

HIGHLIGHTS

- Violence across large parts of the country leaves growing number of people in need of assistance.
- Reduction of bureaucratic obstacles necessary for efficient aid delivery.
- The number of refugees in neighbouring countries could increase from more than 300,000 to 710,000 by end of year.
- Underfunding remains key constraint in aid effort.

FIGURES

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Population | 22 million |
| Governorates | 14 |
| Affected population | 2.5 million |
| Number of IDPs | 1.2 million |
| Number of refugees in neighbouring countries | 304,000 |

FUNDING (US\$)

348 million

requested by the UN for activities inside Syria

130 million (38%)

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



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Civilians pay the price of conflict

Sustained violence leaves growing number of Syrians in need of assistance

The situation in Syria worsens by the day. Over the last two weeks, fighting has continued in the governorates of Aleppo, Homs, Hama, Deir Ez Zor, Idlib, Lattakia, Damascus, Rural Damascus and Dera'a. The security situation in Ar Raqqa governorate has deteriorated.

Humanitarian needs continue to escalate as the violence spreads and deepens. Ordinary civilians – men, women and children – are the primary victims of the violence. An ever-growing number of people are displaced, many for the second or third time. People also continue to flee across the border to neighbouring countries. According to UNHCR, the number of Syrian refugees in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey could increase from the current figure of more than 300,000 to a total of 710,000 people by the end of this year.

Harsh winter cold will add to existing challenges

With the winter season approaching, the number of people in need of assistance is likely to rise. Already the night temperatures are starting to fall significantly. Tens of thousands of IDPs are staying temporarily in buildings that are completely unsuitable for the cold of winter. Loss of livelihoods due to insecurity and market disruptions negatively impact purchasing power and leave more people without access to basic essentials, electricity, heating or fuel.

Syrian children killed, maimed and traumatized

Children are experiencing and witnessing appalling violations. Boys and girls are routinely targeted, maimed and killed. Thousands of children have been injured or forced to leave their homes. In a report published this month, Save the Children shares the testimonies of children who survived detention, torture and the terror of indiscriminate violence. Equally disturbing narratives of the impact of violence on Syrian children have been presented in recent reports by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. The use of heavy weaponry, including air strikes in densely populated areas creates fear and trauma, especially among children.

Tens of thousands of children unable to return to school

Estimated 300,000 children require educational support

When school resumed on 16 September, approximately 5 million children were scheduled to enroll. However, tens of thousands of children were unable to return. Insecurity and growing displacement pose major constraints for children and parents. Many parents are reluctant to send their children to school as the security situation remains unpredictable.

Some 2,072 schools, or 10 per cent of all public schools, have been damaged and destroyed as a result of the violence. More than 600 schools across the country are currently hosting IDPs. Of these, 150 schools are located in Homs Governorate alone. According to a preliminary Government estimate, some 300,000 children are in need of educational support due to displacement and damage to schools.

Palestine refugees in precarious situation

More than 200,000 Palestine refugees affected

Syria hosts 518,000 Palestine refugees. About 40 per cent of the refugee population has been displaced as a result of the current crisis, according to UNRWA. A number of refugees have been killed and three UNRWA staff members have lost their lives. Some 42,000 Palestine refugee families (210,000 people) have so far requested cash assistance. Humanitarian needs in the form of cash assistance, food and non-food items are expected to increase with the onset of winter.

To respond to such needs, UNRWA has launched a revised response plan amounting to US\$44 million.

Over 6,000 Palestine refugees flee to Lebanon, Jordan

The number of Palestine refugees who have left Syria for neighbouring countries has increased over recent weeks. As of 27 September, about 1,100 Palestine refugees had crossed into Jordan, while 5,100 Palestine refugees had entered Lebanon. Their situation is challenging due to scarce resources, considerable restrictions on movement and limited job opportunities. UNRWA provides basic assistance and access to services such as health and education.

Humanitarian partners increase response effort

WFP food assistance targeting 1.5 million Syrians across the country

WFP continues to scale up assistance in Syria, targeting 1.5 million people in September, as compared to a target of 850,000 people in August. Homs, Aleppo and Rural Damascus receive the highest number of food rations as large concentrations of IDPs are hosted in these governorates. Each food basket provides two-thirds of overall daily food requirements for one month.

Almost 70 per cent of September food rations have been dispatched so far. These cover more than 1 million people. Dispatches to date include coverage of almost 160,000 people in Homs, about 100,000 people in Idlib, almost 180,000 people in Aleppo, more than 30,000 people in Deir Ez Zor and about 115,000 people in Hama.

Over 200,000 people receive ICRC and SARC food assistance, NFIs

More than 200,000 people in Damascus, Rural Damascus, Idlib, Homs, Hama, Deir Ez Zor, Lattakia, Aleppo, Ar Raqqa, Tartous and Suweida received food assistance from ICRC and SARC during the month of September. Beneficiaries also received essential items such as mattresses, towels, hygiene kits and blankets, according to ICRC. So far in 2012, ICRC in cooperation with SARC has distributed food to more than 1 million people and provided essential items to 250,000 people in Syria.

UNHCR has delivered essential items to 173,000 Syrians

Since March, UNHCR has provided basic relief items to 173,000 people. Items include mattresses, blankets and bedding. Distribution has mainly taken place in cooperation with SARC. UNHCR aims to assist 500,000 people through provision of essential items this year. In An Nabk, a town between Damascus and Homs where many IDPs are currently located, UNHCR has distributed cash assistance covering more than 10,000 people.

ICRC and SARC helped provide water to 1 million people

Conditions in collective shelters are challenging, especially in terms of access to appropriate water and sanitation facilities. ICRC recently completed the rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities in 125 IDP centres in Homs, Damascus and Aleppo. ICRC also provided drinking water for thousands of families staying in schools, other public buildings and in host communities in Damascus, Rural Damascus, Deir Ez Zor, Homs and Aleppo. About 65,000 IDPs in Rural Damascus and 15,000 residents in Deir Ez Zor have received safe drinking water from SARC with ICRC support. Over the last nine months, ICRC and SARC have helped provide water to more than 1 million people in the governorates of Damascus, Rural Damascus and Homs.

UNFPA targets beneficiaries in deeply affected areas

UNFPA reached more than 7,000 people through reproductive health interventions over the last two weeks. This includes 1,300 women in Damascus, Rural Damascus, Homs, Hama and Aleppo who were referred to secondary health services. In addition, around 3,000 women in Hassakeh and Idlib received hygiene kits and other essential items.

In cooperation with UNHCR, the Ministry of Health and the Syrian Association for Health Promotion and Development, 150 community volunteers and health professionals received training on psycho-social support and first aid. Following training, each volunteer will serve around 250 individuals per day in areas of Damascus and Rural Damascus that are deeply affected by the conflict.

More than 2,000 migrant workers assisted by IOM

A large number of migrant workers and third-country nationals are caught up in the violence in Syria. IOM has assisted more than 2,000 migrant worker and their families with urgent repatriation needs to date. Almost 5,500 requests to assist stranded migrants have been received. The majority of assisted migrants are domestic workers and single females. IOM also provides essential items to Syrian IDPs in Damascus, Suweida and Homs governorates.

To address the growing needs of vulnerable migrants, IOM has launched a revised appeal seeking US\$20.7 million in funding.

Challenges to assistance delivery remain

Insecurity, bureaucracy and lack of funding hamper humanitarian effort

UN agencies and international NGOs continue to deliver assistance in a challenging operational environment. Insecurity and violence, road blocks and road closures impede movement in some parts of the country. On 26 September, an armoured vehicle from WFP was hit by a bullet when approaching Aleppo from Ar Raqqa. There were no injuries.

Bureaucracy remains a hurdle to efficient assistance delivery. Planned assessment missions to the governorates of Ar Raqqa and Hassakeh had to be cancelled due to lack of timely authorizations. New procedures introduced with regards to the delivery of essential items have recently slowed down distribution. Delays in the processing of visas continue to impact operations among humanitarian partners.

Lack of appropriate funding remains a major impediment to timely and efficient humanitarian assistance delivery. The revised Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan seeks US\$348 million in funding. So far, only 38 per cent of required funds have been received. Of funds received, more than 20 per cent has been allocated from the OCHA Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

Significant outflow of refugees continues

More than 75,000 new Syrian refugees in September

The increasing magnitude of the Syria crisis is felt among neighbouring countries as the overall number of refugees has reached more than 300,000 people. More than 100,000 people fled Syria during the month of August. So far in September, more than 75,000 Syrians have done the same. An average of about 2,000-3,000 people arrive daily in neighbouring countries. About 75 per cent of the refugees are women and children.

| Country | Number of registered and/ or assisted refugees |
|--------------|--|
| Iraq | 33,704 |
| Jordan* | 101,881 |
| Lebanon | 80,482 |
| Turkey | 87,774 |
| Total | 303,841 |

Source: UNHCR as of 27 September. Refugee numbers are based on estimates and may vary.

* According to the Jordanian Government, more than 200,000 Syrians are now in the country.

Up to 710,000 Syrian refugees by the end of the year

The number of Syrian refugees could reach up to 710,000 by the end of 2012, according to UNHCR. This is almost four times the forecast made in June. Syrians flee areas of violence across the country, including Dera'a, Homs, Hama, Aleppo and Idlib. Some arrive with only the clothes on their backs after a perilous journey. Others who fled to neighbouring countries several months ago are now coming forward to register as their resources have been depleted and they find it increasingly difficult to make ends meet.

Projected refugee population by the end of 2012

| Country | Current number of refugees | Projected number of refugees |
|--------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Iraq | 33,704 | 60,000 |
| Jordan | 101,881 | 250,000 |
| Lebanon | 80,482 | 120,000 |
| Turkey | 87,774 | 280,000 |
| Total | 303,841 | 710,000 |

Source: UNHCR

Almost 34,000 Syrian refugees registered in Iraq

The Iraqi Government re-opened the border crossing at Al Qa'im on 18 September. New arrivals are directed to the camp set up near the crossing. The camp currently hosts around 3,000 refugees, or about 10 per cent of the refugee population. The Residency Directorate has resumed the process of granting residency permits to all Syrian refugees in the Kurdistan region. So far around 4,000 Syrians have received such permits.

UNHCR provides hygiene kits to newly arrived refugees while WFP continues distribution of food assistance in Domiz camp. In Al Qa'im camp, water and sanitation facilities are under construction by UNICEF. Tents have been established in this camp to serve as classrooms. The school has a current capacity to enroll up to 750 children.

A steady flow of Iraqi refugees continue to return from Syria to Iraq. More than 37,000 Iraqis had returned in the period from June to 23 September. Most Iraqi returnees go to the governorates of Baghdad, Anbar and Ninewa.

Jordan hosts largest Syrian refugee community in the region

The number of registered refugees in Jordan has now reached more than 100,000 people, the largest Syrian refugee population in the region. Most refugees arrive from Dera'a, Homs and Damascus. The security situation along the border remains precarious and refugees report being targeted as they seek to cross into Jordan.

More than half of registered refugees are under the age of 18 and almost one-third of registered refugees are single women or female-headed households. An increasing number of Syrians approach UNHCR in Amman to register. This could be a reflection of diminishing financial resources or the need to obtain asylum seeker certificates in order to enroll children in the Jordanian public school system.

Conditions at Za'atari camp remain challenging and are likely to worsen with the onset of winter. WFP provides hot meals twice daily to 30,000 refugees in the camp. A total of 87 water and sanitation centres have been established and work to complete communal kitchens has accelerated. An initial group of 2,200 children will attend school in the camp. WFP also distributes dry food rations twice per month to support vulnerable Syrians in Jordanian host communities. This intervention has been scaled up from 19,000 beneficiaries in August to a target of 35,000 people in September.

More than 80,000 Syrian refugees in Lebanon

The number of refugees in Lebanon has increased by about 23,000 people since August. Syrians who have arrived in Lebanon report challenges on the Syrian side of the border in terms of security, demands for bribes and an inability for women and children to cross unless escorted by a male. The majority of refugees come from Homs, Idlib, Hama and Damascus. More than half of the refugees are renting accommodation, while about 40 per cent are staying with host families. Many refugees settle in the border areas where the security situation remains volatile. Over the last weeks, cross-border incursions into Aarsal in the Beka'a Valley have also taken place.

In coordination with UNHCR, humanitarian partners including DRC, UNICEF, World Vision, Caritas and WFP distributed food vouchers, food kits, hygiene and baby kits were to more than 40,000 people in September. Of an estimated 15,000 school-aged children among the Syrian refugee population, about 3,000 refugee students have enrolled in Lebanese schools. Efforts continue to encourage refugee parents to enroll their children.

Turkey expands camp facilities to accommodate 130,000 refugees

Turkey hosts the second largest Syrian refugee community in the region at almost 90,000 people. Refugees are admitted into Turkey in groups and transferred to camps. The total number of operational camps is now 12, with an additional four camps under preparation. Once all camps are complete, Turkey will have the capacity to host up to 130,000 Syrian refugees. Thousands of Syrians are currently waiting to enter Turkey. These refugees stay in the border areas and are provided with food, water and medicines.

Funding gaps impede humanitarian response

US\$488m appeal launched by UN and partners to assist refugees

The UN and humanitarian partners have launched a revised appeal for US\$488 million in order to meet the growing humanitarian needs among Syrian refugees. This is the second revision of the plan in 2012. The appeal foresees that the number of refugees could increase to 710,000 people by the end of the year. As winter is fast approaching, items such as winterized tents, caravans, blankets and clothing are needed. The revision includes provisions for the opening of additional refugee camps and support to host communities. The appeal is currently 29 per cent funded.

Humanitarian response plan for Syria remains underfunded

UN agencies and humanitarian partners are seeking US\$348 million in funding for 57 projects in 10 sectors across all governorates. Key priorities under the plan include health, food, livelihoods, infrastructure rehabilitation, community services, education and

shelter. Assistance efforts will focus on areas particularly affected by the on-going violence. The appeal is only 38 per cent funded.

US\$7.1m Emergency Relief Fund fully depleted by end of September

The Syria Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) has received US\$7.1 million in contributions and pledges. Of these funds, US\$5.9 million has been allocated towards 21 projects to assist more than 800,000 people in Syria, as well as 40,000 Syrians who have fled to neighbouring countries. Funding from the ERF has been allocated to international NGOs, UN agencies and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC). Unless fresh funds are received, the balance of the ERF will be expended by the end of the month.

US\$42m pledged as donors meet in New York

A donor meeting co-hosted by the European Commission Directorate General for Humanitarian Affairs and Civil Protection (ECHO) and the Kingdom of Jordan was held in New York on 26 September. Participants included countries from the region, donors who have contributed more than US\$5 million towards the Syria regional crisis assistance appeals, the Security Council permanent five members, as well as Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. Participants were briefed on the humanitarian situation by OCHA, WFP, UNHCR and ICRC. New pledges totalling US\$12 million were made at the meeting by three Member States. Another pledge of US\$30 million was made on 28 September.

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