

Update 18
Iraqi Refugee Returns/Syrian Refugees
Syria Situation
7 August 2012

1. Overview:

A total of 464 Iraqis returned from Syria on 6 August, all through the two border points of Al-Waleed and Rabi'aa, with Al-Waleed receiving 364 returnees while Rabi'aa 100. No returnee arrivals were observed at Al-Qa'im border point which recorded the lowest return figures over the past few days, mainly because of the risks involving travel through Syrian Ya'roubiya border crossing onto al-Qa'im. With the latest figures, the total number of Iraqi returnees since 18 July has reached 22,775.

Al-Qaim is, however, receiving more Syrians, mostly coming from adjacent border areas now scene of clashes between opposition and government troops. August 6 witnessed the arrival of 94 Syrians through this border point while no refugee movement was observed through Al-Waleed or Rabi'aa. The number of Syrian arrivals through these border points since the July escalation has reached 3,726.

Over the past week, 720 more Syrians, mainly Kurds, crossed into Kurdistan, sending the total number of Syrian arrivals in the region to 9,773, all registered with UNHCR and Kurdistan Department of Displacement and Migration (DDM).

Total Syrian arrival numbers across Iraq have thus risen up to 13,499.

In Al-Qa'im, UNHCR Protection team today registered 86 more Syrian families (355 Individuals) at two school locations and updated registration at a health centre in Karabla sub-district. To date, a total of 522 families (2,391 individuals) have been registered.

Many of the cases interviewed were identified as requiring medical care and follow-up. A high number of newborns was also observed among the refugee population, the matter that may necessitate engagement of UNICEF, UNFPA and other agencies.

On the new camp ground in Al-Qa'im, a sample sector of 60 tents is being prepared and fully supplied as a model to be seen and examined by the refugee representatives prior to the first move to the camp.

The two camp locations are to be merged and fenced with BRC. Total 320 tents have so far been erected, of them 70 at the camp extension. More lighting fixtures will be installed. Tents are being wired up to the electricity network and roads covered with a layer of gravel.

The local authorities today delivered 72 out of 250 air coolers to the first location where they will be fixed, one to each tent.

UNHCR team in Al-Qa'im meanwhile completed the site plan for the entire camp, combining the two locations. The plan was submitted to the local authorities for approval this morning.

In Karbala, UNHCR Field/Protection team reported one case of a Syrian refugee woman who is married to an Iraqi and has 3 children. The team interviewed the case that will be registered with UNHCR as asylum seeker.

2. Statistics

2.1 Iraqi returnees

| Border point | Number of arrivals 6 August 2012 |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Al-Waleed: | 364 |
| Total Al-Waleed: 14,011 | |
| Rabi'aa: | 100 |
| Total Rabi'aa: 1,811 | |
| Al-Qa'im: | 0 |
| Total Al-Qa'im: 1,731 | |
| Total returnees on 6 August 2012: | 464 |
| By air: 5,222 | |
| Grand total (since 18 July 2012): | 22,775* |

2.2 Syrian refugees

| Border point | Number of arrivals 6 August 2012 |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Al-Waleed: | 0 |
| Total Al-Waleed: 5 | |
| Rabi'aa: | 0 |
| Total Rabi'aa: 2 | |
| Al-Qa'im: | 94 |
| Total Al-Qa'im: 3,715 | |
| By air: 4 | |
| Total arrivals since 18 July: 3726* | |
| Total arrivals in Kurdistan since March 2011: | 9,773 |
| Grand total: | 13,499 |

3. UNHCR assistance

Al-Qa'im:

- 70 tents installed. Total tents erected: 320.
- Two caravans from Al-Waleed arrived in Al-Qa'im today. Both to be used as an admin unit. A larger health clinic caravan to be transferred to Al-Qa'im.

Al-Waleed:

- Adequate NFI stock at rub-hall ready for distribution whenever needed.
- Water, sanitation, electricity ready to be installed.

Rabi'aa:

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

* Figures updated as at 12:00 am, Sunday, 7 August 2012
Sources of information: Border Immigration Offices/BIAP

Centre/South Governorates:

- 75 NFI kits to be delivered for distribution to returnees from Syria in Anbar, 50 kits in Babylon, 11 in Najaf and 16 in Diyala.
- 20 NFI kits to be delivered to each of Baghdad's six RICCs for another round of distribution to Iraqi returnees from Syria.

Domiz camp (Duhok):

- Assistance ongoing

4. 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, Jenziya (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.

5. Interviews with new arrivals

- MoDM Return Assistance Centre (RAC) in Karkh side of Baghdad today registered 90 cases of Iraqis who returned from Syria after 20 June 2012. Thirty registered returnees from Syria received ID4 million cash assistance at MoDM RAC today.
- MoDM branch office Karbala has started registering Iraqi returnees from Syria after receiving official clarification from the Ministry. Ten families (64 individuals) approached the office for registration today.
- UNHCR team at Al-Waleed border interviewed three families returning from Syria who requested shelter assistance, having been displaced by 2006 violence. The team also observed some Iraqi departures to Syria who made this dangerous trip to receive the cash assistance from UNHCR Syria.
- UNHCR Hilla team today visited MoDM branch office and reported only one family (3 individuals) approaching MoDM for registration as returnees from Syria. A total of 51 families returning from Syria have been registered with MoDM since 29 July

6. Coordination

UNHCR is collaborating closely with the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoDM), MoI-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.