

GENERAL OVERVIEW

North Lebanon, which previously constituted one governorate with seven districts was effectively split into two governorates in 2014, following an earlier administrative decision. Tripoli and five surrounding districts (T5) maintained the denomination of North Governorate, while the district of Akkar became a governorate with the same name. While certain institutions and positions were divided (e.g. the post of the governor), others remain joint for the two governorates (e.g. the North Lebanon Water Establishments).

Akkar covers 788 km² of territory and is one of the most deprived rural regions in Lebanon and shares 100 km of borders with Syria. Akkar is divided into six main areas: Al-Sahel, Middle and Higher Dreib, Joume, Shaffat and Qaita. Its capital Halba, lies 30 km away from Tripoli. There are at least 27 border villages with Syria, with three official crossing points (El Aarida, El Aaboudieh and Boqaiaa).

Location Map



POPULATION OVERVIEW

Akkar has a population of 252,917 scattered across 283 villages and towns. The population is primarily Sunni with a minority of Christians and Alawites.

Wadi Khaled hosted the first displaced Syrians who entered Lebanon in 2011, but as the crisis developed, refugees began to settle all over Akkar.

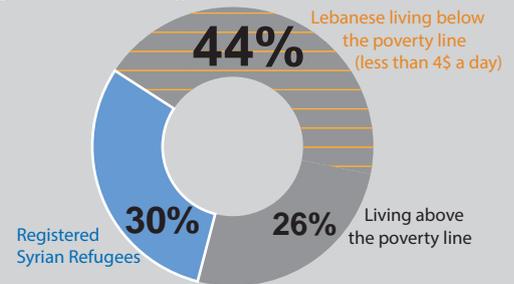
The majority of Syrian refugees in Akkar come from Homs, Idlib, Aleppo, and Hama. As of 7 August, there are 109,270 refugees registered in Akkar.

Distribution of Lebanese Population and Registered Syrian Refugees in Akkar

252,917 Akkar original Lebanese Population.

159,287 People from the original Lebanese population living below the poverty line (less than \$4 a day)

109,270 Syrian refugees registered as of 7 August 2014



HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

Historically, northern Lebanese have had strong ties with Syrians and extensive trade relations with them. The closure of cross-border trade has seriously affected livelihood opportunities in the border areas, increasing the vulnerability of the Lebanese population throughout three years of conflict in Syria.

The response is complicated by the spread of refugees in 217 out of 283 villages. In addition, there are some 320 informal settlements where living conditions are difficult. At the end of 2013, 69 community support projects had been completed with nine planned in the first half of 2014 in order to address growing needs caused by an increase of the population by 56% as of July 2014. One of the main challenges since 2013 has been related to pressures made against humanitarian partners by some municipality members in the area of Wadi Khaled, which disrupted humanitarian programming and at times led to temporary suspensions of assistance, including distributions. Enrolment of school going-aged children in primary school increased from 23% to 38% by the end of the back to school campaign, but still remains a challenge. Inter-agency coordination takes place in Qobayat.

Humanitarian Intervention



Akkar



* Total number of organizations operating in each district

Social Cohesion Sector Livelihood Sector

Security Situation

The security situation in Akkar has been characterized by intermittent shelling and gunfire, mostly at night, in areas close to the northern border and in Wadi Khaled. Wadi Khaled continues to be an area of concern for humanitarian agencies and necessitates a specific security clearance to access the area, manned by a check-point. There has been an increase in shellings in recent weeks, as compared to earlier in the year. This also impacts refugees' freedom of movement, who sometimes fear crossing the check-point, especially those without legal documents. Some curfews have been imposed, notably in Kherbet Daoud, Tal Abbas, Abboudiyeh, Akkar al Attiqa and Najarat el Tine and usually run from 6pm - 6am. Reasons given have been to reduce traffic and noise, but also to prevent social tensions between Lebanese and Syrian communities. Access to Akkar has sometimes been hindered due to the closure of the northern highway leading to the area. In addition, occasional protests in Akkar have resulted in the blockage of roads with burning tires.