EU mobilises additional €40 million in support of Syrian population

Brussels, 21 December 2015

The European Commission has adopted a package worth €40 million to tackle the longer-term development needs of the civilian population inside Syria, including Palestine refugees. This support is financed under the European Neighbourhood Instrument.

The assistance package will be implemented through International NGOs, EU Member States agencies and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). It comprises the following three programmes:

1. Restoration and stabilisation of livelihoods of affected Syrian populations inside Syria (€23 million): It will be implemented by consortia composed of International NGOs to enable a multi-sectorial coverage of needs in targeted provinces all over Syria. This programme will seek to minimise the economic impact of the Syria conflict, to support the early recovery and to enhance resilience of the most vulnerable Syrians, including internally displaced and vulnerable people as well as host communities, thus stabilising populations and decreasing tensions at local level. It aims at strengthening Syrian populations' livelihoods, protecting their assets, and improving their living conditions. The objective is to ensure they are better able to meet their essential needs and have access to activities which support their wellbeing. In parallel, this support will also contribute to resetting basic public services and providing opportunities for revenue generating activities.

2. EU framework for cross-border operations in Syria from Turkey (€7 million): EU Member States agencies active in southern Turkey will team-up under this programme to implementflexible, short-term delivery projects in particular on health, education, food security, civil defence and water and sanitation. These projects will benefit the Syrian population and local governance structures in northern Syria.

3. Supporting the resilience of Palestine refugees communities in Syria (€10 million): This will be achieved through supporting access to basic services (education, healthcare) and to livelihoods opportunities. In particular, 45,000 Palestinian pupils will have improved access to education, 450,000 Palestine refugees will have improved access to health, 2,000 Palestinians students will enroll in short-term vocational training courses and 17,600 Palestinans will have access to microfinance opportunities.

Background

This assistance package is in line with the resilience and livelihood objectives of the Syria Strategic Response Plan and contributes to the implementation of the "EU Regional Strategy for Syria and Iraq as well as the ISIL/Da'esh threat", adopted by the EU Foreign Affairs Council on 16 March 2015.

The Syrian conflict is having a devastating and lasting impact inside the country and across the region. As of October 2015, with the conflict in its fifth year, the needs of the affected populations are of an unprecedented scale: 13.5 million people inside Syria are in need of humanitarian assistance, 6.5 million people are internally displaced and 4.2 million people took refuge to neighbouring countries. The number of conflict-related deaths has surpassed 250,000 and more than one million have been war-wounded. The conflict has also caused extensive damage to vital infrastructure and has tremendously increased vulnerabilities and poverty levels. As the crisis intensifies there is an increasingly urgent need to find a lasting solution that will end this conflict. Only a Syrian-led political process leading to a peaceful and inclusive transition, based on the principles of the Geneva communiqué of 30 June 2012 and in line with the International Syria Support Group communiqués (Vienna process), will bring back stability to Syria, enable peace and reconciliation, create the necessary environment for efficient counter terrorism efforts and maintain the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian State.

Since the start of the conflict, the European Union and its Member States have mobilised over €4.4 billion, making it a leading donor of aid to address the consequences of this crisis. This assistance has allowed for urgent delivery of humanitarian and development assistance inside Syria and in neighbouring countries. Out of the total budget, the EU has allocated €156 million to resilience and

development projects inside Syria (including the current assistance package), mainly to support Education and livelihoods of affected Syrians.

For more information

EU support in response to the Syrian crisis:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/neighbourhood/countries/syria/index_en.htm

EU Delegation to Syria: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/syria/index_en.htm

EU Neighbourhood Info Centre: http://www.enpi-info.eu/

MEMO/15/6373