



100% of the population (233,625 persons) is registered on individual basis in UNHCR database (proGres). Recording of Iris scan continues for all eligible family members.

DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS:

Registration and verification: Verification and biometric registration of Syrian refugees is being implemented in Duhok, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah Governorates. By the end of the month iris scanning of 72,558 individuals was uploaded in the regional database and their individual data was verified and updated in *proGres*.

Out of 26,057 asylum-seekers from Kobane, 14,196 individuals have been registered in various camp and non-camp locations across the region by the end of December.

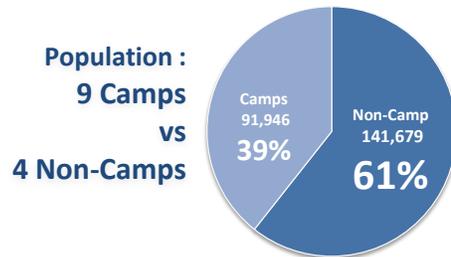
Border monitoring: The Peshkhabour and Ibrahim Khalil border crossing points remained open for commercial and civilian traffic, however with restricted access for asylum-seekers. Syrian nationals from Kobane were allowed to cross into KR-I following an agreement between KRI and Turkey. In December, a total of 688 Syrians from Kobane crossed into KR-I through Peshkhabour and 4,087 through Ibrahim Khalil border crossing points. During December, a total of 1,398 UNHCR-registered Syrian asylum seekers have returned back to Syria bringing the total number of returns during the year to 25,293 individuals.

Protection monitoring and co-ordination of protection activities in all camps in KR-I continued. The validity of the residency cards for the Syrian refugees in Erbil camps has been extended from six months to one year. The similar regime is expected to be soon introduced for the Erbil non-camp refugee population, which is pending the formal endorsement of the Director General of the Residency Department. Protection network meetings have been regularly held in camps and urban areas aiming at improving protection service delivery to the refugees. In Erbil a round-table discussion was held between UNHCR (Protection) and the KR-I Judiciary Council to discuss legal challenges facing refugees and IDPs in the region as well as identify areas of future collaboration between UNHCR and KR-I Appeal Courts for the purpose of finding practical solutions to the existing gaps. In Duhok UNHCR and its partners conducted participatory assessment with camp and non-camp refugees. The findings of the participatory assessment will inform priority areas for protection interventions and assistance in 2015.

Child Protection: During the reporting period, Child Protection partners provided psychosocial services to a total of 3,980 children in Erbil (Basirma, Qushtapa, Darashakran and Kawergosk camp). Duhok (Domiz, Akre and Gawilan camps) and Sulaymaniyah governorates. A child protection team comprising of has been actively engaged in coordination of CP activities at the Reception Center in Ibrahim Khalil (Duhok) to ensure timely identification, registration and referral of children for specialized services. Over the period of December, 322 children received specialized services from front line workers through Child Protection Units (CPUs) in camps. The referred cases included school children with behavioral problems, separated and unaccompanied children, children with disabilities, survivors of gender based violence.

SGBV: SGBV WG is progressing in developing a Peer to Peer Quality Assurance tool, the final draft of which is expected to be released in January. The tool is aimed at improving capacity to analyze the quality of response and reporting. Capacity building activities were carried out in December for SGBV partners and will continue throughout January for new staff.

Resettlement: The merged refugee status determination and resettlement procedures for the Syrian caseload continued to be implemented: Pre-assessment screening was undertaken for 156 cases in eight locations across the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. In total in December, 24 cases/109 persons were submitted for resettlement, including 22 cases/103 persons to the USA (the other two cases were submitted to Denmark and the Netherlands). This brings the total number of submissions in 2014 to 96 cases/429 persons were submitted to resettlement countries. On 15-16 December, meetings were held with a US/IOM delegation on resettlement of Syrian refugees in Iraq to the USA. The USCIS selection mission is expected to take place in the following months.



NEEDS ANALYSIS:

As of 31 December 2014, 26,057 refugees from Kobane were hosted in KRI, with around 72% accommodated in Erbil, 22% in Duhok and 6% in Sulaymaniyah. Due to the lack of space in the existing camps in Erbil it has been agreed with the KRI authorities that from January onwards the new refugee arrivals from Kobane would be received at the Gawilan camp in Duhok. The last convoy to Erbil arrived on 31st December, which brought the total number of refugees in the four Erbil camps to 18,741 individuals. Around 12% of newly arrived refugees remained in the camps while 88% opted to move to Erbil city and other areas. The issue of space for the newly arriving refugees will remain a key challenge in case the influx from Kobane continues, which will require continued advocacy with the KRI authorities on the identification of additional site(s).

Meanwhile, Child Protection (CP) sector is scaling up the CP response in Gawilan camp in light of the expected arrivals. Gawilan has so far been hosting around 1400 Syrians from Kobane, among whom 31 % are children (24% of these are below 4 years of age).

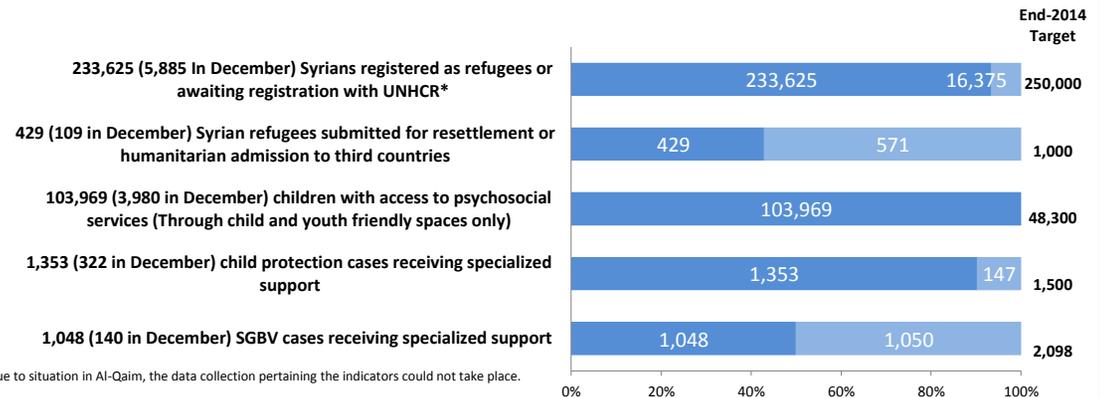
Despite increased efforts of the SGBV actors to outreach to the communities, there is still a serious challenge of under-reporting. Lack of awareness among populations of concern, as well as fear of stigma and retaliation for reporting SGBV are among the contributing factors.

UNHCR continued to follow up on the deportation cases of 5 Syrian refugees from Erbil. The formal response received from the KR-I authorities reiterates position stated earlier, namely that the concerned individuals have been deported due to security considerations and would not be allowed to re-enter KR-I. Protection actors will further strategize their interventions aimed at addressing this challenge and preventing potential refoulement cases in future.

SYRIAN REFUGEE POPULATION IN IRAQ:



PROGRESS AGAINST TARGETS*:



*Due to situation in Al-Qaim, the data collection pertaining the indicators could not take place.

Targets based on expected population of 250,000 Syrian refugees in Iraq by end-2014. There are currently 233,625 Syrian refugees in Iraq.

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