

Event Programme:

SYRIA: CHALLENGES IN DELIVERING EFFECTIVE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

PRESENTATION OF FIRST IMPRESSIONS FROM UNHCR'S RECENT REAL-TIME EVALUATION

BRIEFING ON ACF SPAIN ACTIVITIES IN SYRIA

WHEN Thursday, 13th of June 2013
18:00 to 20:00, followed by refreshments

WHERE FRIDE
Calle Felipe IV, 9 - 1st floor, right
28014 Madrid Spain
[\(click for map\)](#)

WHO Paul Spiegel, UNHCR, Deputy Director, Department for Programme Support and Management
Ed Schenkenberg, DARA, Chief Executive
Jean-Raphaël Poitou, ACF Spain, Desk Officer for Eurasia
*Moderator: Amalia Navarro, UNDP, Coordinator of the UN Millennium Campaign
The event will take place in English.

WHAT With the Syrian crisis entering its third year, the on-going armed conflict is risking to spiral out of control as it increasingly implicates the countries and parties in the region. **The number of people killed in the war has reached 80,000 according to the UN.** No one has a comprehensive picture of the humanitarian needs inside Syria, but what is certain is that they are much greater than what humanitarian agencies with a presence in the country are able to address due to the lack of access and security.

Meanwhile, the number of Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries has reached close to 1.5 million and the latest forecasts indicate that they may reach 3.5 million by the end of 2013. These numbers are by far the largest of what the international community has seen in the last 15 years. In light of this picture, **the international humanitarian community should question itself in terms of its role and responsibility.**

On behalf of the UN, UNHCR is leading international efforts to respond to the protection and assistance needs of the Syrian refugees. As part of the UN's declaration that Syria is the highest priority emergency for humanitarian agencies (declared by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee in January 2013), it is a standard operating procedure for UNHCR to conduct a real-time evaluation of its emergency response.

This real-time evaluation (RTE) mission, which is taking place from 25 May until 6 June, involves senior UNHCR staff not having direct operational responsibilities in the context of Syria, as well as two representatives from NGO partners, including DARA's Chief Executive, on behalf of ICVA. The terms of reference for the mission note that the mission is to take stock of the response of UNHCR and its partners, in particular in three countries, Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq, and to provide support to staff on the ground. The findings should be used as an "immediate catalyst for organisational and operational change" for UNHCR. **Paul Spiegel and Ed Schenkenberg** will present the RTE team's first impressions of the mission.

In addition, **Jean-Raphaël Poitou** from **Action Contre la Faim Spain** will provide a briefing on the activities of their agency operating inside Syria. ACF Spain has been in the country since 2008 and has made continuous efforts to step up its response. Administrative blockages, denial of humanitarian access, intense violence and fighting, and insecurity are the well-known factors that have prevented an effective response. In addition, there are too few agencies that have a permanent presence in the country and cross-border operations from neighbouring countries are largely done on a remote-control basis, which implies that **little monitoring and verification is done on whether humanitarian assistance is reaching its intended destinations.**

The presentations will be followed by a moderated discussion on the future of humanitarian response in the Syrian context.