

UN INTER-AGENCY UPDATE

UNHCR AUGUST 3-10, 2012

Highlights of the week:

- *Centralized registration will begin next week in Tripoli through the Rachid Karame International Exhibition Center. UNHCR is conducting information campaigns to inform the displaced about the benefits and details of registration. Tripoli's new center will have the potential of registering up to 700 individuals daily, with the cooperation of MoSA.*
- *Newly arrived Syrians in the Bekaa are mainly coming from Damascus, Homs, Aleppo and Dara'a.*
- *UNHCR and partner agencies are mapping and assessing abandoned schools in the Bekaa for potential shelter. Discussions to be held with the MoEHE to identify additional schools in areas with large concentrations of the displaced.*
- *Distribution resumes in the North following the arrival of WFP's food kits.*
- *The Summer Accelerated Learning Program is now targeting over 1,200 children in the North and Bekaa, and an additional 2,000 children are participating in summer day camp.*

Numbers

Over 37,000 displaced Syrians are currently receiving protection and assistance in Lebanon through the efforts of the Government of Lebanon and UN and NGO partners. Of this number, 35,686 are registered. Many thousands who have recently arrived in Lebanon are not yet registered with UNHCR. Information campaigns continue to encourage newly arrived families in need of protection or assistance to come forward and register.

Protection and Security

Reports of armed clashes in both the Bekaa and North this week were of concern to UNHCR.

In the Bekaa, there were reports of clashes between security forces and cannabis farmers as well as fighting between armed elements through various parts of the region. No residual threat was reported for the operations.

Additionally, there are regular reports of heavy shelling from Syria into border villages in the North, mainly in Akkar and Wadi Khaled. These ongoing tensions continue to raise protection concerns; UNHCR regularly meets with families in the affected areas to inquire about their safety and security.

This week, three wounded Syrians were admitted to hospitals.



North Lebanon

Protection

Several hundred families are currently living in unstable border areas in north Lebanon. UNHCR protection teams continue to closely monitor these villages as displaced Syrians fleeing into Lebanon settle there.

UNHCR and DRC conducted a number of monitoring exercises that involve visiting and speaking with the displaced families to ensure that their protection needs are addressed. These teams are providing psychological support and counselling to people with specific needs, including women at risk, people with disabilities and separated children. DRC visited 17 newly arrived families in Amayer, Rajm Khalaf, Majdal (Bire) and Tripoli and provided them with psychological support and information regarding registration and other services available to them. DRC also conducted door-to-door visits to 50 people (10 families) in the Ibra shelter and Bekayaa, assessing their safety and security following recent shelling incidents.

Registration/Numbers

Registration remains a critical tool in identifying displaced Syrians' needs and providing them with the necessary humanitarian assistance.

Centralized registration in Bire ended this week, assisting a total of 294 individuals (75 families). This brings the total number of registered displaced Syrians in the North to 19,835 people (4,241 families).

UNHCR also received permission from the Lebanese Government to use the Rachid Karame International Exhibition Center as a centralized registration site in Tripoli. The center is currently undergoing rehabilitation and will be

ready for registration to begin next week. At full capacity, UNHCR will have the capability of registering up to 700 individuals daily, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA).

UNHCR's information campaign in Tripoli began as registration staff received training on the best ways to reach the displaced community and inform them about the registration exercise. A number of focus groups were conducted with members of the displaced community to explain the registration process.

Through the new registration in Tripoli, UNHCR will be issuing registration certificates for each family. These certificates will enable easier and quicker access to assistance, however will not serve as a formal ID.

Distribution

Centralized distribution in north Lebanon resumed this week following the arrival of the World Food Program's (WFP) food kits. UNHCR, WFP and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), with the assistance of Muslim Aid, facilitated the distribution of food, hygiene and baby kits while UNFPA provided sanitary napkins. A total of 7,855 people (1,571 families) were assisted in Wadi Khaled and Tripoli.

Islamic Relief also distributed hygiene kits to 470 host Lebanese (94 families) in Wadi Khaled and Akkar bringing the total number of host Lebanese assisted with hygiene kits to 2,478 (478 families).

Health

Following the suspension by the High Relief Commission (HRC) of medical cost coverage (due to a temporary shortage of funds) IMC and UNHCR are looking at alternative ways to cover this gap. Cases

requiring secondary health care are being referred to IMC who remains the focal point for hospital admissions. IMC referred 20 cases requiring lifesaving treatment and three injured cases to the Qatari Red Crescent (QRC) who were able to cover the cost of treatment. Unregistered cases are referred to the Coalition of Charities' NGOs operating in the North.

In addition to addressing the physical health needs of the displaced, IMC provides health awareness sessions in Wadi Khaled and psycho-social support services in Akkar and Tripoli.

Shelter/Water and Sanitation (WASH)

The provision of adequate shelter for the displaced community remains a top priority for UNHCR and partners.

As the majority of displaced Syrians in the North live with the Lebanese host community, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) continued to assist the hosting Lebanese through supporting the minor rehabilitation of their homes and providing shelter toolkits. Four houses received first payments to commence rehabilitation works, bringing the total number of houses receiving assistance to 165 in the North. Furthermore, rehabilitation of four houses in Akkar was completed.

Additionally, DRC discussed with beneficiaries in Akkar's collective shelters the specific rehabilitation and maintenance needs they have. UNHCR, DRC and partner organizations will follow-up on these needs to enhance the living conditions of displaced residing in these abandoned schools that have been transformed into collective shelters.



Centralized registration in Bire, north Lebanon assisted some 300 people this week.

Assistance in the Bekaa Valley

Protection

The flow of new arrivals into the Bekaa is actively monitored by UNHCR protection teams. Witnesses at the official Masnaa border reported that women and children who are not accompanied by a male family member are not permitted to exit Syrian territory.

Registration/Numbers

Registration in central Bekaa was conducted through a newly set up site in Ksara, in addition to the centralized registration taking place in Zahle. A total of 14,123 individuals (3,085 families) are currently registered and receiving assistance in the Bekaa.

The newly arrived Syrians are coming mainly from Damascus, Homs, Aleppo and Dara'a. They are staying with friends or relatives largely in Beirut, Tripoli, and Saida, or in the Bekaa pending employment opportunities.

Distribution

Over 9,065 displaced Syrians (1,813 families) benefitted from centralized distribution of food and non-food items this week. UNHCR and DRC provided

mattresses, hygiene and baby kits to families in many regions of the Bekaa, while UNFPA provided sanitary napkins and World Vision (WVI) distributed additional hygiene kits in central and west Bekaa.

The World Food Program (WFP) assisted displaced Syrians in Al Qaa with food kits and distributed food vouchers to families in Al Ain, Al Fakeha, Aarsal, Baalbeck and Al Hermel.

Additionally, Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center (CLMC) targeted families in Baalbeck, Zahle, Taalabaya, Saadnayel and Bar Elias, distributing pillow cases, towels, blankets, hygiene and food kits.

DRC continued logistical support to local actors as part of its capacity building plan, to ensure the quickest and most efficient distribution mechanism.

Education

With the upcoming school year approaching, UNHCR and partner agencies are focusing efforts toward identifying schools to enroll Syrian children, as well as preparing these youth for the Lebanese curriculum.

UNHCR and Save the Children International (SCI) received a list of operating schools in the Bekaa that are prepared for the admission of Syrian children. UNHCR and SCI will meet with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) to further discuss the capacity of these schools as well as to identify additional schools in areas where there are large concentrations of refugees.

UNICEF summer day camps are now reaching 2,000 Syrian and Lebanese children with at least 100 new children newly enrolled in camp since the most

recent influx of Syrians to the Bekaa. These activities support children in reintegrating into formal education following their displacement through improving their language skills and other educational activities.

UNICEF is also supporting a network of 20 Child Friendly Spaces (CFSs), the majority of which are school-based, targeting over 5,000 children and caregivers. These CFSs provide psycho-social services to children, a positive development as UNICEF continues to work with partners in scaling up the access to community-based psycho-social help.

Furthermore, the Summer Accelerated Learning Program (SALP) facilitated by SCI now has 650 children from Aarsal, Ain, Brital, Baalbeck, Bar Elias and Kamed el Lawz participating. Activities include remedial classes and extracurricular activities.

Health

UNHCR and partner organizations strive to address both the physical and mental needs of displaced Syrians. Mental health is integral to the well-being of the displaced, many of whom are exhibiting fear, anxiety and panic from the recent events in Syria and their experiences in fleeing to Lebanon.

IMC's social worker meets with members of the displaced community to discuss their worries, which include stress about the future and the financial strain caused by displacement. Referrals are made to the psychologist and psychiatrist when necessary.

Shelter/ Water and Sanitation (WASH)

Identifying and renovating shelter options remains an urgent priority in the Bekaa.

NRC began rehabilitating a large unfinished house and two abandoned buildings to serve as collective shelters in Aarsal and Al Fakeha, with the total capacity to host 220 people (44 families). These basic renovations included installing doors and windows as well as incorporating various WASH standards, such as tiling bathroom floors, installing showers, toilets, water tanks and external/internal water piping. Rehabilitation is expected to complete in six weeks. NRC also continued work on 40 unfinished houses in Aarsal and Saadnayel, providing technical supervision to rehabilitation efforts and distributing payments to owners who have completed the required amount of work.

Renovations on the Bukhari school in Baalbeck are now completed and the shelter is ready to host an additional 30 people (6 families) with the 20 people (4 families) who are already living there.

UNHCR, DRC, UNICEF, Action Contra la Faim (ACF) and Save the Children continued a collaborative effort of mapping and assessing public schools based on the list provided by the MoEHE. This is to identify suitable abandoned schools with the potential of hosting displaced Syrians in the future. UNHCR and partners will advocate with the MoEHE for permission to access and adapt other previously identified abandoned schools as well.

Currently there are 400 displaced Syrians (80 families) living in active schools in the Bekaa. UNHCR and partner agencies are prioritizing the pressing need to relocate these families before the new academic school year begins, and are in discussions with MoSA for a solution.

For more information on Syrian displacement in Lebanon, please visit the Lebanon page on the webportal:

<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>. There you will find facts, figures, and 'who does what', as well as updates on food and non-food items distributed per area and by agency.

Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)

Quick Impact Projects continue to benefit the displaced and host communities in the Bekaa. Two new projects, a mobile theater in Baalbeck and the implementation of children's games through the Ras El Ain public garden are in the works for August.

Rehabilitation work on the Mobile Theater will start on 10 August, through DRC and the Sawa organization. Once complete, the theater will travel around the Bekaa entertaining and performing for displaced and host families. The Sawa organization will provide *animateurs*, with UNHCR, DRC and Save the Children organizing and funding the activities.