



UNHCR Lebanon Operational Update

April - June 2016

Syria Refugee Response

As of 30 June 2016, more than 1.03 million Syrian refugees were registered with UNHCR and are living in over 1,750 locations across Lebanon. Syrians approaching UNHCR for protection are counseled on the Government of Lebanon's instructions to suspend registration, and have their vulnerabilities assessed so that their critical needs can be addressed.

Protection

In June, UNHCR conducted a small survey amongst Syrian refugees to assess their intentions in the immediate future. Through focus group discussions and individual interviews, it was found that 49 per cent plan on remaining in Lebanon for now, pending return to Syria when conditions will allow for a safe repatriation, while 39 per cent expressed a desire to travel to a third country, 7 per cent wish to return to Syria when possible in the immediate future, and 5 per cent are uncertain. Well aware of the risks and challenges of travelling through irregular means and routes, Syrian refugees in Lebanon have consistently indicated their wish to travel via legal and safe channels, particularly through resettlement and other admissions schemes. In particular, they associate official travel with safety and better opportunities to receive appropriate support upon arrival. Health conditions for which humanitarian agencies cannot support treatment, such as cancer or orthopaedic deformities in children, as well as lack of higher education opportunities, continue to push Syrian refugees to move out of Lebanon.

Refugees in Lebanon consistently face challenges renewing and regularizing their legal stay, mainly due to the associated costs. However refugees' awareness of procedures is improving thanks to nearly 29,000 awareness sessions on how to renew their legal stay. Moreover, sustained advocacy on this issue conducted by UNHCR and other protection actors has resulted in the acceptance by the Government of a UNHCR attestation in lieu of a housing commitment when

refugees come to renewing their residency. Significantly, the Government has also agreed to replacing the pledge not to work, formerly required for renewal and regularization of legal stay, with a commitment to abide by Lebanese law. Discussions are ongoing as to the implementation of these procedural changes.

In the first half of the year, 2,211 refugees in detention have been receiving psychological counseling, legal support, core

A Touch of Hope

The "Touch of Hope" campaign, launched during the holy month of Ramadan, has raised over USD 1.4 million for Syrian refugee families in the region, including Lebanon.

The campaign was comprised of two components, firstly a 30-day prime time TV programme that was designed to raise awareness on the refugee crisis in the region. The episodes took the viewers on a journey throughout Ramadan, presenting the lives of refugees - the challenges and hardships they face, as well as their resilience and hopes for the future. Celebrities, ranging from actors to musicians to influential photo journalists and bloggers, starred in the episodes, seven of which featured the situation of refugees in Lebanon.

The second component was a digital marketing campaign. This campaign included a dedicated online platform for donations, a joint social media strategy between UNHCR, MBC and Aram Al-Ihsan, and engagement through the celebrities' social media.

UNHCR would like to thank everyone who got involved and donated to this campaign.



At a hackathon in Beirut in early June, 12 teams worked 48 hours straight to develop apps and tech solutions for the UN that could help better manage the refugee situation in the Middle East/UNHCR/Matthew Saltmarsh 2016

relief items and medical attention. Release requests were submitted to the Lebanese authorities for refugees with specific vulnerabilities such as older persons, persons with disabilities, and LGBTI individuals. This resulted in securing the release of 40 individuals from detention.

In order to strengthen the capacity of General Security Office (GSO) border officers to identify vulnerable individuals with specific needs and ensure a thorough understanding of the principle of non-refoulement, a full-day workshop and three-day training was held in April for GSO border officers on the “Essentials of Border Management and Refugee Protection”. The training was organized in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration and included the participation of regional experts, as well as UNHCR border observation staff.

The second quarter also saw the continued roll-out of the Protection Cash Assistance Programme (PCAP), which aims to address or mitigate protection incidents or situations faced by Persons of Concern (PoCs). Assistance may be provided to PoCs who are bridging a period of extreme hardship brought about by a protection incident, who are transitioning out of a protection situation into safety, or who face a particular protection challenge based on their profile. As of June, PCAP has been provided in 300 cases. In 30 per cent of the cases PCAP is helping a child at risk of or engaged in the worst forms of child labour. Other common categories of PoCs assisted include survivors of SGBV and single heads of households. Whereas emergency cash assistance is provided on a one-off and reactive basis, PCAP can be provided for a maximum of six months and can be used pre-emptively to prevent the deterioration of protection conditions.

Outreach Volunteers (OVs) play an essential role in working in communities and reaching out to the most vulnerable. There are currently 554 OVs mobilized throughout the country. Thanks to their efforts, 16,695 cases of persons with specific needs in need of assistance have so far been referred to UNHCR and partners. The majority of vulnerable persons identified and referred suffered from medical conditions that needed attention, had legal concerns such as birth registration, residency and marriage, or sought assistance due to detention of relatives or friends. Referred persons were provided with specialized services by UNHCR and partners to address their specific needs.

As part of UNHCR’s efforts to reach out to refugees and empower them to gain information through multiple channels, Facebook group pages have been set up for Mount Lebanon, the North, and the South and are managed by OVs. As of June, more than 40,000 refugees were sharing information through these pages including on available services and assistance, political developments, residency in Lebanon and resettlement. Other innovative responses were furthered through UNHCR’s support to a hackathon held in Beirut on 3-5 June 2016. At this event, innovators were challenged to devise unique, technology-driven solutions to help meet the needs of refugee and host communities. The winning team, ‘Kwik Response’, developed a sensor to be used in informal settlements to warn residents and authorities of fires, floods,

fluctuations in temperature and other hazards. The team won USD 3,000 as well as a promise of free office space at the Beirut Digital District to use to develop their innovation further.

Resettlement remains an important protection tool and durable solution for refugees in Lebanon. By the end of the second quarter, UNHCR had submitted over 11,500 Syrians for resettlement consideration to twenty countries. Resettlement and other humanitarian and legal pathways offer refugees the safety, protection and support needed to help them to rebuild their lives. As of mid-year, UNHCR Lebanon has received some 18,300 resettlement pledges, 97 per cent of which are for Syrian refugees.

Health

UNHCR continues to provide direct support to the public health system through financing 55 staff, including 20 nurses and midwives, to increase capacity at primary health care centres (PHCs). In June 2016, UNHCR donated a Computed Tomography (CT) scanner and Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) machine to the Rafik Hariri University Hospital. This support will enhance access to, and quality of, advanced diagnostic services for both refugee and Lebanese patients.

Refugees can access subsidized secondary health care at 53 hospitals across Lebanon. Since the beginning of the year, UNHCR has supported some 33,239 hospitalizations for life-saving care, as well as more than 147,000 PHC consultations. Due to funding shortfalls, some of UNHCR’s health sector partners have had to withdraw support to some PHCs, with PHCs in the South being particularly affected. Concerned PHCs can no longer subsidize consultations, and refugees therefore have to pay the regular fee - which can be up to five times higher than the subsidized fee - in these centres. This may limit access, increase the risk of negative coping strategies and place additional strain on secondary health care providers.

During the second quarter, the 2015 UNHCR Referral Care Report was published. This report is a key monitoring and evaluation tool, and provides an analysis of all UNHCR-supported hospitalizations in 2015. It monitors progress against targets and helps to identify trends in medical conditions and costs. Key findings of this report include a 6 per cent increase, as compared to 2014, in the number of referral care requests financially covered by UNHCR. The report also showed that the average cost of referral care rose from USD 489 per referral in 2014 to USD 544 per referral in 2015.

Education

As of June 2016, there were 487,615 Syrian refugee children in Lebanon aged 3-18 years old; approximately 147,000 remained enrolled in public schools by the end of the academic year. This represents a slight increase as compared to the 2014-15 academic year, and is linked to up-scaled absorption capacity built up by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE). These efforts were supported by enhanced inter-agency coordination and efforts to reach out to communities and increase retention rates. This involved an intensification of

outreach activities including in hard-to-reach areas. Refugees can be enrolled and attend classes in all formal public schools in the morning shifts, 238 schools offering afternoon 'second shifts' and 134 vocational schools.

At the community level, 230 Homework Support Groups (HSGs) have so far been established, targeting more than 2,800 students. HSGs are essential tools to ensure the retention and success of refugee students in areas where they require additional support such as languages and sciences. Parents and youth from refugee communities including those supported through the DAFI-university scholarship programme, with support from 148 Education Outreach Volunteers (OVs), are encouraged to assist in HSGs.

The first phase of the Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) has been completed. A total of 4,901 children were enrolled in this phase. Preparations for the second phase are in progress and involve strengthening coordination between all education partners at the sector level in each geographical area of the country, and harmonizing messages to ensure consistency and avoid confusion. UNHCR is also utilizing information from community services partners in the field to feed into the design of outreach efforts and adapt programming where necessary. In parallel, UNICEF is working on the harmonization of monitoring tools to analyse the success of outreach and retention efforts at the individual level. Due to these efforts, UNHCR and partners are expecting that enrolment will increase further in the second phase which will target some 9,000 Out Of School Children (OOSC). Although UNHCR does not provide funding for the ALP, together with all education partners, UNHCR takes a leading role in outreach activities aimed at OOSC.

Shelter

As of the end of the second quarter, 57 per cent of Syrian refugees live in apartments, 27 per cent in substandard buildings, and 16 per cent in informal settlements. By June, approximately 9,124 households have been assisted with various modes of shelter support. Among these, some 40,783 individuals living in informal settlements have received shelter materials including weatherproofing and floor-raising (for flood prevention) kits. More than 3,500 individuals have benefited from the rehabilitation of their accommodation in exchange for free rent or rent reductions.

Fire is a major hazard in informal settlements, particularly during the hot summer months, where it can spread quickly with devastating results. During the second quarter, some 200 fire awareness sessions were conducted and 1,200 fire suppression kits were distributed in informal settlements, enabling residents to respond more quickly to fires.

WASH

By the end of June, UNHCR's WASH interventions had led to improved sanitary conditions for 33,557 refugees and access to safe water for 19,653 refugees, which is essential preventing the outbreak of diseases. In addition, over 15,000 refugees benefited from hygiene promotion activities, during which they learn how to best adapt their behaviour to living

conditions during displacement, avoid hygiene and related health hazards, and manage waste and waste water in the most sanitary way possible.

In addition, the construction of nine water supply systems in the Bekaa and North Lebanon is underway; in particular, 72km of pipeline has been installed and the construction of two water storage reservoirs has been initiated. Upon completion, over 192,000 individuals are expected to be provided with increased access to potable water.

Basic Assistance

By the end of the second quarter, a total of 22,841 vulnerable Syrian refugee families were supported with monthly multi-purpose cash assistance. In coordination with WFP and the American University of Beirut, a new desk formula has been developed to assess the vulnerability of Syrian refugee families. The new formula does not require additional data collection and uses variables available in UNHCR's ProGres database. The formula allows for assessment of the entire refugee population, and quicker identification of severely vulnerable families, as well as enhanced programmatic convergence between targeting for basic assistance and food.

Families identified as severely vulnerable will be provided with multi-purpose cash assistance. Refugees of nationalities other than Syrian are assessed for multi-purpose cash assistance based on the same criteria. During the reporting period, a joint tender between the Lebanon Cash Consortium, UNICEF, UNHCR and WFP has been launched to identify a single Financial Service Provider (FSP) that will deliver services for transferring cash and e-vouchers for food to refugees. The use of a single FSP will result in efficiency savings for participating agencies through the sharing of costs and functions.

Excellence in Community Services

The UNHCR Award for Achievements in Community Services has been awarded to the Community-Based Protection (CBP) Team at UNHCR Lebanon. This award marks their outstanding work in enabling refugees to play a central role in their protection through the Outreach Volunteer (OV) programme. The team has mobilized hundreds of OVs and developed guidelines and tools to inform their work. These efforts have also inspired other CBP programmes around the world. The award is testament to the hard work of not only the CBP Team, but also tireless efforts and dedication of the network of over 500 OVs working in communities throughout Lebanon.

In 2015 alone, general and specialized OVs identified and referred more than 40,000 persons with specific needs and conducted information sessions to increase awareness on topics such as birth registration, legal residency, and health. OVs have also creatively addressed emerging problems through community-based solutions such as developing networks on social media, and mobilizing community members to participate in activities and events.

KEY FIGURES 2016

1,033,513

Registered refugees

453m

UNHCR funding requirement (millions USD)

47%

Funding level

48

Partners



Funding for UNHCR Lebanon was also received through private donations from Canada, Italy, Netherlands, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and the United States of America



UNHCR Lebanon Achievements at a Glance

Syria Refugee Response

April-June 2016



Protection

Reached April - June

Target if Fully Funded

	Reached April - June	Target if Fully Funded
Monitoring visits	28,755	43,000
Legal counselling	10,104	14,700
Individuals participating in life-skills activities	6,486	9,500
Number of individuals benefitting from individual counseling and case management	3,738	18,824
Individuals trained and engaged in community-based protection	4,804	18,824
Persons submitted for humanitarian admission and resettlement	11,940	19,100
Detention visits	2,211	3,500
Children assisted through case management	1,417	3,450
Specific needs cases referred through volunteers	16,695	65,346
Outreach Volunteers mobilized	554	600
Community centres established	27	28
Individuals registered and benefitting from community centre activities	30,874	55,930
Individuals receiving emergency and protection cash	1,720	18,824
Individuals receiving information on birth registration through individual counseling	15,725	11,160



Education

Children supported for primary education in school year 2015/2016 through financial support to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE):

1st and 2nd shift	27,337	118,983
Children supported for vocation education in school year 2015/2016	1,070	3,000



UNHCR Lebanon Achievements at a Glance

Syria Refugee Response

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Basic Assistance

Households assisted at least once with multipurpose cash grant	22,722	70,000
Individuals receiving seasonal support (winter 2015/2016)	142,827	Fully Funded
Households receiving fuel vouchers and/or in-kind items (winter 2015/2016)	8,757	Fully Funded



Health

Individuals receiving primary health care (including reproductive and mental health)	147,014	310,000
Individuals benefitting from life-saving and obstetric referral healthcare	33,239	98,861



Shelter

Individuals receiving shelter support	45,619	272,020
Shelter and site improvement in informal settlements	40,783	184,300
Minor rehabilitation for substandard buildings	1,306	54,430
Free rent provided in rehabilitated buildings	3,530	30,040



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Sanitation infrastructure, maintenance, desludging	33,557	670,206
Hygiene promotion campaigns, hygiene items	15,078	120,160
Access to safe water	19,653	473,692

CSP

Institutional and Community Support

2015 Allocated Budget

2016 Planned Budget

Institutional support (rehabilitation of infrastructure, staffing and training, equipment, supplies, medications and vaccines)	28.5 million	15 million
Community-based projects (health, education, livelihoods, WASH, roads and communities facilities)	10.5 million	18.5 million
Total invested	39 million	33.5 million