

Egypt Weekly Update

Syria Operation

April 2nd – April 8th 2013

HIGHLIGHTS

Total number of Syrian nationals registered with UNHCR in Egypt stands at 35,054 individuals as of the 8th of April 2013.

22160 new arrivals from Syria have registered with UNHCR since the beginning of 2013 representing an increase of 172%.

10 days Mobile Registration in Alexandria is still ongoing with large registration numbers.

REGISTRATION AND NEW ARRIVALS

UNHCR has so far registered a total of **35,054 individuals / 13,123 families**.

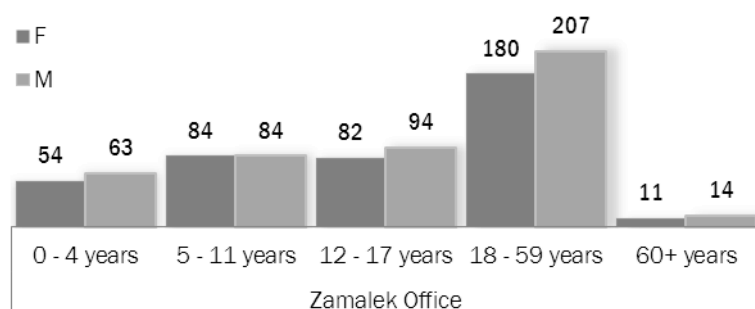
During the reporting period, total registration in Zamalek office was **873 individuals / 338 families**. Registration team registered a total of **5625 individuals / 2120 families** during Alexandria mobile registration.

The sex and age breakdown was very similar to previous weeks. The majority of registered individuals are males. Looking more precisely at the adult population, the largest age group is 18–59 years old. The number of this age group is 387 individuals and represents 44% of the total registered individuals in Zamalek office.

UNHCR Community Services and Protection staff continued to counsel the applicants regarding documentation and the completing of the registration forms in addition to identifying persons with specific needs through individual and group counseling at review desk.

Moreover, registration unit provided support by phone through the registration info/hotline. Phone calls were received from Syrians who were mainly inquiring about services such as financial assistance, how and when they could benefit from, the required documents for the new arrival registration, the location of Zamalek registration center, and the expected date of mobile registration activities in other governorates.

Syrians Registered in Egypt April 2 - 8, 2013



ALEXANDRIA MOBILE REGISTRATION

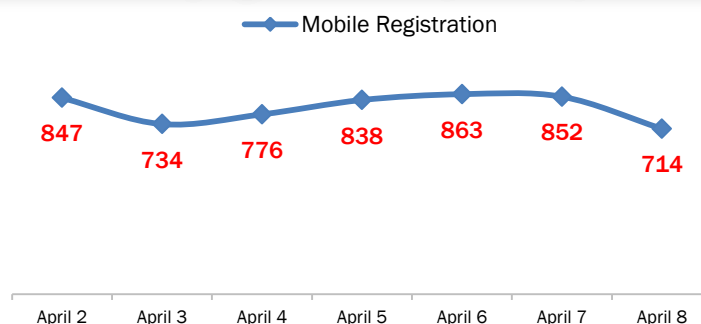
The registration team started the mobile registration exercise on Sunday April 1st, 2013. During the reporting week, an average of 804 individuals / 303 families have been registered daily.

Alongside the new arrival registration, the registration team also issued appointments for registration to families who approached the registration centre and scheduled appointments for 300 families for each day of the exercise up to Wednesday, April 10th when the mobile registration exercise in Alexandria is expected to end. 937 families were recorded as awaiting registration for the next mobile registration exercise.

Looking closely at the figures, the majority of newly registered applicants in Alexandria are considered of family- size-one and belong to the age group of 18-59 years. Most of the family size of one applicant reported to have left Syria to avoid conscription and/or are trying to arrange for their family members to join them in Egypt at a later stage.

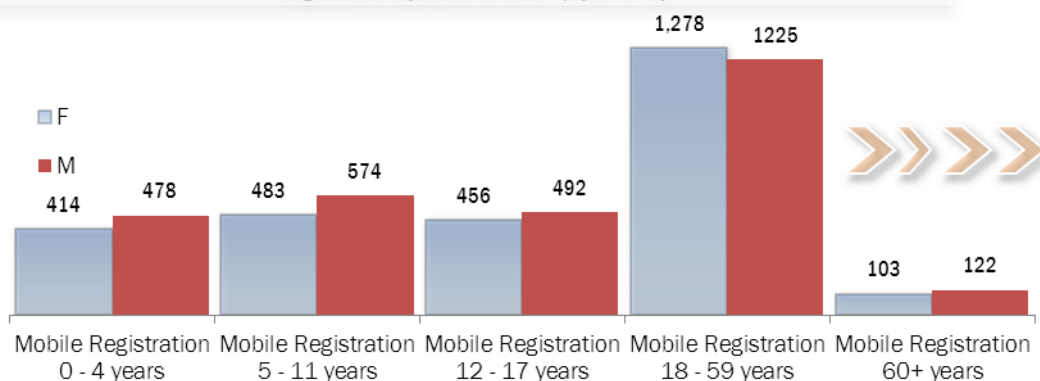
399 people with specific needs were identified. An average of 10 to 15 families with specific needs have been referred to Caritas on a daily basis. Caritas team has so far identified 16 Households from within this category that require home visits due to serious medical conditions or disability. The team started carrying out the home visits on Sunday, April 7th.

Daily Registration Trends (Individuals)



Breakdown by Age & Gender

Registered Syrians in Alex (April 2-8)



PROTECTION

The Protection Team joined the Alexandria Mobile Mission during the reporting period, assisting actively the Registration unit in identifying medical and social specific needs; conducting protection interviews and providing referrals to Persons of Concern (PoCs). It also followed up on going detention cases; newly arriving unaccompanied and separated children were provided with adequate counselling; Best Interest Assessments were finalized and family unity interviews were also conducted by The Team.

The Team is working on SGBV Standard Operation Procedures and the establishment of SGBV working group and network for the Syrian refugee population. The Alexandria Staff met with a University teacher and feminist activist, to discuss SGBV issues. The Protection staff is also meeting with Islamic Relief Worldwide to agree on SGBV referral channels.

During this reporting period, seven new unaccompanied and separated children (6 male and 1 female) were identified. Their age ranges from 15 to 17 years. Two boys are unaccompanied while the rest arrived in Egypt with a family member such as an elder sibling, an uncle or aunt. The children are considering one of two options: go back to school or a minor working position to achieve self-reliance. There are some challenges though in getting enrolled at schools as the current academic year is now almost at its end. The boys have expressed their concern in finding a part time job where they could work while also studying.

Five protection interviews were conducted. The main profiles of refugees are draft evaders, political activists, people with legal background, and persons of high profile in country of origin. PoCs have all expressed fear in country of asylum due to their background and past experiences in Syria. Common protection complaints include receiving threatening phone calls. Interviewed PoCs have also inquired about resettlement to a third country where they would feel safer.

During this week, the Alexandria mobile registration mission identified a new SGBV case. The case was recommended immediately for legal referral.

In general, PoCs suffer from harassment in public areas, transportation, and on the street. Several applicants have expressed fears over their wives or daughters going outside due to general insecurity in Egypt.

The Team is developing a planning and mapping of the different areas where a concentration of Syrians refugees in Egypt exists. This exercise will include field visits and coordination with partners in order to identify needs and gaps.

The Team is hiring new staff to increase their operational capacity for field missions in order to identify needs and gaps, conduct protection assessments, and expand outreach efforts.

On Thursday 4th of April, a training workshop was conducted on children's rights / child protection. New UNHCR registration staff for the Syrian operation attended the workshop. The workshop was conducted by staff from UNHCR, Refuge point and AMERA legal aid, and led by the Child Protection Officer. The aim was to provide new staff members with practical insight into the vulnerabilities that come with being a child forced into migration and how to address this through UNHCR services and partners. Three more workshops are planned in the coming weeks to develop the same level of capacity, skills and competence of all staff working on the Syrian operation to ensure they have all received the same training materials and methods.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

The World Food Program (WFP) is currently in full operational preparation for the April voucher distribution cycle. The target population is around 20,000 vulnerable and food-insecure Syrians.

WFP has increased the value of the food voucher from \$26.3 to \$30 per person as of April 2013, as a result of a running inflation rate of around 14% and high food prices in Egypt. In response to the needs of the refugees, WFP is revising its voucher food list to include all food items that are nutritious and healthy.

WFP and UNHCR held a joint coordination meeting to standardize the beneficiary data/registration list and to reduce the time spent on data cleaning and organizing. This exercise would reconcile the existing lists at the levels of the two sister agencies and eliminate any double-dipping impact. After consultation with UNHCR, WFP removed the refugee names from the voucher distribution list that did not show-up to collect their vouchers twice in a row. Some of these refugees have reportedly left Egypt while others are not interested in the voucher programme.

In response to the high prices in a WFP-partner supermarket, WFP has completed a rapid price survey in Al Obour and 6th October cities both in WFP-partner and non-partner supermarkets for comparison. The results revealed that WFP's partner supermarket is offering average prices. It also showed that most of the commodities it offers are cheaper than in other supermarkets. However it offers more expensive prices for some other commodities, especially imported items. WFP will share the result of the assessment with the refugee groups.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Community Services staff continued to provide counseling to all the applicants who approached the Zamalek office. Three Community services staff took part in the Alexandria Mobile registration. They counseled and supported the registration team during the Alexandria mobile registration that will end on April 10th. The total number of cases counseled exceeded 1800 cases. During counseling, 16 cases were identified to have specific needs and were not able to come to the registration center; consequently home visits were scheduled to these cases. Families with specific needs were referred to Caritas on a daily basis

During the Alexandria Mobile registration, the Community Services Officer investigated the issue of harassment of Syrian girls in schools and discussed the outreach strategy with Caritas. Two focus group discussions, 3 home visits and 2 interviews were conducted for the same purpose.

During the mission, Community Services participated in an awareness event, organized by FRAD organization. Approximately 100 Syrian refugees attended the event. Community Services briefed the participants on UNHCR activities, partners and the support that UNHCR provides to the Syrians refugees.

EDUCATION

During the reporting week the education officer led meetings with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and Save the Children to discuss activities for Regional Response Plan 5 (RRP5). Moreover, the education unit has finalized responses for RRP5.

The education unit held a working group during the reporting week, and a joint meeting with CRS and program colleagues to discuss extended budget to CRS.

HEALTH-CARE

During the reporting period, successive meetings with health partners took place as part of the multi-sectorial RRP5 planning meetings. Health partners include; Caritas, Mahmoud hospital, Refuge Egypt, Save the Children, Arab Medical Union, IOM and UN sister agencies; WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA. Moreover, follow up took place at the health sector level to ensure better coordination, complementary and aligned health services provision with the preset regional standards and the required division of labor and geographical coverage of NGOs and UN sister agencies planned services under RRP5.

During the reporting period, 273 Syrians benefited from primary health care services at Caritas Cairo and Alexandria, among whom 24 children were under-five. At Caritas Alexandria, 79 Syrians suffering from chronic illnesses benefited from specialists' treatment and follow up while three were hospitalized.

Six Syrians also benefited from secondary referral care services and seven Syrian women received antenatal care while none gave birth during the reporting period.

A five years old child, suffering from severe pneumonia, was hospitalized in Alexandria University hospital within Caritas Alexandria initiative to enhance the Public Health care responses for Syrians.

At Refuge Egypt clinics, 54 children benefited from primary health care services. Some 25 pregnant women were enrolled for antenatal care; eight new visits and 17 follow up visits were made. Two Syrian women gave birth and four Syrians benefited from Voluntary Counseling and testing services. One child was referred to secondary health care services and none hospitalized.

Refuge Egypt sustained the health education sessions on HIV, the importance of antenatal care, vaccination, calcium and vitamin D supplement, breastfeeding, weaning and family planning. Some 190 Syrians benefited from these sessions during the reporting week.

Raising Awareness:

Refuge Egypt coordinated with UNHCR an activity for raising the health awareness of Syrians reporting for registration at UNHCR Zamalek registration office. Some 150 Syrian benefited from these awareness sessions. The sessions addressed health services available for Syrians. Among specific themes addressed during the reporting week were: safe motherhood, breast-feeding and diarrheal diseases, non-communicable diseases; hypertensive disorders, diabetes and osteoarthritic problems within a high interest expressed by the beneficiaries. Refuge Egypt plan to organize regular awareness sessions to meet the Syrian community health awareness needs.

MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

During the reporting period, a total of 245 cases benefited from psychosocial services at UNHCR's partner PSTIC; 15 new cases were filed and 14 cases benefited from housing assistance.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Tadamon Community Center had a gathering for 20 Syrian young people along with 12 students from different nationalities from Royal Holloway, University of London and Al-Azhar to share information and experiences on current activities for young people and potential link with students from abroad.

Tadamon initiated several children activities during the reporting period. “Word & Letter” interactive play games project started this week with 60 children. The project targets 3-5 age group and aims to give children new tools of expression through innovative ways and enhance their self-confidence. “El Sard El- Masrahy band” Theater project aims to teach children ways to express their feelings and fears and to earn skills related to theater such as acting. The project attracted 59 children from the age group between 10-13 years old. Last but not least, a French course started with 52 children divided into three basic French classes.

The sports project continued to attract more than 70 Syrian refugee boys. The boys are trained at the Hosary club in 6th of October every Friday and Saturday.

Idea and Art “Fekra wa Fan” Project is one of seventeen micro grants projects. The project main concept is to make puppets, in large sizes, to enable Syrian Women to express their culture and explore their craftsmanship. During this week, 10 Syrian women refugees attended “Fekra wa Fan” project and continued their weekly activities.

Accessories and Handicrafts activities continued to attract 42 Syrian refugee women to sell their products through social media such as Facebook, blogs and Twitter. This week two young girls with disabilities joined the group.

Tadamon also started a new project named “My Bag”. The project’s objective is to empower Refugee women by teaching them skills that will help them earn a modest income as a start. “ My Bag “ project started with industry techniques to design bags and was attended by 24 women.

The number of participants, who benefited from the Syrian community center regular activities, was 517 individuals and from irregular activities, were 546 individuals.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Islamic Relief World Wide (IRW), UNHCR's partner registered 491 cases / 1687 individuals during the reporting period. The number of registration increased due to the improved awareness about IRW’s services among the Syrian Refugees. 89 cases / 307 individuals were identified as vulnerable. 99 cases / 303 individuals received emergency assistance, and clothing coupons / vouchers were distributed to 600 cases / 2202 individuals with a total amount of 353,450 Egyptian Pounds. As in the previous week, IRW distributes clothing packages to the refugees who are being interviewed on a daily basis parallel along with the list it had before. In addition, IRW completed a three-day distribution of the clothing packages in Alexandria. Total number of beneficiaries was 1278 case/ 3925 individual, with a total amount of 640,050 Egyptian Pounds.

During the reporting period, 201 families / 723 individuals received their financial assistance through the post office. IRW conducted home visits to 11 cases/ 48 individuals. And counselled 352 cases / 1245 individuals.

UNHCR's partner, Caritas Alexandria, has registered 165 new cases/ 553 individuals. 213 cases/ 598 individuals received financial assistance and 10 cases received ATM cards while 301 cases / 890 individuals received emergency assistance. During the reporting period, Caritas has identified 16 vulnerable cases. During the reporting week, Caritas held a vocational training for 30 individuals and counselled 735 individuals.

PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

During the reporting week, the Regional Representative, was interviewed by Asahi Shimbun newspaper, Japan's most influential and respected daily newspaper with the circulation of 15 million copies nationwide. The interview focused on UNHCR's services to Syrian Refugees and their conditions. In addition a Danish newspaper interviewed Ms. Karmen Sahkr, Senior Protection Officer about the early marriages of Syrian girls.

On the 7th of April, UNHCR conducted training workshop attended by 12 journalists from Shorouk newspaper, a widespread private daily newspaper. The workshop included sessions about protection, UNHCR programs and community services, in addition to discussions about refugee related issues.

The Public information unit was assigned to a two-day mission to Alexandria, where a mobile registration is currently taking place. The main focus of the mission was to document the Alexandria mobile registration through photos and to conduct mini interviews with Syrian Refugees. In addition, PI has participated in eight home visits with one registration staff in Borg Al Arab city. The home visits activity purpose was to deliver the Yellow cards to disabled refugees. PI conducted mini interviews with the visited individuals about their living conditions and took photos of their apartments.