

IOM Regional Response to the Syria Crisis

17 January 2013

This report is produced by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on its humanitarian response for the crisis in Syria. The summary covers events and activities until 17 January 2013.



- **Syria:** The Emergency Relief Coordinator declared Syria a **Level-3** Emergency; efforts are underway to appoint a regional Humanitarian Coordinator to lead the response to the crisis for the next **3** months.
- **Jordan:** IOM organized a visit of the border areas, a transit centre and Za'atri Camp for **17** foreign officials.
- **Lebanon:** To date, IOM distributed a total of **11,699** rechargeable lamps, **141** diaper bags, **1,667** house cleaning kits, **15,776** shelter support items, **5,140** hygiene kits and **49,868** winter kits to **44,803** Syrian refugees and **39,489** Lebanese returnees.
- **Iraq:** To date, IOM has distributed a total of **5,651** NFI kits to **25,488** Syrian refugees residing in camps; and **46** NFI packages to **265** Iraqi returnees. A **45,000**-litre water tank has been installed in the Alkasek Camp in Ninewa.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

SYRIA The on-going internal conflict continues to force Syrians to seek refuge across the border in neighbouring countries. According to UNOCHA reports, the total number of refugees registered and/or assisted in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey has reached almost **600,000** people.¹

UNOCHA estimates that **4 million** people are in need of humanitarian assistance across all **14** governorates, **3 million** are food insecure, and **2 million** people are internally displaced of which **1.5 million** are at imminent risk of food insecurity.²

During the reporting period, heavy snowfall, rain, and strong winds exacerbated the need for shelter, food, and non-food items across the region.

Insecurity limits access for humanitarian actors to areas across most of the country, including areas in rural Damascus, however with weather conditions permitting; movements within Damascus city are possible.³ IOM works closely with UNDSS to secure clearance for operations outside of Damascus city. IOM and partners are able to use the access road to the border with Lebanon to transport refugees and vulnerable and stranded migrants.

JORDAN There are currently **131,113** registered Syrian refugees in Jordan⁴. The Jordanian government estimates that over **200,000** Syrians have entered the country since March 2011.

The movement of Syrian refugees crossing the border into Jordan decreased to **3,078** in the past week, from **3,927** during the previous reporting period. Severe weather conditions across the region may have contributed to this outcome.

Refugees continue to cross the border into Jordan; plans are underway to open a second camp in Zarqa by February 2013. OCHA reports that although humanitarian agencies have helped hundreds of thousands of people with basic relief items, including blankets, mattresses, cooking sets, hygiene items, drugs and medical supplies, the aid is rapidly outpaced by ever growing needs due to cold weather conditions.⁵

Harsh weather conditions caused the displacement of groups of refugees within Za'atri camp. Heavy rainfall flooded some shelters, while some tents were blown away by strong wind. Efforts to salvage tents and construct barrier walls with mud did little to prevent flooding of shelter areas. Refugees, frustrated at the standards of living in the camp, attacked aid workers with sticks and stones after tents collapsed due to the weather events. Humanitarian actors are working with the community to improve conditions.

¹ OCHA Humanitarian Bulletin, Issue 16: 25 December 2012 – 7 January 2013

² Syria Crisis Report – 15 January 2013

³ Taken from the IOM Senior Management Meeting on 3 December 2012

⁴ <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>

⁵ <http://www.unocha.org/crisis/syria>

General Brigadier Al-Zwahiri, has been appointed as the as the Administrator of the refugee camps within Jordan. At a donor meeting convened by the Government on 17 January, IOM commended the Government's efforts and offered support and expertise to assist the Government with managing Al-Habat - a new refugee camp constructed within Zarqa prefecture that has the capacity to host **5,500** refugees.

LEBANON

Over **139,000** Syrian refugees are registered with UNHCR in Lebanon; a further **55,000** are scheduled to be registered. The pace of refugees entering Lebanon remains steady with the largest population settling in North Lebanon (**70,751**), followed by Bekaa (**53,351**), Beirut and South Lebanon (**15,173**).

In early January, the Government plan to respond to the influx of refugees was approved by Cabinet. The plan lists measures to protect and support Syrian refugees. The plan also includes provisions for the Higher Relief Commission (HRC) to assist Lebanese returnees. The Cabinet's decision has been well received and marks a step towards Government ownership of the response.

IRAQ

The numbers of refugees arriving is on the rise. Since mid-December, the number of Syrian refugees in Iraq has risen by over **6,432** to **72,480**.⁶

Due to civil unrest and demonstrations in Anbar, Ninewa, and other governorates of Iraq, all border crossings into Iraq are now closed to Syrian refugees (as of 13 January), including the Treebil Border crossing on the border with Jordan. Authorities are unclear as to when they will reopen the borders to refugees however returnees are still allowed to cross into Iraq.

During the period 26 December to 8 January, **155** returnee households (**930** individuals) registered with the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD). Since July 2012, **6,000** Households (**36,342** individuals) have registered for assistance. Priority needs of returnees include: NFIs, food, legal assistance, shelter, and access to employment and education.

TURKEY

On 12 January, the Government of Turkey reported that the total number of Syrians registered and accommodated in **14** camps in **7** provinces has increased to **153,307** individuals. During the reporting period, the Government registered **3,266** new arrivals and **1,560** individuals who returned voluntarily to Syria. The Government ensured that access roads to the camps remained open despite heavy snow in Adiyaman and Gaziantep provinces. The Government is addressing the issue of shortage of shelter and will open the Nizip 2 camp (a container site) by the end of January.

⁶ UNHCR Portal - Syria Regional Refugee Response – accessed on 16 January 2013 (<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=103>)

IOM COUNTRY OPERATIONS

1. Syria Operations

Emergency Repatriation of Stranded Migrants

During the reporting period, IOM prioritized securing funding to continue the evacuation of stranded and vulnerable migrants. To date, IOM provided departure assistance for **3,223** Third-Country Nationals (TCN).

IOM Damascus is working closely with UNHCR and the Lebanese government on an agreement to allow all stranded migrants in Syria to obtain transit visas to Beirut in order to travel through/from Beirut's Rafik Hariri International Airport.

IOM is in the process of assisting **88** vulnerable migrants from the Philippines to return home who are due to depart from Beirut International Airport. IOM is coordinating with the Embassy of the Philippines to determine a departure date for them once the remaining **22** exit permissions have been secured. All of the migrants are women who worked as domestic workers in Syria.

791 stranded migrants still remain in the pipeline for departure, out of which **244** vulnerable migrants have completed the rapid screening registration and are ready to travel. These migrants come from Yemen (**56**), Sudan (**128**), Egypt (**37**), South Sudan (**20**), and Belarus (**3**).

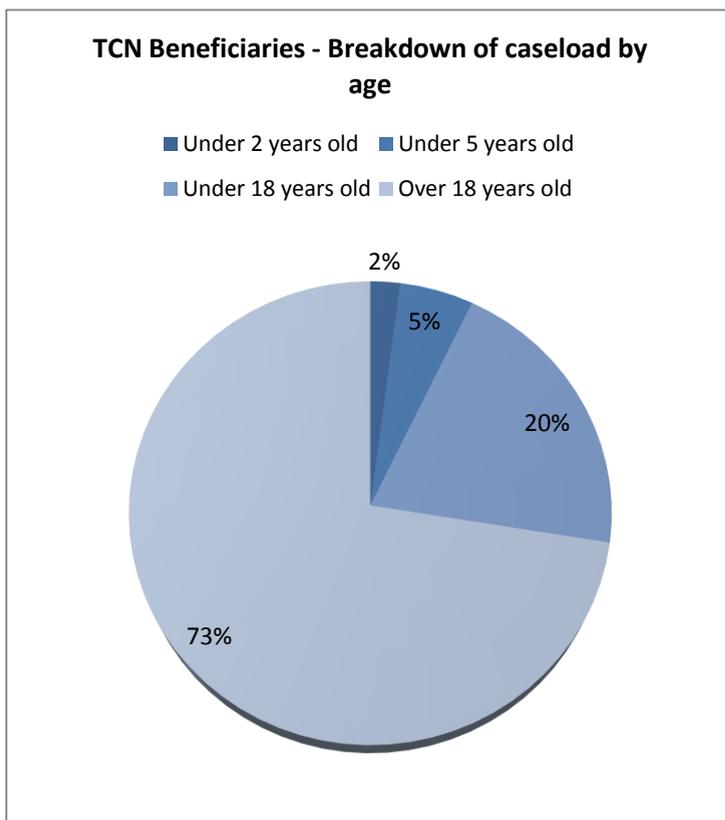
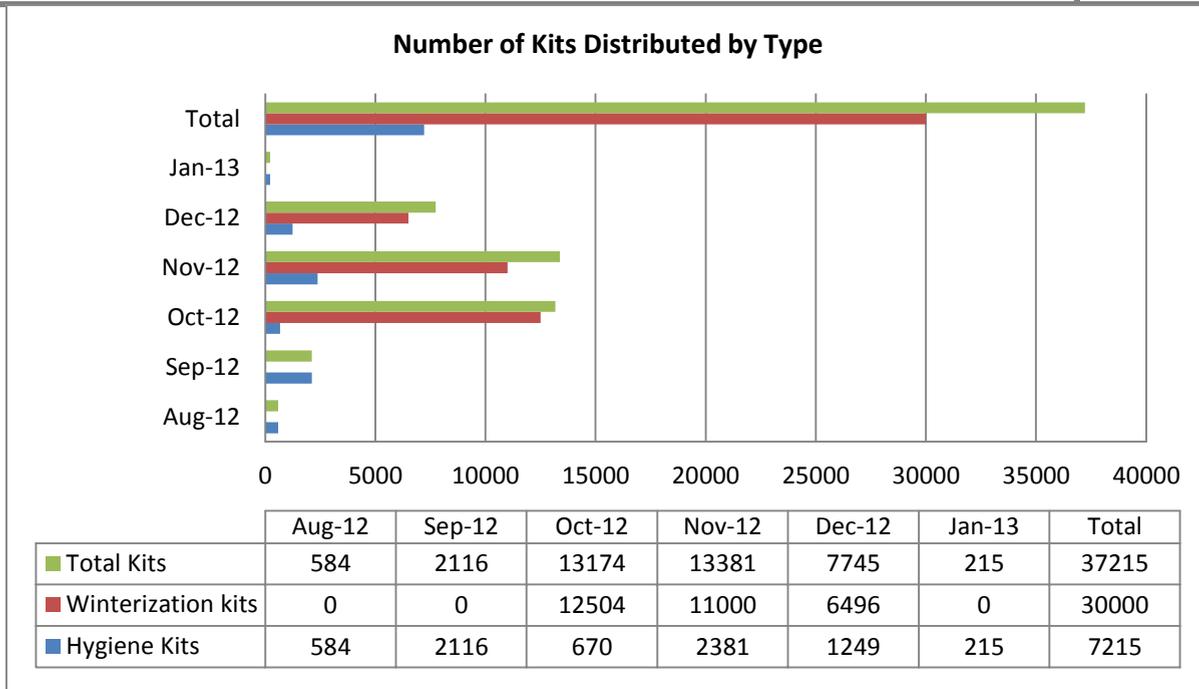
The vast majority of vulnerable and stranded migrants provided with evacuation/return assistance are women (**72%**); **29%** are minors with **9%** of beneficiaries under the age of 5.

Provisions of Emergency Non-Food Items (NFIs)

IOM teams completed the distribution of **37,415** NFI kits (**7,415** hygiene kits and **30,000** winter kits) on 14 January. The distributions began in August and while the initial target caseload was **14,500** beneficiaries, IOM distributed kits to benefit an estimated **61,113** individuals.

Distribution breakdown (14 Aug 2012- 15 Jan 2013)

No. of Kits	No. of Families	No. of Individuals	No. of Female Beneficiaries	No. of Male Beneficiaries	No. of Beneficiaries over 12 years	No. of Children (2-12 years)	No. of Infants (0-2 years)
37,415	12,249	61,113	32,944	28,169	23,255	33,903	3,955



2. Jordan Operations

Emergency Transportation of Refugees

Transportation Assistance provided from 9 to 16 January 2013	
Date (2013)	No. Assisted
9 January	107
10 January	102
11 January	180
12 January	200
13 January	569
14 January	821
15 January	1,099
7-day Total⁷	3,078

In the past week, IOM facilitated the transport of **3,078** Syrian nationals. Since 29 July 2012, IOM facilitated the transport of **89,659** Syrians from border areas to Za'atri Camp.

IOM provides pre-registration and reception services to beneficiaries requiring transport. During pre-departure medical screening IOM health teams identify and make referrals to health providers upon arrival at the Camp.

During the reporting period, IOM teams were on hand to provide emergency assistance to new arrivals that were affected by the severe weather conditions.

UNHCR allocated temporary accommodation in prefabs for refugees whose tents were damaged during the rain. IOM provided transportation assistance to refugees wishing to relocate to these shelters within the Camp.

Ensuring sufficient shelter for new arrivals and camp residents remains a concern and IOM attended a meeting convened for UN Agencies on 9 January where this was discussed. Partners are keen to resolve this issue as increased protests across the camp could result in limited access for humanitarian workers.

Health Services

In the past week, IOM teams referred **9** individuals with medical conditions requiring immediate referral or treatment at the camp's health clinics, these individuals were identified during the pre-departure medical screening. This brings the total referrals to date, to **892** since 29 July 2012.

IOM has been implementing a Tuberculosis (TB) screening and awareness-raising program for the past ten months. Since March 2012, IOM screened **72,158** Syrian refugees for TB and provided **46,458** Syrians with TB awareness-raising activities within Za'atri Camp, transit centres, and host communities in Jordan. To date, IOM medical staff has identified and confirmed **35** TB cases and the Organization is providing follow-up treatment for **32** cases. IOM teams are closely monitoring individuals that have come into contact with those infected with TB.⁸

⁷ Dates reflect evacuation statistics collected the day of and night before the date stated.

⁸ 15 cases and their contacts are followed by IOM medical team under the leadership of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Ministry of Health (MOH) through the national TB program (NTP) procedures, guidance, rules and regulations and in coordination with the United Nations Country Team (UNCT). Dr. Khaled Abu Rumman (NTP Manager and Director of Chest Diseases Directorate) leads the national program in coordination with the TB directorates in Irbid and Mafraq and the Anoor Sanatorium.

Strengthening Inter-Agency and Inter-Government Cooperation

On 16 January, IOM organized a visit for officials from 17 embassies, who observed IOM operations at the border, the transit centre, and Za'atri Camp. A new visit is to be organized for early February.

3. Lebanon Operations

Provision of Emergency Non-Food Items (NFIs)

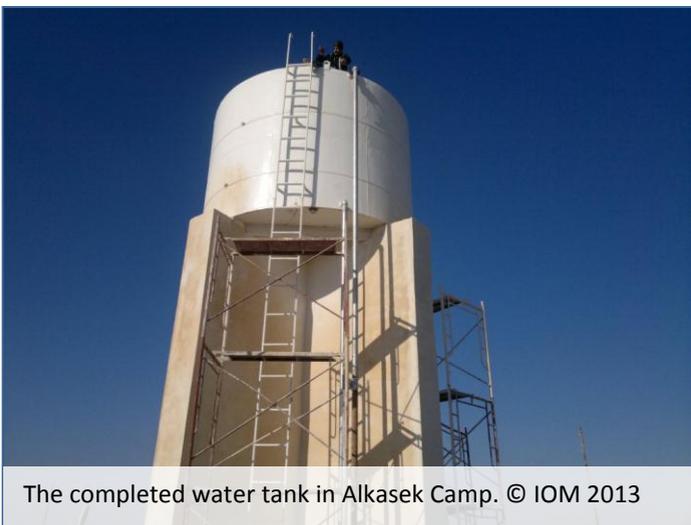
During the reporting period, IOM teams monitored the welfare of returnees and refugees that were affected by the extreme weather events. In accessible areas, staff provided extremely vulnerable households with additional blankets and quilts. IOM staff identified an immediate need to distribute plastic sheeting to enable vulnerable households to waterproof their shelters.

From 17 to 31 December 2012, IOM distributed **4,784** blankets, **6,135** quilts, **800** mattresses, **562** pillows, **1,650** floor tarpaulins and **500** plastic sheeting to benefit an estimated **1,492** Lebanese returnee families and **997** Syrian refugee families in Akkar Governorate in North Lebanon.

4. Iraq Operations

Provision of Emergency Non-Food Items (NFIs)

IOM teams in Iraq are reporting that the cold weather experienced in the country over the reporting period is increasing the need for NFI winterization kits, food items, and clothes. For those refugees that are living with relatives or within host communities, specific needs include: mattresses, blankets, pillows, plastic mats, kerosene heaters, stoves, kitchen supplies, soap and cleaning products, and rechargeable lights.



The completed water tank in Alkasek Camp. © IOM 2013

During the reporting period, IOM has been engaging in inter-agency planning for an estimated **20,000** new arrivals to Northern Iraq predicted to arrive in the coming months.

To date, IOM has distributed a total of **5,651** NFI kits to **25,488** Syrian refugees residing in camps and **46** NFI packages to **265** Iraqi returnees.

Water and Sanitation

The construction of the **45,000**-litre water tank, which began in late November 2012, has been completed in Alkasek Camp in Ninewa. An estimated **100** beneficiary families are set to benefit from the fresh water supply.

5. Turkey Operations

IOM continues to engage with humanitarian partners to support the Government in its efforts to meet the rising needs of the refugees across the **14** camps. IOM participated in an inter-agency health assessment in late 2012 (4-5 December), the assessment findings are currently under revision and will be shared with relevant authorities in the coming weeks.

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