

IRAQ

INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONAL UPDATE - SYRIA

16-28 February 2015

KEY FIGURES

44

UASC assisted

1,303

New Syrians from Kobani registered in KR-I

1,173

Children provided with psychosocial support

73,645

Food parcels distributed in the Erbil Governorate

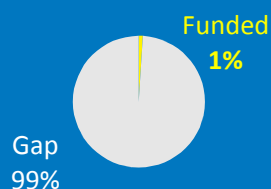
1,900

Individual refugees relocated from temporary to permanent site in Kawergosk camp, Erbil Governorate

FUNDING

USD 426,041,332

requested by agencies for the operation (Source: 2015 3RP – Iraq, as at 24/02/2015)



PRIORITIES

- Protection services to newly arrived Syrian refugees and minors
- Continuous improvements in camp shelter and WASH
- Revamping the education sector

POPULATION OF CONCERN

244,731 Syrian refugees

HIGHLIGHTS

- A total of 1420 cases (2808 individuals) of Syrian origin were processed by the UNHCR-PARC Registration centre in the Erbil Governorate.
- UNHCR has successfully negotiated with the Department of Labour and Social Affairs of the KRG to include refugee children with special needs in their education program.
- UNHCR conducted Participatory Needs Assessments for Syrian refugees in KR-I covering camp and non-camp settings, gathering information on protection gaps and community response capacity.
- Nine BIA reports were finalized for refugee children.
- In Dohuk Governorate, kerosene distribution was completed in Akre camp, covering 283 families (1,353 individuals).
- A joint WHO/UNHCR mission on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) took place in the KR-I, 20-27 February, with the participation of representatives of MoH of the Central Government of Iraq and DoH representatives from the three Governorates of the KR-I. The mission assessed the needs and resources available for MHPSS services for refugees and IDPs through field visits and workshops in the 3 governorates. Key recommendations include the need for strengthening MHPSS coordination structures among the different stakeholder; building skills of medical personnel; and improving data collection.



A newly arrived Syrian refugee boy consults the tent instructions. (UNHCR/V. Lionetti)

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

Intense fighting continues in Tikrit, Salah Al Din Governorate, between the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and ISIS and between the Peshmerga forces and ISIS in Kirkuk and Makhmour, which triggered further displacement.

According to media reports, the Governor of Mosul in exile confirmed that Iraqi forces are preparing for the military campaign to retake Mosul and the liberation of various locations in Salah Al Din Governorate en route.

The KRG Prime Minister, Nichervan Barzani, visited Baghdad to address the issue of the financial arrears required to pay the salaries of civil servants and government employees in the KR-I.

The economic situation remains challenging across the country, due to the combined effect of fluid and widespread armed conflict, massive displacement, and the fall in oil prices. With over 2.4 million IDPs and over 244,000 Syrian refugees, the economic pressure on the shrinking resources of the Government of Iraq and the KRG are enormous.

Syrian refugees continued to arrive into KR-I, using both Peshkhabour and Ibrahim Khalil border crossings, Dohuk Governorate. Reception, registration and emergency services continued to be provided by UNHCR, partners and authorities. UNHCR registration teams continued to assess the needs and to register the new arrivals at Gawilan camp, Dohuk Governorate, on a continuous basis.

Achievements



Protection

CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- A total of 1,303 Syrians from Kobani were admitted to the KR-I, the majority through Ibrahim Khalil border, and 159 who crossed via Peshkhabour border crossing point. All the new arrivals were transported from the border to Gawilan camp in the Dohuk Governorate, where they were registered by UNHCR.
- Most of the new arrivals opted to leave Gawilan camp, after receiving their UNHCR Certificate and approval from the Asayish (security/intelligence), to join family members living in Duhok, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah Governorates.
- The registration centers in all four Syrian camps in the Erbil Governorate processed a total of 1,861 cases (3,741 individuals), involving the issuance and/or renewal of UNHCR documentation and KRG residency cards.
- UNHCR provided training to SGBV case workers of partner Harikar, in Domiz, Gawilan and Akre camps, Dohuk Governorate, covering management of complex cases, and referrals to resettlement.
- UNHCR identified 122 persons with specific needs, including 44 UASC, among the Syrian new arrivals from Kobani that were admitted to Gawilan camp.
- UNICEF and its partners provided psychosocial and specialized services to a total of 1,173 newly registered children in refugee camps in Dohuk, Sulaymaniyah and Erbil Governorates. Services were aimed at addressing problems related to psychosocial distress and disorders, non-attendance at school, child labour, UASC, early marriage, gender based violence and disability.
- In Qushtapa camp, Erbil Governorate, UNHCR completed six BIA reports, whilst three BID reports were finalized for children of the Kawergosk refugee camp. The latter cases will be presented at the BID panel on 4 March.
- In Basirma camp, Erbil Governorate, UNICEF partner Terre des Hommes conducted awareness sessions with ten families on the importance of possessing marriage and/or birth certificates and the risks associated with the lack thereof. This activity was followed with the provision of individual legal counseling to five families.

- In Darashakran and Qushtapa camps, Erbil Governorate, as part of ACTED and UNICEF's child protection programme, NRC conducted a multi-sector Safety Audit. The tool was used to monitor the current situation in terms of safety of populations, with a specific focus on women and girls in the camps, including in relation to GBV risks. The findings of the Safety Audit will be used to highlight protection issues and inform the response.
- To minimise the risk of potential forced recruitment of children to return to Syria to fight, Child Protection Units (CPU) continued to follow up with the youth in camp environments. In the reporting period, follow up activities and training for NGOs was provided in Basirma camp, Erbil governorate, on the global Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM). The MRM is a tool which documents and verifies cases of grave violations against child rights, and on Child Protection in Emergencies, with the aim of increasing child protection through more competent frontline child protection staff.
- In Darashakran refugee camp, Erbil Governorate, 15 persons with specific needs were identified: six serious medical conditions, six persons living with disabilities, one case of torture, one elderly person at risk and one child at risk. In Basirma refugee camp, Erbil Governorate, UNHCR partner INTERSOS identified 16 persons with specific needs: four persons living with disabilities, two women heads of household and ten cases of serious medical conditions. The cases are being treated or referred to public services and authorities, as appropriate.
- In Kawergosk and Darashakran camps, Erbil Governorate, UNHCR organized two Individual Case Management (ICM) panel meetings, on 24 and 26 February, respectively. The key protection case management partners (INTEROS, DRC, UPP, HI and SCI) participated. The ICM panel continues to be a key multi-functional platform to discuss vulnerable individual cases in need for special assistance by various service providers.
- UNHCR organized a training of trainers (ToT) for national protection staff who will be engaged in rolling out capacity building activities in support of local authorities over 2015 as an integral part of a protection capacity building plan that targets the needs of Mayors, Asayish, Police and Border authorities across the three governorates of the KR-I.
- As part of their responsibilities within the established Technical Advisory Committee, UNHCR, UNFPA and DCVAW undertook joint assessment missions in various camp and non-camp locations to identify challenges, referral pathways, gaps and quality of services.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- In Basirma camp, Erbil Governorate, Asayish's security considerations precluded the work of several committees (including the Youth Committee, the WASH Committee, the Social and religious affairs and the Reconciliation Committees) while the activities of others (Women's Committee and the Camp Council) were not questioned. The Camp Administrator and the Asayish made recommendations on alternative composition of the committees as a way forward to enable the functioning of important camp management mechanisms.

NON-CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- A total of 1420 cases (2808 individuals) of Syrian origin were processed by the UNHCR-PARC Registration centre in Erbil. 996 cases were instances of update and transfer and 424 were instances of new registration.
- From 16 to 28 February, the Residency Directorate in Erbil processed a total of 949 applications from Syrian refugees, resulting in 426 cases being issued with residency card and 140 applications granted renewal.
- PARC Qandil identified 17 families with specific needs and referred them to the cash assistance program of 2015. A total of 226 other cases with specific needs identified were provided with counselling and referred to the service providers. PARC Qandil also identified 12 cases of early marriage: 11 girls and 1 boy. All have been provided with counseling, including prevention of early pregnancy, and referred to the public hospitals for appropriate health care services.

Education

CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR successfully negotiated with the Department of Labour and Social Affairs to include refugee children with special needs in their education program.
- In the Darashakran refugee camp, due to the expansion of the school infrastructure, the number of children per classroom has been reduced, providing a more conducive learning environment.
- In Basirma refugee camp, UNHCR, UNICEF and Terre Des Hommes, visited a community-ran secondary school supported by Barzani Charity Foundation (BCF). The school operates with six volunteer teachers, has an established curriculum and is currently attended by 62 students (30 male and 32 female) between 15-17 years old. The need for support with creating a Parents and Teachers Association (PTA), provision of psychological support services and school material was discussed.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Compared with the needs, the enrolment of children in primary schools as well as opportunities for the youth to attend high schools remains limited, for Syrian refugee children in camp and even more for those living in non-camp settings. This situation is due to a number of inter-playing factors, including, *inter-alia*, the scarcity of financial resources on the part of the KRG authorities, international humanitarian agencies and parents, coupled with family pressures to go to work for the older children, and limited infrastructure.



Health

A mass vaccination campaign against polio and measles started on 22 February, targeting 5.9 million under 5 year-old children across Iraq.

CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- In Qushtapa camp, Erbil Governorate, the Family Planning and Awareness (FPA) team conducted awareness-raising sessions with children on health/hygiene practices and a workshop on psychosocial awareness for a total of 15 Syrian refugee women. Patients affected by scabies have received new CRIs. A standard operating procedure for the safe disposal of infected CRIs was agreed: the collected CRIs from affected refugees will be burnt and dumped at site under the supervision of DoH, Municipality and Mayor, and with the presence of UNHCR.
- On 16 February, in Basirma camp, Erbil Governorate, the PHC confirmed 1 case of chicken pox and 13 cases of scabies. On 22 February, in connection with the nation-wide campaign, in Basirma and Qushtapa camps, PHC started a twelve days vaccination campaign for measles (9 months to 5 years) and polio (day 1 to 5 years of age).
- In Basirma camp, Erbil Governorate, UNFPA and the partner Al-Massala conducted a survey to gather the number of pregnant women in order to distribute pregnancy kits.
- In the period 20-27 February, a joint WHO/UNHCR mission on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) took place in KR-I, with the participation of representatives of MoH of the Central Government of Iraq and DoH representatives from the three Governorates of the KR-I. The mission assessed the needs and resources available for MHPSS services for refugees and IDPs through field visits and workshops in the three governorates. Key recommendations were developed jointly with stakeholders in the last workshop and include the need to strengthen MHPSS coordination structures among the different stakeholder, skills-building of medical personnel, improve data collection, and to rationalize research.

- The partner UPP, organized a 6-day training for six psychologists of the DoH of the Erbil Governorate on trauma-related counseling and psychological first aid.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The health status of newly arriving refugees requires close monitoring. The prevention of communicable diseases outbreaks remains a key priority. The mental health and psychosocial care services for refugees, residing in urban areas are limited across the three KR-I Governorates and needs to be expanded in coverage.
- Medicine shortages remain a key concern in public health facilities.



Food Security and Nutrition

CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- In the Dohuk Governorate, WFP distributed food parcels to 67,783 refugees, whilst 1,411 beneficiaries in Akre settlement received food vouchers.
- In Qushtapa camp, Erbil Governorate, WFP distributed food parcels benefitting 5,862 refugees.
- In Basirma camp, Erbil Governorate, the PHC distributed dry milk powder donated by the Barzani Foundation to 250 children.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- In Gawilan camp, Dohuk Governorate, WFP has identified providers for the establishment of food shops, which will enable the shift from food parcel to a voucher system, as demanded by the refugees.



Water and Sanitation

CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- A Camp Cleanup Day was organized in collaboration with the camp management and other partners in Darashakran camp, Erbil Governorate. It was decided to replicate it on a monthly basis across different camps as it proved to be a good practice in refugee mobilization for enhanced self-reliance and self-maintenance of refugees' living space.
- In Qushtapa camp, Erbil Governorate, UNHCR partner ACF replaced 4 latrines in the schools and installed 2 new latrines for the newly arrived Syrian refugees from Kobani. It also conducted a camp assessment in order to organize the distribution of cleaning materials for family and communal latrines. In terms of sanitation, the partner QRC has been extended the contract for one year to provide the maintenance of the sewage and sanitation systems, on the basis of the positive results of a joint verification conducted by the Directorate of Sewerage, QRC, and UNICEF, with the presence of UNHCR.
- UNICEF partner Relief International (RI) delivered a two-day train-the-trainer event (ToT) to 30 refugees aimed at building community ownership over maintenance of WASH facilities and systems.
- In Kawergosk camp, Erbil Governorate, following the upgrade of 512 kitchens with side wall, doors and windows, a total of 444 refugee families were relocated from the transit area to the permanent site.
- In Basirma camp, Erbil Governorate, the construction of sanitation facilities for 84 shelter plots was completed. Construction of sanitation facilities for another 240 shelter plots is in progress.
- In Darashakran camp, Erbil Governorate, the construction of 200 shelter plots, including kitchens, is in progress. Once complete, it will accommodate newly arrived Syrian refugee families from Kobani.

- De-sludging efficiency has significantly improved in Domiz camp, reaching a quantity of 700m³/day.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- In Domiz 1 camp, Dohuk Governorate, it was noted that tanks tend to overflow, which requires a detailed holding tank assessment.



Shelter and NFIs

CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- In Kawergosk camp, Erbil Governorate UNHCR and its partners NRC, KURDS, camp administrator and the Asayish are involved in a major relocation exercise, which started on 11 February. By 28 February, a total of 365 families/1,900 individuals moved to a permanent site of the camp. The relocation process is planned to be completed by 5 March 2015. By the end of the process, a total of 512 families/2,500 individuals, representing about a quarter population of the encamped population will be relocated. From 16- 19 February, IOM distributed CRI kits to all camp residents. The distribution included four blankets, one plastic sheet, one large carpet, one hygiene kit and one kerosene stove. On 24 February, the Ainkawa Church in Erbil organized a distribution of clothes for the refugees. On 25 February, Handicap International and DRC distributed 200 pillows to 45 families with disabled family members.
- In Darashakran camp, Erbil Governorate, DRC distributed 762 tents as part of the shelter improvement programme. KURDS is improving the shading of the Reception Center, and is also working on constructing the new phase of 200 units, which is expected to be ready by the end of March, 2015.
- In Qushtapa camp, Erbil Governorate, DRC erected 320 tents. 240 latrines and kitchens in one of the camp sections have been connected to electricity by the Directorate of Electricity. The relocation of refugees from tents to the concrete slabs shelters is planned to start on 10 March, 2015. Additionally, UNHCR and DRC relocated 29 tents to free up space for the WFP voucher distribution.
- 3,997 families received winterization kits in Domiz 1 and 2 camps, Duhok Governorate.
- In Gawilan camp, Duhok Governorate, UNHCR in coordination with BRHA continued to allocate new plots to the new arrivals from Kobani. 30 families were relocated to 32 family plots, with full access to water and electricity. UNHCR partner Qandil distributed NFIs to 86 families, as well as winterization kits to 14 families and tents to 29 families. The UAE Consulate, through BRHA, distributed 2,228 food parcels to 1,114 families as well as 26 baby cribs and children clothing packages. Finally, IOM distributed winterization kits to 538 vulnerable families.



Winterization distribution in Domiz 1 camp (UNHCR/ F. Jinan)

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- In Gawilan and Akre camps, Dohuk Governorate, hygiene kits and sanitary napkins need to be distributed more regularly.

NON-CAMP

- In Akre, Bardarash and Fayda districts, Duhok Governorate, UNHCR partner Qandil identified and distributed sleeping bags to 1,869 families.

- In Shekhan and Summel districts, Duhok Governorate, IOM distributed 1,831 winter kits to refugee families, including carpets, heaters, plastic sheets and blankets.
- UNHCR monitored and supported a distribution of 596 CRI kits to refugees (mainly from Syria) in Erbil urban settings. UNHCR together with the QANDIL outreach mobile teams conducted identification of beneficiaries and monitoring of the distribution, whilst ERC coordinated with local authorities the logistics.



Camp Coordination and Camp Management

Achievements and Impact

- Regular and participatory Camp Coordination meetings (CCM) remain an important information-sharing and advocacy mechanism for the camp actors and refugee communities. In the Erbil Governorate, CCM meetings were held in Basirma camp (16 and 23 February), in Qushtapa camp (18 February), in Darashakran camp (24 February) and Kawergosk (26 February).
- In Darashakran camp, the CCM meeting included DRC, representatives of all other partners on the ground and refugee community structures, including the Camp Council, Youth, Women and Parent-Teacher Association. The meeting served as a platform for a direct exchange between the main service providers and refugee representatives. Most questions raised during the meeting concerned the reduction of the value of the food voucher and the lack of secondary school opportunities.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Due to funding shortages, in Darashakran camp, the reduction of the value of the food voucher and the lack of secondary school opportunities remain of concern.



Access to Energy

Achievements and Impact

- The partners PWJ and Save the Children completed the kerosene distribution to all families in War city (non-camp), reaching 600 apartments/families.
- The partner GRC completed the kerosene distribution in Domiz collective centres, Dohuk Governorate, reaching a total of 900 families.



Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

Preparations for International Women's Day events were undertaken with all refugee communities in camp and non-camp locations.

CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- A conference hall, a public garden, honeymoon houses and a patisserie shop were completed and inaugurated in Domiz 1 camp, Dohuk Governorate.
- The conference hall provides the space for the refugee community to organize and attend social events and to arrange for conferences or workshops. The patisserie shop is an initiative conceived and run by a group of refugee women. Such business generates income and empowers their social and economic status.

- The construction of four green houses in the Gawilan camp, Dohuk Governorate, is completed.



Refugees return to their shelters after a social gathering in the camp hall, Darashakran camp (UNHCR/V. Lionetti)

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Links:

For information related to the Regional Response Plan (RRP6) please click on <http://www.unhcr.org/syriarrp6/>.

Announcements of all sector meetings along with respective agendas and minutes, and other information on sector-wide progress such as 3Ws, dashboards and camp profiles, are available on the inter-agency information sharing portal at <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>.

For more information on the work of UNHCR and our partners in Iraq, please follow us on Twitter at @unhcriraq and on Facebook at "UNHCRinIraq"

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Agencies are very grateful for the financial support provided by donors who have contributed to their activities with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds as well as for those who have contributed directly to the operation.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AOG	Armed opposition group
ANC	Antenatal care
BIA/BID	Best Interests Assessment/Best Interests Determination
CRI	Core Relief Items (formerly known as non-food items/NFIs)
DoE	Department of Education
DoH	Department of Health
KR-I	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
IDP	Internally displaced people
KR-I	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
MoDM	Ministry of Migration and Displacement
PARC	Protection Assistance Reintegration Centre
PHC	Primary Health Care
RSD	Refugee status determination
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
UASC	Unaccompanied and separated children
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene

ANNEXES

A determined refugee carpenter

Domiz camp, February 26, 2015 (UNHCR) — The small shop in the Domiz refugee camp looks messy, with scattered pieces of wood, carpentry materials and tools in all corners. But the little place can produce much more than a person would expect—chairs, beds, desks, tables and drawers, to name a few.

Forty-six-year-old, Alwan arrived to Domiz camp two years ago with nothing. He fled his home in Syria to northern Iraq, with his wife and six children, fearing persecution after being involved in peaceful political demonstrations against the regime. Fortunately, his talent in carpentry enabled him to immediately start working and make a living for his family.



Alwan, a 46 year-old Syrian refugee carpenter in his shop in Domiz camp (UNHCR/H. Suliman)

Upon arrival to northern Iraq, Alwan established a carpentry business in Summel, but that did not go as planned. He found himself competing with locals that had been around for long time. “The money I started generating did not cover my expenses, so I decided to quit”, he admits. He found shelter in Domiz camp and started working as a handyman in urban areas, sometimes spending weeks away from his family. Eventually, he was able to invest some modest savings to open his own carpentry shop in the camp.

Alwan recycles wooden materials for his business. He collects and purchases old and broken items, which he refurbishes and re-sells, using his creativity and talent in carpentry. “I have been doing this for 33 years; I draw and make my own designs,” says Alwan. Recently, he made a beautiful bed for his 15 year-old daughter who was complaining from back pain. Although the very same bed can be sold in urban areas such as Duhok for a hundred dollars, his market is the refugees living in the camp, to whom he sells his products for cheaper prices. However, he plans to start selling to customers outside of the camp to generate more income, but in order to do so, he needs some extra support.

He has the potential, but would need better materials and equipment to grow his business. If considered by UNHCR’s livelihood programme, the support he will receive may give him a good push. He will be able to purchase what he needs to produce and sell more pieces.

Alwan and his family were able to overcome many challenges in their lives. His secrets to success are determination and skill—they complete each other. And even in such circumstances, he remains hopeful and optimistic. “I have children, all in schools, and I have to work harder,” he concludes.

By Husam Eldin Mustafa

UNHCR Registration Trends for Syrian Persons of Concern

