

Syria and Iraq situations

(Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt)

UNHCR continues its strategic shift from the distribution of in-kind relief items to the provision of humanitarian cash assistance to refugees, primarily through ATM cards and vouchers.

These programmes target the most vulnerable and are linked to UNHCR’s innovative biometric iris scan registration system, to increase efficiency and reduce overheads and the risk of fraud.

Cash assistance provides greater dignity and choice for refugees, while providing benefits to the local economies where refugees are spending the cash they receive under these programmes.

Syrian and Iraqi IDPs and refugees reached (1 January to 30 September 2017)



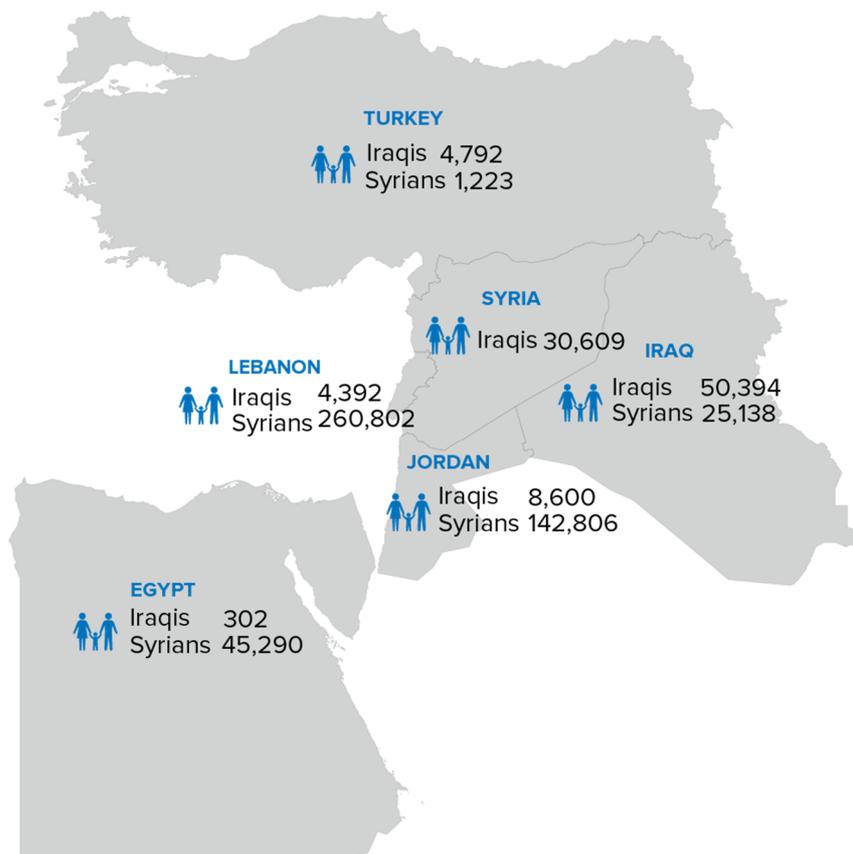
Average of **118,459** families provided with cash assistance per month

Cash distributed (1 January to 30 September 2017)

(1 January to 30 September 2017)



Syrian and Iraqi IDPs and refugees reached by country* (1 January to 30 September 2017)



*The figures do not include cash assistance under the winter programme which is reported separately in the monthly winter update.

Country updates

LEBANON

- UNHCR and partners provided 260,802 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees (45,000 families¹) with multi-purpose cash assistance, of USD 175 per family per month, to assist them in meeting their needs in a dignified manner. In addition, 4,392 vulnerable Iraqi refugees received monthly cash assistance of USD 175 per month per family.
- In September, the yearly discontinuation/inclusion exercise for cash assistance was undertaken as a result of the recalibrated desk formula², aiming to target the most severely vulnerable. Some 16,000 Syrian families had their assistance discontinued, while close to 19,500 Syrian families previously unassisted will start receiving multi-purpose cash assistance from November onwards. Some 10,000 families who were earlier receiving cash assistance will continue to do so. Families were informed of the changes by SMS and the call centre capacity was substantially increased to respond to queries from refugees. Daily counselling also remained available for refugees who approached UNHCR reception centres. The total number of families to be assisted by multi-purpose cash assistance per month remains at 30,000 families.

JORDAN

- Between July and September, UNHCR provided over 142,800 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees (around 30,000 families) and more than 8,600 of the most vulnerable Iraqi refugees and refugees of other nationalities with cash assistance on a monthly basis. For Syrians, it is an average of USD 177 per family per month and for non-Syrians, the value of the assistance is an average of USD 266 per family per month.
- There is a growing number of vulnerable Syrian families assessed to be in need of cash assistance but not being assisted due to funding constraints. To address this, UNHCR is making alterations to its eligibility criteria which takes into account the changes in work opportunities for the Syrian refugees by the Government of Jordan. Families who are working or have a legal work permit are not necessarily excluded from cash assistance, however UNHCR is prioritizing families who have few or no option to work or who have specific risks or protection needs.
- UNHCR recently released its [Post Distribution Monitoring Report on 2016 Winterization Cash Assistance](#).
- UNHCR continues to deliver cash in a faster and more expedited manner through the inter-agency Common Cash Facility (CCF) using virtual accounts with Cairo Amman Bank.

IRAQ

- UNHCR provided unconditional monthly cash assistance of USD 400 per family per month to 50,394 Iraqi internally displaced persons (8,399 families). In addition, over 25,000 Syrian refugees (more than 5,000 families) received cash assistance of USD 400 per family (average) per month. The assistance, which is provided for up to three months, help families to meet their urgent humanitarian needs.

¹ Due to funding shortfall faced by the Lebanese Cash Consortium (LCC), UNHCR also supported around 15,000 families previously covered by LCC for the months of June and July 2017.

² This is a sector-wide targeting tool for multi-purpose cash and food that was established in 2016 and recalibrated in 2017 by the American University of Beirut.

EGYPT

- Between July and September alone, UNHCR provided unconditional cash assistance to 43,228 Syrian refugees (10,889 households). In addition, 220 Iraqi refugees (82 cases) were provided with cash assistance during the same period. The multi-purpose cash value for Syrian refugees ranged between USD 30 and USD 166 per household per month and for Iraqi refugees it was between USD 30 and USD 101 per case per month.
- UNHCR applies the Egypt Vulnerability Assessment of Refugees (EVAR) to develop vulnerability analysis and beneficiary selection. In 2017, UNHCR assessed 65,000 Syrian refugees (13,000 households) and 230 Iraqi refugees (46 cases). Of these, 516 Syrian households and 46 Iraqi cases were included for unconditional cash assistance.

SYRIA

- UNHCR provided monthly cash assistance to 11,052 of the most vulnerable Iraqi refugees and refugees of other nationalities through ATM cards and vouchers. In addition, 30,609 individuals received bimonthly cash for food assistance which was provided to all refugees and asylum seekers registered with UNHCR. However, due to persistent funding constraints, the amount for cash for food had to be reduced gradually during the year from USD 25 to USD 19.5 per person in March, and further to USD 13.5 in the second quarter.
- The disbursement of one-time education grants for refugee students at the primary and secondary levels was initiated in September, with 4,902 refugee students of various nationality assisted during the month. UNHCR plans to reach a total of 11,118 refugee students from different nationalities and Iraqi asylum seekers residing in camps in Al-Hassakeh Governorate. The education grant aims to support education of children aged between 5 and 18 years, with the average grant value of USD 54 per person, which is estimated to be sufficient to cover expenses for school books and stationary.

TURKEY

- Over 4,790 Iraqi refugees have been reached with multi-purpose cash assistance by UNHCR in Turkey so far this year. Refugees are provided with ATM cards uploaded with approximately USD 34 per person per month.
- UNHCR has designed cash-based initiatives for vulnerable individuals who are in need of assistance but do not qualify under existing schemes such as the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN). Since August 2017, Syrian refugees have started receiving cash assistance for higher education and livelihoods. To date, more than 1,220 Syrian refugees have received this support. UNHCR is also introducing urgent cash assistance for persons with specific protection needs, with activities starting in November 2017.

UNHCR is grateful to the donors who have contributed to the cash assistance programme for the Syrian and Iraqi internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees with unearmarked and earmarked funds as well as those who have contributed directly to the operations.

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