

SYRIA AND IRAQ SITUATIONS

REGIONAL WINTER ASSISTANCE PROGRESS REPORT

November 2015

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



Hassan Ibrahim Mohammed and his family outside their shelter at an informal tented settlement in the Bekaa Valley, Lebanon, during the winter early this year.

UNHCR/A.McConnell

As temperatures dropped in November with heavy rainfall and strong winds, UNHCR expedited the release of its winter plan to keep vulnerable refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) warm and protected from the cold conditions across the Middle East.

UNHCR has distributed winter core relief items (CRI) to nearly 345,939 Syrian refugees and over 240,000 Syrian IDPs in the region. Cash assistance for winter months has reached 124,355 Syrian refugees, resulting in an overall 31 per cent of the total Syrian refugees and IDPs reached out of those identified for UNHCR winter support.

Furthermore, 3,152 Iraqi refugees and 228,000 Iraqi IDPs have received winter CRIs, reaching an overall 35 per cent of the total Iraqis UNHCR identified for winter assistance.

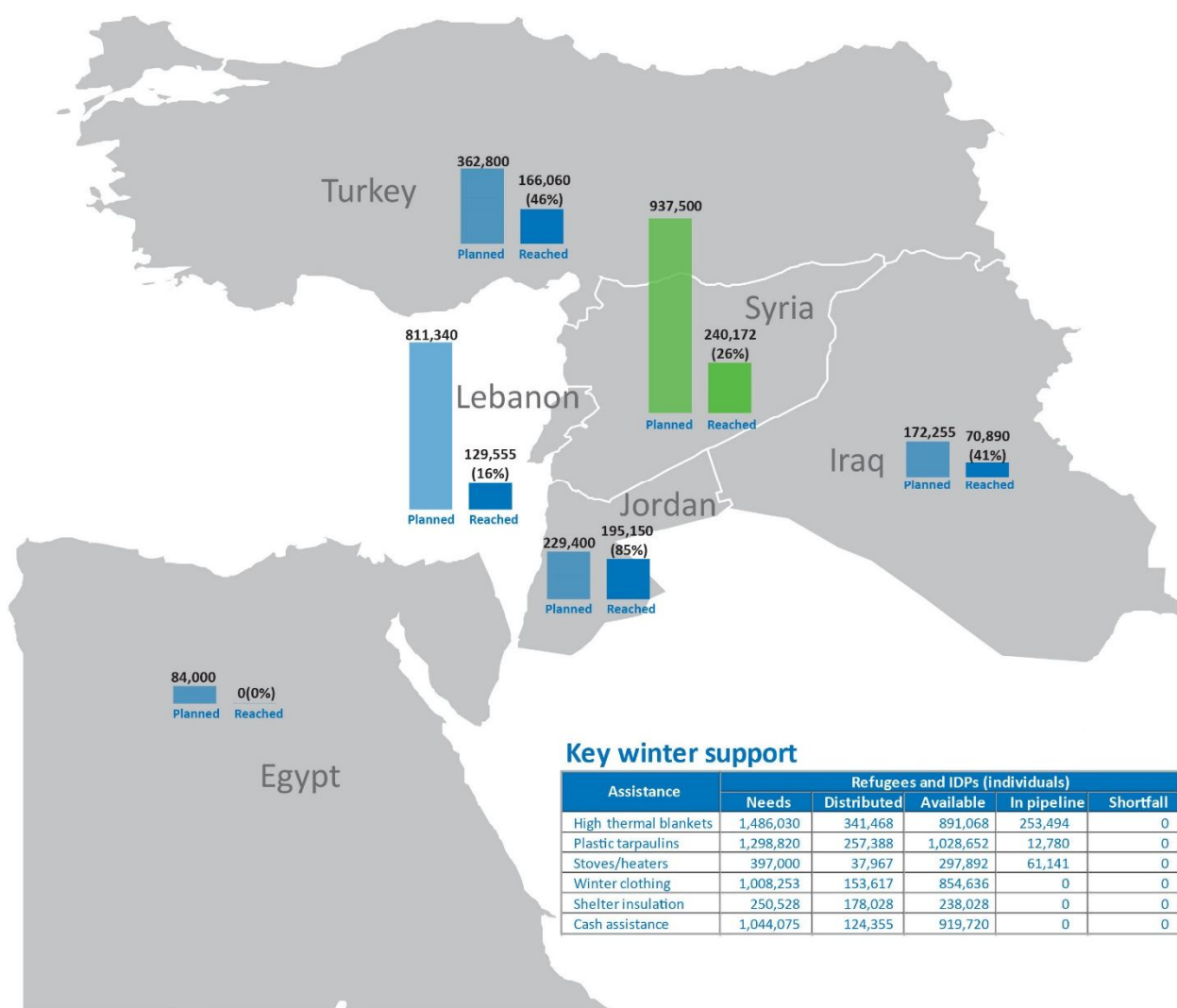
The distribution of most remaining winter assistance for the refugees and IDPs in the region will continue in full force in December.

UNHCR is grateful to the Governments, charities and other organizations for their contributions that have helped UNHCR significantly increase the number of people it will be able to reach with winter assistance in 2015-2016.

SYRIA SITUATION

UNHCR’s regional winter plan for the Syria situation will address the winter needs of **2.7 million Syrians** (1.7 million refugees and 1 million IDPs).

REFUGEE AND IDP PLANNING FIGURES AND DISTRIBUTION FOR UNHCR WINTER ASSISTANCE (INDIVIDUALS)



Key winter support

Assistance	Refugees and IDPs (Individuals)				
	Needs	Distributed	Available	In pipeline	Shortfall
High thermal blankets	1,486,030	341,468	891,068	253,494	0
Plastic tarpaulins	1,298,820	257,388	1,028,652	12,780	0
Stoves/heaters	397,000	37,967	297,892	61,141	0
Winter clothing	1,008,253	153,617	854,636	0	0
Shelter insulation	250,528	178,028	238,028	0	0
Cash assistance	1,044,075	124,355	919,720	0	0

Key Facts



10.8 million
Total Refugees and IDPs

2.6 million (24%)
Refugees and IDPs
Winter Planning Figure

801,827 (31%)
Refugees and IDPs
reached

SYRIA

The winter programme in Syria started during the second week of October. As of 16 November, a total of 40,645 displaced families (205,272 individuals) in Aleppo, Damascus, Rural Damascus, Hama, Al-Hasakeh, Quneitra, Dar'a, Tartous and Latakia governorates received winter items. Emergency winter support including shelter kits composed of timber, plywood, tool kits and sleeping bags will be provided to some 4,000 displaced families living in sub-standard buildings in the western part of Aleppo. Similar support will be considered in other governorates depending on the need.

For cross-border from Jordan, UNHCR has begun its distribution of winter CRIs including hygiene kits. In early November, 4,500 winter kits were distributed in central and southern Dar'a Governorate. A further 5,000 and 4,000 winter kits are planned for distribution in December and January respectively. The Jordan Hub Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI) Working Group continues to meet regularly to coordinate implementation of winter assistance. Further funding has been secured for additional 2,000 winter kits, bringing the total planned beneficiaries to 149,000 in southern Syria, through a coordinated distribution of six organizations.

For cross-border from Turkey, 2,500 winter kits has been distributed to 12,500 newly displaced Syrians in the districts of Harim and Al Ma'ra in Idlib Governorate. A trans-shipment of 10,000 winter kits will be distributed in the coming weeks in Aleppo, Idlib, Hama and Latakia governorates.

TURKEY

In November, UNHCR started delivery of winter non-food items to the camps. Some 166,060 high thermal blankets and 12,462 winter clothes were delivered for the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD) to distribute to a total of 166,060 Syrian refugees in the camps. The rest of the winter items are in the pipeline and will soon be delivered. An additional 30,000 Syrian refugees living in urban settings are receiving cash assistance.

LEBANON

In light of the increasing vulnerability of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, UNHCR has increased its winter assistance programme compared to last year. Since October, UNHCR has been distributing ATM cards to vulnerable families identified in need of winter assistance and to date 106,748 families have either received ATM cards or confirmed that they are still in possession of the cards distributed last winter. The first cash upload took place by 30 November, with a second upload planned in early December.

Some 8,000 Syrian families received blankets and stoves in Lebanon. A notably high no-show rate, up to 50 per cent, has characterized distribution of these items perhaps reflecting onward movement or a preference to cash assistance. The distribution of shelter weatherproofing kits is on-going and to date 15,588 households have received shelter kits. Nearly 1,500 households have benefited from site improvements in informal settlements to reduce flooding during winter rain and snow. In Aarsal, where ATMs are not available, 4,471 households have received fuel-vouchers. UNHCR has agreed to cover the food transfer component for 27,000 of the poorest Lebanese citizens for the period December to March. Beneficiaries will receive a monthly payment of US\$ 30 per person on an electronic voucher to purchase food in WFP-contracted shops. UNHCR is also working with Lebanon's National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP) to identify vulnerable Lebanese families who can benefit from high thermal blankets and stoves this winter.

JORDAN

During November, UNHCR provided winter cash assistance to 30,000 Syrian refugee families in urban areas, with 7,732 families receiving a full package and 22,268 families receiving a half package. As some assistance packages were over JOD 300/US\$ 423 due to family size, UNHCR opted to split these distributions over a two month period, with any amount

over this threshold to be provided through a cash transfer in December. UNHCR provided shelter upgrades to 1,000 urban refugee families (some 3,400 persons) across six governorates. Shelter insulation was also improved in Azraq camp with the introduction of concrete flooring in 3,126 shelters in the camp. Shelter upgrading was implemented prior to the winter months to ensure families have proper insulation before the start of winter.

Distributions for winter months for camp based refugees commenced in November. On 15 November, UNHCR, through its partner Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), began its first round of voucher distribution in Zaatari camp to support the purchase of gas refills. Each voucher is equivalent to the cost associated with purchasing a gas refill, though the vouchers may be used to purchase other items as they are unconditional in nature. Distribution of gas refills also took place in Azraq camp with two refills being provided to each family per month throughout the winter season. The next distribution will take place in December.

Unconditional cash vouchers of JOD 10 (US\$ 14) per person are being provided to the entire Azraq camp population which can be redeemed at the supermarket in the camp which is stocked with basic winter items. Families will also receive high thermal blankets which is an in-kind donation from the Government of the United States of America. The distribution plan is currently under development and will commence upon the arrival of the items. For refugee families in Zaatari camp, given the price of clothing at the Supermarket in the camp and the low stocks available, UNHCR has decided to provide cash instead of vouchers to purchase shelter insulation kits and winter clothes. A total of JOD 20 (US\$ 28) will be provided to each household in the camp and the distribution will take place in December.

IRAQ

UNHCR increased its target for winter CRIs from 10,400 to 13,000 Syrian refugee families and began distribution to vulnerable families on 11 October. As of 25 November, UNHCR had distributed plastic sheets, stoves, blankets, and kerosene jerry cans to 14,178 families (70,890 individuals) in Dahuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah governorates

Distributions of kerosene began mid-November and UNHCR has reached 1,511 families in Sulaymaniyah Governorate and 1,539 families in Erbil Governorate with a total of 363,760 litres of kerosene. UNHCR has also begun distribution of cash for kerosene, dispensing more than US\$ 187,000 to 936 families across Dahuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniah governorates.

EGYPT

UNHCR winter assistance in Egypt aims at supporting 84,000 vulnerable persons, representing some 66 per cent of the Syrian refugee population in the country. An increased winter assistance of US\$ 42 per person will be provided through the post office in three main cities (Cairo, Alexandria and Damietta) and surrounding areas during the first week of December. Through the provision of unconditional cash assistance, the plan will help cover the costs of clothes, blankets, heating and safe accommodation incurred by refugees during winter.

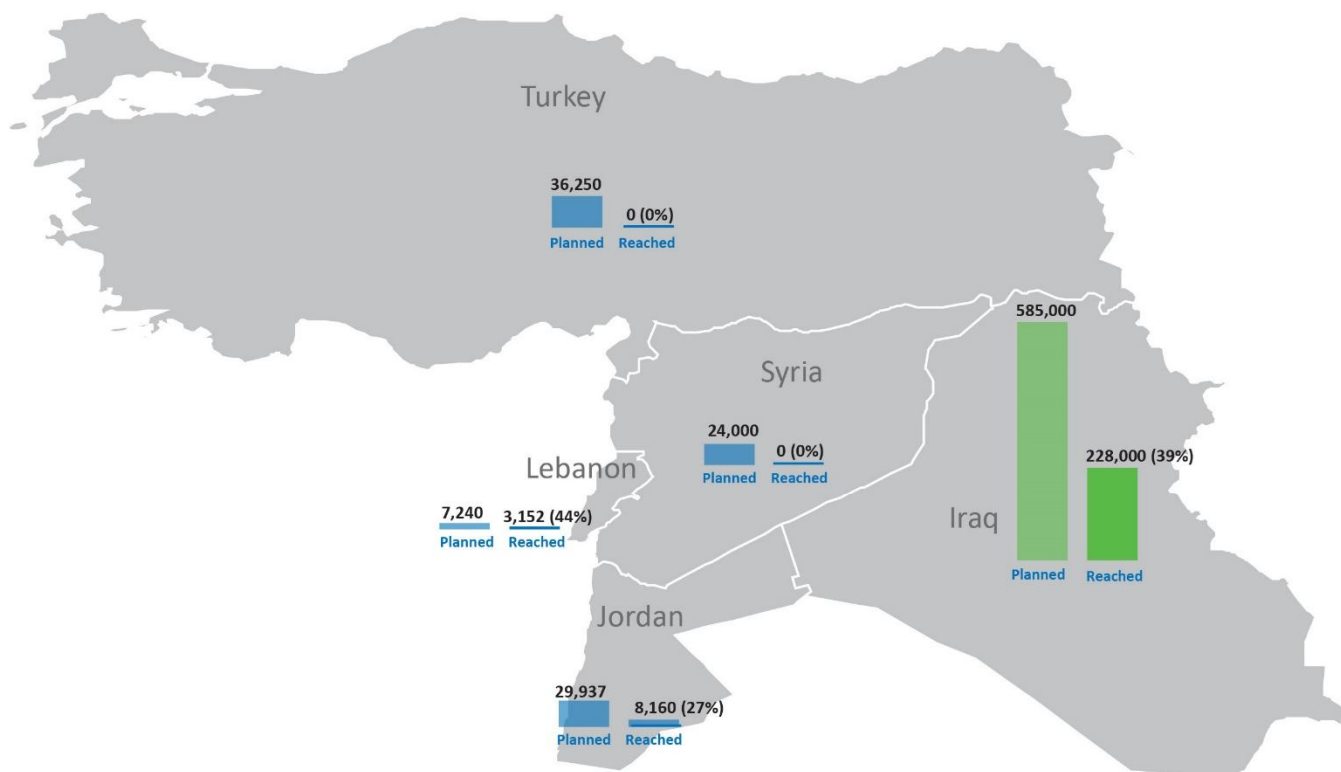
In November, UNHCR conducted several discussions with Partners to identify beneficiaries for winter assistance. This includes extremely vulnerable individuals based on registration data with UNHCR and following individual and family assessment.

UNHCR is also working closely with UNICEF, which will assist vulnerable families with children during the winter. Coordination meetings took place several times for information sharing and finalization of collective winter plans to avoid duplication of assistance and to optimize support. UNHCR will be closely monitoring the provision of winter assistance through periodical meetings with Partners as well as by conducting a post distribution monitoring exercise (PDM) specific to winter assistance.

IRAQ SITUATION

UNHCR’s winter plan for the Iraq situation will reach **700,000 Iraqis** (almost 100,000 refugees and close to 600,000 IDPs).

REFUGEE AND IDP PLANNING FIGURES AND DISTRIBUTION FOR UNHCR WINTER ASSISTANCE (INDIVIDUALS)



Key winter support

Assistance	Refugees and IDPs (individuals)				
	Needs	Distributed	Available	In pipeline	Shortfall
High thermal blankets	393,200	115,325	218,430	59,445	0
Plastic tarpaulins	360,000	121,350	215,624	23,026	0
Stoves/heaters	390,000	95,928	294,072	0	0
Winter clothing	30,000	0	0	30,000	0
Shelter insulation	78,000	9,174	65,746	3,080	0
Cash assistance	289,227	8,160	266,335	14,732	0

Key Facts



3.4 million
Total Refugees and IDPs

682,427 (20%)
Refugees and IDPs
Winter Planning Figure

239,312 (35%)
Refugees and IDPs
reached

IRAQ

UNHCR finalized the distribution plan for winter CRIs to 60,000 IDP families and distribution began on 12 October; two weeks ahead of schedule. The plan will reach a total of 585,000 IDPs, and to date, UNHCR has reached 38,138 families (about 228,000 people) with at least one winter CRI item.

The Government of Iraq has reportedly agreed to provide kerosene to some 200,000 IDP families living in the northern regions, with the Ministry of Oil agreeing to reduce the price by 90 per cent. UNHCR complements the Government's kerosene ration distribution and so far UNHCR has distributed 2,050,500 litres of kerosene to 10,679 families in Dahuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniah governorates. Furthermore, UNHCR has distributed US\$ 1,308,000 in cash to 4,517 families and 2,023 families in Erbil and Sulaymaniah governorates respectively to purchase kerosene.

As of 25 November, UNHCR had distributed a complete set of winter items comprising of a plastic sheet, a heating stove, a kerosene jerry can, and six blankets to approximately 6,356 families in Baghdad, Dahuk, Diyala, Erbil, Najaf, and Sulaymaniyah governorates. In Dahuk Governorate, UNHCR will distribute winter items on a needs basis and some families will receive select items from the winter stock.

TURKEY

Distribution of one-off winterization cash assistance started in November, reaching 6,250 Iraqi refugees residing outside the camps to help them purchase much needed basic items in preparation for the winter months.

JORDAN

In November, winter cash assistance was provided to 2,045 Iraqi families, with 697 Iraqi families receiving a full package and 1,348 receiving a half package. Iraqis newly registered in 2015 will receive winter cash assistance in December.

LEBANON

UNHCR plans to assist 3,000 refugee households with high thermal blankets and cash based interventions. Assistance for Iraqis will be similar as that for the Syrians: usage of ATM cards and monthly assistance through cash transfers. This approach is in line with UNHCR's objective to harmonize cash assistance transfer modalities, including value of amounts, for vulnerable refugee families registered with UNHCR.

Based on multi-functional team recommendations, UNHCR has identified 479 vulnerable families living above 500 metres and 1,137 vulnerable families living below 500 metres who will receive US\$ 147 and US\$ 100 respectively for four months. Of these 1,616 families, 1,071 families (66%) have received the ATM cards that will be loaded with cash by the end of November. The remaining cards will be uploaded in December. In addition, UNHCR will be providing winter CRIs to the families and so far, 3,000 individuals have received high thermal blankets. Additional beneficiaries for winter assistance will be identified during the next month.

SYRIA

Planned winter cash assistance will be distributed together with the regular cash for food assistance for the month of November to all Iraqi and non-Iraqi refugees and asylum-seekers. A total of 8,000 families (24,000 individuals) will be assisted with each family receiving SYP 60,00 (equivalent to US\$ 271).

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