vulnerable Lebanese families living in impoverished areas. Peace-building activities by various partners took place in March to address rising tensions.

- Jordan - UNHCR counsels urban refugees with specific needs on basic social services including health, education, legal and financial services provided by response partners. Vulnerable families or individuals are provided with urgent cash assistance directly by UNHCR or through referrals to Care International. Home visits are conducted to identify and follow-up on the most vulnerable including the elderly and women at risk.

- Egypt - Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) distributes clothing packages and conducts home visits to assess and respond to needs. Caritas distributed financial assistance to 630 individuals and another 858 individuals received emergency assistance. Response partner Resala contacted 724 registered refugees in Damietta to assist with the distribution of one-off emergency assistance.

### Rising numbers pose urgent challenge of finding suitable shelter

- The nature of shelter solutions is evolving with fast-changing needs. The increasing rate of new arrivals and registered populations, the dispersion of refugees across urban and camp settings and the inflation of rents in host communities have rendered the shelter response more complex.

- UNHCR is reviewing its shelter and settlements strategy across the region in response to the constant and critical concern of accommodating increasing numbers of new arrivals. The revision will also inform the prioritization of activities in the next six months, including expanding the absorption capacity of settlement options.

- **Lebanon** - The Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) has stepped up its efforts to assist Syrian refugees finding adequate shelter solutions. Now officially co-leading the shelter response with UNHCR, MoSA will help further strengthen the coordination and implementation of shelter projects by reinforcing the technical role of government counterparts such as the Department of Public Infrastructure, Ministries and Municipalities.

In response to an increase in the number of ‘improvised shelters’ in the form of scattered tents or people living in substandard vacant structures, MoSA and partners are focusing on renovating additional collective shelters, such as abandoned schools or vacant public buildings, to host Syrian refugee families. Agencies have also scaled up their coordination with local authorities and local charities so that refugees in urgent need of assistance can be referred to the adequate partner. During March, over 14,000 individuals benefited from shelter solutions. Partners weatherproofed over 700 dwellings, rehabilitated more than 50 collective shelters and identified 44 new buildings to serve as collective shelters. In addition, more than 450 Syrian families (2,250 individuals) and 1,300 host families benefited from rental assistance.

- **Iraq** - Domiz camp in northwest Iraq’s Dohuk Governorate is currently housing around 35,000 Syrian refugees and is critically overcrowded. Thousands of families are sharing tents with newly arrived refugees as almost 3,500 families do not have their own shelters. Overcrowding is in turn having an impact on sanitation, rendering it below humanitarian standards. The Governorates of Erbil and Sulaymaniyah have confirmed they are willing to allocate more space for additional camps. Various technical missions have taken place to assess two new potential sites. The camps will provide space for an estimated capacity of 25,000 individuals in



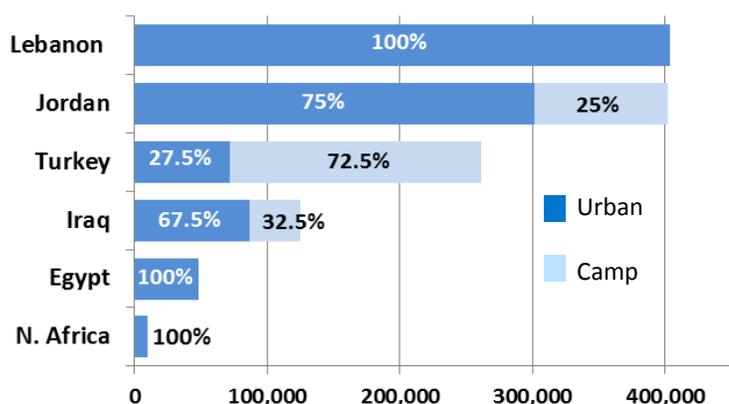
Syrian refugee children play on playground equipment amid refugee families' tents in Domiz refugee camp in the Kurdistan Region, Iraq. UNHCR | B. Sokol

total. A technical review and understanding of livelihood opportunities is required and will be made in conjunction with UNICEF, WFP and ACTED as the mapping focal agency.

- **Jordan** - Due to the enormous influx coming into Jordan in recent weeks, the Government and UNHCR jointly identified a new camp for Syrian refugees in Azraq. Preparatory works have commenced at the site and response partners are undergoing planning to define technical parameters and put in place the necessary infrastructure and services.

- **Turkey** - Government officials have stated that, in addition to two camps under construction in Kilis -Elbeyli and Osmaniye-Duzici, three more new camps are also planned for Malatya, Mersin and Sanliurfa. Expansion of Islahiye camp in Gaziantep is also being considered.

#### URBAN/CAMP POPULATION BREAKDOWN BY COUNTRY



## Host Governments and partners implement integrated health response to address primary needs

- Humanitarian response partners and host Governments provide a range of primary and secondary health care services to Syrian refugees, including dental care, diagnostic services, prenatal care, medications, vaccinations and referrals.

- Vaccination of children under 15 against measles and polio are ongoing across the region with vaccines provided by UNICEF, partners and host Governments.

- Jordan - A total of 16,466 children have been vaccinated against measles and polio since the start of 2013. Planning continues for the mass vaccination campaign in Za'atri camp and host communities. The MSF France pediatric hospital opened in Za'atri on 22 March, providing two 14-bed wards and a three-bed emergency room. A new Jordan Health Aid Society and UNFPA Reproductive Health Unit opened on 24 March with a midwife to provide family planning services.

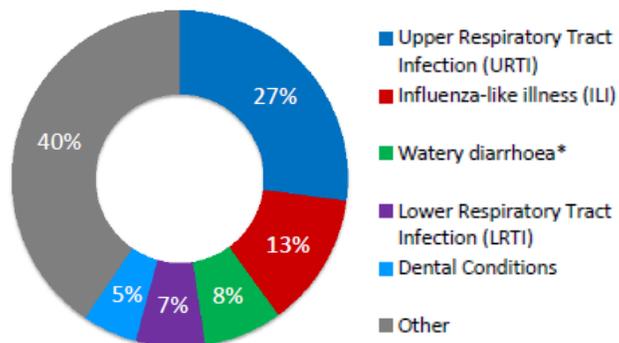
- Lebanon - Over 11,000 refugees in need of medical care were seen in primary health care clinics and over 3,000 refugee patients received secondary health care in March throughout the country. Services are supported by UNHCR, International Medical Corps (IMC), Amel Association, Caritas and Makhzoum Foundation. A new mobile medical unit started to provide primary health care services in Akkar, north Lebanon, bringing the total number of mobile medical units in the country to 18. Mobile medical units have proved particularly useful in disease prevention through the free provision of vaccinations, basic medications and health awareness sessions. IMC are also sending a mobile medical unit to Chebaa and Hasbaia where over 1,000 Syrian refugees have recently settled to provide essential consultations, first aid treatment, and proper referral and follow-up. IMC staff also visited refugee patients in their communities, at primary health care centers and hospitals to ensure they have been properly assisted. The UNHCR/IMC mental health unit provided a total of 2,000 clinical and social consultations in March. IMC is now recruiting community health workers from the refugee community to work within communities for enhanced identification of needs and for appropriate referral and follow-up.

- Iraq - A polio vaccination campaign is underway in both Al'Qaim and Dohuk regions, targeting refugees and host population. Overcrowding in Domiz camp, congestion and warmer temperatures are increasing vulnerability to disease outbreaks. The number of children below 5 years of age suffering from diarrhoea in the camp has doubled in recent weeks. UNHCR, UNICEF and WHO are conducting a joint assessment to address the observed increase.

The Dohuk Department of Health, with the support of UNICEF, is planning a nutritional survey in Domiz camp among children under 5 years old. Further data will be collected on health coverage, incidence of common diseases (diarrhoea and acute respiratory infection) and to identify possible causal factors of malnutrition.

- Egypt - Some 51,000 children were reached by the polio vaccination campaign, exceeding the 44,600 target. Additionally, over 500 Syrians benefited from primary health care services at Caritas Cairo and Alexandria, Refuge Egypt clinics and Mahmoud Hospital. Refuge Egypt is also conducting health education sessions on topics including HIV, antenatal care and family planning.

Acute health conditions in Za'atri camp, Jordan



The regional response for refugees fleeing Syria is the coordinated effort of 61 participating agencies:

ACF | ACTED | AMEL | Arab Council Supporting Fair Trial and Human Rights | ARRD-Legal Aid | Association of Volunteers International | CARE International | CARITAS | Caritas Lebanon Migrant Centre | Centre for Victims of Torture | CHF International | CISP/RI | Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services | DRC | FCA/ACT Alliance | GVC/Muslim Aid | HAI | Handicap International | ICMC | IMC | IOM | International Orthodox Christian Charities | IRD | IRC | Internews | Intersos | JEN | JHCO | JHAS | JRF | Madrasati Initiative | Medair | Mercy Corps | Movement for Peace | NRC | Oxfam GB | People in Need | PU-AMI | Psychosocial Training Institute in Cairo | Questscope | Relief International | Restart | Save the Children Jordan | SCI | ShelterBox | Terres des Hommes | THW | Un ponte Per | UNDP | UNESCO | UNFPA | UNHABITAT | UNHCR | UNICEF | UNOPS | UNRWA | UNWOMEN | War Child Holland | WFP | WHO | World Vision International

Humanitarian response partners are invited to contribute to this report. For more information or to be added to the distribution list, please contact [Anna King](mailto:anna.king@unhcr.org), UNHCR Regional Reporting Officer | [kinga@unhcr.org](mailto:kinga@unhcr.org)