



UN and humanitarian agencies in Lebanon warmly welcome the recent US\$300 million contribution from the State of Kuwait for the Syrian humanitarian response in the region. This generous donation comes at a very critical time when funding was desperately short.

“Many refugees in Lebanon have told us they would have a very hard time filling their basic needs without the monthly assistance they receive, and many are forced to live in substandard makeshift accommodation,” said UNHCR’s Representative in Lebanon, Ninette Kelley. “The Kuwaiti contribution has come at a critical time when UN agencies are increasingly carrying a very heavy burden with dwindling resources”, she said.

Prior to the contribution from Kuwait, the inter-agency Syria crisis appeal for Lebanon was only 38 per cent funded. The Kuwaiti contribution has not yet been allocated between Syria and its neighbouring countries, but this much needed donation will have a significant impact on funding levels in Lebanon.

“This is very positive and much appreciated news from the Kuwaiti Government”, says the UNRWA Director in Lebanon, Ann Dismorr. “It enables UNRWA Lebanon to continue to provide towards water, sanitation and health to the Palestinian refugees from Syria”.

The Kuwaiti donation will now allow UNRWA, UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO, and other key international and national humanitarian agencies in Lebanon to extend their programmes for the next few months in various sectors including health, shelter, education, child protection, water, sanitation and hygiene.

“This timely and generous Kuwaiti contribution will save lives of thousands of children, helpless women and vulnerable families by providing access to better health services, medical care and preventing occurrence of disease outbreaks”; said Dr Alaa Alwan, Regional Director of the World Health Organization.

The needs of refugees from Syria in Lebanon are immense, and the pace of new arrivals continues to grow as thousands of Syrians are fleeing to Lebanon every single day. The December 2012 regional response plan for Syrian refugees was based on a projection of 300,000 people by June 2013; a planning figure that was well surpassed by mid-February this year.

"Over half of those arriving from Syria are children. These children have lost their homes, sometimes their families, relatives, friends, and are now living in dire situations. Many of them carry the scars of violence they have witnessed or experienced," said UNICEF’s Representative in Lebanon Annamaria Laurini. "Every single dollar of this donation will help alleviate the suffering of these children and give them hope."

The Government of Lebanon, UN agencies and humanitarian NGOs are now updating the fifth regional funding appeal since the beginning of the Syria crisis, with one million refugees projected in Lebanon by December 2013. The new appeal is due in late May.

“Kuwait’s contribution is a much needed injection into the coordinated response to the crisis, but much more is still needed from the international community”, said Ms. Kelley. “We urge more donor countries to come to the assistance of those who are suffering”, she said.