

UNHCR Syria Flash Update #17

Response to Displacement from Lebanon to Syria

Reporting period: 24 September - 20 October 2024



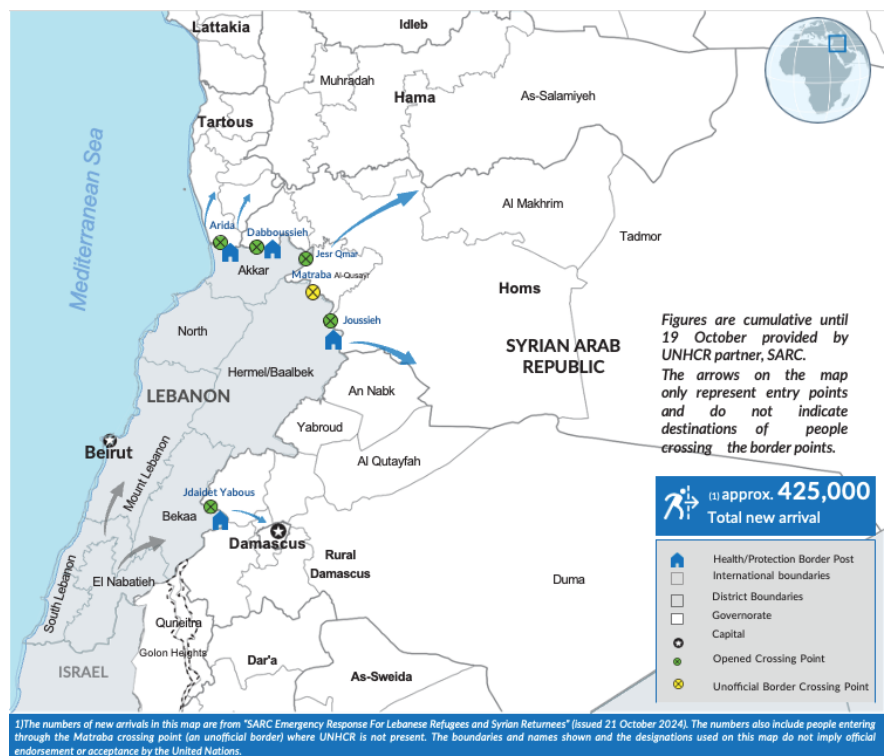
UNHCR continues to be present at the Syrian crossing points | © UNHCR Syria

A total of approximately
425,000¹
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 **72 per cent** are Syrians and **28 per cent** are Lebanese nationals.

Figures now encompass those identified by the relevant authorities as having left Lebanon and entered Syria.

The new arrivals figure therefore goes beyond the initial estimations at official crossing points, which was the basis of earlier reports by SARC.



¹The numbers of new arrivals in this document are based on "SARC Emergency Response For Lebanese Refugees and Syrian Returnees" (issued 21 October). Figures are undergoing verification and are subject to change.

Overview of Developments

- On 20 October, UNHCR's Representative and Emergency Coordinator visited Aleppo to meet with several families – Syrian and Lebanese – that had recently crossed into Syria from Lebanon to see their general living conditions, listen to their experiences and their immediate needs. They also met with the Governor of Aleppo and with SARC Aleppo branch to discuss updates on the current response.
- On 19 October, UNHCR's Health team met with the Directorate of Health in Al-Hasakeh to assess the response to the influx from Lebanon. It was agreed that the Directorate would dispatch mobile clinics to areas where new arrivals are residing to address their health needs.
- The Health team is also coordinating with the UNHCR-supported community centres in Al-Hasakeh and Tawarij, through partners, the Syrian Society for Social Development and Syria Al-Yamama, to map areas with high new arrival presence to evaluate their urgent needs, which will also be shared with the Directorate of Health for further support.
- Free transportation provided at the borders is ongoing to support extremely vulnerable families arriving from Lebanon. Since the onset of the influx, some 32,000 new arrivals were provided with transportation to help them reach Jdaidet Yabous from the crater in Masnaa (Lebanon), and to their final destinations inside Syria.
- As of 19 October, at least 35,000 new arrivals across Syria have benefited from core relief items and community-based services. UNHCR and its partners continue to identify new arrivals within the host communities to ensure that they are provided with essential services and assistance.
- UNHCR distribution of winter items is already underway, and this will accelerate and intensify in the coming weeks.

Overview of New Arrivals

- At the Homs crossing points in particular (Joussieh, Daboussieh, Jisr Al-Qamar), UNHCR continues to witness increased entry rates during the evening hours as compared to the daytime. Families arriving from Lebanon reported beginning their journeys in the morning, travelling for approximately 10 hours to reach the Homs borders.

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 support to new arrivals at the Syrian crossing points.

- On 18 October, **UNHCR** and its legal partners, **SARC** and **Syria Trust**, supported 56 persons at Jdaidet Yabous with civil documentation, civil event registration and border entry facilitation.
- **WFP** and **UNFPA** continue their response at the Syrian borders to support new arrivals with food and medical assistance. On 18 October, through **SARC**, some 1,500 fresh food boxes and date bars were distributed, while over 270 health consultations, through **the Syrian Family Planning Association**, were provided at Jdaidet Yabous. 300 children also benefitted from nutritional support provided by **UNFPA**.



UNHCR's partner SARC providing life-saving medical assistance at the Syrian borders

- In efforts to help new arrivals in meeting their immediate needs, **UNHCR** and **SARC** at Al-Arida distributed over 1,000 relief items on 19 October. So far, some 14,900 relief items, including food, water, hygiene kits and diapers were provided to 8,280 individuals at the crossing point.
- Families arriving with limited transportation means continue to be supported by **UNHCR and its partner SARC**. On 19 October, 540 persons were transported from Masnaa (Lebanon) area – where airstrikes hit on 4 October- to Jdaidet Yabous, while 310 others were transported onwards to their destination in Damascus.
- Mental health support is an essential tool to help new arrivals cope with the traumas and distress they are experiencing after fleeing the hostilities in Lebanon. UNHCR’s partners, **Al-Batoul and SARC**, supported 245 with psychosocial support at Al-Arida, on 19 October.
- In northeast Syria, some 27,500 food items and water were provided to new arrivals at the Al-Sfayan and Tabqa crossing points, since 2 October. **UNFPA**, through **GOPA**, are also providing psychosocial support, medical examinations and distributing hygiene kits at the Tabqa crossing.

Hosting Centres for Lebanese Families

- In **Rural Damascus**, the Hujelleh hosting centre currently accommodates some 260 families (approximately 1,015 individuals).

The centre’s management is temporarily suspending the intake of additional families to prevent the deterioration of living conditions, with the facility requiring rehabilitation work to adequately accommodate new arrivals.

- In **Tartous and Latakia**, some 950 Lebanese families (3,275 individuals) are provided with shelter at 12 hosting centres and 2 reception centres.
- In **Homs and Hama**, a total of 161 Lebanese families (841 individuals) are being hosted at five² hosting centres.

On 19 October, **UNFPA**, in collaboration with **Al-Bir Social Welfare**, provided essential medical care and psychosocial support at the “Deaf and Mute” hosting centre in Hama.

Community Outreach Efforts

- In **Damascus** and **Rural Damascus**, newly arrived families being hosted by the community are experiencing challenges in meeting their medical and basic needs. Families also reported that livelihood support is crucial for them to become self-reliant and rebuild their lives in Syria.

UNHCR is closely coordinating with its partner, **SARC**, to provide support to families with a focus on medical assistance, particularly for persons with disabilities and chronic illnesses, as well as relief items including food, clothes and household items.

- In **Tartous and Latakia**, some 2,400 new arrivals (including 1,570 Lebanese) were reached through the UNHCR-supported community centres, mobile teams and outreach volunteers.

In **Idleb**, partner **SARC** is conducting home visits to identify the needs of new arrival families from Lebanon and refer them to the nearest community centre to receive essential services.

As of 19 October, over 6,000 Lebanese and 4,700 Syrians benefitted from core relief kits in Tartous, Latakia and Idleb.

- In **Aleppo**, a total of 2,175 families (some 9,870 individuals including 9,695 Syrians and 180 Lebanese) are enrolled at the community centres – 24 per cent are women and 58 per cent are children. At the hosting communities, on 19 October, UNHCR through its partners distributed core relief items in three districts (As-Safira, Hanano, and Al-Hamadanieh districts), reaching some 880 persons – of these, 70 per cent were women.

² Mar Elias, Al Saida Al Athraa, and Al Ard churches in rural Homs; the Deaf and Mute Centre in Hama; and Tal Al Ghazali school in rural Hama.

- In **Homs**, it is estimated that some 8,800 Lebanese families (39,900 individuals) reside in the host community, with the majority staying in Al-Qusayr district.

At the community centres in **Homs** and **Hama**, over 9,000 individuals were reached. Services provided to new arrivals, following rapid needs assessments, included child protection, psychosocial support, gender-based violence case management and legal assistance.

- In **northeast Syria**, the number of new arrivals in Ar-Raqqa, Al-Hasakeh and Deir-ez-Zor Governorates continues to increase. As of 19 October, some 8,000 families (39,698 individuals) arrived from Lebanon, with 60 per cent residing in Ar-Raqqa.

On 19 October, a total of 1,430 persons who recently arrived from Lebanon approached the community centres in Ar-Raqqa and Al-Hasakeh. Focus group discussions and awareness sessions were conducted to identify the needs of families and inform them about the services they could benefit from. Medical in-kind assistance including wheelchairs was also distributed.

At the community centres in Deir-ez-Zor, some 490 individuals were provided with legal counselling and 170 individuals were assisted with court and administrative interventions.

As of 19 October, a total of 955 newly arrived children were enrolled in schools in Deir-ez-Zor's Al-Mayadin district. Another 30 children are being provided remedial classes at the community centres.

Since the influx began, UNHCR in coordination with its partners, SARC and GOPA, distributed over 32,000 core relief and winter items in northeast Syria.

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