

## POPULATION OF CONCERN

**247,339** Syrian refugees

## KEY FIGURES

**3,197**

newly registered children provided psychosocial services

**180%**

Increase in the number of Syrian refugee cases being reactivated.

**257**

persons are still waiting for decisions by resettlement countries following submission for resettlement in 2015

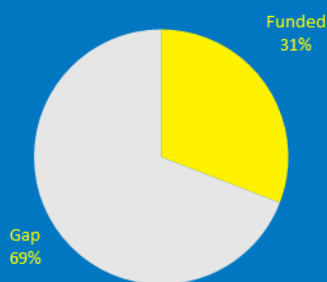
**45,000**

registered refugees lack a valid residency card in Erbil governorate (39% of the refugee population in Erbil Governorate).

## FUNDING

**USD 285,633,934**

requested by agencies for the operation



## PRIORITIES

- Counter the fragile protection environment for children and women
- Enhance livelihoods opportunities
- Improve long term shelter options
- Support education sector

## IRAQ

# INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONAL UPDATE - SYRIAN REFUGEES IN IRAQ

May 2016

## HIGHLIGHTS

- A total of 2,665 Syrians arrived to KR-I during the reporting period, using Pheshkabour border crossing point (only 2 permitted entry as asylum seekers); bringing the total number of new-arrivals since January 2016 to date to 15,104 individuals. This represents an increase of 12% in the number of new arrivals as compared to the previous month. Nonetheless, it is a 53% decrease on the arrivals compared to period January to May 2015 (28,494)
- A total of 512 individuals returned to Syria through the aforesaid border post (437 registered asylum-seekers and 75 unregistered Syrians). This represents a drop of 36% in the total number of returns as compared to the past month.
- UNHCR jointly with the partners (ISHO and UIMS) has suspended all activities at Al Obaidi camp in Al-Qaim, Anbar province, from 1 May. The decision was made as the situation in the AL-Qaim has deteriorated to the point where partners' staff would be at risk. The decision will be reconsidered after 3 months on the basis of security.
- With the assistance of UNHCR, Payosas Sin Fronteras, the Spanish branch of Clowns without Borders, undertook a two week tour of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The group performed 23 shows to almost 7000 spectators at locations across the Dohuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah governorates including refugee and IDP camps, public schools, community centers, orphanages, and institutes providing education to children with severe disabilities.



Participation time: A performer from Payosas sin Fronteras, the Spanish branch of Clowns Without Borders, gets a helping hand from a schoolgirl at a show in Erbil Governorate. ©UNHCR/Michael Prendergast

# UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

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## Operational Context

During May, the Humanitarian situation escalated as conflict intensified in many parts of the country.

Unsolved budgetary disputes continue to affect relationships between the Central Government and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I) while low oil prices negatively impact the local economy. Public servant salaries remain unpaid for months, while most of the public and many private projects are on hold due to the lack of funds in KR-I.

The political situation remains fragile in the rest of the country as the Iraqi Shi'a cleric maintain his call of complete reform of the current Cabinet with the proposed changes of all Ministers and key Departments to a Technocrat cabinet. The waves of demonstrations followed during the Friday prayers that led to increase the security level to a high alert in Baghdad.

In Falluja (Anbar Governorate), the population remained trapped by conflict and there is a lack of food, medicine and services. According to media reports militants have prevented civilians from leaving the city and are used as human shields.

North of Falluja, the Iraqi Government has been holding contingency planning meetings with the UN, humanitarian actors as the Iraqi security forces together with the Kurdish Peshmerga forces have beefed up operations toward the city of Mosul from Makhmur district south of Erbil, and is reportedly preparing for a Mosul offensive. With the frontlines moving forward several villages taken from militants, resulting in thousand Iraqis being displaced towards Debaga in Makhmur district (Erbil Governorate). With temperatures already reaching 40 Celsius, the situation remains dire for the displaced and local authorities have called for international support.

## Achievements



### OVERVIEW

The summer months will challenge child protection staff in camp and non-camp locations as they work to ensure that children continue to attend recreational and psychosocial support activities despite the extreme heat. While formal schools are out of session, Child Friendly and Youth Friendly Spaces are of increasing importance as they can be the main place for children and youth to socialize, attend classes or activities, and engage with peers. Notwithstanding the continuous restrictions imposed by the Syrian border authorities at the Semalka border crossing (on the Syrian side), the total number of Syrians crossing into KR-I via Pheshkabour border in May shows an increase of 12% compared to April. This reflects the high proportion of re-admissions into KR-I through this border crossing (65% of the total).

### ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

- Following the start of the UNHCR regularization campaign two months ago, and an awareness raising campaign launched by UPP, increased numbers of refugees approached UNHCR registration centers. This trend was particularly visible in Dohuk during May. An increase of 87% was seen in the total registration activities was seen in the Domiz and Gawilan centers, including new-births, new arrivals and in-situ registrations as well as reactivation of cases. More specifically, the total numbers of new arrivals. In-

situ registration events have practically doubled in May as compared to April, while an increase of 180% was recorded in the number of cases being reactivated.

- Throughout May, child protection partners provided psychosocial services to a total of 3,197 newly registered children. This brings the total since the start of the year to 5,387 (girls: 2,889 and boys: 2,498).
- 1,282 children newly registered children (571 girls and 711 boys) received specialized services from frontline workers. Cases included children with emotional distress, non-attendance of school, child labor, early marriage, gender based violence and disability. This brings the total since the start of the year to 3,014 (girls: 1,332 and boys: 1,682).
- With the assistance of UNHCR, the Clowns without Borders agency toured the KR-I, performing 26 shows across the Dohuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah governorates. The shows took in a variety of venues including refugee and IDP camps, public schools, community centers, orphanages, institutes providing childcare and education to children with severe disabilities. Clowns without Borders aim to provide psychosocial support to children to their performances.

## IDENTIFIED NEEDS AND REMAINING GAPS

- UNHCR has noted with concern that some 45,000 registered refugees lack a valid residency card in Erbil governorate: 39% of the Governorate refugee population. Support will be required to ensure that refugees are properly documented within a reasonable time frame.

## Education



A team of students parades around the sports stadium as part of an art and sports festival in Dohuk city, May 2016. ©UNICEF/Chris Niles

## OVERVIEW

The financial constraints on the Directorate of Education caused by the economic crisis continues to affect education; teachers have not received their salaries since September 2015, forcing many to leave their jobs. During the summer months, when schools are closed, non-formal education and child friendly activities take on even more importance to keep children occupied and protect them from risks like child labour.

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

- On 9 May, the Ministry of Education pledged full support to the rollout of the planned 120 DAFI scholarships for Syrian refugees to attend university. It has formed a technical committee together with UNHCR, DAAD and the British Council to plan the program set-up. The committee held its first meeting in

Erbil and came up with concrete agreements covering the application criteria and process, as well as the selection procedure for DAFI.

- Across the KR-I, UNICEF is supporting 401 Syrian refugee teachers on voluntary contracts (379 in Erbil and Sulaymaniyah; 22 in Dohuk). The teachers, who are not employed on formal contracts with the Directorate of Education, receive a monthly incentive. Incentives are \$250 for teaching staff and \$150 for education support staff including administrators, cleaners, and guards. This support scheme has been ongoing since the start of the last academic year and will continue for the next academic year to help schools stay open in the absence of government salaries.
- Twelve refugee schools in camps and in host community areas were provided with funds for minor rehabilitation works (approx. USD \$3,000 per school depending on the needs). The 12 schools in Domiz 1, Domiz 2, War City, Gawilan and Dirook in Dohuk have 9,414 students (4,764 girls and 4,650 boys) enrolled.
- A large-scale arts and sports festival in Dohuk city this month saw participation by children from refugee and IDP camps, as well as Kurdish host community. The event promoted themes of citizenship and social cohesion, and was well attended by community members, government and local authority staff.
- In Dohuk, 23 prefabricated containers were provided to schools in host community with refugee students. They schools are overcrowded with insufficient learning space for children.

### IDENTIFIED NEEDS AND REMAINING GAPS

- Government teacher and civil servant salaries have been paid either irregularly or not at all since September 2015. Lack of salary can affect teachers' presence at school, therefore impacting negatively on the quality of learning for students.
- For both camp and non-camp locations there is an urgent need to involve children in some kind of activities during the long summer holiday in order to prevent children being engaged in any form of child labor. In Qushtapa camp Erbil Governorate, the majority of the girls are skipping classes, as they are working in the factories around the camp – only 15 out of 50 female students undertook the year-end exams. Summer-time educational activities are needed to help children avoid the risk of child labor over the summer, ensuring that they enroll in the next school year.



## Health

### OVERVIEW

Despite of the financial crisis in KR-I, refugees still have access to primary health care facilities. No major health conditions were reported and no disease outbreak has been registered. Curative services in camps were implemented in line with national and international standards. However, shortage of medicines in public health facilities is still a key concern.

### ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

- In Domiz 1 camp, Dohuk governorate, MSF will handover mental health and non-communicable diseases activities to DoH-Dohuk. Due to the financial crisis in KR-I, UNHCR will support DoH-Dohuk to run these two activities.
- UNHCR and its implementing Partners (Harikar in Dohuk and KURDS in Erbil) conducted assessments to primary health care centers in different locations, UNHCR through its implementing partners will renovate and provide medical equipment to these PHC facilities through Quick Impact Projects (QIP).

### IDENTIFIED NEEDS AND REMAINING GAPS

- Due to financial crisis, continued support is needed to DoH to provide health services in order to prevent excess mortality and morbidity. Medicine shortages are a key concern in public health facilities.
- Access to mental health care and psychosocial support services remains limited for non-camp refugees and needs to be further expanded.
- The strike in Sulaymaniyah governorate due to financial crisis, ongoing since February 2016, continues to affect provision of health services in public health facilities, only maternity (Emergency department) and emergency hospitals are working. However, some of PHCCs and hospitals restart working but not fully functioning.



## Food Security and Nutrition

### OVERVIEW

A total of 52,407 Syrian refugees received assistance from WFP in May. This included 5,475 refugees supported with in-kind assistance, as well as 46,066 who had their e-vouchers topped up. Of the latter, 23,452 were female, including 4,457 girls under five years old.

### ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

- In May, the voucher rates for Syrian refugees in Iraq were restored to USD 28 for the extremely food insecure and USD 19 for the moderately food insecure. This is due to the generous USD 623 million donation from Germany for Syrian refugees around the region. The reduced amount being provided prior to May was USD 19 for the extremely food insecure and USD 10 for the moderately food insecure meaning these beneficiaries have seen an increase of 32% and 90% respectively.
- Ad hoc in-kind distributions took place in six of the nine refugee camps. This was a response to new arrivals in the camps, and the need to fill gaps while registering beneficiaries in the SCOPE system.
- **The post-distribution monitoring report covering the first quarter of 2016 was published in May.** The survey found that female-headed households seem to be disproportionately affected by decreasing levels of food security. In general, dietary diversity remained high, indicating that refugee households are eating from various food groups even as food consumption may be decreasing.
- UNHCR, UNICEF and the KRG Ministry of Health (MoH) agreed at a joint meeting on 19 May that Government and agencies will invest more in preventive interventions so that no knowledge or service gap jeopardises children's nutrition. Particular attention will be paid to support the Iraq code of marketing of breastmilk substitutes. Weak regulation in marketing substitutes can lead to substandard products available to new mothers, and place infant's health at risk.

### IDENTIFIED NEEDS AND REMAINING GAPS

- In May, the growth of 3,679 children (1,778 boys and 1,901 girls) under 5 were monitored by UNICEF and nutrition partners. Among these, 480 were identified as suffering from malnutrition in at least one form.
- UNHCR and local partners ISHO have suspended activities in Al Obaidi refugee camp, Anbar province. Due to security concerns, WFP did not have access to the camp since June 2014. In the interim UNHCR, through local partner ISHO, had been providing bread daily and cash food assistance monthly to the vulnerable refugee population. Now, in the absence of ISHO, the camp bakery is expected to continue under the supervision of the camp Mukhtars (community leaders) who would contribute daily to camp management.
- Food assistance remains one of the key issues arising in camps and non-camp community discussions. Food beneficiaries raised concerns that the prices of food items in the WFP markets are higher compared to the local markets.

## Water and Sanitation



Upgrading of the water network in Domiz 1 refugee camp, Dohuk Governorate, May 2016 ©UNICEF

### ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

#### Focus on water conservation

Efficient use and conservation of household water is still an area which needs community advocacy, in all the refugee camps. Water losses due to overflow of storage tanks without floating control valves remains a pending issue. UNHCR, UNICEF and partners are engaged in water conservation campaigns aimed at improving water usage in communities across the KR-I and central Iraq, and at strengthening Ministry capacity on water resource management issues. The campaign takes place in and out of camps across Iraq.

As the summer temperatures begin to rise, frequently reaching more than 45 degrees centigrade, electricity hours are expected to reduce and demand for water will go up.

The water conservation campaign will help prevent:

- Increase in incidence of water related diseases as people will have to compromise on maintaining hygiene. Last year, a number cholera cases were confirmed in KR-I and the population living in crowded conditions in camp and non-camp areas are more vulnerable because of such living conditions.
- Refugees from having to purchase water to meet their water demand which may result in reduced spending on food, health and education.
- Water shortages as temperature reaches up to 45°C, and population water needs increase for drinking, personal usage and cooling (water coolers).
- Tensions between refugee and host communities due to reduced water supply.

- All water and sanitation related works have been completed for 1,090 new shelter plots in Darashakran (308 plots), Qushtapa (497 plots), and Kawergosk (285 plots) refugee camps, with the funds from UNHCR, UNICEF and PWJ. The works included construction of individual latrine and shower and household water connection. With the completion of 1,090 new shelter plots, 86% of in camp refugee families (whole KR-I) will have access to individual WASH facilities. The relocation of refugee families to new shelter plots will take place in June 2016.

- A dedicated borehole has been drilled at Kawa refugee camp (for non-Syrian refugees) which will help to increase the access to water in Qushtapa refugee camp. The existing borehole in Qushtapa camp was also being used for Kawa camp and now each will have a dedicated borehole, improving water supply.
- A technical assessment of the water supply network in Domiz 1 camp, Dohuk, was completed earlier in 2016, to identify weaknesses and required improvements to ensure adequate water supply for all areas of the camp. Upgrading works for networks in the camp has commenced through two contractors.
- Water availability was improved compared to April, due to improved government power supply in the period. Routine maintenance, such as fixing leaks and changing taps, continued through the Directorate of Erbil Surrounding Water (DESW).

### IDENTIFIED NEEDS AND REMAINING GAPS

- In Al-Obaidi camp, Anbar province daily provision of water from Al Qaim Water project continues, however this is untreated due to restrictions on chlorine provision.

## Shelter and NFIs



Refugees just moved to their upgraded shelters in Darashakran refugee camp, June 2016 © UNHCR/Oleg Zhdanov

### OVERVIEW

Risk of fire continues to be a major concern for refugees living in camps. As temperatures rise during the summer months, camp dwellers increase usage of electrical appliances due to the need for water coolers and fans to keep cool. This can have the consequence of overloading their electricity capacity and it increases the risk of electrical fires in tents. UNHCR, in partnership with ACTED, launched a renewed fire safety campaign for residents in all camps. Additionally, in collaboration with the Fire Department, municipalities and EMERGENCY (health agency), ACTED are training volunteers to conduct fire audits, extinguish simple fires and to treat burns.

### ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

- All shelter and infrastructure works are completed for 1,090 new shelter plots with the funds from UNHCR in Darashakran (308 plots), Qushtapa (497 plots) and Kawergosk (285 plots) refugee camps. With the completion of 1,090 new shelter plots, 86% of in camp refugee families (whole KR-I) will have access to improved shelter plots that include individual kitchen, individual tent slab and household WASH facilities. The relocation of refugee families to new shelter plots will take place in June 2016.
- In Sulaymaniyah, UNHCR, in partnership with Qandil, conducted over 300 assessment and reviews of refugees who are in need of cash for rent. Some 170 refugee families were approved for the USD 200

assistance (USD 200/family/month for two months). UNHCR plans to target 500 of the most vulnerable families throughout the year who are at-risk of eviction from their current places of residence.

## IDENTIFIED NEEDS AND REMAINING GAPS

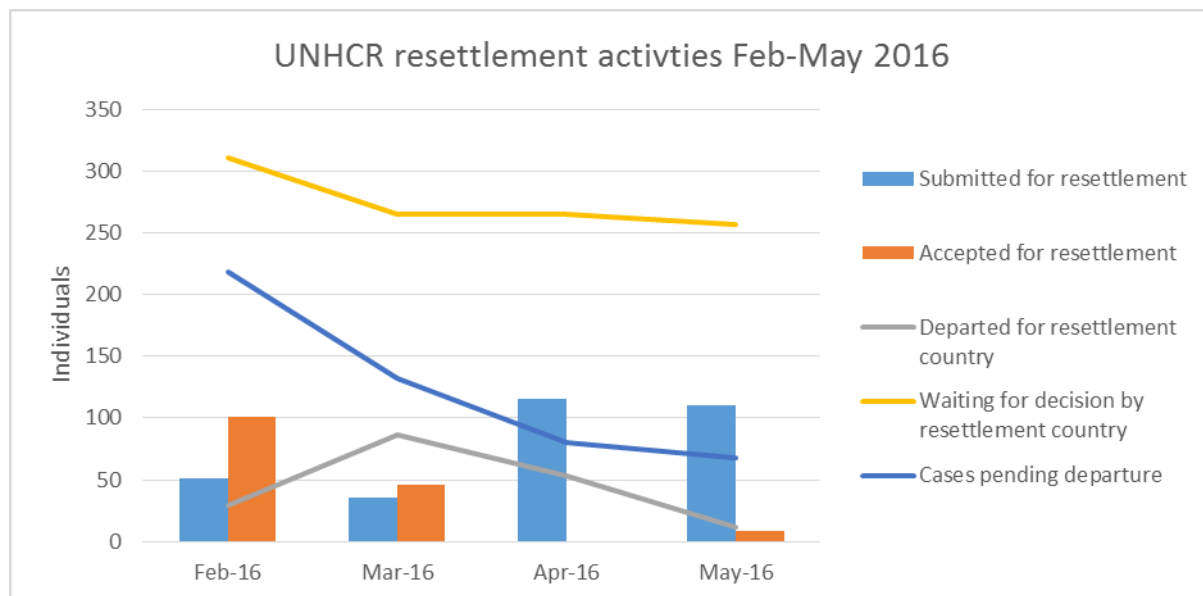
- Additional land is required in Kawergosk camp to construct improved shelter plots to accommodate refugee families living in temporary shelters.

## Durable Solutions

### OVERVIEW

UNHCR continues to enhance its anti-fraud messaging and engage all partners in spreading the message across the three governorates that all UNHCR services are free during their daily activities as well as to warn persons of concern from engaging in fraudulent acts. This has become very necessary with the increase in resettlement activities with various resettlement countries pledging more resettlement spaces as well as alternate private humanitarian admission programme in the spirit of burden sharing, issues of fraud are being perpetrated against persons of concern by unknown third persons.

### ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT



## IDENTIFIED NEEDS AND REMAINING GAPS

- UNHCR continuous to enhanced its anti-fraud messaging and engaged all partners in spreading the message that all UNHCR services are free during their daily activities.
- Despite the increase in resettlement countries selection interview, no decisions from resettlement countries were received in April, and only 8 individuals were accepted for resettlement (to the UK) in May. As a result, 257 persons are still waiting for decisions by resettlement countries following their submission for resettlement consideration in 2015 whilst 68 persons accepted for resettlement in 2015 are still pending departure. **UNHCR continues to engage with resettlement countries to ensure that decisions are processed expeditiously.**



## STORIES FROM THE FIELD

### Clowns without Borders raise the spirits of children escaping conflict



A performer from Payasos sin Fronteras, the Spanish branch of Clowns Without Borders, entertains kids with his antics at a show in Dohuk Governorate. © UNHCR/Rasheed Hussein Rasheed

Dohuk, the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, May 22 (UNHCR) – Waves of laughter rippled across the camp as a baggy-panted clown turned one ball into two and juggled them for a crowd of students, teachers and parents. “I brought my daughter here, but I ended up staying to watch the show too. This is the first time we have ever seen clowns!” said 36-year old Syrian refugee Aya Haji, who was attending the show in a children friendly space in Domiz 2 refugee camp in the Kurdish region of Iraq (KR-I).

The show was put on by Payasos Sin fronteras, the Spanish branch of Clowns without Borders. With their trademark red noses, huge boots and multi-coloured costumes, the clowns spent 16 days delighting crowds in camps and urban settings across the KR-I, putting smiles on the faces of thousands of people who have been forced from their homes in Syria or internally displaced inside Iraq. A number of the children who attended the performances were born in the camps where the shows took place. “The psychological effects of being displaced creates great anxiety. These shows lift the spirits of young people and their parents and transports them to a happier place,” said UNHCR Community Services Officer Antonia Haegner.

Clowns without Borders is non-profit organization that travels to conflict affected areas to entertain communities who have experienced crisis or trauma. Their shows are filled with acrobatics, music, dance and magic tricks, along with opportunities for children to join in on the fun. “This is the second time in two years the clowns have come to perform here. It helps children and their parents forget the situation they are living in.

We all need a little laughter in our lives,” said Ibrahim Mohamad Abedalqahar, who manages the Garmawa Camp for internally displaced people in Dohuk.

With the assistance of UNHCR, the Clowns without Borders troupe performed 23 shows to almost 7000 spectators at locations across the KR-I including refugee and IDP camps, public schools, community centers, orphanages, and institutes providing education to children with severe disabilities. At the end of their final performance one of the performers summed up the motivation for undertaking the tour “Their laughter is our food, it keeps us going.”

*By: Rasheed Hussein Rasheed*

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Agencies are very grateful for the financial support provided by donors who have contributed to their activities with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds as well as for those who have contributed directly to the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) in 2015 and so far in 2016:

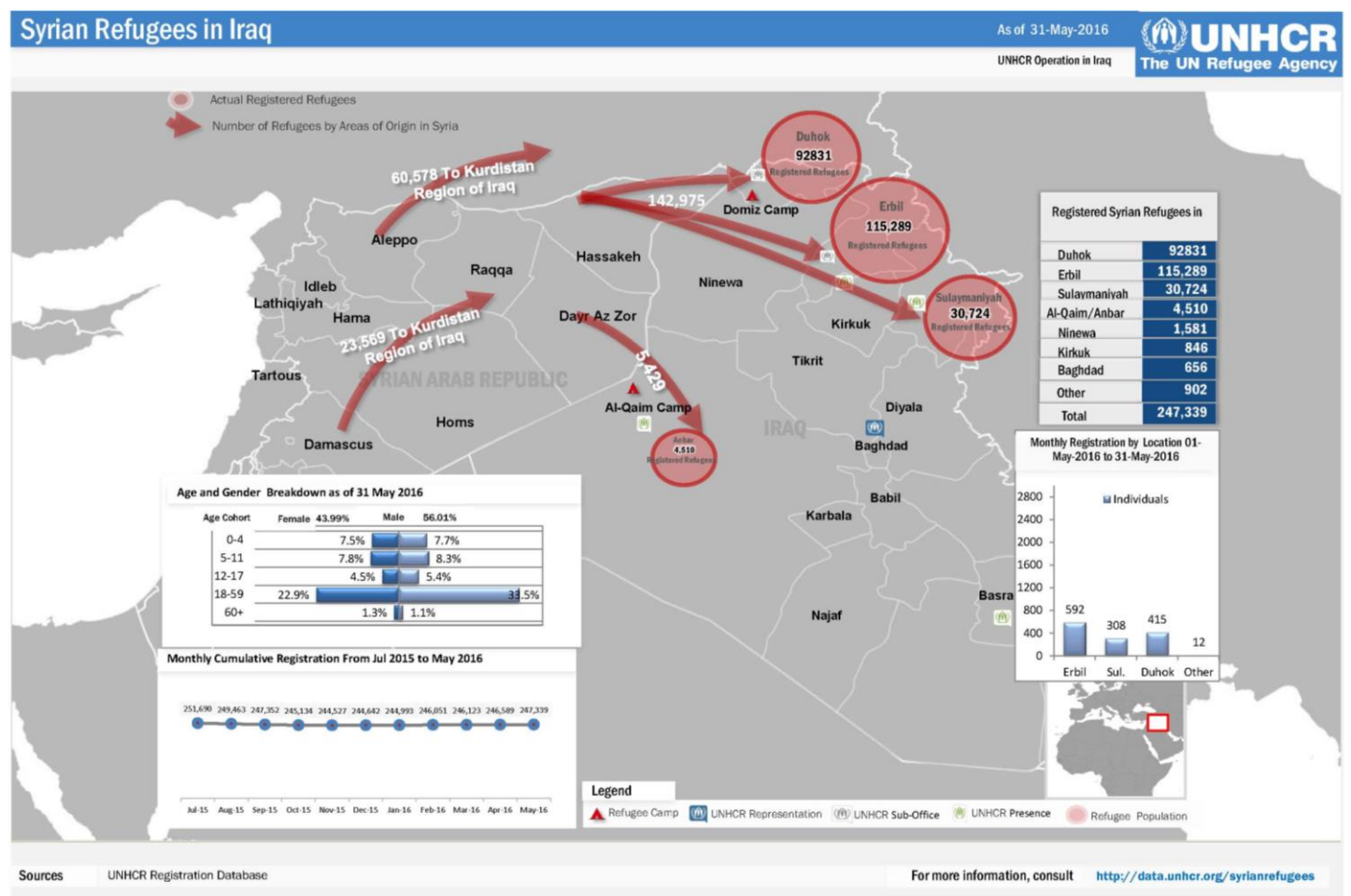
- Australia
- Canada
- CERF
- Denmark
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- France
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- The Big Heart Foundation
- United Kingdom
- United States of America

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| AOG     | Armed opposition group                                    |
| BIA/BID | Best Interests Assessment/Best Interests Determination    |
| CRI     | Core Relief Items (formerly known as non-food items/NFIs) |
| DDM     | Department of Displacement and Migration                  |
| DoE     | Department of Education                                   |
| DoH     | Department of Health                                      |
| DVAW    | Directorate for Combatting Violence Against Women         |
| IDP     | Internally displaced people                               |
| ISHO    | Iraqi Salvation Humanitarian Organisation                 |
| KDP     | Kurdistan Democratic Party                                |
| KR-I    | Kurdistan Region of Iraq                                  |
| MoMD    | Ministry of Migration and Displacement                    |
| MoE     | Ministry of Education                                     |
| PARC    | Protection Assistance Reintegration Centre                |
| PHC     | Primary Health Care                                       |
| RSD     | Refugee status determination                              |
| SGBV    | Sexual and gender-based violence                          |

UASC Unaccompanied and separated children  
 WASH Water, sanitation and hygiene

# ANNEXES



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**Links:**

For information on the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) please click on <http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/>.

Announcements of all sector meetings along with respective agendas and minutes, and other information reporting sector-wide progress such as 3Ws, dashboards and camp profiles, are available on the inter-agency information sharing portal at <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>

For more information on the work of UNHCR and our partners in Iraq, please follow us on Twitter at [@unhcriraq](https://twitter.com/unhcriraq) and on Facebook at [UNHCRinIraq](https://www.facebook.com/UNHCRinIraq)

**UNHCR Registration Trends for Syrian Persons of Concern** 31 May 2016

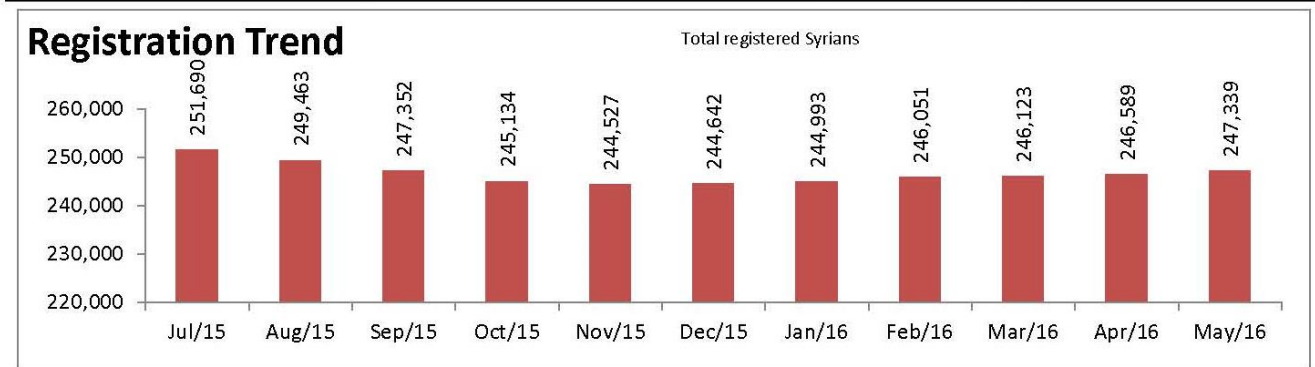
**Registration Unit**

**Total Persons of Concern**

**Individuals**  
247,339

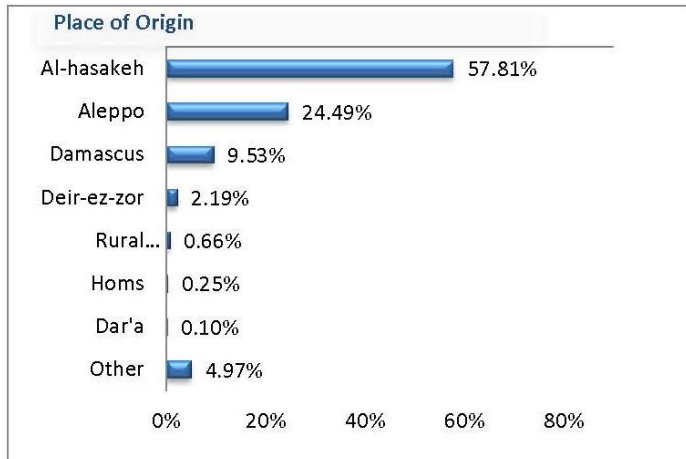
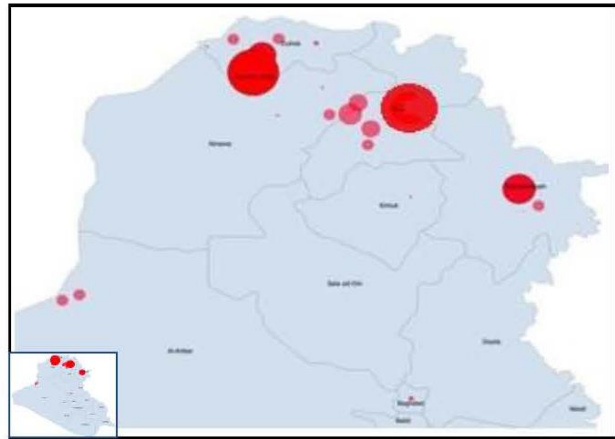
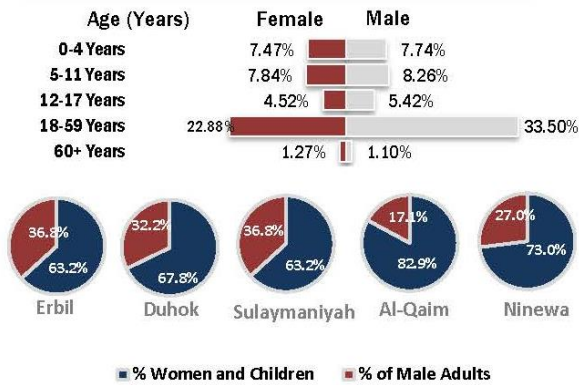
**Households**  
87,925

**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency  
Iraq



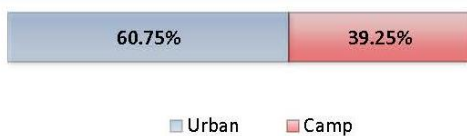
This profile is based on **247,339** proGres registered individuals

#### Age and Gender Breakdown



| Governorate       | Individuals    | Households    | % Total     |
|-------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| Duhok             | 92,831         | 29,260        | 37.53%      |
| Erbil             | 115,289        | 43,879        | 46.61%      |
| Sulaymaniyah      | 30,724         | 11,987        | 12.42%      |
| Anbar             | 4,510          | 1,150         | 1.82%       |
| Ninewa            | 1,581          | 525           | 0.64%       |
| Kirkuk            | 846            | 293           | 0.34%       |
| Baghdad           | 656            | 337           | 0.27%       |
| Other             | 902            | 494           | 0.36%       |
| <b>Total Iraq</b> | <b>247,339</b> | <b>87,925</b> | <b>100%</b> |

#### Camp and non-camp population comparison



| Camps Registered Population |               |               |             |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Camp                        | Individuals   | Households    | % Total     |
| Al-Obaidi Camp              | 1,519         | 319           | 1.56%       |
| Akre Settlement             | 1,262         | 320           | 1.30%       |
| Domiz Camp 1                | 40,426        | 13,222        | 41.64%      |
| Domiz Camp 2                | 7,543         | 1,768         | 7.77%       |
| Gawilan Camp                | 7,526         | 1,831         | 7.75%       |
| Basirma Camp                | 3,527         | 860           | 3.63%       |
| Darashakran Camp            | 10,966        | 2,564         | 11.30%      |
| Kawergosk Camp              | 10,070        | 2,800         | 10.37%      |
| Qushtapa Camp               | 6,715         | 1,852         | 6.92%       |
| Arbat Camp                  | 7,519         | 2,011         | 7.75%       |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>97,073</b> | <b>27,547</b> | <b>100%</b> |

From 16 June 2014, as Al-Obaidi Camp became inaccessible to UN agencies and other humanitarian staff, the camp registered population figure is not updated.