

UNHCR Syria Flash Update #13

Response to Displacement from Lebanon to Syria

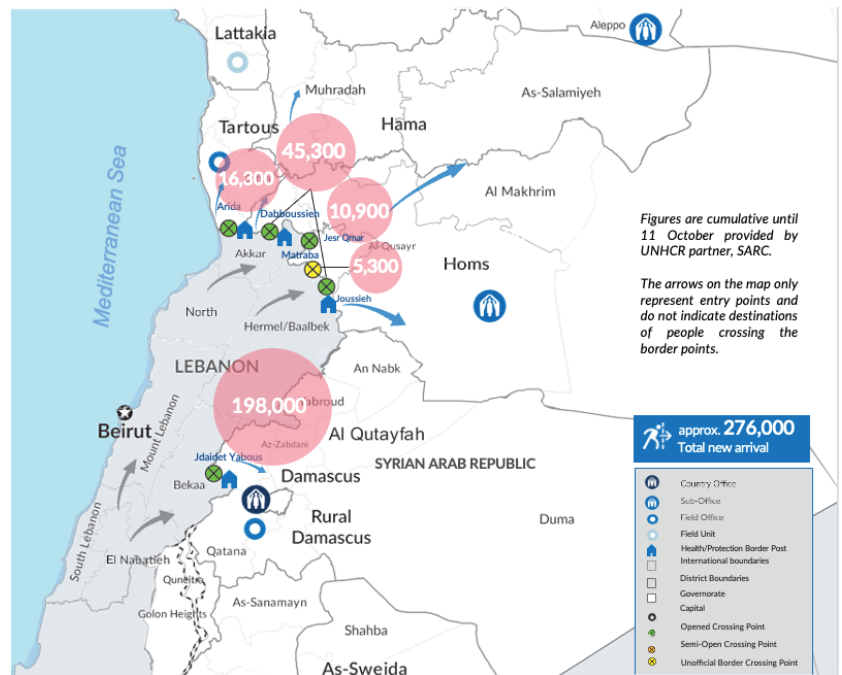
Reporting period: 24 September - 12 October 2024



UNHCR's partner SARC, providing assistance to families who recently arrived from Lebanon | ©SARC

A total of approximately **276,000¹** people (both Lebanese and Syrians) are estimated to have crossed from Lebanon to Syria since the escalation of hostilities in Lebanon.

It is estimated that around **70 per cent** are **Syrians** and **30 per cent** are **Lebanese nationals**.



Figures are cumulative until 11 October provided by UNHCR partner, SARC.

The arrows on the map only represent entry points and do not indicate destinations of people crossing the border points.

¹ The numbers of new arrivals in this document are based on "SARC Emergency Response For Lebanese Refugees and Syrian Returnees" (issued 13 October). The numbers also include people entering through the Matraba crossing point (an unofficial border) where UNHCR is not present. Figures are undergoing verification and are subject to change.

Overview of Developments

- UNHCR continues to observe a high proportion of women and children crossing from Lebanon into Syria, with 60 per cent of total new arrivals under the age of 18.
- Of the 276,000 individuals who have crossed from Lebanon to Syria, over 5,500 are persons with specific needs, including 1,300 persons with disabilities and others with chronic illnesses.
- UNHCR and its partners continue to directly respond to the needs of new arrivals, at the borders and in the communities they are being hosted in. Outreach volunteers and mobile teams are also reaching out to newly arrived families and are being referred to services provided at the nearest UNHCR-supported 114 community centres. Provision of relief items, as well as health and protection services are ongoing in efforts to help newly arrived families meet their basic needs.
- The Higher Relief Committee – the Government body coordinating emergency response in Syria – convened, chaired by the Prime Minister, to discuss more effective and efficient ways to support and assist the Lebanese new arrivals through health services, food, and other forms of relief.
- The Ministry of Health reported that over 35,000 of those who arrived 24th September (both Syrians and Lebanese) have benefited from free medical support.
- On 12th October, the UNHCR Representative travelled to Homs to visit one of the hosting centres located in a Roman Catholic monastery in the rural Al Qusair where 45 Lebanese families were being hosted. There he engaged with some refugees from Lebanon, listening to their stories and immediate needs, and paid tribute to the management for their generous assistance. The Representative also visited Joussieh and Daboussieh border crossings to discuss with the respective immigration officials how UNHCR can better support them.

Overview of New Arrivals

- A trend was observed of low entry rates during the daytime, followed by an increase between late afternoon and evening hours.
- At the Homs and Tartous crossing points, a total of 380 Syrians and Lebanese arrived from Lebanon, with the majority travelling onwards to their intended destinations in Aleppo, Hama and Ar-Raqqa. Many reported that they plan to stay with relatives as their homes were either damaged during the early years of the Syrian crisis or the earthquakes that hit in February 2023.



UNHCR Representative and team visit a hosting centre in Homs | © UNHCR Syria

Response at the Borders

UN agencies and humanitarian partners - including **DRC**, **ICRC**, **UNFPA**, **UNICEF**, **WFP**, **WHO**, **Première Urgence Internationale (PUI)**, **SARC**, and **Syria Trust**, continue to provide assistance to new arrivals at the Syrian crossing points.

- UNHCR and partner SARC continue distributing food items to new arrivals at the Syrian crossing points. Mobile clinics managed by SARC are also operational to respond to health needs. So far, over 2,000 individuals were provided with emergency medical services at the crossing points.

- As of 11 October, over 10,000 relief items, including hygiene kits, food and water, were distributed to new arrivals at the Al Arida crossing point.
- Legal assistance continues to be provided at the crossing points by UNHCR and its partners, **Syria Trust** and **SARC**. This includes border entry facilitation, issuance of replacement identification for lost or missing documents, and authentication for marriage and birth registrations.

Hosting Centres for Lebanese Families

- UNFPA Representative visited the Hujelleh hosting centre in **Rural Damascus**, which accommodates some 208 families (approximately 800 individuals), primarily Lebanese. UNFPA is a key player in the response to the influx, both at the borders and in the receiving communities, including leading the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Working Group.
- In **Tartous** and **Latakia**, a total of 950 Lebanese families (3,100 individuals) who recently crossed into Syria are receiving shelter at nine¹ hosting centres, where a 50 per cent increase was observed in the last days.
- In **Homs** and **Hama**, a total of 144 Lebanese families (707 individuals) are being hosted at five hosting centres.



UNFPA Representative visiting a hosting centre in Rural Damascus | © UNFPA Syria

Community Outreach Efforts

- In **Tartous** and **Latakia**, more than 4,400 Lebanese nationals are being hosted by Syrians, while some 950 individuals are staying in rented accommodation in both Tartous and Latakia.

UNFPA, in coordination with its partner, the **Syrian Family Planning Association**, provided psychosocial support, reproductive health and gender-based violence case management services, as well as distributed female hygiene kits in Tartous.

As of 12 October, UNHCR's partner, **Al-Batoul**, reached some 920 Lebanese and 290 Syrians through the outreach volunteers and mobile teams in Tartous and Latakia's host areas.



Lebanese families in rural Homs provided with assistance | © UNHCR Syria

- In **Idleb**, some 24 families (90 Syrians and one Lebanese) arrived at the Governorate on 11 October, bringing the total number of people who arrived at the Governorate from Lebanon to 824 families (3,500 individuals) since 23 September.

UNHCR, through its partner **SARC**, has reached some 5,000 Lebanese and 3,800 Syrians with core relief kits in Tartous, Latakia and Idleb.

- In **Aleppo**, UNHCR and SARC distributed core relief items to some 360 Syrian returnees.

¹ The nine hosting centres include Pioneer Camp, Al Karnak (East), Al Karnak (West), Blue Bay in Tartous; and Palm Beach, Blue Beach, Ras Al Basit (Chalets), Ras Al Basit (Labour Union) and Al Sheer in Latakia.

- In **Homs**, an estimated 8,000 families (38,250 individuals) – primarily Lebanese - are being hosted by relatives and the community. The needs of recently arrived families continue to increase amidst the ongoing socioeconomic challenges that Syria faces.

UNHCR's network of outreach volunteers also identifies new arrivals in the community and urban areas to benefit from the community centre services.

- In **Hama**, some 1,000 families (approximately 5,000 individuals) reside within the host community. **UNFPA**, with its partners, provided support to women and girls being hosted within the community, and distributed female hygiene kits.

- In **northeast Syria**, over 21,000 individuals recently arrived in Ar-Raqqa, Deir-ez-Zor, and Al Hasakeh Governorates from Lebanon. At the Sfayan and Tabaqa crossing points in



Distribution of core relief items in Aleppo | © UNHCR Syria

northeast Syria, **UNHCR** and its partners provided some 17,000 food parcels since 2 October. **UNFPA** and **UNICEF** also provide reproductive health counselling and nutrition screening. In coordination with **UNICEF**, the **Syrian Department of Health** deployed a vaccination team targeting children under 5. In addition, over 12,000 core relief items were provided by UNHCR in Ar-Raqqa and Al Hasakeh Governorates.

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