

**UNICEF SYRIA Humanitarian Assistance to Refugees from Iraq: Monthly
update # 14
Displaced Children and Women
August 2008**

KEY HIGHLIGHTES

From 21-23 August, The 11th PAN Arab congress of Psychiatry on Psychological consequences of violence Evidence-based Mental Health was held in Damascus College of Medicine.

DISPLACED CHILDREN & WOMEN FROM IRAQ

UNHCR has thus far registered 219,010 displaced individuals from Iraq as refugees in Syria. Since January 2007, UNHCR has identified 8,132 at-risk refugee children or adolescents from Iraq, 95 unaccompanied or separated children, and 6,316 women at risk.

Since January 2008, UNHCR submitted 7,569 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.



© UNICEF/SYR02996/ MINISTRY OF HEALTH STAFF

1. *Al Tanf Camp*: Located in the 'no-man's land' between the Iraqi border and Syrian passport control. Al Tanf hosts 1,300 Palestinians from Iraq, 360 of whom are children.
2. *Al Hol Camp*: Located in the north-eastern province of Syria, Al Hol hosts 485 Palestinians from Iraq, 125 of whom are children. 60 families
3. *Al Waleed Camp*: Located on the Iraq side of the Iraq-Syria border, Al Waleed now hosts 1,367 Palestinians from Iraq, 538 of whom are children.

Health & Nutrition

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

During the Breast Feeding Week that took place in early August, UNICEF organised 6 training seminars for Iraqi women on the benefits of exclusive breast feeding during the first 6 months of a baby's life.

UNICEF has supported the MoH in conducting a survey to assess the health and nutrition status of Iraqi refugees living in Syria. 1250 Iraqi families were interviewed using a questionnaire developed by UNICEF with support from the UNICEF Regional Office and also trained the teams of surveyors.

Nutrition Surveillance Update: As of the end of July 2008, 2,350 Iraqi children were examined by health workers in UNICEF-supported Ministry of Health Primary Healthcare Centres (1,296 boys and 1,054 girls). Nutrition surveillance until this point found that:

Wasting (weight/age): 5,19%. Only 0,68 % were severely wasted.

Underweight: 6,00%

Stunting (height/age): 6,81%

Anaemia: The number of children (6 months old and over) who were given haemoglobin tests totalled 587. Anaemia rate is 30,66%, which is high.

Breastfeeding: The total number of children, 6 months and younger, whose mothers were asked about breastfeeding, was 951. The percentage of exclusive breastfeeding among them was 67,82%. Children within the first month of age had the highest rate of exclusive breastfeeding: 84,17%. This rate, however, drops sharply as the child grows. At 6 months old only 34,23% children are exclusively breastfed.

Malnutrition: 24.21% 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. 19 children were referred to hospital with severe malnutrition; 6 of them were less than six months old.

Education

School rehabilitation update: Of the 160 schools in Damascus and Rural Damascus that UNICEF has undertaken to rehabilitate, 60 in Rural Damascus are 90% completed and 40 are 50% completed. In the remaining 60 schools work is between 5-35% completed.

Work will begin in the weeks to come in the 89 schools in Damascus and Quneitra governorates, of which 30 are covered by successful bids from entrepreneurs. For the remaining schools the bidding process is close to completion and work will begin as soon as possible.

The rehabilitation work will continue during the school year, as schools resume on 7 September after the summer break.



© UNICEF/SYR/3361 /Rashidi

Child Protection

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

➤ Over 15,000 children have benefited from UNICEF's psychosocial support activities.

Open Day Activities: One Open Day Activity was organised by SARC/UNICEF volunteers in the Child Friendly Space of Qudsaya on the 23 August, 76 children participated.

Special Day Activity: One special day activity was organised on the 6th of August in AlFayha'a play ground in Damascus; the Iraqi singer Kazim Al Saher joined 350 Iraqi children from all the child friendly spaces in their activities.

Child Friendly Spaces: From 15 February to end of July 2008, a total of 5029 children were registered in the UNICEF-SARC Child Friendly Spaces (CFSs), 2363 girls and 2666 boys. The most frequent symptoms which the new cases registered in July 2008 manifest are presented in the following table. Art lessons on painting, musical rhythm and handicrafts are incorporated into the Child Friendly spaces' daily schedule.

CFSs	Newly registered children	Sex		Passive	Depression	Anger	Fear	Aggression	Enuresis/Soiling	Change e in manners	Sleeping problems	Unaccompanied	Violence against smb	Difficulty in concentration	Mental retardation	Learning difficulties	Increased attachment to others	Isolation	Risk of sexual exploitation	Speech problems	Not attending school	Sight hearing Impairment	Conflict with law	Child head of household
		Male	Female																					
UNHCR Registration Center	733	382	351	94	133	255	312	60	95	183	138	2	25	64	3	97	121	107	2	35	16	52	20	0
Jaramana	108	56	52	3	6	16	28	2	4	12	11	0	5	8	1	7	15	8	2	2	0	5	1	3
Sayda Zainab	121	75	46	2	8	28	31	6	12	14	6	0	2	3	0	4	7	14	0	4	1	0	0	0
Qudsaya	59	27	32	0	0	4	3	2	1	2	3	0	2	3	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	0	2	0
Total	1021	540	481	99	147	303	374	70	112	211	158	2	34	78	4	108	145	131	4	42	17	57	23	3

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

Multidisciplinary UNICEF/SARC Child Protection & Psychosocial Support Units in SARC clinics: During July 2008 the total of 90 new cases were received by the Psychosocial Support units

Numbers and Diagnoses of the cases

SARC Clinic	New cases referred	Follow-up sessions
Al Mazzeh	12	61
Sayda Zaineb	49	76
Jaramana	29	90
Total	90	227

Total of referred cases visited the units	Anxiety Disorders	Mood Disorders	Speech problems	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder	Enuresis	Mental retardation	Autism Spectrum Disorders	Oppositional Defiant	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	Schizophrenia	Epilepsy	Assessment result: No psychopathological problem
90	18	15	13	12	8	8	4	3	2	2	1	10

Note: 30% of the cases have more than 1 diagnosis

Al Tanf Update: The activities in Al Tanf with regard to the child Friendly space, the women's groups and adolescents' groups are ongoing. UNICEF, Child Protection, Humanitarian Support to Iraqi Refugees provided psychosocial support, with the engagement of a psychologist, to the Palestinian adolescents coming from Al Tanf and Al Hol camps who were hosted by UNRWA in July and August.

Conferences/Trainings

- The 11th PAN Arab congress of Psychiatry on Psychological consequences of violence Evidence-based Mental Health was held in Damascus College of Medicine from 21 to 23 August 2008; UNICEF- Syria has partially sponsored the conference and presented the analysis of the data collected in the CFSSs on child protection and emotional well being indicators during July 2007 to mid February 2008 in the UNICEF symposium held on the first day of the conference under the title "Consequences of war and displacement for Iraqi children living in Syria". The staff of the UNICEF/SARC Multidisciplinary Child Protection and Psychosocial Support Units as well as the Psychosocial Programming Coordinator, SARC and the Technical Team Leader, SARC participated in the Conference. Their participation was funded by UNICEF as part of their capacity building and continuous training.
- The "International Forum On Mental Health And Psychosocial Support In Emergency Settings: Broader promotion and use of the IASC guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial support in Emergency settings" was held in King's College London, United Kingdom from 28 to 29 August 2008. UNICEF- Syria participated with the Child Protection Specialist of the Humanitarian to Iraqi Refugees' Programme in the Forum and presented the Child Protection and PSS, UNICEF Syria strategy according to the IASC guidelines which is currently implemented. UNICEF also funded the participation of the Psychosocial Programming Coordinator, SARC in the Forum.
- A training on Child Protection in Emergencies was organized by UNICEF's Regional Office and took place in Jordan from 24 to 28 August. UNICEF Syria participated with one staff from the Child Protection and funded the participation of the UNICEF/SARC project's Technical Team Leader.

Reports

UNICEF, Damascus Paper 3 "Iraqi Adolescent Girls: Voices to be heard" and Damascus Paper 4, "Parenting problems and counselling needs of Iraqi mothers" are posted on the UN Syria website (www.un.org.sy). The latter will be shared with UN agencies and partners in the upcoming Mental Health and Psychosocial Support coordination meeting.

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.

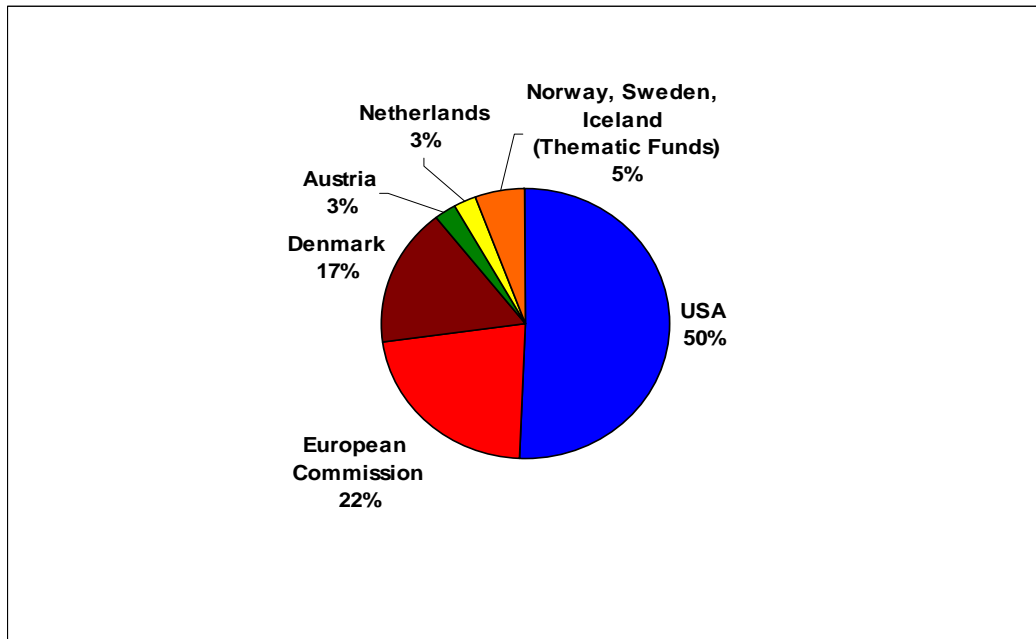
OPERATIONS

Advocacy & Communication



UNICEF has produced a film on the school rehabilitation projects. This film will be used in UNICEF worldwide communication and in different media outlets.

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/>