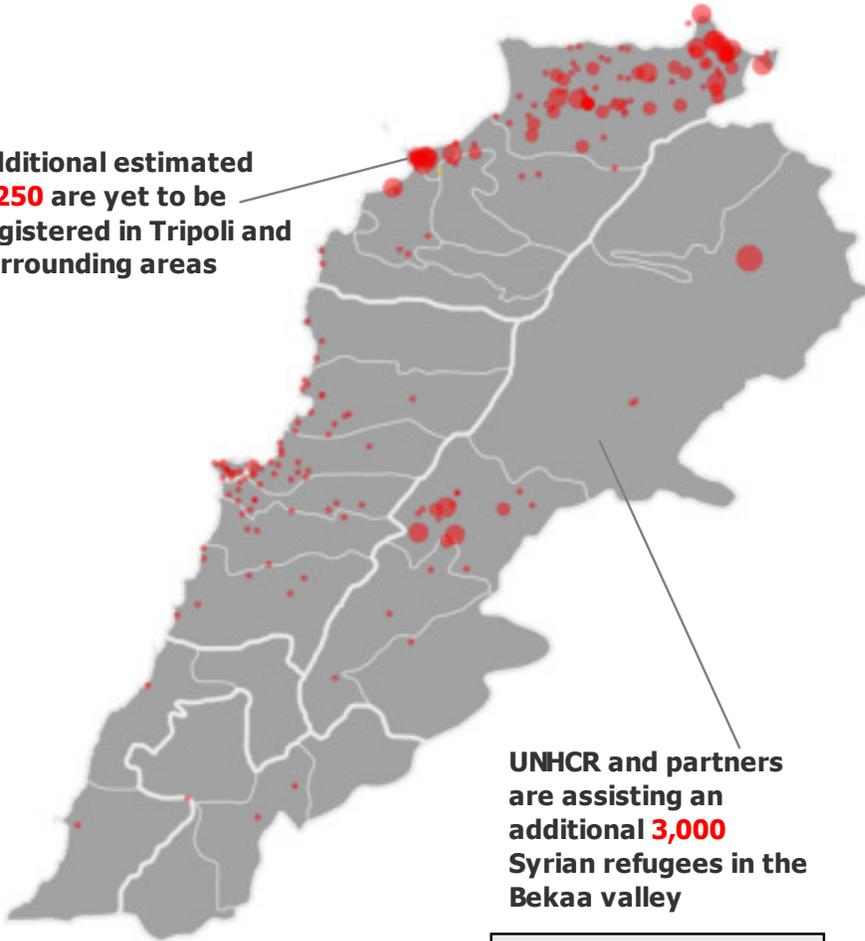


UN Inter-Agency Update

on Syria Situation Response in Lebanon

UNHCR, June 30, 2012

Additional estimated **2,250** are yet to be registered in Tripoli and surrounding areas



UNHCR and partners are assisting an additional **3,000** Syrian refugees in the Bekaa valley

• Refugee locations

The following represents a brief overview of the Lebanon response to the protection and assistance needs of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. It will be issued the last Friday of every month and will replace the weekly update for that week only.



NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL



Numbers

Over 29,000 displaced Syrians are currently receiving protection and assistance in Lebanon through the efforts of the Government of Lebanon and UN and NGO partners. Of this number, 25,024 people are registered. This represents an increase of 8,000 people since the end of May, largely due to the introduction of the centralized registration system in Akkar and the Bekaa areas.

Needs

The needs faced by Syrians remain the same as recounted in the last end of month report. Most fled their homes and villages due to fighting in these areas. They have been deeply affected by the loss of their homes, communities and many have lost loved ones. Over 75% of those who are being assisted are woman and children. Many live with hosting families who themselves struggle to make ends meet. Among the most pressing needs are food and basic non-food items, shelter, medical care and psychosocial support.

The Government of Lebanon through its High Relief Commission (HRC) continues to provide food and secondary medical care to displaced Syrians in north Lebanon and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) engages in psychosocial support. Other needs, including protection and assistance to those in the Bekaa valley are being addressed by UN and NGO partners.

Protection

Syrian refugees continue to be permitted to enter Lebanon. And while the Government has been generously providing support in north Lebanon, it remains reluctant to issue circulation permits to registered Syrian refugees. As a result, registered refugees continue to be confined to small areas and are unable to search for work opportunities to help them provide for their families.

Continued insecurity of some border areas present a number of challenges including humanitarian access, outreach workers and refugees' security, and the timely provision of assistance to persons of concern. Agencies were forced to suspend humanitarian programmes for short periods of time during the month of June. All activities resumed by the end of the month as the security conditions returned to normal.

North Lebanon

Numbers

An additional 5,000 displaced Syrians were registered in June, bringing the total number of people registered in the North to 16,484 individuals (3,432 households).

The first three weeks of June witnessed more than a twofold increase in the number of newly arrived displaced Syrian families in Akkar in comparison with May, with over 130 (over 500 individuals) arriving in the 3rd week of June. This rate has since fallen to 50 families per week. It is difficult to ascribe a reason for the fewer numbers in the past week as the conditions which have sparked arrivals have not abated. Some refugees report greater difficulty crossing the borders from the Syrian side.

Registration

UNHCR and the HRC introduced the first centralized registration in Akkar on 4 June through Social Development Centers (SDCs) of MoSA.

Centralized registration and the introduction of a hotline in Akkar have had a positive impact on the communication flow between the refugees and assistance providers and the follow-up on protection issues. Refugees had previously complained about having difficulties knowing the different services provided. Centralized registration and the hot line have provided

refugees with a more direct line to information about medical and social services provided by the Government and partners.

Protection monitoring also takes place during centralized registration, which helps identify persons with special needs including persons with medical problems, separated children, and survivors of gender-based violence.

In Tripoli, UNHCR, HRC and MoSA outreach workers continue door-to-door registration pending the identification of a proper central registration mechanism in the area.

Distribution

In a coordinated effort involving HRC, UNHCR, WFP, DRC, Muslim Aid and Azzam wa Saadeh, the first centralized distribution took place in Tripoli this June, with over a thousand families (5,552 persons) receiving food and non-food items, including host families.

Interviews conducted with displaced Syrians during centralized distribution in Tripoli and Akkar revealed that many families had not received any form of assistance for the past two to three months, namely in Tripoli. This was in part due to the clashes that erupted there. It is also the case that enhanced coordination of humanitarian efforts in Tripoli among all partners was needed to ensure that such gaps in distribution do not arise. This is now on track and centralized distribution will help streamline assistance and follow-up efforts.

A total of 7,734 individuals received food, hygiene and baby kits this month. In addition, HRC and MoSA obtained permission from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) to use public schools in Akkar as distributions sites during the summer.

Door-to-door distribution continued in other remote villages - Sahle, Mounseh, Akroom, Mrah Al Khookh, Qenieh and Kfartoom- pending the replication of the centralized distributed mechanism in those areas. DRC also resumed assistance to displaced families in Tripoli as the security situation stabilized.

Protection

The security situation in Syria continues to reverberate in Lebanese border areas. A number of Lebanese border villages such as Dbabuyee, El Noura, Boqaia and Moqaibla are affected by the daily sounds of heavy shelling and shooting. UNHCR has set up meetings with Syrian families living close to the border to assess their living conditions and to determine if there are any threats to their physical protection and access to assistance. Options are being explored including finding alternative places for those refugees who are willing to move away from these border zones to more secure areas.

Some refugees continue to report that some border crossings are closing for short periods of time, while others mention that they have had to pay Syrian authorities bribes in order to be allowed into Lebanon. Psych-social support was enhanced this month in Akkar and Tripoli due to the combined efforts of UNICEF, IMC and DRC. UNICEF trained over 40 teachers, community workers and caregivers on psychosocial interventions as well as means of identifying psychological difficulties and devising referral mechanisms. Trained teachers will support the displaced and host communities, helping them cope with the difficult situation.

Community Services

In the past weeks, a number of cases of victims of gender-based violence and unaccompanied and separated children have been reported. The Community

Services staff facilitated a meeting with DRC, Save the Children, and IMC to formalize and improve the individual case management system, enabling partners to conduct proper referrals and follow-up on cases of persons with specific needs. This is an important step towards a coordinated response to assist individuals in need of additional protection.

Outreach and monitoring visits throughout the past month revealed the presence of a significant number of idle youth. As the academic year draws to a close and in light of the low school enrolment rate, Save the Children (SCS) created five child friendly spaces (CFS) hosting over 340 children.

Another key development this month has been the establishment of the first community centre in Rama, Akkar. With this initiative, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) provided a safe space for displaced Syrian and host community children to gather and benefit from the range of recreational and educational activities available at the centre.

UNHCR and DRC started the rehabilitation of the Amayer SDC which will also serve as a community centre providing services to both displaced Syrians and the host community.

Health

The provision of primary medical assistance remained a primary concern to all agencies this month. Refugees continue to express their need for additional access to primary health care services. In addition, increased tension along the Syrian border has resulted in a number of border villages becoming inaccessible to UNHCR and partner staff. Health actors have introduced a number of initiatives to address these pressing concerns:

- The International Medical Corps (IMC) signed an agreement with a diagnostic centre in Tripoli to cover diagnostic tests for displaced Syrians.
- The Makassed Association started providing free insulin medication for displaced suffering from diabetes and non-C-Section delivery for pregnant women.
- UNFPA provided essential reproductive health kits to relevant clinics.
- IMC and UNHCR are providing prescription glasses to displaced school Syrian children.
- UNICEF provided training for a number of health workers on issues such as vaccination and breast feeding.
- IMC set up a case management team composed of a social worker and psychologist, to provide house-to-house primary healthcare support to displaced Syrians and the host community in Berkeyel, Halba and surrounding villages.
- UNHCR disseminated health services information brochures at the central registration sites in Bire and Amayer as well as during centralized distributions in Bire, Halba, Machta Hamoud, Rama and Tripoli.

Another challenge UNHCR and IMC faced this month is the provision of certain essential chronic medication. The World Health Organization (WHO) provided a temporary response to this gap by providing chronic medication to Machha primary health care centre (PHCC) in the North. IMC and UNHCR in turn agreed to provide essential chronic medication to the IMC supported clinics in the North.

On the level of secondary healthcare, the HRC and IMC reported that many wounded Syrians have been recently arriving with an infection that can only be treated by a rare and costly antibiotic. HRC is seeking the necessary resources to obtain the medicine to treat this infection. Another noteworthy observation this month is the fact that a significant number of wounded Syrians are under seven years old. UNHCR, IMC and other health actors are following-up to ensure these minors receive necessary health and psychosocial treatment.

Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)

From the outset of Syrian displacement to Lebanon, agencies have invested in sustainable local projects to benefit both the local and displaced communities. Public gardens, a public library and a cine club have been established and are now functional. The public gardens and library have specified specific opening hours while the cine club is animated by trained volunteers from the local community who regularly screen movies and lead discussions.

The identification of additional needed QIPs is a continuous process. DRC conducted group discussions with children in Al Rama village to consult them on what services they believe their community could benefit from. In addition, two architects visited two newly selected sites in Al Rama and Al-Mounsieh to advise on the implementation of a playground and a city hall in the two villages.

Shelter

Outreach visits during the month of June continued to show that a number of families are living in unsuitable conditions and are in need of alternative shelter options.

UNHCR, DRC and NRC are in turn developing a system whereby these families

are identified and provided with suitable shelter alternatives. In addition, this system will also help us identify shelter capacity either through collective shelters or rehabilitated homes among the host community.

Another finding this month is the fact that an increased number of families are resorting to rent as a shelter solution. Efforts are underway for paying rent to landlords for 400 families

In addition, UNHCR and DRC have started to build prefabricated houses in the playgrounds of abandoned schools serving as collective shelters. A first prefabricated house was assembled in Fraidis collective shelter, with the ability to accommodate beds, a small kitchen and a bathroom. Arrangements are underway for the construction of a second shelter box in Fraidis. The properties of other collective shelter are being examined to determine their capacity to host prefabricated houses.

Education

The security situation in the North-including the recent road blocks in Wadi Khaled -have had a negative impact on class attendance and children's motivation to study.

Save the Children and UNICEF intensified their provision of educational support through a number of activities to children and youth in the North. These initiatives include:

- remedial classes,
- child protection awareness sessions to advise parents on the best ways to deal with their adolescent children's developmental needs;
- information sessions with refugees and hosting communities to discuss activities available to children throughout the summer and school registration for the next academic year; and,

- trainings to teachers, facilitators and social workers on how to improve children's literacy skills.

East Lebanon

Numbers

UNHCR has made significant progress in registering an estimated 9,000 displaced Syrians in the Bekaa where it has established a presence since March 2012. So far, 7,647 people have been registered. In June, over 5,000 were registered.

June saw approximately 100 families (five hundred individuals) arriving each week. UNHCR is working on a proper new arrival reporting system in conjunction with local partners to monitor the changing population numbers.

Origin and Place of Residence

The majority of displaced Syrians in east Lebanon have come from Homs, Hama, Halab, and Idlib, with some arriving from the suburbs of Damascus.

Almost half of the displaced are living with the host community while the other half rent apartments in the area.

So far, the majority of the 7,460 registered Syrians in the Bekaa have entered through legal borders.

Registration

The central registration initiated in May in the Bekaa area continued in June, as many displaced families continued to approach UNHCR registration centers.

A limited number of refugees approached UNHCR to register in the Hermel area. UNHCR met with the Hermel municipality to assess the reasons for the low registration. Findings revealed many refugees fear coming forward to register and many do not yet understand the full assistance and

services provided after registration. The Hermel municipality will lead an information campaign in connection with the upcoming distribution to inform the displaced that there is no danger associated with sharing information via registration and that transportation to Baalbeck's registration in July will be provided.

Food and non-food items (NFIs)

In the Bekaa, distribution efforts rely on the support of local actors. UNHCR and partners work to support the capacity building of local actors in regard to distribution, but it remains a challenge due to limited funding. Capacity building of local partners will broaden their knowledge to enable the most efficient and safe provision of assistance.

Displaced Syrians in Aarsal who are registered with UNHCR received food vouchers by the World Food Programme (WFP) as the transition from the regular distribution system to the voucher system began. WFP voucher specialists have assessed local vendors and retail stores that meet set hygiene and food standards. With the vouchers, displaced Syrians can pick and choose the food and non-food items they need most.

In west and central Bekaa, Baalbeck, Al Fakeha, El Hermel and Al Ain, UNHCR and DRC assisted 10,965 people (2,193 families) this month with the help of local actors

Shetler

The process for locating, assessing and rehabilitating new shelters is lengthy and delays immediate assistance. There is an urgent need to establish a sustainable shelter strategy for the current situation. A long-term contingency plan is also in the pipeline in order to address a possibly protracted displacement situation.

Currently, there are plans to rehabilitate two shelters in Rashaya and Majdel Anjer with the potential of hosting 110 people (20 families). Several hosting homes and mosques throughout Aarsal, Saadnayel and Al Fakeha have been assessed and are waiting to commence rehabilitation.

Assessments conducted by Action Contre la Faim (ACF) and ACTED a shortage of potable water, with approximately 70 per cent of families in the Bekaa not receiving access. Water and Sanitation Health (WASH) working groups are prioritizing these needs.

Health

Outreach monitoring and follow-up visits showed that there is a large number of children diagnosed with enuresis (bed wetting), behavioral and emotional problems. This includes everything from panic attacks to increased levels of anxiety—all normal reactions to exposure of conflict and distressing events. This has become a noticeable trend among displaced children. UNHCR's partner IMC is following up on these children and their families through outreach visits, psychosocial support and referrals to necessary health service providers.

Since displaced communities are dispersed in a wide geographical area between south, central and north Bekaa, the need to expand primary and secondary health care services in order to reach all displaced

people remains a priority. Mobile clinics, such as those provided by Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center (CLMC) are a way to offer medical consultations, nursing care services and provision of medication throughout the Bekaa.

Education

With the school year starting in two months, the top priority in the education sector at this juncture is to create incentives for idle children to enroll in Lebanese public schools. Due to the late arrival of displaced Syrians to Lebanon in the Bekaa, very few have enrolled in schools during the past academic year. In addition, the Hermel municipality raised concerns about the low enrolment rates, and the urgency of setting up response mechanisms in order to prepare school-aged children for the next academic school year.

UNHCR, Save the Children and UNICEF continue to initiate activities aiming to encourage children to enroll in Lebanese schools. These include Child Friendly Spaces (CFS), remedial classes, extracurricular and recreational activities and educational summer camps for children.

*For more information on Syrian displacement in Lebanon, please visit the Lebanon page on the webportal:
<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>.
There you will find facts, figures, and 'who does what', as well as updates on food and non-food items distributed per area and by agency. Additionally, for more on how the response is being coordinated and the many contributions of various agencies, please click on "situational overview" of the Lebanon page.*