

# INTER-AGENCY REGIONAL RESPONSE FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES

Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey

21 - 27 March 2013



This update provides a snapshot of the inter-agency regional response in full coordination with host Governments and 61 partners across the region. Published weekly on Thursday, the next update will be available on 4 April 2013.

## REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- The situation inside Syria continues to deteriorate, including in central and rural Damascus, resulting in an ongoing outflow of refugees. There is a growing concern about regional stability and the regionalization of the conflict.
- There are now more than 1.2 million refugees who have fled Syria to Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. UNHCR has registered 477,347 people since 1 January 2013 alone.
- Revision of the regional contingency plan is underway given the increasing trend in refugee arrivals. Funding of the Regional Response Plan stands at 31 per cent, with a shortfall of US\$735 million, while we have reached 110 per cent of the refugee population planning figure and needs are growing rapidly .
- The Government of Jordan has authorized the opening of an additional camp in Al-Azraq with a capacity to host up to 60,000 refugees. There are currently 20 camps for Syrian refugees in the region, including 17 camps in Turkey with three more under construction, one in Jordan with two additional transit sites, and two camps in Iraq.
- The Al Qa'im border in Iraq remains closed for Syrians seeking asylum except for emergency medical cases and family reunification, which are limited to spouses with a maximum number of three cases per day. Response partners continue to advocate for the opening of the border. All other crossing points are open.

## IN THIS ISSUE

- Healing the psychological wounds of children a major concern, p2
- WFP scaling up food assistance to meet rapidly growing needs, p2
- Sexual and gender-based violence a core protection issue for Syrian refugees, p3
- UNHCR consolidates partnership with the Turkish Government, p3
- New inter-agency information sharing portal launched to enhance coordination, p4

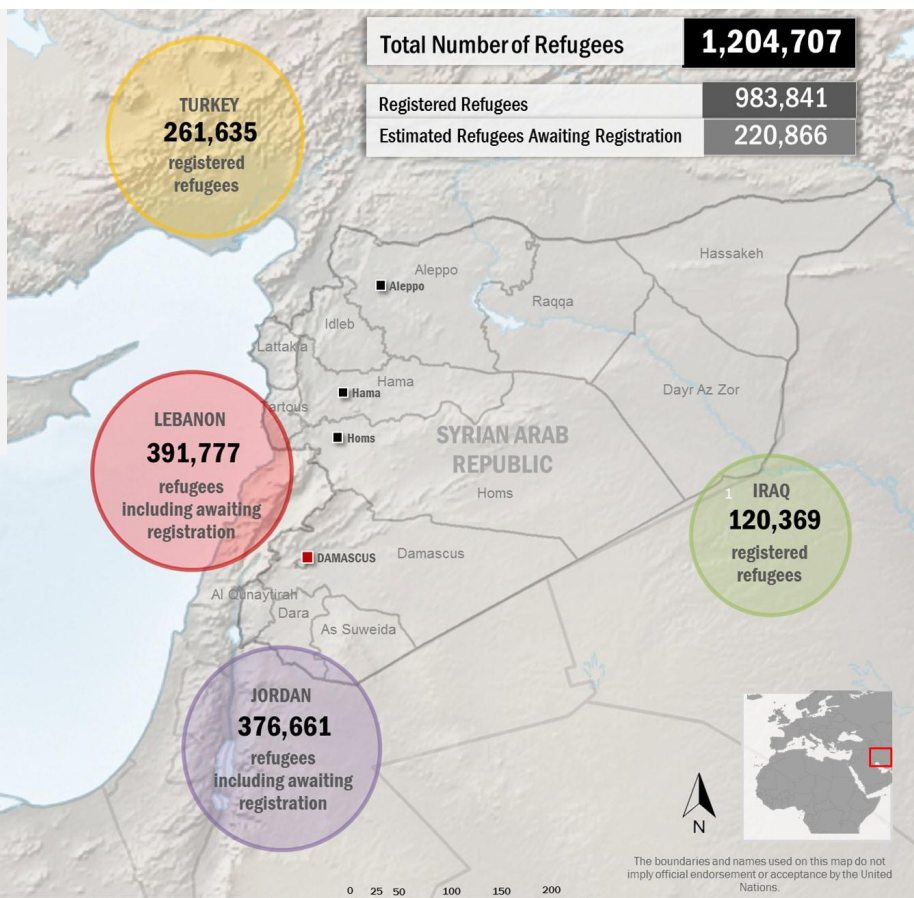
## REGIONAL FIGURES

**1,204,707** persons of concern have fled to neighboring countries

**75%** of refugees are women and children

**31%** of RRP funding has been received  
**110%** of the refugee population planning figure reached

**71%** of registered refugees live outside camps in host communities



Refugee population as of 27 March 2013, based on available data. For updated figures visit <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees>

## UNICEF: Healing the psychological wounds of children a major concern

- Children fleeing the conflict are often put directly in harm's way as they are being recruited by armed groups and forces, making them particularly vulnerable to trauma and suffering. Severe psychosocial consequences from post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental health issues continue to concern response partners.
- Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) serve as an important space for the identification of additional child protection concerns other than psychosocial distress. Trained animators and child protection committee members identify cases of violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect, child labour, and gender-based violence, which are referred to more specialized agencies such as International Medical Corps (IMC) to manage individual cases.
- Jordan - UNICEF partner Mercy Corps opened three new playgrounds in Za'atari camp last week. UNICEF and Save the Children International are installing a further eight CFS in the new camp modules and expect to open these next week. There are currently 18 operational CFS in the camp, which are open seven days a week and provide children with access to quality psychosocial services in a safe environment. Around 1,300 children access these spaces on a daily basis, in addition to the 300 adolescents (ages 12-17) who attend activities in the three UNICEF/IMC Adolescent Friendly Spaces in the camp.
- Lebanon - response partners continues to reach the most vulnerable children with community outreach, psychosocial support services and gender-based violence prevention and response programmes. In the past fortnight, 402 women and 236 girls have received psychosocial support, counseling, life skills based education, parenting skills, nutrition and awareness raising services at two community centres for women and girls in North Lebanon and Bekaa.



Response partners continue to organize activities for Syrian refugee children in the Bekaa Valley, Lebanon. UNHCR | S. Malkawi

- Iraq - CFS and the Child Protection Unit (CPU) in Domiz camp continue to provide children with recreational activities to help them cope with their experiences and monitor child protection issues. In Al Qa'im camp, UNICEF reached 1,155 children aged 3-17 with psychosocial and recreational activities. Signs of distress among the children were identified by social workers and referred to a psychologist for follow up support.

## WFP scaling up food assistance to meet rapidly increasing needs across the region

- Jordan - In February, WFP reached almost 200,000 Syrian refugees, double the overall caseload for food and vouchers in December 2012. The number of bread distribution points in Za'atari camp was quadrupled from one to four to reduce congestion and address some security issues.
- Lebanon - Over 150,000 beneficiaries received assistance in February, an increase of 17 per cent from January. More than 97 per cent of refugees received voucher assistance and food parcels were distributed to almost 3,900 vulnerable Syrians awaiting registration.
- Turkey - Voucher assistance to the Harran camp began in March, bringing the total number of Syrians assisted with electronic vouchers in Turkey this month to 36,000. In response to a request from the Turkish Government, WFP will scale up its operations to two more camps by April, with the aims to assist 100,000 Syrians in by June.
- Iraq - Almost 20,000 refugees were assisted through food and vouchers in February.
- Egypt - WFP completed its first voucher distribution in February, reaching 6,241 (86 per cent) of the 7,240 Syrians identified as vulnerable in the greater Cairo area, Alexandria and Damietta. The 14 per cent shortfall of beneficiaries not reached has been attributed to many refugees travelling between locations, while others have left for Libya seeking work.

## Sexual and gender-based violence is an urgent, core protection issue for Syrian refugees

- Women and girls are particularly vulnerable to harmful acts perpetrated against their will that inflict physical, mental, or sexual harm or suffering. Fear of rape is cited by refugees as one reason for fleeing Syria.
- Response partners are strengthening sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) Prevention, response and coordination mechanisms for effective service delivery, and the management of SGBV programmes by investing in capacity-building and expertise across the region.
- Jordan - UNFPA has established five “Women safe spaces” in Za’atri camp, King Abdullah Park and Cyber City transit centres, where activities are conducted as an entry point to address SGBV. Around 15,000 refugees benefit from these activities monthly. An increasing number of mostly female beneficiaries are attending awareness-raising sessions on SGBV and reproductive health, individual psychosocial support sessions, support groups, individual counselling sessions, and recreational activities for youth at the UNFPA/Noor Al Hussein Foundation’s Institute for Family Health women and youth spaces in Za’atri, camp.
- Lebanon - UNHCR is strengthening its efforts on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and has developed a half-day training session for staff, and implementing and operational partners. Three trainings were already conducted in English and the material is being translated into Arabic. UNHCR and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) trained community services and protection staff from various organizations in Tripoli on prevention and response to SGBV. In the past fortnight, 402 women and 236 girls have received psychosocial support, counseling, life skills based education, parenting skills, nutrition and awareness raising services by two UNICEF-supported community centers for women and girls in North Lebanon and Bekaa.
- Iraq - The Listening Centre for Syrian Women in Dohuk is ready and functional. Training was provided by IRC and HARIKAR to the facilitators. UNHCR, partners and service providers are establishing a mechanism to prevent, identify and assist SGBV survivors. Partners are setting up women’s support groups, as well as working with Youth Volunteer Peer Educators.
- Egypt - UNHCR in collaboration with the Psycho-Social Training Institute In Cairo are facilitating awareness-raising groups for women about issues of early marriage and sexual harassment in addition to the training of Syrian psycho-social workers to learn to facilitate counselling groups.

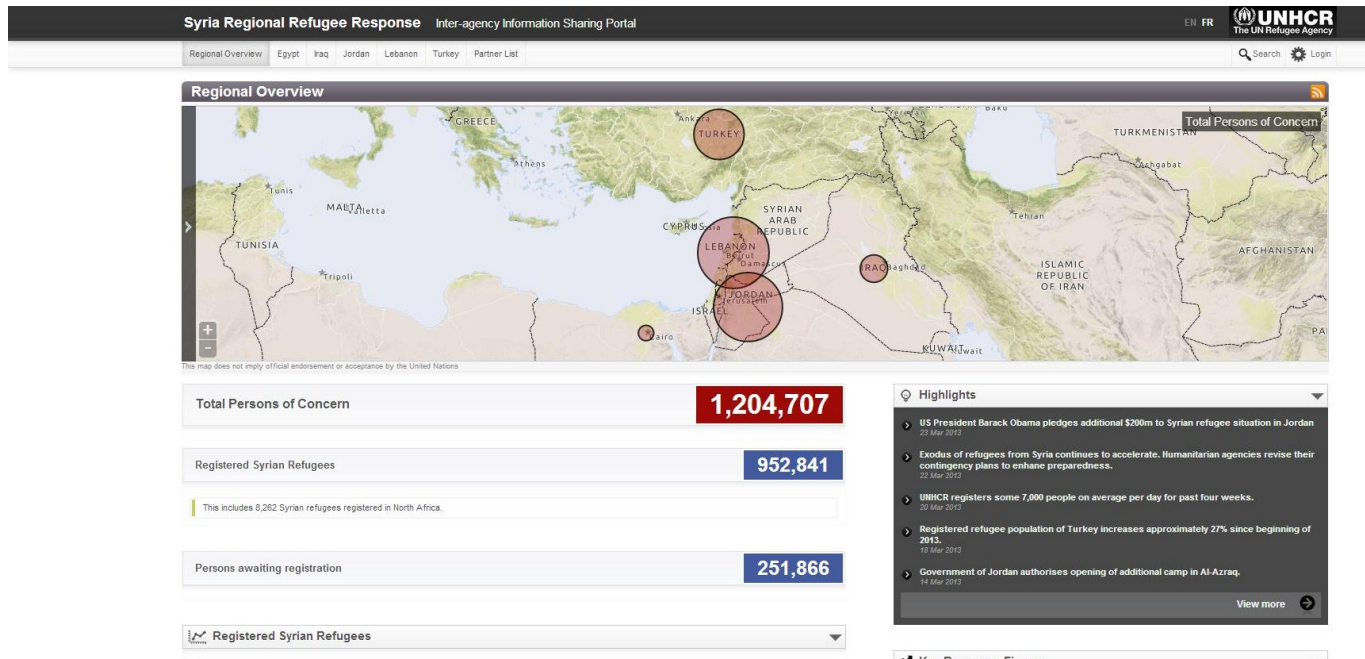
## UNHCR consolidates partnership with the Turkish Government and institutions

- The UNHCR High Commissioner on a recent mission to Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan expressed solidarity with the refugee hosting countries and acknowledged the host Governments’ efforts to support increasing numbers of refugees.
- The High Commissioner signed a Letter of Understanding with the President of the Turkish Government’s Disaster and Emergency Management (AFAD), through which UNHCR agrees to support the efforts of Turkey by the transfer of ownership of ten mobile coordination centres and related equipment and materials.
- AFAD is leading the refugee coordination centres recently established in the urban setting where Syrians can register and through this be linked to assistance. Turkish authorities informed that additional registration desks and staff are being planned.
- The High Commissioner also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Turkish Red Crescent to facilitate partnership and cooperation in areas of logistics, emergency response, capacity building, staff exchanges and contingency support globally.



A Syrian child stands amid tents provided by Kızılay, the Turkish Red Crescent Society, for refugees residing in Adiyaman refugee camp. UNHCR provides technical support to the Turkish Government in assisting the refugees. UNHCR | B. Sokol

## New inter-agency information sharing portal launched to enhance coordination



• In response to evolving operational requirements, a new version of [Syria Regional Refugee Response Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal](#) has been released, featuring a streamlined design, new modules and improved functionality for users.

• The portal contains population statistics, operational highlights, partner information and information on 'who does what where' as well as other features to facilitate operations. In addition, the portal offers a document repository for statistics, maps, needs assessments and fund-raising reports.

Key components that can be added includes: population movement data, key response figures, indicator data, meeting schedules, distribution tracking, sector working group information, donor contribution, funding status.

• The portal will continue to be updated frequently to meet the needs of Syrian refugee operations.

• **Humanitarian response partners are invited to submit to the portal.**

**Please contact the relevant country focal point:**

Egypt: [ABUGHAZA@unhcr.org](mailto:ABUGHAZA@unhcr.org)

Iraq: [PIEPER@unhcr.org](mailto:PIEPER@unhcr.org)

Jordan: [HARKOUS@unhcr.org](mailto:HARKOUS@unhcr.org)

Lebanon: [MINUTO@unhcr.org](mailto:MINUTO@unhcr.org)

Turkey: [TEOH@unhcr.org](mailto:TEOH@unhcr.org)

**WHAT'S NEW?**

- Improved, responsive design
- Mobile compatibility
- Population data filters
- Ability to display information by 'Working Groups', allows information to be grouped by a combination of sectors, themes and geographic areas
- Improved 'arrivals' module, displaying new arrivals on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis
- Interactive map module
- Revised donor module
- RSS feed module

The regional response for refugees fleeing Syria is the coordinated effort of 61 participating agencies:

ACF | ACTED | AMEL | Arab Council Supporting Fair Trial and Human Rights | ARRD-Legal Aid | Association of Volunteers International | CARE International | CARITAS | Caritas Lebanon Migrant Centre | Centre for Victims of Torture | CHF International | CISP/RI | Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services | DRC | FCA/ACT Alliance | GVC/Muslim Aid | HAI | Handicap International | ICMC | IMC | IOM | International Orthodox Christian Charities | IRD | IRC | Internews | Intersos | JEN | JHCO | JHAS | JRF | Madrasati Initiative | Medair | Mercy Corps | Movement for Peace | NRC | Oxfam GB | People in Need | PU-AMI | Psychosocial Training Institute in Cairo | Questscope | Relief International | Restart | Save the Children Jordan | SCI | ShelterBox | Terres des Hommes | THW | Un ponte Per | UNDP | UNESCO | UNFPA | UNHABITAT | UNHCR | UNICEF | UNOPS | UNRWA | UNWOMEN | War Child Holland | WFP | WHO | World Vision International

Humanitarian response partners are invited to contribute to this report. For more information or to be added to the distribution list, please contact [Anna King](mailto:Anna King), UNHCR Regional Reporting Officer | [kinga@unhcr.org](mailto:kinga@unhcr.org)