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a weekly update for unrwa's donors

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situational overview

The deteriorating situation in Syria is forcing many Palestine refugees and Syrians into destitution. Significant numbers of people, many of whom were previously self-reliant, can no longer meet their basic needs, particularly in the conflict-affected areas of Rif Damascus Governorate, Aleppo and Dera'a.

With external flight options restricted, Palestine refugees in Syria remain a particularly vulnerable group. As the armed conflict has progressively escalated since the launch of *UNRWA's Syria Crisis Response 2013*, the number of Palestine refugees in Syria in need of humanitarian assistance has risen to over **400,000** individuals. Some **4,406** Palestine refugees have fled to Jordan and approximately **32,000** refugees have sought refuge in Lebanon.

syria

At a glance:

- Armed conflict continues throughout most of the country, with a series of explosions reported throughout Damascus, including the use of vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIED) and a number of mortars targeting security facilities;
- A mortar caused the death of a 14-year-old Palestine refugee while he stood outside an UNRWA school in Qaboun. Another student was injured;
- An UNRWA area staff member was injured, reportedly by a stray bullet, while travelling in a taxi on a private errand in Damascus;
- Hostilities continued around a number of camps in and around Damascus, namely Yarmouk, Sbeineh, Seyeda Zaynab, Husseinayah, Khan Sheikh and this week for the first time, Khan Dannoun. The hostilities have caused a number of deaths and injuries and at least two UNRWA installations were damaged;

- General hardship intensified within the camps as the intensity of the conflict restricted humanitarian access;
- Dera'a town continued to witness regular clashes and shelling, including in the vicinity of the camp;
- Armed conflict continued in and around Aleppo with reports of intensive hostilities from the city centre and around the airport, all of which severely restricted access to Neirab camp.

Despite the formidable challenges of restricted humanitarian access and high risk of exposure to violence, since the start of the conflict in March 2011, UNRWA's network of staff and humanitarian assets have succeeded in providing 28,652 refugee households with food parcels, 13,605 mattresses, 25,752 blankets, and 2,536 hygiene kits. Cash assistance has been provided to nearly 60,000 families including the latest distribution for the month of February, which reached 14,806 families in Damascus and Aleppo.

Currently, there are some 12,000 internally-displaced people (IDPs) sheltering in UNRWA-managed facilities in Syria, of which nearly 9,000 are in UNRWA buildings (e.g. schools and training centres) being used as make-shift emergency shelters.

The IDPs are dependent on humanitarian assistance for their basic food and health needs, as well as non-food items. Almost half of them are children, and there are 99 pregnant women, with 20 coming to full term. Among the displaced are 82 newborn babies and 79 elderly people. To date, 15 babies have been born at UNRWA schools being used as emergency shelter.

IDPs in four UNRWA facilities as of 20 January*:

Area	Women	Men	Children	Total
Damascus Training Centre	498	472	630	1600
Damascus (Jaramana Camp)	280	209	564	1053
Damascus (Mezzeh)	154	146	207	507
Damascus (Khan Sheikh Camp)	463	360	483	1306
Damascus (Ramadan Camp)	574	473	793	1840
Damascus (Dummar)	146	112	286	544
Damascus (Rukn Eddin)	133	151	210	494
Damascus (Khan Dannoun Camp)	170	196	423	789
Aleppo	199	227	303	729

Hama	--	--	--	28
Total	2617	2346	3899	8890

*Over the past weeks, UNRWA has been striving to locate displaced Palestine refugees. These efforts have been successful in locating 2,333 Palestine refugees at 8 non-UNRWA schools in Qudsaya, Khan Esheikh and Khan Dannoun. 1,926 Palestine refugees have been identified in Hama Camp, having come from Yarmouk and Ein el Tal. 5,281 refugees have made themselves known to UNRWA in Homs camp, having fled from Aleppo, Damascus and Homs countryside. 2,171 refugees have made themselves known to UNRWA in Latakia, having fled from Yarmouk and Ein el Tal. (Total: 11,981)

Damascus/Rif Damascus

Intensive clashes and shelling continued in all areas surrounding Yarmouk with several shells again landing within the camp. During the last week, in Yarmouk alone at least five refugees were killed, and a child died due to injuries caused by mortar fire. UNRWA is investigating reports that its community centre was damaged. Security forces still control access to the camp, occasionally closing off access through Yarmouk Street. Less than 40 per cent of refugees remain in the camp.

Insecurity persists in camps throughout Damascus/Rif Damascus Governorate including Sbeineh, Seyeda Zaynab, and Husseinayah where about half of the residents have left to seek safety. The situation is worsening in Khan Dannoun camp which is now overcrowded as more displaced refugees arrive from other areas amidst reports of clashes in the vicinity of the camp.

Clashes and shelling continued in Khan Sheikh camp, Douma, Qaboun, and Barzeh. UNRWA is deeply concerned about the conduct of armed conflict in residential areas including in the immediate vicinity of schools, which places children at extreme risk of death and injury. In a suspected mortar attack close to UNRWA's Tantorah School in Qaboun, a 14 year-old Palestine refugee student was killed and another was injured. A Syrian man and his two daughters also died. UNRWA issued a media statement denouncing the perpetrators of this tragedy.

Earlier in the week, an UNRWA teacher was injured by a stray bullet while travelling by private taxi from Rukn Eddin to Barzeh. The staff member was briefly admitted to hospital and has since been discharged.

Aleppo

The situation remains volatile in Aleppo with continued clashes in the city, especially in the vicinity of the Old City. There are reports that some refugees were fleeing from Neirab to Ein El Tal camp where the situation is relatively calm. UNRWA remains gravely concerned over increasingly restricted access to Neirab, where the Agency's facilities remain operational.

Dera'a

Sporadic shelling and clashes persist in Dera'a town, as well as Mzerieb and Jillien villages.

Homs

There have been reports of shelling close to Homs town but the camp remains calm. A refugee reportedly died due to conflict-related injuries sustained last week.

Hama

The situation remains calm and UNRWA facilities are operational.

Lattakia

At least 40 families from Neirab camp have sought safety in the camp in Lattakia. There is a marked increase in the army presence around the camp. UNRWA facilities remain operational.

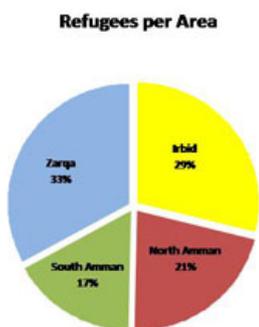
lebanon

The volatile situation in Syria has led to an increase in the number of Palestine refugees fleeing to Lebanon, now approximately 32,000 individuals. In Lebanon, Palestine refugees from Syria are dispersed in Saida (30 per cent), northern Lebanon (15 per cent), Beqa'a (23 per cent), central Lebanon Area (17 per cent) and Tyre (15 per cent).

UNRWA continues to provide cash assistance, clothing and food vouchers to vulnerable Palestine refugee families from Syria, many of whom are entirely dependent on humanitarian assistance and the host community to survive. Accommodation is the most pressing need of Palestine refugee families from Syria.

UNRWA's alternative education modalities programme ensures that approximately 2,700 Palestine refugee children from Syria are able to continue their education despite displacement. Vulnerable Palestine refugees from Syria are also provided with UNRWA health services. The Agency is planning to enhance the environmental health and sanitation systems in camps of host communities where there is overcrowding.

jordan



The number of Palestine refugees from Syria registered with UNRWA in Jordan is 4,406; 221 of these are in Cyber City, a government-appointed facility, and the remainder are dispersed in the host communities across Jordan. Only 11 of the 1,024 families registered with UNRWA live outside the northern governorates of Irbid, Zarqa and Amman.

An age/gender breakdown of the PRS population highlights the community's vulnerability in terms of gender: 28.6 per cent of households are headed by females; 51.9 per

cent of the total population is female; 77 per cent are women and children; 54.2 per cent of the elderly are female (over the age of 51); and 53.4 per cent of teenagers (ages 13-18) are young women.

UNRWA schools now host 401 Palestinian and 152 Syrian children.

In the last week, UNRWA health centres provided services to 99 Palestine refugees from Syria in the Irbid area, nine in South Amman, 47 in Zarqa area, and 31 in North Amman, with two patients referred to hospitals.

Palestine Refugees from Syria: Not just numbers

Abu Zein* is a Palestinian who lived until recently with his wife and three children in Yarmouk refugee camp in Damascus, Syria. Despite escalating violence, the family was reluctant to leave their home, family and friends behind, and uncertain about finding a place of refuge. But motivated by fear for the life and safety of their children, they felt they had no choice.

In October, Abu Zein's wife, who is part Syrian, was able to flee to Jordan and stay with her sister and aunts in Madaba, south of Amman. Abu Zein and the children (without Syrian passports) followed her to Jordan one month later. But instead of being reunited with their mother, Abu Zein's children and their father were placed in the King Abdullah Park transit facility in Ramtha, north-west Jordan. On 14 January 2013, the family was transferred to Cyber City, another government-appointed facility in Jordan.

In Cyber City, Abu Zein does his best to care for his five children as a single parent; the eldest 19 years old, and the youngest only three. Despite help from his older children, Abu Zein is struggling with the difficult situation.

The children's mother is only allowed to visit the camp once a month. The first time, she was granted a meagre two-hour visit. Now, Abu Zein says, his younger children cry when they hear her voice over the phone.

Abu Zein, a loving husband and father, feels families should be together during hard times. He believes children should not be separated from their parents, and civilians like him who have escaped abuse should be protected, not detained.

While grateful to be safe from the violence in Syria, he says, "living here is like seeing all fog in front of you.

"Not a single ray of light."

UNRWA has urged the Government of Jordan to uphold the principles of equal treatment of refugees. [Read More](#)

funding requirements

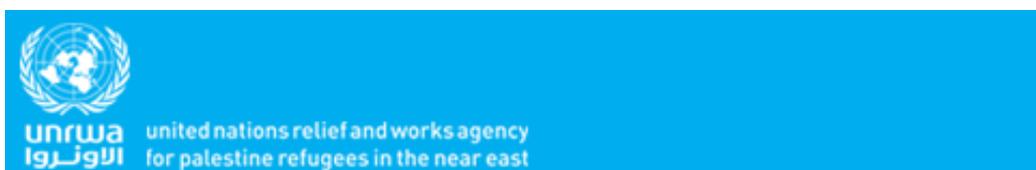
2013 response plan (january 2013 – june 2013)

The total pledged amount against the 2013 Response Plan is now at USD 26.85 million, equivalent to 29.43 per cent of the total budget of the 2013 Response Plan required (USD 91.24 million). New pledges of USD 204,125 were confirmed from the Spanish regional government of Castilla-La-Mancha, and UNICEF.

Out of the USD-26.85-million pledged funds, USD 19.04 million were received so far.

2012 response plan to 31 December 2012

Out of the USD 28.9m pledged funds, USD 1.98 million remain outstanding (= outstanding installments of 2012 pledges).



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