

Egypt Weekly Update

Syria Operation

9 – 14 July 2013

HIGHLIGHTS

Total number of Syrian refugees registered and awaiting registration with UNHCR in Egypt stands at 92,749 individuals as of 14 July, with 72,841 Syrians registered to date.

The Government imposed restrictive entry procedures on 8 July requiring Syrians coming to Egypt to already have a visa and prior security approval. Some 476 Syrians have been deported or denied entrance to Egypt to date.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that the new visa measures are temporary and that these measures will not affect support for Syrians in Egypt.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres issued an appeal on 12 July to the Egyptian authorities, as he has to all other governments in the world, to admit and protect all Syrians seeking refuge in their country.

REGISTRATION AND NEW ARRIVALS

The total number of Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR in Egypt stands at **72,841** individuals (26,287 families) as of 14 July. Additional **19,908** individuals are awaiting registration.

To date, the total number of Syrian refugees registered in Greater Cairo stands at 37,969 individuals, 14,543 in Alexandria, and 7,862 in Damietta. 12,467 Syrian refugees are residing in other governorates in Egypt.

43% of registered Syrians arrived to Egypt through a transit country: **79%** through Lebanon, **10%** through Jordan, and **11%** through others countries.

During the reporting period, 2,800 individuals (929 families) registered in Zamalek Registration Centre. 605 cases with specific needs were identified and 36% of the cases were child. 16,088 individuals are awaiting registration in Greater Cairo, 1,454 in Alexandria and 2,366 in Damietta.

The Zamalek Registration Centre is operating in one shift during the Holy Month of Ramadan, and has been registering over 600 individual each day.

UNHCR also provides counselling and responds to all calls on 4 hotlines through the Zamalek Registration Centre.

Total Gender and Age Breakdown

Age Group	F	M	Total
0 - 4	5252	5523	10775
5 - 11	6373	6730	13103
12 - 17	4217	4853	9070
18 - 39	13290	12433	25723
40 - 59	5529	5527	11056
60+	1515	1599	3114
Total	36176	36665	72841

Monthly Registration Trends



PROTECTION

Since the crisis began in Syria in 2011, the Egyptian Government had been maintaining a liberal and hospitable approach towards Syrians seeking asylum in the country. Syrians could receive an entry visa and residency permit valid for 6 months at the point of entry, and were granted access to the same level of health and education afforded to Egyptians. However, within the current political turmoil in the country, there has been a shift in perceptions and the level of sympathy afforded to the Syrian community.

On 8 July the Government imposed restrictive entry procedures requiring Syrians coming to Egypt to already have a visa and prior security approval. A number of flights carrying Syrians were turned back from airports in Egypt. Syrian nationals were returned to where their flight originated, including Damascus and Latakia in Syria. The procedures were put in place as a temporary security measure due to security concerns stemming from the alleged participation of a few Syrians in protests and violence. Some 476 Syrians have been deported or denied entrance to Egypt to date.

UNHCR conducted a field visit to 6th of October, where there is a high concentration of Syrians in Cairo, to meet with Syrian refugees, Community Based Protection Network (CBPN) members, and partners to assess protection concerns in light of the new circumstances. Syrians directly or through the CBPNs have also been reporting to UNHCR that they have experienced threats, harassment, questioning by the authorities, expulsion from jobs, denial of services such as enrolment in school, and detention. In at least one case this included a house search. All of this has led to a notable increase in the number of Syrians approaching UNHCR to register.

Some Syrians choosing to leave Egypt approached UNHCR during the reporting period to close their cases. Reasons for these requests are varied and include lack of employment in Egypt and family reasons. Very few, as of yet, have stated concern over the current political situation as a reason for leaving.

UNHCR continued to conduct Best Interest Assessment (BIA) upon registration, mostly for separated children who have traveled to Egypt with relatives. During the reporting period 13 unaccompanied and separated children were registered, among which five have been identified as unaccompanied and eight as separated children including one disabled child, and two girls. Ten arrived from

Damascus while the other three were from Homs or Hama; all arrived between September 2012 and July 2013.

Nine BIAs were finalized during the week. Main needs identified were education and vocational training (work) as well as financial assistance. One child is in need of shelter and another is in need of medical care.

One case of SGBV was reported to UNHCR during the reporting period and has been provided with counselling and assistance.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

During the reporting period 911 individuals (238 families) registered in Cairo for financial assistance, of which 1,256 individuals (313 families) were identified as vulnerable. 250 individuals (79 families) were registered in Alexandria, and 142 individuals received financial assistance.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

For the month of July, the World Food Programme (WFP) is planning to assist 35,525 food-insecure Syrian refugees with food vouchers. There is a capacity to assist up to 40,000 Syrian refugees in July, pending additional beneficiary lists.

Due to ongoing security concerns, WFP food distributions in Damietta and Obour were rescheduled to the third week of July. Distributions in Alexandria and 6th of October are planned for the fourth week of July, assuming distributions can be safely conducted. WFP is investigating changing to e-vouchers, which would eliminate the need for face to face distribution for ongoing beneficiaries and reduce delays in receiving assistance during times of unrest.

WFP staff have been responding to Syrian refugee concerns through the hotline and providing an updated distribution schedule. As it is the Holy Month of Ramadan, WFP is keen to complete the food voucher distributions as soon as possible.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The community centre in the 6th of October suburb of Cairo provided support to 1134 Syrians during the reporting period. 234 Syrian (115 women and 119 men) participated in awareness sessions on protection provided by the UNHCR, community centre services and NGOs and CBOs that support refugees, including places that offer assistance to Syrian refugees. Syrians also participated in education and children's activities in the centre.

EDUCATION

Students continued to register for education grants; to date, 4,911 grants have been provided, 14 to children with special needs children.

HEALTH-CARE

UNHCR implementing partner Caritas Alexandria signed an agreement with Mabaret El-Asafra Hospital to expand health coverage to Syrians in Alexandria.

During the reporting period 595 Syrians were provided with primary health care services; 81 children under 5 years benefitted from health services, and 57 women received ante natal care with 2

referrals for delivery. 53 patient referrals were issued for secondary care, 4 for tertiary care and 8 for hospital admission. Some 318 Syrians benefited from chronic disease treatment.

Health education sessions were given on calcium and vitamin D supplementation, brain development, breast feeding and weaning and oral health, complementary feeding and mother diet, warning signs in pregnancy.

MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

During the reporting period, 218 cases benefited from psychosocial services at UNHCR's implementing partner PSTIC, and 4 cases benefited from housing assistance. Syrian refugees reported that landlords were moving from monthly to weekly rent payment and that they were unable to pay weekly.

PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

With the new policies imposed by the Egyptian authorities on the access of Syrians to Egypt, many journalists and human rights organizations have been approaching UNHCR for clarifications and response. During the reporting period, the Regional Representative was interviewed by several news agencies, including BBC Arabic which aired on 16 July, and the Daily Beast for an article that also appeared on 16 July.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued two statements on the 10 and 15 July emphasizing that these measures are temporary and will not affect Egypt's support to Syrians in the country.

On 12 July the UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres issued an appeal to the Egyptian authorities, as he has to all other governments in the world, to admit and protect all Syrians seeking refuge in their country. He said, "I fully understand the challenges faced by Egypt at the present moment. But the traditional hospitality of the Egyptian people should not be denied to Syrians trying to flee the most devastating and dangerous conflict in the world today."

An article was published on 14 July in Daily News, Egypt under the title of Egyptian Leaders express support for refugees. Mohamed ElBaradei, Vice President of Foreign Affairs, Ziad Bahaa El-Din, Deputy Prime Minister of Economic Affairs and Hamdeen Sabahy, founder of Al Tayar Al Sha'aby, commented on Arabs seeking refuge in Egypt. Bahaa El-Din stated, "If we're convinced that Egypt is the heart of pan-Arabism, then we need to know that it's just not fancy rhetoric, but a national responsibility in every sense of the word."