

SYRIA AND IRAQ SITUATIONS

FINAL REPORT

2015-2016 UNHCR Regional Winter Assistance

(Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt)

During this last winter, the Middle East faced harsh weather conditions. Freezing temperatures, snow storms, torrential rain and flooding created more difficulties for millions of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the region. Due to early planning, preparation and procurement, UNHCR was able to provide a timely and efficient response ensuring families were equipped to survive the winter. The winter programme in the region started as early as September and assistance included cash to help refugees purchase needed items and cover heating costs, shelter upgrades, weatherproofing kits, stoves/heaters, blankets and sleeping bags, heating fuel, kerosene jerry cans, as well as winter clothes and boots.

Almost 100 per cent of the total Syrians and Iraqis identified for UNHCR winter assistance have received support. This includes 1.5 million Syrian refugees in the region, 1.1 million IDPs in Syria, more than 94,000 Iraqi refugees in the region, and over 505,000 IDPs in Iraq.

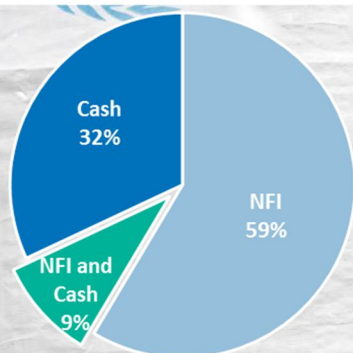


3.2 million Refugees and IDPs received winter assistance

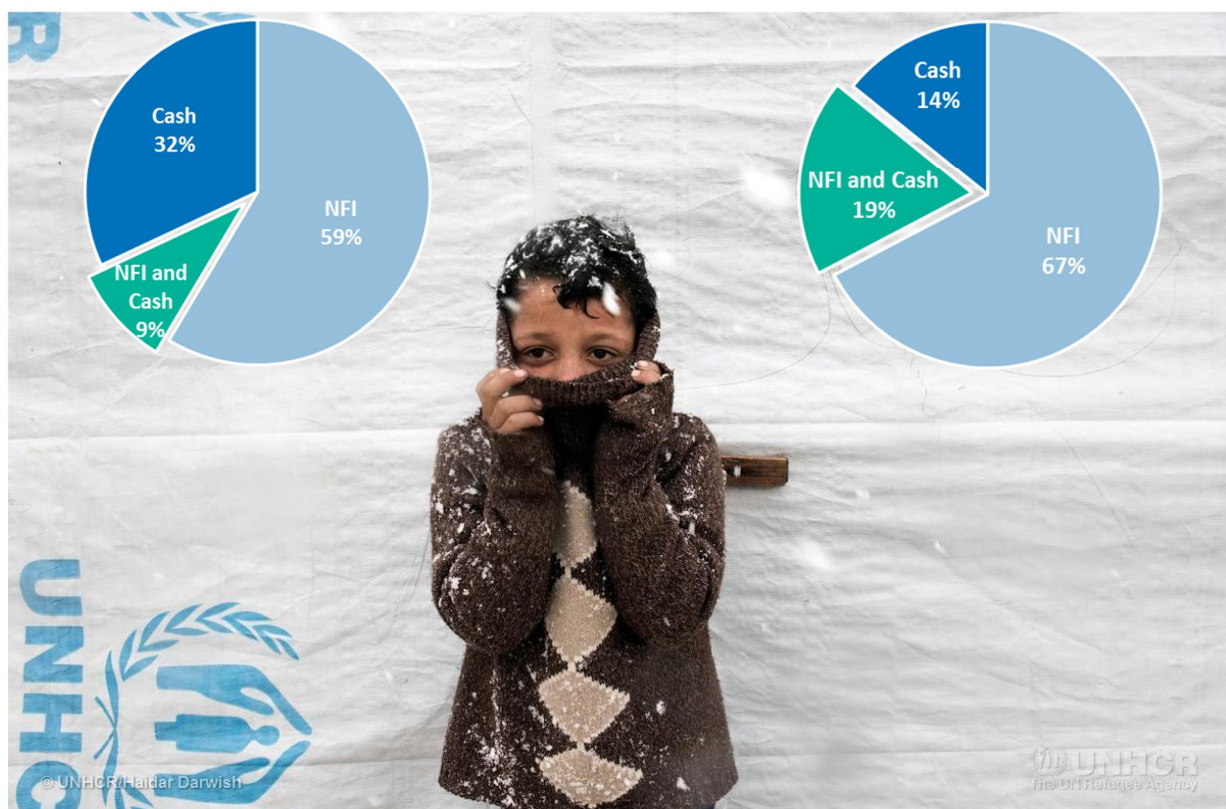
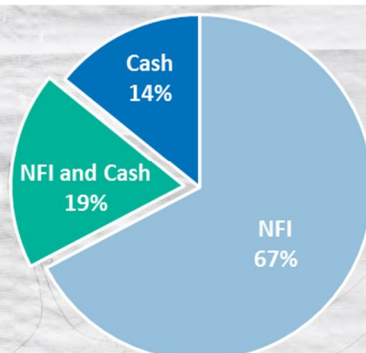
USD 200 million total expenditure



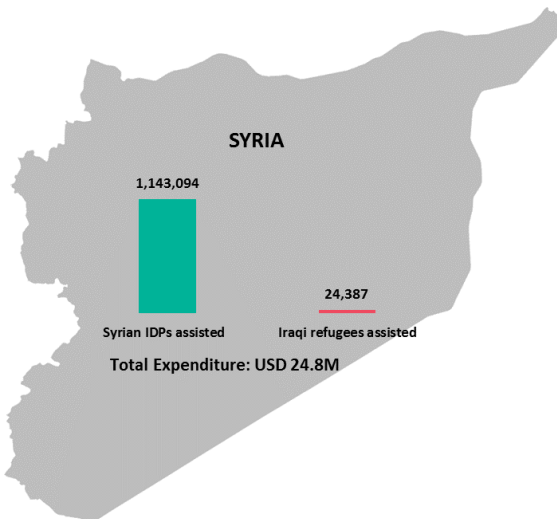
Syrian refugees and IDPs assisted with Cash and NFI



Iraqi refugees and IDPs assisted with Cash and NFI



SYRIA



Syrian IDPs

UNHCR and its partners provided winter items to over 1 million IDPs in Syria. Although the initial target population for winter support was 750,000 persons (150,000 families), due to emerging needs in hard-to-reach and besieged areas, UNHCR decided to assist an additional 250,000 people.

For the first time, UNHCR also provided supplementary winter packages to 4,000 displaced families living in skeleton buildings and other sub-standard shelters in Aleppo Governorate. The package included sleeping bags and winterized shelter kits and it was provided in addition to the standard winter items distributed by

UNHCR across the country. The distribution of sleeping bags was highly appreciated by the families and is recommended for distribution in other locations in future. The shelter kits were manufactured and sourced from local suppliers and consisted of timber, plywood and a tool kit. It complemented existing shelters, reinforced and adjusted the substandard shelters, and offered dignified living conditions to IDPs. Information and guidance was provided to volunteers, shelter partners and beneficiaries on how to use the shelter kits.



The shelter kits provided by UNHCR in Aleppo Governorate in Syria also provided privacy to families, especially females and children living in crowded conditions. UNHCR/Syria

Iraqi refugees

Refugees and asylum seekers receiving UNHCR's regular monthly cash assistance were

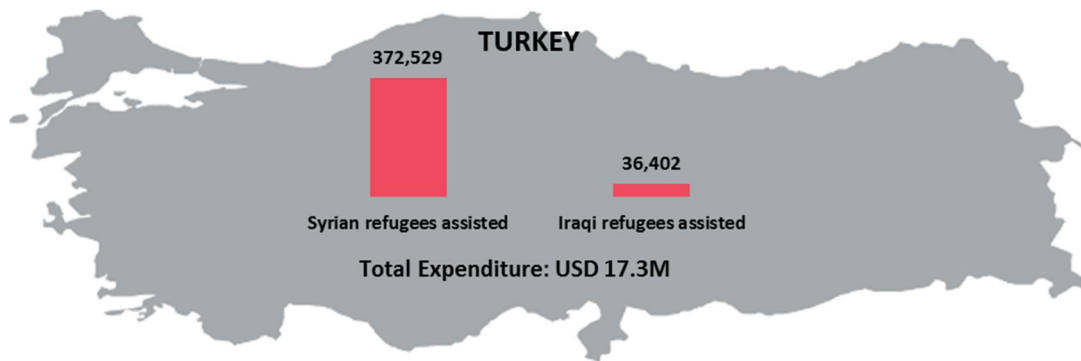
provided with a special one-time cash grant for additional support for the winter season. A total of 8,349 families (24,387 individuals) benefitted from this grant, receiving USD 273 per family. In February/March 2016, UNHCR started conducting a survey via phone and personal interaction (inquiry counter) with beneficiaries of the 2015 cash programme including the winter cash grant. The final results are expected to be available in mid-April. Information received so far confirms that the winter cash grant supported families in overcoming extra needs such as clothing and electricity bills or fuel for heating, leaving more cash for daily necessities such as food or medical needs.

Cross-border interventions from Jordan and Turkey

From Jordan, UNHCR dispatched 13,500 winter kits in central and southern Dar'a Governorate in Syria. In January, nearly 1,800 winter kits were delivered to the towns of Nawa and Dael in Dar'a Governorate to respond to the urgent needs of displaced families from Sheikh Miskine (Dar'a Governorate). From Turkey, UNHCR and partners assisted 140,000 individuals (28,000 households) with winter support in the Governorates of Idlib, Hama and Aleppo in Syria. Assessments were conducted prior to distribution and most vulnerable households with elderly, pregnant and

persons with disabilities, and female and child headed households were identified and supported with special access in the distribution points or by having the winter kits delivered to their homes. A post-distribution monitoring was conducted and findings indicated that 96.9 per cent of the beneficiaries were satisfied with the contents of the winter kit, with over 84 per cent mentioning high thermal blankets to be the most useful.

TURKEY



Syrian refugees

UNHCR in Turkey implemented an unprecedented winter programme for Syrian refugees, benefiting 74,506 refugee households (372,529 individuals). About USD 15.7 million worth of non-food items (NFIs) and e-vouchers were distributed, with NFIs to both refugees living in camps and those in urban communities, and e-vouchers for refugees only residing outside the camps. UNHCR did not have beneficiary data of refugees outside of camps, however with the help of a house-to-house needs assessment, UNHCR was able to identify a total of 13,829 households (69,145 individuals) for a one-off e-voucher assistance of an average amount of USD 200 per household. For NFI distribution to refugees living outside of camps, UNHCR adopted a similar rigorous approach of beneficiary selection. A total of 60,677 families (303,384 individuals) received winter clothes, boots, high thermal blankets, and heaters and the distribution was implemented by the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD).

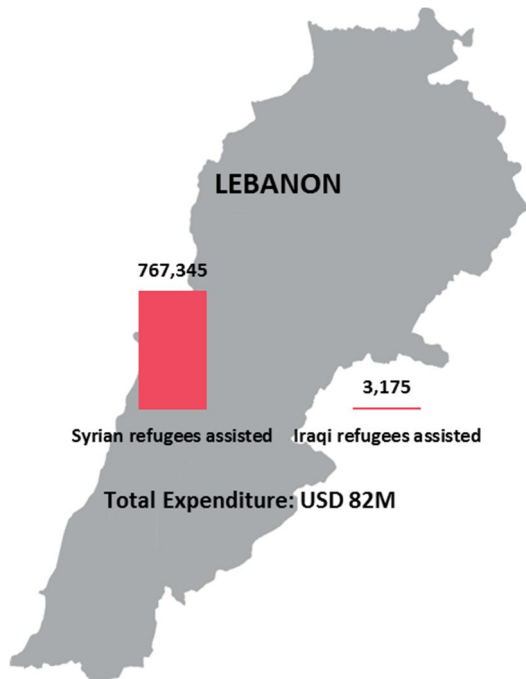


At home in Siverek in Turkey, Mahir and Khadija look at the new anoraks; their little son is already holding on to his red boots. "The boots are especially useful for our children to keep them warm. We got this just at the right time," said Khadija happily. "It is so cold and we don't have money to buy any of these items!"
UNHCR/N. Bose

Iraqi refugees

UNHCR also implemented a winter programme for the Iraqi refugees residing in the camps as well as in the host communities. For those living in the camps, the NFI package was similar to what was provided to the Syrian refugees. Some 6,000 households (about 30,000 individuals) received winter clothes, boots, high thermal blankets, and heaters. For Iraqis residing outside of camps, UNHCR provided winter cash assistance directly through the bank to 2,884 Iraqi households (6,402 individuals) with each household receiving an average of USD 100.

LEBANON



Syrian refugees

UNHCR launched the #WarmTheirHearts fundraising campaign to support 20,000 refugee families (100,000 individuals) in Lebanon with winter assistance. Over 12,000 families were provided with much-needed fuel, blankets, stoves, warm clothes and insulation kits through this initiative. The monthly winter cash assistance has directly benefited 767,345 refugees in Lebanon and provided them with the means to cover their winter expenses.

UNHCR worked with the World Food Programme (WFP) to support 5,000 extremely vulnerable Lebanese families identified through the National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP), under the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA). They received USD 30 per person per month for the winter months via WFP e-vouchers intended for food purchases. UNHCR also worked with MoSA to identify 53,000 Lebanese families to receive high thermal blankets. UNHCR pre-positioned 6,000 blankets

at MoSA Social Development Centres to be distributed as and when weather conditions necessitate. In total, UNHCR distributed nearly 250,000 high thermal blankets to vulnerable Syrian refugees and Lebanese. Despite deteriorating security in Aarsal, more than 8,000 families (40,000 individuals) were reached with fuel cards enabling them to purchase fuel to warm their houses. Shelter weatherproofing kits were distributed to over 24,000 households (120,000 individuals) and more than 2,300 households (11,500 individuals) have benefited from site improvements in informal settlements to reduce flooding due to winter rain and snow. A post-distribution monitoring exercise has been initiated and more than 2,000 randomly selected families have already been contacted by UNHCR through phone interviews with the aim of assessing how effectively beneficiaries were able to access winter assistance, and for which purpose the assistance was used.

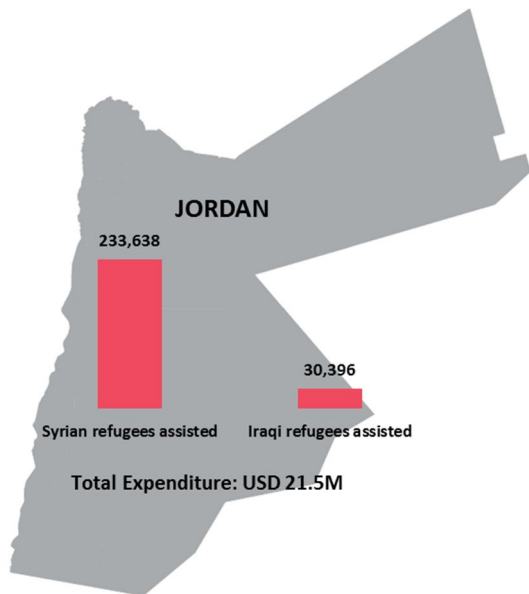


A young Syrian refugee carries bread to his shelter at Fayda tented settlement, in Bekaa Valley, Lebanon. UNHCR/A. McConnell

Iraqi refugees

UNHCR provided 1,300 families (over 6,300 individuals) from Iraq and other nationalities with three months of winter cash assistance, in addition to distributing more than 3,000 high thermal blankets.

JORDAN



Syrian refugees

UNHCR supported a total of 233,638 Syrian refugees through its 2015/2016 winter programme. With the additional contributions received, UNHCR was able to expand its planned activities and provide enhanced winter assistance. Winter cash assistance was provided to 38,194 Syrian refugee families (190,970 individuals) which comprised of two different packages - a full package and a half package. Full packages (USD 103 per person) were provided to 13,700 families (68,500 individuals) who had previously not received winter cash assistance, while half packages (USD 68 per person) were provided to 24,519 families (122,595 individuals) who received this assistance in the past. Most families received cash assistance in November 2015 so that were able to purchase supplies in advance for the winter months. However, families that received over USD 400 were provided cash in

two instalments over the course of November and December. With the additional funding available, UNHCR was able to provide cash assistance to an additional 7,057 Syrian families.

Unconditional vouchers were provided to the entire camp population of Zaatari camp (79,227 persons) in order to purchase gas refills and 99.8 per cent of the vouchers were redeemed. A one-off cash distribution of USD 28 per family was also provided in December which allowed refugees to purchase additional items to get through the winter months. Refugees in Azraq camp (some 20,945 persons) were also provided with unconditional vouchers of USD 14 per family and 100 per cent of the vouchers were redeemed. Gas heaters were provided to 11,815 newly arrived Syrians in the camp, while 13,318 gas refills and 3,000 gas cylinders were provided to the entire population.



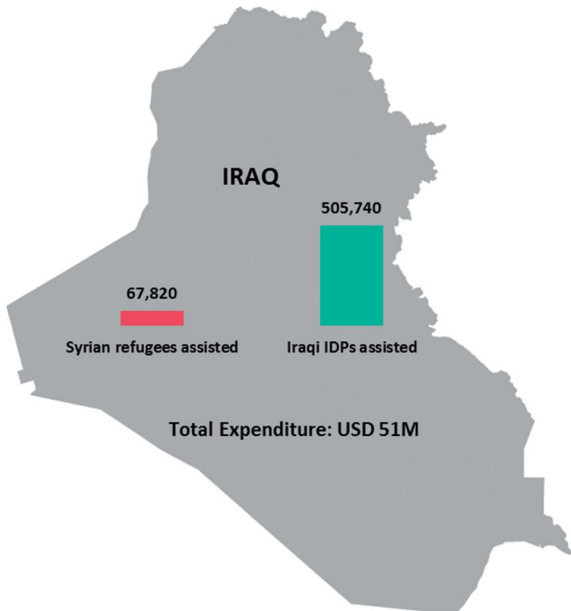
High thermal blankets were distributed countrywide including in the camps in Jordan. UNHCR/A.Bino.

UNHCR was also able to double the number of high thermal blankets distributed when compared to the original planning figures, with 91,555 blankets distributed countrywide including in the refugee camps. UNHCR provided shelter upgrades for 1,000 refugee families in host communities across six Governorates benefitting some 5,000 persons. Shelter upgrading was implemented much in advance to ensure families had proper insulation before the start of winter. Shelter insulation was also improved in Azraq camp with the introduction of concrete flooring in 3,126 shelters.

Iraqi refugees

Cash assistance was provided to a total of 30,396 non-Syrian refugees. Mirroring the programme for the Syrian refugees, UNHCR provided full (USD 103 per person) and half (USD 68) packages.

IRAQ



Iraqi IDPs

UNHCR surpassed the original target of winter assistance for 60,000 families, and reached 84,290 families (approximately 505,700 people) across Iraq with core relief items (CRIs) or shelter support, of whom 457,700 individuals also benefitted from kerosene or cash for kerosene. Distribution of CRIs including plastic sheets, heating stoves, kerosene jerry cans, and blankets benefitted families in Anbar, Babylon, Baghdad, Basrah, Dahuk, Diyala, Erbil, Kerbala, Kirkuk, Missan, Najaf, Ninewa, Qadisiya, Sulaimaniyah, Thiqr and Wassit governorates, including 4,000 families in Erbil Governorate who received cash for winter items. More than 10,000 IDP families living in UNHCR-provided tents also received insulation materials such as tent liners and insulated floor boards. UNHCR also provided 500 IDP families in Erbil Governorate with shelter sealing-off materials to improve living conditions in unfinished buildings.

UNHCR also complemented the Government of Iraq's kerosene ration distributions, distributing more than 15,000,000 litres of kerosene to 58,337 IDP families (about 350,000 people) throughout Anbar, Baghdad, Dahuk, Diyala, Erbil Kirkuk, and Sulaimaniyah governorates. Due to varying winter conditions, 39,209 families in central Iraq and Sulaimaniyah Governorate each received 200 litres of fuel, while 19,128 families in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) each received 400 litres of fuel. Furthermore, UNHCR distributed USD 3,590,600 in cash to 17,953 IDP families, benefitting more than 107,700 people, in Dahuk, Erbil, and Sulaimaniyah governorates to purchase kerosene.

With the economic downturn severely affecting the KRI, many host community families who previously supported refugees and IDPs were no longer able to fully provide for themselves or their families. To encourage peaceful co-existence in mixed refugee/IDP/host community neighborhoods, 40,000 litres of kerosene were also provided to 200 vulnerable families from the host community in Sulaimaniyah Governorate.



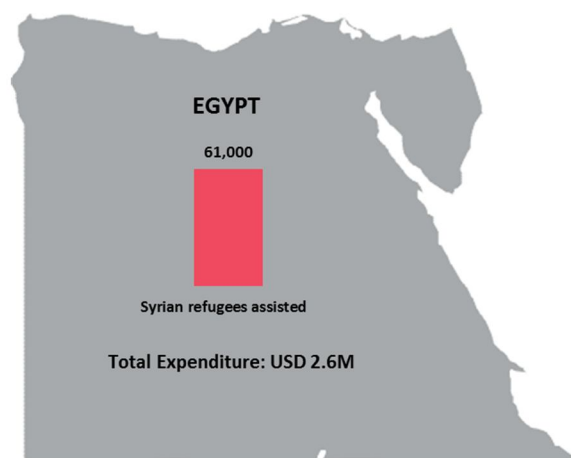
Mustafa Hamo Mughary lives with his family in Arbat refugee camp in Sulaimaniyah Governorate in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. They received winter support from UNHCR, including heating and cash assistance. "Here it is very cold and the children are always getting sick. Sometimes it's so cold, we can't sleep at night". UNHCR/C. Gluck

Syrian refugees

UNHCR provided winter core relief items to 13,564 vulnerable Syrian refugee families, reaching some 67,820 people. UNHCR distributed stoves and various other household items such as plastic sheets, blankets, and kerosene jerry cans to refugee families in Dahuk, Erbil and Sulaimaniyah governorates. UNHCR also distributed tent insulation materials to 2,722 Syrian refugee families across the three governorates.

Throughout the winter months, UNHCR continued to lead the coordination mechanism with partners and local authorities for an integrated winter response. Distributions of kerosene began mid-November 2015 and continued until March 2016. UNHCR distributed 400 litres of kerosene to each family reaching a total of 13,625 refugee families in the three governorates. UNHCR also provided USD 200 in cash per family to purchase kerosene, benefitting 10,765 refugee families across the KRI.

EGYPT



Syrian refugees

The winter assistance was a one-time grant provided to the most vulnerable refugees registered with UNHCR, to help them cope with the harsh winter conditions. UNHCR assessed and identified 85,000 vulnerable Syrian refugees in need of winter assistance, of whom 61,000 refugees were provided with cash assistance by UNHCR while 24,000 Syrians with children under 18 years were assisted by UNICEF. The assistance was provided through 3,000 post offices across the country, with 90 per cent of the cash assistance distributed mainly

through seven post offices located in Greater Cairo, Alexandria and Damietta governorates. Furthermore, UNHCR also provided regular monthly cash assistance for some 32,000 Syrian refugees.

Information on cash assistance was disseminated through the different social media platforms and a short information video was produced. Posters explaining the process of getting the cash assistance and note books with practical advices and awareness messages on protection and healthy routines during the winter were also printed and distributed. UNHCR's Infoline was also available to respond to any queries related to the assistance.



Mohamed Amer, is a Syrian refugee currently living in 6 of October City in Egypt. "This is the first time I received the winterization grant," Mohamed noted. "With that money I bought blankets and a heater, it was indeed very helpful and it made the winter more bearable." UNHCR/Egypt

UNHCR closely monitored the provision of winter assistance through weekly reports provided by the post office on the collection rate of assistance. Regular meetings that took place with the Partners, community members and refugees during the distribution period also supported in the monitoring process. UNHCR also conducted a post distribution monitoring exercise specific to winter assistance to evaluate the impact of the programme. Rent, food and water represented the top three areas in which the refugees spent their grants.

DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS

UNHCR is grateful to the following Governments that have contributed to raising the funds to assist refugees and IDPs under the 2015-2016 winter programme.



Funding to the winter assistance has also been received from private donors and other institutions, while contributions made outside of winter assistance earmarking by governments, charities and other organizations are gratefully acknowledged. UNHCR is also grateful for unearmarked funds provided by donors to their global operations.

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