

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH) COORDINATOR

Context

The UNHCR Operation in Lebanon currently has over 580,000 refugees registered or awaiting registration. Based on the trends in arrivals from January to June this year, it is estimated that the number of Syrian refugees in need of assistance in Lebanon by the end of 2013 might reach 1 million. The dramatic increase in the size of the refugee population means that more is required to assist them as well as the hosting communities in which they reside. Refugees are spread across the country in some 1,400 locations. Overall coordination of the inter-agency response rests with UNHCR, with other UN agencies and NGOs playing critical roles in areas of their respective expertise. The Office has grown substantially since the beginning of the operation to some 500 staff. Field Units cover operations in Beirut (Mount Lebanon), Tyr (South), Tripoli and Qobayat (North), and Zahle (Bekaa).

Lebanon is currently assessed at security level 4: substantial. The unrest in Syria has had an impact in Lebanon and security incidents are on the rise, which can disrupt the smooth delivery of the humanitarian programme. In addition, the scattered nature of the refugee population often in areas with difficult access, pose challenges. Nonetheless, much has been achieved and refugees continue to receive a wide range of assistance, including food and non-food items, shelter, medical care, education assistance and psychosocial support.

The Government of Lebanon is not party to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees or its 1967 Protocol. There is no legislative or administrative framework governing refugee affairs. Refugees who cross unofficially into Lebanon, or overstay their visas, are considered to be illegally in the country and are at risk of arrest, detention and even deportation. UNHCR's mandate is recognized but the role of the Office very much depends on maintaining clear, open and transparent communication with the Government so that we are able to maintain the position of authority and respect currently experienced by the Office.

UNHCR is the recognised lead agency of the refugee response and leads the sectors of protection, non-food items, and shelter, and co-leads the education, health, social cohesion and WASH sectors. UNHCR co-leads the WASH group with UNICEF.

Objective

The principle objective of the WASH Coordinator is to support the sector and its established working groups and task forces in contributing towards the effective provision of emergency assistance to the refugee, returnee and displaced populations through the timely and efficient coordination of sector activities. The WASH Sector operates in the frame of UNHCR policies and strategic orientation in regard to activities, and conducts operations:

1. Based on Needs;
2. Sustained with credible assessments; and
3. Implemented with adequate capacity and monitored.

Tasks

Specifically, the WASH Coordinator will be responsible to facilitate and guide the following actions:

Planning and strategy development

- Develop a common strategic framework and guidelines on the WASH sector response;
- Identify geographical and thematic gaps in coverage;
- Update agreed response strategies and action plans according to the context evolution;
- Promote synergies with other actors active in complementary sectors;
- Draw lessons from activities and beneficiary feedback to revise strategies/plans accordingly;
- Ensure that the WASH sector response is guided by relevant policies, technical standards and commitments that the Government has undertaken under international human rights law;
- Ensure approval by relevant national and regional authorities of the strategic documents produced in the coordination of the WASH sector.

Assessment and analysis

- Collect and analyze available data related to WASH sector activities;

- Participate in joint sectoral needs assessment and analysis;
- Carry out specific needs assessments when necessary.

Coordination of programme implementation

- Ensure that national and/or internationally accepted and relevant standards and policies are applied and adapted in close coordination with the host country and relevant UN agencies and partners.
- Ensure appropriate coordination with partners and other sectors in implementing the WASH strategy;
- Promote the integration of agreed cross-cutting issues (human rights, age, gender, diversity, and the environment) using participatory approaches;
- Secure commitments from participants in responding to needs and filling gaps, ensuring an appropriate distribution of responsibilities, with defined focal points where necessary;
- Undertake needs and resources assessments with partners in order to prioritise needs and services

Monitoring, reporting and information

- Ensure adequate monitoring mechanisms are in place to review the impact of activities and progress against plans;
- Ensure adequate reporting and effective information sharing;
- Provide input to information material to be disseminated through the sector website;
- Regularly exchange information and best practices with relevant stakeholders;
- Provide input to WASH sector-specific 3W and 5W charts and regularly update Inter-Sector Coordination on changes.

Advocacy and resource mobilization

- Support in advocating for donors to fund WASH activities, while at the same time encouraging participants to mobilize resources through their usual channels.
- Support in discussions with main stakeholders on prioritization, resource mobilization and advocacy on WASH issues.

Training and capacity building

- Support capacity building initiatives so that refugees and other persons of concern and partners acquire the needed knowledge, skills, and sense of responsibility and ownership of programmes.
- Promote and support training and capacity building of partners and beneficiaries;
- Support efforts to strengthen the capacity of the national authorities and civil society.
- Share relevant guidelines and information materials on WASH activities.

Reporting

The WASH Coordinator will report directly to the Assistant Representative for Coordination and will provide technical guidance and advice to the UNHCR WASH unit.

Deliverables

Strategic document / Guidelines

Monthly Sector Activities reports (outputs, lessons learned, best practices, outcomes, impact)

Sector assessments reviews and analysis

3W and 5W charts (including gap analysis)

Website updates

Consolidated monitoring reports