



Social Affairs Sector
Refugees, Expatriates,
& Migration Affairs Department



UNHCR

UN High Commissioner for Refugees
المفوضية السامية للأمم المتحدة لشؤون اللاجئين

UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR)- LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES (LAS) NEWSLETTER

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Issue 01



> *Statistics from the Arab region:*

The Arab Region hosts nearly half of the world's refugees, including its largest population, the Syrians, and its most protracted situation, the Palestinians. According to data collected by UNHCR operations in the region until April 2022, the total number of registered refugees has reached 3,725,649 individuals including 170,393¹ asylum seekers in addition to approximately 5.7 million Palestinian refugees assisted by UNRWA².

By the end of 2021, the top three Arab countries hosting refugees were Lebanon, Jordan, and Sudan. While Syria, Sudan and Somalia³ remain among the top countries of origin. UNHCR has recorded a total of 11,268,611 individuals internally displaced. UNHCR has also witnessed an increase in returns, reaching 1,671,733 individuals in the region⁴.

Age, Gender, and Diversity analysis has revealed that an average of %42.6 of the total registered population are children below 18 years old, equally divided by gender⁵.

On mixed movements, UNHCR operations have recorded 29,427 individuals intercepted while crossing the West Mediterranean route between January and June 2022⁶.



> *Updates on the Forcibly Displaced Persons in the Arab region⁷*

Syria Situation

The Syria crisis, now into its 11th year, remains the largest displacement crisis in the world, by June 2022, with around 5.6 million refugees and asylum seekers registered in neighbouring countries including Turkey, and 6.7 million IDPs⁸. COVID19- brought significant economic and social distress which will continue to impact Syrian refugees, IDPs and their host communities. While host governments and the international community stepped up and continue



1-This figure does not represent the actual number present in the region, as it does not include a large number of unregistered individuals.

2-Status Report - International Migration - -2021english.pdf

3-<https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>

4-The numbers are calculated based on updates from UNHCR offices in the Arab region through June 2022.

5-Previous reference

6-The numbers were calculated based on the updates of the Arab countries bordering the central and western Mediterranean route until June 2022.

7-According OHCHR, forcibly displaced persons are those who have been "forced to move within or across borders, due to armed conflict, persecution, terrorism, human rights violations and abuses, violence, the negative impacts of climate change, natural disasters and development, or a combination of these factors."<https://www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/human-rights-water-and-sanitation-forcently-displaced-persons-need-humanitarian>

8-<https://reporting.unhcr.org/syriasituation>

to extend their support for Syrian refugees in response, vulnerabilities will likely continue to worsen towards the end of 2022 and the whole of 2023, due to the challenging socioeconomic situation globally as a result of the emerging crises, the repercussions of the pandemic, as well as other financial and social hurdles. Over 610,000 Syrians have been identified with resettlement needs since the beginning of the crisis representing the highest resettlement needs globally. The resettlement of Syrians will likely remain a critical demonstration of responsibility-sharing by the international community. Generous contributions have already ensured that UNHCR persons of concern benefit from the same services as citizens, while providing much-needed financial support to the host countries. Inside Syria, significant humanitarian needs will persist, including community basic infrastructure, shelter, education, and health care⁹ .

Yemen Situation

More than seven years of conflict have resulted in one of the world's worst humanitarian crises in Yemen, one in which 70 per cent of the population rely on aid for their survival with millions displaced from their homes. As of March 2022, 4.3 million Yemenis were internally displaced¹⁰ .

Sudan Situation

Sudan hosts one of the largest refugee populations in Africa. South Sudanese make up the majority. Many others fled violence and persecution in neighbouring countries, including Eritrea, the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, and Chad, but also the wars in Syria and Yemen which pushed people to seek safety in Sudan. Most refugees live in out-of-camp settlements, host communities and urban areas, while others are located in 24 camps around the country. (10 at the East Sudan, 1 at Blue Nile State 10 at White Nile State, 2 at East Darfur State and 1 at the Central Darfur State)¹¹ .

Lebanon Situation

At the start of 2022, the onset of winter heavily impacted Lebanon's Beqaa Valley, bringing heavy rain and pushing night-time temperatures close to freezing. The crisis caused widespread hardship in the country, where 9 in every 10 Syrian refugees live in extreme poverty and half of the refugee population is food insecure. The deteriorating situation has taken a toll throughout the country, forcing both Lebanese and refugee families to make unbearable choices.



Over the past few months, UNHCR has provided shelter rehabilitation support to the most vulnerable Lebanese and refugee families, as well as solar lamps and basic household items and

⁹-Previous reference

¹⁰-<https://reporting.unhcr.org/yemen>

¹¹-Update of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Sudan until June 2022 ,30 <https://reporting.unhcr.org/document/2954>

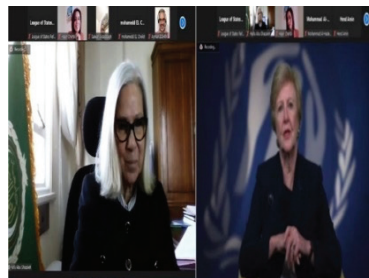
materials to weatherproof structures during winter. UNHCR has also provided water trucks, generators, solar panels, and water pumps to municipalities throughout the country to ensure Lebanese and refugees have better access to water and electricity¹².



> Joint UNHCR-LAS (Social Affairs Sector) Activities

Signing of an action plan between UNHCR and the LAS (Social Affairs Sector)

An action plan was signed by H.E. Ambassador Dr. Haifa Abu-Ghazaleh, Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the Social Affairs Sector, and Mr. Ayman Gharaibeh, Regional Director of the UNHCR Middle East and North Africa Office regarding joint cooperation between the two sides, an annotated agenda of activities for the years (-2021 2022) is annexed to the action plan.



The action plan is based on agreed strategic objectives to respond to the increasing need for protection and assistance for forcibly displaced persons in the Arab region and aims to define the strategic framework for technical support for all joint activities between the two parties related to international protection.

The Global Compact on Refugees and Preparation for the High-Level Officials' Meeting (14-15 December2021):

In preparation of the High-Level Officials' Meeting, LAS and UNHCR held virtual regional consultations on the Global Compact on Refugees for the Arab region on 10 November 2021. Senior government officials from 15 Arab countries participated in the consultations to review the national efforts and progress made in operationalizing the Global Compact on Refugees since its adoption in 2018. Also, representatives of relevant stakeholders from the private sector, civil society organizations, development agencies, academic institutions, and specialized United Nations organizations attended to present their efforts to operationalize the compact. The consultations provided an opportunity for participants to present efforts made by the various parties to fulfil the pledges made during the Global Refugee Forum in 2019, and to exchange experiences and good practices. It also highlighted challenges, opportunities, and identified areas that need support.

The consultations came out with key messages that reflect three priority issues in the Arab region: providing support to refugees, providing support to host countries and communities, and strengthening partnerships and encouraging the multi-stakeholder approach, which were submitted to the high-level officials meeting in December 2021 to reflect the priorities of the region.

12- UNHCR conclusions on protection monitoring in Lebanon for the second half of 2022 <https://reporting.unhcr.org/document/2956>



Arab Strategy on Prevention and Response to Combat All Forms of Violence in the Asylum Context, especially Sexual Violence against Women and Girls¹³ :

Within the framework of existing cooperation between LAS and UNHCR, the Arab strategy for Prevention and Response to combat all forms of violence in the Asylum Context especially Sexual Violence against Women and Girls was drafted. The strategy outlines the key strategic priorities to be undertaken by the Arab Countries to protect refugees against sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). They include adoption and enforcement of key laws and policies, the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, and survivor-focused multi-sectoral services to be provided by national governmental and civil society actors. The strategy builds upon existing laws, policies and services in the region and provides key recommendations to strengthen national SGBV prevention and response systems to better protect refugees against SGBV in line with relevant international laws and standards. The Strategy was followed by a regional plan of action, and both were adopted by the Council of the Arab League at the Ministerial level on 3 March 2021.



Arab Strategy for the Protection of Children in Asylum Context in the Arab Region¹⁴ :

Considering the developments in the Arab region and the increasing numbers of refugees and displaced persons, and the risks faced by refugees, especially children, LAS, in cooperation with UNHCR, launched the Arab strategy for the protection of children in asylum contexts in the Arab region and its action plan on 19 November 2019, in Cairo. The strategy aims at improving the refugee children's status in the Arab region, enhancing their living standards, which calls for all partners to work together to find solutions that ensure the best interests of refugee children, protecting them, adopting a non-discriminatory approach and working with host communities and families, taking into account the risks faced by these children.



The strategy was adopted by the Economic and Social Development Summit at its fourth session in Beirut in January 2019, pursuant to Resolution No. 62, as well as its annexed action plan.

The adoption was followed by a virtual regional expert meeting on the follow-up to the implementation of the strategic action plan under the title "Providing protection and family/educational care for refugee children" on 9-10 December 2020 with the participation of representatives of number of Arab Countries as well as international and regional organizations

13- <https://www.unhcr.org/eg/what-we-do/las-cooperation/gbv>

14-<https://www.unhcr.org/eg/what-we-do/las-cooperation/child-protection>

working in the field of protection and promotion of children's rights. In addition to the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on Children and Armed Conflict. A report on this meeting was issued in both Arabic and English.¹⁵

Arab Strategy on Access to Public Health Services in Asylum and Displacement Contexts¹⁶

Given that health issues impact refugee communities in different ways, and are exacerbated by lack of access to services, gender dynamics, and existing health problems such as communicable and non-communicable diseases (NCDs), a framework to address such issues was much needed.

In addition to the fact that the complications caused by the emergence of problems such as sexual and gender-based violence, early marriage, maternal and child health complications, non-communicable diseases and others also contribute to the severity of the health issues, the League of Arab States, in cooperation with the UNHCR, prepared the Arab strategy on providing public health services in the context of asylum in the Arab region. The Strategy was adopted by the Arab Health Ministers Council on 19-20 May, 2019 in Geneva.



The strategy aims to respond to the needs of refugees, displaced persons, and asylum seekers to promote health, prevent disease, healthcare and support national health systems to ensure that the health needs of refugees and host communities are met, as well as reduce morbidity and premature mortality, and adopt a universal health coverage (UHC) model in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

The two sides also prepared an action plan annexed to the Arab strategy on providing public health services in the context of asylum in the Arab region (2010-2030) focusing on addressing health needs of forcibly displaced populations and promoting access to quality and affordable public health services, which was approved by the Arab Health Ministers Council on 10 March 2021.

15-<https://www.unhcr.org/eg/wp-content/uploads/sites/06/2021/36/Report-on-the-Regional-Expert-Meeting-on-the-Implementation-of-the-Child-Protection-Strategy.pdf>

16-<https://www.unhcr.org/eg/what-we-do/las-cooperation/public-health>