

UNHCR Syria Flash Update #15

Response to Displacement from Lebanon to Syria

Reporting period: 24 September - 16 October 2024

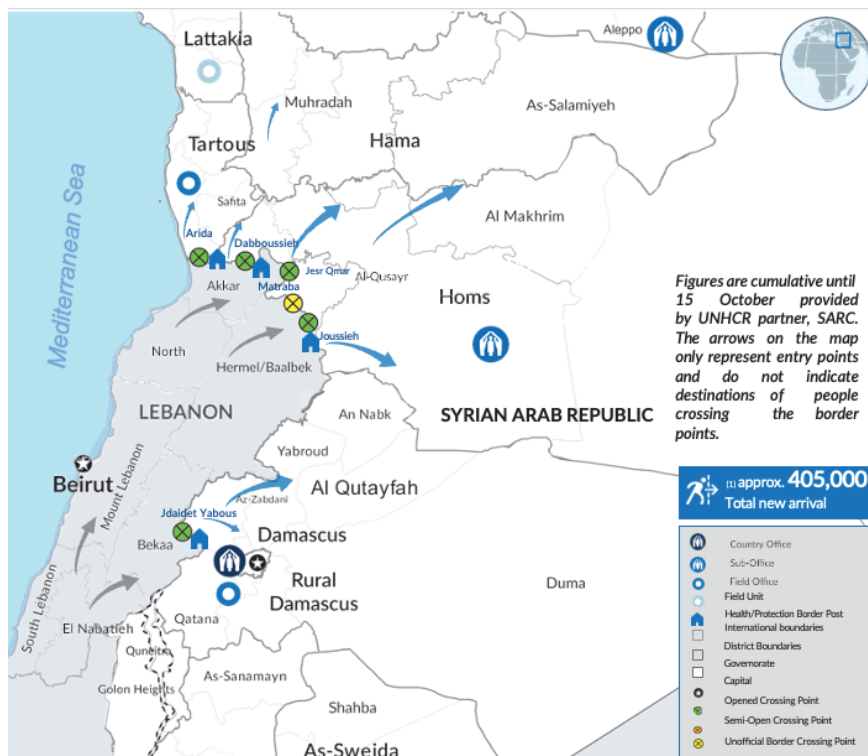


Provision of core relief items to new arrivals in Homs | © UNHCR Syria

A total of approximately
405,000¹
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.

Please note that these figures now encompass those identified by the relevant authorities as having left Lebanon and entered Syria. This new figure therefore goes beyond the initial estimations at official crossing points which was the basis of earlier reports by SARC.



¹ The numbers of new arrivals in this document are based on "SARC Emergency Response For Lebanese Refugees and Syrian Returnees" (issued 17 October). Figures are undergoing verification and are subject to change.

Overview of Developments

Over 400,000 people have crossed into the Syrian borders fleeing the escalating hostilities in Lebanon, since 23 September.

This rising influx underscores the urgent humanitarian needs faced by those arriving in Syria with limited prospects. The majority of new arrivals – primarily women and children – struggle to meet their basic needs. Many are either residing at the locally-established hosting centres or are being hosted by the local communities.

- UNHCR through its partner SARC, monitored the return of some 38,000 persons across various governorates. Homs, Rural Damascus, and Ar-Raqqa have so far received the highest number of new arrivals, respectively.
- On 14 October, a UN team including OCHA, UNICEF, UNDP and WFP, and led by UNHCR, met with the Tartous Governor where they discussed contingency planning for the emergency response. The Governor noted that more people are expected in Tartous from Lebanon and emphasized the importance of rehabilitating shelters to accommodate displaced families. Support for families hosting new arrivals was also highlighted due to the dire socioeconomic conditions Syrians are already experiencing. The Governor agreed to provide a list of shelters needing rehabilitation as well as population data to aid in planning.
- In northeast Syria, UNHCR with WHO met with the Al-Hasakeh Governor who outlined the urgent needs for health facilities in both Al-Hasakeh and Qamishli. The Governor emphasized that core relief items and shelter support were identified as main needs for new arrivals. While there are no plans to establish hosting centres in Al-Hasakeh, the Governor highlighted that newly arrived Syrians and their hosting communities are severely strained and require comprehensive assistance.
- Since the influx began, UNHCR and its partners have been closely monitoring the situation of women and girls arriving from Lebanon to safeguard their wellbeing. Continuous efforts are being made to ensure that instances of gender-based violence are rapidly identified and responded to. UNHCR recognizes that females who recently crossed into Syria, particularly those with no male guardians, are at heightened risk and require specialized assistance.

Overview of New Arrivals

- At the Al Arida crossing point in Tartous, a total of 245 individuals (including 156 Lebanese, 83 Syrians and 6 Palestine refugees in Lebanon) arrived from Lebanon on 14 October. UNHCR and its partner, SARC, continue to be present and provide humanitarian assistance. Since 23 October, some 7,000 Syrians and Lebanese received relief items, including hygiene kits, blankets, food and water.
- At the Jdaidet Yabous crossing point in Rural Damascus, over 1,400 individuals arrived on 14 October, including 695 Syrians and 676 Lebanese, with smaller numbers of Palestine refugees and other nationalities.



UNHCR's help desk at the Jdaidet Yabous crossing point | © 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 have a presence and provide life-saving assistance to new arrivals at the Syrian crossing points.

- Between 13 and 14 October, an estimated 680 Syrians and Lebanese who arrived at Jdaidet Yabous were supported with free transportation, provided by UNHCR through SARC, to Damascus, Aleppo, and Ar-Raqqa. An additional 1,020 individuals were transported from the crater near the Masnaa crossing point (Lebanon) – where the airstrikes hit on 4 October – to Jdaidet Yabous. Since the influx began, over 27,000 persons have benefitted from this service.
- Legal teams from UNHCR and partners, SARC and Syria Trust, remain present at the borders to support new arrivals with legal aid. At Jdaidet Yabous, over 110 individuals received legal assistance related to civil documentation, border entry facilitation, and civil event registration.
- Provision of health services and food is ongoing in response to the immediate needs of families, including women and children. On 14 October, 1,250 fresh meals were distributed by **WFP**, while over 550 persons benefitted from health support offered by **SARC**, the **Shabab Association** and **UNFPA's** partner, the **Syrian Family Planning Association**.
- At the Tabqa crossing point, which facilitates access into Al-Hasakeh in northeast Syria, UNHCR installed a large tent that serves as a support station for UN agencies to assist new arrivals. Through their partners, **UNICEF, UNFPA, and WHO** provided medical assistance, reproductive health counselling, and vaccinations to over 60 persons.



*UNHCR continue to support new arrivals at the Syrian crossing points
| © UNHCR Syria*

Hosting Centres for Lebanese Families

There are currently over 30 locally-established hosting centres in Syria to accommodate new arrivals, with an estimated collective capacity of more than 11,000 persons. At present, 17 hosting centres are occupied by families – primarily Lebanese – who fled the hostilities in Lebanon.

- In **Rural Damascus**, the Hujelleh hosting centre currently accommodates some 260 families (approximately 1,015 individuals), primarily Lebanese.
- In **Tartous** and **Latakia**, a total of 950 Lebanese families (3,100 individuals) who recently crossed into Syria are receiving shelter at nine² hosting centres.
- In **Homs** and **Hama**, a total of 145 Lebanese families (713 individuals) are being hosted at five hosting centres.

Community Outreach Efforts

- In **Tartous** and **Latakia**, a total of 250 Lebanese and 240 Syrians were identified through UNHCR's partners - **Al-Batoul, Syrian Society for Social Development, Syria Trust** and **GOPA** - outreach volunteers and mobile teams.

² 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.

Since 23 September, over 2,000 individuals (including 1,360 Lebanese and 644 Syrians) were identified in both governorates and referred to the nearest community centres in their areas to benefit from essential protection services.

In **Idleb**, 30 Syrian families (154 individuals) who recently crossed from Lebanon arrived at the governorate on 14 October, bringing the total to 900 families (3,882 individuals) who reside there.

As of 15 October, some 9,700 individuals (5,617 Lebanese and 4,066 Syrians) received core relief kits³.

- In **Homs** and **Hama**, the outreach volunteers and mobile teams identified approximately 8,568 individuals, of which 95% are Syrian and 5% are Lebanese.
- In **Aleppo**, UNHCR, through its partner, SARC, has verified the arrival of some 2,900 Syrian and Lebanese families (13,900 individuals).

At the community centres, more than 7,000 persons enrolled to receive assistance. So far, UNHCR, through its partners, has assisted 920 persons, 64 per cent of whom are women and 30 per cent are children. Services provided include legal assistance, child protection, gender-based violence case management, educational support, and services tailored to persons with specific needs.

Families who recently arrived in Aleppo reported that their most urgent needs include support in the form of small business startup grants and agricultural grants. Many new arrivals also reported working as daily labourers, earning an average of just one dollar per day.

- In **southern Syria**, over 7,000 persons (including 173 Lebanese) have so far arrived in As-Sweida, Dar'a and Quneitra Governorates – with 56 per cent being children and adolescents.

At the UNHCR-supported community centres, some 3,000 enrolled to receive assistance. The main vulnerabilities identified among new arrivals include psychosocial support needs, persons with medical conditions and children at risk, respectively.

- In **northeast Syria**, some 32,000 individuals – primarily Syrians - arrived in Ar-Raqqa, Deir-ez-Zor, and Al-Hasakeh Governorates.

Over 970 families (4,193 individuals) who recently crossed the borders from Lebanon approached the community centres. UNHCR and its partners, **SARC** and **GOPA**, are assessing their needs to provide protection services accordingly.

Legal support was also provided to some 80 individuals, including legal awareness sessions, counselling, and administrative and court interventions.

Since the influx began, UNHCR and its partners distributed some 22,000 core relief items to over 6,000 individuals.

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³ Core relief *kits* contain a range of essentials including hygiene items, blankets, kitchen sets and solar lamps, among other items.