

# INTER-AGENCY REGIONAL RESPONSE FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES

Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey

14 - 20 February 2014



This situation update provides a snapshot of the inter-agency regional humanitarian response in full coordination with host Governments and 155 partners across the region.

## REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- The United Nations Security Council on 22 February unanimously adopted a resolution demanding that all parties in **Syria** immediately put an end to all forms of violence, and promptly allow **safe and unhindered humanitarian access** for UN humanitarian agencies and their implementing partners to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches people in need.
- Turkish officials reported an explosion near a Syria-Turkey border crossing post on 20 February. Five people reportedly died from the blast, believed to have been caused by a car bomb, and at least 40 wounded were transported to be treated in the southern Turkish city of Kilis. **Turkey** is experiencing an increase in new arrivals from Syria following attacks in Aleppo, some 60 km south of Kilis, and in other border areas. There are already more than 610,000 Syrian refugees registered in Turkey.
- Agencies continue to respond to more than 12,000 Syrians who have fled into the Bekaa Governorate, **Lebanon**, since a fresh offensive on the Syrian city of Yabroud and its outskirts began on 9 February. The new arrivals represent a second wave of refugees to escape fighting in the same region of Syria, following an earlier influx in November 2013. The recent arrivals bring the total refugee population in Aarsal to more than 50,800, exceeding the number of resident Lebanese.

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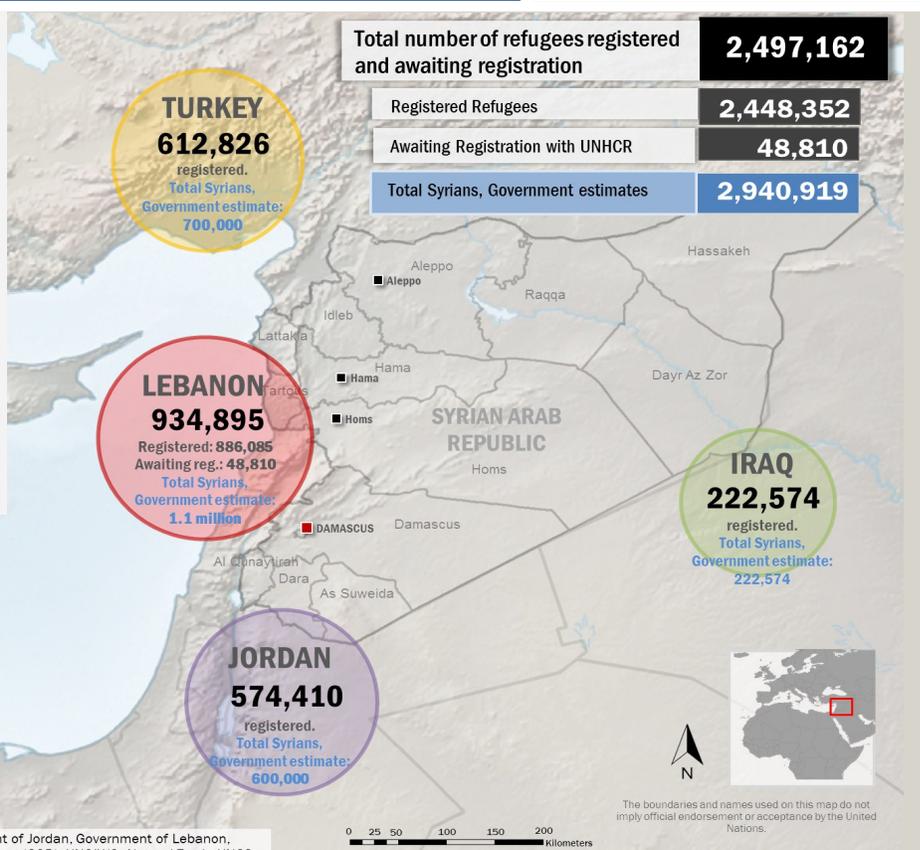
## REGIONAL FIGURES

**2,497,162** Syrian refugees have fled to neighbouring countries and North Africa

**83%** of refugees are living in urban and rural communities

**1.2 million** refugees are under 18 years of age

**12%** of the \$4.2 billion RRP6 inter-agency appeal is funded



Sources: AFAD, Government of Egypt, Government of Iraq, Government of Jordan, Government of Lebanon, UNHCR Regional Datawarehouse, Common Operational Dataset (COD), UNGIWG, Natural Earth, UNCS

0 25 50 100 150 200 kilometers

Refugee population as of 20 February 2014, based on available data. For updated figures, please visit <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees>

## LEBANON: UNHCR TRANSITIONING TO CROSS-SECTORAL CASH-BASED ASSISTANCE

- Refugee households throughout Lebanon are struggling to meet their basic needs due to lack of access to labour opportunities and dwindling family resources and savings. The cost of living in Lebanon, especially for housing, is very high. This has forced many households to adopt negative coping strategies or to move into substandard accommodation. As many households rely on market-provided goods and services, financial support is critical for the survival of vulnerable families.
- Refugees frequently express a preference for financial assistance, which enables them to prioritize their own needs and saves time travelling to distribution sites, as an alternative to in-kind assistance and distribution of core relief items.
- UNHCR launched its ATM cash assistance programme in November 2013. By the end of December 2013, some 46,518 refugee households (232,590 individuals) had received ATM cards with cash to purchase heating fuel and a stove as part of the winterization programme. Also in December, 22,876 additional vulnerable refugee households (over 114,000 individuals) were provided with ATM cards charged with cash for hygiene and baby kits and one-time winterization assistance of US\$ 107.

### Move towards cash-based assistance

- UNHCR is planning a shift in 2014 from sector-specific or 'conditional' cash assistance to a more comprehensive cross-sectoral 'unconditional' approach of monthly cash grants. Households receiving the monthly cash allowance will be able to use the funds to bridge the gap between their expenditures and income and set their own priorities.
- The approach seeks to target a portion of the total refugee population who would be qualified for financial assistance based on their vulnerability, while the refugee population at large will continue to benefit from protection services, food, health and education according to existing criteria in addition to other *ad hoc* emergency interventions. In this way, cash assistance via ATM will supplement, rather than replace other forms of assistance that cannot or should not be monetized.

### ATM cards have a number of benefits:

- Given the fact that refugees live in close to 1,600 locations across Lebanon, ATM cards provide a practical means for swiftly delivering cash assistance to refugees in the country.
- ATM cards empower refugees by providing a dignified means of receiving assistance, and saves time spent at or travelling to distribution sites.
- Cards enable UNHCR and partners to make the best use of funds available. They eliminate costs related to procurement, storage, and distribution of in-kind assistance.
- Monitoring of electronically recorded transactions allows partners to better assess and understand refugee needs. Some 650,000 refugee families will have received ATM cards by the end of March.



*Syrian refugee children holding a new ATM card. UNHCR | A. McConnell*

### Coordination

- Inter-agency stakeholders continue to work towards the harmonization of cash assistance via ATM card through the Cash Working Group, chaired by UNHCR, to ensure that assistance is provided in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.

### UNHCR implementing partners

- Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED); Caritas; Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli (CISP); Danish Refugee Council (DRC); Makhzoumi Foundation; Save the Children; Social, Humanitarian, Economical Intervention for Local Development (SHEILD); Solidar Suisse; and World Vision.

## ACTED: RESPONDING TO EMERGENCY WINTER NEEDS ACROSS THE REGION

- ACTED teams reached over 75,000 vulnerable beneficiaries across Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq. ACTED distributed winter and shelter kits to ensure families were insulated from winter elements such as heavy rains and snow. ACTED moreover increased its cash assistance program to support families at risk of eviction and provide them with the capacity to purchase key winter items and meet their basic needs.



- **Jordan** - Over the past few months, ACTED has been very involved in the distribution of core relief items and cash assistance in the north of Jordan to support the most vulnerable Syrians and Jordanians during the harsh winter months. ACTED's distribution of winterization non-food items (NFI), including blankets, gas heaters, and shelter sealing-off kits, reached over 1,700 families between December 2013 and January 2014, giving beneficiaries access to improved shelter and winterized items. In parallel, ACTED has launched a new initiative of distributing Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) NFI vouchers that are redeemable at a national supermarket cooperative throughout North Jordan. The vouchers will enable beneficiaries to purchase WASH items suited to their individual household family needs at a competitive market price.
- In addition, distributions of regular three-month unconditional cash assistance through the use of ATM cards, to the value of 155 JOD, have begun to 1,250 eligible families. Identified beneficiaries are in great need of cash support to cover their rent costs or access to basic services such as education and health.
- **Lebanon** - During the winter months, ACTED distributed over 238 sealing-off kits in Mount Lebanon, reaching a total of 1,190 vulnerable refugees. Cash assistance was given to 1,264 households for winterization, enabling them to purchase items such as heating stoves and fuel. Some 5,400 blankets were also distributed to vulnerable households, especially important for those situated in high altitude areas that experience extreme weather conditions.
- **Iraq** - During the winter months, ACTED distributed kerosene for heating and cooking to over 5,900 households across four camps in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. As UNHCR's main partner, ACTED distributed over 5,000 winterization kits (including thermal blankets, jerry cans, quilts, and a plastic sheet) across Kawargosk, Darashakran, Basirma and Qushtapa camps. In response to heavy rains in Kawargosk camp, ACTED coordinated an emergency drainage system through Cash-for-Work labourers. In order to assist the most vulnerable family members such as people with disabilities, pregnant women, small children and elderly, ACTED distributed a total of 11,000 camping beds in Kawargosk, Gawilan, Basirma and Arbat camps, which have allowed these vulnerable beneficiaries to be more insulated from the heavy rain and the cold.

## NEW CALL FOR RESETTLEMENT OR OTHER FORMS OF ADMISSION FOR 100,000 SYRIANS

- UNHCR is calling upon States to make multi-annual commitments towards a goal of providing resettlement and other forms of admission for an additional 100,000 Syrian refugees in 2015 and 2016.
- UNHCR has earlier called upon States to provide solutions for 30,000 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees through resettlement or other forms of admission by the end of 2014. To date, 20 countries have offered more than 18,800 places towards this goal. UNHCR remains confident that the 30,000 goal will be met by the end of the year through a significant number of submissions to the United States of America.
- UNHCR anticipates that in the coming years, there will be increasing numbers of vulnerable Syrian refugees who will be in need of resettlement, relocation, or other forms of humanitarian admission. In light of the growing needs of the Syrian refugee population, the goal of 30,000 in 2014 represents only the first benchmark in securing solutions for this group.

## LEBANON: INFLUX INTO ARSAL CONTINUES, REFUGEES OUTNUMBER LOCAL RESIDENTS

- Agencies continue to respond to the arrival of an estimated 12,800 Syrians in Arsal since 9 February as fighting in the Qalamoun region of Syria continued. The recent arrivals bring the total refugee population in Arsal to more than 50,800, exceeding the number of resident Lebanese.
- Humanitarian partners have scaled-up outreach activities to provide information and counseling to all new arrivals, presently scattered in over 32 Informal Tented Settlements, collective shelters and public spaces such as mosques, halls and, sometimes, trucks.
- New arrivals have received hygiene kits, mattresses, blankets, stoves, fuel vouchers, kitchen sets, baby kits, and food. A preparedness stock containing food parcels for more than 130,000 people and core relief items sufficient to respond to an influx of up to 200,000 people has been established. Agencies continue to work with the authorities to meet immediate needs and ensure adequate contingency planning.



*New arrivals are pre-registered and provided with assistance by humanitarian partners in Arsal. UNHCR | A. McConnell*

The regional response for refugees fleeing Syria is the coordinated effort of 155 participating organizations, including 105 appealing agencies:

ABAAD | [ACTED](#) | ActionAid | [Action contre la faim](#) | Adventist Development and Relief Agency | [Africa and Middle East Refugee Assistance](#) | Al Majmoua | [AMAN](#) | AMEL | [Arab Medical Union](#) | Arc en Ciel | [ARDD-Legal Aid](#) | Association de Charité Humanitaire | [Association Justice et Miséricorde](#) | Association of Volunteers in International Service | [BBC Media Action](#) | Beyond Association | [British Council](#) | CARE International | [Caritas](#) | Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center | [Catholic Relief Services](#) | Central Association for Kindergarten Supervisors League | [Centre for Victims of Torture](#) | Civil Development Organization | [Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli](#) | CONCERN | [Cooperazione Internazionale](#) | Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services | [DRC](#) | Family Guidance and Awareness Center | [FAO](#) | Finn Church Aid | [Finnish Red Cross/Iraqi Red Crescent Society](#) | Fundacion Promocion Social de la Cultura | [GIZ](#) | Global Communities Partners for Good | [Gruppo di Volontariato Civile](#) | Handicap International | [Heartland Alliance International](#) | High Relief Commission | [Hilfswerk Austria International](#) | Human Relief Foundation | [Humedica](#) | ILO | [Institution for Family Health/Noor Al Hussein Foundation](#) | International Alert | [International Catholic Migration Commission](#) | International Children's Continenence Society | [International Medical Corps](#) | International Orthodox Christian Charities | [International Relief and Development](#) | International Rescue Committee | [Internews](#) | INTERSOS | [IOM](#) | Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project | [Iraqi Youth League](#) | Islamic Relief Worldwide | [JBA](#) | JEN | [Jesuit Refugee Service](#) | Jordan Health Aid Society | [Jordan Hashemite Charity Organization](#) | Jordan Hashemite Fund for Human Development | [Jordan Red Crescent](#) | Jordan River Foundation | [Jordanian Women's Union](#) | KAFA | [KG](#) | KnK | [KURDS](#) | Lutheran Word Federation | [MADA](#) | Madrasati Initiative | [Mines Advisory Group](#) | Mahmoud Mosque Society | [Makassed](#) | Makhzoumi Foundation | [Medair](#) | Medical Aid for Palestinians | [Médecins du Monde](#) | Mercy Corps | [Mercy USA](#) | Ministry of Public Health | [Ministry of Water and Irrigation](#) | Movement for Peace | [Muslim Aid](#) | NAJMAH | [National Center for Culture and Arts](#) | NICCOD | [NRC](#) | Operation Mercy | [Organization for the Development of Women and Children](#) | Oxfam | [PEOPLE IN NEED](#) | Plan International | Polish Center for International Aid | [Psycho Social Training and Services Institute in Cairo](#) | PU-AMI | [Public Aid Organization](#) | QANDIL | [Questscope](#) | Rassemblement Democratique des Femmes du Liban | [Relief International](#) | Refugee Education Trust | [Refugee Egypt](#) | Resala | [RESCATE](#) | RESTART | [Royal Health Awareness Society](#) | Safadi Foundation | [SAWA](#) | SCI KR-I | [SCI](#) | SCJ | [Search for Common Ground](#) | Secours Islamique France | [Seraphim GLOBAL](#) | SHEILD | [Solidar Suisse](#) | Solidarités International | [Soins infirmiers et developpement comunautaire](#) | St. Andrew's Refugee Education Service | [STEP](#) | TADAMON | [Taghyeer](#) | TDH | [TDHI](#) | THW | [TRIANGLE GH](#) | UAE Red Crescent | [UNAMI](#) | UN Women | [UNDP](#) | UNESCO | [UNFPA](#) | UN-Habitat | [UNHCR](#) | UNICEF | [UNOPS](#) | Un Ponte Per | [UNRWA](#) | WAAJC | [War Child UK](#) | War Child Holland | [WARVIN](#) | WFP | [WHO](#) | World Rehabilitation Fund | [World Vision International](#) | Young Man's Christian Association | [Y-PEER](#)

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