

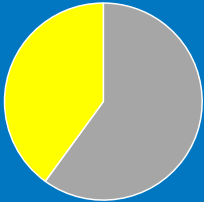


## DECEMBER UPDATE

- December developments
- Vulnerable Lebanese receive winter assistance
- Study: refugee vulnerability has skyrocketed since 2014



## FUNDING



Agencies and the Government of Lebanon have requested US\$ 1.87 billion in the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) (revised downward from US\$ 2.1 billion). As of 14 December 2015, agencies reported to have received US\$ 919 million (49% of the requirements)

## REGISTERED REFUGEES

A total of 1,070,189 are currently registered with UNHCR in Lebanon

## LEBANON

### INTER-AGENCY UPDATE

### DECEMBER DEVELOPMENTS

The Government of Lebanon, UN agencies, local and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) together launched Lebanon's 2016 funding appeal on December 17, 2015, appealing for US\$ 2.48 billion to support the response to the Syrian refugee crisis, including assistance to the affected Lebanese communities, Syrian and Palestinian refugees.

The renewed appeal aims at ensuring that the most vulnerable among persons displaced from Syria and poorest Lebanese are assisted. It also aims at strengthening the capacity of national and local service delivery systems to expand access to and quality of basic public services such as water, electricity; and reinforcing Lebanon's economic, social, environmental, and institutional stability.

#### Winter distributions: update

In Aarsal, the distribution of shelter materials is on-going in informal settlements. Over 60 per cent of the targeted population has so far been reached. A total of 2,131 Syrian refugee families (10,655 refugees) have received wood and plastic sheets to help them weatherproof their shelters against winter elements. Additionally, 6,500 families (32,500 refugees) were provided with fuel cards from UNHCR through Dar Al Fatwa (DAF) to keep them warm in the winter months. Distributions in the area are ongoing.

In Mount Lebanon, 17,737 families (88,685 persons) have received winter cards from Makhzoumi Foundation, PU-AMI and UNHCR.

In North Lebanon, 20,124 households (86,817 individuals) received winter cards including 6,230 families (28,000 individuals) in Akkar alone. Over 18,000 blankets and 238 stoves were also distributed to vulnerable families.

The Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) provided 3,400 plastic sheets to various organizations in the North including the Union of Relief and Development Agencies (URDA), PU-AMI and Solidarites.

In South Lebanon, the distribution of winter cards concluded with 9,617 Syrian families (48,085 individuals) assisted. Additionally, families received blankets from CISP and UNHCR.

In total, 141,146 Syrian refugee families have received winter cards across Lebanon. A further 3,210 families will receive cards in the next two weeks.

### Lebanese families in need receive winter assistance

In the Bekaa, 13,850 Lebanese families in need will receive winter assistance through the government-led National Programme Targeting Plan in coordination with UNHCR. To date, over 8,083 families have been assisted. In Arsal, 3,954 vulnerable Lebanese families have received blankets.

In the North, UNHCR distributed blankets to vulnerable Lebanese families referred by the Akkar Governorate Office and Halba, Mina and Minnieh municipalities.

## STRUGGLING TO MAKE ENDS MEET



*Amina, Lebanese widow, prepares food for her family.*

“I make my own dough; I bake it and feed my family so I can save LBP 2,000 or LBP 3,000. I try to save as much as I can so I can keep feeding them.”

Amina is struggling to put food on the table for her family. Her life turned upside down when her husband was killed two years ago in a shooting incident in Baalbek.

“Since then, I have been struggling to make a living and earn an income for me and my children”.

Amina and her family are among over 100,000 Lebanese families living in extreme poverty today and in desperate need for help. These families will benefit this year from winter aid provided by UNHCR. This aid includes blankets and cash assistance.

Check out the full story here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zltcpaXu02Y&feature=share>

## **16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Violence**

Community members and partners held events around Lebanon to mark the 16 days of activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV). In Akkar, refugees participated in four sessions on GBV prevention and referral, women's rights, children's rights and early marriage. In Sidon and Jezzine, refugees participated in info session by the International Relief Committee (IRC) on legal documentation.

The 16 Days of Activism against gender violence – celebrated from 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, until 10 December, the Human Rights Day – aim to galvanize action to end violence against women and girls around the world.

Today, 54 facilities across Lebanon, 36 of which run by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA), provide women and girls at risk, including survivors of GBV with psychosocial, medical and legal services. On average, 100 new people access these services on a daily basis. During the first eight months of this year, more than 23,000 persons benefitted services in those centres, 36 per cent of whom below the age of 18. A further 50,000 women and children in remote areas were reached by similar mobile services. "These activities give me all the support that I need. Because of them, I'm a strong woman now" – said one of the survivors interviewed.

### **Youth Committee activities**

In the North, over 200 Lebanese and Syrian youth from 12 different youth committees participated in the Youth Networking Forum, organized by Kulluna Youth Committee in collaboration with UNHCR, Caritas Lebanon Migrants Center and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC). The event provided a networking opportunity for participants who also had the chance to discuss and plan activities for 2016.

The main objectives of the activity were to create and establish a network that connects all existing youth initiatives in North Lebanon in addition to developing an action plan that empowers youth to address specific challenges identified within their communities.

### **Medical Support through the Instrument for Stability programme**

A neonatal intensive care unit was established at the Zahle Governmental Hospital. New equipment was provided with the aim of strengthening the capacity of the neonatal and intensive care units and maternity wards at the hospital.

A large provision of medical equipment and a water laboratory was also handed over to the Rashaya El Wadi Governmental Hospital in the Bekaa. The provided medical equipment includes cribs, fetal monitors, ultrasound machines, incubators, infant resuscitators and other emergency obstetric and neo-natal care supplies. It also includes vaccines, a solar fridge to maintain the cold chain for vaccines, medications for chronic and acute diseases, and a water laboratory to test the quality of the local water supply.

Both projects were supported by the Instrument for Stability (IfS) programme funded by the European Union led by the Ministry of Public Health and implemented by UNHCR, the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, International Relief and Development and International Alert.

## STUDY: REFUGEE VULNERABILITY HAS SKYROCKETED SINCE 2014

---

Beirut, Lebanon, 23 December 2015 - An estimated 70 per cent of refugees in Lebanon are now living below the Lebanese extreme poverty line of US\$3.84 per day, says the 2015 annual Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees (VASyR) in Lebanon formally launched today by the World Food Programme (WFP), the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

“This is a striking increase from 49 per cent in 2014,” said UNHCR’s Representative in Lebanon Mireille Girard, “We have reached a critical juncture. More than ever, refugees need our solidarity and support. Without a robust and sustainable humanitarian response, refugees risk sinking deeper and deeper into poverty.”

In addition to the sharp increase in poverty, the study’s key findings indicate a heightened reliance on debt and humanitarian aid coupled with reduced quality of food consumed and expenditure due to limited resources.

Nearly 90 per cent of the more than one million Syrian refugees in Lebanon are today trapped in a vicious cycle of debt. They are borrowing to cover basic needs – rent, food and healthcare – as their resources depleted, their ability to find work diminished, and humanitarian assistance decreased. Almost one in three families spends at least US\$ 400 beyond their monthly income, according to the study findings.

Refugee families have become more reliant on food vouchers than they were in 2014. Limited resources have forced over half the surveyed refugee families, double the number last year, to spend less than expected to cover their most basic survival needs.

“The findings of the VASyR are extremely concerning. Moderate food insecurity doubled, with 23 percent of households affected while the percentage of food secure households fell from 25 percent in 2014 to 11 percent this year,” said WFP’s Representative Gawaher Atif. “These results represent an urgent call to action, demanding that no time is spared in addressing the increasing needs and vulnerabilities of Syrian refugees here in Lebanon.”

On average, each household spent US\$ 493 a month, a 35 per cent drop from US\$ 762 in 2014.

Two-thirds of children under five had less than three cooked meals a day, compared to half in 2014. Only 3 per cent of infants between six and 17 months had a minimum acceptable diet, mainly because of fewer meals and poor nutritional diversity. Many adults are eating less to make sure their children are fed.

Last year, just over half of 6-14 year old children nationwide reportedly attended school. This rate was lowest in the Bekaa, where only 36 per cent attended school. Only 5 per cent of 15-17 year olds attended secondary school or higher, with Akkar reporting the lowest attendance rates. All efforts are being made to increase these figures this year.

“The Syria crisis is a tragedy for children on an unimaginable scale and continues to significantly impact their protection, wellbeing and development across the entire region. Children’s exposure to violence, poverty and displacement are having enormous consequences, in the immediate and long-term. UNICEF’s commitment to children in Lebanon continues to focus all efforts on those most vulnerable crisis-affected children. All children have the right to a life of dignity and the hope for a better future” said UNICEF Representative in Lebanon, Tanya Chapuisat.

In addition to reducing calories and nutrients in their diets and ignoring ailments, people are increasingly withdrawing their children from school, often sending them to work in an exploitative informal labour market.

The vulnerabilities of Syrian refugees in Lebanon have been compounded by additional requirements that have been in place since January relating to their stay in Lebanon. Residency must be renewed every six months, and to do so, registered refugees of working age have to sign a notarized pledge not to work. Most Syrian refugees who work do so informally, finding jobs in agriculture or construction for a few days each month, typically earning no more than US\$15 for a 12-hour working day. Women and children earn as little as \$4 for a day’s agricultural work.

The vulnerability survey was based on an assessment of more than 4,000 refugee households and over 100,000 family visits this year. Partner agencies including Action Contre la Faim (ACF), ACTED, Caritas, InterSOS, Mercy Corps, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Premiere Urgence – Aide Medicale Internationale (PU-AMI), SHEILD, Save the Children and World Vision International have contributed to collecting the information.

The 2015 inter-agency funding of US\$ 1.87 billion is today 49 percent funded. The Government of Lebanon, UN agencies and partner organizations have last week launched a revised appeal for the coming year amounting to US\$ 2.48 billion to cover the needs of refugees in Lebanon as well as affected Lebanese host communities and public institutions.

The full VASyR can be found on <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/admin/download.php?id=10006>

## DONORS

---

Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, European Union, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Luxemburg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America.

Contributions have also been received from the Emergency Response Fund (ERF) and the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) as well as from private donors, national and international organizations.