

MANAGEMENT
RESPONSE TO THE
RECOMMENDATIONS
OF “FROM SLOW BOIL
TO BOILING POINT” -
A REAL-TIME
EVALUATION OF
UNHCR’S RESPONSE
TO THE SYRIAN
REFUGEE CRISIS



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

December 2013

1. This document responds to the July 2013 report “From Slow Boil to Boiling Point”, a real-time evaluation (RTE) of UNHCR’s response to the Syrian refugee emergency. The purpose of the exercise was to take stock of achievements as well as to identify, in an open and transparent manner with partners, areas of the refugee response requiring improvement and UNHCR’s specific attention.
2. The review was conducted by a team of UNHCR staff and representatives from two NGO consortia (ICVA and InterAction) at the request of UNHCR’s Assistant High Commissioner for Operations. The inter-agency review focused on UNHCR’s response to the refugee crisis in Jordan, Lebanon and Northern Iraq, based on an 11-day mission to the field in May and June 2013.
3. In brief, the review found that UNHCR as the coordinator of the refugee response had substantially scaled-up its response to the mounting crisis, and in doing so had helped to avert the refugee crisis from spiralling out of control. There have been some significant achievements: most borders have been kept open; protection space has been preserved to a considerable extent; relationships with governments have been positive and constructive; refugees have benefited from access to basic public services, psycho-social and counselling programs have been initiated, and malnutrition and mortality rates have remained relatively low.
4. However, the evaluation noted that the growing number and needs of the refugees, as well as the serious pressures they are placing on host communities, which now requires UNHCR and its partners to complement their emergency response activities with comprehensive and proactive strategies.
5. Management agrees with the findings of the review and all recommendations are being addressed. Actions addressing the evaluation findings are presented in the attached matrix.
6. The management response outlines concrete actions taken in the five months after the release of the Real-Time Evaluation (RTE) in relation to recommendations contained therein. At the same time, UNHCR and partners fully recognize that whilst a lot has been done in terms of concrete actions, it is indeed too early to fully measure the effect and impact of all these very actions.

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REAL-TIME EVALUATION OF
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Recommendation	Action by	Management response and action taken
<p>1. Inter-agency coordination</p> <p>Clarify and strengthen UNHCR's approach to coordinating the international response to the Syrian refugee emergency.</p>	<p>Regional office</p> <p>Country offices</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>UNHCR is continuing efforts to enhance its coordination capacity as well as strengthen its leadership in the refugee response to the Syrian crisis.</p> <p>Action 1: Coordination improved</p> <p>UNHCR is investing in developing tools and providing training to strengthen coordination skills. Information management and sharing – critical to the response – is also being strengthened both among and within sectors. UNHCR launched in August 2013 a three-pronged Leadership and Coordination Project to enhance its leadership and coordination in the Syria response (i. mapping of existing coordination infrastructure and mechanisms; ii. development of regional coordination toolkit and training; iii. delivery of coordination workshops). A senior consultant well-versed in the management of complex emergencies was contracted from August to December 2013 to carry out the three phases of the project. Based on two field missions to Lebanon and Jordan in August 2013, regional, national and sub-national coordination infrastructure, tools, models, good practices, challenges and gaps were mapped and reviewed. A detailed Action Plan to further strengthen refugee response coordination in the region has been drafted, with particular focus on Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. Based on existing and new materials, the plan will be complemented with a coordination toolkit. Six trainings are being delivered in Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon throughout November and December. To ensure overall stewardship (content, timely delivery) of the Leadership and Coordination Action Plan, a P-5 Senior Project Manager has been engaged.</p> <p>Furthermore, UNHCR is delinking its inter-agency coordination functions from operational functions in Lebanon and strengthening coordination functions in Jordan and Iraq. This has allowed UNHCR to establish functions dedicated to coordination without detracting from the operational resources and efforts at delivery. Currently, more than 30 staff members are dedicated to coordination of the operational agencies and partners in the design and implementation of the regional refugee response. The objective of these positions is to ensure joint planning, strategic prioritization and coherent and efficient delivery in all sectors, and close coordination with donors, governments and other stakeholders at their respective levels.</p>

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<p>1. Inter-agency coordination</p> <p>Clarify and strengthen UNHCR's approach to coordinating the international response to the Syrian refugee emergency. <i>Continued</i></p>	<p>Regional office</p>	<p>Furthermore, the Inter-sectoral Working Group in Jordan conducted in September 2013 a survey on sector coordination. The survey aimed to assess the current performance of sector coordination and set a baseline against which progress on improvements to coordination can be measured over time. The survey had 111 respondents and exemplifies a practice that can be replicated in other operations to establish benchmarks on coordination in the refugee response.</p> <p>UNHCR coordinated and led a broad participatory planning process in the development of the 2014 Syria Regional Response Plan (RRP6) – reflecting the combined efforts of 106 humanitarian partners, five host Governments and 35 sector working groups. Through the consultative development process, the Plan features categorization – whereby expected outputs are categorized as i. life-saving or preventing immediate risk of harm; ii. preventing deterioration of vulnerabilities; and iii. strengthening capacity and resilience among refugees and host communities – and presents the full year's funding requirements into six-monthly portions to allow both appealing agencies and donors to reassess coverage, identify gaps and better target support at the mid-year mark. A mid-year review of the RRP6 will revisit the planning figures, objectives, strategy and budgetary requirements. This ensures a flexible and more adequate response planning to the volatile situation and population flows, and provides an opportunity for planning revisions in relation to other resource mobilization platforms and national-led strategies at the mid-year point. The review will also allow agencies to identify new needs, re-categorize outputs and adapt their activities to the fast-changing operational environment given the difficulty to exactly predict how the regional situation will evolve in the coming months.</p> <p>In addition, UNHCR and RRP partners in a collegial undertaking have successfully introduced monthly results-based reporting on 2013 activities. Ongoing efforts will be made to ensure reporting reflects the collective efforts of all partners in the Syria response.</p>

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<p>1. Inter-agency coordination</p> <p>Clarify and strengthen UNHCR's approach to coordinating the international response to the Syrian refugee emergency. <i>Continued</i></p>	<p>Regional office</p>	<p>Action 2: Leadership strengthened</p> <p>UNHCR has appointed a new Director of the Regional Bureau of the Middle East and North Africa and brought the Syria situation operation fully under the authority of the new Director. In recognition of the magnitude and complexity of the Syria situation regional refugee response, the Director is now based in the region and has established his office in Amman to ensure close oversight of the operations. The Director has also taken on the function of the Regional Refugee Coordinator, providing the interface between UNHCR and regional stakeholders, including the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator and other strategic/planning platforms in the region.</p> <p>UNHCR has also taken the leadership to ensure that proper linkages are made between the humanitarian response (under the Regional Response Plans) and more medium-term stabilization/early recovery frameworks by the UN, the World Bank and their partners.</p>
<p>2. Expansion and decentralization</p> <p>Reinforce UNHCR's presence and capacity at the point of delivery.</p>	<p>Country offices</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Action: UNHCR is strengthening its response capacity to address immediate humanitarian needs by expanding its field presence and strengthening its coordination capacity. In coordination with municipal authorities, programmatic decision-making is being devolved closest to points of delivery through a decentralization process.</p> <p>Country offices have delegated more programme management authority, responsibility and accountability to its field offices. UNHCR Lebanon has been decentralized since the outset, with an office established in Qubayat in 2011, followed by offices in Tripoli and Bekaa in 2012 and in Tyre in 2013. UNHCR Jordan has had field presences in Za'atri camp and Irbid since mid-2012 and early 2013 respectively. These presences will be upgraded to fully fledged offices, with a new office identified in Mafraq as well as plans to establish a satellite office close to the new camp in Azraq. UNHCR Iraq is promoting the delegations of authority with the sub-office in the Kurdish region and program management, including sub-agreements, for the Kurdistan Region are developed and signed in Erbil.</p>

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<p align="center">2. Expansion and decentralization</p> <p>Reinforce UNHCR's presence and capacity at the point of delivery. <i>Continued</i></p>		<p>As the responsibilities of these field presences expand, a greater number of authorities are also devolved to the field offices supported by new positions, including in the areas of programme, administration/finance, protection, community services. Additional technical staff are also being deployed in key sectors, further allowing for increased delivery at a field level. This is strengthening UNHCR's capacity to monitor progress, identify problems and take timely and corrective action in coordination with its partners from host governments and national and international NGOs to achieve agreed results.</p>
<p align="center">3. Protection space</p> <p>Convene an international conference on the Syrian refugee crisis to secure commitments to a multifaceted response based on international responsibility-sharing.</p>	<p>Headquarters</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Action: UNHCR included at this year's Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme a humanitarian and non-political High-Level Segment on Solidarity and Burden-Sharing with Countries Hosting Syrian Refugees as an integral part of the Executive Committee's agenda. The High-Level Segment was held over two days from 30 September to 1 October with the participation of 30 ministers, UN Agencies, a number of which represented at principal level (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNOCHA, WFP), NGO partners and the World Bank. In response to the compelling presentations made by Ministers of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey on the generosity thus far displayed by their government and people and the socio-economic impact of the presence of large refugee populations on their countries, the High-Level Segment secured commitments to a multi-faceted response based on international responsibility-sharing to i. safeguard access to protection for those fleeing the conflict; ii. mobilize additional financial support to meet community development needs in host countries; and iii. enhance options for long-term, durable solutions including resettlement and humanitarian admissions. Numerous governments committed themselves to addressing the humanitarian and development needs created by the refugee exodus and 16 states have offered to provide resettlement or other humanitarian admission places for some 10,000 refugees. The related Final Statement of the High-Level Segment was formally approved by the 64th Annual Session of UNHCR's Executive Committee.</p>

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<p>4. Support for host countries and communities</p> <p>Ensure the immediate involvement of development actors so as to mitigate the impact of the refugee influx on host states and communities.</p>	<p>Regional office</p> <p>Country offices</p> <p>Country offices</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>UNHCR is taking a comprehensive approach to guide, coordinate and engage with development actors. UNHCR is already collaborating with development agencies and financial institutions to provide capacity development and longer term development programmes including on current initiatives with ESCWA, UNDP and the World Bank (WB). Through these initiatives, UNHCR has continuously advocated for an early and swift mobilization of longer-term aid instruments and most recently is contributing to the development of the Comprehensive Regional Strategy under the stewardship of the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator.</p> <p>Action 1: Addressing needs of host communities in the RRP6</p> <p>As the refugee crisis enters its fourth year, the RRP6 will address three target groups including i. refugees accommodated in organized settlements; ii. refugees residing in private accommodation or settlements; and iii. people in host communities. Some 2.7 million people from host communities will benefit from the RRP6 through education, health, livelihood and social cohesion initiatives. To mitigate tensions between refugees and host communities, self-reliance programmes such as job placement support and vocational trainings are included in the Plan. Programmes aim to empower refugees and host communities groups including women and vulnerable groups in host communities. Although limited in its scope and duration, the RRP6 is designed to complement longer-term interventions, upon which stabilization processes in the region will largely depend.</p>

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<p>4. Support for host countries and communities</p> <p>Ensure the immediate involvement of development actors so as to mitigate the impact of the refugee influx on host states and communities.</p> <p><i>Continued</i></p>	<p>Regional office Country offices</p>	<p>Action 2: Engagement with UNDP</p> <p>Cooperation is on-going in Lebanon. At the policy level, UNDP, UNHCR and the Ministry of Social Affairs co-chair a Task Force on support to local communities within the overall refugee response framework. Since the beginning of 2013, UNDP is an implementing partner of a number of UNHCR-financed community support projects (total value US\$ 1.5 million) at Municipality level. More generally, UNDP is part of the review committee at field level for all community support projects identified under UNHCR's programme for host communities.</p> <p>In Jordan, an approach to supporting local Jordanian communities has been developed by the UNCT and a preliminary management framework agreed with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC). UNHCR and UNDP will co-lead the Secretariat in partnership with MoPIC. Technical modalities for support are being developed.</p> <p>In Iraq, UNDP has initiated a first assessment within host communities and developed a concept note on Support for Non-camp Syrian Refugees and Host Communities in the Kurdistan Region.</p> <p>A regional MoU between UNHCR and UNDP is being signed for the purpose of guiding the work of country operations.</p>

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<p>4. Support for host countries and communities</p> <p>Ensure the immediate involvement of development actors so as to mitigate the impact of the refugee influx on host states and communities. Continued</p>	<p>Country offices</p>	<p>Action 3: Engagement with the World Bank UNHCR has entertained very close cooperation with the WB in the response for the Syria operation.</p> <p>In Lebanon, UNHCR is collaborating with the WB on a socio-economic survey of refugees and hosting communities. UNHCR was instrumental in initially pushing forward the idea of an impact assessment with the Government and the WB. It has participated in and provided inputs into the preparation of the Economic and Social Impact Assessment report (finalized in mid-September 2013)¹. The report highlights considerable losses to the Lebanon's GDP (c. US\$ 7.5 billion since 2011) and estimated stabilization costs of US\$ 2.5 billion.</p> <p>Additionally, UNHCR is liaising with the WB to see how to support several of its current initiatives for hosting communities. The WB has also agreed to work with UNHCR in ensuring that initiatives within the RRP that respond to the humanitarian emergency in a way that provides support to Lebanese communities and institutions are appropriately tagged for ease of reference for donors. The links between the RRP initiatives and those proposed in the first track of the WB's recently released roadmap are also being made, with efforts underway to ensure that projects developed in the first track "rapid delivery and immediate impact" of the WB's roadmap are immediately funded.</p> <p>In Jordan, UNHCR participated in the WB-led identification missions in June 2013 looking at priority sectors impacted by the conflict and the refugee presence. A project document for an initial emergency loan of US\$ 150 million (focused on support to the health sector and subsidy support for essential commodities) has been developed. In July and August 2013, UNHCR participated in the project design mission to formulate a host community support intervention amounting to c. US\$ 50-55 million (a mix of loans and grants) in support of local municipalities.</p>

¹ Lebanon: Economic and Social Impact Assessment of The Syrian Conflict, available on http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2013/09/24/000333037_20130924111238/Rendered/PDF/810980LB0box379831B00P14754500PUBLIC0.pdf

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<p>5. Planning and preparedness</p> <p>Develop regional and national strategic plans with particular attention given to contingency planning and emergency preparedness.</p>		<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Action 1: Implement far-reaching winterization programme UNHCR and Regional Response Plan (RRP) partners are implementing a plan that meets the needs of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees in the region. In total, RRP partners are providing assistance to all Syrians residing in camps and over 40 per cent living outside of camps, targeting more than 1.1 million beneficiaries in total. A range of activities will be implemented including a supplemental distribution of core relief items or cash assistance, and weatherproofing for families living in sub-standard shelters. The overall Syria RRP winterization programme for refugees in the region is valued at some US\$ 138 million.</p> <p>Action 2: Update contingency plans In response to the threat of possible air strikes inside Syria in September 2013, UNHCR has worked with its UN and NGO partners to update its contingency planning in Syria as well as in neighbouring countries. Planning for the first four weeks of a mass outflow are in place to assist a total of 600,000 refugees crossing into Turkey (200,000 people), Jordan (150,000), Lebanon (150,000) and Northern Iraq (100,000).</p> <p>Core relief items are readily available in the respective countries and at UNHCR's regional stockpile in Zarqa (Jordan) to meet the needs of 5,000 people per day for 30 days (150,000 people). UNHCR maintains further stocks for up to 350,000 people in its Dubai-based Global Emergency Stockpile and beyond. UNHCR Iraq is maintaining a stockpile to respond to the needs of up to 100,000 new arrivals in one month. UNHCR also maintains a large number of frame agreements with suppliers for basic goods to procure and ship items quickly to specific locations as needed. Nonetheless, challenges related to the delivery of core relief items including security and free passage (border and custom complexities) remain e.g. movements from Jordan to northern Iraq takes six days and Lebanon is no longer easily accessible by road, necessitating shipments via sea or airlift. Country offices are also working to develop and maintain contingency plans for a large-scale influx that would surpass existing receptions mechanisms.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the above, an essential feature of the region's contingency plans is the ability of Government, UN and NGOs partners to contribute to the collective efforts of any emergency response.</p>

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<p>6. Emergency response</p> <p>Recommendation 1: More extensive and effective outreach to out-of-camp refugees.</p>	<p>Regional office Country offices</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>UNHCR is strengthening community outreach and sharing best practices between operations. The establishment of new field offices will assist this process and enhance UNHCR's presence.</p> <p>Action 1: Increasing outreach through strategic communication with beneficiaries</p> <p>Taking into consideration the specific needs and profiles of Syrian refugees in each country, UNHCR dedicated a specialist Mass Information (MI) team to develop targeted messages and identified appropriate channels to provide relevant information to refugee communities. A MI tool kit has been developed and rolled out to improve awareness amongst refugees of services available from UNHCR and response partners. Some UNHCR offices throughout the region have recruited MI staff to collaborate with sector working groups and operational agencies in messaging efforts directed at refugees and host communities. More than 160 staff from UNHCR and response partners in Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Turkey and Syria have been trained on designing MI strategies.</p> <p>UNHCR and response partners are working to increase coordination of strategic communications with beneficiaries and an inventory of current and planned MI initiatives has been created. A regional consultation in cooperation with the Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities (CDAC) network is scheduled in February 2014 to exchange further information on strategies.</p> <p>Additionally, in Jordan alone, 140 Government, UN, and NGO staff involved in camp management have been trained on the importance of two-way communication with refugees living in camps. In order to facilitate direct communication with refugees, hotlines have been established in Jordan and Egypt, five help desks have been set up in Jordan, and public announcement and mass SMS systems have been put in place in Iraq and Lebanon. During the recent influx of Syrian refugees into Northern Iraq, outreach through more than 150 refugee volunteers in newly-established camps reduced chaos, while relevant printed material ensured that refugees were informed about assistance, registration procedures and rights. In addition, Protection, Assistance, and Reintegration Centres and mobile teams in Iraq have been enhanced, and a protection community based network has been established. UNHCR is also planning to develop a volunteer outreach network in Dohuk to better identify and address the needs of urban refugees.</p>

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<p align="center">6. Emergency response</p> <p>Recommendation 1: More extensive and effective outreach to out-of-camp refugees. <i>Continued</i></p>	<p>Country offices</p>	<p>Action 2: Scaling up assistance to mitigate the high cost of living</p> <p>In Jordan, UNHCR has cleared the registration backlog at its Amman and Irbid urban registration centres. UNHCR and humanitarian partners have put in place a system of outreach and protection monitoring in the country's main refugee-hosting areas. Over 85,000 home visits have been conducted since September 2012 to reach out to and assess the vulnerability of refugees living outside of camp settings. UNHCR will continue to expand the cash intervention support to the most vulnerable urban refugees. The cash programme implemented by UNHCR and partners for vulnerable refugees has expanded in the past six months to over 10,000 families. UNHCR's cash assistance programme in Jordan utilizes biometric technology, has very low overheads and could be adopted as a best practice for the region.</p> <p>In Lebanon, where refugees reside together with host communities in over 1,500 urban and rural localities, hundreds of thousands are already benefitting from assistance out of camps. Efforts are being made to strengthen community outreach through refugee volunteers programme, increased number of NGO and government-run community development centres with mobile component and participatory assessments. These initiatives are complemented by additional expertise in cash programming and distribution to oversee the rapid up-scaling of assistance in line with spiralling refugee numbers. As UNHCR is moving out of procurement/warehousing and in-kind distribution (to be gradually replaced by cash assistance), a monitoring and outreach strategy is being put in place (using some of the same distribution NGO partners) to enhance UNHCR's outreach capacity in the field through home visits. The purpose is to more systematically monitor the living conditions of refugees and identify protection and humanitarian assistance needs.</p> <p>In Iraq, the cash assistance program is being expanded to reach the equivalent of 5,000 families. A cash assistance consultant is being recruited to provide additional tools and expertise on designing an efficient and effective programme. In the central region, the assistance to non-camp refugees is integrated into the Extremely Vulnerable Individuals scheme, which is functioning well. Those in need are identified through the protection centre or through mobile teams.</p>

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<p align="center">6. Emergency response</p> <p>Recommendation 1: More extensive and effective outreach to out-of-camp refugees. <i>Continued</i></p>	<p>Country offices</p>	<p>Action 3: Formulate an extensive programme of Quick Impact Projects More than 350 community support projects are being implemented in Jordan and Lebanon, and hundreds more are planned across the region.</p> <p>In Lebanon, around US\$ 2 million have gone into 119 smaller host community driven support projects benefitting an estimated 1.7 million Lebanese and half a million refugees. In addition, host communities have profited from interventions in WASH, shelter, education, and health. More than 3,000 people (40 per cent Lebanese) have enrolled in vocational training programmes, at least 20 per cent leading to gainful employment, and a number of agencies are now establishing more wide-ranging livelihood programmes.</p> <p>UNHCR Jordan has also ramped up its investment in Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) and Community Impact Projects (CIPs). By the end of 2013, a total of 40 QIPs and 5 CIPs should be implemented. This is a significantly increase from 2012 and sets the tone for 2014, where more comprehensive plans will be included in the RRP6. UNHCR Jordan also opened community centres and expanded its community outreach through so-called Community Action Committees. The number of the latter has doubled and additional committees stand to be launched before the end of the year.</p> <p>In Iraq, UNHCR has launched QIPs implemented by NGOs targeting the non-camp population. A working group led by UNDP and UNHCR was formalized in September 2013, SOPs for QIPs were developed and a dedicated budget per governorate was allocated to the total amount of \$5 million.</p>

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<p>6. Emergency response</p> <p>Recommendation 2: Improve standards and security for refugees living in camps.</p>	<p>Country offices</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Action: Implementation is on-going in Jordan and Iraq, the two countries covered by the RTE in which camps have been established for Syrian refugees.</p> <p>In Jordan, the replacement of tents with pre-fabricated container dwellings in Za'atri camp improved living conditions and provided more privacy, dignity and protection - a priority demand in the shelter sector strategy for addressing attention to the needs and concerns of women and girls who consider their tent homes unsafe as tents cannot be locked and provide insufficient privacy when to be shared with men.² Shelter and settlement achievements also included the development of a new camp at Azraq as part of the contingency plan to accommodate refugees in the event of a mass outflow from Syria. All essential infrastructure and basic service facilities are designed and implemented for this capacity and the master plan was developed from a lessons learned reflection and from the aim to avoid mistakes observed in Za'atri. This approach included the need to provide utmost transparency over the planning process and in doing so to enhance a commitment of all stakeholder Agencies to actively engage in all phases of planning and physical implementation. The approach was successfully implemented through regular interagency meetings and discussions of cross cutting issues for all detailed planning issues and throughout all stages of the Master Plan. On Government level, this included also the participation and engagement of key Line Ministries, such as the MoPIC, Ministry of Public Works and Housing, the Office of the Governorate of Zarqa and other Government Departments.</p>

² CP&GBV SWG Jordan (Jan 2013) *Findings from the Interagency Child Protection and Gender-Based Violence Assessment in the Za'atari Refugee Camp*

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<p>6. Emergency response</p> <p>Recommendation 2: Improve standards and security for refugees living in camps. <i>Continued</i></p>		<p>At the time of the RTE, some 120,000 refugees lived in Za'atri camp, the largest Syrian refugee camp in the region. Since that time, the population has been reduced as the numbers crossing into Jordan have decreased and there has been some movement to host communities. A verification exercise is currently underway to determine the exact population of the camp. It is worth noting that even when the population was at 120,000, some services in Za'atri were being provided at standards higher than SPHERE guidelines. Security is a major challenge and a key protection issue in the camp. UNHCR developed a new governance plan for Za'atri, which seeks to address security concerns by restructuring the camp, empowering new community leadership structures, decentralizing services, strengthening the role of the Jordanian police and ending impunity for criminal behaviour. UNHCR continues to pursue further gains in security to ensure protection standards are met and plans to expand the presence of the Syrian Refugees Camps Department in the districts while strengthening humanitarian organizations' engagement and communications with, and accountability to refugees.</p> <p>In Iraq, great efforts are being made by response partners to tackle the poor hygiene conditions in Domiz camp (Dohuk governorate). Nonetheless, the overcrowded camp, which is hosting some 45,000 residents in a site originally intended for 30,000 people, needs to be decongested for conditions to improve. A key priority for UNHCR was obtaining more land and construction of additional camps in the Kurdistan Region, both to decongest Domiz camp and to accommodate new arrivals. UNHCR has received additional land to be developed into camps to accommodate new arrivals. In addition to Domiz camp, six permanent camps have been established, including four in Erbil (Kawergosk, Darashakran, Qushtapa and Basirma) and one each in Dohuk (Gawilan) and Sulemaniyah (Arbat). It is expected that these camps will help with the decongestion of Domiz camp as well as ensure that the new Syrian arrivals are accommodated in safety and dignity and in line with international standards. Approximately, 11,000 tents have been distributed and erected in Anbar and the Kurdistan Region governorates. In addition, concrete foundations have been or are in the process of being established for 6,940 tents in the newly established locations as a result of the influx. Strategic mass information campaigns are also implemented at each site to raise awareness among the refugee population regarding their right, duties and services available, and to reinforce their protection and security.</p>

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<p>6. Emergency response</p> <p>Recommendation 3: Improve access to services and assistance (in particular with respect to health and education).</p>		<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Syrian refugees in both camp and urban/rural settings remain largely dependent on the provision of assistance and services across the different sectors. Meeting their basic needs, enhancing access to services and enhancing the absorption capacity of host government services continues to be key priorities in response plans across the region.</p> <p>NB: The response below is a summary and complement to the detailed information available in the RRP5 monthly results-based reporting dashboards and the RRP6 (available on the Syria Regional Refugee Response Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal).</p> <p>Action 1: Enhancing access to education</p> <p>In line with inter-agency vulnerability assessments, UNHCR continues to support interventions to provide protection and quality learning opportunities for children, including through advocacy in recognition of the displacement of one million Syrian refugee children, supporting the <i>A Lost Generation?</i> initiative spearheaded by UNICEF and through <i>The Future of Syria – Refugee Children in Crisis</i> report, the first in-depth survey conducted by UNHCR of Syrian children since the start of the conflict, which found widespread psychological distress, many children living alone or separated from their parents, most receiving no education, and extensive involvement of children in illegal labour.</p> <p>Although significant progress has been made to register Syrian children in public schools, enrolment and retention remains critically low. Partners are working to address barriers to education as well as enhance the absorption capacity of the public education system in host countries, which have come under enormous strain as a result of the ever increasing refugee population.</p> <p>In Jordan, Syrian children benefit from free access to public schools across the country, regardless of their status. The number of Syrian children registered in public schools increased significantly from 30,000 children in March 2013 to over 83,000 children in both host communities and refugee camps by October 2013, which represents 44 per cent of the total registered school aged Syrian children with UNHCR. This includes those 15,000 children registered and benefitting from formal education in Za’atri camp and the Emirate Jordan Camp.</p>

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UNHCR'S RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS**

Recommendation	Action by	Management response and action taken
<p>6. Emergency response</p> <p>Recommendation 3: Improve access to services and assistance (in particular with respect to health and education). <i>Continued</i></p>		<p>Remedial and catch up classes have been launched in both host communities and camps to support vulnerable Syrian children to overcome learning difficulties they were facing after weeks, and sometimes months without school access. Outreach activities ensured adequate information regarding education services are provided to families and children. With clear gap in assistance to adolescents girls and boys, and youth, education actors endeavored to further strengthen the coverage and coordination through a dedicate forum, the Youth Taskforce. Created under both Education Sector Working Group and Child Protection Sub-Working Group, the taskforce aims to ensure that existing gaps are filled in as well as youth needs are addressed in a participatory manner in Za'atri camp.</p> <p>The host community platform, an initiative addressing the longer term development needs and impact of refugees in host communities, is also being created for education sector and will ensure the humanitarian assistance is linked up with medium and longer term developmental needs in host communities. Partners are also working together to ensure a continuous and tighter collaboration between Education sector and Child Protection sub-Working Group partners to address needs and challenges on key issues such as reducing the exposure to child labor and early marriage risks through accessing education, ensuring safe learning environment for students in schools.</p> <p>In Lebanon, concerted action by the Ministry for Education and Higher Education (MEHE) with humanitarian partners enabled some 30,000 Syrian children to enrol in the Lebanese public school system for the school year 2012/2013. Some 7,000 Palestine refugee children from Syria enrolled in schools managed by UNRWA. A further 45,000 vulnerable children (Syrian, Lebanese returnees and vulnerable Lebanese populations) accessed non-formal education. UNHCR is focusing on measures to increase classroom capacity, expand the cadre of teaching staff and mitigate against quality concerns. Investment is being made to increase enrolment in formal education including through community outreach for enrolment; support with tuition fees and the costs of transportation; improvement of school environments; running second shifts and providing learning support to ensure school retention. Enrolment in non-formal education programmes will be enhanced, including through the introduction of a structured Accelerated Learning Program accredited by MEHE. Furthermore, national capacity to respond to the increasing needs of both Lebanese and refugee populations will be increased through capacity building of government officials and partners and professional development for teachers and educational personnel.</p>

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Recommendation	Action by	Management response and action taken
<p>6. Emergency response</p> <p>Recommendation 3: Improve access to services and assistance (in particular with respect to health and education. <i>Continued</i></p>		<p>In Iraq, education coordination systems have been established by UNICEF at all levels. Response partners have facilitated the enrolment of over 14,701 Syrian children in educational facilities, both in camp and in host community schools. Enrolment has been increasing over the past year as refugees resettle from transit to more permanent camps where semi-permanent classrooms have been constructed or rehabilitated in host community schools. Since May, three pre-fabricated schools were constructed in Domiz and another 40 tented classrooms were provided with educational supplies in the new camps in Qushtapa, Kawergosk, Basirma, Akra and Gawilan camps since August 2013. All pre-fab structures are being modelled to facilitate access for disabled children. UNHCR and partners are conducting a Community Assessment of barriers for non-camp Syrian refugee children to access education in all governorates of the KR. The assessment will in addition examine how disabled Syrian refugee children have been accessing education and how education provision can be improved for children with special learning needs.</p> <p>In Iraq, the <i>A Lost Generation?</i> initiative builds on three pillars; ensuring access to and continuity in education a paramount priority in camps and communities; developing community based protection mechanisms and the provision of psychosocial care; and, youth will be provided with alternative education, vocational training and to speak for their own rights and the rights of people in their communities.</p>

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REAL-TIME EVALUATION OF
UNHCR'S RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS**

Recommendation	Action by	Management response and action taken
<p align="center">6. Emergency response</p> <p>Recommendation 3: Improve access to services and assistance (in particular with respect to health and education). <i>Continued</i></p>		<p>Action 2: Enhancing access to health services</p> <p>UNHCR is enhancing coordination and partnerships between UN agencies, NGOs and national health sectors to utilise the comparative advantages of each, avoid duplication and ensure that resources are used in the most cost-efficient way and to achieve maximum impact. Owing to the excellent level of cooperation between UN agencies and NGO partners that has prevailed in the development of the RRP6, health partners were able to fully incorporate the polio response into the Plan in the very late stage of its development.</p> <p>Although Lebanon has a wide network of health care service providers, affordability is the main barrier to health for affected populations. Health services in Lebanon are largely privatized and based on user fees. Refugees are often expected to cover the costs of treatment, which can sometimes reach significantly above their means. Humanitarian actors continued to assist refugees with treatment costs and supported the fragile network of public health providers with medicines, equipment and staff capacity to respond to increased demand and mitigate against deteriorations in services for Lebanese communities. Health education and mass information activities are also being expanded across the country to advise refugees about the services available and how to access assistance. Refugees are encouraged to seek treatment in contracted hospitals where UNHCR and partners have negotiated preferential rates.</p> <p>UNHCR is also working to improve efficiencies by centralizing procurement of essential drugs for acute and chronic conditions and making them available to targeted refugees and vulnerable Lebanese for a nominal fee. UNHCR will also use a Third Party Administrator to administer and audit medical and financial services provided by contracted hospitals. This will reduce the burden on partners, enabling them to focus on case follow up and monitoring. It will also provide for better scrutiny of treatments prescribed to targeted groups, given reports of unnecessary medical procedures and the prescription of expensive therapeutic regimes.</p>

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UNHCR'S RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS**

Recommendation	Action by	Management response and action taken
<p align="center">6. Emergency response</p> <p>Recommendation 3: Improve access to services and assistance (in particular with respect to health and education). <i>Continued</i></p>		<p>In Jordan, the Ministry of Health (MoH) has maintained its policy of free access to primary and secondary care in their facilities for registered Syrians living outside of camps. Most refugees therefore have the right to access MoH services. A coordination structure is already in place and includes sub-working groups on Nutrition, Mental Health/Psycho-social Support and Reproductive Health. Links with other sectors will also be strengthened such as to protection on the health response to SGBV. A strategy to strengthen refugee participation and engagement in provision of information and selected health services by training and supporting male and female community health volunteers will be developed by agencies working in the health sector and resources sought for this. Furthermore, vulnerability identification and scoring will be improved with the aim of better targeting and reaching those most vulnerable with essential services and assistance and monitoring of assistance against needs. This will build on a pilot project initiated in Za'atri in 2013 and expand to other sectors.</p> <p>In Iraq, the Kurdistan Regional Government is making a concerted effort to ensure access to health care for refugees, including providing referral care for secondary and tertiary health services. Partners have established primary health centres that deliver a free-of-charge package of essential health services, including reproductive health and mental health. Health needs assessments have been conducted and systems for communicable disease surveillance and early detection of outbreaks have been established in the camps. The rapid establishment of six new camps and multiple transit sites in the Kurdistan Region has been a challenge and partners are working to ensure that one primary health centre is available for every 10,000 refugees in each camp. For refugees outside of camps, partners are prioritizing resources to ensure that refugees have free access to health services and that the host population's access is not hindered by the influx of refugees. In order to achieve this objective, various components of the health system in the host community are being increasingly strengthened, including among others, supporting primary health and referral facilities located near the camps or areas with high concentration of displaced Syrian population, uninterrupted provision of medicines and supplies and equipment, capacity building for health practitioners; and health education and promotion to the population in the community.</p>