

Winter plans being finalized across the region to assist around 1.6 million Syrian refugees in coming months

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS:

Across the region, needs assessments and planning to assist refugees and others through the harsh winter season are being finalized. It is estimated that around 1.6 million Syrian refugees will receive winterization assistance in the coming months across Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. Depending on the country context and plan, this assistance can include seasonal cash assistance, high thermal blankets, plastic tarpaulins, shelter insulation, stoves/heaters and fuel, and winter clothing and shoes.

Winter plans in Iraq will target the most vulnerable refugees living in camps and in urban, peri-urban and rural areas with in-kind seasonal non-food items (NFIs) and kerosene during the winter months. More broadly in Iraq, active preparations of distribution plans and identification of vulnerable families for winterization support have started across all three KRI governorates. Massive replacement of tents already took place as a response to a heavy storm of 6 September, which destroyed almost 1,500 tents and hundreds of household items.

In Jordan, the Winterization task force resumed operational planning in September. An initial gap analysis is underway to inform and initiate planning mechanisms. The Winterization response is a multi-sector interagency response comprised of Shelter, Basic Needs (Cash and NFIs), WASH and Protection with more than 20 partner organizations participating in the process. An Emergency Harsh Weather Response taskforce has been formed to begin assessing lessons learned from previous years to integrate in to 2015-2016 operational planning. Given the increasing demand for cash-based assistance, the Basic Needs sector and the Winterization task force have both agreed to adopt a harmonized approach to targeting. This is to ensure that the most vulnerable are reached across the basic needs sector and in winterization programmes.

NEEDS ANALYSIS:

The majority of the new refugee arrivals to neighbouring countries in 2015 arrive with few personal possessions and in need of domestic items to meet their needs, including blankets, water jerry cans and kitchen sets. The 3RP partners provide a response for basic needs which is predominantly humanitarian, with packages of basic domestic items for new arrivals, and replacement items for refugees who are accommodated in camps for long periods of time.

For the most vulnerable families, agencies have adopted unconditional, multi-purpose cash assistance programmes through the region, allowing beneficiaries to spend the assistance on goods and services they feel they need most, giving them the dignity of choice while positively impacting on local economies.

Weather in the Middle East includes low winter temperatures, near or below freezing (especially at higher elevations), and heat during the summer often reaching in excess of 40 degrees Celsius. These extremes require warm clothes, energy for heating, and reinforced shelters during the winter, while in summer refugees need basic materials to create shade and protection from disease vectors, especially for children and the elderly.



Replacement of tents in Gawilan camp, Duhok. UNHCR/S. Gammah

Sector Response Summary:



1,904,095 Refugees & Local
Community Members targeted for
assistance by end-2015
1,150,460 assisted in 2015



Syrian Refugees in the Region:



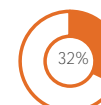
4,270,000 Syrian Refugees
expected by end-2015
4,047,013 currently registered or
awaiting registration



Basic Needs Sector Funding Status:



USD 791 million
required in 2015 (Agencies)
USD 254 million received in 2015



WORSENING CONDITIONS FUEL DESPAIR, DRIVING THOUSANDS OF REFUGEES TOWARDS EUROPE

The spike in Syrian refugees arriving in Europe, including from Syria directly, is mainly due to the loss of hope that a political solution will soon be found to end the war and to steadily deteriorating living conditions in exile, triggered by the humanitarian funding shortfall which is impacting on refugees in the region.

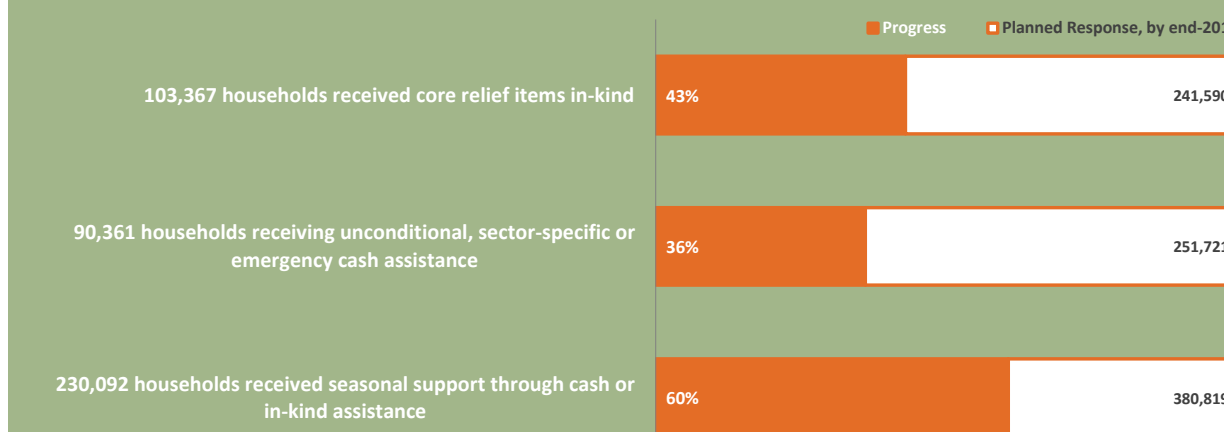
Limited livelihood and education opportunities, hurdles to renew legal residency, and refugees feeling increasingly unsafe have also been given as reasons why refugees are moving onward.

For the 4.08 million refugees already in neighbouring countries – the vast majority of whom live outside of formal camps – hope is also dwindling as they sinker deeper into abject poverty. Recent studies in Jordan and Lebanon, for example, have found a marked increase in refugee vulnerability amidst funding shortfalls for refugee programmes.

In Jordan, the situation for more than 520,000 Syrians living outside the country's refugee camps is increasingly dire. A recent assessment showed that 86 per cent of those in urban and rural areas are now living below the poverty line, having exhausted any savings or other assets they once had. As a result, more than half of all refugee households have high levels of debt and are taking increasingly extreme measures in order to cope, such as reducing their food intake or sending family members – including children – out to beg.

A similarly bleak picture exists in Lebanon where the preliminary findings of a recent vulnerability study found 70 per cent of Syrian refugee households live far below the national poverty line – up from 50 per cent in 2014. Here too, more refugees are buying food on credit, withdrawing children from school and resorting to begging.

REGIONAL RESPONSE INDICATORS: JANUARY - SEPTEMBER 2015*



These dashboards reflect the achievements of the more than 200 partners, including governments, UN Agencies, and NGOs, involved in the 3RP response in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. Progress and targets may change in line with data revisions. All data on this Dashboard is current as at 30 September 2015.
* Progress data not yet received for Turkey in September 2015.