

Egypt Weekly Update Syria Operation

25 November-10 December 2013

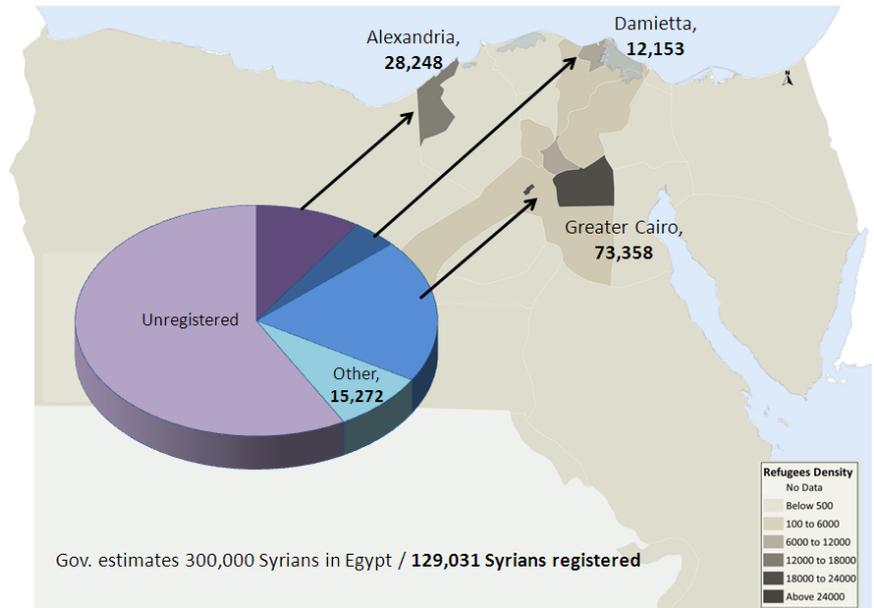
Registration of Syrians in Egypt (as of 7 December)

Response in Egypt to Syrian Crisis

As the conflict in Syria continues to escalate, the number of people fleeing into other countries in the region in search of refuge has been increasing. Some 300,000 Syrians currently reside in Egypt according to Government estimates provided in June, of whom UNHCR has registered 129,031 individuals as of 7 December.

Most Syrians in Egypt are scattered in urban neighbourhoods, renting and sharing accommodation, and benefit from access to public education and health care.

UNHCR conducts registration, provides counselling, and works with partners to provide legal assistance and address the social needs of vulnerable Syrians in Egypt. UNHCR also operates hotlines for emergencies and inquiries, and sensitizes refugees of the dangers of involvement in political activities.



50.25% of registered Syrians arrived to Egypt through a transit country; of those, 77% passed through Lebanon, 12.3% through Jordan, and 10.7% through others countries.

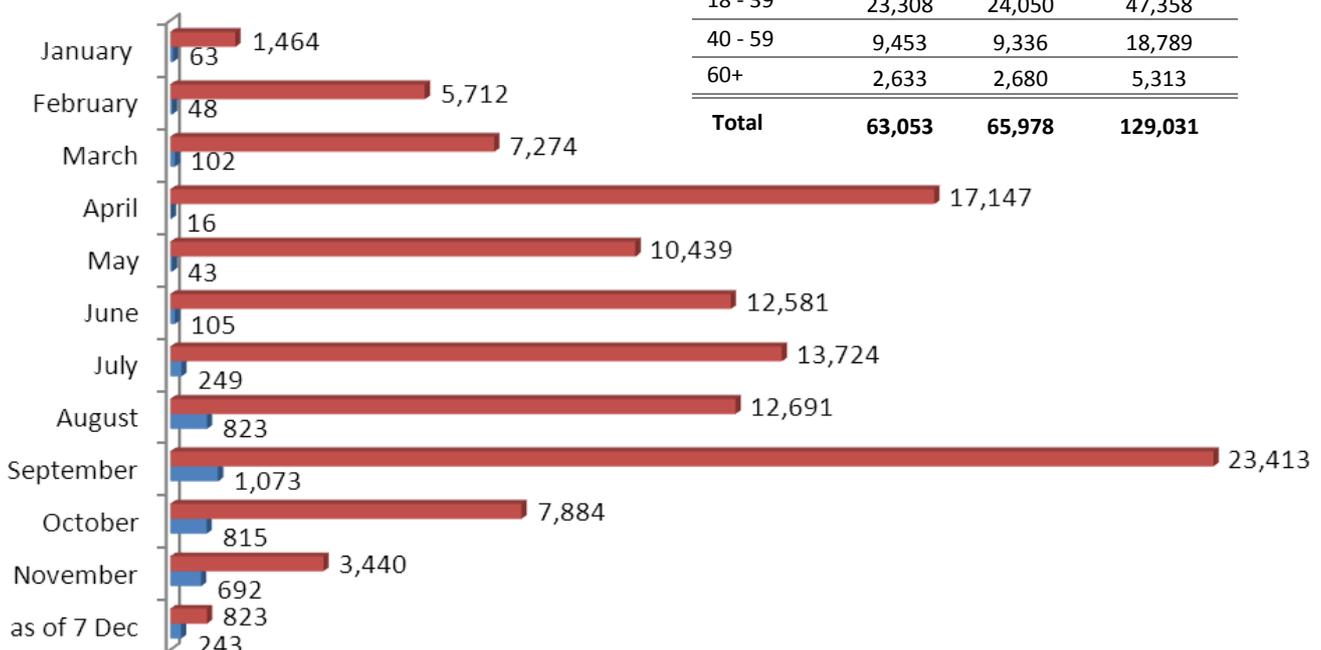
During the week, 823 individuals registered in the Zamalek Registration Centre; 26 persons were identified with specific needs.

Registration and Closure Trends in 2013

Registration Total: 116,592

Closure Total: 4,272

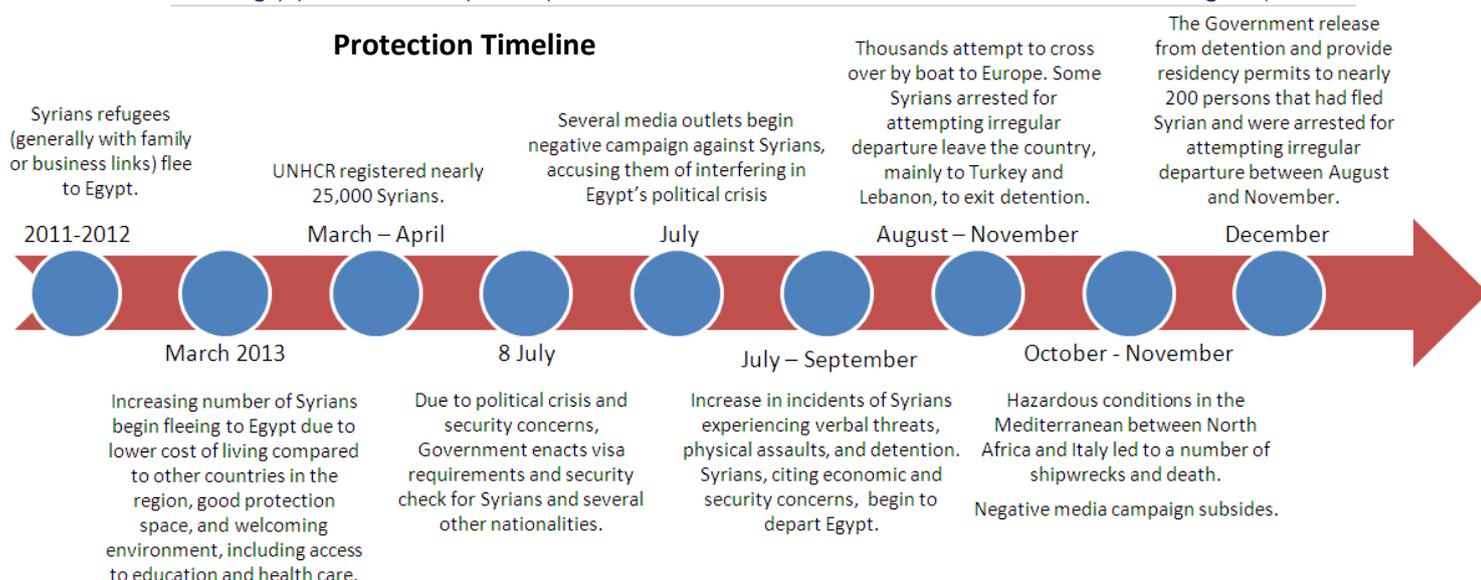
From 1 Jan – 7 Dec



Gender and Age Breakdown

Age Group	F	M	Total
0 - 4	9,246	9,673	18,919
5 - 11	11,118	11,799	22,917
12 - 17	7,295	8,440	15,735
18 - 39	23,308	24,050	47,358
40 - 59	9,453	9,336	18,789
60+	2,633	2,680	5,313
Total	63,053	65,978	129,031

Protection Timeline



Release from Detention

The Government of Egypt announced on 10 December that it had released 171 out of 206 persons (mostly women and children) from detention that had fled Syria and had been arrested between August and November for attempting irregular departure from Egypt. The Government has issued the refugees with temporary residency permits in order for them to rectify their legal status in the country.

UNHCR has expressed its gratitude to the Government of Egypt for facilitating the release of the refugees that had been in detention, and is encouraged by the cooperation and positive outcome. UNHCR has deployed staff to Alexandria to work with the authorities and partners to ensure the persons that have been released have accommodations, medical care and are able to meet their basic needs. UNHCR continues to work with the Government regarding those that are still in detention pending a review of their cases by National Security.

UNHCR is also looking to conduct a campaign on the dangers of attempting departure across the Mediterranean to avoid further arrests and loss of life.

Protection/Field

UNHCR was alerted through its partners (Save the Children, Tadamon and Fard) of three incidents of sexual gender based violence (SGVB) in Masaken Osman (Greater Cairo), an impoverished area of Cairo with no police presence and little access to services. UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR and partners are working on referral mechanisms, awareness raising sessions, SGBV training and the establishment of more protective spaces in order to improve prevention and response.

On 8 December, UNHCR met with representatives of the Syrian community to address a range of issues which had led to a protest in front of UNHCR's office in 6th of October (Greater Cairo) last month. Issues included food voucher distribution, financial assistance, education grants, residency, etc. for which UNHCR provided explanations and is following up in response to the needs of the refugees.

Released (as of 10 Dec)				
Location	Women	Men	Children	Total
Shabrakheit	6	2	3	11
Edku	8	8	22	38
Rahmania	9	9	7	25
Al Montazah	5	10	20	35
Karmouz	7	6	24	37
Port Said	6	9	10	25
Total	41	41	44	171

Remaining in detention (as of 10 Dec)				
Location	Women	Men	Children	Total
Shabrakheit	0	1	0	1
Edku	0	3	0	3
Rahmania	0	3	0	3
Al Montazah	0	15	2	17
Karmouz	0	1	0	1
Port Said	0	10	0	10
Total	0	33	2	35

QIPs

UNHCR hosted a workshop on 3 December for over 50 participants from donors, the Minister of Local Development, UN agencies and NGOs on quick impact projects (QIPs). UNHCR's Regional Representative (RR) for Egypt opened the workshop and cited the importance of QIPs in addressing Syrian refugee and host community needs while promoting coexistence. Presentations included research on urban development of Syrians in Cairo, insight into the Lebanese experience of Community Support Programmes (the equivalent of QIPs in Lebanon), the FARD Foundation's QIP for a shuttle service in Masaken Othman (Greater Cairo). The workshop created a lot of interest in the upcoming call for proposals for QIPs in 2014.

Education

The RR met with the Egyptian Minister of Higher Education Dr. Hosam Essa, to discuss challenges facing Syrian refugee students wishing to enrol in Egyptian universities. The Minister and RR reviewed the possibility of extending enrolment cut off dates for latecomers, assisting Syrians enrolled in Egyptian universities but were outside of the country when the visa restrictions were put in place on 8 July to obtain visas, some administrative difficulties for Syrians looking to enrol, and opportunities for post-graduate studies.

UNHCR and the Ministry of Education (MoE) conducted a joint mission in Damietta to address education and child protection concerns, which included issues of placement tests, poor results, and access concerns. UNHCR and MoE officials agreed that all Syrian refugee students on the waiting list (more than 800 students) would be split equally between seven local schools and promptly provided place in the schools. The Director of Education in New Damietta agreed to establish comprehensive remedial classes for the 2,200 Syrian children enrolled in the various grades to assist them with the main subjects they have been encountering problems with. This programme will be taught by the same classroom teachers in 6 schools in the area and supervised by the MoE. As well, 300 of the most vulnerable children from the host community will join the classes to benefit from extra hours, and promote better relations between the communities.

Community Outreach

On 28 November, as part of a series of awareness raising events, IOM conducted training for around 30 Syrians at the Community Centre in 6th of October (Greater Cairo). IOM presented BOSLA (<http://bosla-egypt.info/>), the newly developed web-platform for migrant services. IOM's expert on counter human smuggling/trafficking also held a session explaining the difference between the two and focused on how the former can likely lead to the latter. Syrians were reminded of the possibility of being deceived by smugglers and of the risks in travelling on makeshift boats. IOM distributed flash memory sticks containing videos, presentations and UNHCR's brochure on services in Greater Cairo.

On November 30, UNHCR conducted a one-day training workshop for 31 staff recently recruited by Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW), and another on December 2 for 30 Syrian volunteers who recently joined the Egyptian Refugee Multicultural Council through UNHCR's partner Tadamon. The workshop covered UNHCR's mandate, the principle of international protection, the refugee definition, durable solutions and rights and duties of refugees in Egypt. The workshop also covered UNHCR's funding mechanisms and gave the participants an overview of the various projects for Syrian refugees in Egypt.

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UNHCR's Director of the Department of International Protection, Mr. Volker Türk, and UNHCR's Regional Representative for Egypt, Mr. Mohamed Dayri, during a press conference on 1 December in UNHCR's Registration Centre in Zamalek, Cairo. (UNHCR/T. Leposky)

Mission of the Director of the Department of International Protection (DIP)

On 1 December, UNHCR's Director of DIP, Mr. Volker Türk, while on mission in Egypt, met with senior government officials to discuss the Syrian refugee situation, and how UNHCR, the government and the host community can work hand in hand to improve the livelihood conditions and protection environment for Syrian refugees. Mr. Türk also discussed with government officials on ways the international community could help Egypt with its responsibility towards Syrian refugees.

UNHCR Egypt organized a press conference during which Mr. Türk gave an overview of the Syrian refugee situation in neighbouring countries and reiterated the fact that to date there are more than 2.2 million Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR; most in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq. Mr. Türk stressed that Syrians have become a global refugee population. Syrian refugees are not present only in the neighbouring countries, but are also present in Europe, North Africa and South East Asia.

Mr. Türk noted that the hospitality and generosity of Egypt's people and government should be admired. A lot of Egyptians consider Syrians as their brothers and sisters and he said, "This positive attitude gives us a lot of hope that things are going to be better soon."

During his mission, Mr. Türk also visited the community centre in 6th of October (Greater Cairo) run by UNHCR's partner, Tadamon. Mr. Türk took the opportunity to meet with a number of Syrian refugees who shared with him many of their day-to-day challenges.

Partners:

Caritas • Catholic Relief Services (CRS) • Islamic Relief Worldwide • Mahmoud Mosque society • Refuge Egypt • Resala Association • Terre Des Hommes - TADAMON and Psycho-Social Services and Training Institute in Cairo (PSTIC) • Save the Children • UNICEF • WFP • UNHABITAT • WHO • UNFPA