

UNICEF SYRIA EMERGENCY RESPONSE: Monthly update # 13
Displaced Children and Women from Iraq
July 2008

KEY HIGHLIGHTES

UNICEF Syria welcomes its new Humanitarian Programme Officer, Mr. Eric Durpaire who arrived on 14 July.

On July 23 UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador and renowned Beninese musician Angelique Kidjo visited the Child Friendly Space in Jaramana. Ms. Kidjo was in Syria as an invitee of the Damascus Capital of Culture Committee.

The Goodwill Ambassador said she was impressed by the energy and creativity of the young people in the child-friendly space, which is supported by UNICEF and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC). She was also pleased to hear the children sing for her, and later performed the same song at For more information on this event, please follow this link:

http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/syria_44902.html



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DISPLACED CHILDREN & WOMEN FROM IRAQ

UNHCR has thus far registered 216,370 displaced individuals from Iraq as refugees in Syria. Since January 2007, UNHCR has identified 7,890 at-risk refugee children or adolescents from Iraq, 95 unaccompanied or separated children, and 5,910 women at risk.

In 2008 alone, UNHCR has identified at least 300 survivors of sexual gender based violence (SGBV) among refugees from Iraq.

Since February 2007, UNHCR submitted 13,647 Iraqi refugees for resettlement; however, only 3,124 individuals actually departed for resettlement countries (2180 to the US, 477 to Canada, 116 to Sweden, 113 to the Netherlands, 105 to Finland and the rest to other countries).

There are three refugee camps near or at the Iraq-Syria border, which host **Palestinians from Iraq** who cannot enter Syria.

1. *Al Tanf Camp*: Located in the 'no-man's land' between the Iraqi border and Syrian passport control. Al Tanf hosts 893 Palestinians from Iraq, 289 of whom are children.
2. *Al Hol Camp*: Located in the north-eastern province of Syria, Al Hol hosts 334 Palestinians from Iraq, 158 of whom are children.
3. *Al Waleed Camp*: Located on the Iraq side of the Iraq-Syria border, Al Waleed now hosts 1,367 Palestinians from Iraqi, 538 of whom are children.

UNICEF RESPONSE

Health & Nutrition

UNICEF's health and nutrition support focuses on community behavioural change, improving vaccination coverage, supply of medical equipment, access to and delivery of quality health services, and the establishment of a nutritional surveillance system.

➤ **Over 2,011 Iraqi children under five have been screened in UNICEF Nutrition**

Preparations have been carried out for the Breastfeeding week, which will take place in the beginning of August. Lectures on the benefits of Breastfeeding will be given in Al-Batihaa, Al-Hawaza and in Sayda Zainab to increase awareness amongst Iraqi women.

A meeting took place between UNICEF and Mr. Miyoshi from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to discuss the possibility to engage in cooperation on health related projects targeting refugees from Iraq living in Syria.

A training course on Integrated Management of Child Illnesses (IMCI) has been prepared and the training will take place in August for Health workers in 21 PHC centre and a ToT course on adolescent health for doctors (heads of the 21 PHC centres) took place in Damascus from the 20-30 July.

UNICEF supported a training course on newborn resuscitation held by the Syrian-American medical association that took place in the end of July in Lattakia. UNICEF plans to organise this training for health workers from the 21 PHC centres.

Nutrition Surveillance Update: As of the end of July 2008, 2,011 Iraqi children were examined by health workers in UNICEF-supported Ministry of Health Primary Healthcare Centres (1103 males and 908 females). Nutrition surveillance until this point found that:

Wasting (weight/age): 4.77%. Only 0,75% were severely wasted.

Underweight: 5.72%

Stunting (height/age): 7.36%

Anaemia: The number of children (6 months old and over) who were given haemoglobin tests totalled 526. Anaemia rate is 28.33%, which is average.

Breastfeeding: The total number of children, 6 months and younger, whose mothers were asked about breastfeeding, was 802. The percentage of exclusive breastfeeding among them was 69.54%. Children within the first month of age had the highest rate of exclusive breastfeeding: 89.12%. This rate, however, drops sharply as the child grows. At 6 months old only 35.29% children are exclusively breastfed.

Malnutrition: 28.29% of the total children referred to the health centres benefited from supplementary feeding. Vitamin-fortified peanut butter was given to all children who suffered from malnutrition. Vitamin A was given to all (one-year +) children whenever available. 15 children were referred to hospital with severe malnutrition; 5 of them were less than six months old.

Education

UNICEF's education support focuses on supporting the expansion of the Syrian educational infrastructure to ensure access to quality education for all children, enhancing the quality of education through the application of the child friendly school initiative, and creating opportunities for the re-integration of dropouts through informal education and life-skills based education.

Education Supply Update: the delivery of supplies to the 183 phase III schools is continuing although at a slower pace because schools now only open two days a week; nearly half of the 35 items on the list has been delivered to all the target schools in Rural Damascus, Quneitrah and Damascus; and more recently to the 30 schools in Aleppo.



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Child Friendly School Initiative Training Update: The Ministry of Education and UNICEF with technical cooperation from UNRWA have organised from June 28 to July 2nd 2008 a 5-days training of trainers' session on "school planning and the child friendly school framework". 30 trainers from the central and provincial levels of the Ministry of Education have participated to this session which was successful and well organised

A very tangible summer training programme is being jointly implemented by the MoE and UNICEF with 3 main components:

- The first has consisted in a 3-days training session for 5 school team members from each of the 183 phase III schools; its main focus was on school planning and the child friendly school framework. 35 workshops have been organised since July 5th for Damascus schools (8 workshops) then on July 12th for Schools in Quneitrah (6 workshops) followed by 15 workshops for Rural Damascus schools starting July 15th and finally in Aleppo where 6 workshops were held starting July the 26th.

- The second aims at enhancing health-promoting behaviours among school teams and will consist in a two-days training session on topics such as hygiene education, water-born diseases and nutrition. It targets participants from the 140 schools of the EU-funded UNICEF project. 12 workshops are being implemented starting late July and early August

- The third aims to strengthen the capacities of school teams in school planning and design of school improvement plans; 12 workshops are being organised simultaneously with the health education workshops and target 3 staff members from the 140 phase I & II schools. It should be mentioned that teams from these schools had already participated during May to training workshops on the child friendly school framework.

School Rehabilitation Update: the Rural Damascus Provincial Education Directorate has concluded 47 out of 55 contracts relating to rehabilitation, water and sanitation and painting works to be implemented in 160 schools. The 8 remaining contracts have already been advertised. The preparatory phases for rehabilitation have also been finalised for Damascus, Quneitrah and Aleppo (Needs assessment works, BOQs and costing exercises) and UNICEF will support rehabilitation projects in 92 target schools of these three provinces. The bidding process will be launched in the first week of August and the works will hopefully start around August 19th. The total number of schools benefiting of rehabilitation through UNICEF is 253 half of which thanks to the financial support of the European Commission. An additional school will be rehabilitated through a joint effort between UNICEF and the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC).

New Partnerships / Agreements: discussions have continued with one national NGO the Women General Union (WGU) to initiate a pilot preschool education project which, aims to ensure easier access of Iraqi 5-year old children to 15 preschool education centres of the WGU which UNICEF will support with provision of additional educational material and supplies, with rehabilitation activities and with a training programme for KG teachers. Several coordination meetings have been held with several INGOs which are planning to implement activities in support of Education of the Iraqi children in Syria such as DRC, IRC, Enfants du Monde, Secours Islamique France, Help e.V. and ASB.

Child Protection

UNICEF's child protection support focuses on creating a protective environment for children and adolescents, and building capacities at national and community levels to effectively run and sustain this environment.

Over 14,000 children have benefited from UNICEF's psychosocial support activities.

Open Day Activities: Two Open Day Activities were organized by SARC/UNICEF volunteers: the first one in Sayda Zainab CFS on July 19th (attended by 110 children) the second in Jaramana CFS on the 26 of July (attended by 80 children).

Child Friendly Spaces: From 15 February to end of June 2008, a total of 4,008 children were registered in the UNICEF-SARC Child Friendly Spaces (CFSs), 1882 girls and 2126 boys. The most frequent symptoms which the new cases registered in June 2008 manifest are presented in the following table.

From the 1st of June until 31st of June 2008

CFS	Newly registered children		Sex		Passive	Depression	Anger	Fear	Aggressiveness	Enuresis/Soiling	Change in manners	Sleeping problems	Violence against smb	Difficulty in concentration	Learning difficulty	Increased attachment to others	Isolation	Speech Problems	Not attending school	Sight Hearing impairment	Conflict with the law
	Females	Males	Females	Males																	
UNHCR registration centre	477	235	242	49	71	128	13	26	55	81	84	14	62	52	102	34	31	3	31	23	
Jaramana	93	58	35	1	0	4	5	0	3	7	5	1	3	6	10	1	2	2	2	0	
Sayda	81	35	46	3	4	8	13	0	1	2	6	1	2	1	0	3	3	0	1	0	
Zainab																					
Qudsaya	68	31	37	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Total	719	359	360	53	75	141	81	28	60	90	96	17	68	59	112	38	38	5	34	24	

* Only cases meeting specific criteria (need of psychological or psychiatric assessment, parental consent) are referred to Child Protection & Psychosocial Support Units.

Multidisciplinary Child Protection & Psychosocial Support Units in SARC clinics:

During June 2008 the total of 88 new cases were received by the Psychosocial Support units

SARC Clinic	new cases referred	Follow up sessions
Al Mezza	11	31
Sayda Zenab	37	48
Jaramana	40	34
Total	88	113

Diagnoses for the Cases

Total referred cases visited the clinics	Depression	PTSD	Anxiety Disorders	Speech Problems	Behavioural Problems	Enuresis	Epilepsy	Learning Disabilities	Mental Retardation	Down Syndrome	Hyper Activity	Addiction	Sexual Disorder	Schizophrenia	Pending cases
88	16	11	10	7	6	4	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	19

Adolescents' Report: A report on Iraqi Adolescents' emotional needs was prepared based on focus group discussions, and is in the process of being published as a UNICEF Damascus Paper. The report will be shared with UN agencies and partners and will support the creation of a training manual for adolescents, who can then offer support at peers' groups. It will also be posted on the UN in Syria website (www.un.org.sy) by mid-September.

Al Tanf Update: In coordination with UNHCR, UNICEF facilitated "Clowns without borders" participation in the Al Tanf camp to give a show for the children. 200 children attended the show.

Trainings:

- 40 Syrian and Iraqi psychologists and social workers have been trained for the UNICEF/SARC project on the mother support groups' manual. They are expected to start implementing the mother support groups next to each child friendly space from August 2008.
- The 14 professionals who constitute the UNICEF/SARC multidisciplinary child protection and psychosocial support units have been trained on the use of a data base specifically designed for the needs of the units and on the reporting of the data.
- 60 SARC volunteers have been trained on Basic Psychosocial support and Children Activities in order to be involved in the new UNICEF/Child Friendly Spaces under construction in Zabadani and Yarmook areas.

Interagency Collaboration

UNICEF plays an active role in multiple ongoing coordination mechanisms including: UN Interagency Working Group on Iraqi Refugees, UNHCR Information Sharing Coordination Meeting (with donors and INGOs), Education Coordination Meeting (UNICEF holds secretariat), Health Coordination Meeting, PSS & Mental Health Coordination Meeting, Child Protection Coordination Meeting and other thematic groups including: SGBV, UNHCR Registration Centre, Al Tanf Camp, and Community Centre Development.



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OPERATIONS

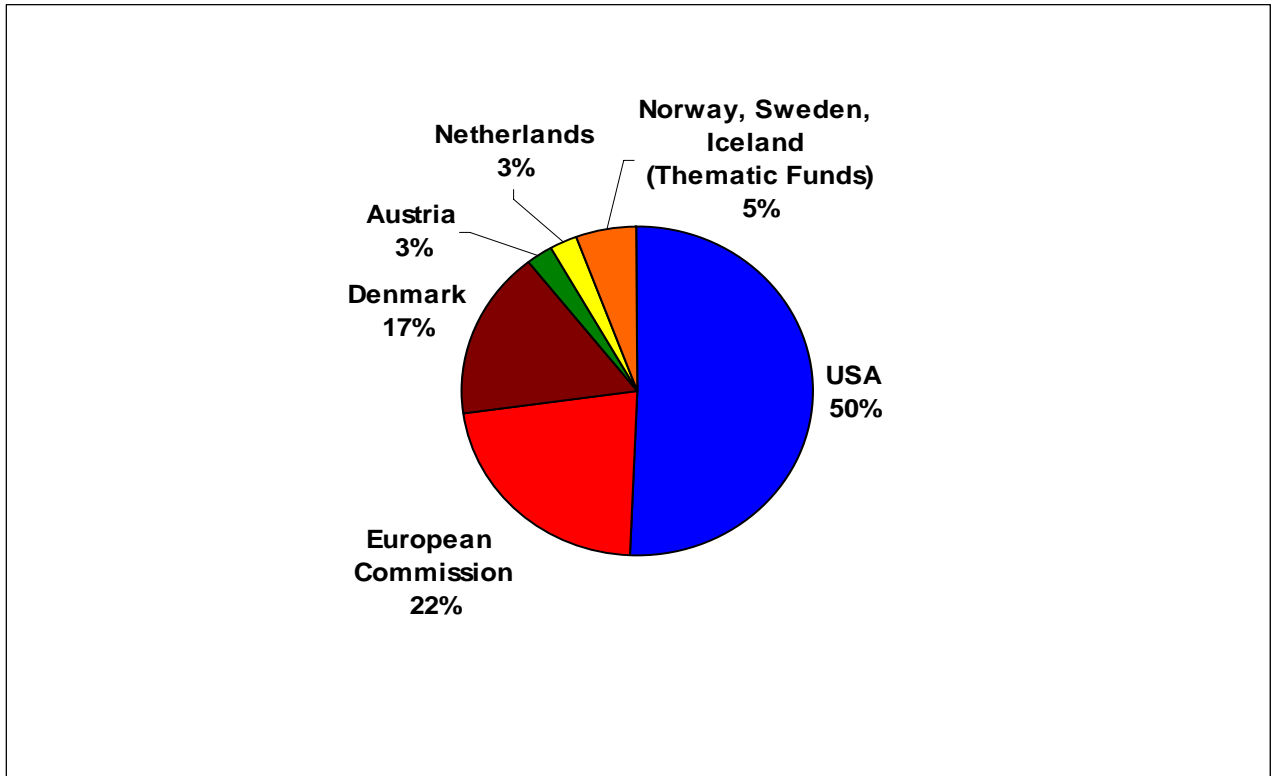
Advocacy & Communication

On 23 July, UNICEF Deputy Representative Marc Lucet was interviewed on the Iraqi Al-Sharkia TV-station on the situation of Iraqi refugee children living in Syria and UNICEF's support to these children. The interview was part on an in-depth daily news programme broadcasted every evening.

Human Resources

Eric Durpaire, UNICEF Syria's new Emergency Coordinator took up his post on the 14 July

Funding by Donor Contribution



For further information please contact:

Ms. Sherazade Boualia, UNICEF Representative at sboualia@unicef.org or Marc Lucet, Deputy Representative at mlucet@unicef.org

For UNICEF's response in 2007, please refer to:

The UNICEF Humanitarian Action Report at www.unicef.org/har08

See also the recently launched UN in Syria Website at: <http://www.un.org.sy/>