



Note on Syrians in Egypt

General Information

A big influx of Syrians has been seeking refuge in Egypt since the debut of the conflict in Syria in March 2011.

UNHCR Cairo office registered so far 8,858 individuals (3,429 cases) as of 4th of December 2012, including 1,774 individuals registered in Alexandria and 1,265 individuals registered in Damietta and Gamaasa.

Syrians arriving in Egypt are residing in different areas such as Greater Cairo, Damietta, Mansoura, Hurghada, Suez, and Ismailia.

It is expected that numbers of registered Syrians will increase to reach at least 10,000 people by the end of the year if the rate of registering Syrians continues in the same pattern.

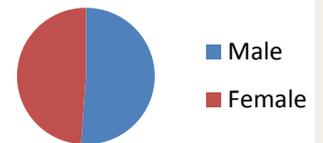
The majority of Syrians registered with UNHCR are coming from Homs. Other main cities include Damascus and Aleppo.

Flights coming from Damascus halted in November 30th due to the escalation of events there, yet it resumed in December 3rd. Syrians come to Egypt by air from Damascus and Aleppo. Others are leaving by road to Lebanon and eventually reach Cairo by air. Many travel to Egypt by road from Jordan, eventually seeking to cross into Libya. The Libyan authorities have imposed entry visa on Syrians as of 8th January 2012, leaving hundreds of Syrians stranded on a weekly basis in Salloum near Egypt/Libya border. There are currently 50-75 Syrians in Salloum city near the Western borders.

The Government of Egypt does not require entry visas for Syrians. They are able to enter Egypt freely for three months as visitors. Afterwards, they need to regularize their stay in the country through the Department of Immigration of the Ministry of Interior. At this stage, renewal of residence is granted only for 3 months.

Total Registered Syrians: **8858** individuals

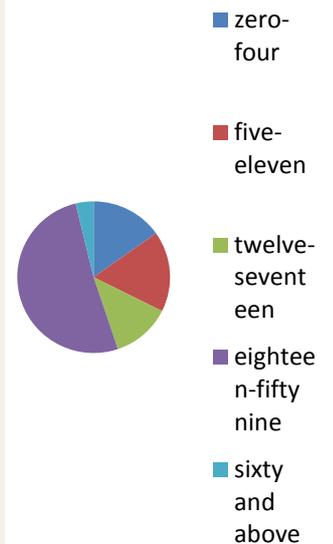
Gender



Males: **51.12%** - Females: **48.88%**

Age Groups

Group Age



0-4 years: **15.2%**

5-11 years: **17.2%**

12-17 years: **12.5%**

18-59 years: **51.4%**

60-above years: **3.8%**

UNHCR Strategies on Influx of Syrians

UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP conducted a joint needs assessment targeting Syrians in Egypt during November. Findings and recommendations were included in the Egypt chapter of the Regional Response Plan, which will be launched on 16 December. Main findings include needs in the fields of protection, housing, food security, basic needs, livelihood, education and health.

Protection

Sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), including harassment and reports of early marriages, has been flagged as one of the main concerns. Other protection problems include security threats, like thefts and physical aggression, and child protection.

Registration

UNHCR Cairo is conducting mobile registration in different areas of Alexandria, Damietta and Gamasa in weekends. These efforts facilitate the registration of Syrians near their areas of concentration and allow the issuing of the yellow asylum seeker cards on the same day rather than extending the regular registration waiting-period for other nationalities, which has already reached over 3 months.

In addition, UNHCR has set up, since 21st of October, a permanent registration presence at All Saints Cathedral in Zamalek for the registration of Syrians. The team is registering 80-120 persons on daily basis.

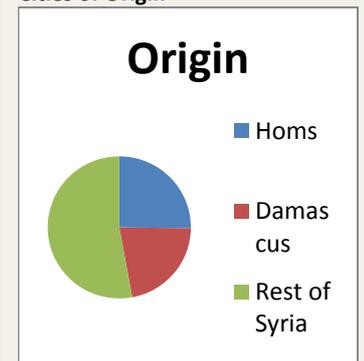
Palestinians

62 Palestinian families/180 individuals with Syrian travel documents requested to be registered with UNHCR Cairo. Discussions are ongoing with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the extension of their visas and registration with UNHCR.

Community Outreach

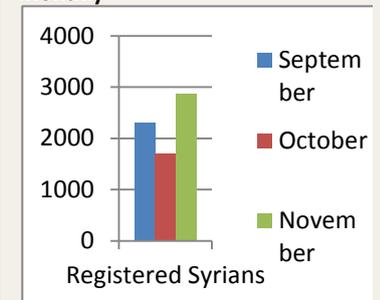
A protection team held an information session in Rehab with a group of 50 Syrians on Thursday December 6th. The group had many concerns regarding registration and residency issues. At the same time, the community have established a community school which UNHCR may extend support towards. The Syrian community in Rehab has requested a mobile registration session to facilitate the registration of several hundred families residing in Rehab who may wish to register.

Cities of Origin



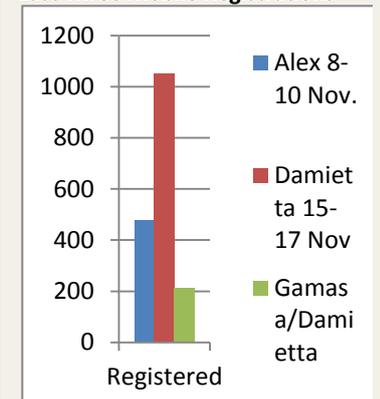
Homs: **25.2%**
 Damascus: **21.9%**
 Rest of Syria: **52.9%**

Number of Syrians Registered Monthly



September: **2304 individuals**
 October: **1703 individuals**
 November: **2873 individual**

Last Three Mobile Registrations



Alexandria Mobile Registration 8-10 November: **476 individuals**

New Damietta Mobile Registration 15-17 November: **1052 individuals**

Gamasa/New Damietta Mobile Registration 29-30 November: **213 individuals**

Humanitarian Assistance

Vulnerable cases among Syrians are assisted by UNHCR partners: Caritas Egypt, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Refuge Egypt and PTIC through UNHCR's existing programs.

The majority of those already registered or pending registration are families composed of 5 to 8 individuals.

According to the aforementioned Joint Needs Assessment, Syrians in Egypt lack financial capacity to pay housing rents. Over half of the Syrians interviewed pay more than EGP 1200 for rent. The majority of Syrians do not have any savings or sources of income. Winterization and food security are among the major needs as well.

Education

Although a presidential instruction to the Ministry of Education to facilitate the enrolment of Syrian nationals in the public system was issued, some problems still exist including bureaucratic difficulties in enrolment, curriculum differences, accent barriers, class environment, and inability to bear the expensive educational fees of private schools.

UNHCR Cairo was informed that some Syrian families started to return back to Syria, despite the generalized violence there, in order not to miss the current educational year. 63 Syrians closed their files with UNHCR in November in order to return home. Their stated reasons for wanting to close their files include inability to access schools in Egypt and high cost of living.

Health

A decision was taken by the Egyptian government to treat Syrians in Egypt's public hospitals as Egyptians, yet UNHCR received information that the policy has not been applied in some public hospitals, where Syrians are being charged expatriate-rate fees.

UNHCR is currently subsidizing primary and specialized referral healthcare for Syrians through Caritas and Refuge Egypt.

Main health concerns include Syrians' lack of awareness of public health services, long waiting periods in some NGO health facilities, low quality of public health services, and high cost of medications and hospitalization.

Other Syrians receive health services from the Egyptians medical syndicate services network and from broader civil society health facilities.

Psycho-social support

Psycho-social support has been flagged as a major need by the Syrian community. UNHCR Cairo is working with its partner Psycho-Social Training Institute in Cairo (PSTIC) to train a group of Syrian psycho-social workers. Cases are also referred to specialized centers for

Pictures of Mobile Registration in Shaikh Zayed and Damietta, and Permanent Registration in Zamalek



Mobile Registration, Islamic Complex, Shaikh Zayed, 6th October city, 12-13 October 2012



Permanent Registration, All Saints Church, Zamalek, 7 November, 2012



New Damietta Mobile Registration 15-17 November

psycho-social support. UNHCR through its partner Tadamon has set up a community centre in 6th October city to serve the Syrian community.

New partners for the Syrian Refugee programs

If the number of registered Syrians increases to reach 10,000 - 12,000, UNHCR will not be able to absorb this big number in its on-going programs. Therefore, UNHCR Cairo is in the process of exploring expansion of programs and the possibility of having new partners to assist the increasing number of Syrians.



Permanent Registration, All Saints Church, Zamalek, 7 November, 2012

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UNHCR Cairo

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