

UNHCR participated in inter-agency mission to Tear Malah, Homs Governorate

On 24 April 2013, UNHCR participated in an inter-agency mission to Tear Malah, located eight kilometers to the north of Homs. Most of the affected population in Tear Malah, which hosts 18,000 displaced Syrians, is originally from areas in northern Rural Homs, including Rastan, Talbisseh, Dar Kbereh, and Hassuiea. Most displaced persons are hosted by the local community; seven schools host a further 300 displaced while some Syrians stay in unfinished buildings. The city had been without power for 45 days and without water for 66 days. Most of the local doctors had fled the town and there is lack of medicine or no medicine at all to treat patients.

In a ten truck convoy, five UN agencies and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) participated in the mission. Items delivered by UNHCR included 1,500 mattresses, 2,000 sanitary napkins, 2,800 packs of diapers, 1,000 jerry cans, 3,000 sleeping mats, 1,000 kitchen sets and 1,000 plastic sheets benefitting a total of 3,000 vulnerable families.



Delivering assistance in Tear Malah, Homs ©UNHCR/Syria 2013

This is the third cross-line inter-agency mission UNHCR has joined in Homs Governorate in April. Previously two missions were carried out to Talbisseh (distribution mission on 17 April; assessment mission on 25 April) on top of regular delivery of assistance to Homs and Rural Homs by UNHCR in cooperation with SARC and other local partners.

For the overall 2013 programme, UNHCR has dispatched close to 1.6 million (1,578,716) non-food items (NFIs) for vulnerable Syrians as of 1 May 2013.

UNHCR distributes life-saving assistance in Tartous

Following the decision to join the UN inter-agency Hub in Tartous on 8 April 2013, UNHCR conducted an assessment of all 19 communal shelters in the Governorate, and delivered assistance to all shelters. As part of an urgent short-term response, UNHCR swiftly distributed relief items to 1,157 households (5,773 individuals) in Tartous.

New activities in Al-Nabek community centre

In response to the identification of increasing psychosocial support needs of children in Al-Nabek area, Rural Damascus, Al-Nabek Community Centre has started recreational, psychosocial support and educational activities targeting children up to 12 years old and girls from 13 to 17 years old.

For the overall 2013 programme, UNHCR has dispatched to date 1,578,716 non-food items.



Al-Nabek Community Centre opened at the beginning of 2013 and has registered over 200 beneficiaries. Activities proposed include remedial classes, vocational training, counseling, psychosocial support, recreational activities and peer support groups. It is managed by SARC with funds and technical support from UNHCR.

Aleppo Clean-Up Campaign

On 22 April, UNHCR joined in a clean-up campaign for the neighborhoods of Aleppo along with hundreds of citizens and civil society members. The cleaning campaign, which lasted for a full day, was organized by 12 local associations and charities in cooperation with Aleppo Governorate and Municipality. The campaign was aimed at raising awareness on the fact that the cleanliness of the city is the responsibility of all, especially with the security situation preventing garbage collection in many neighbourhoods of Aleppo. A Facebook page was created by one of the organizing charities to encourage Aleppo's population to participate in the campaign. Since its creation on 09 April, 2013, 4,500 Facebook members have joined the page. UNHCR supported the initiative by providing funds and participation of staff. Similar campaigns in other areas of Aleppo are envisaged in the near future.

UNHCR training of Syrian Arab Red Crescent branches

On 18 & 19 April, 2013 UNHCR organized a workshop for SARC members focusing on non-food items (NFIs). SARC branches from all governorates were represented at the workshop except for Dera'a, Qunietra (southern Syria) and Hassakeh (northeastern Syria), who could not attend for security reasons. Training sessions took place on methods of distribution of NFIs, identification of vulnerable people, reporting, needs assessments and warehousing. Protection mainstreaming and application of the principle of 'Do No Harm' during assistance distributions were also on the agenda.

Funding level of the UNHCR Syria emergency response

The funding level of the UNHCR Syria emergency response to the Syria crisis as of 02 May stands at 31.1 million USD, out of a total of 82.9 million USD needed to respond to life-saving needs for the first six months of 2013. Contributions earmarked at the country level were received from Austria, Canada, the European Commission, Luxemburg, Russia, Switzerland, the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and the USA. Contributions earmarked at the regional level (26.1 million USD as of 2 May) by various donors for the Syria emergency crisis may also benefit the UNHCR emergency response inside Syria.