Syria: humanitarian emergency, help from Italy

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The number of Syrian refugees is now more than 2 million. In one year, according to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), their numbers in neighbouring countries have increased by 1.8 million. Countries to which, on average, nearly 5,000 Syrians continue to flee each day, and which to date have taken in over 97% of the refugees. The number of children among the refugees has crossed the dramatic threshold of 1 million, according to UNHCR and UNICEF figures. And about 740,00 of these young people are under 11 years of age.

Humanitarian emergency, says Bonino

The situation of the refugees from the conflict in Syria constitutes an emergency, commented Foreign Minister Emma Bonino, to which the international community must pay more attention. An emergency in which Italy too can lend support, through the “Missions Decree”. “We’re talking about 1 million refugees in Lebanon”, added Bonino, “which itself has just 4 million inhabitants. And 600,000 refugees in Jordan, some of whom I have visited, and a recent wholesale exodus of Kurds from northern Syria”.

Italian Development Cooperation initiatives

The MFA is providing significant help: 19,686,622 euros already funded for the Syrian crisis and a further 6,345,000 in the pipeline. The initiatives implemented so far amount to 13.554.522 euros, with more initiatives totalling 5,450,000 euros currently under way.

A multilateral payment of 500,000 euros has been sent to UNICEF to support the emergency programme in Iraq. Its aim is to provide humanitarian assistance in the water/sanitation sector for Syrian children and adolescents taking refuge in the autonomous Kurdistan region in northern Iraq. Italy’s contribution will be used by UNICEF primarily to provide drinking water and sanitation facilities to about 27,000 Syrian refugees in the three temporary UN camps in Qushtapa, Kawrgosk and Basirma in the Erbil Governorate. The project will supply about 20 litres of water per day per person (making a total of 540,000 litres per day) for a period of 6 months.

The re-opening of the Syrian-Iraqi border on 15 August led to a flow of about 48,000 new refugees streaming into Iraqi Kurdistan. Of these, 39% are minors and 15% aged less than 4 years old.

Source :
https://www.esteri.it/en/sala_stampa/archivionotizie/approfondimenti/2013/09/20130904_siria_emergenza_umanitaria_italia_in_soccorso/