

LEBANON: Arsal Influx Inter-Agency Update

20 November 2013



Arsal

35,000
Resident
Population of Arsal

19,500
Registered Refugees
As of 15 October 2013

13,200
Refugees registered with
the local municipality
since 15 November 2013

67,700
Total population in
Arsal

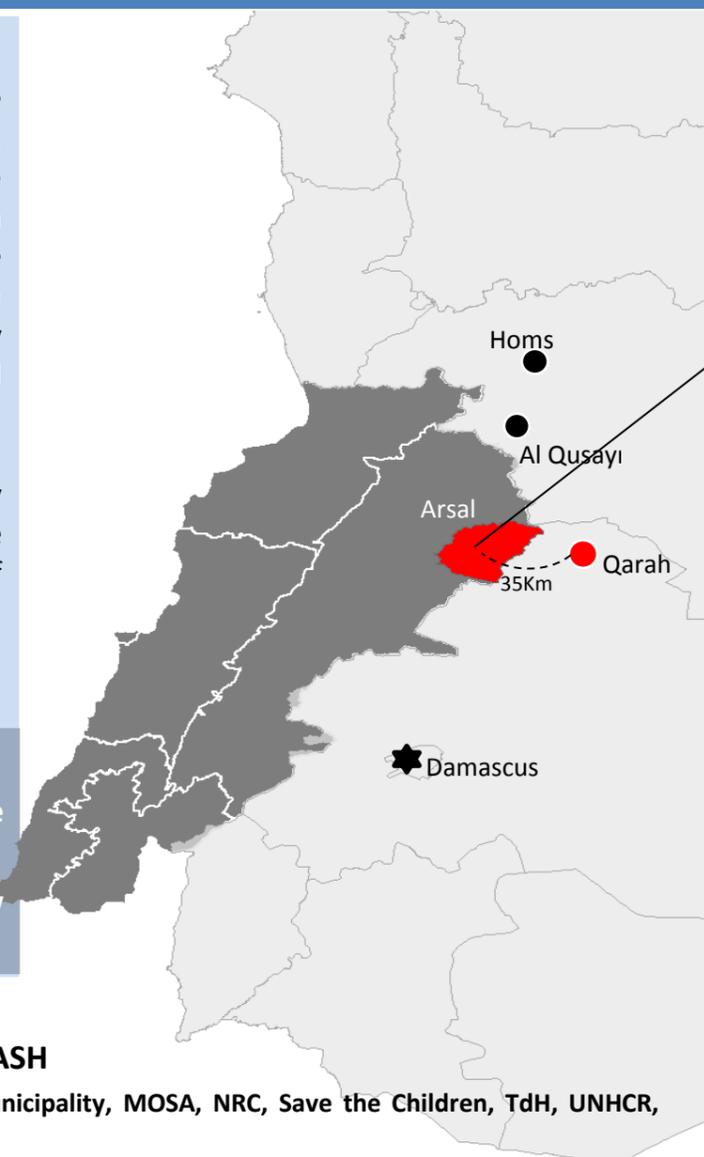
CONTEXT

Humanitarian partners are responding to an influx of some 2,200 refugee families following heavy fighting between the Syrian Armed Forces and Armed Opposition Groups in the Qalamoun area of Rif Dimashq, Syria. Heavy clashes began on 15 November and are ongoing. Most civilians fleeing the fighting have come from Qarah, close to the border with Arsal, Lebanon. Additional arrivals late in the day yesterday were reported from neighbouring towns of Jreijeer and Al Sahel. These accounts have yet to be confirmed.

Humanitarian partners have been on the ground since Friday to support municipal authorities. UNHCR is coordinating the inter-agency response under the direction of the Ministry of Social Affairs.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Arrival of additional 150-200 families reported by the municipality late yesterday evening.
- Distribution of food and core relief items has now reached some 65% of the registered population.



Newly established formal tented settlement on land donated by Dar al Fatwah in Arsal, 2013-11-19, © UNHCR

RESPONSE

Protection

(Amel, Al Jamaa Al Islamiya, Arsal Municipality, DAF, DRC, TdH, IRC, Jousoor Al Nour, Jarrah Scouts, Local Community, MOSA, NRC, Popular Rescue, Prince of Qatar Aid, Rural Dev. Assoc, TdH, UNHCR, UNICEF)

Refugees who arrived from Friday to Tuesday have been registered with local municipalities for emergency assistance, allowing partners to focus on other protection challenges today. Registration will resume as needed to ensure that additional new arrivals are assisted. Women have expressed a need for increased privacy in collective shelters, including their access to sanitation facilities and personal feminine hygiene items. Referral pathways for sexual and gender-based violence have been established.

Public Health

(AMEL, Beyond, HI, ICRC, IMC, MDM, MSF, MOPH, SHRO, UNHCR, UNICEF)

Partners are concerned about possible deteriorations in the health status of refugees as cold weather approaches and given inadequate access to hygiene items and sanitation facilities. Mobile medical units are targeting upto 6,000 people with general consultations, immunizations and lice treatment. Demand for services outstretches current capacity of local primary health centres and mobile medical units.

Shelter and WASH

(ACF, Intersos, Municipality, MOSA, NRC, Save the Children, TdH, UNHCR, UNICEF)

The newly established formal tented settlement now has a water system in place. This includes a 5,000 litre water tank, 3 water collection points and 18 water taps to ensure adequate water supply for upto 50 families. In addition to the 21 tents erected yesterday, 29 more tents are planned for this site in coming days. 9 vulnerable families have moved into the site.

Refugees accommodated in 3 collective centres and 10 informal tented settlements now have access to chemical latrines and clean water. In addition a total of 100 solid waste collection bins were delivered to various locations hosting refugees.

Core Relief Items and Food Security

(Al Jamaa Al Islamiya, DAF, DRC, GVC, IRC, KSA Relief, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP)

610 families received assistance today at a newly identified distribution centre at the entrance of Arsal and at sites in Al Ain and Jdeide-Fekha. Some 1,544 families have been assisted to date with core relief items and food parcels distributed through the inter-agency response. Sufficient stocks of NFIs and food parcels are in place to respond to further new arrivals. Donations from private sources are also being distributed.

	Reached	In process
Core Relief Items	65%	35%
Food	65%	35%

Challenges

The critical shortage of emergency shelter continues. Many families who have sought refuge in spontaneous collective accommodation are struggling to cope with inadequate conditions as partners increase efforts to provide core relief items, water and sanitation as swiftly as possible. High rental charges in some collective shelters and other sites are presenting challenges for refugees who have fled with minimal means.

The security situation continues to be closely monitored for any potential repercussions on the delivery of assistance.

Next Steps

Given the fluidity of the current situation and the volatility on the other side of the border, the Municipality of Arsal together with all other partners in the crisis have agreed on the need to hold a contingency planning meeting tomorrow.

The health task force co-chaired by MOSA and UNHCR is working to identify ways to support primary health centres, and improve community outreach to ensure information sharing on available medical assistance.

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