

**YARMOUK SITUATION UPDATE 17**

18 April 2015

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UNRWA continues to seek secure and unhindered access to Yarmouk itself and stands ready to expand the response in the case of further displacement from the area. UNRWA significantly expanded its response operations today, reaching the area of Babila, a neighbouring area of Yarmouk, for the first time. Humanitarian activities continue in Tadamoun, to the north-east.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- UNRWA continued to its humanitarian response to the Yarmouk crisis today, distributing humanitarian assistance to displaced civilians and host communities in Babila for the first time. Over 1,000 food parcels, 1,200 bags of bread and other humanitarian items were provided. UNRWA medical personnel established a mobile health point, treating 254 patients over the course of the day, a 65% increase from 16 April. UNRWA doctors identified 10 cases of hepatitis A, the result of contaminated water supplies in the area.
- The UNRWA distribution team will seek to access the adjacent area of Beit Saham, which is also hosting displaced civilians, tomorrow.
- Those receiving assistance are comprised of Palestinian and Syrian families displaced or affected by conflict, including host communities. UNRWA missions deliver a broad range of critical humanitarian materials to each of these families, including food, medical supplies, water purification treatments, mattresses, blankets, family kitchen sets and hygiene kits.
- UNRWA continues to provide humanitarian assistance to the civilians from Yarmouk who remain displaced in Tadamoun, an area on the north-eastern periphery. The Agency is also providing daily hot lunches for all civilians, complemented by regular distribution of canned food.
- The UNRWA mission met with local religious, political, community leaders and the Local Relief Committee in Babila who, in addition to the Syrian authorities, played a critical and welcome role in continuing to expand the humanitarian response.
- This new distribution in Babila and planned expansion to other areas represents a sustained demonstration of UNRWA's commitment to providing essential assistance to all civilians affected by the intensive armed clashes that have recently affected in Yarmouk. UNRWA's priority remains the delivery of humanitarian aid to civilians within Yarmouk itself and reiterates its strong demand for all parties to respect and comply with their obligations to protect civilians and to establish of secure conditions under which the Agency can deliver life-saving humanitarian assistance.
- The vulnerability of civilians in Yarmouk remains of the highest severity. UNRWA is deeply concerned that without access, the most basic humanitarian needs of up to 18,000 Palestinian and Syrian civilians, including 3,500 children, continue to be left unmet.

**UNRWA PREPAREDNESS**

- UNRWA mobilized its emergency response team on April 1<sup>st</sup> to develop a range of response scenarios, including large displacements to areas where UNRWA does not currently have access.
- UNRWA works closely with partners and UN Agencies to mobilize resources for a large-scale humanitarian response to support the civilians of Yarmouk.
- UNRWA has prepositioned stocks of food, mattresses, blankets, and hygiene kits to respond to the most urgent needs as soon as access is granted.
- UNRWA is working rapidly with all partners to assess the situation of the displaced civilians to the south east of Yarmouk, in Yalda, Babela and Beit Saham and respond to their most pressing needs.

**CALL FOR SUPPORT**

- As violence continues to profoundly threaten the lives and safety of Palestine refugees throughout Syria, UNRWA appeals for donors to increase their support to the Agency's [Emergency Appeal](#).
- The capacity of the Agency to sustain life-saving emergency interventions, whilst responding immediately to urgent developments such as the one impacting Yarmouk since April 1st, is gravely undermined by chronic underfunding for humanitarian interventions inside Syria.
- More than 95% of Palestine refugees now rely on UNRWA to meet their daily needs of food, water and healthcare.
- Priority interventions include cash assistance which enables UNRWA to access up to 470,000 Palestine refugees in need, including up to 39,500 currently living in hard to reach areas. This intervention will run out of funding after the distribution of second round of cash assistance in June.
- Additional funding is also required for critical non-food items including blankets, mattresses and hygiene kits for displaced Palestine refugee families throughout Syria.

<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/emergency-reports/yarmouk-situation-update-17>