



Lebanon Update

Situation in North Lebanon

December 23 - December 30, 2011



Highlights of the week

Numbers:

The number of registered Syrians with UNHCR and the High Relief Commission (HRC) is 4,840. Since last week, there has been an increase of some 100 persons mostly due the fact that a number of displaced Syrians had crossed into Lebanon earlier but only recently approached our Office.

Health:

Mobile clinics of UNHCR's implementing partner International Medical Corps (IMC) circulated among the displaced in collective shelters where IMC doctors provided medical examinations to those in need. In addition, and as part of the objective to improve the health environment of the displaced, IMC organized awareness sessions on the symptoms and ways of transmission of the influenza, proper use of medication and children's safety from indoor and outdoor accidents.

Distribution:

Throughout the week, UNHCR and partners continued to distribute food, non-food and winterization items to newly registered Syrians and the most vulnerable of the host families with the collaboration of Caritas Migrant Center that is currently providing hygiene kits.

Education:

This week, UNHCR and partners provided remedial classes to some 330 students to help them adapt to the Lebanese curriculum. In addition, 85 displaced and Lebanese parents benefited from awareness sessions on the psychological, social, and behavioral impact of displacement on children and the importance of a balanced diet for children and infants in different villages in Wadi Khaled. This comes as part of a broader initiative aiming at improving the protection environment among the displaced.

Protection:

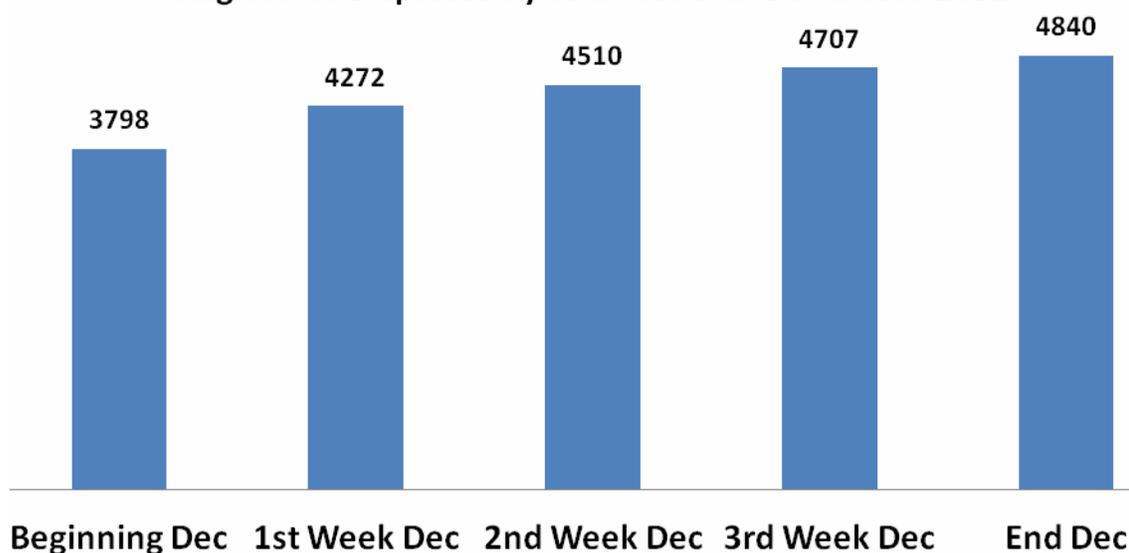
On December 27, three Lebanese were shot dead in the Bekayaa village of Wadi Khaled. They were reportedly shot by Syrian armed forces. According to the Internal Security Forces (ISF) of Lebanon, investigations are ongoing. Wadi Khaled residents and those displaced in northern Lebanon are increasingly worried over their safety. UNHCR maintains regular contacts with law enforcement authorities as well as with civil society representatives to follow up the security situation of the displaced population in the north of Lebanon. An additional 17 wounded persons were referred to hospitals in the north this week. UNHCR teams visited the hospitals of Qobeyat, Halba and Tripoli to follow-up on their circumstances. Reportedly, all the wounded were injured from gunshots in Homs and Al Qusayr areas.

Situational Overview

Beginning in April 2011, Lebanon witnessed an influx of some 5,000 Syrians refugees into northern Lebanon. Many subsequently returned to Syria, while others relocated inside Lebanon. Cumulatively, since April 2011, UNHCR and the HRC registered and assisted over 9,000 persons. Currently there are 4,840 persons (905 families) registered in the North and Akkar, residing mostly with host families in difficult circumstances.

Those who remain are unwilling to return until stability and security is restored in their Syrian villages. Many individuals and families have been deeply affected by the events that caused them to flee, and are reluctant to go home until the situation stabilizes.

Registered Displaced Syrians Trend in December 2011



Age Group	Females	Percentage	Males	Percentage	Total
0-04	431	20%	505	24%	936
05-11	473	22%	466	22%	939
12-18	336	16%	366	17%	702
18-29	515	24%	449	21%	964
30-39	322	15%	321	15%	643
40-49	190	9%	210	10%	400
50-59	81	4%	83	4%	164
60+	50	2%	42	2%	92
Total	2,398	50%	2,442	50%	4,840

Trends	1st Week Dec	2nd Week Dec	3rd Week Dec	End Dec
Newly Registered	424	138	197	134
Re-activated	50	100	0	188
Internally Moving	0	0	0	39
Returned to Syria	0	0	0	49
Absent during Distribution	0	0	0	101
Active Population	0	0	0	4,840

Currently, 4,840 Syrians are registered with UNHCR and the HRC. A number of displaced Syrians had crossed into Lebanon earlier but only approached our Office during this week. Local mayors and NGOs played an active role in referring displaced Syrians to UNHCR-HRC teams for registration.

Identification and registration occurs on a daily basis by outreach teams. UNHCR and the HRC verify the numbers during the monthly distribution of food/non-food items. Persons found no longer to be in the area are de-registered. Many of these are known to have returned to Syria.

Coordination

A very solid coordinated response and positive working relations with the government's HRC and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) were established at the outset to the benefit of the refugees and hosting communities. These partnerships continue and together with other UN and NGO partners the needs of refugees and affected communities are being holistically addressed. They include the following:

- Protection interventions to ensure safety, physical integrity and non-refoulement;
- Assistance to meet basic needs;
- Education and remedial classes;
- Provision of medical and psycho-social care.

A common data base is in use by the HRC and UNHCR and referral mechanisms established to enable the displaced persons to access assistance through specialized partners.

Protection

The vast majority Syrians who have arrived in the past many weeks have come from Tal Kalakh and Homs. They express fear and anxiety about returning, and most do not feel that the situation is safe enough for them to do so.

Most of those who have recently arrived have crossed at official border crossings expressing fear of going through the unofficial ones as the Syrian army is reportedly heavily present along the borders and continued reports point to the presence of planted land mines on the Syrian side.

UNHCR maintains regular contacts with the Lebanese authorities and civil society representatives to follow-up the security situation of the displaced population in the

north of Lebanon. UNHCR has provided guidance to the government on the appropriate treatment of army deserters.

UNHCR continues to follow-up on the cases of Syrians who are detained for illegal entry or stay.

According to UNHCR's estimates, some 150 wounded Syrians have been treated in various hospitals in Lebanon since the beginning of the influx. Expenses related to their treatment are covered by the Lebanese authorities through the High Relief Commission. Their treatment and needs are followed up by UNHCR and partners.

Community Services

Outreach workers from the MoSA and partners continue to visit the displaced Syrians at homes and in schools in Wadi Khaled, Tall Bire, and Tripoli in order to counsel them, assess their needs, and refer newcomers to UNHCR and HRC for registration.

Shelter and other projects

Most of the displaced Syrians reside with host families. Just over 200 persons are accommodated in three (abandoned) schools: Al-Rama, Al-Ibra and Al-Mouanseh schools. The schools were initially not well equipped (with sanitation and hygiene facilities) to receive large numbers of people, but have been improved and are regularly monitored. The hall of Khorbet Daoud Mosque has also been rehabilitated to host displaced families, should there be a need in the future.

UNHCR and the Government initiated the renovation of Al Rama, Al Mouanseh, Kashlak schools, and the hall of Khorbet Daoud Mosque, while the renovation of the Al Ibra school was undertaken by the Al-Bashaer Islamic Association.

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) together with partner organizations and outreach workers have identified host family residences in pressing need of improvement in preparation for the winter. NRC has begun to provide these families with coupons enabling them to renovate their homes.

UNHCR's implementing partner, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) commenced the rehabilitation of two public gardens: the first is located in the Social Development Center (SDC) of Amayer and the second next to Moukaybel municipality. DRC is currently monitoring the work of local contractors hired to complete the project. In addition, DRC started working on renovation work and equipment for the public library in Aidamoon village, and the cine-club in Wadi Khaled.

Distribution (Food/ NFI)

UNHCR along with the Government, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Caritas Migrant Centre, World Vision, and UNICEF, distribute food and non-food items to the displaced on a monthly basis. UNHCR continues to provide food and non-food items to newly registered families who were not on the UNHCR-HRC database during the last distribution.

Items Distributed	December 28, 2011	Cumulative
Mattresses	200	4,589
Blankets	0	4,857
Food kits	65	5,557
Diapers	0	886
Baby milk	2	1,068
Baby kits	0	424
Hygiene kits	0	3,192
Women's underwear	0	714
Tuition fees	53	465
Books	53	465
Stationary	75	596
Uniforms	53	465
Family kit (kitchen utensils)	0	48
Clothes coupons of 75,000 LBP	0	1,113
Fuel coupons (20 liters)	48	11,745

Education

The Minister of Education is facilitating the enrolment of displaced children in public schools. UNHCR is covering the cost of school fees, books, uniforms, notebooks, and stationary. UNHCR and its implementing partner Save the Children Sweden (SCS) are providing remedial classes for Syrian displaced children given the differences between the Lebanese and Syrian school curricula. A total of 465 displaced children have enrolled into public schools.

Health

UNHCR, HRC and World Health Organization (WHO) have established a referral system so that registered displaced Syrians have access to health care services through the most specialized partner. Public Health Centres, Social Development Centres of the MoSA, and a few NGO-run health care centres in the region are providing primary health care and medication to the displaced. UNHCR covers up to 85% of diagnostic tests. The HRC covers the cost of secondary and tertiary health care through local hospitals in the north. UNHCR provides additional support where needed. The HRC and UNHCR's implementing partner, the International Medical Corp (IMC), reached agreements with five hospitals for discounted rates in the provision of necessary health care. Medecins sans Frontieres (MSF) started the implementation of a mental health project jointly with the Makassed Public Health Centre (PHC). A psychologist will be deployed in Makassed's centre to provide mental health counselling to all Wadi Khaled residents, including the displaced. Moreover, IMC has launched a series of trainings to the medical and social staff in the PHCs, Social Development Centres

(SDCs) and partner agencies on the best techniques and tools to support persons affected by armed conflict and on psychological first aid. IMC has also provided a basic computer skills training to Al-Makassed primary health centre's employees to improve the reporting procedures on cases in need of primary health care. Since May, 550 persons have received primary health care services while 230 persons have received secondary healthcare services.

Capacity Building

UNCHR has invested in strengthening the capacities of government's and local partners through:

- Regular coordination meetings and joint plans of action;
- Technical and material support to the HRC in regard to registration, data collection and verification;
- Training and guidance to outreach teams composed of staff from MoSA and partners;
- Training provided to MoSA Social Development Centres on the protection of refugees and internally displaced persons in the event of an emergency;
- Establishment of medical referral mechanisms and training for the systematic entry of data in the health referral system;
- Training to medical and social services professionals on the best techniques to support persons affected by armed conflict;
- The establishment of referral mechanism to ensure timely attention to specific needs;
- Training of 30 school teachers on UNHCR mandate, Group Management in Remedial Classes and Positive Disciplines;
- Training to outreach workers on registration and proGres database used to keep track of the record of every registered displaced person, their bio-data, and their legal and psycho-social status;
- Training to outreach workers on and volunteers on psychological first aid and mental health;
- Implementing quick impact projects such as public gardens, public library and a cine club;
- Training to local health centres on basic computer skills.