



Note on Syrians in Egypt

Partners are IRW, Resala, Caritas, CRS, Refuge Egypt, PSTIC and Mahmoud Mosque Society

UN Sister Agencies: WFP, UNICEF

UNHCR Cairo calls for USD 10 million to assist Syrians

14,478 Syrians registered up to date

Until January 15th:

2924 Syrians received financial assistance

1794 students received education grants for academic year 2012/2013

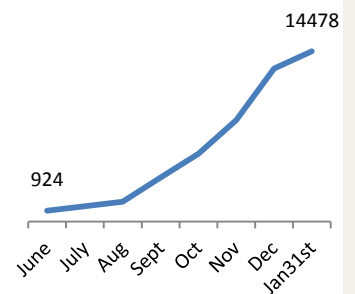
997 received health care services

I. General Information

In the first half of 2012, the number of Syrian Asylum seekers registering with UNHCR Cairo office remained limited. However, the last four months of 2012, witnessed a sharp increase in the numbers and UNHCR tried to accommodate the needs of the most urgent cases from the regular Egypt existing programs for refugees and asylum seekers.

Given that the numbers continued to increase, Egypt was included for the first time, in December 19th, in the Regional Response Plan (RRP), which is expecting the total number of Syrian refugees in the region to reach 1.1 million. The last appeal for the RRP called for USD 1 billion to fund its operations, out of which USD 14,337,831 are allocated for operations in Egypt by UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP until end of June 2013.

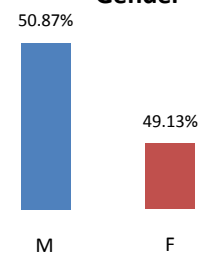
Registered Syrians



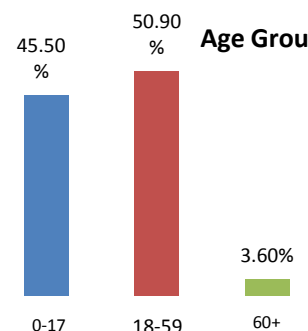
July: 1,313
 August: 1,695
 September: 3,761
 October: 5,780
 November: 8,618
 December: 13,001

Info from Joint Needs Assessment, Nov 2012:

Gender



Age Group



As of January 30th, UNHCR Cairo office has a total of 14,478 individuals (5,476 families) registered, including 4,261 individuals registered in Alexandria and 1,265 individuals registered in New Damietta. This figure is expected to rise to 30,000 individuals by end of June 2013.

Although Egypt is not a neighboring country to Syria, Egypt has been receiving large influx of Syrians. Egyptian government grants Syrians a visa-free entry followed by a renewable three-month residency, and access to public schools and hospitals without bearing additional costs. Egypt is considered less expensive than other neighboring countries. Moreover, many Syrians consider that Egypt is a safer option than the neighboring countries where the Syrian Government is still very active and targeting Syrian nationals.

Syrians arriving in Egypt are scattered throughout urban areas such as Greater Cairo, Alexandria, Damietta, Mansoura, Hurghada, Suez, and Ismailia. They tend to live in areas where they have family links or acquaintances, or cities with similar characteristics to their cities of origin. Residents of coastal cities of Latakia and Tartous prefer to live in Alexandria. Profession is an additional factor in determining areas of Syrians' concentrations. Many of Syrians craftsmen originating from Eastern Ghouta in Damascus suburbs are living in New Damietta, where they can work in the field of furniture.

II. UNHCR Strategies on Influx of Syrians

UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP conducted a joint needs assessment targeting Syrians in November 2012. Findings and recommendations were included in the Egypt chapter of the Regional Response Plan, which was launched on the 19th of December. Main findings include needs in the fields of protection, housing, food security, education and health.

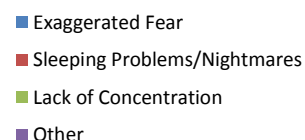
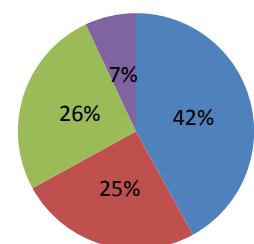
a) Protection

Main protection problems relate to three areas:

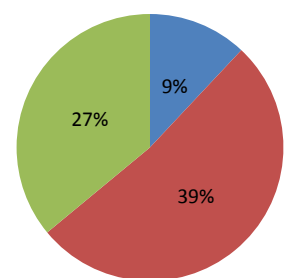
The first concerns the overall general situation prevailing in the country after the revolution such as lack of security, and increasing incidents of thefts and physical aggression.

Child protection and reports of early marriages, as well as domestic violence represent another area of concern mentioned by several interviewees. The increased reports of harassment of women in the community have also been raised as a main concern for the Syrian community and the women arriving into the country.

Children Psychological Problems

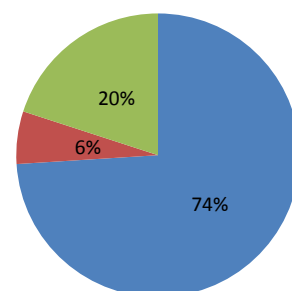


Rent Per Month in Cairo



*100-599: 2%
4000+: 9%
No answer: 15%

Savings



A third protection risk is related to the increase in number of deportation and refoulement reported as compared to first half of 2012. Many Syrians are arrested daily while attempting to travel from Egypt with forged documents or genuine passport but forged visas to Europe. Some others are arrested while trying to transit through Cairo airport from other destination countries (Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey) to Europe with either forged documents or visas.

UNHCR enhanced its protection capacity by recruiting additional staff to work on the protection challenges and detention cases. The protection unit is coordinating with the training unit on the capacity building of national law enforcement officers working in the airport and police stations. Moreover, UNHCR has expanded its agreement with Arab Council for Supporting Fair Trials and Human Rights, UNHCR's legal protection partner, to include the Syrian nationals. Therefore, cases of harassment, security threats and others are regularly referred to legal counsel for further representation.

b) Registration

The November joint assessment showed that many Syrians living in Egypt are still unaware of UNHCR's activities, including the registration ones.

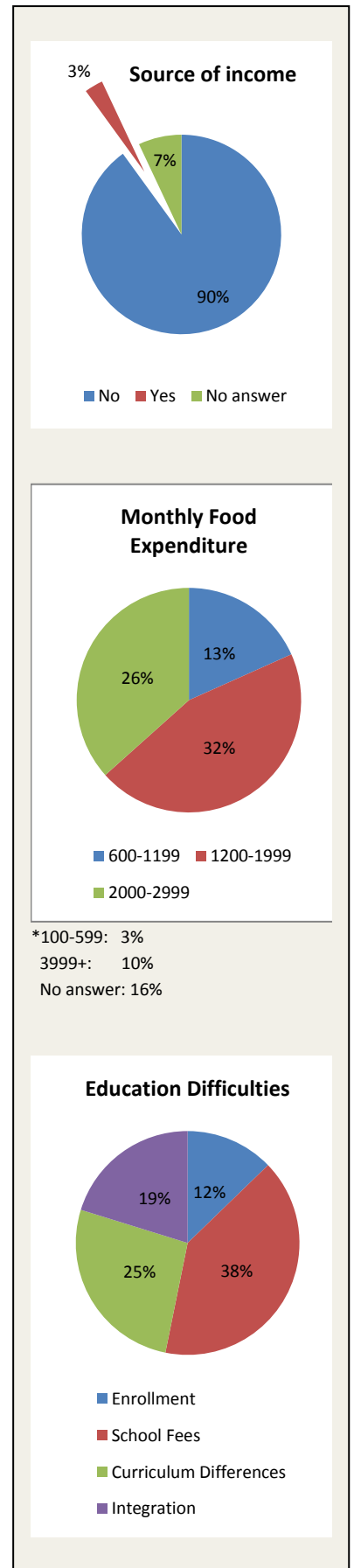
Since 21st of October 2012, UNHCR has set up a permanent registration presence at All Saints Cathedral in Zamalek (Cairo) for the registration of Syrians. The team is registering 80-120 people on a daily basis.

UNHCR Cairo has increased its registration capacity in the second half of 2012. It conducted mobile registration operations in different areas of Greater Cairo, Alexandria, Damietta and Gamasa in weekends. These efforts facilitate registration of Syrians in their areas of concentration and allow the issuance of the yellow asylum seeker cards on the same day.

Noteworthy that 63 Syrians closed their files with UNHCR Cairo in November and 11 in December. Main reasons listed for closures are travelling outside Egypt and lack of job opportunities.

c) Palestinians

83 Palestinian families/274 individuals with Syrian travel documents requested to be registered with UNHCR Cairo. There were several discussions with the Egyptian authorities regarding the extension of their visas and registration with UNHCR. UNHCR was informed not to register Palestinians coming from Syria but was told that they will have the same access to services as Syrian nationals. Up to date, Palestinians lack access to residency, public education and health care.



d) Assistance for Vulnerable Cases

As of January 15th, 2013, Caritas registered some 4,334 Syrians for assistance programs, out of whom 2,924 Syrians received financial stipends to cover part of their basic needs. The assistance varies between EGP 300-1200, according to the vulnerability of each case. Caritas will continue assisting Syrians whose needs have been assessed before 2013.

Majority of Syrians cited Housing as their most critical and expensive need in Egypt. 66% of interviewed during registration with UNHCR said they pay EGP 1200-3000 per month. Sharing apartments and borrowing to pay the rent were reported in the assessment.

An inter-agency mission (UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO, IOM, CRS & Resala) to Damietta will take place next week to assess the urgency and vulnerability of Syrians living there.

e) Food Security

Food security also features a major concern. Approximately 58% of Syrian families interviewed said they need between EGP 1200-3000/per month for food. 28% only of Syrian families receive regular food support from local NGOs.

WFP has appealed for funds under the RRP to provide food vouchers, which can be redeemed against a variety of commodities included in a list of foods. The vouchers will be distributed to some 30,000 Syrian asylum seekers in Egypt by June 2013, subject to fund availability.

WFP will start, in February, by distributing Food Vouchers in poorer areas such as Damietta, and Al Obour and 6 October in Cairo.

f) Winterization

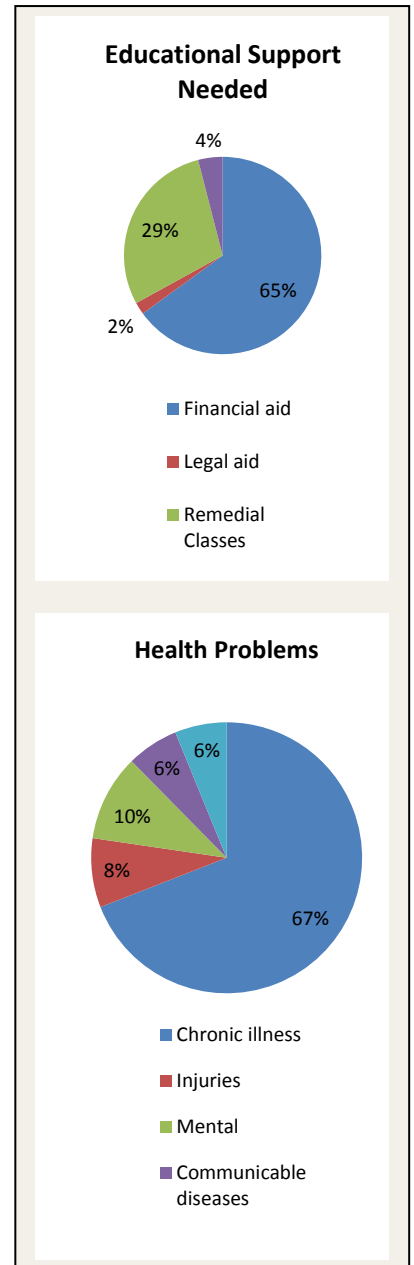
UNHCR is planning to distribute coupons to Syrians, through Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW), which can be redeemed with winterization items like blankets and winter clothes. The coupons vary between EGP 200-1200. Some 15,000 Syrian refugees are estimated to receive the coupons.

g) Education

1,794 Syrian students received education grants for the academic year 2012/2013 through Catholic Relief Services. Education grants vary between EGP 1300-2700 according to the type of school, public or private, and the student's grade.

Vulnerable cases who cannot pay tuition fees were assisted with an additional education grant between EGP 300-900.

Although a presidential instruction to the Ministry of Education to facilitate the enrolment of Syrian students in the public system was issued, some problems nonetheless exist, including bureaucratic difficulties in enrolment, curriculum differences, accent barriers, discouraging class



environment such as overcrowded classes, and inability to bear the expensive educational fees of private schools.

38% of interviewed families said their main concern about education is paying school fees. 25% said that differences between Egyptian and Syrian curricula is their major problem.

UNHCR provided and will continue to provide educational grants to Syrian children through Catholic Relief Services (CRS). Financial and technical support will be delivered to the ministry of Education to strengthen the capacity of public schools.

h) Health

997 Syrians benefited from health care services provided by Caritas in Cairo and Alexandria, and Refuge Egypt in Cairo up to January 15th 2013. Caritas Alexandria is providing health care to some 15 Syrians every day in the week, and conducting 12 home visits per-week.

A decision was taken by the Egyptian government to treat Syrians in Egypt's public hospitals as Egyptians, yet UNHCR received information that the policy has not been applied in some public hospitals, where Syrians are being charged expatriate-rate fees.

There is a high prevalence of chronic illnesses, rehabilitative and specific mental health care needs. In addition to general primary, maternal and under-five health care needs.

UNHCR is currently subsidizing primary and specialized referral health care for Syrians through Caritas and Refuge Egypt.

Starting from February 1st, Mahmoud Mosque Society will deliver health care services, and Refuge Egypt will continue providing maternal and child health care, in addition to some chronic communicable diseases in Cairo. Caritas will continue delivering health care in Cairo and Alexandria.

Syrians keep receiving health services from the Egyptians medical syndicate services network and from broader civil society health facilities.

UNHCR will support Ministry of Health (MoH) efforts in assisting Syrians through provision of specific medical equipments.

UNICEF will support MoH in the field of maternal and neonatal health care services.

i) Psycho-social support

According to the assessment, 42% of Syrian children in Egypt suffer from exaggerated fear, 26% from lack of concentration, and 25% from sleeping disorders and nightmares, due to the disappearance of relatives or because they witnessed violent scenes in Syria.

Pictures of Mobile Registration in Shaikh Zayed and Damietta, and Permanent Registration in Zamalek



Mobile Registration, Islamic Complex, ShaikhZayed, 6th October city, 12-13October 2012



Permanent Registration, All Saints Church, Zamalek, 7 November, 2012



New Damietta Mobile Registration 15-17 November

Psycho-social support has been flagged as a major need by the Syrian community. UNHCR Cairo is working with its partner Psycho-Social Training Institute in Cairo (PSTIC), and have trained a group of Syrian psycho-social workers, who are following up certain cases. Cases are also referred to specialized centers for psycho-social support. UNHCR through its partner Tadamon, set up a community center, in December 12th, in 6th October city to serve the Syrian community by facilitating their gathering and organizing different activities.

III. Syria Regional Refugee Response Portal

UNHCR published a page on its regional web portal, data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees, for Egypt. The portal hosts a wealth of information about the response, including daily updates of Syrian refugees registration statistics, information about needs and affected locations, agencies involved and ongoing activities of these agencies.

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UNHCR Cairo

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