



As of 31 March 2016, more than 1.04 million Syrian refugees were registered with UNHCR and are living in over 1,750 locations across Lebanon. Registration remained suspended throughout the first quarter of 2016, following instructions from the Government of Lebanon (GOL) issued in May 2015. Syrians approaching UNHCR for protection and assistance are counseled about the suspension of registration, and have their vulnerabilities assessed so that any of their critical needs can be addressed.

Protection

On 8 January, the Turkish Government introduced visa requirements for all Syrian nationals entering Turkey. Since then, onward movements from Lebanon have virtually halted. UNHCR and partners have intensified monitoring, and have set up an ad hoc taskforce to identify possible increases in people smuggling and human trafficking.

A key concern over the first quarter was the continued deterioration of the economic situation of refugees. By the end of March, the level of debt accumulated by refugee households averaged USD950, versus an average of USD842 in 2015. Some 55% of refugee families had not been able to renew their residency permits due to the fee (USD200 per person aged 14 years and above) and the documentation required (including a notarized pledge not to work).

Between January and March 2016, UNHCR and partner agencies made 63 requests to the Lebanese authorities to release Syrian refugees with specific vulnerabilities, such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, and LGBTI individuals

who had been detained for irregular entry or stay. These interventions led to the release of 23 vulnerable individuals by the end of the reporting period. UNHCR is following up on the remaining cases.

In Lebanon, if the birth of a child is not registered with the Nofous office (local registry office) before the child reaches one, a lengthy and often costly court procedure will be required to complete the birth registration process. As a result, children born to refugee parents who are unaware of this birth registration procedure may risk becoming stateless. In light of this, the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and UNHCR are jointly working to increase birth registration by

London Conference

On 3-4 February, the Governments of Germany, Kuwait, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United Nations co-hosted the "Supporting Syria and the Region 2016" Conference in London. This conference brought together over 60 countries, international organizations, business representatives, civil society, as well as people directly affected by the war in Syria, to agree on a comprehensive approach to this protracted crisis. UNHCR is working alongside the conference hosts and the Government of Lebanon towards the realization of commitments made in London, particularly in relation to the simplification of residency requirements for Syrian refugees.



UNHCR High Commissioner Filippo Grandi visited a class of Syrian refugees at the Ibtihaj Kadoura Primary School in the Bir Hassan neighborhood of Beirut/ UNHCR/ B. Denton 2016

refugee parents with the Nofous office at the Personal Status Department by combining this process with the update of newborns in UNHCR files. At Reception Centers, UNHCR, MOSA and partners provide individualized counselling and support. During the reporting period, MoSA staff had counselled over 7,000 refugee families on how to register the birth of their children with the Lebanese authorities.

In February 2016, UNHCR Lebanon revised its Community-Based Protection (CBP) strategy. The core components of the strategy entail working with and through communities to identify concerns, share information, refer persons who need immediate care and prevent risks within their communities. Outreach Volunteers are a core component of the CBP strategy and a review is underway to ensure quality, consistency, impact and accountability of the Outreach Volunteer programme, as well as other community structures. This is being done through developing a standard training curriculum and putting in place accountability and feedback mechanisms. There are currently 553 Outreach Volunteers. During the first quarter, the volunteers referred 7,356 cases to UNHCR involving individuals in need of specific assistance, such as persons facing challenges to register births. They also carried out community initiatives such as collecting clothes to distribute to the most vulnerable, constructing fences in informal settlements to act as safety barriers for children, mobilizing communities on school enrolment, health risk prevention, and sharing information on services through community outreach, home visits and social media. Thanks to the efforts of Outreach Volunteers, refugee communities throughout Lebanon are better informed on the services and assistance available to them.

During the reporting period, 14,640 persons, particularly women, youth and children participated in social activities at Community and Social Development Centres, with 17% enrolling in life-skill activities, such as IT workshops.

In 2016, UNHCR will continue to strengthen social support mechanisms for refugees and vulnerable Lebanese. As part of this, UNHCR is funding over 160 staff at MOSA to coordinate the humanitarian response, conduct outreach, share information, and provide assistance at the 57 MOSA Social Development Centres (SDCs). Additionally, UNHCR Lebanon is engaging many partners and stakeholders with capacity-building activities. In the reporting period, UNHCR conducted a workshop on UNHCR and the Syria Crisis for Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) officers. The officers were introduced to the mandate of UNHCR and given an overview of relevant protection issues in relation to the Syrian refugees. A training curriculum on refugee issues is in development aimed at officers of the LAF, Internal Security Forces and General Security Office. UNHCR is also engaging its partners and academic institutions in similar capacity-building initiatives. These activities help UNHCR to spread awareness of refugee issues and supports GOL and other actors as they offer protection and assistance to refugees.

Resettlement remains an important protection tool and a durable solution for refugees in Lebanon. By the end of March 2016, UNHCR submitted over 7,000 Syrians for

resettlement consideration. Resettlement offers refugees the safety, protection and the support needed to help them rebuild their lives. So far, UNHCR Lebanon has received over 15,000 resettlement pledges. UNHCR is following up on these commitments.

Basic Assistance

As of March 2016, close to 19,500 severely vulnerable Syrian refugee families were being supported with monthly multi-purpose cash assistance. This quarter UNHCR published the results of a Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) exercise, measuring the impact of cash-based interventions in Lebanon from October-December 2015. PDM Data was collected from UNHCR's cash database, bank reports, a randomized phone survey of nearly 300 households, and reports and observations from field offices. Key findings of the PDM included that refugees face few challenges accessing cash through ATMs and that cash assistance is a key lifeline for refugees predominantly being used to pay for food and rent. The PDM also found however that refugees are still struggling to make ends meet: 45 percent of cash recipients reported taking on additional debt in order to cope, and 24 percent reduced the amount of food they consumed.

The first quarter of 2016 also saw the completion of UNHCR's programme of winter assistance. The number of people reached with cash assistance this winter has doubled compared to last, thanks to the generous contributions of donors, which allowed UNHCR and partners to help mitigate the high risk that winter represented for refugees given their level of vulnerability. By the end of March more than 148,000 Syrian refugee households had received winter cash assistance. This assistance was offered for a total of five months to vulnerable refugee households and was complemented with in-kind assistance in the form of blankets, stoves and fuel vouchers. Vulnerable Lebanese households also benefited from winter support and distributions.

Shelter

Thanks to site improvements executed throughout this and the previous quarter, informal settlements (IS) and collective shelters (CS) were able to withstand the winter weather conditions in the first quarter. UNHCR and partners have conducted regular shelter assessments and have assisted refugee families as required. These assessments have also helped UNHCR and partners to identify sites prone to flooding and assist them with improvement works to ensure adequate drainage and accessibility.

Over 19,000 families living in substandard buildings received shelter assistance through the distribution of weatherproofing kits, minor repairs such as sealing windows, doors and roofs, and by rehabilitating substandard units in exchange for a period of reduced or free rent to increase tenure security.

WASH

In the first quarter of 2016, UNHCR's WASH interventions have led to improved sanitation conditions, including waste

collection services for 17,796 refugees, access to safe water has been improved for over 10,000 refugees, and 6,026 refugees have benefited from hygiene promotion activities.

WASH activities also include the continuation of preparatory works for the upgrade of nine water supply systems in the Bekaa and North Lebanon. The project will involve the replacement of over 156 km of sanitation networks, construction of three large reservoirs, drilling and equipping of four boreholes and water connections to more than 10,000 households. These works will significantly improve water supply and sanitation conditions in the target areas.

Health

UNHCR continues to support the Lebanese public health system. UNHCR is directly financing 55 staff, including 20 nurses and midwives. Refugees can access subsidized secondary health care at 55 hospitals across Lebanon. So far this year UNHCR has supported over 61,000 primary health care consultations, and more than 17,000 hospital admissions for life-saving and obstetrics care, a slight rise in admissions as compared to the last quarter.

Education

As of March 2016, over 460,000 Syrian refugee children in Lebanon are aged 3-17 years old, approximately 200,000 of them are currently in formal education. 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.

In the first quarter of 2016, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) started the review and development of Reaching All Children with Education II (RACE II). This five year plan (2017 – 2021) seeks to build on lessons learned from RACE I and focus on ensuring access to quality learning opportunities for all, including the most vulnerable and hardest-to-reach children and youth.

As part of its support to RACE and MEHE, UNHCR financially supports the employment of 11 MEHE staff and plays a significant role in outreach and awareness-raising to children and communities, including on the Accelerated Learning Programme. To increase school enrolment and prevent absenteeism, UNHCR continues to mobilize parents and communities through 126 Parent Groups and 117 Homework Support Groups. A tripling of this number is planned in the course of this year.

UNHCR is following up on the enrolment of over 1,000 refugee youth in formal vocational and university education, providing some with language skills, involving them in community activities and providing younger students with homework support. These are organized at the community level and at the refugees' living areas to secure access and limit the costs and risks associated with movements.

Winter Support Programme

Winter represented a critical challenge this year due to the widespread and worsening vulnerabilities of refugee families. The number of people reached with cash assistance through this year's Winter Support Programme doubled compared to last year's, thanks to the generous contributions of donors to UNHCR and partners. By the end of March more than 148,000 Syrian refugee households had received winter cash assistance. This assistance was offered for a total of five months to vulnerable refugee households and was complemented with in-kind assistance in the form of blankets, stoves and fuel vouchers. Close to 27,000 refugee households received shelter kits and almost 2,400 households in informal settlements benefited from site improvements to reduce flooding due to winter rain and snow. Shelter support is provided all year round to ensure that refugees can live in as dignified conditions as possible.

KEY FIGURES 2016

1,048,275	453m	16%	48
Registered refugees	UNHCR funding requirement (millions USD)	Funding level	Partners



Funding for UNHCR Lebanon was also received through private donations from Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Qatar, and the UAE.



UNHCR Lebanon Achievements at a Glance

Syria Refugee Response

January-March 2016



Protection

Reached January - March

Target if Fully Funded

Monitoring visits	16,278	43,000
Legal counselling	2,069	14,700
Persons submitted for humanitarian admission and resettlement	7,270	19,100
Detention visits	984	3,500
Children assisted through case management	722	3,450
Specific needs cases referred through volunteers	7,356	65,346
Outreach Volunteers mobilized	553	600
Community centres established	27	28
Individuals registered and benefitting from community centre activities	14,640	55,930
Individuals receiving emergency protection cash	642	18,824
Individuals receiving information on birth registration through individual counseling	9,003	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



Basic Assistance

Households assisted at least once with multipurpose cash grant	19,486	70,000
Individuals receiving seasonal support (winter 2015/2016)	142,827	Fully Funded
Households receiving fuel vouchers and/or in-kind items (winter 2014/2015)	8,757	Fully Funded



Health

Individuals receiving primary health care (including reproductive and mental health)	61,152	310,000
Individuals benefitting from life-saving and obstetric referral healthcare	17,004	98,861



Shelter

Individuals receiving shelter support	17,328	272,020
Shelter and site improvement in informal settlements	15,181	184,300
Minor rehabilitation for substandard buildings	1,876	54,430
Free rent provided in rehabilitated buildings	271	30,040



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Sanitation infrastructure, maintenance, desludging	17,796	670,206
Hygiene promotion campaigns, hygiene items	6,026	120,160
Access to safe water	10,146	473,692



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