

Syria humanitarian response (Issue 11)

Tags: Jordan | Lebanon | refugees | Syria

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Damascus, Syria

situational overview

Based on earlier assessments, UNRWA estimates that 225,000 Palestine refugees are directly affected by the conflict. Currently, there are 6,251 internally-displaced persons (IDPs) sheltering in 22 UNRWA school buildings, representing a decrease of approximately 16 per cent since 20 September.

In Jordan, there are currently 1,436 registered Palestine refugees who have fled from Syria (data tabulated as of 30 September), representing a 14-per-cent increase over the course of this week. The number of displaced Palestine refugees from Syria who have approached UNRWA in Lebanon is now over 6,000 individuals.

syria

At a glance:

- Continuing hostilities in Aleppo have spread to areas of the Old City
- Successful delivery of 2,000 emergency food baskets to Ein el Tal and Neirab camps in Aleppo
- Kidnapping and killing of three Palestine refugees in Neirab camp and tensions between camp residents and community
- Shells exploded in the main street of Neirab camp, killing four refugees
- An UNRWA staff member was killed when he was caught in an exchange of fire at a checkpoint in the vicinity of Seyda Zeinab in Rif Damascus
- Hostilities spiked in the northeast and northwest of Rif Damascus area. Yarmouk and its neighbouring suburbs were relatively calm but tense during the past week
- Attack against military headquarters in Damascus city centre on 26 September leads to closure of roads for several hours and limited movement throughout the city
- An attack on a municipality office in Mzerieb was followed by armed clashes and security operations
- Schools in Dera'a were unable to open due to insecurity.

Violence and displacement resulting from conflict throughout Syria continue to exacerbate 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, and cooking sets are also needed. Currently, there are 6,251 internally-

displaced persons (IDPs) sheltering in 22 UNRWA school buildings, representing a decrease of approximately 16 per cent since 20 September. The displaced population residing in UNRWA school buildings comprises predominantly women (approximately 32 per cent) and children (approximately 43 per cent).

1. **Damascus**

An UNRWA staff member, a teacher, was killed on 28 September when he was caught up in an armed clash at a checkpoint. His tragic passing occurred near Seyda Zeynab in Rif Damascus.

Suburbs adjacent to Yarmouk, home to 79 per cent of Syria's Palestine refugee population (June 2011 data) have been particularly volatile. As of 27 September, 3,661 IDPs continue to be accommodated in ten UNRWA schools in Yarmouk, representing an approximate 19-per-cent decrease since 20 September (data tabulated as of 27 September 2012). Two UNRWA schools and a health centre in Jobar were broken into and a number of computers and a public address system stolen. Clashes and shelling continued in suburbs to the northwest of Damascus, resulting in staff residing in the area being unable to report to work due to road closures. Conflict and shelling also continued in the southern parts of Damascus, where tensions remain high.

Yarmouk and its neighbouring areas have been relatively calm over the past week. It was reported that on 27 September a number of men, including Palestinians, were arrested in an area where a number of displaced people are accommodated in three UNRWA schools, one government school, and a mosque. Facilities in Douma, Qaboun, Sit Zeinab, Husseiniyeh, Sbeineh, and the southernmost health centre in Yarmouk were temporarily closed at the beginning of this week, but all other UNRWA facilities were operational.

The security situation throughout Damascus city remains highly volatile following explosions on the morning of 26 September of two explosions close to a sensitive military installation in central Damascus. The incident sparked several hours of road closures and limited movement in the city.

IDPs accommodated in UNRWA school buildings in Damascus as of 27 September 2012

Area	Men	Women	Children	Total
Yarmouk	902	1,248	1,511	3,661
Khan Eshieh	193	275	395	863
Jaramana	1	3	11	15
Ramadan	93	89	170	352
Total	1,189	1,615	2,087	4,891

2. **Aleppo**

Unrelenting armed conflict continues to compound the humanitarian needs of the population in Aleppo. Incidents of the past week include clashes in the immediate vicinity of Neirab and Ein el Tal camps. Tensions peaked in the camps over the kidnapping and killing of three refugees and the death of four refugees in Neirab Camp when a

shell exploded in the main street of the camp. Despite the rapidly-deteriorating security situation in Aleppo, UNRWA succeeded in distributing food baskets to 2,000 Palestine refugee families. The food rations were transported by road from Damascus on the weekend of 28-29 September. Delivery of food assistance to a further 7,000 families is planned for the coming week. UNRWA facilities in Neirab and Ein el Tal camps remain operational.

IDPs in UNRWA facilities in Aleppo as of 27 September 2012

Area	Men	Women	Children	Total
Neirab	215	193	297	705
Ein el Tal	191	167	297	655
Total	406	360	594	1,360

3. Dera'a

An armed attack on the municipal office in Mzerieb on 27 September was followed by heavy shelling and intense clashes. Shelling in the immediate vicinity of Dera'a camp continues, resulting in damage to refugee houses. UNRWA operations are functioning; however, shelling throughout the city has led to the temporary closure of UNRWA schools as the situation is too precarious to secure the safety of students.

4. Hama

The situation remains calm despite intermittent shelling in the town and a security presence. UNRWA facilities are operational.

5. Latakia

There has been no change in the situation in Latakia during the week. A heavy security presence remains, particularly at checkpoints. UNRWA facilities are operational.

6. Homs

The area of Homs has seen intermittent shelling during the course of the week. On 29 September, there were reports of clashes from the immediate vicinity of the camp. Despite the incidents of shelling, the camp was calm by the morning of 30 September, with all UNRWA facilities operational. The city centre remains inaccessible and the main road to Hama is blocked with just a side road accessible. The routes to Damascus and Latakia remain accessible.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE: FOCUS ON EMERGENCY CASH ASSISTANCE

UNRWA continues to receive hundreds of applications for emergency cash assistance on a daily basis. There are currently over 50,000 applications from conflict-affected Palestine refugees who can no longer meet their basic needs. The Agency's country-wide estimate of cash assistance needs is expected to rise sharply when an ongoing UNRWA assessment is completed in Aleppo. Since March 2011, UNRWA has distributed emergency cash assistance to 21,300 Palestine refugee households throughout Syria, with 44 per cent of beneficiaries from the Damascus area. Despite the current volatile

situation in Syria, UNRWA has succeeded in distributing emergency cash assistance partly through ATM banking systems.

UNRWA's Regional Humanitarian Response Plan of USD 53 million includes USD 10,933,500 to meet the growing emergency cash assistance needs of Palestine refugees in Syria.

jordan

There are currently 1,436 registered Palestine refugees who have fled Syria for Jordan (data tabulated as of 30 September), representing a 14-per-cent increase over the course of this week. Of this total number, there are 169 refugees based in Cyber City. There are currently 198 Palestine refugee students from Syria who are attending schools in Jordan.

UNRWA is increasingly concerned about reported cases of refoulement of refugees attempting to cross into Jordan.

lebanon

UNRWA continues to co-ordinate with partners on providing assistance to displaced Palestinians from Syria. Last week, UNRWA distributed non-food items (NFIs) to displaced Palestine refugee families in the Saida area, whereas NFIs from the International Committee of the Red Cross were distributed in Beirut camps, and from the Danish Refugee Council in the Beqaa area. According to the latest count, the number of displaced Palestine refugees from Syria who have approached UNRWA is now over 6,000 individuals.

current funding requirement

The United States announced on 28 September 2012 a contribution of USD 8 million in support of Palestine refugees affected by the crisis. France will support UNRWA humanitarian operations with half a million euros; and Belgium will provide EUR 400,000 for cash assistance to Palestine refugees in Syria. Further confirmed pledges include CHF 1 million from Switzerland for cash assistance, and over USD 2 million from OCHA's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) for food and non-food assistance for Palestine refugees in Syria. So far, and since the launch of the previous regional response plan earlier this year, USD 5.7 million has been received from the United States, Italy, Sweden, CERF, ERF, and private donors.