

## HIGHLIGHTS

- UN inter-agency mission delivers vaccines for 500,000 children in Aleppo.
- 2 million Syrians received food assistance in March, including about 500,000 people in opposition-held areas.
- 7,000 Syrian refugees register per day; overall figure reaches nearly 1.3 million.
- Needs continue to outpace funding as critical sectors remain severely underfunded.

## FIGURES

Population	22m
Governorates	14
# of people in need	4m
# of IDPs	2m
# of houses destroyed in Syria due to the conflict	1.2m
# of Syrian refugees in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and North Africa (as of 7 April)	1,299,822

## FUNDING

**\$519 million**

Requested for humanitarian assistance inside Syria (January-June 2013)

**40%** funded

(as of 7 April 2013)

**\$1 billion**

requested under the regional Refugee Response Plan (January-June 2013)

**31%** funded

(as of 15 March 2013)



UNICEF/Romenzi

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## One-third of Syrian homes damaged or destroyed

### Violence continues to spread to more areas

The conflict in Syria has continuously escalated in scale and scope since the onset in March 2011. Violence is spreading to new densely populated urban areas, which in turn leads to increasing levels of destruction, casualties and displacement. In March, armed groups launched new military offensives in the north of the country, including in Ar-Raqqa, where hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) are located. Armed confrontations have also intensified in the south, particularly along the border with Jordan. An upsurge in violence in Damascus during the last week of March caused civilian deaths and considerable destruction, with more than a dozen people killed as mortars struck a cafeteria in Damascus University.

### 1.2 million houses damaged or destroyed

An estimated 1.2 million houses have been damaged or destroyed, according to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). Some 400,000 houses have been completely destroyed, while 300,000 houses have been partially destroyed. In addition, about 500,000 houses have damaged infrastructure. The overall figure of damage and destruction represents around one third of the total housing stock in Syria, based on the 2004 census. The main concentrations of housing damage are found in what ESCWA identifies as informal settlements – which in most cases means where poor people live – in conflict areas, such as Homs, Damascus, Aleppo, Dar'a and Deir-Ez-Zor.

### Humanitarian staff deliver despite heightened risks

An intensification of conflict in Damascus late last month prompted the UN to temporarily reduce international staffing levels within Syria. Staff reductions are not impacting the delivery of emergency assistance and critical programmes remain fully operational. Meanwhile, national staff continue to live in an extremely challenging environment, where travel to and from work represents a particular risk.

### UN aid convoy brings vaccines to cover 500,000 children in Aleppo

A UN inter-agency convoy delivered assistance to Aleppo late last month, despite the worsening security situation on the ground. The convoy brought measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccines to cover 500,000 children aged 0-15 in Aleppo governorate. The vaccinations are part of an on-going campaign led by UNICEF. The receipt of the vaccines will now allow the ministry of Health to cover the needs of the entire governorate.

The convoy also carried health supplies for more than 30,000 people and essential items, such as food, blankets, mattresses, reproductive health kits, and kitchen sets to assist 6,000 people. Agencies participating in the convoy were UNDSS, UNICEF, WHO,

*UN inter-agency humanitarian hubs in Homs and Tartous will strengthen assistance coverage and outreach.*

UNFPA, UNHCR, UNDP, WFP/Logistic Cluster, SARC and OCHA. During the visit to Aleppo, UN staff visited hospitals and met with humanitarian partners to discuss future deliveries of assistance across conflict lines.

### **UN inter-agency humanitarian hubs opened in Homs and Tartous**

Humanitarian agencies have now established the first inter-agency hubs. The initial roll-out of hubs has taken place in Homs and Tartous, where the strengthened international field presence will enhance coverage and outreach not only in the host governorates, but also in Hama and Latakia. Other hubs are planned for Qamishly, Dar'a and Aleppo.

### **International NGOs ready to strengthen humanitarian response**

The international NGO Merlin visited Syria in March in preparation of the upcoming establishment of an office in Damascus. Merlin met with key local partners, relevant ministries, UN agencies and other INGOs. Meanwhile, the Norwegian Refugee Council has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with SARC and is expected to commence operations in Syria as soon as visas have been processed.

### **CERF allocation of US\$20 million to Syria**

The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) has allocated US\$20 million to the Syria crisis. Funds target interventions to address immediate emergency needs and critical lifesaving response to IDPs and other people severely affected by the crisis. Interventions will focus particularly on reaching geographical areas and beneficiaries that have not been adequately accessed to date, including across lines of conflict.

## **Refugee communities increasingly vulnerable**

### **Palestine refugees killed in the violence**

During the last week of March, at least 20 Palestine refugees were killed as a result of the on-going violence. Among those killed were five Palestine refugee children. According to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), four of the children died due to injuries associated with the use of heavy weapons.

Conflict is affecting access and assistance delivery to Palestine refugee camps in Aleppo and Damascus. Ongoing violence around Aleppo international airport has prevented access to Neirab camp, hampering provision of food assistance. In the Damascus area, Palestine refugees in Yarmouk, Sbeineh, Husseiniyeh, Khan Eshieh and Qabr Essit have been particularly affected. Many UNRWA facilities, such as schools and health clinics, remain closed in these areas.

### **400,000 Palestine refugees require assistance**

Approximately 35 per cent of Syria's 525,000 Palestine refugees are currently displaced in the Damascus area, UNRWA reports. Other concentrations of refugees who have been displaced are found in camps and facilities in Hama, Homs, Latakia, and Dar'a. The Agency estimates that over 400,000 Palestine refugees in Syria are unable to meet basic needs and require urgent assistance. So far, more than 33,000 Palestine refugees have fled to Lebanon. Almost 5,000 Palestine refugees have registered with UNRWA in Jordan.

### **Mounting protection and assistance needs among other refugees**

Protection and assistance needs of other refugee communities are also rising. Syria hosts around 68,000 registered refugees who mainly originate from Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia and Sudan. Most refugees are entirely dependent on assistance provided by UNHCR and others. Iraqi refugees, who account for around 70 per cent of refugees registered with UNHCR for assistance, are widely reported to face threats, risk of abduction, harassment and extortion. As many as 28,000 refugees (approximately 40 per cent) have special needs and require targeted support, according to UNHCR.

*WFP reached close to 2 million beneficiaries in March. By April, WFP food assistance will target 2.5 million people.*

## Syria's education system in crisis

### One in five schools no longer operational

Children are killed, maimed, orphaned and displaced as a result of the violence. Many have witnessed violence and lost family members and friends. Hundreds of thousands of children are consistently deprived of basic education. One in five schools has ceased to operate as a learning environment. Out of more than 22,000 schools across the country, an estimated 2,445 schools are damaged or destroyed, while 1,889 schools are being as collective shelters for internally displaced people. Schools in Idlib, Aleppo and Der'a have been particularly affected.

### School attendance rate as low as 6 per cent in Aleppo governorate

Insecurity is making it increasingly difficult for children, especially girls, to go to school with attendance rates plummeting in several governorates. In some areas, children have now been out of schools for as long as two years. Where schools are still open, the average attendance is about two days per week. In Aleppo, school attendance is as low as 6 per cent, according to UNICEF. Attendance in Idlib is reported at 38 per cent with 60 per cent attendance in Ar-Raqqa. Recent violence in Ar-Raqqa led to the closure of all schools (1,600) in the governorate for 10 days.

### UNRWA schools report 35 per cent attendance

Insecurity has also affected UNRWA's education programme to Palestine refugee children. During the reporting period, only 52 of UNRWA's 118 schools were operational, serving 23,518 elementary and primary students. This represents 35 per cent of the total student population. In order to support UNRWA's education efforts, the Education Department has successfully negotiated the use of an additional 20 government schools in Damascus.

### Humanitarian partners provide education support to children in need

UN agencies and partners continue to provide education support. Over the last weeks, UNICEF distributed 160 School-in-a-box kits to Talbiseh (Homs governorate), benefiting a total of 7,600 students. The distribution of recreational kits for 120 school clubs in Homs (50), Hama (50), and Quneitra (20) benefitted at least 40,000 children. Moreover, remedial support has been provided to almost 6,000 children and adolescents in 14 collective shelters for IDPs in Homs.

## Agencies scale up amid security challenges

### WFP assistance reached nearly 2 million people in March

WFP provided food assistance to about 2 million people last month. This represents a scale-up by almost 300,000 people from the February distribution. Dispatches took place under considerable security challenges in multiple governorates. Reaching certain areas of Rural Damascus, Quneitra, Der'a, Deir-ez-Zor, Ar-Raqqa, Aleppo and Idlib remains particularly challenging, WFP reports.

The scale-up is largely enabled through new partnerships with local NGOs. Food is being distributed to additional beneficiaries in Aleppo, Damascus, Deir-ez-Zor, Homs, Lattakia, Sweida and Tartous, through such cooperation. In March, WFP's NGO partners are reaching 500,000 beneficiaries, while the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) is reaching 1.5 million people.

In areas of Syria where needs are high, WFP family rations are repackaged. During food distribution, WFP food parcels are opened, repacked and distributed by SARC and other partners with additional items included by local NGOs. While WFP has offered to send unpacked items to areas of very high IDP concentrations, an agreement has been reached to maintain a standardized system of packed parcels. The unpacking of WFP parcels may explain why many Syrians are unaware that food assistance is being provided by the UN.

*Humanitarian partners join forces to prevent and control disease outbreaks before upcoming summer season.*

### **Food assistance reached about 500,000 people in opposition-held areas**

WFP has been providing food assistance to people in need from the onset of the crisis. The agency continues to have access to all 14 governorates of Syria, including to areas that are contested and to locations held by armed opposition groups. WFP and partners deliver through a constantly evolving logistical network. Under the February food distribution cycle, about 30 per cent (500,000 people) of those who received food assistance (1.7 million people) were staying in areas controlled by armed opposition groups. Still, many people remain in acute need and are beyond the reach of WFP and humanitarian partners.

### **UNICEF water support to 450,000 people in Homs and Aleppo**

Syrians across the country continue to suffer from water shortages as a result of power outages. During the reporting period, UNICEF provided support to over 450,000 people in Homs City and suburbs of Aleppo through basic repairs and resumption of generators and pumps. For example, in Al Wa'er of Homs City, an area hosting many IDP families, about 2,000 people have been assisted. Meanwhile, UNICEF continues to dispatch sodium hypochlorite to affected areas, with over 500 tons of Chlorine recently distributed to Aleppo, Hasakeh, Damascus and Deir-ez-Zor.

## **Humanitarian partners respond to health needs**

### **Preparations underway to prevent and control disease outbreaks**

As the upcoming summer season poses high risk of outbreaks of communicable diseases, the health and water, sanitation and hygiene sectors have established a task force to develop a summer contingency plan to prevent and contain possible outbreaks. WHO is supporting the Ministry of Health to further expand the Early Warning Alert and Response System to cover more affected areas, as well as procuring medicines that will be distributed in four regions for rapid response to outbreaks. Furthermore, as a preventative measure for children, the measles vaccination campaign is being carried out in schools, IDPs shelters and health facilities. Agencies have contributed to the essential contingency stock list and standard operating procedures. Preparations include hygiene promotion training in collaboration with International Medical Corps (IMC).

### **Medical supplies to affected areas in the north**

Shortages of medicines and essential medical equipment continue to impact delivery of basic health care. According to UNFPA, there are concerns about the inadequacy of available stocks and qualified personnel for reproductive health care, especially antenatal and emergency obstetric care, in many health facilities across the country, particularly in areas besieged or with large numbers of IDPs.

Drawing on supplies from the ICRC and the Danish Red Cross, WHO and SARC provided medicines to the Ministry of Health and local partners. Over the reporting period, WHO emergency medical supplies and medicines were distributed to affected areas in the north of the country, covering basic primary health care treatment for 80,000 people over three months. In addition, medical supplies for 1,600 surgical interventions and treatments for common diseases were distributed. WHO also provided cancer medicines, life-saving medicines and oxytocin to cover more than 2,500 patients. In Homs, UNICEF distributed 20 international emergency health kits to cover the needs of 20,000 people.

### **11,800 women receive maternity hospital care support**

UNFPA continues to support women in areas that are particularly hard hit, including Damascus and Aleppo. In Aleppo, UNFPA runs a voucher system that allows IDPs and host families to obtain services free of charge at the Aleppo Obstetric and Maternity Hospital, as well as at the SARC clinic in Aleppo University Dormitory, which is housing about 28,000 IDPs. UNFPA direct services reached around 1,800 women in Aleppo and over 10,000 in Damascus over the reporting period.

*UNHCR has dispatched more than 1 million items in 2013, covering an estimated 430,000 people.*

### **Mobile health teams support health needs of IDP children**

Over a two-week period last month, almost 9,000 IDP children received treatment and underwent medical check-ups by the Syrian Association for Health Promotion and Development. So far this year, over 23,000 IDP children have been reached through such support. Assistance is provided by 28 mobile teams, operating in 12 out of 14 governorates.

### **Psychosocial support capacity strengthened**

Signs of gender based violence in communal shelters and other violence affected communities are increasingly reported. To address this, agencies are strengthening the capacity to deliver psychosocial counseling and first aid. UNFPA focuses its training on Damascus, Rural Damascus, Homs, Idlib, Aleppo and Raqqa governorates. In collaboration with UNRWA, UNFPA is training health professionals and relief workers on psychosocial support and first aid. Meanwhile, the Danish Refugee Council delivered training on psychosocial support to staff and volunteers who are in daily contact with children. In Damascus, UNICEF continues to provide psychosocial support and health counseling activities in 6 shelters benefiting around 2,000 people, including 1,200 children.

### **UNICEF provides assistance to treat and prevent acute malnutrition**

Following training courses on Nutrition in Emergencies, UNICEF is supporting the Syrian Ministry of Health and its partners in the treatment and prevention of acute Malnutrition. During the month of March, more than 20,000 boxes of therapeutic and supplementary products have been distributed across the country. Almost 40,000 children under the age of five will be targeted for treatment through this intervention.

## **IDPs receive NFIs, shelter support**

### **UNHCR reached 37,000 people in Homs, Damascus and Rural Damascus**

UNHCR provided non-food items to nearly 37,000 people in Homs, Damascus and Rural Damascus during the last two weeks of March. Assistance included blankets, quilts, mattresses, diapers, kitchen sets, jerry cans, winter clothes, and plastic sheeting. Overall in 2013, UNHCR has provided assistance to an estimated 430,000 people through dispatches of more than 1 million items. A recent drop in assistance delivery was caused by insecurity hampering access to warehouses and distribution sites.

In response to the ongoing violence and displacement affecting the Baba Amr neighbourhood of Homs, the Danish Refugee Council delivered mattresses to about 12,000 people. Assistance was also provided to about 10,000 people in Rural Damascus.

Premiere Urgence distributed hygiene kits in Homs, Hama and Tartous governorates, reaching more than 160,000 beneficiaries. Some 65,000 people received winterization kits.

### **At least 46,000 IDPs benefit from rehabilitation of collective shelters**

By mid-March, the Ministry of Local Administration had officially recognized 730 collective shelters hosting more than 165,000 people. The new figure reflects recent displacement, most notably to Hama. At present, UNHCR remains on target for the rehabilitation of 122 collective shelters hosting about 46,000 people. Works are underway and will be completed during the first half of 2013.

*Many donors contributed funding over the last three weeks, yet many sectors remain critically underfunded.*

## Nearly 1.3 million Syrians have taken refuge in neighbouring countries and North Africa

### Refugee outflow continues as 7,000 people register every day

Country	Refugees registered and/or assisted awaiting registration as of 8 April 2013
Egypt	49,197
Iraq	126,440
Jordan	412,105
Lebanon	408,654
Turkey	293,761
North Africa	9,665
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,299,822</b>

Source: UNHCR as of 8 April 2013. For updated figures and more information, please visit <http://data.unhcr.org/syrian-refugees>. Above figures are based on numbers registered in each country and/or those who are assisted while waiting for registration. In addition to the above figures, around 28,000 Syrians have fled to various European countries.

Nearly 1.3 million Syrians are now either registered as refugees or being assisted in Syria's neighbouring countries and North Africa. This number significantly exceeds the 1.1 million projection of the Regional Response Plan (RRP) for Syrian Refugees for the January-June 2013 period. Over half of the current refugees have left Syria over the last three months, with UNHCR having registered about 7,000 people on average per day for the past four weeks. To enhance assistance delivery and preparedness, humanitarian agencies are revising the response and contingency plans.

## Limited funding leaves response gaps

### Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan 40 per cent funded

The Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan (SHARP) covering the period from January to June 2013 requires funding to the amount of US\$519 million. Under the plan, up to 4 million people will receive emergency assistance and support across ten sectors, including health, water and sanitation, food security, shelter and essential non-food-items.

As of 7 April, the plan was only 40 per cent funded. All sectors are underfunded, especially community services (5.7 per cent), health (18.5 per cent), education (7.5 per cent) and shelter and non-food items (27.5 per cent). The water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector has received only 7.5 per cent of required funding, just as the hot summer season is approaching and the threat of water-borne diseases is on the rise.

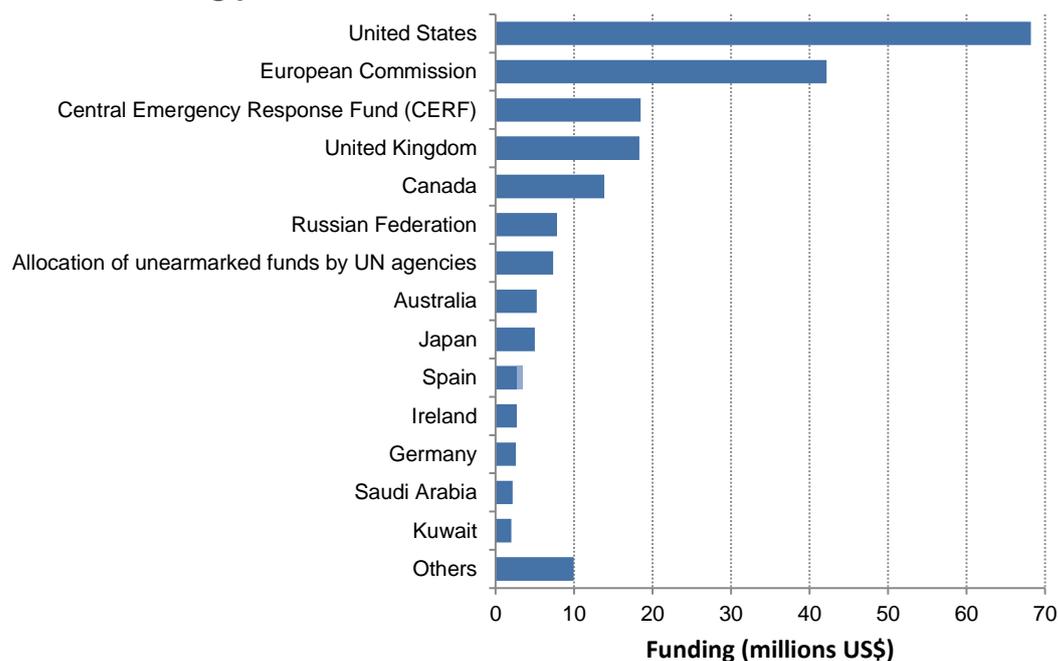
### Less than one-third of Kuwait pledges committed so far

To address funding gaps, a donor conference was hosted by the Emir of Kuwait on 30 January 2013. At the Kuwait conference, forty-three donors pledged US\$1.542 billion in funding for humanitarian action in Syria and neighbouring countries. So far, donors have committed more than US\$400 million, leaving about US\$1.1 billion uncommitted.

During the last three weeks, funding has been registered from the USA, ECHO, UK, Germany, Finland, Belgium, Bulgaria, Spain, Luxembourg, Japan, India, Canada, France, Poland, Korea, Austria and Switzerland.

*Emergency Response Fund used to enhance capacity of local NGOs to reach conflict areas.*

### SHARP funding per donor

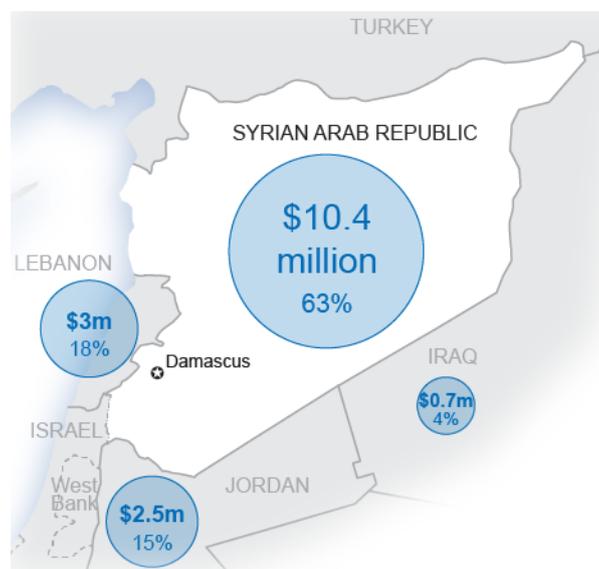


Funding received against the SHARP by donor, as registered by 7. April 2013. The Syria plan requires US\$ 519 million, of which only US\$208 million has been received (Source: Financial Tracking Service).

### Emergency Response Fund supports local NGOs in reaching conflict areas

There are currently 25 projects with a combined value of US\$8.7 million at different stages of the review and approval process of the ERF. The Fund is used inside Syria to support a strategy to enhance the capacity of local NGOs to reach conflict areas and expand the humanitarian coverage. The ERF is also prioritizing support to the logistics working group and UNDSS in order to enable more efficient humanitarian delivery and enhance access to hard-to-reach areas.

In Jordan the ERF team is looking at ways to streamline the approval process and ensure that funds are allocated more efficiently to fill response gaps. Moreover, the UN Resident Coordinator in Turkey has just approved the composition of the ERF Review Board under the leadership of UNHCR.



The Emergency Response Fund has disbursed about US\$ 16.6 million to 59 projects in four countries, to reach over 2.7 million people (Source: ERF).

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