

POPULATION OF CONCERN

248,367 Syrian refugees

KEY FIGURES

225

225 new born babies received health support services

577

Newly registered children provided with psychosocial support

699

Syrians counseled on voluntariness of return

29,627

Refugees in Erbil camps provided with safe water and hygiene

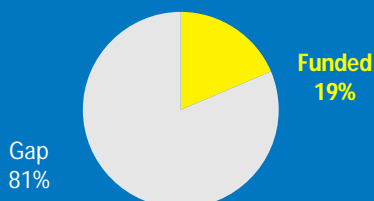
1,650,000

USD injected into the KR-I economy in April through the refugee food voucher program

FUNDING

USD 426,041,332

requested by agencies for the operation (Source: 2015 3RP – Iraq, as at 24/04/2015)



PRIORITIES

- Protection services to newly arrived Syrian refugees and minors
- Continuous improvements in shelter and WASH

IRAQ

INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONAL UPDATE – SYRIAN REFUGEES IN IRAQ

16-30 April 2015

HIGHLIGHTS

In the reporting period:

- 267 Syrians entered the KR-I and were transferred from the Peshkabour crossing point to Gawilan camp, for registration and assistance. The overwhelming majority of new-arrivals (94%) were large families of Kurdish ethnicity, who have been displaced from Aleppo sub-districts such as Tel-Hasil, Tel-Arn and Kobane.
- A total of 699 Syrians who intended to return from KR-I to their places of origin in Syria were counseled by the UNHCR/Harikar team at Bajet Kandala Registration Centre, Dohuk Governorate, to ensure the voluntary nature of their return. These new returns bring the total number of spontaneous returnees to 5,647 since the beginning of the year. The majority of returnees cite various reasons for return including family reunification, difficulties with the high cost of living in the KR-I and the lack of employment opportunities, or attendance at family events including funerals, and for medical reasons.
- The challenging economic situation continues to affect refugees, evidenced by increasing requests from refugees in urban locations to relocate to camps, due to reduced economic opportunities to sustain themselves in non-camp locations. Since the beginning of the year, 255 refugee families living in non-camp settings in Duhok Governorate have relocated to Gawilan camp.



Young arrivals from Syria made their way with their families to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq through the Peshkabour border crossing (UNHCR/R. Rasheed).

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

Relations between Baghdad and Erbil remained complex in light of discussions on fiscal and political issues. Though disbursements are being made by the Iraqi central government to the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), under the agreed budgetary allocation, discontent with the level of contribution is an issue. Economic challenges faced both by the KRG and the central Government, primarily due to a significant budgetary deficit caused by the drop in oil prices, continue to strain the economy.

In his visit to the United States, Iraqi Prime Minister Al-Abadi reiterated the plan to retake Mosul, for which President Obama pledged support to the Iraqi government in the fight against ISIS. The US Congress bill however, which aimed to provide direct military assistance to the Peshmerga and Sunni tribes, faced strong opposition from Baghdad on grounds that it would possibly exacerbate internal divisions. Whilst the KRG is in support of the military campaign against ISIS militants in Mosul, it does not envisage the involvement of Peshmerga forces inside Mosul city. The reports of an imminent military operation on Mosul and the mass population displacement it could trigger, is causing concerns within the humanitarian community who have been involved in putting together contingency plans and developing preparedness measures.

Within Iraq, fighting continues in Ramadi, the capital of Anbar Governorate, with the displacement of Iraqi civilians ongoing and many fleeing elsewhere across the Governorate, to Baghdad or further afield in Suleimaniyah in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I). In the north, attack-and-retreat techniques were used by ISIS militants in Makhmour and Khazir (west and north of Erbil, respectively) and in Mosul Dam in Ninewa Governorate with on-going clashes between the Peshmerga forces and insurgents.

Achievements



Protection

CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- 267 Syrians entered the KR-I and were transferred from the Peshkabour crossing point to Gawilan camp, for registration and assistance. The overwhelming majority of new-arrivals (94%) were large families of Kurdish ethnicity, who have been displaced from Aleppo sub-districts such as Tel-Hasil, Tel-Arn and Kobane. A total of four unaccompanied and separated children and 18 persons with specific needs were among the arrivals. The majority of new arrivals decided not to stay in Gawilan camp (99%), opting for reunification with family members already living in the KR-I.
- In Dohuk Governorate, a total of 699 Syrians who intended to return to their places of origin, were counselled by the UNHCR/Harikar team at Bajet Kandala Registration Centre to ensure the voluntary nature of their return. These new returns bring the total number of spontaneous returnees to 5,647 individuals since the beginning of 2015. The majority of returnees have reported their intentions to return to non-conflict zones, controlled by Kurdish forces, including Qamishly and Al Malkeyia. Various reasons for return have been provided, including family reunification, challenges with the high cost of living and lack of job opportunities in the KR-I, or the need to return to attend family events such as funerals and for medical reasons.
- In focus group discussions with refugees from Kobane conducted in Arbat camp, Dohuk Governorate, participants reported that due to the security situation in Kobane they did not want to return home. However, the issue of lack

of income and the struggle to provide basic necessities was raised, noting that some may choose to return to an unsafe place in their country of origin as they were also struggling in their place of asylum.

- In coordination with Peshkabour border officials, a total of 14 registered unaccompanied minors (8 boys and 6 girls) were successfully reunited with their families in Syria via the Semalka border point.
- In all four Erbil Governorate camps, the residency departments continued to issue individual documentation to eligible refugees, with a total of 1,629 residency cards processed in the second half of April. The residency cards have a one year validity, which facilitates refugees' access to employment and key social services such as health and education.
- In Erbil Governorate, a PARC/Qandil legal team provided legal consultations to 242 camp-based refugees on personal affairs, labour and civil laws; and facilitated the issuance of 58 legal documents, including birth, marriage, divorce and death certificates.
- UNHCR, in partnership with Qandil, NRC and INTERSOS, organized a total of 11 focus group discussions (FGDs) on birth registration across Erbil camps. Approximately 400 women participated, which helped to identify some pertinent concerns and challenges that hinder birth registration in KR-I, as well as to inform participants of relevant procedures.
- Legal assistance to families in need of birth registration and marriage certificates continues to be provided in Basirma camp, Erbil Governorate, by UNICEF's implementing partner, Terre des Hommes, with five new cases assisted and awareness-raising sessions reaching 20 parents.
- In Basirma camp, UNICEF supported the Erbil Department of Social Affairs in conducting awareness raising sessions on the negative consequences of early marriage. A total of 21 teenage girls participated in the sessions.
- In Darashakran camp, Erbil Governorate, UNICEF's implementing partner, ACTED, conducted a three-day training for 15 child friendly space (CFS) and protection staff on Sign Language, to promote inclusion of children with disabilities in CFS activities.
- UNHCR assisted four SGBV survivors in Gawilan camp to secure employment.
- In Arbat camp, Dohuk Governorate, UNHCR conducted FGDs with female refugees on gender-specific issues. Key issues relating to a lack of income and livelihoods for their spouses and access to health care were raised. The refugees were consulted on approaching pertinent service providers and female representatives.
- 287 refugees were consulted and received guidance in relation to registration and residency issues in Arbat camp.



A Focus Group Discussion session for refugee women and representatives of the Women's Committee in Darashakran camp, Erbil Governorate.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- In Erbil Governorate, refugees contacted PARC/Qandil lawyers to report delays with court procedures for the issuance of marriage certificates. Referrals to the general Asayish office in Erbil for screening can take up to a month, which prompts many refugees to revert to customary ways of marriage registration, such as through religious clergy. The lack of formal marriage documentation is one of the reasons hindering birth registration in the area.

NON-CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- The Residency Department in Erbil interviewed 600 Syrian asylum-seekers and issued 568 residency cards.
- In Erbil Governorate, a PARC legal team counseled 151 refugees on personal affairs, labour and civil laws. The team also facilitated the issuance of 32 documents, including birth and marriage certificates.
- The cases of 44 separated children were referred to PARC community services team in Erbil Governorate. The children were counseled on the availability of schooling in KR-I and encouraged to continue their education. All 44 children were working to support their families who remained in Syria and did not want to be referred to child protection services, citing that they wanted to continue working. Community services teams are continuing to work on collecting data on these cases, with particular attention to children that report recruitment to armed groups.
- A PARC team in Erbil identified 10 cases of early marriage. The girls were provided with counseling and information on how to prevent early pregnancies.
- In Suleimaniyah Governorate, 410 registration certificates, including renewals, were issued. Another 1127 cases were referred to the Residency Department for the issuance or renewal of residency permits. 137 cases were transferred from Erbil and Duhok to Suleimaniyah. 1447 refugees also received consultation and guidance related to registration and residency issues.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The challenging economic situation continues to affect refugees in urban and semi-urban locations. Results of protection monitoring in urban areas of Erbil and Duhok suggest an increasing number of refugees residing in urban areas wish to relocate to the camps due to the limited job opportunities, scarce education opportunities for children and increasing rental costs.
- In Suleimaniyah Governorate, protection monitoring teams in Said Sadiq, Halabja, Bardaqaraman, Takya and Chqarqwrna found that the main issues of concern among refugees were the interrelated issue of financial challenges, housing problems and lack of jobs. Indicative of financial and housing issues for refugees is the situation in Bardaqaraman, where 10 families have asked for tented accommodations as they can no longer pay their rent. Also indicative are increasing requests for regular food distributions.
- In Suleimaniyah Governorate, the Asayish has been reluctant to work on cases that have no other documentation other than UNHCR certificates, hindering the obtaining of residency permits.



Durable Solutions

Achievements and Impact

- Resettlement pre-assessment screening was undertaken for 10 cases, all of which were prioritized. The cases were received as internal referrals from other units within UNHCR across the KR-I or as self-referrals from the resettlement hotline.
- Interviews were carried out in camp and non-camp locations in the Governorates of Erbil and Duhok. Identification interviews were conducted in 40 cases, whilst 22 cases were reviewed, of which nine were prioritized and 13 deprioritized. The teams also undertook 17 RSD/RST interviews.
- 13 cases (55 individuals) were referred to the MENA Regional Hub in Amman for submission for resettlement. The MENA Regional Hub submitted 12 cases (39 individuals) for resettlement to Sweden and two cases (three individuals) for resettlement to the USA.
- One case (6 individuals) was accepted by Sweden for resettlement and three cases (9 individuals) were accepted by the UK. Two cases (eight individuals) departed for resettlement to Sweden.
- In Suleimaniyah Governorate, UNHCR conducted two familiarization sessions on resettlement with representatives of the refugee community.

Education

CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- In Sulaymaniyah Governorate, construction started for a Refugee School in Arbat camp. STEP and UNICEF have opened a Child Friendly Space and Save the Children International is running a resilience program for children as well as recreational activities benefitting 100 girls and 63 boys.
- In the four Erbil refugee camps (Kawergosk, Darashakran, Qushtapa and Basirma), over 5,500 students are enrolled and support was provided through the members of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) to mitigate dropout rates and increase attendance.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The discontinuation of the monthly incentive of USD 200 for the camp school teachers in Dohuk Governorate is negatively impacting their motivation; and in Suleimaniyah Governorate, the Barkhudan secondary school has closed due to the lack of refugee teachers who have not been paid due to delays in issuance of their contracts. Students from this school have now moved into the Amoda primary school where all refugee students are currently accommodated.
- A UNHCR protection visit to Arbat refugee camp found that access to education is challenging due to the poor state of facilities. Quality is also of concern as a number of students determined to catch up on missed classes and prepare for upcoming exams are faced with the frequent absence of teachers, due to the non-payment of their salaries.
- Many camp schools are in need of renovations and repairs, particularly the WASH facilities in the Dohuk refugee camp schools.

NON-CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- In Erbil Governorate, UNHCR has successfully advocated with the Department of Education to build a new school in Mamzawa town with Arab curriculum, which could serve some 500 out-of-school Syrian refugee children residing in the towns of Mamzawa, Qatawi, Numazawa, Sarkariez and nearby villages south of Erbil city. Approval from the Department of Municipality was obtained to allocate the required land for the construction of the school. The school will also benefit the local children and those from IDP community.
- In Dohuk Governorate, UNICEF is facilitating access to education for 2,104 refugee students who are attending host community schools, with Arabic as the language of instruction.
- In Sulaymaniyah Governorate, UNICEF supplied nine School-in-Box kits benefitting 5855 refugee students. In addition, two suitable locations for the establishment of Refugee Prefab Schools were identified and the land allocated.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Protection monitoring teams in Erbil Governorate found that around 80% of children in Baharka and Mamzawa towns are out of school.
- In Duhok Governorate, many families are not sending their children to school due to the cost of transportation.
- In Suleimaniyah Governorate, protection monitoring found that the lack of a sufficient number of schools with curricula in Arabic is impacting on refugee children's learning and will to return to school.



CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- UNICEF and its implementing partners provided psychosocial services to a total of 577 newly registered refugee children across KR-I refugee camps. 10 newly registered children were also provided with specialized services in relation to: psychosocial distress and disorders, non-attendance at school, child labour, early marriage, sexual and gender based violence and disability.
- Trained Syrian refugee nurses visited 1,200 families in their tents across refugee camps in KR-I as part of the UNICEF-supported new born home visit program. A total of 225 new born babies received health support services.
- UNICEF continued to support local and governmental health authorities for routine immunization of encamped Syrian refugees. A total of 739 children under five years old (U5) were immunized against polio, 82 infants under one year of age were vaccinated against measles, 100 U5 children received the MMR vaccine, and 187 U5 children received vitamin A supplements.
- In Basirma and Qushtapa camps, IMC completed its health project. The primary health centre (PHC) will be operated by the Department of Health and the World Health Organisation (WHO) will continue to provide financial support until the end of June.
- WHO and UNHCR visited Qushtapa camp to assess the health situation and the service delivery of the PHC. Health service delivery is ongoing at acceptable levels and standards with a total of 3,070 consultations provided in the month of April.
- In Qushtapa and Kawergosk camps, a total of 21 new scabies cases have been assisted through PHCs. In parallel to medical interventions, the Danish Refugee Council continues to replace blankets, mattresses and pillows for identified families, with an inter-agency scabies campaign launched across the camps by health service providers and community mobilisers.
- In Suleimaniyah Governorate, a high level inter-sectoral committee has been established by the Governor's office to take the lead in preparing for and responding to any possible outbreak of such disease. Cholera is endemic in Suleimaniyah with the last outbreak occurring in 2012.
- In Arbat camp, Suleimaniyah Governorate, EMERGENCY and its partners completed the breastfeeding promotion campaign.
- In the Al Obaidy camp in Anbar Governorate, 20 children were vaccinated against polio, in the context of the campaign initiated by Al Qaim DoH, with support from the United Iraqi Medical Society (UIMS) and UNHCR's partner in the management of the Health Clinic. The health promotion program in the camp also expanded with volunteers visiting 10 families and conducting seven health promotion sessions in the PHC.
- UNICEF facilitated the growth monitoring of 1,325 U5 children. Children that showed signs of malnutrition, such as wasting and stunted growth, received treatment with supplementary or therapeutic food and referral. 94 seminars were also held in UNICEF's baby huts, encouraging discussions and raising the awareness of 488 Pregnant and Lactating Women (PLW) on exclusive breast-feeding, well balanced diets and complementary foods for infants.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Limited options for the provision of health services to children, particularly related to chronic diseases, mental health issues and disability represent an increasing concern, in both camp and non-camp areas. UNICEF has approached the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) to assist with the response to identified gaps.
- In the Qushtapa and Basirma refugee camps in Erbil Governorate, the Community Health Worker programmes needs to be expanded as the prevention of communicable disease outbreaks remains a key priority. The health cluster and sector group will jointly work on updating the cholera preparedness plan.

NON-CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- UNICEF supported the Department of Health in Dohuk to vaccinate 57 under 15 year old children (U15) against polio and 54 U15 children against Measles.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The assessment of four urban PHCs in Dohuk Governorate and two in Suleimaniyah Governorate identified needs for rehabilitation and the provision of medical equipment.
- Mental health and psychosocial care services in urban areas continue to be limited across all three KR-I Governorates and do not cover all refugees in need of support, thus requiring an expansion.
- Drug shortages remain a key concern in public health facilities.



Food Security and Nutrition

CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- WFP, in partnership with INTERSOS, ACTED and Islamic Relief Worldwide – Iraq, completed food distributions in all Syrian refugee camps.
- Food parcels were distributed in Al Obaidy camp in Anbar Governorate through WFP's cooperating partner IRW-I. However, the partner provided half-rations to camp residents using pre-existing stocks, given that the delivery of food parcels was not possible due to ongoing fighting on roads leading to the camp.
- In Al Obaidy Camp, UNHCR through the Iraqi Salvation Humanitarian Organisation continued to distribute two pieces of bread per refugee per day for the entire camp population; in addition to complementary food assistance of IQD 17,500 to each of the 761 refugees in the camp.
- In Darashakran camp, the local NGO Koraw distributed 250 food parcels amongst the Kobane arrivals, which remains one of the most affected population segments in view of the changes in the food assistance scheme.
- In total, WFP reached almost 105,000 refugees in April, injecting USD 1.65 million into the local economy through the voucher program.
- As part of the joint UNHCR/WFP targeting process, focus group discussions were held with refugees to better understand perceptions of vulnerabilities within their communities.
- WFP has commenced construction of a proper shading area at the distribution point in Gawilan camp.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The residents of Gawilan camp continue to request the introduction of a Food Voucher System.

NON-CAMP

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- In Dohuk Governorate, non-camp refugees have reportedly requested WFP to consider the establishment of voucher distribution and redemption centres near their locations as the cost of travel to Domiz to receive the voucher risks to outweigh the already reduced voucher value itself.



Water and Sanitation

CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- Across Erbil Governorate camps, camp-cleaning campaigns and de-sludging of septic tanks and garbage collections continued.

- UNICEF and partners provided water for 33,472 refugees in Domiz camp and 1,500 refugees in Gawilan camp through pipe network and water trucking. UNICEF through its implementing partners, provided safe and sufficient water, water quality monitoring and hygiene promotion services for 29,627 refugees across refugee camps in KR-I.
- In Domiz 1 and 2 camps, 1,140 hygiene promotion visits were conducted by UNICEF and its partner, benefiting 4,600 adults and 280 children. Hygiene promotion messages focused on the prevention and spread of scabies within the community. The Norwegian Refugee Council distributed to those infected shampoo for the treatment of head lice.
- In Domiz 1, UNHCR started waste water sampling with a view to the possible construction of a waste water treatment facility.
- Following complaints about water quality in Akre Camp, the Akre Water Directorate conducted a water test with results showing no bacteriological contamination of the water.
- In Gawilan camp, the Department of Health conducted a successful fumigation campaign against mosquitoes and rodents.
- In Kawergosk camp, UNICEF rehabilitated 28 latrines and 16 shower cabinets. Ventilation pipes were also installed for the cesspools and a topographical survey is currently being conducted, to assess the feasibility of connecting lines with a recently repaired sewerage network.
- Relocation of refugees from the old sections of Qushtapa camp to a permanent section is completed. 384 kitchen units are being upgraded; a blocked sewer line and manholes have been cleaned; the water network and pipelines have been repaired, which should result in water trucking reducing from 182,000 to 130,000 liters/day.
- Upgrading of roads continues across several camp sites in Erbil and Suleimaniyah Governorates, including in Qushtapa, Kawergosk and Arbat camps.
- In Arbat camp, the water supply system, funded by UNICEF and constructed by the Directorate of Surrounding Water (DoSW) and Qatar Red Crescent (QRC) has been handed over to the Arbat Water Directorate for operation and maintenance. The new system includes three new boreholes and three reservoirs of 144,000 liters in total, serving the daily water needs of 5,863 refugees.
- In Al Obaidy camp, hygiene awareness sessions continued in the camp and school.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- An additional USD 3 million is required for the next six months for UNICEF to upgrade, operate and maintain WASH infrastructure in KR-I refugee camps.
- In Domiz camps there remains a need to find a solution for a durable sewage disposal site.
- In Gawilan camp, there is a need for WASH care and maintenance to respond to the needs of the entire camp.
- Women in Akre and Gawilan camps requested hygiene kits and sanitary tools.
- In Kawergosk camp, the road upgrading works are suffering from delays due to wastewater overflowing in the street.



Shelter and NFIs

CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- In Qushtapa camp, 367 families have been allocated concrete slabs. In Kawergosk camp, DRC pitched 5 new tents for 5 newly married families.
- In Darashakran camp, 200 rechargeable fans were distributed among the refugees from Kobane. The local NGO Koraw distributed 70 water filters to families with infant children or kidney ailments.
- The construction of 654 new extension plots in Domiz 1 and 2 camps is ongoing. NRC is also constructing permanent shelters in both camps.
- In the Gawilan camp, PWJ and UNHCR have commenced the construction of 26 concrete slabs.
- BRHA has commenced kerosene distributions in Duhok camps, reaching 1,264 families.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- In Arbat camp, delays with the relocation of some 300 refugee families to a new extension is causing frustration among the communities, with some waiting up to three months and placing an additional burden on friends and families who are temporarily sharing their tent space. Relocation delays are caused by an incomplete water connection network and UNHCR is following up with the relevant WASH partner to address the issue.
- UNHCR met with the Women's Committee in Basirma camp to assess the general protection situation in the camp and specific issues of concern to refugee women. The Committee raised the issue of security and safety due to gaps in the camp fence and a lack of a night guard/guardian system in place. Additionally, issues related to the poor sanitary situation, mixed use of latrines and shortage of water, as well as irregularities in the provision of hygiene kits to families, were mentioned amongst the key concerns.
- In Gawilan camp, a rapid assessment by UNHCR and Qandil for mould affected tents found that out of 924 tents assessed a total of 666 need to be replaced. Mould is a result of the combination of high humidity and poor ventilation in the tents. 150 fire extinguishers also need to be replaced or serviced.



The construction of a new extensions in Domiz 1 and 2 camps, Dohuk Governorate.

NON-CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- 255 non-camp families mainly from Zakho were relocated to Gawilan camp.



Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- In Akre camp, an IOM team has conducted a rapid assessment for livelihood projects. The results are under review with a plan to target some 15 beneficiaries.

NON-CAMP

Achievements and Impact

- In Duhok Governorate, a refugee committee was elected to represent urban refugees in Duhok. The committee consists of five refugee members and is chaired by a woman.

Working in partnership

- The Inter-Sector Working Group (ISWG) has been involved in the development of a 'Refugee Annex' to the Humanitarian Response Plan, scheduled to be presented in Brussels on 4 June 2015. It also approved the updated Contingency Plan for Syrian Refugees, which assumes a scenario of over 300,000 persons by end of 2015.
- The ISWG is also supporting the UNDP-led Resilience Feasibility Study, which is currently being undertaken by the Middle-East Research Institute (MERI). The study will focus on four refugee camps (Domiz, Akre, Qushtapa and Arbat) and their surrounding host communities to examine the feasibility for livelihood and resilience interventions.
- In close coordination with WFP, UNHCR has started the food targeting exercise, with the aim of providing food vouchers to the most vulnerable refugees.

DONOR INFORMATION

Agencies are very grateful for the financial support provided by donors who have contributed to their activities with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds as well as for those who have contributed directly to the operation.

Donors who have contributed to the operation:

- Australia
- Canada
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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AOG	Armed opposition group
ANC	Antenatal care
BIA/BID	Best Interests Assessment/Best Interests Determination
CRI	Core Relief Items (formerly known as non-food items/NFIs)
DoE	Department of Education
DoH	Department of Health
KR-I	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
IDP	Internally displaced people
KR-I	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
MoDM	Ministry of Migration and Displacement
PARC	Protection Assistance Reintegration Centre
PHC	Primary Health Care
RSD	Refugee status determination
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
UASC	Unaccompanied and separated children
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

Resolving the irregular shelters of Domiz camp

Domiz, Duhok Governorate, 27 April 2015 (UNHCR) – Home to almost a thousand refugee families, the shanty “irregular shelters” that form part of Domiz refugee camp are in line for an upgrade.

UNHCR is funding an ambitious development project to reconstruct 438 housing units in the Domiz I refugee camp. The project will be implemented by Peace Winds Japan (PWJ) and is expected to be handed over at the end of July this year. Two similar projects are also underway in Domiz II and Gawilan camps for a total of 242 housing units.

“We are used to our home, despite the fact that it is considered irregular,” says Shereen Haji, a resident of the Domiz I camp. “It is close to work and my elderly parents can easily walk to the nearby bakery. I hope the new shelter will be close by as well”. Shereen, a 23 year old refugee, has been living with her parents and an aunt in an irregular shelter for a number of years. As the only breadwinner for her family, she bears great responsibility with no other young men in the household and her family depending on her for almost everything.

Those living in irregular shelters usually suffer from a lack of services. “There is no water, no open channels and no waste collection services in irregular areas”, says Ayad Othman, UNHCR’s Assistant Field Officer, currently involved in the upgrade project. He is confident that the project will change the lives for the betterment of thousands of refugees.

In coordination with government authorities, namely the Board of Relief and Humanitarian Affairs (BRHA), UNHCR will prioritize housing unit allocations to vulnerable families. After receiving the lists of families currently housed in the irregular shelters, a committee will be established to conduct assessment with families selected on the basis of their needs and current situation. Households including the elderly, female-headed or those with disabilities will be among the prioritized for relocation.

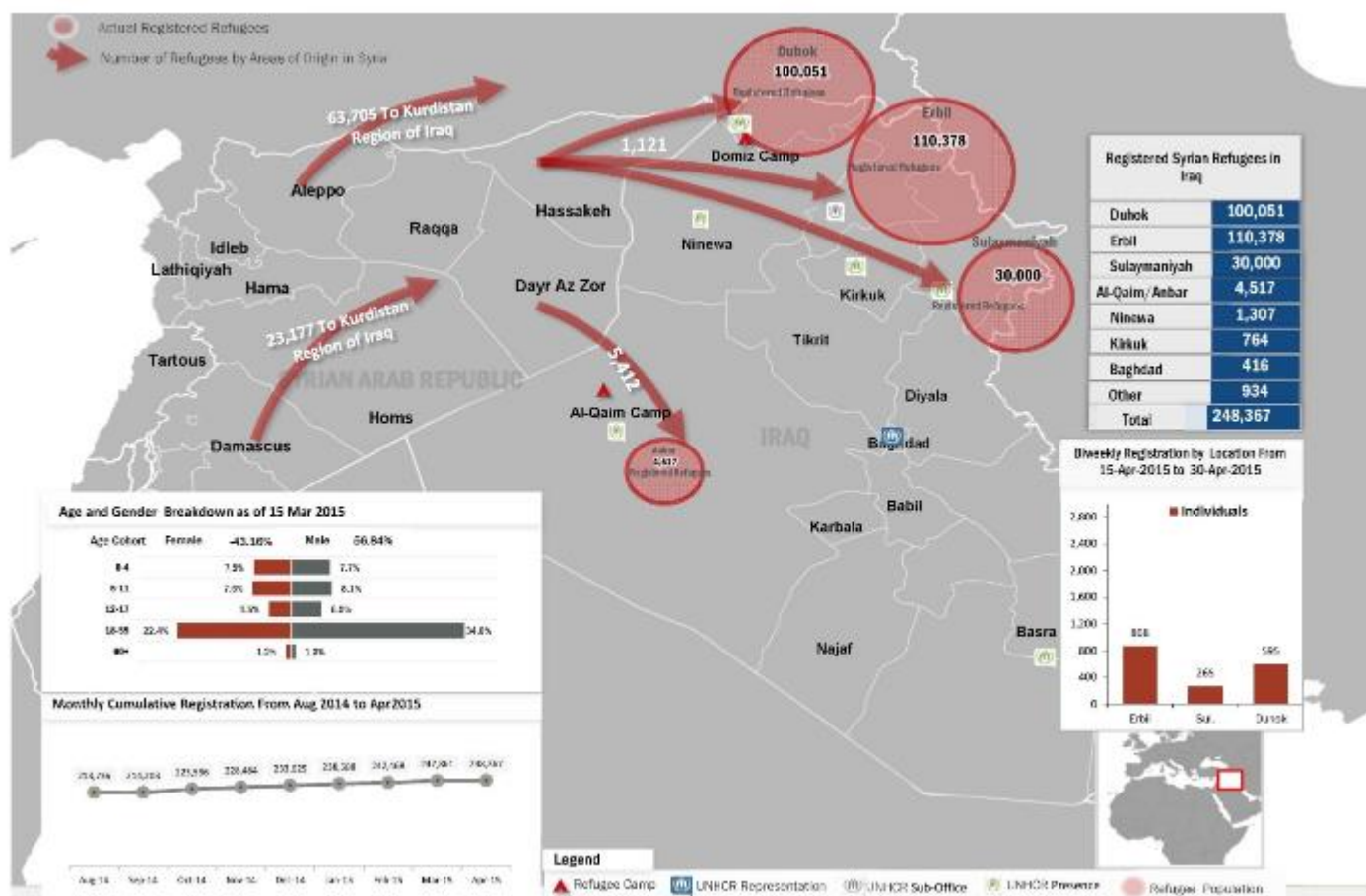
By Husam Eldin Mustafa



The housing project in Domiz I refugee camp will benefit nearly 500 families that are currently being accommodated in irregular shelters (UNHCR/H. Suliman)

ANNEXES

Refugees by Areas of Origin in Syria



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Links:

For information on the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) please click on <http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/>.

Announcements of all sector meetings along with respective agendas and minutes, and other information on sector-wide progress such as 3Ws, dashboards and camp profiles, are available on the inter-agency information sharing portal at :

<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>.

For more information on the work of UNHCR and our partners in Iraq, please follow us on Twitter at @unhcriraq and on Facebook at "UNHCRinIraq"

UNHCR Registration Trends for Syrian Persons of Concern

