

UN Inter-Agency Response for Syrian Refugees

Beirut, March 2013

#1inaMillion
#syria



Highlights of the Month:

- Over 400,000 winter clothes vouchers, electric heaters, blankets, pillows, and mattresses were distributed this month;
- 150,000 World Food Programme (WFP) food vouchers, and 800 food parcels were distributed to refugees across the country;
- Over 300 schools across the country have received 153,382 litres of fuel from UNICEF and UNHCR;
- Over 3000 Syrian children dropped out of Lebanese public schools this month fearing they would not pass the mid-term exams;
- Over 11,000 refugees received primarily health care in clinics throughout the country;
- Some 3,000 refugee patients were hospitalized;
- Mental health services were provided to 2,000 refugees;
- UNHCR registered 48,000 Syrian refugees;
- The number of Syrian refugees in Jordan, Turkey, Iraq, Egypt and Lebanon hit the one million mark on March 7;



Donor contributions for 2013



Funding is also received in private donations from the following countries: China, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, and Spain.

¹ EU funding is received from DEVCO and ECHO.

Registration and New Arrivals

In March, UNHCR registered 48,000 Syrian refugees bringing the number of refugees registered and awaiting registration with the Office to just under 400,000 (251,407 and 145,524 respectively). Current distribution of the registered population is as follows:

North Lebanon: 110,204

Bekaa: 95,457

Beirut and Mount Lebanon: 25,746

South Lebanon: 20,000

Increased efforts to reduce waiting times and quicken registration resulted in 10,000 more refugees registered in March over February and a notable decrease in waiting periods across registration offices. In Beirut and Mount Lebanon, the registration waiting period has been cut by half, while the waiting period in the Bekaa has been cut by one third. In the North, the average waiting time has reached 27 days, a threshold UNHCR is aiming to reach across registration offices by mid-year. The new registration premise in Tyr is scheduled to open next week following the finalization of construction works at the center. Meanwhile in Beirut, the newly constructed registration prefabricated cubicles helped triple the number of people registered on a daily basis, going from 200 to over 600 people each day.

During the second half of March, a total of 1,065 Syrian refugees arrived to Chebaa, south Lebanon, through the Sheikh Mountain. In addition, an increased number of refugees approached the newly opened Bekaa registration center. This also reflects a relatively higher number of new arrivals and a higher number of people choosing to settle in the Bekaa as compared to last month.

The number of Syrian refugees in Jordan, Turkey, Iraq, Egypt and Lebanon hit the one million mark on March 7. By the end of the month, the number had already reached 1,200,000 people, marking a notable 20 per cent increase.

Protection

March witnessed an increased number of people approaching UNHCR offices to register and seek assistance, particularly in the Bekaa. The total number of municipalities hosting refugees rose to 980 from 800 municipalities last month. Areas that have recently started to host Syrian refugees include Rashaya where 1,000 people recently settled. Liaison with municipalities in the area was established to provide support and hold information sessions with refugees about registration.

Municipalities and municipal unions across Lebanon continue their efforts to receive and assist refugees. Their hospitality, however, is becoming increasingly strained by their limited resources and the increasing rate of new arrivals. These communities and hosting families need further support especially as excess supply of labour is creating downward pressure on wages and more and more communities report growing unemployment. Partners are also reporting an increased number of child labor. Throughout March, UNHCR worked to expand the provision of vocational training, remedial classes, and agriculture-based projects to provide alternatives and training to unemployed adults and out of school youth. UNDP and UNHCR have also started to implement quick-impact projects to provide needed improvements to hosting communities in impacted areas. Peace-building activities by various partners have also taken place in March to address rising tensions. Agencies are now working to identify additional development opportunities to benefit both hosting communities and Syrian refugees in order to

preempt tensions and provide much-needed assistance to vulnerable Lebanese families living in impoverished areas.

The majority of refugees continue to cross into Lebanon through official border crossings. Nonetheless, some people feel compelled to cross on foot through precarious unofficial roads either due to their lack of appropriate documentation or because of their inability to move with intense shelling on their side of the border. While refugees are not generally arrested and criminally charged for entering through unofficial borders, among people registered with UNHCR, there are currently 16 Syrian nationals held in different detention facilities for illegal entry or stay. Discussions with the Ministry of Interior and other government counterparts continue with the aim to facilitate the renewal of residencies and legalization of status.

Security

Border towns in the North and in the Bekaa continued to witness shelling into Lebanon as clashes inside Syria were taking place near the border. No casualties have been reported in March.

In Tripoli, the security situation deteriorated with further reports of sporadic shooting and grenade throwing mainly in Abi Samra, Syria Street, Tebbaneh and Qobbeh.

Concerns over mine safety increased during the last week of March after the severe injury of a Lebanese child in Wadi Kahled which resulted in the amputation of his leg. UNHCR and UNICEF visited the child at the Salam Hospital in order to gather information on the circumstances of the incident and provide support.

Also of concern is the situation in Aarsal in the Bekaa. The recent spate of kidnappings in the area has resulted in reinforced security presence. The UN Department of Safety and Security also curtailed unnecessary missions to Aarsal as long as the situation remains unstable. Local authorities also advised humanitarian actors to remain vigilant and adjourn non-critical missions to the area. UN and non-governmental organisations continue to work with the Aarsal's municipality to provide support and assistance to refugees in the area.

Distribution

Over 400,000 winter clothes vouchers, electric heaters, blankets, pillows, and mattresses were distributed this month through the efforts of UNHCR, UNICEF, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Amel Association, Makhzoumi Foundation, World Vision and Caritas Lebanon Migrant Centre. In addition, over 150,000 World Food Programme (WFP) food vouchers, and 800 food parcels were distributed to refugees across the country.

The final phase of fuel delivery to schools across the country is nearing completion. To date, 312 schools across the country have received 153,382 litres of fuel from UNICEF and UNHCR benefiting both Lebanese and Syrian students.

Education

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) estimates that the number Syrian children enrolled in public schools across Lebanon has dropped from over 32,000 to 28,700. Mid-year examinations constitute the primary reason for school drop-outs, mainly due to difficulties Syrian students face in successfully passing their mid-term exams. A UNHCR, UNICEF and partners continued to provide remedial classes, accelerated learning programmes and other extra-curricular activities to encourage enrolment and help children remain in school. In

addition, refugee children who did not have a chance to enrol at the outset of the school year continue to approach education partners for support in the process.

agencies have been working on remedying this gap through regular remedial classes and after-school support.

Classes have also been suspended throughout the month of March by the prolonged public strike which was launched in Mid-February and ended on the 25th of March. As a result, students will likely be attending six days of school instead of five in an attempt to catch up with missed classes.

The Joint Education Needs Assessment (JENA) that was meant to be launched by MEHE, UNHCR, UNICEF, and UNESCO in March was put on hold as a result of the national strike, but is expected to resume beginning of April. The JENA results will help bring to light the most urgent education gaps and needs, which in turn will enhance the education programme to be implemented during the remaining of 2013.

The first chapter of vocational training in the Halba community centre in Akkar concluded on March 14. Over 40 refugee women graduated in sewing, hairdressing and English courses. The vocational training and livelihood activities proved successful as a number of women graduates were able to find jobs following the course.

Health

In March, over 11,000 refugees in need of medical care were seen in primary health care clinics throughout the country. These are supported by UNHCR, International Medical Corps (IMC), Amel Association, Caritas and Makhzoum Foundation. A range of primary health care services were provided including dental care, diagnostic services, prenatal care, medications, vaccinations and referrals.

A new mobile medical unit started to provide primary health care services in Akkar, north Lebanon, bringing the total number of mobile medical units in the country to 18. These have proved particularly useful in prevention diseases through the free provision of vaccination and basic medications, in addition to health awareness sessions. IMC are also sending a mobile medical unit to Chebaa and Hasbaia where over 1,000 Syrian refugees have recently settled. The mobile unit will provide essential consultations, first aid treatment, and proper referral and follow-up.

IMC's mental health unit supported by UNHCR provided a total of 2,000 clinical and social consultations in March. IMC is now recruiting community health workers from the refugee community to work within communities for enhanced identification of needs and for appropriate referral and follow-up.

UNHCR, IMC, Amel Association, CLMC, and Makhzoumi also assisted over 3,000 refugee patients receive secondary health care throughout the month. IMC staff visited refugee patients in their communities, at primary health care centers and hospitals to ensure they have been properly assisted.

In March, the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH), UNICEF, and the World Health Organization (WHO) have launched the second phase of the nation-wide vaccination campaign targeting Syrian and Lebanese children to be vaccinated against polio and measles.

Also in March, UNHCR and IMC worked on the wide dissemination of an early warning system developed by the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) to all primary health care clinics in Lebanon. Guidelines on the early reporting of epidemics as they occur in order to pre-empt their spreading and improve the provision of services were disseminated. The World Health Organization (WHO) and MoPH will provide the necessary medication for the treatment of reported cases.

Shelter

During the month, work to meet ongoing and increasing shelter challenges continued. More than 14,000 individuals benefited from shelter solutions across Lebanon including weatherproofing, shelter rehabilitation, cash for shelter and the rehabilitation of collective shelters.

Shelter activities were interrupted in north Bekka for part of the month due to the security situation there. Elsewhere in Lebanon, UNHCR and partners weatherproofed more than 700 households, rehabilitated more than 50 collective shelters and identified 44 new buildings to serve as collective shelters. In addition, more than 450 Syrian families and 1300 host families benefited from the assistance to pay rent.

ShelterBox distributed a total of 237 shelter boxes each containing one family tent with reflective thermal liner, eight blankets, four ground sheets and two solar lamps. The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) have installed 16 shelter boxes in Jeb jannine, Sawiri, Bar elias and kfarzabad and have begun tendering procedures for two collective centres in Forzol and Kfar denis.

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and DRC continued to sign contracts with Lebanese owners of unfinished houses in the Bekaa and Akkar to begin rehabilitation works in these houses which in turn will host Syrian refugees for one year free of charge.

The previously identified transit site in Bebnine, Akkar has recently been approved for the construction of a transit site. UNHCR and MOSA are working together on finalising the initial processes to enable construction to begin in April.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) initiatives in the Bekaa this month included the construction of 114 latrines in the Faour, Dalhamiyye, Bar Elias, Terbol, Ryak and Deir Ahmar tented settlement by UNHCR and Action Contre La Faim (ACF). UNHCR, ACF and DRC distributed 875 hygiene kits and 89 baby kits in the Bekaa benefiting over 4,700 beneficiaries.

In the South, work has focused on improving living conditions in the recently identified Ouzai collective shelter. UNHCR and Premiere Urgent (PU-AMI) installed two water tanks and seven garbage bins for the collection of solid waste, and constructed seven emergency latrines at the shelter. PU-AMI also installed eight metallic garbage bins outside and five plastic bins for the collection of solid waste at the Aaqbiye collective shelter in south Lebanon. Also in the South, SHIELD, PU-AMI, and Caritas Migrant Center distributed 1,430 hygiene kits and 780 baby kits benefiting over 7,000 people.

DRC, Makhzoumi Foundation and PU-AMI distributed 6,782 hygiene kits and 2,713 baby kits in Mount Lebanon and Beirut benefiting over 36,000 people. PU-AMI facilitated the launching of works to establish sanitation facilities within refugees' accommodation in Chouf and Katermaya. At the Katermaya tented settlement in Mount Lebanon, 12 hygiene promotion sessions and recreational activities for children were conducted.

In the North, DRC distributed 6,567 hygiene kits and 2,548 baby kits benefiting over 35,000 people.

What's new on the web portal (<https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122>).

UPDATES:

- INTER AGENCY MEETING - Presentation – March 15, 2013
- INTER AGENCY MEETING - Minute – March 15, 2013
- ToR Food Security Working Group – Draft
- Food Security Working Group - Minute 26.03.2013
- New Lebanon Contact List - Syrian Refugee Response 25 .03.2013

MAPS:

- Dashboard - Lebanon Sector Intervention What and Where 25 March 2013
- WASH Response Map - Lebanon - Feb 2013
- WASH Assessment Map - Tripoli/Mt Lebanon - Feb 2013
- WASH Assessment Map - Tripoli - Feb 2013
- WASH Assessment Map - South/Bekaa Valley - Feb 2013
- WASH Assessment Map - South Lebanon - Feb 2013
- WASH Assessment Map - Lebanon - Feb 2013
- WASH Assessment Map - North Lebanon - Feb 2013
- WASH Assessment Map - Bekaa Valley - Feb 2013
- WASH Assessment Map - Beirut - Feb 2013
- WASH Assessment Map - Baalbek/Hermel - Feb 2013

STATISTICS:

- Lebanon Registration Daily Statistic (25-27 Mar 2013)