

## Lebanon Update

### Support to displaced Syrians

18 - 24 February 2012



Syrian refugee children stand in the corridor of a school in the Wadi Khaled region, on the Lebanese-Syrian border, North Lebanon, October © UNHCR Dalia Khamissy October 4, 2011

### Highlights of the week

#### Numbers

The number of displaced Syrians currently registered with UNHCR and the High Relief Commission (HRC) in North Lebanon is 6,916 persons. Since the previous week, there has been an increase of 311 newly registered persons, mainly in the Wadi Khaled, Akroom, Bire, Halba, and Old Akkar areas. Most of these (200 persons) arrived in Lebanon since the beginning of the year. The others arrived earlier but only came forward to register this week. Additionally, there were 85 persons who previously registered but were taken off the active list because they could not be verified as still residing in North Lebanon. We understand that some went back to Syria while others moved elsewhere in Lebanon.

The HRC postponed registration in Tripoli a few weeks ago. UNHCR is in discussions with the government with the hopes that it will resume soon. In the meantime – assistance is being provided to persons in need.

There are also concentrations of Syrians displaced residing in other parts of Lebanon. UNHCR's latest estimates with partners indicate that there are between 3,000-4,500 persons in need in the eastern Lebanon and south of Beirut.

#### Protection and Security

During the week, 27 wounded Syrians were admitted to hospitals and 2 wounded persons passed away.

Registration certificates to persons registered with UNHCR and HRC remain on hold and circulation permits have yet to be issued. Many in the north report feeling frustrated by their lack of mobility and consequent inability to find temporary work.

#### Assistance in North Lebanon

##### *Fuel and Water*

UNHCR and the HRC began the monthly distribution of fuel coupons: 2,714 fuel coupons were distributed to 358 families. In addition, in an effort to facilitate access to potable water, this week, UNHCR and partners installed a water pump into the well in Al Rama Collective Shelter. This shelter houses 98 displaced Syrians.

##### *Education*

UNHCR and Save the Children Sweden (SCS) conducted home visits to the families of children who had dropped out of school and who had been absent from remedial classes. These follow-up visits contributed to a 75% increase in remedial class attendance.

##### *Community Services and Health*

UNHCR and partners conducted home visits to provide specialized support for persons with specific needs. There are

myriad needs arising from physical disabilities, trauma, and illness. Two orthopedic surgeons with the necessary medical expertise were recruited to follow-up on wounded cases. Together with other medical specialists, they form an exceptional care committee who reviews, approves and follows up on treatment for complex medical cases.

*Quick Impact Projects (QIPS)*

Recently purchased farm equipment is now ready for use to farmers in Akroum.

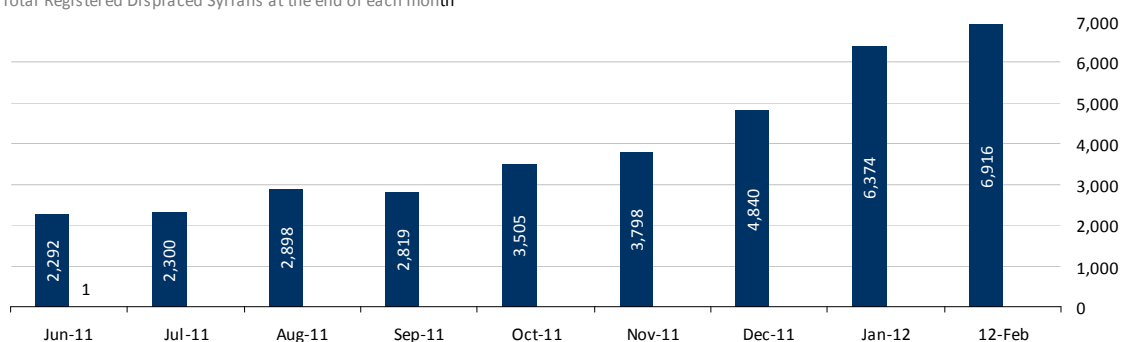
**Assistance in other parts of Lebanon**

The HRC is currently operational in north. Elsewhere in Lebanon, refugees are assisted by local NGOs, municipalities, and other partners. UNHCR is contributing to and expanding its efforts to meet humanitarian needs of these communities.

## Situational Overview

### UNHCR Registered

Total Registered Displaced Syrians at the end of each month



Beginning in April 2011, Lebanon witnessed an influx of some 6,000 Syrians into North Lebanon. Many subsequently returned to Syria, while others relocated within Lebanon. Cumulatively, since April 2011, UNHCR and the HRC have registered and assisted over 11,000 persons in the north.

Currently there are 6,916 persons (1,336 households) registered in the north. Of this number, one third was registered in the past two months. Local mayors and NGOs have played an active role in referring displaced Syrians to UNHCR-HRC teams for registration.

There are also concentrations of displaced Syrians residing in other parts of Lebanon. UNHCR's latest estimates with partners indicate that there are between 3,000-4,500 persons in need in the eastern Lebanon and south of Beirut.

Syrians who have entered Lebanon reside mostly with host families in difficult circumstances. In North Lebanon, some 200 live in collective centres that have been renovated by UNHCR and partners.

Many individuals and families have been deeply affected by the events that caused them to leave and are reluctant to return home until the situation stabilizes.

### Protection

The vast majority of Syrians registered with the HRC and UNHCR have come from Tal Kalakh and Homs. They express fear and anxiety about returning and most do not feel that the situation is safe enough for them to do so yet.

Most of those who have recently arrived have crossed at official border crossings expressing fear of going through the unofficial ones. They also express concern of the reported presence of land mines on the Syrian side of the border.

UNHCR maintains regular contact with the Lebanese authorities and civil society representatives to follow-up on the security situation of the displaced populations.

Since the outset last April, the Lebanese government has taken a humanitarian approach allowing displaced Syrians to enter Lebanon. There have been very few cases of arrests of illegal entry/stay in the past many months. In all cases, persons were released upon UNHCR's interventions.

Circulation permits have not been issued by the authorities to those who crossed at unofficial border crossings. This has

limited their movement within Lebanon.

Records reveal that 192 wounded Syrians have been treated in various hospitals in Lebanon since the beginning of the influx. Expenses related to their treatment are covered by the Lebanese authorities through the HRC. Their treatment and needs are followed-up by UNHCR and partners.

### **Assistance**

Outside of North Lebanon where the HRC is not operational, refugees are assisted by local NGOs, municipalities, and other partners. UNHCR is contributing to and expanding its efforts to meet humanitarian needs of these communities.

In North Lebanon, a very solid coordinated response and positive working relations with the government's HRC and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) were established at the outset to the benefit of the refugees and hosting

communities. These partnerships continue and together with other UN and NGO partners, the needs of refugees and affected communities are being holistically addressed. They include the following:

- Protection interventions to ensure safety, physical integrity and non-refoulement;
- Assistance to meet basic needs;
- Education and remedial classes;
- Provision of medical and psycho-social care.

A common database is in use by the HRC and UNHCR, and referral mechanisms were established to enable the displaced persons to access assistance through specialized partners. Identification and registration occurs on a daily basis by outreach teams. UNHCR and the HRC verify the numbers during the monthly distribution of food/non-food items. Persons found no longer to be in the area are de-registered. Many of these are known to have returned to Syria

**Community Services** Outreach workers from the MoSA and DRC continue to visit the displaced Syrians at homes and in schools in Wadi Khaled, Tall Bire, and Tripoli in order to counsel them, assess their needs, and refer newcomers to UNHCR and HRC for registration.

**Shelter** Most of the displaced Syrians reside with host families. Just over 200 persons are accommodated in three (abandoned) schools: Al-Rama, Al-Ibra and Al-Mouanseh schools. The schools were initially not well-equipped (with sanitation and hygiene facilities) to receive large numbers of people but have improved and are regularly monitored. The hall of Khorbet Daoud Mosque has also been rehabilitated to host displaced families should there be a need in the future.

UNHCR and the HRC initiated the renovation of Al Rama, Al Mouanseh, and Kashlak schools, and the hall of Khorbet Daoud Mosque, while the renovation of the Al Ibra school was undertaken by the Al-Bashaer Islamic Association.

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) together with partner organizations and outreach workers identified host family residences in pressing need of improvement in preparation for the winter. Through this assessment, NRC provided 90 families with coupons that enabled them to renovate their homes, allowing for better living conditions for both the local and displaced

communities. NRC is currently in the process of planning for the potential continuation of this project.

**Distribution (Food/ NFI)** UNHCR along with the HRC, DRC, Caritas Migrant Centre, World Vision, and UNICEF distribute food and non-food items to the displaced on a monthly basis. UNHCR continues to provide food and non-food items to newly registered families who were not on the UNHCR-HRC database during the last distribution.

Mattresses	4,589
Blankets	4,857
Food kits	5,949
Diapers	886
Baby milk	1,317
Baby kits	424
Hygiene kits	3,960
Women's underwear	714
Tuition fees	465
Books	465
Stationary	596
Uniforms	465
Family kit (kitchen utensils)	48
Clothes coupons of 75,000 LBP	1,113
Personal donation	403
Clothes by UNICEF	52
Toys by UNICEF	92
Fuel coupons of 20	21,201
Educational kits for children in remedial classes	23

**Education** The Ministry of Education is facilitating the enrolment of displaced children in public schools. UNHCR is covering the cost of school fees, books, uniforms, notebooks, and stationary. UNHCR and its implementing partner, Save the Children Sweden (SCS), are providing remedial classes for the displaced Syrian children given the differences between the Lebanese and Syrian school curricula. A total of 465 displaced children have enrolled into public schools. UNHCR is seeking to improve the school enrolment rate in 2012 by continuing to give awareness sessions to displaced parents on the importance of education, and offering remedial classes to both Lebanese and displaced Syrian children in Wadi Khaled, Tall Bire, and Tripoli. UNICEF and SCS are supporting five Child Friendly Spaces in the area of Wadi Khaled where children can play. These spaces are located in public schools, shelters, and NGO centers. Teachers, social workers and community facilitators have been trained on how to manage recreational activities and integrate psycho-social support in dealing with children in these safe spaces.

## Health

UNHCR, HRC and UNHCR's implementing partner International Medical Corps (IMC) have established a referral system so that registered displaced Syrians have access to health care services through the most specialized partner. Primary Health Care Centres, Social Development Centres of the MoSA, and a few NGO-run health care centres in the region are providing primary health care and medication to the displaced. UNHCR covers the full cost for doctor consultations and diagnostic tests for women and children and up to 85% of diagnostic tests for all displaced persons. The HRC covers the cost of secondary and tertiary health care through local hospitals in the north. UNHCR provides additional support where needed.

The HRC and IMC reached agreement with five hospitals for discounted rates in the provision of necessary health care. Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) started the implementation of a mental health project jointly with the Makassed Public Health Centre (PHC). A psychologist and a psychiatrist have been deployed to Makassed's centre to provide mental health counselling to all Wadi Khaled residents, including the displaced.

Since 19 September 2011, there have been 455 hospital admissions, mostly covered by HRC. In addition, there have been 986 patients who have received primary health care from different health centres and mobile medical units (the number of patients who receive primary health care is updated on a monthly basis).

WHO and UNHCR are liaising with MoPH, IMC, MSF and other partners to increase the provision of chronic medications and to improve the health referral mechanism and health information at the field level.