

Update 14
Iraqi Refugee Returns/Syrian Refugees
Syria Situation
3 August 2012

1. Overview:

The latest statistics record a total of 460 returnee arrivals at the three border points of Al-Waleed, Rabi'aa and Al-Qa'im on 2 August. Return figures in Al-Waleed indicated an increase with 342 more arrivals, while Rabi'aa and Al-Qa'im maintained the same return trend, observing 96 returns in Rabi'aa and 22 others in Al-Qa'im. Total returns have thus risen up to 21,167, among them 5,222 returnees by air.

Another 56 Syrians crossed Al-Qa'im border on 2 August, making up a total of 3,412 Syrians who entered Iraq through these border points since 24 July 2012. No Syrian arrivals were recorded in Al-Waleed and Rabi'aa on the above date. With 9,053 Syrians in Kurdistan, who are registered with UNHCR and Kurdistan Department of Displacement and Migration (DDM), the total number of Syrians in Iraq goes up to 12,465.

The registration of Syrian arrivals in Al-Qa'im is ongoing. UNHCR Protection team today registered 98 Syrian families (509 individuals) at Anqaa' school in Al-Qa'im centre, bringing the total number of registered asylum seekers to 204 families (998 individuals).

UNHCR has agreed to an official request from the Emergency Cell in Al-Qa'im to expand the camp being established for Syrian refugees. UNHCR earlier received a letter asking UNHCR to annex a selected plot of land adjacent to the camp location to the present camp in order to cope with the increasing number of Syrian refugees. UNHCR is now preparing a detailed site plan for the new extension.

This request comes in response to complaints from the refugee population about their conditions at the schools and public centres where they currently live amid expectation of a large refugee influx into Al-Qa'im, triggered by the rapidly deteriorating security situation in Syria.

The Prime Minister's Office has been pressing for expediting the movement of refugees from their present locations to the new camp.

The Government has meanwhile given approval to 229 individual sponsorship requests allowing Syrians to live with their relatives. Less than 10% of the Syrian arrivals will be eligible to enjoy such privileges.

Construction works and provision of services are steadily progressing at Al-Qa'im camp site. One hundred and forty tents have so far been erected. BRC fencing materials have been delivered today with the main gate. A new transformer was installed with the electricity pylons and wiring equipment by the Electricity Department. The Water Department is to start setting up a water network. UNHCR IP IRW's warehouse received UNICEF items, including water tanks, hygiene kits and garbage containers.

Iraqi media have been covering the activities on the ground while UNHCR photographer is continuing with his assignment both at the camp site and in the locations where refugees have been accommodated.

UNHCR has also been following up with the concerned authorities on the possible relocation of two Syrian Arabs who crossed Rabi'aa border on 21 July to Domiz camp or to the new camp in Al-Qa'im. UNHCR learned from Kurdistan DDM Director that any new arrival, whether Kurd or Arab, should visit Assayish (security) Office in Zumar, Sinjar or Dohuk towns to obtain clearance for entering Domiz camp.

2. Meetings:

-UNHCR team in Al-Qai'm attended the regular Emergency Cell meeting during which a message from the PM Office was conveyed, stressing that the camp should be ready as soon as possible.

-UNHCR North team joined a UNCT meeting with Ninewa Governor to discuss Iraqi returns and emergency preparations for a possible influx of Syrian refugee through Rabi'a border crossing. UNHCR was requested to conduct assessment of a site identified as a camp location by MoDM in Kasak, Tela'far.

It was agreed that UNICEF, WHO, UNHCR, WFP, IOM would assess the location in terms of accessibility to water, electricity, health and education.

The Governor assured that the Syrian refugees would be able to look for work in the community and would be allowed to move out of the camp and live in the community and integrate.

The Governor also agreed that the school building in Rabiaa will only be used as a transit facility for the reception of Iraqi refugee returnees for a month until the opening of schools on 1 September.

3. Statistics

3.1 Iraqi returnees

Border point	Number of arrivals 2 August 2012
Al-Waleed:	342
Total Al-Waleed: 12,867	
Rabi'aa:	96
Total Rabi'aa: 1,400	
Al-Qa'im:	22
Total Al-Qa'im: 1,678	
Total returnees on 2 August 2012:	460
By air: 5,222	
Grand total (since 18 July 2012):	21,167

3.2 Syrian refugees

Border point	Number of arrivals 2 August 2012
Al-Waleed:	0
Total Al-Waleed: 5	
Rabi'aa:	0
Total Rabi'aa: 2	
Al-Qa'im:	56
Total Al-Qa'im: 3,405	
Total arrivals since 21 July: 3412*	
Total arrivals in Kurdistan since March 2011:	9,053
Grand total:	12,465

* Figures updated as at 12:00 am, Friday, 3 August 2012
Sources of information: Border Immigration Offices/BIAP

4. UNHCR arrangements

Al-Qa'im:

- 140 tents installed at the new camp location.
- BRC fence delivered with the main gate.
- 50 mobile toilets delivered at the camp site by UNHCR IP ISHO.

Al-Waleed:

- NFI items stored in Al-Waleed rub-hall: 1,800 mattress, 1,800 blankets, 208 heaters, 204 plastic sheets, 138 water tanks, 296 kitchen sets, 300 fans and 300 hygiene kits.
- 120 tents installed.
- Water, sanitation, electricity ready to be installed.

Rabi'aa:

- Erbil stockpile is ready to support Rabi'aa with tents and NFIs.

Baghdad:

- 60 emergency NFI kits distributed by Baghdad's six RICCs to Iraqi returnees.

Domiz camp (Duhok):

- A total of 432 tents erected in the family section and 144 in the single section.
- Work in progress to build individual sanitation units and closed sewerage for families in sectors 1 and 2 and in single the singles.
- Work is under way to construct tent foundations, walls, cooking areas and sanitation units for 214 family plots in sector 2.
- 100 tents, cooking areas and sanitation units for singles being established.
- 48 tents with 24 sanitation units for newly arrived families being installed for the transit area.
- 44 NFI packages distributed and 43 tents erected for 176 singles. 50 NFI packages and 100 pallets stored at Domiz Rub-hall and 100 NFI packages and 100 canvas tents at the DDM/UNHCR warehouse.

5. Returnee/refugee needs

Needs for NFIs, water network/tanks, generators with fuel and tents have been identified at locations set to receive Syrian refugees in Al-Qa'im and Al-Waleed.

Returnees' needs, however, stretch from documentation, including PDS cards, Jensiya (national ID) document, to shelter (for some), food, health care and cash as well as employment, based on a rapid assessment conducted by UNHCR staff both at the border and at the disembarkation point.

6. Coordination

UNHCR is collaborating closely with the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoDM), Mo-PC, and Governorate Offices. In the meantime, the Office has engaged in a coordination process with various humanitarian actors/stakeholders, including the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) consisting of agencies and NGOs, to ensure necessary support to the Iraqi Government's efforts to respond to the returnees' immediate needs.