Restoring Livelihoods - UNDP Response in Syria

As the crisis deepens in Syria after 23 months of escalation of hostilities, the United Nations Development Programme, in partnership with other UN and humanitarian agencies, are scaling up their emergency and humanitarian interventions to reach areas where people are mostly affected and need help.

The Syria crisis has left 4 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. Thousands are fleeing across borders every day, while others are leaving their homes to safer areas and at least 1.2 million people have taken shelter in public buildings, parks and with host families. Support mechanisms are under increasing pressure due to the limited and depleting resources of host families and local communities. The crisis has also exacerbated pre-existing levels of poverty and unemployment especially in rural areas.

As an immediate response to the emerging needs of the Syrian population, and in line with the Syrian Humanitarian Response Plan (SHARP), UNDP was able to mobilize USD 8 million from its own resources to kick-start its emergency initiatives. The initiatives are focused on immediate impact projects that create jobs, provide emergency livelihoods support, restore critical community infrastructure and community capacities and create a resilient local economy.

UNDP and its partners are reaching more people with emergency livelihood and business assistance every day. Winterization products, non-food items and hygiene kits were distributed in affected areas. In 2012, over 100,000 families from Deir El Zor, Aleppo, Homs and others have been better equipped to face the cold winter season. These families, who are currently residing in communal shelters, received duvets, blankets, carpets and winter clothes to keep their children warm. Based on a capacity assessment, women in different shelters have been identified and provided with raw materials to knit and sew blankets and winter clothes for a nominal fee.

Assessments are being conducted in Raqqa, Hassakeh and Homs to identify quick emergency livelihoods and income generation interventions for the affected population.

Basic Facts
Population: 23 million
People need assistance: 4 million
People internally displaced: 2 million (46% are children)
Refugees: Over 660,000
People need food assistance: 2.5 million
Funding Required for UNDP Humanitarian activities: USD 42 million

Source: OCHA
Emergency Employment for Improved Service Delivery

The programme aims at enhancing the resilience of the population through the provision of emergency livelihood support, utilizing emergency job creation schemes in areas like solid waste management, garbage collection, community infrastructure repairs and others. Basic social infrastructure will be restored through the use of labour intensive schemes. Tools and equipment will also be purchased to facilitate the work that will be carried out in affected areas. The programme is expected to create approximately 100,000 short-term job opportunities per month, with 30 percent of its target being women.

Emergency Support for Restoration of Livelihoods

The programme aims at providing cash assistance for community shelters and house repairs. A mapping process will be carried out to identify damaged community shelters and houses prior to cash assistance support. The programme will also include providing essential and non-food items (NFIs) to impoverished communities. Approximately 5000 households will benefit from cash assistance, 120,000 people will benefit from non-food items (NFIs) and 10,000 people will benefit from productive tools. Tailored capacity building and short-term vocational training will also be provided to centres mapped by the assessment.

UNDP is also mobilizing its youth teams in Raqqa and Hassakeh to support the needs assessments and delivery of humanitarian assistance. A solid waste management project in communal shelters and hosting communities has been developed; assessments and stakeholders’ analysis are carried out to identify target areas and potential local partners.

UNDP will increase the number and scope of its activities to alleviate immediate suffering and increase self-reliance of the Syrian population in order for them to live a safe and dignified life. Based on UNDP’s global experience in crisis affected areas, the below programmes have the potential to achieve much more than just relief; building sustainable livelihoods and economic empowerment, strengthening civil society organizations and improving the environment.

**Emergency employment for improved service delivery**
- **Partners:** UNDP, UN agencies, NGOs, CBOs, private sector
- **Location:** Raqqa, Hassakeh, Aleppo, others
- **Duration:** 12 months
- **Amount needed:** USD 16,800,000

**Emergency support for restoration of livelihoods**
- **Beneficiaries:** 5000 households and 130,000 individuals
- **Partners:** UNDP, UN agencies, NGOs, CBOs, financial institutions, private sector
- **Location:** Raqqa, Hassakeh, Aleppo, others
- **Duration:** 12 months
- **Amount needed:** USD 18,900,000

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Support Women Headed Households, Youth and People with Disabilities

The programme aims at providing assistance to vulnerable groups, including women, youth and people with disabilities, to increase their income through tailored emergency employment generation programmes. Through the programme, support to women headed households will be provided through the provision of economic and social services, psychosocial and physiotherapy support and vocational training. Start up grants and business development services will also be provided to create opportunities for people with disabilities and women to become entrepreneurs. Wheelchairs, crutches and other equipment will also be provided through the programme.

Developing Capacities for Community Resilience

The programme aims at enhancing the role of civil society organizations in engaging in emergency responses and delivering better services to communities. Grants for community-based initiatives will be provided in addition to training of psychosocial workers in order to provide support to crisis affected communities. The programme will offer an opportunity to facilitate networking and exchange of information and best practices.
Seeking a Safe Haven in Raqqa

Nineteen-year-old Razan had to flee Der El Zor with her family of seven, including five children - 3 boys and 2 girls, to Raqqa due to the violence there. "I was praying to be able to find a secure place for my family. With the help of organizations like UNDP we have been able to better manage in a very short time."

Since 2012, the security situation has been escalating in all parts of Syria but mainly in Der El Zor, Aleppo, Homs and Rural Damascus. Many people were forced to leave their homes and have sought alternative locations such as schools and shelters. Raqqa is one of the popular locations that received over 45,000 refugees from different parts of Syria including Homs, Rural Damascus, Idlib, Aleppo and Der El Zor.

As part of the Syrian Humanitarian Response Plan, UNDP has prioritized activities to respond to urgent humanitarian needs of the Syrian population. With an already existing specialized team in Raqqa, UNDP was able to distribute 406 carpets, 150 mattresses, 300 diapers, 700 duvets, 500 hygiene kits, 1,391 items of clothing, children bags and 240 sets of children clothing. As for the families stationed at Camp Vanguard hot water tanks, mixers and other necessary electrical connections were provided. Through similar interventions, UNDP was able to distribute winter essentials and support over 26,280 families living in schools and shelters.

UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in 177 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.