HIGHLIGHTS

- Humanitarian needs in Syria have continued to deteriorate in the last two months. There are now an estimated 2.5 million people in need of assistance and over 350,000 registered refugees.
- The UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen talks to the media in Cairo and calls for greater focus on addressing the humanitarian crisis.
- The Arab Humanitarian Portal is launched in Kuwait at the third Annual Conference on Effective Partnership and Information Sharing for Better Humanitarian Action.

FUNDING

- Consolidated and flash appeals in the MENA region are currently 45% funded, with additional requirements totalling over 1.2 Billion.
- 11 countries from the MENA region have contributed funds to appeals in 2012. These total 75 Million with Somalia, Yemen, Lebanon, and oPt the largest recipients.

Syria: humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate

The humanitarian situation has deteriorated significantly in Syria over the last two months due to continuing violence and conflict across the country. There are now at least 2.5 million people inside of Syria that need humanitarian assistance, with that number likely to rise significantly should the violence continue over the coming months. Many Syrians have had to flee their homes to safer areas, with at least 1.2 million people taking shelter in public buildings such as schools or staying with host families. The closure of schools is denying education to thousands of children and the damage and destruction of medical facilities have left large parts of the population without access to healthcare.

More than 350,000 people have fled Syria to neighboring countries and North Africa since the beginning of the conflict – over 160,000 in the last two months alone. According to UNHCR forecasts, the number is likely to double by the end of the year if the conflict continues to deteriorate. At least three-quarters of the refugees are vulnerable women and children and refugees from other countries – Palestinian, Iraqi, Somali and others – have also found themselves caught up in the crisis and are in need of assistance.

As winter approaches, the humanitarian situation is likely to worsen. The loss of livelihoods and high levels of inflation mean that people are no longer able to purchase essential items such as fuel, heating and electricity. The situation is particularly difficult for those seeking refuge in shelters that lack adequate insulation from the cold and humidity.

In order to respond to the increasing level of humanitarian needs, both the Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan (SHARP) and the Regional Refugee Response Plan were revised in September 2012. The SHARP now seeks to raise US$348 million to implement 57 projects in 10 sectors across all Syrian governorates and the Regional Response Plan seeks US$488 million to support up to 710,000 refugees in need of assistance. Both include an extensive winterization program aimed at rehabilitating communal shelters, distributing non-food items such as mattresses, blankets, quilts and winter clothing and providing cash assistance to help affected families cope with immediate domestic and shelter needs.

Media briefing in Cairo on the humanitarian situation

A media briefing was organized on 18 October 2012 in Cairo to highlight the deteriorating situation in Syria and call on countries to support humanitarian response efforts. Mr. Radhouane Nouicer, Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria and Mr. Panos Moumtzis, Regional Refugee Coordinator for Syrian Refugees attended the briefing and...
expressed concern at the increasing number of people in need of assistance. They praised neighboring countries for keeping their borders open to refugees and highlighted the hospitality of families inside and outside of Syria that have taken the displaced into their homes.

The UN and its partners are doing all it can to cope with the situation, increasing its provision of food, health services, shelter, water, sanitation and psychosocial support. These efforts are being severely hindered, however, by a lack of resources. The SHARP is only 45 per cent funded (as of 30 October 2012) and the Regional Refugee Plan has just received 29 per cent of required funds (as of 30 October 2012). Mr. Nouicer and Mr. Moutsizis called on the international community to give generously and quickly, otherwise the ability of the humanitarian community to reach all those that need help and to prepare for the winter will be hampered, putting hundreds of thousands of lives at risk.

**Yemen: UN Humanitarian Coordinator calls on the international community to focus on the humanitarian situation**

A media briefing was held in Cairo on 1 October 2012 with the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen, Mr. Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed. Mr. Ould Cheikh Ahmed was returning from the fourth ‘Friends of Yemen’ conference in New York held on 27 September 2012. The conference reinforced the international community’s support for Yemen’s political transition, bringing the sum of financial support pledged to US$7.9 billion. The UN Humanitarian Coordinator welcomed this support and commented that the political transition in Yemen is proceeding in the right direction; however, he mentioned that there are three key challenges that are impeding further progress: the precarious security situation, the faltering economy and the worsening humanitarian situation.

The briefing focused on the worsening humanitarian situation. Yemen is the poorest Arab country, and in 2011, with the breakdown of social services and new displacements in the south, the humanitarian situation deteriorated and expanded to new areas. It is estimated that more than 10 million people are food insecure, with food insecurity particularly severe in the highlands. Malnutrition is most prevalent in the western coastal areas, and across the country there are almost one million children that are acutely malnourished. Water scarcity is also a major concern, with more than 12 million people with no access to safe water, which in turn has led to the outbreak of diseases such as cholera and diarrhoea.

Despite the tragic situation, an even worse scenario has been averted by a strong humanitarian presence and timely interventions last year. International organizations such as UN agencies and NGOs are present on the ground, and by working with local partners are able to reach some of the most vulnerable areas.

There is a Humanitarian Response Plan for 2012 that seeks to raise US$600 million for humanitarian activities in Yemen. Mr. Ould Cheikh Ahmed highlighted his concern that it is currently only 54 per cent funded and called on the international community, including Arab states to do more to alleviate the humanitarian situation. Not addressing the humanitarian situation could potentially undermine progress in the political transition and effect regional stability. The UN Humanitarian Coordinator also called for greater coordination and information sharing among humanitarian actors from different regions to
Regional Humanitarian Funding Update (1 November 2012)

SITUATION OVERVIEW
1. Consolidated and Flash appeals in the MENA region received US$1.07 billion. The largest recipient was Yemen, with US$317 million, followed by oPt with US$276 million. In total, the appeals are 45% funded with a shortfall of 55%.
2. The requirements for the Syria Regional Response Plan have been revised to US$488 million. The plan includes Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq and is currently 29% funded.
3. Eleven countries from the MENA region contributed funds in 2012 for humanitarian appeals worldwide. The amount totaled US$75 million and went to 29 countries. The largest donors were Afghanistan, Egypt, Kuwait, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Israel and UAE.
4. The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) distributed funds to eight countries in the MENA region in 2012. The largest recipient was Pakistan with US$36.7 million, followed by Syria with US$36.5 million. Nine countries from the MENA region made contributions or pledges to the CERF region in 2012. The largest recipient was Yemen, with US$317 million, followed by oPt with US$276 million.

AID FLOW FROM MENA REGION - BY DONOR, 2012 (US$ Million)

- **UAE**: US$34.98
- **Saudi Arabia**: US$14.18
- **Turkey**: US$9.92
- **Qatar**: US$7.55
- **Kuwait**: US$7.50
- **Morocco**: US$0.40
- **Israel**: US$0.21
- **Egypt**: US$0.02
- **Pakistan**: US$0.01
- **Afghanistan**: US$0.003
- **Bahrain**: US$2.0

Total contributions from the MENA region to CERF in 2012 were US$36.5 million. Contributions from the MENA region were redirected to various countries, with the largest contributions going to Afghanistan, Egypt, Kuwait, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Israel and UAE.

AID FLOW FROM MENA REGION - BY DESTINATION COUNTRY, 2012 (US$ Million)

- **Somalia**: US$36.5 million
- **Yemen**: US$36.7 million
- **Lebanon**: US$2.6 million
- **oPt**: US$4 million
- **Syria**: US$317 million
- **oPt**: US$276 million
- **Jordan**: US$10 million
- **Comoros**: US$0.5 million
- **Not Allocated**: US$1.52 million
- **Central African Republic**: US$0.15 million
- **Syrian Arab Republic**: US$488 million
- **Not Allocated**: US$1.15 million
- **Syrian Arab Republic**: US$2.01 million

**Notes:**
1. Funding information: OCHA FTS, as of 2nd September 2012, all changes are reflected on http://fts.unocha.org
2. Revised Syria Regional Response Plan August 2012
3. 4. OCHA FTS

**Requirements**: 488 m
**Funding**: 142 m
**Funding Coverage**: 29%

**Total Funding and Shortfall for Appeals in 2012**
- **Afghanistan**: 67%
- **Pakistan**: 44%
- **Syria**: 54%
- **Yemen**: 54%

**Regional funding for Syria**

**Regional Contributions to CERF in 2012 (US$)**

- **Qatar**: 3,000,000
- **Kuwait**: 1,000,000
- **Turkey**: 200,000
- **Saudi Arabia**: 150,000
- **UAE**: 50,000
- **Israel**: 20,000
- **Egypt**: 15,000
- **Pakistan**: 10,000
- **Afghanistan**: 1,000
The UAE Office for the Coordination of Foreign Aid (OCFA) was established in 2008 by the UAE Federal Cabinet as part of the government’s drive towards greater transparency and accountability in its foreign aid activities. OCFA is a federal entity reporting to the Cabinet and its President is HH Sheikh Hamdan Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Ruler’s Representative in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi.

OCFA’s vision is for the UAE to be internationally recognized as one of the world’s top donors to humanitarian response and sustainable development. In working towards this vision, OCFA focuses on five core areas of work: (1) recording and reporting on the UAE’s official and private aid flows; (2) humanitarian information and support services; (3) capacity-building for the donor organizations and their personnel; (4) advisory services on issues of policy, monitoring and evaluation; and (5) communications and media work to raise the profile of the UAE as a foreign aid donor.

Recording and reporting

OCFA has produced three annual reports to date on the UAE’s foreign aid. The 2011 report, featuring the activities of over 30 donor organizations, is available at ocfa.gov.ae

OCFA also reports the UAE’s aid flows to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Financial Tracking Service (FTS). OCFA works with both organizations to ensure that the UAE’s foreign aid reporting standards are compatible with international best practice. Following the UAE’s submission of its 2009 data, the OECD issued a report identifying the UAE as the first and only country not a member of the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC) to report its official development assistance (ODA) using the DAC’s Creditor Reporting System (CRS). As a result, the UAE was ranked the 14th most generous donor in 2009, when its ODA was calculated as a proportion of Gross National Income (GNI).

In 2012, OCFA introduced the Foreign Aid Tracking Service (FATS), an online database system that enables the UAE donors to report their aid flows directly, and allows users to access the data used by OCFA in its reports and to customize their own reports http://ocfa.gov.ae/en/Pages/Fats.aspx

Humanitarian Information and Support Services

OCFA provides information and support services to UAE donor organizations involved in humanitarian response, such as the UAE Red Crescent Authority, Khalifa Foundation, and Mohamed bin Rashed Establishment. The information services seek to enable them to respond in a better prepared and more coordinated manner and include Emergency in Focus reports, the provision of up-to-date information about current emergencies, Humanitarian Country Profile reports, and the Humanitarian Flash reports, a monthly overview of current and possible future crises.
Capacity-building

OCFA aims to help build a foreign aid sector consisting of organizations that perform to international standards. OCFA provides regular training opportunities, for the personnel of UAE donor organizations on humanitarian, development and organizational management issues ranging from disaster management to development effectiveness and evaluations. OCFA also provides internship opportunities for Emirati students, briefs diplomats and civil servants on the UAE’s foreign aid and, in partnership with academic institutions, offers humanitarian and development seminars for university degree courses.

In May 2011, in collaboration with OCHA, OCFA published a three part, bilingual (Arabic-English) manual, Responding to Emergencies. The manual provides guidance for aid workers and an introduction to the international humanitarian response system. In view of strong demand, the manual is being revised for a second edition.

Advisory Services

OCFA provides expert advice and guidance to the UAE Government and donor organizations on a range of topics. This involves collaboration with other government entities on issues such as the Millennium Development Goals and Climate Change Finance, or on country-specific initiatives such as the Friends of Yemen Group. Research is carried out to provide a basis for decision-making, and to enhance the quality of OCFA’s products and services.

OCFA has published standards and guidelines for recording UAE Foreign Aid Data. These Standards are used in the data collection process for UAE Foreign Aid reports, and for the submission of data to the OECD and UN FTS.

Communications and Media

OCFA conveys its messages through its website ocfa.gov.ae, its Twitter account (@UAEForeignAid), a monthly newsletter - Musa'adat, and through regular press releases about its activities in local and online media, as well as releases about the UAE foreign aid sector in general.

Since its establishment, OCFA has built a steadily expanding strategic partnership with OCHA - with the Headquarters in New York and Geneva, the Regional Office in Cairo and, most recently, the new Gulf Liaison Office in Abu Dhabi. This partnership will be pursued further in the coming years, with the aim of promoting improved services to the victims of humanitarian emergencies around the world.

The Arab Humanitarian Portal is launched in Kuwait

On 12-13 September 2012, the Arab Humanitarian Portal (Arabhum) was launched during the third Annual Conference on Effective Partnership and Information Sharing for Better Humanitarian Action organized by OCHA and the International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO).

The idea for the Portal stemmed from the gap that exists between what international organizations publish on humanitarian emergencies and the information produced in the Arab World including the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). This information gap
ArabHum promotes information sharing and coordination among international humanitarian organizations and those based in the Arab world.

encouraged a network of 10 organizations, led by the OCHA Gulf Liaison Office, to create the Arab Humanitarian Portal.

The aim of the portal is twofold: first, to compile and centralize humanitarian information products such as manuals, international conventions, guidelines, situation reports, humanitarian news, assessments, and donations in Arabic and English. Second, the portal aims to be a platform that can promote dialogue and improve the flow of information between international organizations and humanitarian organizations from the GCC.

Information sharing is seen as a central component for supporting more structured and coordinated humanitarian work and strengthening links between different members of the humanitarian community. It is a necessary first step to build trust and confidence among international organizations and those based in the Arab World.

Arabhum is available in Arabic and English and is currently being populated with news, maps, training manuals, up-coming events information and employment opportunities. The site is currently being hosted by OCHA on behalf of the Humanitarian Information Network, and there are specialists located in Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates that maintain and update the website.

The Arab Humanitarian Portal is accessible at www.arabhum.net and you can share any information products or publications by emailing them to ochagulf@un.org. OCHA invites all its partners to explore Arabhum and to share the website widely among the humanitarian community.

A video on Arabhum can be viewed at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3p49Q3eNCnY&feature=relmfu and you can access Arabhum content on both Facebook (http://www.facebook.com/arabhumanitarian.portal) and Twitter (https://twitter.com/ochagulf)