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REGIONAL ANALYSIS

SYRIA BRIEF

1 November - 7 December 2014

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This RAS Brief highlights key developments in Syria and the region in the past five weeks. It is not intended as a comprehensive overview of the humanitarian situation—for this, readers are directed to the October quarterly RAS which provides a more comprehensive, coherent analysis of the overall situation in Syria and in each of the affected countries.

The Strategic Needs Analysis Project (SNAP) welcomes all information that could complement these reports. SNAP is a partnership of ACAPS and MapAction aimed at supporting the humanitarian response in Syria by providing independent analysis and supporting coordinated assessments. For additional information, comments or questions please email SNAP@ACAPS.org.

1. CONFLICT DEVELOPMENTS IN SYRIA

The strategic situation in Syria has seen little change overall since November. Although fighting continued, including heavy clashes in Dar'a and Aleppo, there have been few major strategic developments and only limited changes in the front lines. This situation has not resulted in major changes in humanitarian access or needs within Syria during the reporting period. For details on those issues, please consult the *October 2013 quarterly RAS*, and the *November RAS update*.

1.1. Aleppo remains embattled

The situation in Aleppo, although precarious, appears to remain in stalemate. Media reports continue to speculate about the imminent besiegement of opposition-held portions of the city by Government of Syria (GoS) forces, but there have been few reports of changes in the front line since early October. (*Syria Direct 28/11/2014*, *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat 28/11/2014*, *Syria Direct 18/11/2014*, *IBTimes 17/11/2014*, *BBC 14/11/2014*) The GoS continues to launch regular air and artillery strikes against Free Syrian Army (FSA) positions along the armed group's last remaining supply line. (*PI 27/11/2014*) If the city were to be besieged, humanitarian access to some 300,000 people would be cut off, and defeat of the FSA and the Islamic Front would likely cause a significant change in conflict dynamics in the north. (*OCHA 07/11/2014*, *Al Monitor 10/11/2014*) However, media reports of the city's imminent fall have been circulating for months—primarily fed by FSA commanders in the north, who may be exaggerating the situation in order to advocate for more foreign assistance.

1.2. Coalition airstrikes continue

The number of coalition airstrikes in Syria appears to have decreased slightly, from roughly 220 in October to roughly 160 in November. (*BBC 03/12/2014*, *analysis of US Department of Defense news releases*) This number remains extremely small compared to the number of airstrikes carried out by the Syrian Armed Forces (SAF)—reportedly more than 1,500 between 20 Oct and 19 Nov. (*SOHR 19/11/2014*) There is a significant information gap regarding the humanitarian impact of the foreign military intervention. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reports that coalition strikes killed 52 civilians over the first two months of strikes, though the US government disputes claims of civilian casualties. (*SOHR 22/11/2014*, *FP 03/12/2014*) There are no reports of strikes directly affecting humanitarian operations. (*OCHA 20/11/2014*) There have been claims that the coalition strikes have triggered an increase in attacks by the SAF, but these have been poorly documented. (*Reuters 13/10/2014*, *Reuters 21/10/2014*) A recent news report suggested that the strikes have limited IS' ability to provide public services and maintain order in the areas it controls, however this report has not been verified or corroborated. (*NYT 18/11/2014*)

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1.4. US-backed opposition fighters set back further in Idlib

Jabhat Al Nusra (JAN) continued its campaign against the US-backed opposition groups of the Syrian Revolutionaries Front (SRF) and Harakat Hazm, seizing more territory in Jabal Zawiya, Idlib. (McClatchy 07/11/2014, Syria Direct 05/11/2014, Syria Comment 05/11/2014, ISW 10/11/2014) The takeover of the province by JAN is a serious blow to the SRF, and will likely seriously decrease its relevance.

However, reports of an imminent alliance between JAN and IS, with the goal of eliminating US-backed groups, have so far remained unfounded. (AP 13/11/2014, Daily Beast 11/11/2014) Some analysts are sceptical of these reports, and consider the merger highly unlikely due to the deep ideological differences and longstanding battlefield rivalries between the two groups. (Syria Comment 14/11/2014, ISW 15/11/2014)

1.5 Armed Opposition Groups advance in Dar'a

In November, an alliance of armed opposition groups (AOGs), which included both JAN and US-backed groups, made gains in Dar'a, taking over the city of Nawa and the western part of Sheikh Miskine. (AP 29/11/2014, ISW 12/11/2014, Al-Monitor 17/11/2014, Syria Deeply 17/11/2014, Syrian Observer 13/11/2014) However, the GoS is reported to have taken back some of this territory after heavy aerial bombardment, and the rebel offensive stalled long before its stated objective of connecting rebel territory in Dar'a with Eastern Ghouta, near Damascus. (ISW 02/12/2014, Al-Monitor 17/11/2014)

A Nusra Front leader in Dar'a has reportedly ordered precautions to be taken against IS attempts to infiltrate the governorate. IS is known for swift advances that take advantage of sleeper cells and the co-option of local armed factions, but it is not clear whether the warning from Nusra front was a genuine concern or a political move. (Al-Monitor 03/12/2014, ISW 02/12/2014)

1.6 Armed conflict over food aid in Duma

Violent clashes broke out in the city of Duma, Rural Damascus, in mid-November, when, according to media reports, thousands of residents erupted in protests outside a warehouse affiliated with the Islamic Army, accusing the armed group of distributing only to its fighters and supporters. (Assafir 17/11/2014, Al Monitor 24/11/2014) Duma's 50,000 residents, as well as an unknown number of internally displaced people, have been living under siege by GoS forces for two years, with only occasional deliveries of basic food and medical supplies. (WFP 27/05/2014, WHO 28/05/2014, Amnesty 2014/06/12) Warehouse guards responded with gunfire, which was returned by some protesters. Following the clashes, the Islamic Army detained civilians and leaders of other AOGs, accusing them of instigating and organizing the protests. Across Syria, civilian protests have often been supported on an ad-hoc basis by either AOGs or individual fighters for reasons that range from political to principled. The Judicial Council in Eastern Ghouta later demanded food be put on the market at reasonable prices, but no binding measures were taken. (Assafir 16/11/2014, Assafir 19/11/2014)

2. A PROPOSED "FREEZE" IN ALEPPO

On 30 October, UN Envoy to Syria Staffan de Mistura proposed the establishment of "freeze zones" that would halt the fighting and allow the delivery of humanitarian aid, followed by building local political processes. (UN 31/10/2014) The first location proposed was Aleppo, but the UN hopes a successful freeze can be expanded to other areas, and that local de-escalations can contribute to the development of inclusive peace talks. (UN 10/11/2014, BBC 11/11/2014)

At the time of writing, the GoS expressed interest in studying the Aleppo proposal, although most of the details in the plan were yet to be worked out. Unconfirmed sources reported that broadly, it would include a halt in hostilities and permission for civilians to move back and forth in the city, which is currently divided between GoS and AOG-controlled areas. (UN 10/11/2014, Daily Beast 18/11/2014) Some opposition groups have already rejected the plan. (AJE 12/11/2014) Information on which groups might be involved in any freeze talks is limited—a UN official recently said the Envoy's office was still mapping influences on the ground. (Reuters 27/11/2014)

2.1 Possible Outcomes

The freeze plan has triggered a wide range of reactions. The primary argument against the proposal is that in the past, many local truces have not been genuine agreements, but military defeats by another name, in which AOGs and populations besieged by GoS forces have lain down arms in exchange for access to food and services. Opponents of the freeze argue GoS would have little incentive to make real concessions, given its history of success with such agreements—particularly recapturing the city of Homs—and would use the UN-brokered de-escalation as a delaying tactic, to pave the way for military victory. (Daily Beast 18/11/2014, Foreign Policy 14/11/2014) Others have argued that the foreign backers of the warring parties still prioritise maintaining their interests in the region over achieving a resolution. (Al Monitor 21/10/14)

Supporters of the freeze zones plan see it as the only way out of the current impasse—a European conflict-mediation group recently leaked a similar plan to the media. (Washington Post 04/11/2014, Foreign Policy 14/11/2014) Freeze proponents argue that recent changes in the Syrian situation make a political settlement more likely than it was during previous efforts like Geneva II. These changes include international involvement in the fight against IS, especially by Arab states; an increased willingness by Russia and Iran to seek a political solution to avoid a state of attrition; and regional pressure to de-escalate violence, as neighbouring countries are facing increasing social and economic costs from loss of trade and displacement. Internally, conflict actors may be under increasing pressure to seek a political solution from populations that have grown weary of the conflict and deterioration of basic services. (Al Monitor 21/10/2014, The Guardian 06/11/2014, Daily Beast 18/11/2014) In early 2014, a report that surveyed Syrians from a wide range of backgrounds and political affiliations had already indicated that most respondents were in favour of a negotiated settlement to end the conflict. (SJAC 21/11/14)

Some backers of the freeze plan have argued that the current stalemate between the GoS

and AOGs is creating the conditions where extremist groups like IS and the Nusra Front can thrive, and that halting or reducing that conflict is the only way to stop the extremists' expansion. (Assafir 12/11/2014, Foreign Policy 14/11/14)

Additionally, unlike the circumstances of many previous truces, where hostilities were halted only after opposition-held areas found themselves largely encircled by government forces, both sides in Aleppo currently have their own lines of supply, which could allow for more balanced power dynamics between negotiating parties.

2.2 Lessons learned from past truces and ceasefires

Two recent studies drew different lessons from previous conflicts. A June 2014 study that interviewed participants in local ceasefires argued that such agreements did not constitute the starting point of a broader peacebuilding process, and were severely undermined by the marked absence of political will for meaningful and inclusive negotiations. (Integrity 06/14) The research indicated these initiatives were mostly perceived as a government strategy to retake besieged areas after forcing AOGs to surrender—however the study also limited itself to looking at truces in besieged areas, suggesting some selection bias in the results.

Despite some instances of positive improvements, the study found local ceasefires resulted in minimal and short-term improvements of the humanitarian situation among affected communities. Most cases studied showed low exploitation of good practice in these agreements, often resulting in violations of terms and increased mistrust on both sides. Notably, engagement by humanitarian actors was restricted to truce implementation and the delivery of aid, and the impact of assistance was largely inadequate. The authors suggested that improved humanitarian outcomes could be possible if negotiations were more focused on the implementation and delivery phases of assistance.

Another report, in November, argued that although local ceasefires have sometimes proven problematic, and can in many cases be regarded as military tactics, they have often delivered tangible improvements for affected communities and remain the best way to alleviate civilian suffering, which top-level attempts at negotiation have failed to achieve. (LSE/Madani 17/11/14) The researchers identified the key obstacles to success as: a lack of political will both at the top Syrian and international levels; the intervention and interference of regional actors; and the growing war economy. Researchers suggested outcomes could be improved by using third party mediators to facilitate and monitor local agreements, something seldom implemented in previous ceasefires. The authors recommended an integrated approach that would strengthen the role of local civil society and link it to high-level negotiations.

In the case of Aleppo, meaningful political will to negotiate and compromise remains to be tested. While there is limited potential for this initiative to lead to a broader peacebuilding process, there could be enough incentives on both sides to de-escalate the violence. Available information suggests that the “freeze” plan has a stronger truce implementation monitoring framework than previous efforts. It is unclear to what degree humanitarian access and assistance would be a component in the negotiations, but organisations working in Syria should monitor the situation.

3. SHRINKING REGIONAL PROTECTION SPACE

Since mid-2011, at least 3.25 million Syrians have fled the conflict in search of assistance and protection. As the number of refugees has grown, host countries have implemented tighter and tighter border controls, and varying degrees of access restrictions, meaning Syrians have ever fewer opportunities to flee. (NRC-IRC 13/11/2014) In Jordan, for example, the average number of Syrians able to enter on a daily basis has dropped from 1,700 in early 2013 to fewer than 200 in late 2014. (IOM 2013-2014, RRP6) From 31 October to 19 November, no new arrivals were recorded, and since then just 10 to 50 a day have been allowed in. (PI 20/11/2014, CMC 02/12/2014) UN agencies report that refugees are often brought into Jordanian territory and screened at the Jordanian Army's registration centres, after which they are immediately deported to Syria. (UNHCR 16/11/2014, UNHCR 15/10/2014) In Lebanon, border restrictions have changed frequently and unpredictably. In October, regulations that had previously been unofficially and inconsistently applied were regularised by an official government statement. The number of new arrivals subsequently fell from almost 9,000 in September to around 2,500 in November, according to a DRC monitoring programme. (DRC 03/12/2014) However, unconfirmed reports at the start of December indicate that these restrictions may have been reversed. (PI 05/12/2014)

In addition to border restrictions, several host countries have recently introduced changes to the rules and procedures applied to Syrians who are already in residence. In some cases, these changes may be positive, while in some they appear to represent a substantial risk in decreasing the protection space available to Syrian refugees. In Turkey, a new legal framework, the Temporary Protection Regulation, appears to offer Syrians a more formal protection status, but how it will be applied remains unclear. In Jordan, gradual changes in implementation and enforcement of regulations have raised worries that the Government of Jordan (GoJ) is pursuing a policy aimed at pushing refugees in urban areas into camps. In Lebanon, policies determining the status of Syrians within the country are often ambiguous and open to different interpretations. There is currently a debate as to whether Syrians will be categorised as ‘refugees’ in the upcoming funding appeal (the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan), a decision which may have status implications. The status for Syrian refugees in Iraq has remained unchanged.

The topic of formal and informal state policies and their impact on the protection space enjoyed by Syrians is considered highly sensitive by most actors. As a result, there is only limited structured data collection, and public condemnation of harmful policies is rare. On-going, mostly covert, advocacy initiatives to strengthen refugee protection in neighbouring countries have had only limited success, as illustrated by the continued border closures. Without sufficient checks and balances, there is a risk that existing and future policies will further marginalise Syrians, limiting their access to services, justice and protection.

3.1 Jordan: Encampment and Registration

In Jordan, Syrians who have been able to enter and register as refugees with UNHCR have previously enjoyed significant protection space, including *de facto* acceptance of their choice to live in either urban settings or camps, and access to public health and education services. Recently, however, there have been credible reports of significant erosions of this space,

including the forced return of refugees to camps, and *refoulement*. Though details have not been made public, SNAP considers these reports reliable.

To access the different services available, Syrians in Jordan must register with both UNHCR and the Jordanian Ministry of Interior (MoI). Procedures are different for those in camps and those outside. For refugees in host communities, a UNHCR asylum seeker certificate gives access to many humanitarian services, while an MoI “service card” is required for access to state health care and education services. The vast majority of refugees in Jordan crossed the border informally, and were brought to camps by the Jordanian authorities. To leave the camps, these refugees must obtain “bail” from the government. While the process has remained somewhat opaque, it appears that in order to obtain bail, most Syrians must prove they have a Jordanian relative who is a (possibly male) citizen without a criminal record. (CMC 04/11/2014, PI 03/12/2014) However, large numbers of refugees have left the camps without obtaining bail, and for years their presence in urban areas has been tolerated by the government.

Recently there have been reports that the government is enforcing bail procedures, and refugees who have left the camps without bail, or whose bailout is declared invalid by the authorities (often for apparently arbitrary reasons) may be unable to obtain MoI service cards, or may be forcibly returned to camps if they approach the authorities. (PI 03/12/2014, PI 12/11/2014) The number of forced returns has increased considerably in the past three months, many of them for reasons related only to lack of bailout. (UNHCR 16/09/2014, UNHCR 04/11/2014, PI 12/11/2014) The GoJ has also asked UNHCR not to issue asylum seeker certificates to Syrians in urban areas who left the camp after 14 July, and who did not obtain bail. (PI 16/07/2014, PI 07/2014) Small but significant numbers of refugees continue to be deported to Syria. (HRW 23/11/2014, PI 03/12/2014)

These changes have left some refugees unable to obtain complete documentation, and, for others, are contributing to a climate of fear around approaching authorities. This has a significant impact on refugees’ access to services. Those without the MoI service card are unable to access public education, health and police services, and are technically ineligible for assistance from international humanitarian organisations, as the GoJ has instructed these not to provide aid to Syrians who do not have service cards. (PI 03/12/2014)

Finally, the GoJ has resumed its practice of dismantling informal tented settlements (ITS), and forcibly relocating the inhabitants to camps. From 2-8 December, three new ITS were dismantled, affecting more than 100 families. (PI 10/12/2014) Some of the inhabitants were returned to camp—despite having gone through bail procedures, their bail was now deemed invalid by the authorities. These were the first such transfers since June, and it is not clear if this policy will continue.

In the past, there has been considerable tolerance extended to refugees, particularly on the bail issue, and most refugees have been able to get documentation and access assistance. (Studies by multiple humanitarian and UN agencies suggest that between 15-30% of the refugees in Jordan may not be fully registered. (UN Women 16/05/2014, CARE 24/04/2013, WFP-REACH 06/2014, PI 12/11/2014) Should the current enforcement trend continue, a huge number of Syrians will be at risk of losing access to services, being forced into a camp, or, possibly, deported. The number of Syrians who have left the camp without bail is un-

known, but it is definitely in the hundreds of thousands, perhaps as high as 300,000. (NRC-IRC 13/11/2014) The declaration of bail as invalid by the authorities potentially puts more than half a million refugees at risk.

3.2 Turkey: Temporary Protection and Registration

Turkey has recently taken steps to further formalise the position of Syrians within the national legal framework, with the integration of the notion of temporary protection in the national legislative system. The October 2011 circular of the MoI (text was never published) known as the Syria Regulation offered “temporary protection status” that guaranteed non-*refoulement*. In April 2014 the Turkish Parliament adopted the Law on Foreigners and International Protection, which introduced the notion of temporary protection into the legal system. The Directive on Temporary Protection was published on 22 October in the Official Journal. The Council of Ministers has the power to activate and suspend temporary protection (TP) under the directive. (NRC-IRC 2014/11/12, German Institute for International and Security Affairs 2014/11).

Coupled with issuing temporary protection identification cards, the regulation guarantees no forced returns, the right to stay as long as the temporary protection is in effect, access to health and education services and to social aid, as well as access to services and the labour market (albeit with limitations). While TP provides allowances similar to those afforded to foreigners obtaining residency permits (a status many Syrians have applied for), there are distinctions on movements abroad between the two statuses, outlined in the chart on the following page. (OCHA 18/11/2014, UNHCR-Turkey, Unofficial Translation Temporary Protection Regulation)

The main issues requiring further clarification relate to the labour market, geographical restrictions, and the extent to which provincial governments can decide how the TP will be implemented. The passing of the TP directive signals a shift towards longer-term thinking, and could lead to expanded protection space, especially for the more vulnerable refugees currently entering Turkey. TP also highlights the great strides made by Turkey to accommodate the large numbers of Syrians who have sought safety within its border—while underscoring the challenges in trying to do so, some of which are listed below. Nevertheless, international cooperation and burden-sharing remain an important desired component (similar to the EU regulation on temporary protection), as is stressed in a section of the TP directive and echoed repeatedly by various actors in the region.

In order to speed up registration, Syrians were given an initial two week window to register with the Turkish Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (AFAD) and the General Directorate of Migration Management (GDMM), but also faced challenges and delays in receiving the identification cards. Though the system might not be fully prepared to register large numbers of people expected, registration is ongoing, and the TP directive stipulates that it is to be fully implemented by mid-February 2015.

The protection afforded to refugees under TP can be lifted as soon as a refugee voluntarily returns to Syria. It is unclear how this could impact the cross-border operations of INGOs employing Syrians, as well as many of the Syrians who have to return to Syria to take care of documentation, oversee property or seek livelihood opportunities.

With unemployment at 10% nationwide, there is growing concern that Syrians will compete with and take away labour opportunities from Turkish citizens. (AFP 13/11/2014) The city of Antalya already made a request to bar unauthorised refugees from entering the city, and requested exemption from the decree granting Syrians access to work permits, health and

education services, raising some concerns as to what may happen in other provinces. As such, the regulations worked out by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection aim to progressively integrate the Syrian labour force in a way that does not result in increased competition for Turkish workers. (Hurriyet 07/11/2014, Al Arabiya 08/11/2014)

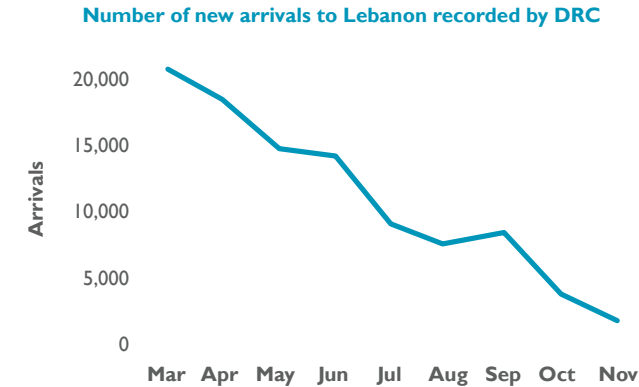
People have been reluctant to go through with this process as it's unclear how their ability to move in and out of the country may be affected, however there is a legal obligation to register, and this will be enforced by local authorities.

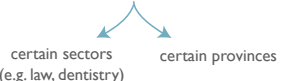
3.3. Lebanon: Ambiguous framework

New information suggests that the recent tightening of restrictions for Syrian nationals intending to cross the border through Al Areeda, Al Aboudiyeh, and Al Masnaa crossing points was reversed at the start of December. The most recent round of policies aimed at curtailing cross-border movement, which were formalised mid-October, effectively hampered a large part of the movement into Lebanon (see graph). The current turn-around means that, in theory, those with a valid passport can re-enter Lebanon. It is likely that in practice, entry will remain heavily restricted. Unconfirmed reports state that only vehicles are allowed to cross the border and that individuals' place of origin can impact their ability to exit Syria. The latter restriction, which remains impossible to verify, is an extension of an earlier planned policy—in late June, the Ministry of Social Affairs informed the UN of a decision to only welcome Syrian refugees coming from conflict-affected regions near the Lebanese border. (DailyStar 19/06/2014, PI 09/12/2014)

As with most regulations related to Syrians, this supposed change of policy has not been confirmed by official statements, and large questions remain around its practical consequences. Despite Lebanon's commendable hospitality (the country is hosting around 35% of the total Syrian refugee population in the region) the overall policy towards refugee arrival and residence is characterised by ambiguity. Official confirmation of existing practice is rare and most of the information in the public domain is based on unofficial government statements, internal memos and rumours. This lack of clarity is compounded by the fact that UNHCR and UNRWA are not able to have a continued presence at the border, limiting on-the-ground

verification of existing procedures. The unpredictability of policies and their implementation severely hampers the provision of protection services and frustrates advocacy efforts aimed at putting in place a solid legal framework.



Turkey's Temporary Protection Regulation		
	RP RESIDENCE PERMITS applicable to ALL FOREIGNERS; language adapted here to reflect impact on Syrians	TP TEMPORARY PROTECTION REGULATION
Granted To	 Syrian passport holders who have legally entered Turkey and have a valid passport and a valid visa.  Married to Turkish citizens.	Every Syrian, regardless of possession of legal papers, including:  Exceptions Anyone who may have committed acts of terrorism or human rights violations.
Access to services		
Access to labour market	 - Work permits must be obtained through the employer - Work permits can be obtained by those with RPs over 6 months, by employers applying on behalf of refugee - Work permits cannot exceed duration of RP and cannot exceed 12 months, but can be renewed upon extension of RPs	Access to labour market, albeit with restrictions, as to be determined by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection limited to: 
Duration	 - Issued for 6 months - 12 months. - Cannot be issued for more than 12 months, but can be extended (up to 4 times) within 15 days prior to expiration. - Longer term residence cards may be obtained after 8 years of stay in the country.	 The duration of the TP policy is subject to decision of the Council of Ministers
Expiration	 - If leaving Turkey with expired RP, must apply for new visa and may be banned for 90 days. - If do not wish to renew, Syrians can obtain Temporary Protection ID. - Syrians: - Whose passports or visas expired in the last 12 months - Who entered Turkey illegally - Whose visas expired more than 12 months ago – cannot get a Residence Permit but can receive a TP ID.	- If leaving Turkey of own will. - If availing protection of another country. - If admitted to another country under humanitarian reasons or resettlement.

4. FOOD ASSISTANCE IN A PROTRACTED CRISIS

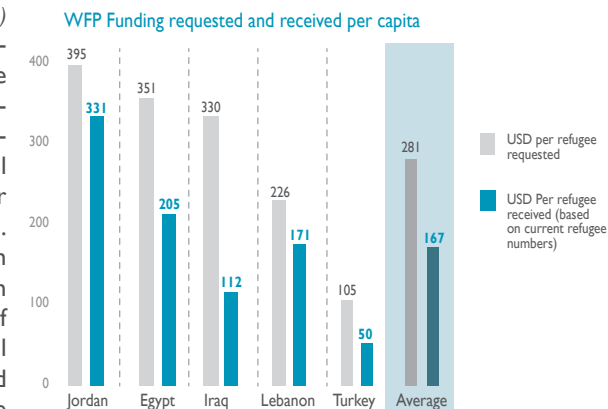
In early December, WFP unexpectedly cut food support to some 1.7 million Syrian refugees, due to a funding shortfall. The cuts were temporary, as immediately after they were announced, a public appeal raised roughly USD 80 million, which WFP officials say will fund the programme for another two months. The cuts indicate the volatility of the current approach, by which WFP and its partners provide emergency food assistance for millions over a protracted crisis. The costs of such a programme are immense. (See chart, in the right.)

In the UN's 2014 mid-year appeal for Syria, WFP funding amounted to almost 25% of the USD 3.7 billion requested. This translates to about USD 280 per registered refugee, compared to, for instance, USD 65 per refugee fleeing the high level (L3) emergency in Central African Republic. Over the long term, it is likely that donors will be increasingly unable or unwilling to provide sufficient funds to maintain current levels of support. The December cuts are the most extreme example, but for months WFP has been forced to resort to last-minute appeals to make up major funding deficits, or risk across-the-board cuts to the program.

Several steps have been contemplated to limit the costs of the food assistance programme. The targeting approach introduced in Lebanon, and being developed in Jordan, could facilitate a more needs-based approach, moving from blanket food distribution to targeting the most vulnerable. In Turkey and Iraq, food assistance is provided solely to those in camps, in line with host countries' preference for a camp-based approach and reflecting the possibility, albeit limited, for non-camp refugees in those countries to generate an income.

However, large numbers of refugees remain highly dependent on food assistance. In Jordan, it is estimated that as many as 85% of refugees cannot meet the cost of basic needs without the WFP food aid. (WFP 07/12/2014) In surveys asking what would happen if assistance were cut, large numbers of respondents said they would have no choice but to return to Syria. (IRC 05/12/2014, PI 10/12/2014)

Without a solution to the crisis in Syria, or a radical change in income generating opportunities for Syrians in host-countries, high levels of funding will continue to be required over a protracted period of time. Alternative approaches, such as kitchen gardens and cash for work, can address some of the existing needs on a small scale, but are unlikely to lead to a significant reduction in the current costs.



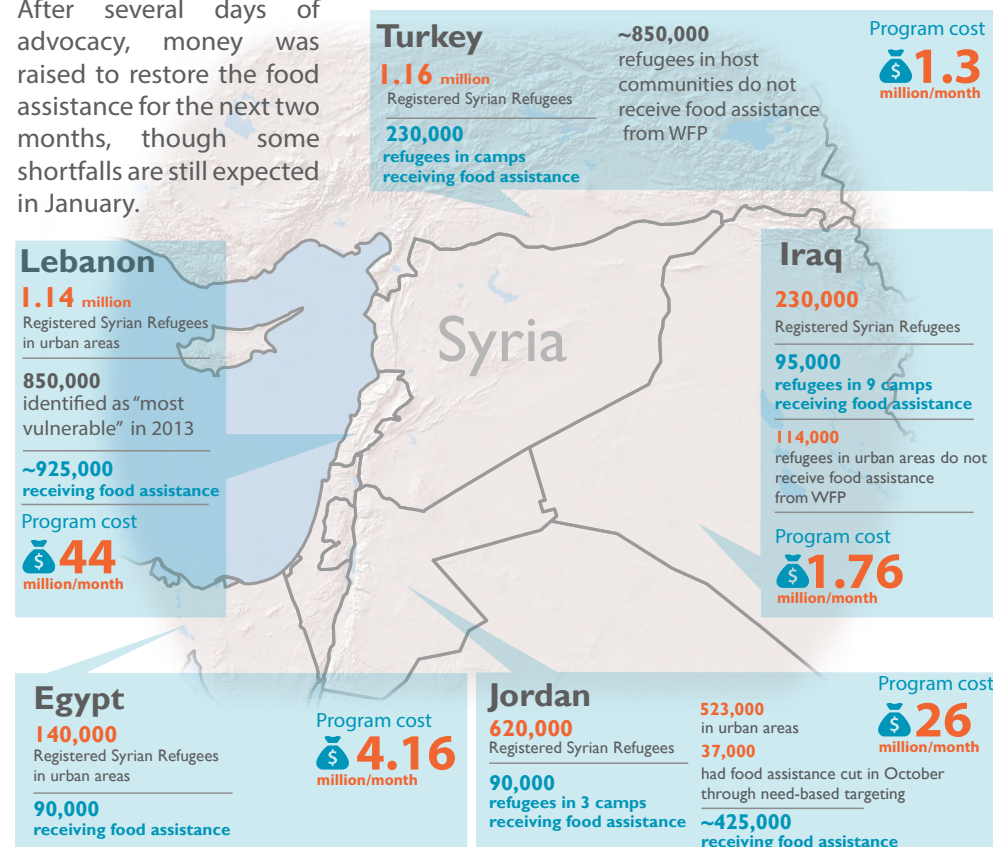
Source: RRP Mid-year review (June 2014), UNHCR data portal (December 2014), FTS 8 December 2014. Total amount includes operation costs requested and received.

77
million/month

REGIONAL WFP FOOD ASSISTANCE COSTS

Across five countries, nearly **1.9 million** Syrian refugees depend on the roughly USD 30 / month in food aid that the WFP distributes. In December, a funding shortfall meant that food aid to nearly **1.7 million** of those people was briefly cut.

After several days of advocacy, money was raised to restore the food assistance for the next two months, though some shortfalls are still expected in January.



Sources: UNHCR Syria Regional Refugee Response Dashboard, Jordan Inter-Sector Updates 12/11/2014, 04/12/2014, WFP 25/11/14, WFP 09/12/2014, correspondence with individual WFP offices. Figures are approximate.