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# syria humanitarian response



unrwa

a weekly update for unrwa's donors

16 november 2012 | issue 18

## situational overview

The humanitarian situation remained grave during the last week. An escalation in armed conflict in Aleppo and Damascus/Rif Damascus has compounded humanitarian needs. In particular, the evolving situation in Yarmouk camp in Damascus and neighbouring areas of Zahera, Tadamon, Yalda and Hajar al-Aswad has resulted in a number of unconfirmed deaths and injuries as well as a growing sense of apprehension throughout the Palestine refugee community.

Based on field assessments in Syria, UNRWA estimates that the refugee population in need has surpassed the planning figure on which the Agency's Regional Syria Humanitarian Response Plan was based (225,000) and now stands at over 300,000 Palestine refugees in Syria, three-quarters of the population.

UNRWA has received requests for emergency cash assistance from over 59,000 households in Syria with projections that the current rate of requests will mean the Agency will receive 100,000 applications for cash assistance by the end of the year. UNRWA anticipates that its current available resources for cash assistance will be exhausted by January 2013.

Currently, 1,700 registered Palestine refugees have fled Syria for Jordan. The number of Palestine refugees from Syria that have approached UNRWA in Lebanon is estimated to be 9,666 individuals (2,248 households).

## syria

At a glance:

- Significant deterioration in the overall security situation this week, particularly

- in the areas of Aleppo, Rif Aleppo, and Damascus/Rif Damascus;
- There have been intensive clashes in Yarmouk camp, resulting in the reported deaths of at least 13 refugees;
- Clashes and shelling continue in Harasta, Douma, Zamalka, and Darraya. The proximity of Darraya to West Mezzah, where the UNRWA field office is situated, meant that normal working hours were temporarily disrupted.

Increased exposure to violence and displacement throughout Syria are compounding the humanitarian needs of Palestine refugees. Food remains a critical priority for all, and non-food items included in UNRWA's response plan (in particular: mattresses, blankets, quilts, and hygiene kits) are needed.

UNRWA is re-doubling preparations to support Palestine refugees during the forthcoming winter season. Conflict-affected refugees are expected to face grave challenges during the winter season in Syria, as many of them are no longer able to afford warm clothes, blankets and quilts. Anticipated areas of concern include the limited availability of fuel for heating and the plight of refugees whose homes have been damaged or destroyed.

UNRWA seeks support from donors for projects involving the procurement of items to help vulnerable refugees cope with the winter and the provision of cash allowing refugees to purchase warm clothes and household items.

There are currently **1,886** internally-displaced persons (IDPs) sheltering in six UNRWA school buildings. The displaced population residing in UNRWA school buildings is predominantly composed of women (approximately 34 per cent) and children (approximately 40 per cent).

### **Damascus**

Conflict has continued to escalate in Damascus, particularly in the area of Yarmouk, which has been severely affected by shelling in the camp and hostilities in the neighbouring areas of Zahera, Tadamon, Yalda and Hajar al-Aswad. UNRWA has received reports that at least 13 Palestine refugees have been killed in Yarmouk this week. Other areas of Damascus, such as Harasta, Douma, Zamalka, Midan, and particularly Darraya, have been inaccessible due to clashes and air strikes. As a precaution, work at the UNRWA field office in the Mezzeh area was temporarily disrupted on 12 November. In Sbeineh, a shell landed within the compound of a school. No casualties or injuries were reported and damages are being surveyed for repairs of the facilities.

UNRWA facilities are operational with the exception of Yarmouk, Seita Zeinab, Douma, and Sbeineh.

#### **IDPs in two UNRWA school buildings in Damascus as of 7 November 2012**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Children</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yarmouk	195	311	237	743
Khan Eshieh	91	104	151	346
Ramadan	74	78	145	297
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>1,386</b>

### **Aleppo**

The situation in Aleppo remains volatile, with increased concerns over access to Neirab and Ein el Tal camps due to checkpoints and heavy clashes in the vicinity of

the camps. There are reports of the heavy presence of armed groups in the areas around Ein el Tal Camp. Clashes continue in the vicinity of the airport adjacent to Neirab Camp. Intensified conflict has also been reported in the area of Jdaydeh and north of Aleppo.

Approximately **1,210** banking cards have been distributed to vulnerable Palestine refugees in the Aleppo area with cash assistance distribution planned in the coming weeks. UNRWA facilities remain operational.

#### **IDPs in four UNRWA school buildings in Aleppo as of 7 November 2012**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Children</b>	<b>Total</b>
Neirab	87	91	76	254
Ein el Tal	38	63	145	246
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>500</b>

#### **Dera'a**

The situation remains volatile in Dera'a, with reports of conflict close to the UNRWA health centre in the city that caused the temporary closure of the facility. The road to Damascus remains open with intermittent closures due to security operations. The Agency has distributed ATM banking cards to approximately **2,400** families who are expected to receive emergency cash assistance in the coming weeks. UNRWA schools remain temporarily closed due to high risks of exposure to violence for children.

#### **Hama**

There are reports that no casualties or injuries were caused by two shells that landed in the camp earlier this week. The camp remains calm despite the incident and shelling in the vicinity of the Citadel. Access to Hama from Homs remains restricted, with the closure of the main road forcing vehicles to access Hama via a detour through Salamiyeh. UNRWA facilities remain operational.

#### **Latakia**

There are reports of increased security in the town and additional checkpoints. UNRWA facilities remain operational.

#### **Homs**

The situation remains tense, with continued clashes in the city centre and Bab Amr. A building in the camp was demolished by authorities citing the need for enhanced surveying and security of the entrance of the camp. Early this week, a large military presence and temporary closures of roads caused restricted movement from the camp and a lack of commodities in local shops as residents clamoured to stockpile food and basic household items. UNRWA cash assistance and emergency food distribution for 3,500 households in the camp is currently underway.

## **jordan**

There are a total of 1,700 Palestine refugees from Syria who have entered Jordan, representing a slight increase over the course of this week. Of this total number, there are 179 refugees residing in Cyber City and approximately 30 refugees in

Za'atari camp. It is estimated that 76 per cent of Palestine refugees from Syria in Jordan comprises women and children. Female-headed households make up a quarter of the 393 Palestine refugee households from Syria that have entered Jordan. The needs of Palestine refugees from Syria remain acute in the fields of emergency health care, food, and NFIs including winter items.

The Agency remains concerned about reported cases of *refoulement* of refugees attempting to cross into Jordan and continues to liaise on such cases with the relevant authorities.

## lebanon

Currently, there are **9,666** Palestine refugees from Syria who have entered Lebanon. UNRWA has organised child-friendly spaces and the introduction of learning materials for Palestine refugee children from Syria as part of its programme of alternative education. There are currently **655** children participating in the alternative education activities, representing approximately 60 per-cent of the **1,086** Palestine refugee students from Syria who had requested to attend UNRWA schools.

## current funding requirement

UNRWA is seeking **USD 54 million** through the revised Regional Syria Humanitarian Response Plan to ensure the provision of humanitarian assistance to Palestine refugees in Syria and those who have fled across Syria's borders into neighbouring Lebanon and Jordan. The focus of UNRWA's response plan is Syria. UNRWA is seeking **USD 44 million** for the six-month period from September 2012 to February 2013 to address pressing humanitarian needs. The Agency is also requesting over **USD 8 million** to support Palestine refugees who have fled to Lebanon, and **USD 1.5 million** for those currently seeking refuge in Jordan.

So far, and since the launch of the previous regional response plan earlier this year, **USD 17.567 million** has been received from the United States, Italy, Sweden (Sida), the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) through its Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and Emergency Response Fund (ERF), the Bizkaia regional government, the Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department of the European Commission (ECHO), Switzerland, and private donors. UNRWA is continuing negotiations with several donors for support to Palestine refugees affected by the crisis



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