SITUATION REPORT
Syrian Refugees in Turkey, 15 January 2013

OVERVIEW

Violent conflict between the Assad regime and the armed opposition groups continue to deteriorate the humanitarian situation in Syria. The non-international armed conflict has internally displaced over 1.2 million Syrians, with the number of affected people in need of humanitarian assistance reaching 4 million inside the country. According to ACAPS, Syrians having fled to neighbouring countries stand between 500,000 and 1,000,000 (ACAPS, 22 December 2012).

The total number of Syrian refugees in Turkey has exceeded 250,000, of whom 153,307 are registered and settled in refugee camps under the management of the Turkish authorities. Turkish officials estimate that between 60,000 and 70,000 Syrians are residing with urban host communities (UNHCR, 31 December 2012), while local sources and NGOs estimate this figure to be more than 100,000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Refugees Registered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>153,307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>140,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>131,113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>70,535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>13,684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>509,289</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNHCR, 15 January 2013

Local sources state that particularly in the last one-month period, the border province of Hatay in Turkey experienced large influx of Syrian refugees. Local contacts of Support to Life (STL) suggest the number of urban refugees has quadrupled in some districts. Given this recent development, STL has increased its presence in the region to plan for more structured data collection.

METHODOLOGY

This report is aimed to fill the information gap on the situation and needs of the conflicted affected Syrian population in Turkey.

For the situation analysis provided here, data is collected during STL assessments and aid distributions to Syrian refugees residing in Turkey, as well as through observations of STL teams on the ground, complemented by secondary data obtained from meetings with local authorities and aid agencies on the ground.

Surveys and semi-structured interviews are used by STL staff to assess the needs of the conflict affected population since September 2012. STL has been in regular contact with key informants.
(mukhtars, community leaders, local CSO members and activists) in areas populated by Syrian refugees. STL is in close cooperation with the mukhtars of the villages and towns who facilitate the flow of information, including updates on the figures of Syrian refugees settling outside the camps. During its assessments, STL team interviewed 1,072 Syrian families in Hatay, Kilis and Sanliurfa provinces.

The information obtained through secondary sources is triangulated by STL own assessments. However, as the situation changes rapidly and simultaneously, most population figures provided through local contacts remain unconfirmed. Also, high mobility of Syrian refugees limits the monitoring of their numbers and movement patterns. Therefore, STL strongly recommends a detailed profiling exercise with the objectives of uncovering the immediate to mid-term needs of the conflict affected population.

SUMMARY

Syrian refugees in Turkey report that their basic needs are generally well met in the government controlled camps. This being the case, STL had previously observed that protection issues do not seem to be a consideration of camp managers and the authorities alike (STL, 30 November 2012). However, recent reports suggest that the Turkish authorities have put stronger attention on protection issues such as psycho-social support for the traumatized Syrian population in the camps (IFRC, 29 December 2012).

Contrary to the assistance being provided in the camps, Syrian unregistered refugees in urban areas, towns and villages are not being supported by the Turkish government. Local sources and NGOs estimate the figure of urban Syrian refugees to be more than 100,000. Support to Life (STL) focuses its relief operation on this target group due to limited support received by Syrian refugees living outside the camps.

Despite the presence of a number of international NGOs on the ground in Turkey, the ambiguous legal framework of aid agencies makes it difficult for NGOs to plan their humanitarian assistance within and through Turkey. There is only a limited number of INGOs working on the ground in Turkey, mainly providing limited healthcare services to those in need. Recently some large national NGOs assisting the refugees have decreased their assistance. Apart from the INGOs and the more resourceful national NGOs, there are some small local civil society organizations that are mobilizing local resources for working with the Syrians, in responding to their needs. However, these local civil society organizations have limited capacity.

Priorities of the Syrian refugees have not changed greatly in the last two months. The only change has been noted in terms of numbers and urgency of winterization needs. Added to this, IFRC has observed an increase in cases of PTSD among the Syrian population residing in Turkey. Syrian refugees prioritized their main needs as follows:

- Immediate winterization, mainly blankets, stoves, fuel for heating, winter clothes, and plastic sheeting
- Income for meeting their daily needs of food and NFI, including hygiene materials,
- Mental health support
- Medical and health care
- Advice on their legal status
- Education

During the month of December 2012 and the first half of January 2013, STL has continued supporting refugee families with food aid, hygiene materials, kitchen utensils and winterization items (stoves, heating fuel, blankets, carpets). To date, STL has reached 1,072 families, covering the basic needs of a population of 5,591. STL will continue distributing food and hygiene packages along with
winterization materials, while preparing to respond to the other needs of the Syrian refugees living outside the camps.

NUMBERS IN REFUGEE CAMPS

As of 15 January 2013, 153,307 Syrian refugees are registered by the Turkish authorities (UNHCR, 15 January 2013). The Turkish government is in the process of opening more camps.

According to the latest figures of the Turkish Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD, 14 January 2013 only in Turkish), the location and current capacity of the camps are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Refugee Camp</th>
<th>Province</th>
<th>No. of tents / containers</th>
<th>No. of refugees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yayladağı-1</td>
<td>Hatay</td>
<td>2,074 tents - 259 divisions</td>
<td>12,708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yayladağı-2</td>
<td>Hatay</td>
<td>2,074 tents - 259 divisions</td>
<td>3,239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apaydin</td>
<td>Hatay</td>
<td>2,074 tents - 259 divisions</td>
<td>3,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altınözü Tekel</td>
<td>Hatay</td>
<td>2,074 tents - 259 divisions</td>
<td>1,212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altınözü Boynuyogun</td>
<td>Hatay</td>
<td>2,074 tents - 259 divisions</td>
<td>1,622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reyhanlı Reception Center</td>
<td>Hatay</td>
<td>2,074 tents - 259 divisions</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akcakale</td>
<td>Sanliurfa</td>
<td>4,829 tents</td>
<td>16,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceylanpinar</td>
<td>Sanliurfa</td>
<td>4,767 tents</td>
<td>20,836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilis Oncupinar</td>
<td>Kilis</td>
<td>2,053 containers</td>
<td>13,074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islahiye</td>
<td>Gaziantep</td>
<td>1,743 tents</td>
<td>8,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karkamis</td>
<td>Gaziantep</td>
<td>1,588 tents</td>
<td>6,235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nizip</td>
<td>Gaziantep</td>
<td>1,580 tents</td>
<td>7,493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osmaniye</td>
<td>Osmaniye</td>
<td>2,012 tents</td>
<td>8,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kahramanmaras</td>
<td>Kahramanmaras</td>
<td>2,300 tents</td>
<td>15,137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adiyaman</td>
<td>Adiyaman</td>
<td>2,000 tents</td>
<td>5,993</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though a larger number of Syrians are registering with camp managers, the number of Syrians physically residing in camps has not changed drastically due to limited space in terms of the number of tents. In Ceylanpinar district of Sanliurfa, for instance, over 12,000 refugees who are registered by camp management are given permission to live in the surrounding villages and town center as the capacity of the camp is unable to accommodate all that have registered. In some camps, the Turkish government is trying to solve the problem of limited shelter by replacing family size tents with larger tents to accommodate a larger number of households.

REFUGEES LIVING OUTSIDE THE CAMPS

Given the quality of services provided in the camps, some Syrian families are interested in settling in the camps but are unable to do so, as the Turkish government needs to complete the new camps before it can start admitting more refugees. Consequently, the number of Syrian refugees living outside the camps has increased, possibly higher than 100,000 according to estimates from local sources of information.
Unregistered Syrian refugees are mostly located in Hatay, Kilis, Gaziantep and Sanliurfa, which are all border provinces in Turkey. Increasing number of Syrians chose to enter into Turkey because of harsh winter conditions, increased violence and the lack of resources or limited access to resources inside Syria. Numbers are very roughly estimated as 50,000 Syrians in Hatay, 30,000 in Kilis, 20,000 in Gaziantep and 20,000 in Sanliurfa. A detailed profiling of the movement patterns, access to and availability of life saving services and resources is yet to be carried out both in Turkey and in Northern Syria.

STL operations are concentrated in the border districts of Hatay province, namely Yayladağı, Kirikhan, Altınözü and Reyhanli. According to STL assessments and the data obtained from local sources, the breakdown of the population is as follows:

**Kirikhan**: Over 1,000 Syrian families according to local sources. Before 25 December, Kirikhan was hosting approximately 266 families (1,321 individuals) according to STL assessments. Therefore, it is estimated that Kirikhan district could be hosting approximately 5,000 Syrian refugees.

**Reyhanli**: According to local contacts in Reyhanli, the refugee population in the district has experienced dramatic increase since mid-December 2012. Before 15 December, the estimated number of Syrian refugees in Reyhanli was 15,000. The number of refugees is now estimated to be as high as 35,000 (6,000 to 7,000 families).

**Yayladağı**: STL has assessed 305 families (1,586 individuals) in Yayladağı district.

**Altınözü**: STL has assessed 421 families (2,315 individuals).

**Antakya Centre**: STL has assessed only 58 families in Antakya city center due to difficulties in tracking the families. Hence, STL believes there is a huge information gap with regard to the refugees in Antakya center.

**Other**: Local sources have confirmed the presence of Syrian refugees in Kumlu and Belen districts, where STL is not yet operational. Local sources inform that in Kumlu there are 150 families (750 to 900 persons). STL does not have information on the figures in Belen.

Breakdown of the Syrian population per district can be seen below:

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Photos are taken by Kerem Yucel with the funding of Malteser International/German Federal Republic Humanitarian Aid
STL preliminary assessment figures indicate 2% of Syrian refugees in Turkey are infants (0-12 months), while 47% of the refugees are children (under 18 years).

SECTORS

Shelter and NFI

Winterization is still one of the highest priorities of the Syrian refugees. Heaters, winter clothes, blankets, mattresses and carpets are the most needed items. Many do not have sufficiently warm clothes with them as most had fled to Turkey during the summer time. Undergarments are another crucial need.

WASH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>STL assessment figures</th>
<th>Unconfirmed sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirikhan</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>1,321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reyhanli</td>
<td>53*</td>
<td>309*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yayladagi</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>1,586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altinozu</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>2,315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antakya Centre</td>
<td>58*</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumlu</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belen</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*STL has conducted only limited assessments in Reyhanli and Antakya, not covering all settlements.
Basic hygiene items such as towels, diapers and sanitary pads are extremely needed, given the fact that most of the refugees prefer to spend their limited money for purchasing food items. Due to very poor shelter conditions, some refugee families use outdoor toilets, which are not properly isolated and lack privacy as well as safe excreta disposal.

**Food Security and Livelihoods**

A large number of unregistered Syrian refugees are working as seasonal workers in agriculture sector in and around Hatay. Each worker is paid a daily wage of 15 Turkish Lira (equivalent to 7 Euro), which is less than half the official rate for seasonal agricultural workers in Turkey. Reports suggest Turkish employers see many unregistered refugees as easy targets for exploitation (IRIN, 26 December 2012).

Other than those staying with host families or relatives in Turkey, Syrian refugee families find daily work to pay their rents. Rents in the villages range between 100-200 TL (45-90 Euro), while this goes up to 350 TL (160 Euro) and even higher in the urban areas.

Refugees settled in villages have greater access to a variety of food items (eggs, chickens, vegetables from the garden, home made bread, and so on) compared to those choosing to settle in urban areas, where food items need to be purchased from the market.

Most refugees complain about the lack of bread. Refugees state that they have to pay 20-30 TL (9-14 Euro) for 2 hours rent of tandır ovens, which are traditional ovens for making bread.

**Health**

Syrian refugees not living in camps have limited access to health services. In some areas, urban refugees are allowed to enter and be treated in medical units within camp premises, but this depends on the discretion of camp management.

In Sanliurfa for instance, particularly in Akcakale, Ceylanpinar and Viransehir districts, unregistered refugees are not allowed to make use of the medical services at the camps and have to pay at public hospitals.

In Hatay and Kilis, camp managers mostly allow unregistered refugees to use health services in the camps, along with some public hospitals serving Syrians for free. However, access to public hospitals mainly depends on doctor and/or hospital management discretion.

Access to medical care is also limited due to financial reasons as reports suggest refugees are not able to benefit from available hospitals due to high costs (RI, 5 December 2012).

There are also alternative initiatives such as the self-run “Syrian Hospital” accepting all Syrians for treatment. Some of these are also supported by NGOs. However, many Syrians either do not know of these options or do not have access to such facilities.

Syrian refugees in villages complain about the lack of medicine. There are many who were receiving medical treatment in Syria but are unable to continue their treatment in Turkey.

Bronchitis due to cold weather is widely common among the children who are under 3 years of age. As the treatment of bronchitis is tedious, the sickness can easily turn into chronic bronchitis. Poor
winterization of shelters and lack of NFIs (mainly blankets and clothing) is seen as the main cause of such health issues.

**Education**

The percentage of school attendance among unregistered refugee children is very low. In some cases, for instance in Yayladagi district of Hatay, unregistered Syrian children are able to attend the school inside the refugee camp but there is no transportation facilities for distant villages. In some exceptional cases, Syrian Turkmens are able to continue their education as guest students in Turkish schools given their Turkish language skills.

There are several self-run education facilities founded in most cases by the Syrian refugee population themselves. There is one school in Kilis ([AFP, 18 December 2012](http://www.supporttolife.org)), one in Antakya centre and one in Reyhanli.

**Protection**

There are many Syrians who have been subjected to violence during the conflict in Syria. OCHA states that three-quarters of refugees are women and children, many of whom have suffered unbearable violence and abuse before they could flee ([OCHA, 11 November 2012](http://www.supporttolife.org)).

While a number of families have asked STL staff for mental support, the figures of those suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder could be quite high. According to observations, the numbers of those in need of PTSD has dramatically increased in the last two months. According to a research conducted in Gaziantep, almost half of the children affected by war have PTSD and elevated levels of depression ([NPR, 26 December 2012](http://www.supporttolife.org)), which is also shared by other reports from Kilis ([AFP, 18 December 2012](http://www.supporttolife.org)).

Cases of gender-based violence in the camps have been reported to STL staff. The situation out of the camps is not known, although in many cases, newly arrived refugees tend to spend their first days and weeks in communal buildings such as mosques, wedding halls, and schools. Under such conditions, privacy becomes an important issue.

Reports suggest that children are recruited and used by armed groups within Syrian territory ([AlertNet, 29 November 2012](http://www.supporttolife.org)). Whether there are any Syrian children recruited from Turkey to be used by armed groups in the conflict is unknown.
Many Syrians have very limited information on their current legal status in Turkey. Turkish authorities issued a directive in April 2012 on the temporary protection policy for the Syrian population, however this has not been public and therefore this directive offers no guidance to local authorities, agencies and refugees themselves (RI, 5 December 2012). One of the frequently asked questions to STL staff is with regard to their legal status, both residence permits in Turkey and possible resettlement to third countries. Refugees want to know who and where to contact for such legal issues.

**STL RELIEF ACTIVITIES**

Since four months, Support to Life field team, with a base in Antakya city of Hatay province, has been providing humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugees living with host families. Aid is being given to Syrian families in Hatay province, both in the city center as well as the towns and border villages.

A total of 1,116 food packages, 1,116 hygiene sets, 666 kitchen sets, 491 hygiene and kitchen sets, 7,474 blankets, 683 plastic carpets, and 7.8 tons of flour were distributed to 1,188 Syrian households in villages and urban areas of Yayladağı, Altınözü, Reyhanlı, Kirikhan and Antakya.

Each Syrian household is assessed individually and based on pre-set criteria the beneficiaries are selected. Door-to-door deliveries of relief goods are conducted. Brief survey data is collected from each household assessed.

**Food security, WASH and NFI:** During the month of January 2013, STL aid distributions have been continuing with winterization (stoves, fuel, blankets and winter clothes), food packs, hygiene materials, and other NFIs.

**Psychosocial support:** In addition to its distribution of relief goods, STL is in the final stages of opening community centers where protection services will be provided to those Syrians affected by the conflict. In addition to rehabilitative activities, one aspect of the community centers will be to provide a referral system to Syrian refugees in linking them up with services provided by other actors. **Profiling:** STL is planning to conduct a detailed profiling exercise for the Syrian and host community population located in STL operational area. STL expects this profiling exercise to be complementary to the activities of other aid agencies on the ground.

STL works in partnership with international NGOs that are based in Germany, Spain, Japan and Denmark.

**HUMANITARIAN NEEDS AND GAPS**

There are many gaps in the assistance provided to Syrians living in urban areas and villages. These have been identified by STL team as follows:

- Stoves, blankets, fuel for heating, winter clothes and plastic sheeting where applicable,
- Food supplements
- Hygiene materials
- Legal advice and guidance
- Mental health support
- Health care support
- Education

Although not mentioned by Syrians, STL is highly concerned about the possible future impacts of unexploded ordinances (UXOs) in the Syria-Turkey border area. This is an area in which awareness raising campaigns can be conducted.
In order to create the foundation for better relief programming, a structured analysis of the Syrian refugee profile in Turkey needs to be conducted.

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