



## BASIC ASSISTANCE

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## SECTOR OUTCOME

**OUTCOME 1:** Targeted severely (socio) economically vulnerable populations have improved access to essential goods and services of their choice in a safe, dignified, and empowered manner without increased negative coping mechanisms.

**OUTCOME 2:** Targeted population affected by seasonal hazards, displacement shocks, and unexpected circumstances, is able to maintain safe access to goods and services.

**OUTCOME 3:** Strengthened social safety net structures to serve the most (socio) economically vulnerable households by building on existing mechanisms, to improve social stability and to prevent the decline of (socio)-economically vulnerable households.

### INDICATORS

% of total affected populations identified as severely economically vulnerable

% of severely economically vulnerable households to benefit from market-based interventions

% of total affected populations found to be seasonally vulnerable

% of total seasonally vulnerable populations assisted

% of assisted Lebanese households (out of the total population)



\$219.6 m



\$67.9 m



\$1.1 m



## PRIORITY INTERVENTIONS

- 1: Scale-up and provide market-based interventions
- 2: Provide market-based interventions and in-kind support to seasonal hazards-affected households
- 3: Provide market-based interventions and in-kind core relief item kits for auxiliary needs households
- 4: Support, expand and strengthen existing social safety net structures



## FUNDING STATUS

Funding already received for 2015:

\$1.5 m

Estimated sector needs for 2016:

\$ 263 m



## 1. Situation Analysis and Context

The ability to meet basic household needs is shaped by socio-economic and living conditions. These circumstances vary according to seasons, insecurity or secondary displacement. The provision of basic assistance and the promotion of social protection mechanisms aims to prevent economically vulnerable households from falling deeper into poverty.<sup>1</sup>

Over the course of the Syrian crisis, Lebanon's growing population has seen fewer livelihood or income-generating opportunities and with depleted savings, many households struggle to access goods and services critical to their survival and well-being.

An estimated 70 per cent of the total registered Syrian *de facto* refugee population requires assistance to meet basic needs, and of this population, an estimated 29 per cent is deemed severely economically vulnerable. Extremely poor Lebanese households constitute 7 per cent of the country's population<sup>2</sup>, while over 90 per cent of Palestine Refugees from Syria households are in severe need of basic assistance.

In 2014, the Basic Assistance sector (previously "Basic Needs") focused on:

- 'one-off' standard newcomer kits (consisting of mattresses, blankets, kitchen sets, buckets/jerry cans, and baby kits);
- winter support (blankets, stoves, heating fuel, and children's winter clothes) for five months of winter; and,
- assistance in purchasing goods on the market, 'market-based interventions' (initiated in August 2014).

Lessons learned in delivering such assistance include:

- high logistical costs of reaching people in need due to a scattered population;
- weakened impact of direct assistance due to households reportedly selling some of the items they had received;
- through the selling of in-kind assistance, reprioritization by households of their spending according to their most pressing needs ;
- the need to conduct more systematic assessments of economic and multi-sector vulnerabilities to prioritize households in need of assistance and identify more clearly their priority needs; and,
- monitoring of the markets.

Consequently, a small-scale programme to monetize non-food items was piloted during the 2013 winter response. Post-distribution monitoring reports and evaluation<sup>3</sup> indicated that cash transfers allowed recipients to meet their basic needs while offsetting issues associated with in-kind distribution, such as poor transport infrastructure or low warehouse capacity.

Different forms of support systems are available to vulnerable persons in Lebanon. The National Poverty Targeting Program (NPTP), started by MOSA in 2011, provides social assistance to Lebanese households under the extreme poverty line. With the Syrian crisis pushing more households into poverty, the NPTP is scaling-up in a three-year emergency project to more widely mitigate the impact of the crisis on Lebanese households.

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<sup>1</sup> Silva, Joana; Levin, Victoria; Morgandi, Matteo. (2012), "Inclusion and resilience: the way forward for social safety nets in the Middle East and North Africa", MENA Development Report. Washington, DC: World Bank.

<sup>2</sup> US\$2.4/ per day is identified, determined and used for the Lebanese National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP) to reach the extreme poor Lebanese households. In 2013, the poverty rate was updated using the Consumer Price Index to US\$3.84 for the lower (food) poverty line.

<sup>3</sup> See findings from *Emergency Economies*, IRC Report on Winter Cash Assistance in Lebanon, August 2014 and DRC Post-Distribution Monitoring of Winter cash-for-fuel assistance.



## 2. Overview of 2015 Response

The sector approach is to help households meet their basic needs in a manner that allows choice and promotes dignity. Basic assistance entails life-saving support to affected households, with attention to protection sensitivities (i.e. age, gender, etc.) in all population groups, and priority to the severely economically vulnerable. Concurrently, the sector strives to promote Lebanon's ability to deal with complex emergencies and strengthen existing safety net mechanisms.

The sector will provide support through a variety of activities and transfer modalities including market-based interventions, vouchers, in-kind distribution and subsidized services, as appropriate to population group and context<sup>4</sup>. In-kind assistance has been critical to the response, and will remain a form of assistance to highly vulnerable populations in 2015. However, functioning and stable markets and a vibrant private sector make market-based intervention programming a viable option, with the additional benefit of supporting the local economy.

As beneficiary needs increase and resources diminish, the sector will optimize its impact by:

- Conducting an economic vulnerability household profiling of households of *de facto* Syrian refugees to ensure appropriate targeting, data collection and needs assessment,
- Scaling-up market-based interventions to severely economically vulnerable Syrian *de facto* refugees to meet basic needs and reduce negative coping mechanisms,
- Providing direct humanitarian assistance during seasonal shocks or unexpected circumstances to Syrian *de facto* refugees and Palestine refugees from Syria,
- Supporting and enhancing existing social safety nets for vulnerable poor Lebanese.

An Inter-Agency Targeting Task Force (IA-TTF) and Cash Working Group oversaw the design of a market-based interventions package, to be provided as a monthly transfer to severely economically vulnerable displaced households from Syria. This assistance is distinct from other sectors' market-based intervention programmes in that it is unconditional (though not without targeting criteria) and unrestricted, as well as aiming to meet a range of other sector basic needs through the calculations of a survival minimum expenditure basket (SMEB)<sup>5</sup>. The Lebanese poor will be targeted by activities of the Basic Assistance Sector. While there are no plans to provide cash assistance to Lebanese, support will be provided through in-kind assistance and subsidized social services largely through the NPTP.

### **This strategy arises from the humanitarian community's desire to enhance:**

- ✓ Overall targeting and economic as well as multi-sector vulnerability profiling
- ✓ Intervention planning for new arrivals, seasonal shocks and increased instability
- ✓ Referral, monitoring, and evaluation systems appropriate to the multi-dimensional crisis

Close collaboration with MOSA and the High Relief Commission (HRC) is essential to harmonize approaches toward targeting, implementation, delivery mechanisms, monitoring, and a longer-term strategy for sharing responsibilities. The sector will more deeply engage with local actors in planning and service delivery.

<sup>4</sup> Lebanese households do not receive cash assistance, under government policy.

<sup>5</sup> The SMEB (valued at \$435 per Syrian household per month) was developed following the minimum expenditure basket (MEB valued at 571 per Syrian household per month), which allowed the Inter-Agency group to think of all goods and services that could be accessed through a market-based intervention.



### 3. Overall Sector Target Caseload

Targeting of this sector will focus on:

- Severely economically vulnerable households
- Households affected by seasonal shocks or increased insecurity
- Newly arrived *de facto* refugees from Syria

The proposed targeting is flexible so as to accommodate unexpected needs that may arise and auxiliary needs identified by agencies in the field. Severe economic vulnerability targeting<sup>6</sup> is expected to complement other sectors' criteria. Specifically, seasonal assistance targeting is based on economic vulnerability and exposure to cold (linked to a temperature map). Sector partners will maintain necessary resources for market-based intervention and in-kind contingency stocks to allow for timely response to extraordinary circumstances.

Humanitarian agencies will coordinate with the government to target according to population groups' criteria, thereby reducing misperceptions of imbalanced assistance.

#### *Syrians registered with UNHCR as refugees*

The minimum amount necessary for survival is calculated from a Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB). Severe economic vulnerability is defined by multi-sector household profiling with a focus on expenditures. The IA-TTF findings and results from the 2014 VASyR estimate that 28-29 per cent of registered Syrian *de facto* refugees have household expenditures below the SMEB<sup>7</sup>. By the end of 2014, the sector will finalize an approach to prioritize households within the 29 per cent. The most extreme category of economic vulnerability for Syrian *de facto* refugees is 'severe', referring to a situation where household expenditure is found to be below the SMEB of \$435/household/month.

#### *Lebanese poor and vulnerable*

Eligibility criteria for the poorest (approximately 8 per cent of the population) and most vulnerable Lebanese are defined by the Government per the NPTP criteria. The targeting is based on Proxy-Means Testing (PMT), which evaluates household welfare from correlates of living standards.

#### *Palestine refugees from Syria*

Vulnerability of PRS is calculated by UNRWA following a family assessment, using a multi-sector methodology similar to the VASyR but tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of Palestine refugees.

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<sup>6</sup> While severe economic vulnerability is what defines and differentiates this sector from others in terms of targeting, other social vulnerabilities (identified through *de facto* refugee referral mechanisms) may also determine eligibility for assistance. Economic vulnerability will be assessed via a multi-sector household profiling exercise weighing in proxy indicators for expenditures. Social vulnerability is defined as one dimension of vulnerability to multiple stressors and shocks, including abuse, social exclusion and natural hazards. Social vulnerability refers to the inability of people, organizations, and societies to withstand adverse impacts from multiple stressors to which they are exposed. These impacts are due in part to characteristics inherent in social interactions, institutions, and systems of cultural values. Therefore targeting for assistance may incorporate some aspects of social vulnerabilities where they further exacerbate economic vulnerabilities.

<sup>7</sup> See Lebanon Targeting Task Force recommendations August 2014. As well as VaSyR results 2014



## Population cohorts

Category	Female	Male	Total
Syrians registered with UNHCR as refugees	275,362	249,138	<b>524,500 individuals</b> (29 per cent of total Syrian <i>de facto</i> refugee population+ seasonally vulnerable people living above 1,000 meters outside the 29 per cent)
Palestine refugees from Syria	31,360	30,739	<b>62,100 individuals</b> (20,700 households x 3 (using the PRS demographic statistics of UNRWA) being profiled; assisted with winter support and other market-based interventions. Reported under Food Security and Shelter sectors)
Vulnerable Lebanese	38,042	38,042	<b>76,085 individuals</b> (taken from the NPTP appeal, not including NPTP food e-vouchers)
Lebanese Returnees	10,100	9,900	<b>20,000 individuals</b>

## 4. Mainstreaming of Social Protection/ Safety Nets, Social Stability, Food Security

- 1. Social Stability:** The scale up of the NPTP for vulnerable Lebanese is expected to help conditions for the increased number of Lebanese pushed deeper into poverty by the Syrian crisis. Reaching more vulnerable Lebanese is expected to help improve social stability.

The proposed shift toward market-based interventions for Syrian *de facto* refugees has led to economic multiplier effects. This has mitigated the negative impact on struggling communities of poor Lebanese and *de facto* refugees from Syria<sup>8</sup>.

- 2. Food Security:** Food security should improve, with beneficiaries less given to skipping meals and better placed to purchase nutritious food. Beneficiaries of market-based intervention are selected jointly with the Food Security sector since the value of the WFP e-voucher contributes to the cost of the SMEB.
- 3. Child Protection and Education:** The protection of children and their education can benefit from reduced child labour practices. If households are better able to meet their SMEB, this means that more children will be able to attend school rather than be forced to work.
- 4. Protection:** The sector will coordinate with Protection to ensure that newcomers and households in need of in-kind assistance are identified and supported in a timely and safe manner. Distributions will be carefully planned with the Protection sector to maximize security. The sector’s activities will take into account women and girls’ capacities to safely access assistance. It will also strive to address negative coping mechanisms specific to women and girls, such as early marriage and sexual exploitation. Delivery mechanisms will be designed in consultation with women and girls. Women and girls will participate in post-distribution monitoring.
- 5. Health and WASH:** Health and WASH activities, especially disease management and hygiene promotion, will benefit from market-based interventions that allow recipients to prioritize and purchase relevant items. The WASH sector may also organize information sessions on hygiene practices alongside distribution of hygiene kits, and share best practices for safe storage of water with distribution of buckets and jerry cans.

<sup>8</sup> See *Emergency Economies*, IRC Report on Winter Cash Assistance in Lebanon, August 2014. Laong with CaLP and IRC *Impact evaluation of Cross-Sector Cash Assistance* April 2014, along with *WFP Economic Impact of Food E-vouchers on the Local Economy*, June 2014.



6. **Shelter:** Market-based interventions should be closely referenced against shelter activities since households may need weatherproofing materials during winter or in flood prone areas. Related child protection concerns during winter include heating for schools and cold-weather clothing. Finally, market-based interventions will reinforce in-kind assistance across all sectors by reducing the incentive to sell material items.

## 5. Partnerships

This Sector is under the leadership of the Ministry of Social Affairs.

### List of Partner Agencies

ACF	CLMC Lebanon	IRC	PU-AMI	TdH-It
ACTED	DRC	Makhzoumi Foundation	RI	UNHCR
ActionAid	Handicap International	Medair Lebanon	Save the Children	UNICEF
ANERA	IOCC	MoSA	SI	UNRWA
AVSI	IOM	OXFAM	SIF	WVI
CARE	IR Lebanon	PCPM	Solidar Suisse	