



SYRIA – COMPLEX EMERGENCY

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- U.N. Under-Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) Valerie Amos visited Syria from August 14 to 16 to assess the humanitarian situation and discuss ways to increase humanitarian access to conflict-affected Syrians. At the conclusion of her visit, ERC Amos stated that as many as 2.5 million people in Syria may be in need of humanitarian assistance, more than double the number that the U.N. assessed to be in need of humanitarian assistance in March 2012.
- Ongoing fighting between Syrian Arab Republic Government (SARG) forces and armed opposition groups during August, particularly in northern Syria, continues to trigger internal displacement. On August 17, the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimated that the conflict had displaced approximately 1.2 million people inside Syria, an increase from the U.N.'s mid-July 2012 estimate of 1 million people.
- U.S. Department of State Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs acting Assistant Secretary Beth Jones led a U.S. Government (USG) delegation to Turkey on August 22–23 to participate in a U.S.–Turkey Bilateral Cooperation Meeting on Syria. Discussion topics included a wide range of issues including humanitarian assistance. U.S. Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary David Robinson and USAID Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) Director Mark Bartolini led the humanitarian breakout session, along with counterparts from the Government of Turkey (GoT) Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD).
- The USG continues to address the needs of conflict-affected people in Syria and neighboring countries through nearly \$82 million of humanitarian funding. USG humanitarian assistance includes the provision of emergency medical care, food, and relief items, as well as humanitarian coordination and logistics support to relief agencies. The USG also supports nutrition, protection, and water, sanitation, and hygiene activities.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE	Source	
Estimated Total Number of IDPs ¹ in Syria ²	1.2 million	OCHA – August 17, 2012
Estimated Total Number of People in Need of Humanitarian Assistance in Syria	2.5 million	OCHA – August 17, 2012
Estimated Total Number of Syrians Displaced to Turkey	78,409	GoT – August 24, 2012
Estimated Total Number of Syrians Displaced to Lebanon	52,090	UNHCR ³ – August 23, 2012
Estimated Total Number of Syrians Displaced to Jordan	65,000	UNHCR – August 24, 2012
Estimated Total Number of Syrians Displaced to Iraq	15,898	UNHCR – August 24, 2012
Estimated Total Number of Syrians Displaced to Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq	211,397	UNHCR, GoT

HUMANITARIAN FUNDING PROVIDED IN FY 2012 ⁴	
USAID/OFDA Assistance to Syria	\$16,151,875
USAID/FFP ⁵ Assistance to Syria and Neighboring Countries	\$26,000,000
State/PRM Assistance to Syria and Neighboring Countries	\$39,600,000
Total USG Humanitarian Assistance to Syria and Neighboring Countries	\$81,751,875

¹ Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

² Due to lack of access, the U.N. continues to estimate the IDP population in Syria.

³ Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

⁴ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds.

⁵ USAID's Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP)

Context

- Following the commencement of peaceful demonstrations against the Syrian government in March 2011, President Bashar al-Assad pledged legislative reforms. However, reforms failed to materialize and SARG forces loyal to President al-Assad began responding to demonstrations with violence, leading armed opposition groups to retaliate. On June 11, the U.N. reported more than 10,000 civilian deaths due to the conflict. According to public reports by the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, the conflict had killed more than 23,000 people—including civilians, armed insurgents, defectors, and members of the SARG security forces—as of August 21.
- On March 26, 2012, the SARG accepted a six-point peace plan proposed by U.N.–Arab League Special Envoy to Syria Kofi Annan. The plan, endorsed by the U.N. Security Council, called for a ceasefire, unrestricted humanitarian access, and the withdrawal of military personnel from populated areas. The ceasefire never took full effect as clashes between SARG and opposition forces, as well as SARG attacks on demonstrators and populated areas, continued. On August 2, Annan announced his resignation as U.N.–Arab League Special Envoy to Syria, effective at the end of August. The U.N. named Lakhdar Brahimi as his replacement.
- On August 16, the U.N. elected not to renew the mandate of the U.N. Supervision Mission in Syria, which suspended operations on June 16 due to increasing levels of violence throughout the country. All U.N. military observers are scheduled to depart Syria by August 24.

Population Displacement to Neighboring Countries

- From August 10 to 24, the number of displaced Syrians seeking refuge in Turkey increased by more than 33 percent to approximately 78,400 people, according to the GoT, as a result of increased conflict in northern Syria. On August 20, the GoT publicly announced that Turkey, which currently hosts more registered displaced Syrians than any other neighboring country, lacks the capacity to host more than 100,000 displaced Syrians. However, on August 23, the GoT announced plans to build seven additional camps for displaced Syrians, bringing the camp total to 18 and increasing the total capacity to 130,000.
- In response to the ongoing flow of displaced Syrians into Turkey, the AFAD has begun coordinating the delivery of emergency relief supplies to the Turkey–Syria border. In addition, the Turkish Red Crescent Society has opened four centers on the border to accept donations of relief supplies from local sources, while a center has been opened at Gaziantep airport to accept international relief supply donations.
- While nearly 12,000 displaced Syrians are residing in Jordan’s Za’atri camp, UNHCR and local humanitarian organizations have identified approximately 50,000 people from Syria who are residing in Jordanian host communities and are in need of humanitarian assistance. Among displaced Syrians who have been residing with host communities, a number of people have sought entry to Za’atri camp, as they face challenges in fully meeting their basic needs without humanitarian support. UNHCR, other U.N. agencies, and NGOs continue to work with the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (GHKJ) to provide assistance both in Za’atri camp and in host communities. According to the GHKJ, more than 150,000 Syrians have left Syria for Jordan since the conflict began in March 2011.
- On August 13, UNHCR opened a new facility in Tripoli, Lebanon, to expedite the registration of thousands of displaced Syrians in the country. The new facility will augment existing registration facilities in the Beqaa Valley and Beirut. Most displaced Syrians in Lebanon are residing with host families or renting apartments, however an increasing number are seeking shelter in schools in the north and the east of the country, according to UNHCR. Humanitarian agencies are identifying and renovating additional shelters in north Lebanon and the Beqaa Valley, and the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) is distributing food vouchers to enable Syrians to purchase food in the local economy. The U.N. Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and partners are conducting remedial classes and other educational activities to prepare Syrian children to enroll in Lebanese schools at the beginning of the academic year. In addition, UNHCR and partners are providing health care, including critical psychosocial services, to displaced Syrians in need throughout Lebanon.
- The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) provides food, health services, education, and other basic items to Palestinian refugees who have fled the violence in Syria and relocated to Jordan and Lebanon. Approximately 3,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria have sought safety in Lebanon, while over 950 have entered Jordan.
- UNHCR reports that registration of Syrian asylum seekers in Egypt, primarily in Cairo and Alexandria, continues to rise. UNHCR registered 481 Syrian asylum seekers in July, slightly below the number registered in June, bringing the total number of registered Syrian asylum seekers in Egypt to 1,405, as of August 6.

Protection

- As displacements in Syria increased during August due to intensifying violence, many IDPs are seeking shelter in schools, mosques, and other public buildings ill-equipped to serve as residences, according to OCHA. The facilities are often overcrowded, with limited privacy and insufficient sanitation facilities. Women and children are particularly vulnerable in this context, especially when separated from male relatives, OCHA reports. A recent SARG Ministry of Education survey revealed that displaced Syrians are residing in 330 public schools in 12 of the country's 14 governorates, with only Latakia and Tartus governorates currently not hosting IDPs in schools. Nearly 11,500 Syrians are temporarily residing in schools run by UNRWA. Other displaced populations are residing with host families or in open spaces. The Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and other relief organizations are scaling up their efforts to respond to the increased displacement.
- The conflict in Syria has affected the country's significant refugee population. Syria hosts nearly 500,000 Palestinian refugees and up to 85,000 Iraqi refugees, among other populations. Like IDPs, many refugees have taken shelter in schools and other public buildings. Refugees increasingly report threats, financial difficulties, and the need for food assistance, according to OCHA. UNHCR, working with the SARC, provides basic food assistance to Iraqi and other refugees who have sought shelter in schools in Syria. UNHCR also operates two refugee hotlines to provide counseling and assistance.
- UNRWA estimates that over 225,000 Palestinian refugees in Syria have been affected by the violence. Food remains a critical priority, and there is an urgent need for non-food items, in particular mattresses, blankets, and cooking sets. In addition to hosting 11,500 Syrian IDPs in UNRWA schools, UNRWA has provided cash assistance to Palestinian families most affected by the unrest.
- Through UNICEF, UNHCR, and UNRWA, the USG supports protection efforts for populations displaced within Syria as well as people who have fled Syria to neighboring countries.

Food Security

- The U.N. World Food Program (WFP) continues to provide food assistance to approximately 850,000 conflict-affected people in all 14 governorates of Syria, including SARG-controlled, opposition-controlled, and contested areas. However, dispatch and distribution is progressing at a slower pace than previously, as insecurity and road closures continue to hinder delivery of food assistance, particularly in Dar'a Governorate.
- Despite escalating violence in Aleppo Governorate's urban areas, WFP and implementing partner SARC have been able to distribute food to beneficiaries.
- As of August 9, the end of the July cycle of distributions, WFP had dispatched to SARC sufficient food for 824,875 people—97 percent of the 850,000 person target for July. As of August 11, SARC had distributed rations to 715,075 people—84 percent of the July distribution target.
- To date in FY 2012, the USG has provided \$18 million to support WFP's Emergency Operation (EMOP) in Syria, benefitting 850,000 people, and \$8 million for food aid to displaced Syrians in neighboring countries.

Health

- Ongoing fighting, inaccessible roads, and the presence of numerous checkpoints continue to limit the ability of Syrian citizens and health care providers to access health care facilities, according to the U.N. World Health Organization (WHO). In addition, insecurity prompted WHO to suspend the second phase of its health facilities rapid assessment as of August 16.
- WHO is supporting three mobile clinics in Rif Damascus Governorate and one mobile clinic in Homs Governorate, which have collectively treated 12,500 people since May.
- WHO has provided medicines and medical equipment to the SARG Ministry of Health (MoH) for trauma care and treatment of non-communicable diseases. WHO also plans to provide NGOs in Rif Damascus with medicines for chronic illnesses. WHO estimates approximately \$20 million in costs to supply essential medicines between August 2012 and March 2012.
- In recent weeks, WHO has provided reproductive health services and psychosocial support to 4,000 conflict-affected women and provided vouchers for free access to reproductive health services to an additional 1,200 women in Damascus and Rif Damascus. WHO also has delivered reproductive health kits to SARC branches across Syria, benefitting approximately 6,500 women.
- To date, the USG has provided nearly \$200,000 in health and nutrition training to reduce conflict-affected children's vulnerability to malnutrition and disease.

Logistics and Relief Commodities

- Humanitarian agencies continue to distribute relief items in conflict-affected areas of Syria. In the first two weeks of August, UNHCR and the U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA) provided hygiene kits, blankets, mattresses, kitchen sets, and other essential items to more than 60,000 people in Syria, according to OCHA. In addition, UNHCR and the SARC began providing one-time cash distributions to displaced people on August 15. As of August 17, 440 people had received cash assistance totaling \$13,500 in Al-Nabak District of Rif Dimashq Governorate, according to OCHA.
- Due to access constraints—including insecurity and SARG-imposed restrictions—that prevent international organizations from directly distributing relief items widely, the U.N. and other humanitarian agencies work with Syrian organizations, including the SARC, to distribute relief items. The SARG is authorizing approximately 90 Syrian NGOs to cooperate with international aid organizations, according to OCHA. UNICEF works with 40 local organizations, and in July, WHO signed an agreement with the SARG MoH to expand collaboration with approved NGOs.
- The USG continues to support the distribution of relief commodities in Syria, including through the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), ICRC, and UNHCR.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)

- Since early August, ICRC, in cooperation with the SARC, has improved access to safe drinking water in 37 schools and residential areas in Damascus, Rural Damascus, and Aleppo, benefitting approximately 70,000 people.

Other Humanitarian Assistance

- As of August 24, the U.N.'s six-month Syria Humanitarian Response Plan had received \$81.5 million, 45 percent of the requested \$180 million. Donors have also provided \$64.3 million to the \$193 million U.N. Regional Response Plan for activities targeting displaced Syrians in Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, and Iraq.

USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO SYRIA AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES PROVIDED IN FY 2012¹

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE²			
NGO Partners	Health, Logistics and Relief Commodities, Nutrition, Protection, Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management	Syria	\$11,974,409
OCHA	Humanitarian Coordination and Info Management	Syria	\$500,000
UNDSS	Humanitarian Coordination and Info Management	Syria	\$300,000
UNICEF	Health, Protection	Syria	\$750,000
WFP	Logistics and Relief Commodities	Syria	\$1,500,000
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	Health, Logistics and Relief Commodities:	Syria	\$1,000,000
	Administrative and Support Costs		\$127,466
TOTAL USAID/OFDA			\$16,151,875
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE³			
WFP	Syria EMOP	Syria	\$18,000,000
WFP	Regional EMOP	Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, and Iraq	\$8,000,000
TOTAL USAID/FFP			\$26,000,000
STATE/PRM ASSISTANCE			
UNHCR	Assistance for IDPs through Syria Humanitarian Response Plan	Syria	\$3,600,000

UNHCR	Support for the Regional Response Plan	Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq, Syria	\$19,500,000
ICRC	Emergency Medical Care, Food, and Relief Items	Syria	\$8,000,000
UNRWA	Support for Palestinian Refugees in Syria	Syria	\$3,000,000
NGO Partners	Health, Psychosocial, Protection, and Shelter Assistance	Jordan and Lebanon	\$3,000,000
UNICEF	WASH and Protection	Jordan	\$2,000,000
IOM	Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management	Region	\$500,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM			\$39,600,000
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO SYRIA AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES IN FY 2012			\$81,751,875

¹ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds.

² USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of August 24, 2012.

³ Estimated value of food assistance.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. The USG encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietary, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
The Center for International Disaster Information: www.cidi.org or +1.202.821.1999.
Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at www.reliefweb.int.