

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Syrians continue fleeing their homes to safer areas.
- Targeting of medical facilities and staff leaves thousands without access to health.
- Despite challenges, response reaches more people in all areas.
- Funding shortage constrains humanitarian response.

## FIGURES

Population	22 million
Governorates	14
Affected population	2.5 million
Number of IDPs	1.2 million
Number of refugees in neighbouring countries and North Africa	340,000

## FUNDING (US\$)

**348 million**

requested by UN for activities inside Syria

**139 million (40%)**

received for UN activities inside Syria

**488 million**

requested under the regional refugee response plan

**142 million (29%)**

received for the regional refugee response plan



People queue in Aleppo to buy bread. OCHA

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## Sustained violence negatively impacts the humanitarian situation

### Violence forces people to escape from their homes

The security situation continues to deteriorate as conflict escalates in largest cities – Aleppo, Damascus and Al-Raqqa. Aleppo is experiencing the third consecutive month of fighting, including in the medieval citadel where the ancient covered market, one of UNESCO World Heritage sites, has been destroyed. Increasing numbers of people have been forced to leave Aleppo and its surrounding rural areas, over 42,000 of them are now staying in shelters. Military operations have also intensified in Homs and al-Qusayr.

Fighting moved to the Syrian-Turkish border and tensions between the two countries escalated when, on 3 October, shelling from Syria claimed the life of five women and children in the Turkish village of Akcakale, which triggered Turkey's retaliatory artillery fire into Syria.

Syrians keep fleeing their home to seek refuge in safer areas. 1.2 million of the 2.5 million affected population are internally displaced, many staying in schools and other public buildings. Over 340,000 people have crossed the border to Syria's neighbouring countries and North Africa.

### Winter likely to worsen the humanitarian conditions

With the onset of winter, the humanitarian situation is likely to worsen as the loss of livelihoods and increasing prices make access to essential items, fuel, heating and electricity difficult. The situation is particularly dire for people living in shelters lacking adequate insulation from the cold and humidity.

In order to address the winter-related challenges, United Nations agencies have defined a preparedness strategy focusing on three main priorities: i) light rehabilitation of communal shelters hosting internally displaced people, including schools and other public and private buildings; ii) distribution of essential non-food items, such as mattresses, blankets, quilts, winter clothing, kitchen sets and jerry cans, and; iii) provision of one-time cash assistance to affected families in order to help them meet immediate domestic and shelter needs.

### Syrians highly affected by rising prices

The impact of the conflict has aggravated existing vulnerabilities, especially among the urban and rural poor. Unemployment is increasing and inflation and depreciation are negatively affecting purchasing power. Market prices have risen dramatically, especially in the north-eastern part of Syria where people are facing a shortage of food and

essential items. The cost of apartment rentals has tripled in the past three months and many families have been forced to sell their assets in order to cover their basic needs. In Aleppo, the majority of people rely on private bakeries as subsidized bread is now scarce. Basic food commodities are available in markets but mostly at high prices.

## Targeting of medical facilities and staff seriously threatens people's access to health

The crisis is seriously threatening people's access to health as medical facilities and health professionals are routinely targeted during military operations by both parties to the conflict, in breach of International Humanitarian Law.

Through information from multiple sources, WHO indicates that fifty-nine of Syria's eighty-eight public hospitals (67 per cent) and 161 of 2,000 primary health care facilities (8 per cent) have been damaged or destroyed since the onset of the crisis. In the Homs Governorate, half of the public hospitals (6 of 12) and three-quarters of all private hospitals (24 of 32) are not functioning. Health centres are facing severe shortages of medicines and qualified staff. At least 50 per cent of the medical doctors have left Homs and there are reportedly only three surgeons in the governorate, with many of the health facilities staffed with volunteers.

Half of the country's 520 ambulances have been the subject of attack, many of them now out of service. Given the shortage of ambulances, large numbers of patients requiring urgent medical, surgical and obstetric care are no longer being referred to hospitals for care. 157 vaccination/supply vehicles have also been damaged, thus affecting the implementation of the national immunization programme.

### **Pregnant women in need of special attention**

With the deterioration of security and disruption of routine public health services including reproductive health services, such as routine antenatal and postnatal care, conflict has a particular negative effect on pregnant women. It is estimated that over 44,000 women among the 2.5 million affected population in Syria are currently pregnant, with about 7,000 possibly experiencing pregnancy-related complications requiring life-saving emergency obstetric care.

## Despite challenges, UN and its partners find ways to reach more people in all areas

### **Insecurity threatens action by aid workers**

Aid workers face difficulties in carrying out their humanitarian initiatives given that insecurity, violence, road blocks, road closures, and criminal activities prevail in many parts of the country. Over the past two weeks, two United Nations staff members lost their life in the vicinity of Seida Zeinab and in Al Hameh, thus bringing the total number of United Nations staff who have died to five since the beginning of the crisis. Increasing criminal activities, including kidnapping, further constrain United Nations staff's mobility.

### **UN expands partnerships and field presence to enhance its humanitarian response**

In order to increase its response capacity and ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches people in all affected areas, the United Nations continues to expand partnerships

with international and national non-governmental and local community based organizations. In Homs, during the month of September, 30 per cent of food rations were distributed by a local non-governmental organization, while in other areas it was done by the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. In order to better identify the specific needs of affected communities for the winter season, UNDP is currently liaising with seventeen new local associations, religious charities and non-governmental organizations.

The United Nations has offices in Aleppo, Al-Hassakeh, Damascus, Dera'a, Deir-Ez-Zor, Latakia and Tartous staffed with over 1,000 personnel. The United Nations continues exploring the possibility of expanding its presence in these locations as well as opening new offices in Ar Raqqa and Homs. UNICEF has expanded a permanent presence in Tartous.

### **WFP dispatches food for 1.5 million people**

Conflict and displacement are resulting in increased food insecurity throughout the country. To meet the increasing food needs of the population, WFP has scaled up its assistance from a monthly distribution targeting 500,000 people in June and July, 850,000 in August to 1.5 million in September. As of 4 October, WFP had completed the September food distribution cycle, dispatching food rations for 1.5 million beneficiaries across the country's fourteen governorates. WFP plans to reach 1.5 million people in October and, during the current cycle, it has dispatched food for over 200,000 people. WFP plans to adjust the food basket and provide a higher calorie intake to address people's nutritional needs during winter.

### **WHO delivers health assistance to 60,000 people in September**

The major risks to public health are associated with the direct effects of violence, lack of access to health care and interruption of basic primary health care services and treatment of chronic diseases. Of particular concern is access to proper care for the wounded, safe blood transfusion, basic and comprehensive emergency obstetrical care, pediatric care, nutrition as well as poor hygiene conditions for receiving care. WHO estimates that 250,000 out of the 2.5 million affected people are in need of health assistance for cardiovascular diseases, chronic respiratory diseases, diabetes, mental health, tuberculosis and hemodialysis. In September, 200,000 people were estimated to be in need of assistance for trauma related injuries, surgical interventions, postoperative care, early rehabilitation and preventive and curative outpatient services. WHO has reached over 60,000 people with health assistance in September, including through the provision of emergency surgical care, trauma, and diarrheal treatment kits in Aleppo, Damascus and Tartous and the provision of blood safety kits to the national blood bank.

WHO also continued building the capacity of field surveillance officers for Early Warning Alert and Response (EWAR) to increase their level of early epidemic preparedness and rapid response; 90 health workers from the Ministry of Health, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and international-non-governmental organizations benefited from this training. During the first week of October, WHO has also supported the Ministry of Health's Eradication of Polio Initiative by facilitating the distribution of vaccines to Aleppo and Rural Damascus.

### **UNFPA continues addressing women's reproductive health needs**

In September, over 5,500 women and youth have received reproductive health and psychosocial support through UNFPA-supported mobile and static facilities in Aleppo, Damascus, Rural Damascus, Hama and Homs. 1000 women received antenatal and post-natal care and referral in Damascus, Rural Damascus, Hama and Al-Raqqa. An additional 625 women received emergency obstetric services through free reproductive health vouchers in Al-Hameh, Dumar, Jdayadeh Artouz, Kudsaiya and Kafarsouseh. UNFPA further organized training courses for 125 community and youth volunteers and 25 health professionals on psychosocial support and medical aid which are expected to

benefit 250 people a day in Damascus and Rural Damascus.

### **UNHCR reaches over 186,000 people with essential items**

Given the increasing displacement, the need for shelter and essential non-food items is growing by the day. Many of the 1.2 million internally displaced people are currently staying in over 600 schools and other public buildings which often lack or have limited heating and sanitation facilities. The situation is likely to worsen with the onset of winter, especially for internally displaced people staying in buildings that are unsuitable for the cold temperatures. Since March 2012, UNHCR has reached over 186,000 people with non-food items out of the 600,000 people it intends to reach by the end of this year. Between July and September 2012, UNHCR and its partners have distributed 380,000 hygiene kits, 66,000 blankets, and 115,000 mattresses. UNHCR has also provided cash assistance to 3,341 families in An Nabk. UNDP has worked with local associations to distribute non-food items hygiene kits and disability aids. In October, UNDP provided 9,000 hygiene kits in Damascus, Dera'a, Deir Ez-Zor, Rural Damascus, Homs, Latakia, and Sweida.

### **UNICEF delivers education assistance to 50,000 children**

Violence, insecurity and displacement have resulted in tens of thousands of children being unable to resume school when the academic year begun on 16 September. Approximately half of the 2.5 million Syrians in need of assistance are estimated to be children, including 910,000 under 14 years, nearly half of them internally displaced. Over 2,000 of the country's 22,000 schools have been destroyed or damaged and approximately 600 continue to be used as shelter for displaced people. The Ministry of Education estimates that 300,000 children are in need of educational support.

UNICEF has reached 50,000 children with education assistance, including through school clubs offering remedial education, psychosocial support, recreational activities and school supplies. 35,000 children benefited from minor rehabilitation work in 70 schools and 6,000 families were provided with (education) "school in a bag" kits. UNICEF has further provided psychosocial support to 31,750 children in school clubs and other child-friendly spaces.

### **UNRWA addresses the needs of Palestine refugees**

Syria currently hosts more than 500,000 Palestine refugees. 225,000 of them are estimated to be affected by the crisis. Several refugees have been killed, including during the 3 October shelling in the Dera'a refugee camp, and four UNRWA staff have lost their lives since the beginning of the conflict. UNRWA continues to provide assistance to Palestine refugees including in the areas of food, non-food items, cash, health, education, water and sanitation. During the month of September, 60,000 people have been reached with water, hygiene and sanitation assistance in Aleppo, Damascus, Dera'a, Hama and Homs. 10,000 people have benefited from food parcels distributed in the Neirab and Ein al Tal camps. 34,000 children have received education assistance through UNRWA's schools.

## Syrians continue fleeing violence across the borders

### Refugees likely to increase from 340,000 to 710,000 by the end of the year

Syrians are increasingly moving across the border to flee the intensifying violence, thus putting growing pressure on the receiving countries. More than 340,000 people have left Syria since the beginning of the conflict 19 months ago – over 37,000 during the last two weeks. The number of refugees is likely to double by the end of the year, according to UNHCR forecasts.



A Syrian refugee in Za'atari camp, Jordan. OCHA

Syria's four neighbouring countries – Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey - host the bulk of refugees, i.e. more than 335,000. North African countries have also become countries of destination with almost 5,800 Syrians having registered in recent weeks.

Country	Refugees registered and/or assisted	Projected number of refugees by the end of 2012
Iraq	39,036	60,000
Jordan	105,737	250,000
Lebanon	93,980	120,000
Turkey	96,397	280,000
North African countries	5,765	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>340,915</b>	<b>710,000</b>

Source: UNHCR as of 10 October 2012. Refugee numbers are based on estimates and may vary.

### Jordan hosts the largest number of Syrian refugees

Jordan remains the country hosting the largest refugee community in the region - 105,000. The Jordanian authorities estimate the number of refugees in Jordan to be much higher – over 200,000.

About 15,000 Syrians are stranded at the Syrian-Jordanian border where the security situation remains volatile. The number of Syrians requesting registration at UNHCR office in Amman and help desks in Irbid, Mafraq, Ma'an and Zarqa continues to increase (2,000 during the first week of October).

Most Syrian refugees are hosted by local communities whilst approximately 30,000 are sheltered at the Za'atari tented camp where recent rain, sand storms and dropping temperatures worsened the living conditions of refugees, thus triggering their protests and riots on 1 October. A number of refugees have left the camp through the "bailing out" voluntary return procedure or by their own means. UNHCR is working with the Jordanian authorities to capture in more detail the movements in and out of the camp.

Efforts to improve the living conditions at the camp are under way. UNHCR is planning the implementation of a winterization package. During the first week of October, the first dry food rations (WFP) and complementary food (UNHCR) comprising rice, lentils, bulgur, wheat, pasta, oil and sugar, were distributed by Save the Children International to refugees. In the same period, UNFPA supported reproductive health services, mainly antenatal care, family planning and gynecology consultation, which benefited 34 women. UNFPA further organized sessions on reproductive health, psychosocial support, and basic life skills for the youth.

### **More than 96,000 refugees registered in Turkey**

The recent fighting at the Syrian-Turkish border and in Aleppo has resulted in an increasing number of people leaving their homes to seek refuge in safer areas. Approximately 8,600 new arrivals have been registered in Turkey during the past two weeks, bringing the total number of Syrian refugees to 96,000. Turkey currently has twelve operational camps with four camps under preparation; once ready, Turkey will have the capacity to host up to 130,000 refugees. As the existing camps are currently full, the Turkish Government has started accommodating refugees in public schools.

The Turkish Government estimates that over 14,000 Syrians are stranded at the border area, waiting to cross into Turkey or seeking assistance in Syria.

### **13,000 new arrivals in Lebanon in the past two weeks**

More than 94,000 Syrian refugees are registered in Lebanon with over 13,000 new arrivals during the past two weeks. North Lebanon hosts the largest share of the refugee population, followed by the Becka Valley and Beirut.

During the first week of October, working in coordination with UNHCR, humanitarian agencies such as UNICEF, WFP, Caritas, and the Danish Refugee Council distributed food vouchers, food kits, and non-food items to over 17,000 people. UNHCR, UNICEF, Save the Children International and Mouvement Social are supporting refugee families with educational supplies and by covering tuition fees. Approximately 7,800 children out of the estimated 15,000 school-age children among the Syrian refugees, have now registered in schools.

### **Almost 40,000 Syrian refugees registered in Iraq**

More than 5,000 Syrian refugees arrived in Iraq during the past two weeks, thus bringing the total number of refugees to almost 40,000. The majority of them entered the Kurdistan region, followed by the border crossing at Al-Qai'm which reopened on 18 September but where entry is restricted to 100 persons a day, generally women, children under 12 years and men over 50). Initially many of the Syrians fleeing into the Kurdish region were single refugees. However, recently there has been a growing proportion of families among new arrivals.

Given the cholera outbreak in Suleimaniya with some cases reported in Kirkuk, UNHCR and the Department of Health have made due preparations for a potential cholera outbreak in the Domiz refugee camp. Plans are also under way to expand and strengthen services, infrastructure and water, sanitation and hygiene facilities at the camp which are under strain due to the number of new arrivals.

Iraqi citizens are also constantly arriving in Iraq from Syria in order to escape violence. Since June 2012, almost 45,000 Iraqis have returned.

## **UN agencies seek additional funding to enhance the humanitarian response**

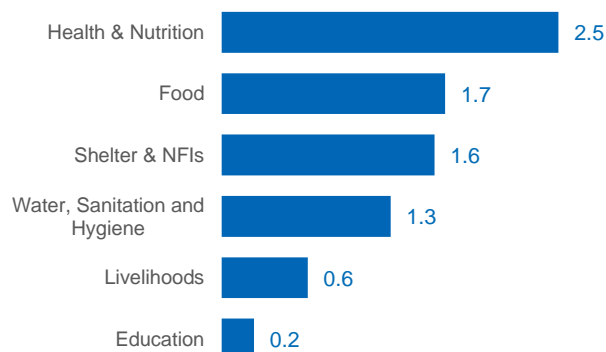
### **Regional refugee response interventions 29 per cent funded**

The Regional Response Plan was revised on 27 September in view of the increasing number of Syrians seeking assistance across borders. The plan is based on an estimate of 710,000 refugees in need of assistance by the end of 2012 and seeks \$488 million. It is 29 per cent funded.

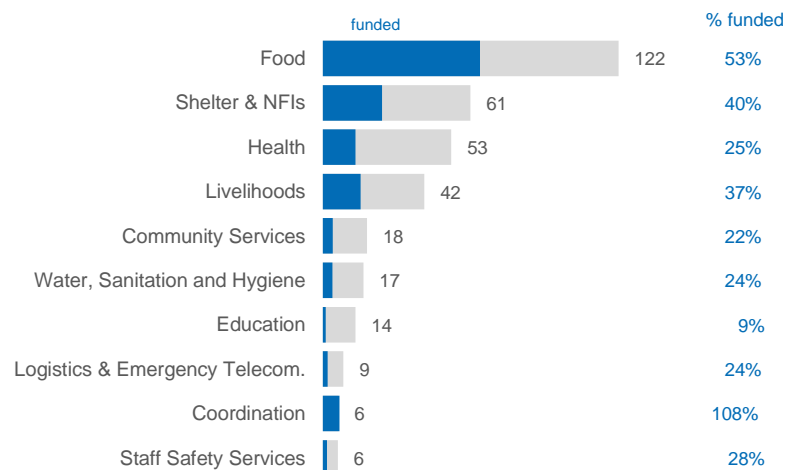
## Humanitarian response plan for Syria 40 per cent funded

The Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan (SHARP), which was revised on 7 September to be aligned with the growing needs, seeks \$348 million to implement 57 projects in 10 sectors across all Syria's governorates. The plan is 40 per cent funded.

### Number of People targeted by sector (in million)



### Funding by sector (as of 8 October 2012)



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