



Lebanon Update

Situation in North Lebanon

December 31 - January 06 2012



A UNHCR outreach worker registering a displaced Syrian woman in the host community house in Wadi Khaled. UNHCR © Dalia Khamissy, Oct 3 2011.

Highlights of the week

Numbers:

The number of registered Syrians with UNHCR and the High Relief Commission (HRC) is 5,039. Since last week, there has been an increase of some 100 persons, many of who reside in the Tripoli area.

Distribution:

Preparations are underway for the January distribution of food and non-food items. The distribution is led by HRC and UNHCR with contributions also received from a number of other partners notably UNHCR's implementing partner the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and Caritas. Every effort is being made to ensure that all partners providing assistance to displaced do so through the coordination mechanisms established in the field. This will help to prevent duplication and improve the effectiveness of assistance provided.

Education:

UNHCR and partners continued to provide remedial classes to some 330 students to help them adapt to the Lebanese curriculum. The classes, available to displaced and Lebanese children, are having a positive impact and demand for them continues to be high and growing. Designed by UNHCR and its implementing partner, Save the Children Sweden (SCS), the classes will help to encourage students stay in school by providing them needed support.

In addition, UNHCR is seeking approval from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) to extend school registration period so that newly arrived students can be enrolled.

Also this week, 130 displaced and Lebanese parents in different villages in Wadi Khaled benefited from awareness sessions on Adult Stress Disorder, infectious diseases/ prevention and treatment, and oral and dental.

Shelter and other projects:

UNHCR and DRC continue to coordinate with the HRC in identifying abandoned structures that can be used as collective shelters.

In addition, a number of projects to benefit hosting communities are in the final stages of completion. These include two playgrounds, a cine dub, a public library, and an agricultural cooperative where community members can rent and share various tools, such as mowers and a generator, instead of purchasing these items.

Protection:

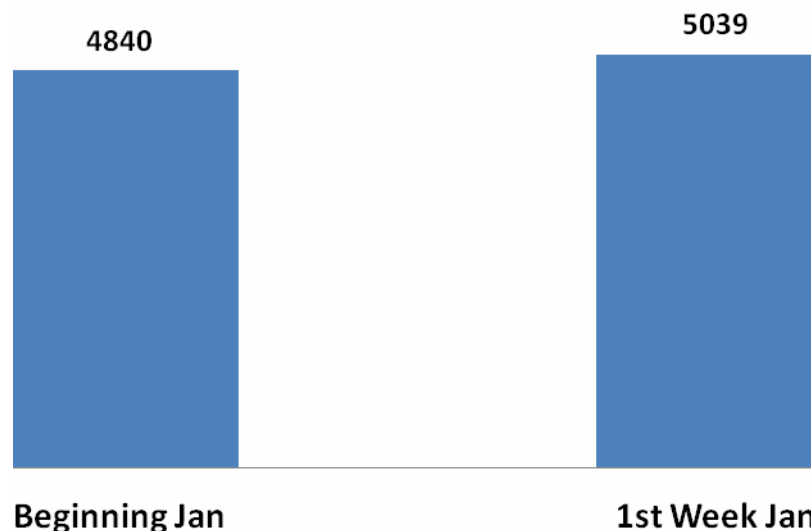
An additional 3 wounded persons were referred to hospitals in the north this week. UNHCR teams visited the hospitals of Qobeyat, Halba and Tripoli to follow-up on their circumstances. Reportedly, all the wounded were injured from gunshots in Homs and Al Qusayr areas.

Registration certificates to persons registered with UNHCR and HRC are still on hold. Moreover, no circulation permits have yet been issued.

Situational Overview

Beginning in April 2011, Lebanon witnessed an influx of some 5,000 Syrians refugees into northern Lebanon. Many subsequently returned to Syria, while others relocated inside Lebanon. Cumulatively, since April 2011, UNHCR and the HRC registered and assisted over 9,000 persons. Currently there are 5,039 persons registered in the North and Akkar, residing mostly with host families in difficult circumstances.

Those who remain are unwilling to return until stability and security is restored in their Syrian villages. Many individuals and families have been deeply affected by the events that caused them to flee, and are reluctant to go home until the situation stabilizes.

Registered Displaced Syrians Trend in January 2012

Age Group	Females	Percentage	Males	Percentage	Total
0-04	422	20%	496	23%	918
05-11	493	23%	493	23%	986
12-18	359	17%	393	18%	752
18-29	529	25%	467	22%	996
30-39	346	16%	345	16%	691
40-49	198	9%	225	10%	423
50-59	89	4%	85	4%	174
60+	52	2%	47	2%	99
Total	2488	49%	2551	51%	5039

Trends	1st Week Jan	2nd Week Jan	3rd Week Jan	End Jan
Newly Registered	193			
Re-activated	6			
Internally Moving	0			
Returned to Syria	0			
Absent during Distribution	0			
Active Population	5039			

A number of displaced Syrians had crossed into Lebanon earlier but just this week approached our Office. Local mayors and NGOs played an active role in referring displaced Syrians to UNHCR-HRC teams for registration.

Identification and registration occurs on a daily basis by outreach teams. UNHCR and the HRC verify the numbers during the monthly distribution of food/non-food items. Persons found no longer to be in the area are de-registered. Many of these are known to have returned to Syria.

Coordination

A very solid coordinated response and positive working relations with the government's HRC and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) were established at the outset to the benefit of the refugees and hosting communities. These partnerships continue and together with other UN and NGO partners the needs of refugees and affected communities are being holistically addressed. They include the following:

- Protection interventions to ensure safety, physical integrity and non-refoulement;
- Assistance to meet basic needs;
- Education and remedial classes;

- Provision of medical and psycho-social care.

A common database is in use by the HRC and UNHCR and referral mechanisms established to enable the displaced persons to access assistance through specialized partners.

Protection

The vast majority of Syrians who have arrived in the past few weeks have come from Tal Kalakh and Homs. They express fear and anxiety about returning and most do not feel that the situation is safe enough for them to do so yet.

Most of those who have recently arrived have crossed at official border crossings expressing fear of going through the unofficial ones. Residents in the north report that the heavy presence of the Syrian army in border areas, as well as the presence of land mines on the Syrian side, prevent more people from fleeing to Lebanon.

UNHCR maintains regular contact with the Lebanese authorities and civil society representatives to follow-up on the security situation of the displaced population in the north of Lebanon. UNHCR has provided guidance to the government on the appropriate treatment of army deserters. A planned training of LAF and ISF remains pending until the authorities confirm a date.

UNHCR continues to follow-up on the cases of Syrians who are detained for illegal entry or stay.

According to UNHCR's estimates, over 150 wounded have been treated in various hospitals in Lebanon since the beginning of the influx. Expenses related to their treatment are covered by the Lebanese authorities through the HRC. Their treatment and needs are followed-up by UNHCR and partners.

Registration certificates to persons registered with UNHCR and HRC are still on hold. The certificates are a means to show that the person is someone who is registered with UNHCR and the HRC and is aimed to prevent fraud and facilitate access to needed services.

Circulation permits have also not been issued by the authorities. Displaced Syrians are increasingly worried about their inability to move freely.

Community Services

Outreach workers from the MoSA and DRC continue to visit the displaced Syrians at homes and in schools in Wadi Khaled, Tall Bire, and Tripoli in order to counsel them, assess their needs, and refer newcomers to UNHCR and HRC for registration.

Shelter and other projects

Most of the displaced Syrians reside with host families. Just over 200 persons are accommodated in three (abandoned) schools: Al-Rama, Al-Ibra and Al-Mouanseh schools. The schools were initially not well equipped (with sanitation and hygiene facilities) to receive large numbers of people but have been improved and are regularly monitored. The hall of Khorbet Daoud Mosque has also been rehabilitated to host displaced families should there be a need in the future.

UNHCR and the Government of Lebanon initiated the renovation of Al Rama, Al Mouanseh, Kashlak schools, and the hall of Khorbet Daoud Mosque, while the renovation of the Al Ibra school was undertaken by the Al-Bashaer Islamic Association.

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) together with partner organizations and outreach workers have identified host family residences in pressing need of improvement in preparation for the winter. NRC has begun to provide these families with coupons enabling them to renovate their homes.

UNHCR's implementing partner, DRC, has reached the final stages of the rehabilitation of two public gardens: the first is located in the Social Development Center (SDC) of Amayer and the second next to Moukaybel municipality. In addition, DRC is completing the renovation work and equipment for the public library in Aidamoon village, and the cine-club in Wadi Khaled.

Distribution (Food/ NFI)

UNHCR along with the Government of Lebanon, DRC, Caritas Migrant Centre, World Vision, and UNICEF distribute food and non-food items to the displaced on a monthly basis. UNHCR continues to provide food and non-food items to newly registered families who were not on the UNHCR-HRC database during the last distribution.

Items Distributed	December 28, 2011	Cumulative
Mattresses	200	4,589
Blankets	0	4,857
Food kits	65	5,557
Diapers	0	886
Baby milk	2	1,068
Baby kits	0	424
Hygiene kits	0	3,192
Women's underwear	0	714
Tuition fees	53	465
Books	53	465
Stationary	75	596
Uniforms	53	465
Family kit (kitchen utensils)	0	48
Clothes coupons of 75,000 LBP	0	1,113
Fuel coupons (20 liters)	48	11,745

Education

The Minister of Education is facilitating the enrollment of displaced children in public schools. UNHCR is covering the cost of school fees, books, uniforms, notebooks, and stationary. UNHCR and its implementing partner, Save the Children Sweden (SCS), are providing remedial classes for Syrian displaced children given the differences between the Lebanese and Syrian school curricula. A total of 465 displaced children have enrolled into public schools. UNHCR is seeking to improve the school enrolment rate in 2012 by continuing to give awareness sessions to displaced parents on the importance of education, and offering remedial classes to both Lebanese and displaced Syrian children in Wadi Khaled, Tall Bire, and Tripoli.

Health

UNHCR, HRC and the World Health Organization (WHO) have established a referral system so that registered displaced Syrians have access to health care services through the most specialized partner. Public Health Centres, Social Development Centres of the MoSA, and a few NGO-run health care centres in the region are providing primary health care and medication to the displaced. UNHCR covers up to 85% of diagnostic tests. The HRC covers the cost of secondary and tertiary health care through local hospitals in the north. UNHCR provides additional support where needed.

The HRC and UNHCR's implementing partner, the International Medical Corp (IMC), reached agreements with five hospitals for discounted rates in the provision of necessary health care. Medecins sans Frontieres (MSF) started the implementation of a mental health project jointly with the Makassed Public Health Centre (PHC). A psychologist has been deployed in Makassed's centre to provide mental health counselling to all Wadi Khaled residents, including the displaced. Moreover, IMC has launched a series of trainings to the medical and social staff in the PHCs, Social Development Centres (SDCs) and partner agencies on the best techniques and tools to support persons affected by armed conflict and on psychological first aid. IMC has also provided a basic computer skills training to Al-Makassed primary health centre's employees to improve the reporting procedures on cases in need of primary health care. In parallel, IMC and UNHCR continue to provide pamphlets on vaccination, obstetrics and gynaecology based on the Ministry of Public Health guidelines through the PHCs and SDCs. Since May, 582 persons have received primary health care services while 256 persons have received secondary healthcare services.

**Capacity
building**

UNCHR has invested in strengthening the capacities of government's and local partners through:

- Regular coordination meetings and joint plans of action;
- Technical and material support to the HRC in regard to registration, data collection and verification;
- Training and guidance to HRC, MoSA, partners, medical, educational and social service providers in a wide range of areas including:
 - protection of refugees and internally displaced persons;
 - effective registration and monitoring practices;
 - psychological first aid and mental health;
 - remedial class management and positive discipline;
 - computer skills for local health service providers
- Quick impact projects such as public gardens, public library and a cine club;
- Establishment of medical referral mechanisms and training for the systematic entry of data in the health referral system.