

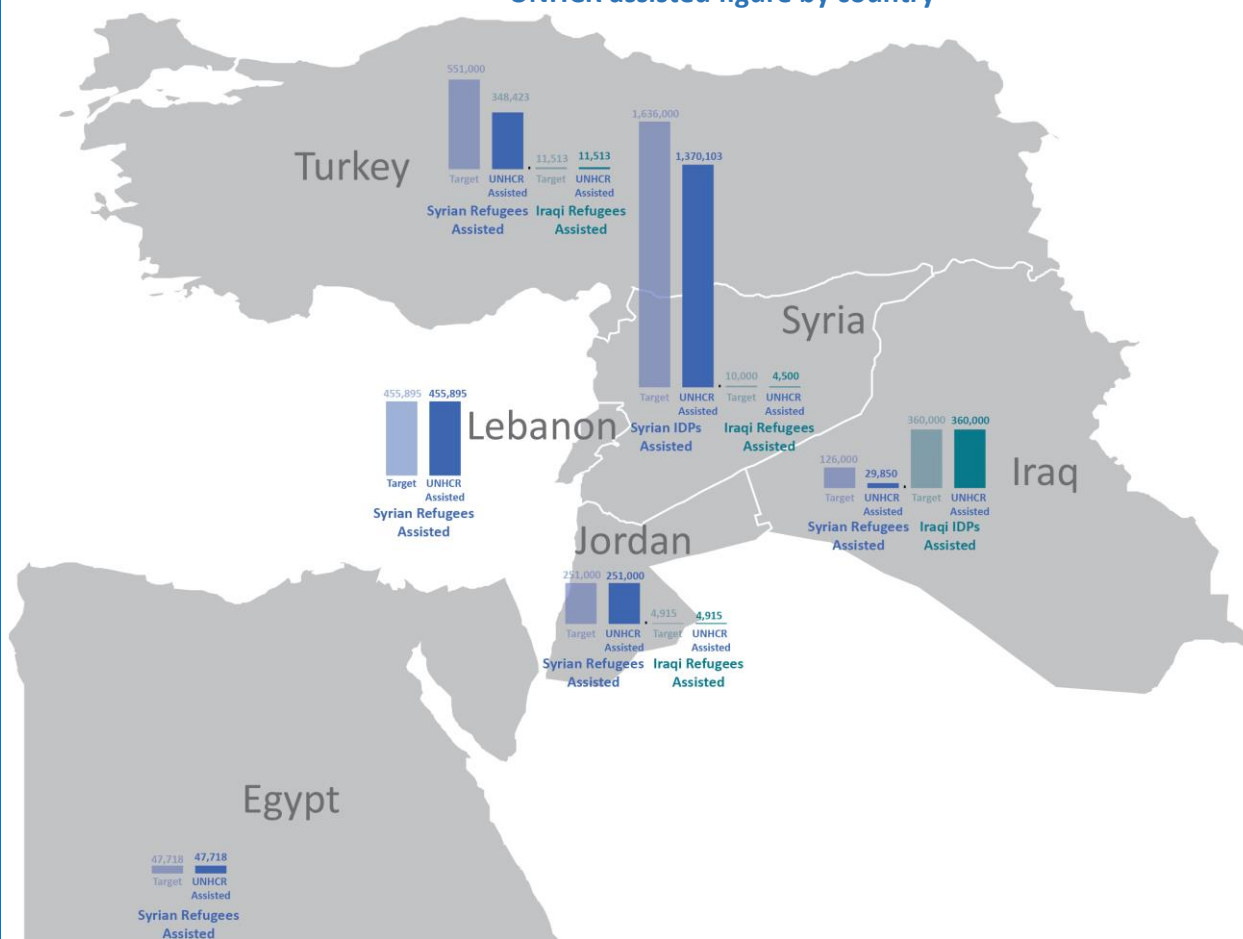
WINTER ASSISTANCE

SYRIA AND IRAQ SITUATIONS

(Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey)

The severe winter storms ‘Huda’ and ‘Jana’ swept across the Middle East in January and February 2015, exposing millions of refugees to freezing temperatures, and bringing heavy snow, rainfall and high winds across the region. UNHCR responded immediately to keep vulnerable refugees and internally displaced people warm and protected from the harsh conditions. UNHCR and its partners replaced damaged tents, provided repair kits, delivered emergency supplies and offered alternative temporary shelter for those forced to abandon their homes due to the snow storms. Over 2.8 vulnerable people in the region including 1.1 million Syrian refugees, 1.4 million Syrian IDPs, 16,000 Iraqi refugees and 360,000 Iraqi IDPs were provided assistance which also included cash to help people purchase required items, and the provision of fuel, stoves, blankets and weatherproofing kits.

Iraqi and Syrian refugees and IDPs supported through winter 2014/2015:
UNHCR assisted figure by country



	Planned and assisted	Lebanon	Jordan	Iraq	Turkey	Egypt	Syrian Arab Republic	Total
Syrian	Total target	455,895	251,000	126,000	551,000	47,718	1,636,000	3,067,613
	Total UNHCR assisted	455,895	251,000	29,850	348,423	47,718	1,370,103	2,502,989
	% of target assisted	100%	100%	24%	63%	100%	84%	82%
Iraqi	Total target		4,915	360,000	11,513			376,428
	Total UNHCR assisted		4,915	360,000	11,513			376,428
	% of target assisted		100%	100%	100%			100%

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

UNHCR teams worked throughout the winter months, providing fuel, stoves, blankets and weatherproofing kits to keep Syrian and Iraqi families in camps, and urban areas, warm and protected from the harsh conditions. Where possible, cash-based interventions played an important role in the response, enabling refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) to pay for rent, heating and additional winter clothes. Cash-based support is often a more dignified way of assisting affected populations, as it empowers people to determine their own needs and the best way of meeting them.

The needs and scale of the response were enormous. UNHCR and its partners targeted the most vulnerable refugees and IDPs who have the highest risk in relation to winter, using the following categories:

- Families and individuals residing in tents, including in refugee and IDP camps or in makeshift or sub-standard accommodation in informal settlements;
- Individuals living in geographic areas subject to severe winter weather, such as high-altitude or subject to significant levels of precipitation in terms of snow, rain and sleet;
- Families who, despite having habitable accommodation, are socio-economically vulnerable and unable to cover the costs of heating fuel.



The Bekaa, Lebanon Four month old baby Yousef is held by his mother, Fatima, in the Dilhamya tented settlement in Bekaa Valley, Lebanon on 10 January 2015. Winter storm 'Huda' brought heavy snow and freezing conditions to the Bekaa, affecting hundreds of thousands of refugees. UNHCR/A. McConnell

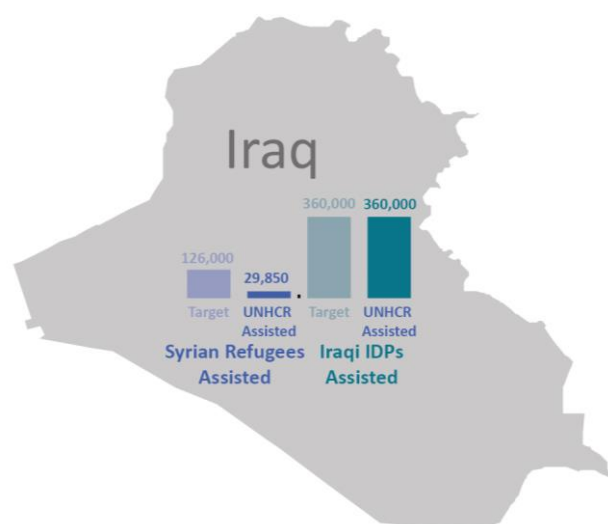
EGYPT



Syrian refugees

Over 12,500 Syrian families in Egypt received cash assistance this winter to alleviate the harsh living conditions. This support included 39,792 people in Greater Cairo; 5,546 people in Damietta and 2,380 people in Alexandria. Winter assistance was targeted towards refugees who had not received regular cash assistance during 2014, providing individuals with a fixed amount of unconditional cash over the winter months. The total number of individuals reached represents 36 per cent of the overall Syrian refugee population in Egypt.

IRAQ



Syrian refugees

UNHCR targeted all refugees within Al-Obeidy camp in Anbar Governorate, distributing one winterization kit per family, composed of: five thermal blankets, one plastic sheet, two jerry cans, one stove and 100 litres of kerosene (per family per month for four months). Families also received a winter shelter kit for insulation which included: one inner liner for a tent, boards for flooring, insulation panels and plastic sheeting.

Approximately 6,620,100 litres of kerosene was procured in the Northern region to cover the heating needs for four months, for 14,913 refugee families living in camps. In Al-

Obeidy camp, where the security situation remained extremely challenging, but where the weather conditions were less fierce, 244 families were provided with a winter shelter kit and a total of 74,550 litres of kerosene was distributed (100 litres per family, for three months). UNHCR reached 12 per cent of the overall Syrian refugee population in Iraq.

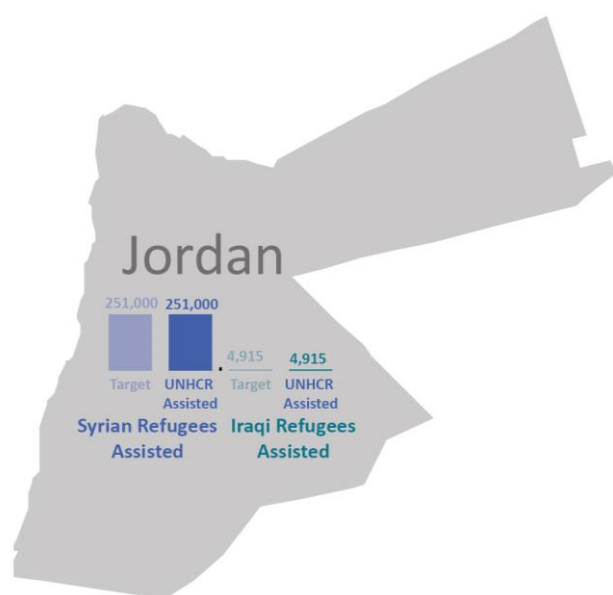
Iraqi IDPs

UNHCR implemented its winterization strategy in response to the difficult climatic conditions during the winter in Kurdistan Region in Iraq (KR-I) in order to protect the most at risk IDPs living in tents and sub-standard shelter arrangements. Overall, UNHCR reached 15 per cent of the estimated Iraqi internally displaced families, providing support to a total of 360,000 IDPs with basic domestic items needed during winter, including weatherproofing kits, blankets and stoves, meeting the planned target. Kerosene distribution started in December 2014 and UNHCR reached 64,444 families with approximately 8,515,825 litres. Support included winterization of emergency shelter including collective centres and tented housing.

A total of 50,000 winterization kits were distributed to IDPs in KR-I. For IDPs living in unfinished or abandoned houses, sealing-off kits were provided and refurbishment undertaken where possible. 10,000 IDP families living outside of camps in KR-I were targeted with cash assistance, with a particular focus on those living in poor accommodation conditions. The amount of the winterization cash grant was determined by family size. Families of up to five people received one-time cash assistance, with families numbering six or more receiving more financial support.

Despite the highly insecure security situation, UNHCR successfully met the needs of 20,000 families in the central and southern governorates of Iraq with winterization kits and CRIs. Also, 11,094 families received 1,221,852 litres of kerosene while 5,782 families benefitted from the winterization of collective shelters.

JORDAN



Syrian refugees

Since November 2014, UNHCR together with humanitarian partners carried out operations nationwide to support hundreds of thousands of refugees in both urban areas and camps.

Overall, 29,150 families (145,700 people) have received monthly winterization cash assistance in both urban and camp settings. Refugees received payments based on retinal recognition (IRIS scanning) to prevent fraud, and amounts varied according to the family size. UNHCR received almost 250,000 pieces of various winter clothing and shoes through in-kind donations, which were all distributed by end-February.

UNHCR, in coordination with partners, assisted more than 100,000 refugees living in refugee camps with tailored winterization support. In Azraq camp UNHCR and partners cemented 6,100 shelter floors for better insulation and provided 11,000 pieces of plastic sheeting to further protect families from the harsh weather conditions.

A total of 36,581 families (151,000 individuals) in urban areas were supported through winterization cash programmes and in-kind provisions of gas heaters, cylinders, mattresses, blankets and other non-food items.

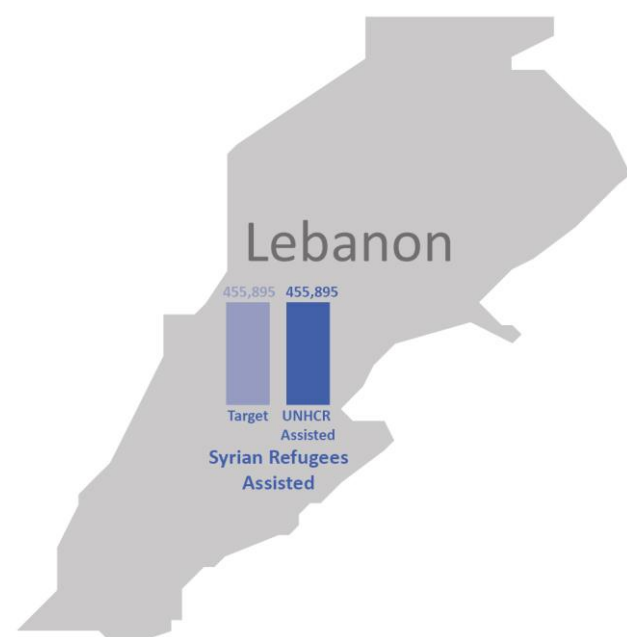
UNHCR, authorities and humanitarian partners activated robust contingency plans ahead of two storms ('Huda' in January and 'Jana' in late February). In camps, emergency shelters were made available and flooding and infrastructural damage was limited due to concrete foundations and drainage being prioritized. In total, 217,530 high-thermal blankets were delivered to Zaatari and Azraq camps, as well as urban areas. This included the provision of 109,130 blankets in a 96 hour period during the 'Huda' storm. UNHCR staff, partners and community organizations worked 24 hours-a-day to ensure that the blankets were delivered to families. In urban areas, refugees were provided with non-food items, targeted cash and vouchers, as well as emergency shelter support. UNHCR reached 40 per cent of the total Syrian refugee population in Jordan with winter assistance.

Iraqi refugees

From November 2014 to February 2015, UNHCR provided financial supplements to almost 5,000 Iraqi families, to help them cover additional winter needs, such as purchasing stoves, fuel and blankets. Families received a monthly allowance over the winter period, which was in addition to the regular monthly cash assistance provided to the most vulnerable refugee families throughout the year for basic needs.

Of the 5,000 families, almost 1,000 were identified as the most vulnerable newly arrived families and were provided with a one-time emergency cash assistance per family. In total, winter supported was distributed to 11 per cent of the Iraqi refugee population in Jordan.

LEBANON



Syrian refugees

Targeted shelter and cash assistance for winterization began in September and November 2014 respectively, both of which were initially planned until end February 2015. The cash support was then extended until end of March due to the winter conditions lasting longer than anticipated with temperatures remaining very low in February, particularly at night for altitudes above 500 metres.

Some 55 per cent of refugees in Lebanon are estimated to live in sub-standard shelters, including more than 144,000 refugees living in informal settlements in the Bekaa Valley who are among the hardest-hit. For this reason, UNHCR's winter support prioritized refugees living at high altitudes in inadequate shelters, altogether supporting 39 per cent of the total Syrian refugee population in Lebanon.

More than 76,485 refugee families (382,425 individuals) received cash or fuel voucher assistance across Lebanon. A total of 68,000 refugee families received cash through ATM cards. In areas without ATM access, some 8,485 families received fuel vouchers to support their heating needs. The cash provided through ATM cards varied according to the geographic location and condition of refugees, differing for those who are living between 500 meters to above 1,000 meters; and for households considered as economically vulnerable.

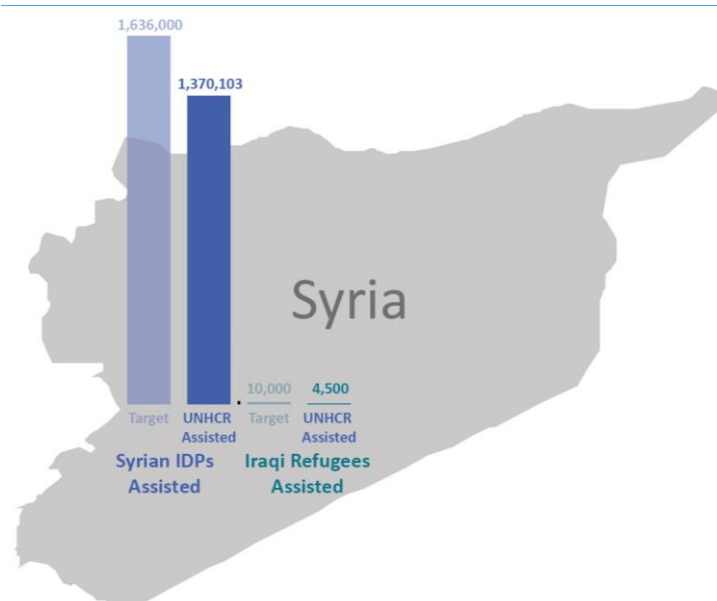


Asma'a, 12, and Inas, 7, warm their feet by the stove at their family's shelter in the Bekaa Valley, Lebanon, on 8 January 2015. Winter storm 'Huda' swept through the region bringing harsh conditions to millions of refugees. Hannouf (Asma'a's mother) arrived with her family three years ago from Homs and says it is the worst winter they have seen. *"During the first winter here we said hopefully we will go back home before the next winter, but with each year, the situation is going from bad to worse. UNHCR gave us blankets and food coupons which help a lot."* UNHCR / A. McConnell

Approximately 290,000 high thermal blankets benefitting some 58,000 families have been distributed in total. The distribution was extended to reach refugees in cold areas and to those new arrivals who did not receive blankets last winter. As supplementary winter support, over 2,800 stoves were distributed, reaching some 14,000 people.

A total of 28,320 households (186,000 people) received weatherproofing materials for their shelters in informal settlements and unfinished buildings. An additional 13,000 weatherproofing kits were procured at the end of 2014, to replenish stocks and to meet the constant demand for kits during the year from the growing population living in informal settlements and unfinished buildings.

SYRIA



Iraqi refugees

UNHCR, in coordination with partners, provided winterization assistance to 4,500 Iraqis. 584 Iraqi asylum-seekers were supported through vouchers which can be cashed at specific banks, while 3,916 refugees were provided with ATM cards, reaching 18 per cent of the total Iraqi refugee population in Syria with winter support.

Syrian IDPs

UNHCR, together with humanitarian partners, urgently responded to the difficult winter conditions by distributing mattresses, high thermal blankets, sleeping mats, winter clothing and plastic sheeting to

over 10,000 extremely vulnerable individuals in Damascus and rural Damascus. During and directly after the snowstorm, UNHCR dispatched 148,903 core relief items (CRIs) to 40,038 beneficiaries throughout the country.

UNHCR and partners distributed some 100,000 litres of fuel for heating 20 collective shelters in rural Damascus and some 30 shelters in Homs. In addition, approximately 95,383 litres of fuel was distributed in Hama and rural Damascus. UNHCR also distributed winter clothes to 31,120 vulnerable IDPs in the hard to reach areas of Idlib, as well as in urban and rural Tartous.

Pursuant to the adoption of UNSCR 2165/2191, UNHCR began dispatching NFIs from Turkey across borders in July 2014. As of 26 February, through 27 separate cross-border deliveries, UNHCR has dispatched items for 47,200 households (236,000 individuals) to Aleppo, Hama and Idlib. CRI distribution was scaled up, with the cross border winterization programme commencing in December.

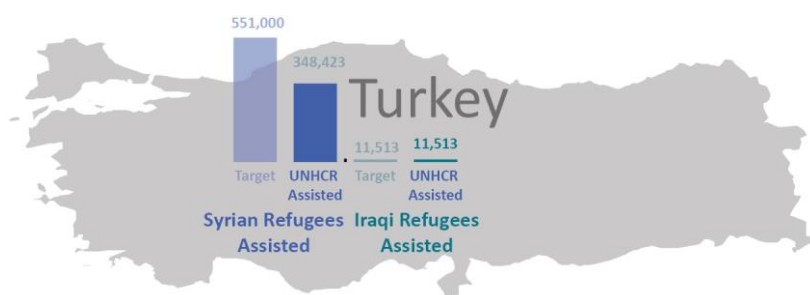
Between December 2014 and February 2015, UNHCR and its partners distributed 105,000 high thermal blankets and 60,000 plastic sheeting through its cross border activities from Turkey.

As of February 26, more than 150,000 Syrian IDPs in Aleppo, Hama and Idlib have received winterization kits which included jerry cans, kitchen sets, sleeping mats, diapers for babies and adults, hygiene parcels, sanitary napkins, and solar lamps, through cross border endeavours.

Through its cross-border operation from Jordan, UNHCR has assisted a total of 3,500 households with 17,500 high thermal blankets and 2,000 plastic sheeting between December 2014 and January 2015.

In total, both through Syria directly and cross-border, UNHCR in coordination with partners supported 1,370,103 internally displaced Syrians through the harsh winter period, 18 per cent of the total estimated Syrians displaced in Syria.

TURKEY



Iraqi refugees

Distribution of winter assistance began in November 2014 to Syrian and Iraqi refugees in the country and accelerated in response to the onset of snow and heavy rains at the end of the year. UNHCR winterization items for Iraqi refugees concentrated in Government-managed camps and to those outside of camps who approached UNHCR for registration for case processing. Winter support was provided to 3,041 Iraqis in Midyat camp, 3,987 Iraqis in Nusaybin camp, and 500 Iraqis in the newly opened Islahiye 2 camp.

Syrian refugees

Winterization assistance included high thermal blankets, heaters and stoves, clothing packages, and sleeping mats. Winter packages have been distributed to 348,423 Syrian refugees in and out of camps.

For non-camp refugees, UNHCR and its partners provided winter assistance to those identified as extremely vulnerable, reaching 20 per cent of the total Syrian refugee population in Turkey.

MAJOR DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2014-2015

UNHCR is grateful to the following Governments that have contributed to raising the funds to assist refugees and IDPs under the winter assistance 2014/2015.



Funding to the winter assistance has also been received from private donors and other institutions, while contributions made outside of winter assistance earmarking by governments, charities and other organizations are gratefully acknowledged. UNHCR is also grateful for unearmarked funds provided by donors to their global operations.