

### HIGHLIGHTS

- UN and partners step up assistance across conflict lines.
- Over 850,000 Syrian refugees flee violence to neighbouring countries and North Africa.
- 80 per cent of Palestine refugees affected by the crisis.
- Funding UN appeals remains crucial to enhance the response.

### FIGURES

Population	22 m
Governorates	14
People in need of assistance	4 m
Number of internally displaced people	2 m
Number of Syrian refugees in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and North Africa	857,712

### FUNDING (US\$)

**519 million**

requested by the UN for activities inside Syria (January-June 2013)

**1 billion**

requested under the regional Refugee Response Plan (January-June 2013)



Credit: IRIN/Jodi Hilton  
Internally displaced women and children at Atmeh camp, at the Syrian-Turkish border

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## Aid workers expand their reach to people in need in Aleppo and Idlib governorates

### Food and essential items delivered across conflict lines in hard-to-reach areas

Humanitarian agencies have expanded their reach with much needed assistance in areas where access has been difficult so far due to the prevailing insecurity and active fighting. In total, about 65,000 people in Aleppo, Homs and Idlib governorates have benefited from cross-line deliveries organized by United Nations agencies since 31 January.

At the end of last year, forty to forty-five percent of the 1.5 million who have been receiving WFP food assistance are in areas across conflict lines. In addition, 30 per cent of children immunized during a UNICEF/WHO campaign from 26 November to 20 December 2012 were also in such areas. However in recent weeks United Nations agencies and partners have expanded operations into areas in the north with further types of assistance.

On 13 February, UNHCR delivered 1,000 tents and 15,000 blankets to internally displaced people in the Bab Al Hawa area, in Aleppo governorate near the Syrian-Turkish border. This was the second UNHCR delivery across conflict lines since the end of January. On 16 February, a United Nations inter-agency convoy with food and other relief supplies such as mattresses, blankets, quilts, hygiene kits, children's clothes and school recreational kits for 6,000 people successfully reached Karameh, in Idlib governorate.



Credit: IFRC  
SARC convoy delivers assistance in northern Syria

These convoys have been organized in close collaboration with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), and with the support of both the Government of Syria, and the opposition that have committed to facilitate access of humanitarian assistance to all those in need wherever they are.

### UN expands partnerships for the distribution of humanitarian assistance

In order to scale up the humanitarian response to address the growing needs throughout the country, the United Nations is expanding partnerships with national and international non-governmental organisations. The United Nations is currently vetting a list of 110 national organisations that have been approved by the Government of Syria to work with United Nations agencies; selection will be based on their organizational strength, neutrality, operational capacity, logistical needs and geographical presence. WFP has identified twenty-eight organisations out of the 110 to partner with to scale up its food

distribution. In addition, the Syrian Government has authorized three additional international non-governmental organisations – the Norwegian Refugee Council, Mercy Corps and Merlyn – to provide assistance in Syria. The continuous expansion of partnerships remains vital in efforts to enhance the humanitarian response so that aid can be provided in the most efficient and effective way in all areas where acute needs persist.

## Close to 70,000 people killed, millions affected by the ongoing crisis

### **Fighting continues to shatter the lives of millions of people**

Violence in Syria remains unabated spreading death and destruction. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights estimates that close to 70,000 people have been killed since the beginning of the conflict almost two years ago. The whole country is impacted by the crisis which is shattering the lives of millions of people. The collapse of the country's economy, rising food prices, increasing unemployment, shortages of fuel, water and other necessities as well as the destruction of essential infrastructure is putting considerable strain on the social sector. As people lose their economic opportunities and struggle to access social services, their daily life is severely affected.

The humanitarian situation on the ground has been described as “nothing short of catastrophic” by the Director of Operations of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) after a four-day visit to Syria in mid-February. The ICRC highlighted the plight of civilians who are being killed and injured; millions have been displaced and thousands have gone missing or been arrested.

The United Nations estimates that four million people are currently in need of humanitarian assistance, half of them in three governorates alone: Aleppo, Homs and Rural Damascus. Two million people are internally displaced, many staying in schools and other public buildings, many more generously hosted by local communities whose capacity to support them is completely over-stretched.

### **Diseases spread amid drug shortages**

Contaminated water supply due to insufficient disinfection coupled with poor hygiene practices and accumulation of solid waste in populated areas have led to an increase in waterborne, such as Hepatitis A and Typhoid, and other diseases. According to WHO, the health situation on the ground is rapidly deteriorating with Hepatitis A, a viral liver disease that can cause explosive epidemics, having been reported in Aleppo and Idlib and some crowded shelters hosting displaced people in Damascus. WHO also reports an estimated 2,500 cases of Typhoid in the Deir Ez-Zor governorate and 14,000 cases of Leishmania in the Hassekeh governorate.

The situation in the health system is compounded by a shortage of much needed medicines, equipment and medical personnel. According to WHO, many hospitals lack essential medicines, including insulin, antibiotics, intra-venous fluids, and serum albumin as well as equipment and supplies for anesthesia and surgery. The Ministry of Health has run out of trauma treatments to help the increasing numbers of burn victims and wounded civilians in intensive care units. Glokantim, which is used to treat Leishmania, is also in short supply.

Moreover, numerous surgeons have left the country and many health facilities have been damaged or destroyed. 55 per cent of the country's hospitals, 10 per cent of health centres and 78 per cent of ambulances have been damaged, thus making it hard for patients to receive the care they need (WHO, December 2013). All parties to the conflict must stop targeting medical workers and facilities and ensure their protection in line with their International Humanitarian Law obligations.

## Syrians' purchasing power further deteriorates

The conflict is having a significant economic impact on the life of ordinary citizens, aggravating existing vulnerabilities. The Syrian Gross Domestic Product has contracted by almost 30 per cent since March 2011 (ESCWA) and the Syrian Pound has witnessed a devaluation of about 80 per cent. WFP reports that the average monthly inflation from January to September 2012 was 32 per cent, twice as much as during the 2008 global food price crisis. The present level of inflation has mainly been driven by food inflation which, in the January-September 2012 period, was high in all governorates, with the highest rates recorded in Aleppo and Homs (+35 per cent) Ar-Raqqa, Deir Ez-Zor and Hassakeh (+35 per cent).

Prices of most essential commodities, including food and fuel, are on the rise. In some areas the cost of bread, milk, meat, and chicken increased by 300 per cent (WFP, January 2013) whilst that of heating oil in Damascus rose five-fold from SYP 20 to SYP 100. WFP and FAO estimate that up to 3 million people find it difficult to access basic food.

## Violence leads to displacement and death among Palestine refugees

### 80 per cent of Palestine refugees affected by the crisis

UNRWA estimates that 400,000 (80 per cent) of the 500,000 Palestine refugees living in Syria require humanitarian assistance. Of these, 180,000 are currently displaced from Damascus alone. During the last two weeks, at least thirty Palestine refugees have reportedly been killed due to the prevailing violence in Damascus and Rural Damascus. Fighting in Rural Damascus has led to a particularly grave humanitarian crisis among Palestine refugees living in camps in the area, including in Khan Eshieh Camp, Husseinyeh, Qabr Essit Camp, and Sbeineh Camp, where conditions are increasingly harsh. Palestine refugees in these areas live under direct threat of harm from the conflict while their option to seek safety elsewhere remains limited. They also experience acute shortages of food, water, electricity, health care and other essential supplies. The situation of Palestine refugees in Damascus is equally dire as hostilities have continued in the immediate vicinity and within a number of camps, including Yarmouk, Sbeineh, and Sit Zeinab.

The volatile situation is affecting UNRWA's regular service provision. UNRWA health centres and schools are often closed due to fighting in their immediate vicinity and staff experience increasing difficulty in reaching their place of work.

Due to violence, at least 20,000 Palestine refugees have moved to Lebanon and 3,500 to Jordan.

## Overview of the humanitarian response

United Nations humanitarian agencies, SARC and their partners continue providing assistance throughout the country, often working in very dangerous situations. The general insecurity related to the on-going violence and the rise in criminal activities negatively impact on the humanitarians' work. All parties must respect aid workers and guarantee their safety and security in accordance with International Humanitarian Law.

### UNHCR, UNICEF and partners provide essential non-food items to people in need across the country

During the reporting period, United Nations agencies and partners continued providing essential non-food items (NFIs) to people in need throughout the country. UNHCR provided NFIs to approximately 40,000 people in Aleppo/Izaz, Damascus, Idlib and Rural Damascus bringing the total number of people it has assisted with NFIs this year to 122,520. Internally displaced women and children in Damascus and Rural Damascus have been specifically targeted with winter clothing and sanitary supplies. The agency also continued running its cash distribution programme for internally displaced people

which, since its start on 16 December 2012, has benefited 4,915 households (i.e. 24,575 people).

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) provided blankets, mattresses and winter clothes to 52,500 people in Dara'a and Rural Damascus governorates. IFRC continued supporting SARC in the distribution of essential non-food items, including 49,740 blankets, 15,000 quilts, 17,100 tarpaulins, and 9,550 hygiene kits in 9 of Syria's 14 governorates. UNICEF distributed 395,000 NFIs to people in need in Aleppo, Ar-Raqqa, Damascus, Deir Ez-Zor, Hama, Hassakeh, Idleb, Lattakia, Rural Damascus, and Tartous governorates in the last two weeks.

### **WFP scales up its food assistance to 1.75 million people this month to reach 2.5 million people by April**

WFP began scaling up its food distribution with the aim of reaching 1.75 million people this month, 2 million in March and 2.5 million by April. The aim is to reach all people in need of food assistance as identified by SARC.

At the end of the January food distribution cycle, WFP had distributed food to approximately 1.2 million people in all governorates. Dispatches under the February cycle have reached about 555,000 beneficiaries. UNICEF also provided food items, including high-energy biscuits and food baskets, for over 30,000 people in Aleppo, Ar-Raqqa, Damascus, Deir Ez-Zor, Hama, Hassakeh, Idleb, Lattakia, Rural Damascus, and Tartous governorates.

### **WHO and UNICEF fight the spread of waterborne and other diseases**

WHO stepped up efforts to prevent waterborne and other disease, including education campaigns to sensitize vulnerable people on disease prevention, provision of laboratory diagnostic kits for Hepatitis A and initiating procurement for 400,000 doses of Leishmaniasis medicines and treatment for 6,000 Typhoid cases to be delivered to the affected governorates.

In order to purify water and help prevent the spread of waterborne diseases, UNICEF has distributed close to 240 metric tonnes of sodium hydrochloride to approximately 20,000 people in Aleppo, Ar-Raqqa, Damascus, Hama, Homs, Idleb and Rural Damascus. In heavily affected areas of Aleppo, one of its local partners provided safe drinking water for some 11,000 internally displaced people living in 30 public shelters.

UNICEF also continued providing support to 8 mobile health clinics in Aleppo, Damascus, Dara'a, Hama, Homs, and Rural Damascus benefiting 1,176 internally displaced children: 646 girls and 530 boys. Since the beginning of this year, a total of 4,086 internally displaced children have been reached. In mid-February, UNICEF has increased the number of active medical mobile teams to 50 with the aim of covering 280,000 internally displaced children with medical care in 2013.

### **169 school clubs provide 40,000 children with education and psycho-social support**

Due to on-going violence and with 2,000 of the country's 22,000 schools damaged and an additional 2,000 still used as shelter by internally displaced people, children's access to education remains severely constrained. In order to provide assistance to children in need, UNICEF is supporting 169 school clubs in Damascus, Dara'a, Lattakia, Hama, Quneitra, Rural Damascus, and Tartous, – an increase of 62 clubs in the last two weeks - providing remedial classes and recreational activities to 40,000 children.

The agency also supports remedial classes through its Adolescent Development Programme carried out in cooperation with local non-governmental organisations. 4,600 internally displaced children have benefited from these classes in 14 shelters in Homs, and 50 youth received training on income generation skills. Moreover, 500 displaced persons benefited from psycho-social support activities in three shelters in Damascus.

DRC provided training to teachers in various governorates including Damascus, Dara'a, Rural Damascus, and Lattakia. 147 teachers benefited from the Active Learning training,

70 teachers from the Psycho-Social Support training and 20 from the Psycho-First Aid training

### Women targeted for essential assistance

In order to address the specific needs of women affected by the crisis, UNFPA assisted 4,400 women in Aleppo, Homs and Rural Damascus with normal delivery services and psychosocial support. It also provided the Ministry of Health with medical equipment and support to reproductive health services for 60,000 women and family planning assistance for 150,000 women.

UNHCR supported activities aimed at promoting women's empowerment, including on livelihoods and food preservation, benefiting 270 women in six shelters in Aleppo and Damascus.

### Cash and food assistance benefits over 72,000 Palestine refugees

UNRWA continued providing cash assistance to the affected Palestine refugee population. Over the past two weeks, its cash assistance programme benefited 14,803 families across Syria. To date, over 60,000 families have benefited from this programme.

During the reporting period, the agency also provided food assistance for around 7,480 displaced refugees in Aleppo, Damascus, Dara'a, Hama, Homs, and Lattakia, thus bringing to about 143,000 the total number of food beneficiaries.

UNRWA continues to operate 23 primary healthcare centres across Syria although the current security situation has forced the closure of eight centres and led to the substantial reduction of working hours for another eleven centres.

During the reporting period, 52 out of 118 UNRWA schools were open, providing classes to 20,860 elementary and primary students; 56 UNRWA schools are currently not operational due to conflict.

## Syrians increasingly flee violence across borders

### 5,000 people flee Syria every day, 36 per cent more than in December

Many Syrians who fled their home as a result of violence sought refuge in Syria's neighbouring countries and North Africa. UNHCR reports that five thousand people cross the border of Syria every single day, 36 per cent more than in December, thus bringing the total number of Syrians registered and/or waiting registration to 857,712 – over 280,000 since the beginning of this year. The agency expects the number of refugees to reach 1.1 million by June 2013.

Country	Refugees registered and/or assisted	Estimated number of refugees by June 2013
Egypt	18,245	30,000
Iraq	92,523	90,000
Jordan	269,110	300,000
Lebanon	287,571	300,000
Turkey	182,621	380,000
North Africa	7,642	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>857,712</b>	<b>1,100,000</b>

Source: UNHCR as of 18 February 2013. Refugee figures are based on estimates and thus may vary. For updated figures, visit <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees>.

\*Figure provided by the Government of Turkey.

In addition to the above figures, around 28,000 Syrians have fled to various European countries.

## Daily arrivals in Jordan reach 1,850; a new UNHCR registration centre opens in Irbid

The Government of Jordan estimates that the country is currently hosting 340,000 Syrians, including over 269,110 registered (219,067) or waiting registration (50,043) with UNHCR. The average daily arrivals in the past 30 days have increased substantially with 1,850 Syrians entering Jordan each day when the average in the previous 180 days was 750 persons a day. IOM reports that over 48,000 Syrians arrived in Jordan in January 2013, the monthly record since the onset of the Syria crisis (not all of them registered with UNHCR). In order to scale up registration, on 10 February UNHCR has now opened a second registration centre in Irbid; since its opening, 2,912 people have registered at this centre.

## About 42,000 new arrivals in Lebanon in the last two weeks

With the number of refugees steadily increasing, the Syrian refugee community in Lebanon now represents over 6 per cent of the country's entire population. At present, over 287,000 Syrians are registered and or being assisted while awaiting registration in Lebanon, the majority staying in North Lebanon (47.5 per cent) Beka'a (38.5 per cent), South Lebanon (7 per cent), Beirut (3 per cent) and Mount Lebanon (4 per cent). Refugees come primarily from Homs, Idlep, Damascus and Aleppo and stay mostly with host communities whose capacity to assist them is critically strained.

Médicins dans Frontières (MSF), which carried out a survey involving 2,100 Syrian refugee families in Lebanon, highlighted the deteriorating health situation of refugees. More than half of all interviewees indicated that they cannot afford treatment for chronic diseases such as asthma, diabetes, hypertension and cardiovascular diseases, and nearly one-third had to suspend treatment due to the high costs. Regardless of whether refugees are registered, the costs attached to essential primary health care, ante-natal care and institutional deliveries is often out of reach for many. (For more information, see: <http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/publications/reports/2013/Syria-Lebanon-Report-2013.pdf>).

Lebanon also hosts approximately 20,000 Palestine refugees from Syria, 30 per cent of them are staying in Saida, 22 per cent in Beka'a, 17 per cent in Central Lebanon, 15 per cent in Northern Lebanon, and 15 per cent in Tyre. Children represent 42 per cent of Palestine refugees and are provided with education and psycho-social support by UNRWA through special classes and recreational activities. A total of 2,142 Palestine children are currently attending UNRWA schools with all new arrivals are being enrolled in special classes.

## Over 182,000 Syrian refugees registered in 17 camps in Turkey

The Syrian community living in camps in Turkey continues to grow. According to the Government of Turkey, there are now 182,621 Syrians registered in 17 camps - a 18 per cent increase since the beginning of this year. An additional 100,000 Syrians are estimated to be living in urban areas. The container site in Harran in the Sanliuifa province, which opened last month to accommodate the increasing number of refugees, has nearly reached its full capacity (9,353 persons). The new arrivals as well as refugees temporarily accommodated in communal shelters in Nizip town are reportedly expected to be transferred to the newly opened camp in Adana province.

## The number of Syrian refugees in Iraq exceeds UNHCR's initial estimates

The number of Syrian refugees in Iraq has reached 92,523 people, exceeding the UNHCR's estimates of 90,000 refugees by the end of June 2013. The refugee population has increased by about 23,000 since the beginning of this year. The majority of the refugees are staying in the northern provinces of Duhok (65.4 per cent), Erbil (19.3 per cent) and Sulemaniyah (5.4 per cent).

*Providing the necessary funding to UN appeals remains crucial for the implementation of an effective and efficient humanitarian response*

## **Refugees in Egypt double in three months**

Egypt has received a large influx of Syrian refugees with the number doubling from November 2011 when the country was hosting 8,600 refugees to 18,000 today. Refugees mostly stay with host communities in Greater Cairo, Alexandria, Damietta, Mansoura, Hurghada, Suez, and Ismaila. They are granted a visa-free entry from the Egyptian Government which is followed by a renewable three-month residency and access to public schools and hospitals at no additional cost.

## **Funding to UN appeals remains crucial**

### **\$1.5 billion pledged by donors for the Syria crisis**

During the High-Level Pledging Conference organized by the United Nations and hosted by the Emir of Kuwait on 30 January, Member States and private donors pledged over \$1.5 billion to assist Syrians over the coming six months. This positive result demonstrates the generosity of donors willing to contribute to the humanitarian effort aimed at addressing the needs of people in Syria and neighboring countries.

Most of the pledged funds have yet to be converted into committed and disbursed funds. The prompt disbursement of these funds and their commitment to specific recipients remains crucial for the implementation of an effective humanitarian response.

### **UN appeals seek funds to assist 5 million people**

As of 17 February, the \$519 million Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan aimed at providing life-saving humanitarian interventions to four million people across all governorates in Syria and the \$1 billion regional Refugee Response Plan, intended to support 1.1 million Syrian refugees and other groups affected by the Syria crisis in Syria's neighbouring countries and North Africa are, respectively, 20 per cent and 19 per cent funded. Adequate funding for both UN appeals is necessary for the implementation of a coordinated humanitarian response to people in need.

## **US\$36.5 million contributions to the Emergency Response Fund**

### **43 projects receive ERF funds; 21 project proposals under consideration**

The Syria Emergency Response Plan (ERF) has received a total of US\$ 36.5 million contributions for the implementation of projects related to the Syria crisis. Out of the total contributions, \$11.3 million have been allocated so far - 62 per cent of the allocated funds are for activities in Syria, 20 per cent for activities in Lebanon, 14 per cent in Jordan, and 5 per cent in Iraq. 21 proposals are currently under consideration with a combined value of US\$6.7 million.