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UNRWA Syria crisis situation update (Issue 30)

Tags: conflict | emergency | Syria | Yarmouk

Syria situation update
11 January 2013

Highlights:

- Widespread closure of UNRWA facilities in Damascus, with 8 facilities currently housing 6,549 internally displaced persons (IDPs).
- There are a total of 7,623 IDPs in UNRWA facilities across the country as of 9 January, up from 2,631 on 6 December. 92 per cent of IDPs are Palestine refugees.
- Unconfirmed reports of at least 8 refugees killed in Damascus.
- Approximately 50,000 students currently unable to attend regular classes.
- Electricity is back on in Homs.

Damascus and the surrounding area: Occasional clashes continue within Yarmouk and the surrounding areas, but residents are now able to enter and exit the camp. All UNRWA facilities remain closed. There are reports of at least eight Palestine refugees killed yesterday.

Shelling and clashes were reported in the vicinity of Sbeineh camp, amid rumors that at least one shell landed within the camp, killing seven people. It is unclear if any of these were refugees. Armed opposition elements are reportedly still in the camp, and security forces control movement in and out of the camp. Residents have been able to enter and exit, but are still not permitted to take out any belongings. Commercial traffic into the camp is still not allowed, and all facilities remain closed.

Khan Dannoun and Jaramana were somewhat calm and accessible, with health centres operating in both. One school is also operational in Khan Dannoun as of Wednesday.

Clashes and shelling continue in Sit Zeinab, including within Qabr Essit camp. Security forces reportedly continue to prevent movement in and out of the camp, and all facilities remain closed.

Clashes and shelling also continue in Husseiniyeh, with a number of shells reportedly impacting within the camp. There are also reports of armed opposition elements present in the camp. Residents are able to leave the camp, but not with their belongings.

Ongoing hostilities continue in Douma, with all UNRWA facilities closed. Jobar and Qaboun health centres are not operational but schools were open in both areas as of Wednesday. One school is operational in Barzeh and another in Rukn Eddin. Small firearms were reported in Dummar on Wednesday but the health centre remained open.

The health centre at Elliass is also open, along with one school. The school in Mezzeah is still housing IDPs. Derayya and Moadamiyeh continue to report shelling and small firearms.

Heavy snowfall prevented many staff from reaching the Field Office on Wednesday and Thursday.

The ongoing conflict has had a devastating affect on education. Approximately 50,000 students are currently unable to attend regular classes due to the hostilities. The Chief of the Education Department at UNRWA approached the Ministry of Education, which has agreed to provide 20 schools in Damascus and the surrounding area to accommodate the students.

A total of 6,549 IDPs are currently being housed in UNRWA facilities in Damascus. Approximately 92 per cent of all IDPs in UNRWA facilities are Palestine refugees.

Of the total IDP population in UNRWA facilities, particularly vulnerable refugees include 75 pregnant women, with 10 coming to full term, 49 newly born babies and 59 elderly people. 6 babies have been born at UNRWA schools following the latest displacement of refugees. With only partial data currently available, 587 families have 4 or more persons, and 204 families are three persons or fewer.

Dera'a town and the surrounding villages of Mzerieb and Jillien were relatively calm yesterday, with all facilities operational.

Hama refugee camp was relatively calm and all UNRWA facilities operational there. An unconfirmed number of refugees arrived from Yarmouk today.

In Homs city, the shelling of Bab Amr and the Sultaniyeh neighbourhood intensified on Wednesday, but the camp in the city remained relatively calm. Communication difficulties continued throughout the week, but the camp had electricity for the first time in nearly two weeks on Wednesday. Facilities were operational but closed early due to the heavy snowfall.

Latakia refugee camp was reportedly calm and all UNRWA facilities operational.

Aleppo city was reportedly calm on Wednesday, but electricity shortages continued to affect much of the city. Mobile phones and the internet are down with landlines working infrequently. There is an increasing need for heating fuel, as families are now burning any

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wood they can find. UNRWA facilities in the city were operational on Wednesday. Ein el Tal camp was relatively quiet and accessible, due to the reduced level of hostilities in the area today. Neirab camp was also relatively calm and accessible, and all facilities were operational in both camps.

IDP numbers in UNRWA facilities as of 7 January:

Area	F	M	Children	Total
Damascus Training Centre	309	381	496	1,186
Damascus (Jaramana)	396	234	459	1,089
Damascus (Mezzeh)	145	132	217	494
Damascus (Khan Eshieh)	378	326	536	1,240
Damascus (Ramadan)	380	306	480	1,166
Damascus (Dummar)	125	120	170	415
Damascus (Rukn Eddin)	132	107	145	384
Damascus (Khan Dannoun)	159	119	297	575
Aleppo (Neirab)*	182	102	176	460
Aleppo (Ein el Tal)*	218	128	285	631
Total	2,424	2,186	3,261	7,640

*Aleppo numbers correct as of 6 December

UNRWA response:

Area	Population	UNRWA facilities	Latest Distribution	Total Distribution (since March 2011)
Aleppo	36,912	17	9,000 food parcels	9,000 food parcels, 928 families cash assistance
Damascus/Rif	412,332	134	1,300 families cash assistance	27,784 families cash assistance
Dera'a	30,545	14	2,175 food parcels	1,916 families cash assistance, 6,600 food parcels
Hama	9,642	10	1,451 families cash assistance	1,451 families cash assistance
Homs	23,758	13	6,000 food parcels, 178 families cash assistance	3,122 families cash assistance, 6,000 food parcels
Latakia	11,076	9	1,250 families cash assistance	1,897 families cash assistance
Total	524,265	197		21,600 food parcels, cash assistance for 37,098 families

--Ends--

UNRWA-Syria in numbers

518,900 registered persons
9 camps
118 schools
63,700 pupils
23 primary health-care facilities
497,000 annual patient visits
35,000 special hardship cases
68,000 microfinance loans

To read more detailed information about events throughout the country, sign up to receive weekly updates on our humanitarian response in Syria at www.unrwa.org/syria.

[Click here](#) to read the latest UNRWA statement on the humanitarian crisis in Yarmouk published on 17 December.

[Click here](#) to read about UNRWA's emergency response in the last situation report published on 16 December.

[Click here](#) to read a profile of Yarmouk describing the scope of UNRWA's work there before the outbreak of recent hostilities.

[Click here](#) to read about UNRWA's regular work in Syria.

Background information:

As the Syria conflict and its impact on civilians continue to escalate, UNRWA continues to exert all efforts to respond to the humanitarian needs of Palestine refugees. The Agency is monitoring the situation as it evolves, and its staff will continue to assess the situation and render any needed assistance.

UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and is mandated to provide assistance and protection to a population of some 5 million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the

Gaza Strip to achieve their full potential in human development, pending a just solution to their plight. UNRWA's services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, microfinance and emergency assistance.

Financial support to UNRWA has not kept pace with an increased demand for services caused by growing numbers of registered refugees, expanding need, and deepening poverty. As a result, the Agency's General Fund, supporting UNRWA's core activities and 97 per cent reliant on voluntary contributions, has begun each year with a large projected deficit.

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