



4 April 2017. United Nations organisations and their partners have called for increased funding for Syrian refugees as a conference on supporting the future of Syria opens in Brussels.

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) have, on behalf of the 240 international and national partners and the host governments in the region, expressed extreme concerns about the current low funding levels of the response to help millions of Syrian refugees and the communities hosting them.

An estimated \$4.63bn is needed in 2017 to continue delivering vital protection and assistance for refugees and host communities. To date – only \$433m of the amount requested has been received, just 9% of what is needed.

There are now more than five million Syrian refugees living in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, and many more who have made the dangerous journey to Europe and farther afield.

“Without additional funding, all areas of assistance will be curtailed this year. Food and cash assistance will be reduced, or cut by mid-year, challenging stability and security in the region,” UNHCR and UNDP say in their statement.

“The situation is getting desperate,” said Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. “We are already seeing children who aren’t able to go to school, families who cannot access adequate shelter or provide for their basic needs.”

“The story is the same throughout the region - water and sanitation services, employment and housing markets are all under strain,” said Helen Clark, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme.

“We recognise and applaud the donations made so far, but the simple truth is that funding isn’t keeping up with needs,” added Grandi.

The Brussels Conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region is being held from April 4-5. The conflict in Syria remains the largest humanitarian challenge in the world – with 13.5 million men, women and children inside Syria also in need of urgent assistance.

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