



# Lebanon Update

## Situation in North Lebanon

14 October - 21 October 2011



*UNHCR staff distributing food kits to displaced families in Wadi Khaled – © UNHCR.*

### Highlights of the week

#### **Numbers:**

Currently there are 3,149 Syrians registered with UNHCR and the High Relief Commission (HRC).

#### **Distribution:**

In addition to the food and non-food items that are part of the monthly distribution, measures have been taken to respond to winter needs. Some local NGOs have begun to distribute winter blankets and clothes in coordination with UNHCR and the HRC.

UNHCR identified a local fuel supplier enabling the distribution of heating fuel to displaced Syrians and vulnerable host families to begin next week.

#### **Education: dispersed/transportation/less families**

During the past week, some additional 30 children registered in local schools in Tall Bire and Halba, bringing the total number of school enrolled children to 430. More children are believed to have registered in Tripoli. This will be verified by the end of next week when UNHCR will begin distributing education assistance in this area.

UNHCR teams continued the distribution of stationary, books and uniforms to displaced children in need in Wadi Khaled through the Social Development Centers (SDCs) of the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA). UNHCR is covering the education fees for all the displaced Syrian children.

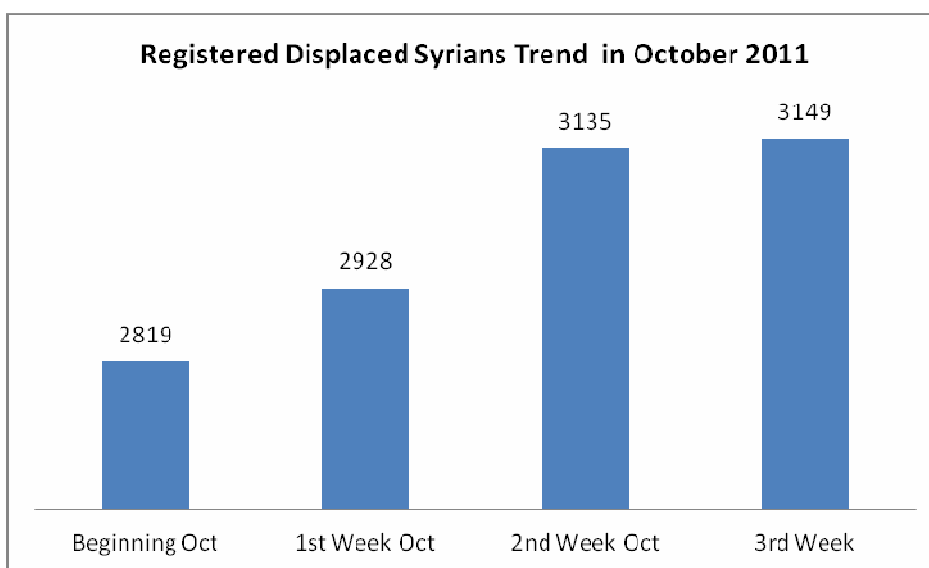
#### **Protection:**

Reports continue of enhanced security along the Syrian border. Some communities in border areas are worried about their security.

## Situational Overview

Beginning in April 2011, Lebanon witnessed an influx of some 5,000 Syrians refugees into northern Lebanon. Many subsequently returned to Syria. Currently there are 3,149 registered persons in the North, residing mostly with host families in difficult circumstances.

Those who remain are unwilling to return until stability and security is restored in their Syrian villages. Many individuals and families have been deeply affected by the events that caused them to flee, and are reluctant to go home until the situation stabilizes.



Currently, 3,149 Syrians are registered with UNHCR and the HRC. Identification and registration occurs on a daily basis by outreach teams. The situation is a fluid one, with people also returning to Syria. That is why each month UNHCR and the HRC verify the numbers during the monthly distribution of food/non-food items. Persons found no longer to be in the area are de-registered. Many of these are known to have returned to Syria.

## Coordination

A very solid coordinated response and positive working relations with the government's High Relief Commission (HRC) and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) were established at the outset to the benefit of the refugees and hosting communities. These partnerships continue and together with other UN and NGO partners the needs of refugees and affected communities are being holistically addressed. They include the following:

- Protection interventions to ensure safety, physical integrity and non-refoulement;
- Assistance to meet basic needs;
- Education and remedial classes;
- Provision of medical and psycho-social care.

A common data base is in use by the HRC and UNHCR and referral mechanisms established to enable the displaced persons to access assistance through specialized partners.

**Protection** The vast majority Syrians who have arrived in the past many weeks have come from Tal Kalakh and Homs. They express fear and anxiety about returning, and most do not feel that the situation is safe enough for them to do so.

Most of those who have recently arrived have crossed at official border crossings given increased security at unofficial crossing points.

**Distribution (Food/ NFI)** UNHCR along with the Government, Caritas Migrant Center, World Vision, and UNICEF, distributes food and non-food items to the displaced on a monthly basis. UNHCR continues to provide food and non-food items to newly registered families who were not on the UNHCR-HRC database during the last distribution.

| Items Distributed | October 20 2011 | Cumulative |
|-------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Mattresses        | 13              | 4,235      |
| Blankets          | 13              | 4,697      |
| Food kits         | 641             | 3,910      |
| Diapers           |                 | 460        |
| Baby milk         |                 | 1,013      |
| Baby kits         | 81              | 424        |
| Hygiene kits      | 571             | 2,725      |
| Women’s underwear | 269             | 714        |
| Tuition fees      | 430             | 430        |
| Books             | 430             | 430        |
| Stationary        | 430             | 430        |
| Uniforms          | 430             | 430        |

**Community Services** Outreach workers from the Ministry of Social Affairs and partners continue to visit the displaced Syrians at homes and in schools in Wadi Khaled, Tall Bire, and Tripoli in order to counsel them, assess their needs, and refer new comers to UNHCR and HRC for registration.

**Shelter** Most of the displaced Syrians reside with host families. Some 200 persons are accommodated in two (abandoned) schools: Al-Rama and Al-Ibra. The schools were initially not well equipped (with sanitation and hygiene facilities) to receive large numbers of people, but are being improved.

UNHCR and the Government initiated the renovation of Al Rama school, while the renovation of the Al Ibra school was undertaken by the Al-Bashaer Islamic Association.

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) together with partner organizations and

outreach workers have identified host family residences in pressing need of improvements for the winter months. These will be addressed in the coming weeks.

### **Education**

The Minister of Education is facilitating the enrolment of displaced children in public schools. UNHCR is covering the cost of school fees, books, uniforms, notebooks, and stationary. UNHCR and partners will also launch remedial classes for Syrian displaced children given the differences between the Lebanese and Syrian school curricula.

By October 15, 400 children had received educational grants from UNHCR and registered in public schools in Wadi Khaled. UNHCR distributes education grants in Tall Bire and Halba and will soon start to do the same in Tripoli. UNICEF will be providing training and guidance to those who will be facilitating extracurricular activities.

### **Health**

UNHCR is working with the HRC and World Health Organization (WHO) in ensuring that every registered displaced person in the north has access to health care services through the most specialized partner. Public Health Centres in the region are providing primary health care and medication to the displaced. The HRC continues to cover the cost of secondary and tertiary health care through local hospitals in the north. UNHCR provides additional support where needed. Most recently, the HRC and UNHCR's implementing partner, the International Medical Corp (IMC), reached agreements with five hospitals in Akkar region for the provision of necessary health care. Assessments are also being done in the Tripoli area for agreements with hospitals there.

### **Capacity Building**

UNCHR has invested in strengthening the capacities of government and local partners through:

- Technical support and guidance to outreach teams composed of staff from MoSA and partners;
- Regular coordination meetings and joint plans of action;
- IT equipment for registration and data collection and analysis;
- Technical support and guidance to the HRC in data collection and verification, and;
- The establishment of referral mechanism to ensure timely attention to specific needs.