



This update provides a snapshot of the United Nations inter-agency response to the influx of Syrians into Jordan. The response is led by UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and is undertaken in full coordination with the Government of Jordan.

I. HIGHLIGHTS/KEY PRIORITIES

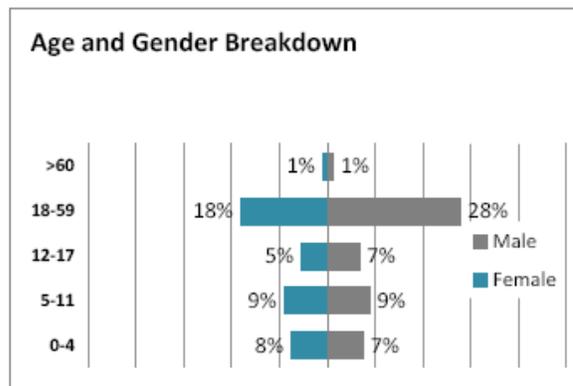
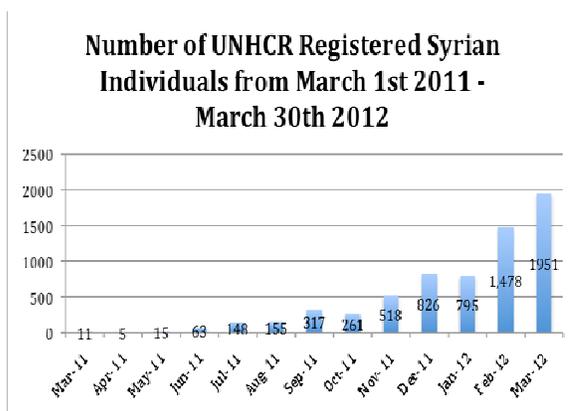
- The number of Syrian individuals registered with UNHCR Jordan since March 1st 2011 has increased with 6,529 individuals now registered with the Agency up to March 30th, 2012. In addition, there are 3,723 Syrian individuals with appointments to register with UNHCR.
- Ramtha facility has witnessed a further increase in the numbers at the facility with 1,254 individuals by March 30th, 2012.
- During the reporting period, UNHCR facilitated a presentation centred on coordinating the response relating to the launch of the RRP for the Syrian Situation. Representatives of the Government of Jordan, the Inter Agency Task Force, donors and stakeholders were in attendance.
- A joint needs assessment between UN partners and the Government of Jordan is underway in an effort to ascertain a better understanding of vulnerabilities within the Syrian community.

II. Situation Overview

Registration and Numbers

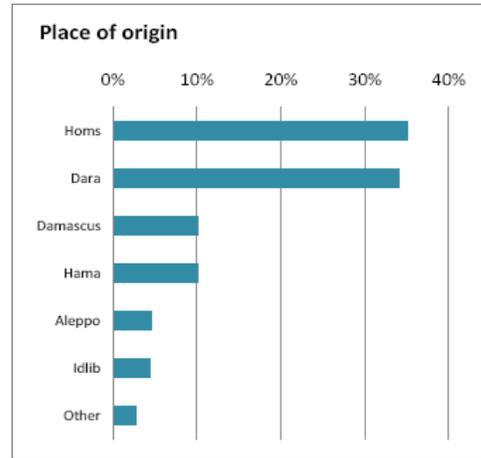
As insecurity in Syria prevails, Syrians continue to cross the border both legally and illegally into Jordan. The total number of Syrians registered with UNHCR Jordan up to 30th of March 2012 is **6,529**, with a further 3,723 Syrians with registration appointments. This figure does not include the Syrians that have been in Jordan prior to this time and registered with UNHCR earlier. Furthermore, UNHCR acknowledges that this figure does not accurately reflect the number of vulnerable Syrians in Jordan since March 1st, many of whom are reluctant to register due to security fears and/or geographic distance from Amman. In response, UNHCR is working to increase registration capacity through an enhanced rapid registration process rolled out during the reporting period, and working with the Government of Jordan to identify possible options to carrying out off-site or mobile registration.

Below is a table showing the registration trends per month from the period of March 2011 up 30th March 2012, and shows the steadily increasing numbers approaching the Agency to register, with a spike in the numbers approaching the Agency in February and March of this year. The figures registering per month is quickly approaching the numbers registered at BO Amman in 2007 during the height of the Iraq crisis.



Registration Highlights

- ❖ 88.5% of those registered come from the cities of Homs, Dara, Damascus and Hama;
- ❖ 50% of the population is between the age of 18 and 59;
- ❖ 50% of those registered in 2012 arrived this year;
- ❖ 85% of Syrian are in Amman, Irbid and Mafraq;
- ❖ Notable increase in illegal crossing, and absence of Male Head of Household in families crossing;
- ❖ Security situation and political opinion main reasons for flight;
- ❖ Significant number of single males reporting draft evasion as reason for flight.



Ramtha Transit Facility

The Ramtha facility has witnessed a significant increase in numbers in recent weeks. While last week the figure stood at 720, during 26th and 27th of March approximately 91 families (454 individuals) arrived at the facility, along with 73 singles bringing the number of new arrivals to 1,254. This represents the highest increase in numbers since the facility opened.

The demographics of the facility are also changing, with 70% of those at the facility representing families, and 30% singles. Furthermore, the majority of the new arrivals originate from Homs and surrounding villages, making the long trip to Jordan through Damascus, Dara'a and crossing illegally into Jordan. In terms of UNHCR planning, this marks a significant shift in the profile of those coming to Jordan.



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The facility is a Government of Jordan temporary guesthouse for those who have crossed the border illegally (by virtue of exiting Syria illegally), with the aim of providing temporary shelter and protection on arrival in Jordan. There is a bailing system in place, which allows Syrians to leave the facility.

The current numbers have inevitably placed an enormous strain on the facility, with persons now accommodated in cramped conditions in temporary shelters including; two tents, open-plan basement equipped with bunk beds, four containers along with the five original renovated buildings.

UNHCR continues to provide support to the facility with the provision of food on a weekly basis, and non-food items on arrival. The informal permanent presence of UNHCR staff is ongoing, who are carrying out counselling, protection interviews, and referring arrivals to the appropriate and available services.

UNHCR is working closely with the Government of Jordan to identify the best manner in which to ensure protection and delivery of assistance in a timely and effective manner

In coordination with UNHCR, UNICEF is working to improve sanitation and hygiene at the Ramtha Facility. As part of this effort, a UNICEF Water, Sanitation and Hygiene expert has conducted several field visits to assess the facility and improve conditions. UNICEF has also mobilised 11 Syrian volunteers to assist with cleaning and maintenance in return for a stipend, and is partnering with international NGO ACTED to improve the situation at the facility.

Needs Assessment

UN Partners are currently engaged in a joint needs assessment with the Government of Jordan in an effort to ascertain a better understanding of vulnerabilities within the Syrian community. UNHCR conducted an intensive two day training workshop on participatory assessment methodology with a special concentration on conducting the focus group discussions and how to interview key informants.

Joining UNHCR are staff from WHO, WFP, UNESCO. UNICEF is also participating in the joint rapid needs assessment, providing support on technical guidance on Children, Women and Education components, and allocating field staff to gather data.

Data collection is taking place in areas with a high concentration of Syrians, including Amman, Mafraq, Irbid, Zarqa and Ramtha. Six cross-organisational teams are aiming to conduct 30 focus group meetings segregated according to age and gender, along with 12 meetings with key informants including at the governor level, community leaders, and education leaders. The results are scheduled to be made available by 10th of April.

Food and Non-food Items Assistance

The cornerstone of UNHCR Jordan's response to date has been the provision of food and NFI assistance to vulnerable Syrians through its implementing partners, JHAS and Caritas. Distributions include much needed household items including; mattresses, blankets, bed linen sets, pillows, towels, heaters, mats, underwear, kitchen sets, jerry cans along with female hygiene products.

In addition, family hygiene kits, baby kits, school kits and winter clothing vouchers have been distributed as UNHCR works to alleviate the pressure and burden on



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UNHCR implementing partner, Caritas, continue to carry out NFI distributions, with a large distribution taking place for 388 UNHCR registered individuals in Mafraq, followed by a smaller number in Karak.

At the same time, the JHAS carried out three distributions for UNHCR registered Syrians in Ma'an, Zarqa and Amman with 137 families, or 420 individuals receiving assistance,

The distribution package includes blankets, mattresses, school kits, hygiene kits and sanitation kits along with other much needed household items, which are targeted according to family size, and single male or single female packages.

Cash Assistance

In addition to emergency cash assistance, UNHCR intends to include the most vulnerable Syrians as part of its ATM financial assistance programme. Each eligible Syrian family will be visited to confirm their needs before cards are issued.

Health

Health care provision has remained a key concern for Syrian crossing the border. UNHCR through its implementing partners, Caritas and Jordan Health Aid Society are providing out-patient curative, preventative and health promotion services including maternal and child health services. Clinics are located in Zaraqa, Mafraq and Irbid and are free of charge to Syrians. Furthermore, JHAS mobile medical units are also free of charge and travel as far south as Ma'an to pockets of Syrians. The UNHCR health team is also frequently conducting field missions in an effort to identify gaps and vulnerabilities in providing primary and secondary health care to Syrians.

Since unrest started, close to 2,000 registered and non registered Syrians have been assisted through the UNHCR health program. Furthermore, a number of cases have been assisted with high cost, life saving, tertiary care.

Education and Psychosocial Support

UNICEF is assisting vulnerable Syrian children with psychosocial and remedial education in the Ramtha Facility and in Ma'an. During the reporting period, UNICEF supported some 330 children and 135 family members in the Ramtha Facility. In Ma'an, 360 Syrian children and family members benefited from similar services in the same period.

Together with Save the Children Jordan, UNICEF is working to follow-up on individual cases to facilitate registration of vulnerable Syrian children in public schools. During the reporting period, Save the Children Jordan reached out to nearly 1,200 children and parents with information about school enrolments and with necessary follow-ups.



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Syrian children participate in remedial classes offered by UNICEF in collaboration with a local partner, Noor Al Hussein Foundation.

UNICEF has procured 7,000 school kits, containing essential supplies to enable vulnerable children to attend schools in targeted areas of Jordan. 2,000 copies of a leaflet informing parents and communities about access to health and education services available to Syrian children in Jordan has been produced by UNICEF. The leaflets will be distributed by the agency and partners.

Furthermore, UNICEF is engaged in discussions with five potential national and international partners for scaling up the child protection response in targeted areas of Jordan. In view of its emergency assistance to vulnerable Syrian children, UNICEF Jordan has increased its staff to rapidly respond to meet the needs of the displaced population. To date four surge capacity staff have joined UNICEF, including a Reports Officer from RedR Australia as a stand-by partner for six months.

Through the UNHCR registration process, protection and community services staff continue to promote the registration of children in the Jordanian public education system. Information is shared on an individual case level at BO Amman, and more generally through an SMS system. Public outreach efforts through partners on the importance of registration are also taking place on regular basis with particular emphasis on school attendance. UNHCR encourages children's participation in education by linking assistance to school registration.

In addition, in March 2012, UNHCR conducted a Participatory Assessment in order to adapt and inform programmes to meet the needs of persons of concern to the Agency. Critical findings related to education which need to be addressed include low school registration due to various economic and protection challenges, in addition to cultural reasons. In response, UNHCR is currently identifying CBOs in numerous locations across Jordan in order to implement informal education activities with those children that still are not attending school.

As for beginning of April 2011, UNHCR has distributed 800 school kits to vulnerable children in Amman, Ramtha, Mafraq, Irbid, Ma'an and Zarqa in an effort to encourage school attendance and reduce the burden on families. This follows increasingly worrying reports of child labour among the most vulnerable Syrian community. UNHCR, along with partners, will intensify efforts to identify such practices and address the root causes of child labour, through assistance to impoverished communities and continued provision of remedial classes.

Field Visits

UNHCR staff continue to conduct daily missions to the field, including home visits aimed at the Syrian population in Jordan. Teams are comprised of field, community services and protection staff, in order to holistically assess the challenges faced by persons of concern in Jordan in the urban and village setting.

UNHCR field staff have reported an increase in numbers approaching the *Information Desks*, in areas with large concentrations of Syrians. This has been reflected in the rapid increase in the number of registration appointments.

UNHCR field staff are also currently putting place criteria and eligibility guidelines to assess the vulnerability of Syrians for cash assistance.



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Syrian children warm their hands on a distributed heater in Ma'an, south of Jordan.

Agreements with Partners

A number of agreements are still pending Government approval before implementation can start to further support Syrian refugees in Jordan.

Donors and Contributions

UNHCR is very pleased to announce that it has received generous donations for vulnerable Syrians in Jordan. Joining the Government of Japan, the European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the Government of the United States, the Czech Republic has contributed to the humanitarian assistance of Syrian refugees.

The assistance reaches the amount of CZK 3 million and will be provided through the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and will target those fleeing unrest in Syria to neighbouring countries, mainly to Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon.

UNICEF has received contributions to fund its planned activities outlined in the Syria Regional Response Plan. To date, UNICEF received generous and timely contributions from the Government of Germany and the Government of Norway. UNICEF would like to also thank the Government of Australia and RedR for the surge capacity staff provided to support the emergency response.



Contact

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