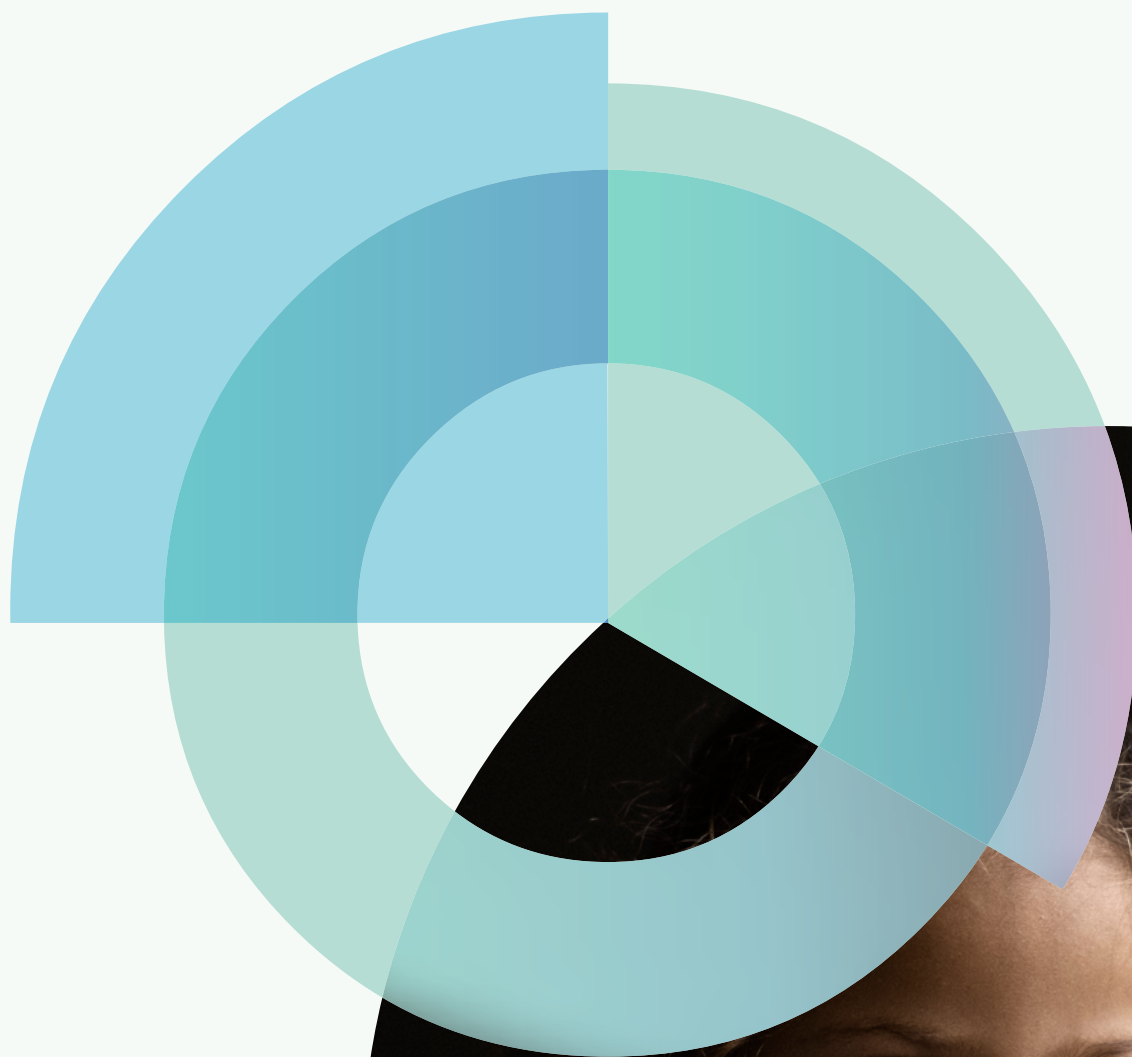


# REGIONAL NEEDS OVERVIEW 2021

REGIONAL REFUGEE  
AND RESILIENCE PLAN



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# Executive Summary

**The Syria refugee crisis remains the largest humanitarian and development crises in the world. Across the five main Syrian-refugee hosting countries including under the 3RP – Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt – over 10 million people need some form of humanitarian and resilience support going into 2021. This includes some 5.5 million Syrian refugees and 4.8 million impacted host community members, which is the highest number of people in need of some form of assistance in this crisis, in nearly a decade.**

Alongside the record numbers of people in need, the level of vulnerability among refugees and impacted host community members is growing. Five key underlying trends are driving this need: the effects of large-scale protracted displacement, macroeconomic forecasts, socioeconomic conditions, COVID-19, and demographic pressures. These interlinked trends have worsened existing structural and individual vulnerabilities and, in some cases, created new vulnerabilities, with long-term effects yet to be fully measured. The trends have also deepened pre-existing inequalities, the most pervasive being gender inequality.

This 3RP Regional Needs Overview (RNO) provides a consolidated overview of the needs and vulnerabilities of refugees and impacted host community members at both the regional and country level based on the data and information from over 100 assessments and studies conducted throughout 2020. It is intended to inform 3RP regional and country-level planning for 2021 and beyond, as well as further research and policy efforts. While the scale and scope of needs vary across the 3RP countries, a common regional picture emerges, in addition to the specific country dynamics. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic hit first

the region early in the year and was followed by other waves that at the time of writing continue to impact the lives of millions of refugees and host communities alike. Similarly, in the context of a global economic recession, host countries have further stretched thin the resources needed to fund services in support of the vulnerable population. Economic forecasts for 3RP countries in 2020 and beyond have been progressively downward revised from early 2020, especially in Lebanon where compounding crises have had devastating effects. Rises in levels of unemployment, income and multidimensional poverty, and food insecurity are among the greatest factors driving individual need in the short-term. The high youth population across the region places stressors on the limited capacities of education and livelihoods sectors. Additional demographic pressures are a result of worsening social cohesion due to competition over limited resources, services, and opportunities. At a time where the social fabric is under pressure, violence against women and risks of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) continue to be reported across the region. Moreover, the broader health impacts driven by COVID-19 will also entail long term consequences for the most vulnerable people.

Against this backdrop, a clear set of regional needs have emerged. Protection-related intersectional needs, particularly those related to legal status, gender, age and specific needs, have been highlighted across regional assessments. Syrian refugees additionally continue to need opportunities for durable solutions. The need for broader availability and improved quality of education, livelihoods opportunities and access to quality food and health care is essential. With rises in the use of negative coping mechanisms by vulnerable individuals observed across the region, support to address these needs, among others, is critical. Enhancing local capacities, specifically infrastructure, service provision, and social safety net programmes, is a critical element to ensure that the needs of vulnerable individuals can be met in the medium and long-term by building resilience.

## Methodological considerations

*The Regional Needs Overview (RNO) of the 3RP is the first document of this kind that complements and informs a Regional Response Plan. While all regional crises around the world build their narratives and responses around country-specific needs assessments, this RNO also aims at streamlining and identifying common trends and dynamics that may impact the region alike. It is therefore essential to recognise and praise the efforts made by different actors and stakeholders involved in this process and taking this document as a starting point for future publications.*

*Before reading, it is therefore important to share some methodological considerations. First of all, countries employ various methodologies, and data availability varies across the region. Second, similar types of assessments undertaken in other countries by the same agency consider different information, based on available secondary data. Third, at the time of writing, new waves of COVID-19 pandemic are unfolding globally, and across the region, the depth of the needs will continue to evolve and grow.*

*More information is available on the 3RP regional and country websites, including detailed needs analyses.*

<http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org>



# Population

## ★ TURKEY

**3,635,410**  
registered Syrian refugees

**3,635,410**  
projected registered Syrian  
refugees by December 2020

**3,635,410**  
estimated total number  
of Syrians

**1,800,000**  
number of impacted host  
community members



## LEBANON



**879,529**  
registered Syrian refugees

**800,000**  
projected registered Syrian  
refugees by December 2020

**1,500,000**  
estimated total number  
of Syrians

**1,500,000**  
number of impacted host  
community members

## ★ SYRIA

## ★ IRAQ



**241,738**  
registered Syrian refugees

**255,000**  
projected registered Syrian  
refugees by December 2020

**245,810**  
estimated total number  
of Syrians

**231,938**  
number of impacted host  
community members

## ★ JORDAN



**661,997**  
registered Syrian refugees

**633,314**  
projected registered Syrian  
refugees by December 2020

**1,300,000**  
estimated total number  
of Syrians

**520,000\***  
number of impacted host  
community members

## ★ EGYPT



**130,187**  
registered Syrian refugees

**136,000**  
projected registered Syrian  
refugees by December 2020

**500,000**  
estimated total number  
of Syrians

**804,480\*\***  
number of impacted host  
community members

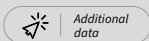
## REGIONAL TOTAL

**5,580,518\*\***  
registered Syrian refugees

**5,400,683**  
projected registered Syrian  
refugees by December 2020

**7,122,179**  
estimated total number  
of Syrians

**4,856,418**  
number of impacted host  
community members



Additional  
data

\* Numbers are based on 2020 figure

\*\* The Regional total includes  
31,657 Syrian refugees in North Africa

Figures as of 18 November 2020



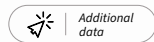


# Key Facts



## Social Cohesion

Around **two-in-five** host community members believe that the cost of living in their neighbourhood increased due to the presence of refugees.



## Informal Employment

Informal employment is particularly high among **women** and even more for women who are heading households.

In Turkey, **42,2%** of women working within the informal employment sector as carers, cleaners and seasonal workers are without social security.



## Gender-based Violence

In Egypt, Iraq and Jordan, violence against women was one of the main reasons women felt unsafe in their homes, with nearly **1 in 3 women** fearing domestic violence (by husband or family).



## Situation

The socio-economic impact of movement restrictions and lockdowns has been dramatic. In Lebanon, according to the recently completed annual Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees **88%** of the total refugee population cannot afford the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket, compared 55% at the end of 2019.



## Host Communities

The region's 2020 GDP growth has been **downgraded** by **7.4 %** points on average. Particularly, self-employed, informal sector workers lacking social protection, and individuals working in sectors directly hit by the COVID-19 crisis, such as tourism, retail, textile, and garment industries are at **risk of falling into poverty**.



## Digital Divide

The digital divide is exacerbating inequalities, particularly **gender inequalities**, in the access to skills development, livelihoods opportunities, as well as social assistance. In the Arab region, **nearly half** of the female population of 84 million is **not connected** to the internet nor has access to a mobile phone.



## Residence

**95%** of Syrian refugees within the region are living in urban and peri-urban areas, while **5%** are living in refugee camps.



## Gender and Youth

Some **45%** of Syrian refugees within the region are below the age of 18. Some **45%** of host community populations are below the age of 24.

Some **44%** of Syrian refugees within the region are female. Some **49%** of host community populations within the region are female.



## Return

A strong majority of Syrians **wish to return to Syria one day**, a much smaller number plan to return to Syria in the near future. The key issues influencing return intentions include safety and security, livelihoods opportunities, access to shelter and access to basic services.

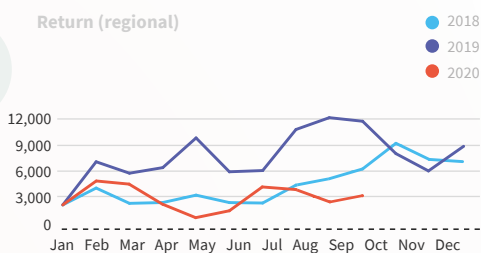


## People with Disabilities

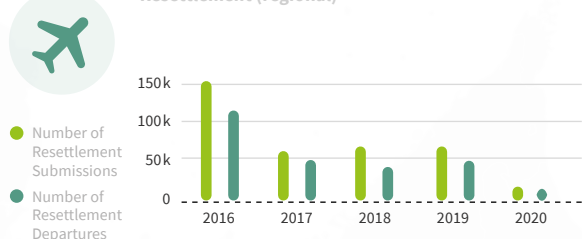
Global estimates suggest that **15%** of the refugee population are people with disabilities.



## Return (regional)



## Resettlement (regional)



# Regional Context Analysis

## The needs of Syrian refugees and their host communities in the 3RP countries are shaped by several key regional trends.

These trends include large-scale protracted displacement, macroeconomic trends and socio-economic conditions, the compounding and multi-faceted impacts of COVID-19, and demographic drivers. Despite the challenges brought by these trends, throughout nearly a decade of displacement, host countries, institutions, and communities continue to provide asylum and provide services to more than 5.5 million Syrian refugees, and

refugees of other nationalities, as well as stateless and other persons of concern.

The unprecedented political, economic and social situation across the region, in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and other myriad challenges, has underscored the need for sustained support to host governments, host communities, refugees, and other persons of concern.

This section provides a regional overview for each of these key trends which shape needs and vulnerabilities across the region.



## Estimated Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Arab Region

It is estimated that one in quarter of the Arab populations are ranked as poor. In short-term, responding to COVID-19 requires humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable individuals and households. At the same time, considering the mid- to long-term impact, it is important to take into account the concept of building back better by bolstering capacities of vulnerable individuals, institutions and invigorating private sectors.



## ***Palestine refugees***

Palestine refugees affected by the Syria crisis remain particularly vulnerable and are exposed to substantial humanitarian and protection risks. An estimated two-thirds of Palestine refugees in Syria have been displaced from their district of origin at least once since the beginning of the conflict, and 91 per cent of Palestine refugee households live in absolute poverty. Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) who have fled the country and are currently in Lebanon and Jordan continue to face a precarious and marginalized existence due to their uncertain legal status and limited social protection mechanisms, with very limited access to basic services other than those provided by UNRWA. Deteriorating socio-economic conditions, constrained employment opportunities and increased costs of living experienced in both Lebanon and Jordan have increased the vulnerability of PRS families. The situation is further compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has exacted a heavy socio-economic and public health toll.

## ***COVID-19 impact and opportunities for achieving Agenda 2030***

The COVID-19 pandemic specifically revealed the fragility of health and food systems, provided a strong rationale for the 2030 Agenda and demonstrated how inter-related the SDGs are. It started as a health crisis, but soon affected all sectors of the economy, imposing serious challenges to the achievement of all SDGs. At the same time, COVID-19 presents an opportunity for the international community to act in solidarity and to turn this crisis into an impetus to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

### **Manar (4)**

Syrian Refugee

Four-year-old Syrian refugee, Manar, is photographed at home in Beirut



# Large-scale Displacement

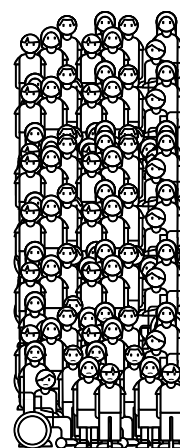
**Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt continue to host over 5.5 million Syrian refugees as of the end of 2020. The registered Syrian refugee population remained relatively stable throughout the year and there was no major arrival of new refugees into the host countries in 2020 as borders and admissions practices remained closely managed by host states.**

Some countries witnessed modest net increases in registered refugees primarily due to the registration of new-borns. In addition to registered Syrian refugees, estimates indicate that a significant number of additional Syrians reside in host countries under various arrangements. It is anticipated that a large-scale refugee population will remain in host countries for the time being given current return and resettlement dynamics which will continue to drive needs in 3RP countries. Regarding return, order and movement restrictions as a result of COVID-19 significantly impacted return movements. While the levels of return in the first two months of 2020 were broadly comparable to previous years, return through official border crossings slowed down significantly in March as countries started to enact border measures and other public health containment policies to reduce the spread of the coronavirus. There were no verified returns to Syria between late March and late May 2020. Return movements resumed by June in Turkey, Lebanon, and Iraq, although at lower rates than before the pandemic. While there may be an increased number of returns in 2021 compared to 2020, this is subject to the evolution of COVID-19 pandemic, as well as socio-economic conditions in host countries, and inside Syria. Furthermore, the worsening socio-economic situation in the region may cause more refugees to consider irregular movements beyond the region, often using unsafe means.

Since reaching its peak of 76,000 resettlement submissions in 2016, there has been a dramatic reduction of resettlement places for Syrian refugees in recent years. The global decrease in the number of resettlement places available and a shifting of resettlement opportunities to other global priority situations have been the primary drivers for the decrease. Still, despite an overall decrease in resettlement places globally, there was a small but critical increase of approximately 1,500 Syrian resettlement submissions in 2019 compared to 2018. According to estimates, Syrians remain the largest refugee population globally in need of resettlement in 2020. Given that the resettlement needs far outnumber the resettlement spaces – with an estimated 579,031 Syrian refugees currently in need of resettlement, vulnerable refugees remain in host countries for longer, which compound their needs and result in increased pressure on assistance programmes and vital services.

*The most recent intention surveys, as well as on-going engagement with the refugee community confirms that a strong majority of Syrians wish to return to Syria one day, but that a much smaller number plan to return to Syria in the near future. The key issues highlighted as influencing return intentions include safety and security, livelihoods opportunities, access to shelter and access to basic services. Return decision-making remains dynamic and complex, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and its political, economic and social impact across the region. UNHCR will continue to gauge the intentions of refugees in 2021 as this remains the basis for operational planning.*

Syrians remain the **largest refugee population** globally in need of resettlement in 2020



Estimated **579,031** Syrian refugees are currently in need of resettlement

Return trend





# Socio-economic Outlook

**Economic forecasts for 3RP countries have been progressively revised downwards since early 2020. Most 3RP countries have confronted economic recessions, and rising levels of unemployment and poverty, likely hitting women worse, exacerbated in some countries by high inflationary pressures and important fiscal challenges.**<sup>1</sup>

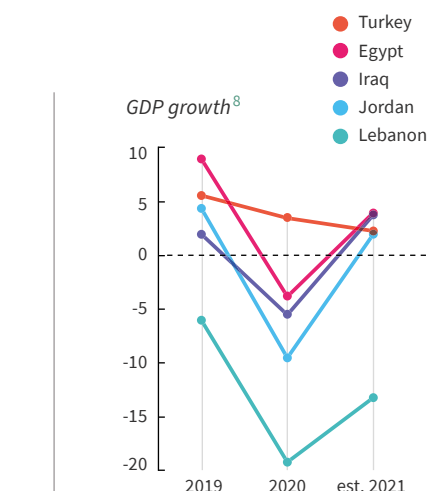
The COVID-19 pandemic and other compounding crises in some countries have resulted in a loss of 8 to 15 percentage points in real GDP growth in 3RP countries in 2020 compared to the previous year.<sup>2</sup> As a result of reduced revenues and increased government expenditure to mitigate the socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak and support economic recovery, fiscal deficits and debt levels are also expected to widen significantly, reaching critical levels in some countries. The economic outlook for 2021 is currently bleak and subject to uncertainty as new waves and secondary impacts of the pandemic and other interlocking crises continue to unfold.

Lebanon now faces multiple compounding crises. The COVID-19 outbreak hit the country at a particularly difficult time of economic decline and political fragility, leading to further worsening of the socio-economic situation with direct effects on unemployment levels and services. The effects of the port explosions added a tremendous strain on the country's general economy and created additional despair, loss of jobs and tensions. The devastating impact of the Beirut Port explosions further cemented the call, which started in October 2019 with widespread protests, for urgent political and institutional reforms

The underlying socio-economic conditions facing refugees and host communities is another key driver of need across the region. These conditions have worsened as a result of COVID-19 and other compounding crises in some countries, leading to growing vulnerabilities and deprivations.

While the widespread informality<sup>3</sup> that features labor markets in the sub-region makes the real level of unemployment difficult to accurately assess, reported unemployment levels are on the rise regionally with already high youth unemployment rates likely to worsen. Across the 3RP countries, vulnerable populations are facing increased levels of income and multidimensional poverty.

Even before the COVID-19 outbreak, 3RP countries were suffering from high levels of food insecurity, only mitigated by the ongoing flow of assistance to crisis-affected vulnerable populations covering both Syrian refugees and host communities. Now, spillover effects of COVID-19, along with measures to contain the pandemic including movement restrictions, trade barriers and reduced working hours affecting small businesses and casual labor, are increasing unemployment and poverty. In Turkey and Lebanon, spillover effects of COVID-19 also include rises in the price of essential commodities, including food, and in inflationary pressures. Early assessments of the pandemic's impact indicate increased vulnerability to food insecurity and inadequate dietary intakes and diversity, with higher needs among both refugees and vulnerable host communities. Even more, refugees and vulnerable host community members in some host countries who have so far withstood the effects of the Syria crisis are now considered extremely vulnerable to food insecurity. This is heightening the risks of social tensions.



The particular challenges and vulnerabilities facing women have been exacerbated. Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, regional needs assessments<sup>4</sup> indicated that in some countries, Syrian refugee women have difficulties meeting their basic needs and those of their families due to challenges around their legal status, their skills, social norms and language barriers. Lack of access to basic services such as education, shelter, health care, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services, employment opportunities, mobile technology and life enhancing services/opportunities affect the wellbeing and development of women and girls.<sup>5</sup> Such challenges and shocks result in negative gender-specific coping mechanisms such as child marriage, child labor, girls dropping out of school to help with housework, women overloaded with house and work-related chores, men controlling decisions over loans taken by women as well as sexual exploitation and abuse. Across the 3RP countries, women in female-headed households report using more negative coping mechanisms than male-headed households. Furthermore, female-headed household tend to fare worse than most refugee households on vulnerabilities related to livelihoods, income, food security, and risks related to violence.<sup>6</sup> Children in female-headed households are twice as likely to work as opposed to children with a male-headed household.<sup>7</sup>

# COVID-19

**On March 19, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. The number of new cases continues to increase and most 3RP countries are now facing second waves of the virus with measures to curb its spread being reintroduced.**

As highlighted earlier, the pandemic has undermined macroeconomic conditions across 3RP countries, leading to growing vulnerabilities among both refugee and host communities. The pandemic has also had far-reaching impacts on health and the environment, among other areas, with consequences for populations and social cohesion.

While countries have largely managed to deal with the immediate COVID-19 crisis from a health perspective, the increased demand for care of COVID-19 patients has had a major impact on the delivery of other essential services, particularly preventative and treatment services for non-communicable diseases which have been significantly disrupted according to global assessments. The most common reasons for the unavailability of services, from a health systems perspective, were cancellations of planned treatments due to other priorities and a lack of staff because health workers had been reassigned to support COVID-19 services. This includes, for example, the management of the increase pressure on ancillary or supporting health-related services, such as waste management, which pose a range of environmental and social challenges.

Measures to contain the spread of the pandemic such as movement restrictions further complicate access, with refugees and host communities in the sub-region reporting reduced access to multiple health services. Lack of transport or ability to access health services was cited in numerous assessments in 3RP countries. This is of significant concern because vulnerable people, including those with non-communicable diseases are at higher risk of severe COVID-19-related illness and death. Also, the social stigma associated with COVID-19 has encouraged illness concealment, delayed early

detection and treatment, and increased distrust in health authorities lowering the likelihood of compliance and prolong recovery. This lack of accessibility to primary and secondary health care services during this period will likely have a negative health impact over the short, medium, and long-term.

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered or compounded a wide range of mental health conditions, increasing levels of anxiety and uncertainty that can lead to significant long-term mental health and psychosocial consequences at the same time that access to mental health care is reduced. Some of the most vulnerable are showing high degrees of psychological distress attributed to challenges like lack of resources, fear of evictions, risks of exploitation, violence and discrimination, disruption of social networks, as well as lack of livelihood opportunities.

Furthermore, direct consequences of the pandemic such as loss of job and/or income due to the reduction or cessation of business activities have been observed across 3RP countries. In this context, individuals have reduced their health care spending due to loss of income or livelihoods. This loss of income has further resulted in difficulties sustaining livelihoods including access to health and nutrition services and has increased reliance on negative coping mechanisms, including accruing dire levels of debt.<sup>9</sup>

Gender factors such as the concentration of women in informal labor markets and the dominant perceptions of women as caregivers and men as providers further complicate the impact of loss of livelihoods. More women are pushed to search for jobs without having critical infrastructure in place such as childcare

and decent work conditions. Meanwhile, the incidence of child marriage has also significantly increased in response to the coping mechanisms parents and caregivers employ to respond to household vulnerabilities.

Multiple studies report an increase in cases of violence against women associated with COVID-19 measures, in particular periods that require individuals to remain in their homes.<sup>10</sup> In a study conducted by UN Women during the COVID-19 pandemic, nearly 1 in 3 women reported that they felt unsafe in their homes, fearing domestic violence (by husband or family).<sup>11</sup>

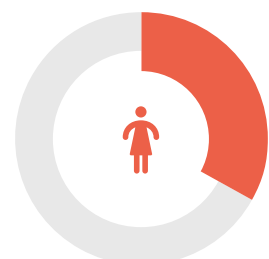
Reported cases of COVID-19 in 3RP countries as of end-October 2020



995,474 total cases of COVID-19

26,881 deaths due to COVID-19

Nearly 1 in 3 women are in fear of domestic violence





# Demographic Characteristics

**Certain demographic characteristics populations drive institutional, environmental, and social pressures across the 3RP countries. The influx of a large refugee population has, in some instances, contributed to deepen these pressures.**

Three key drivers have emerged. First, 3RP countries have slightly above-average population growth rates compared to global trends and these growth rates occur in the context of hosting large-scale refugee populations – Turkey hosts the most refugees of any country in the world, while Lebanon hosts the most refugees per capita in the world, with Jordan among the top five countries.

Second, the region is characterized by a high youth population. For 3RP countries, over 50 per cent of the population in Egypt, Iraq and Jordan, approximately 40 per cent in Turkey<sup>12</sup>, and around 64.3 per cent of the population in Lebanon<sup>13</sup> are children and youth, under 24 years old. These high percentages are also mirrored in the Syrian refugee population: Some forty percent of registered Syrian refugees are age 17 or under.

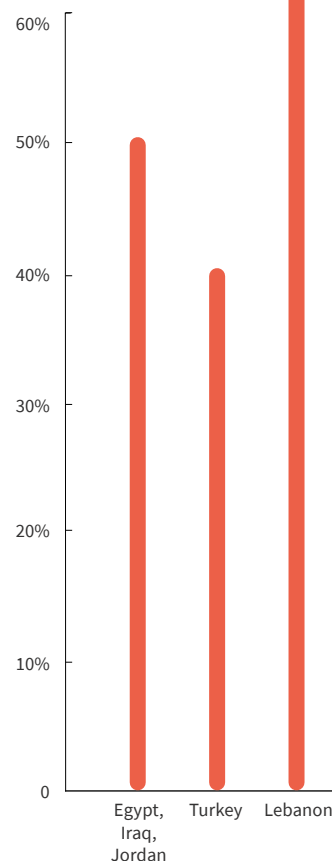
Third, the region is characterized by an increasingly urbanized population. In most 3RP countries, the majority of the population is already urbanized, and reaches some 90 per cent in both Lebanon and Jordan. Yet, this ratio continues to grow particularly as young people in rural areas move to cities or other urbanized areas in search of education or employment. Meanwhile, nearly 95 percent of registered refugees continue to live in urban and peri-urban non-camp settings.

While the combination of a growing, youthful, and urbanized population has the potential to reap a dividend in terms of economic growth potential and increased productivity, it has also brought numerous stresses, particularly related access to basic and essential services. For example, the growth in the school-aged population, compounded by the additional demand for education services from the

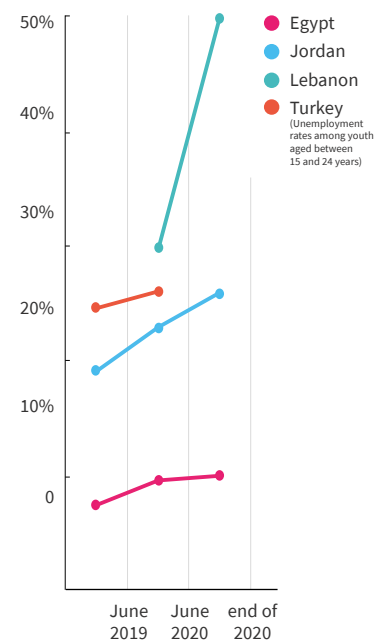
refugee population, has put the education systems of these countries under additional pressure. Moreover, economic security is a major issue with levels of unemployment for youth, especially young women, far higher than the general unemployment rates. Demographic pressures can also increase competition in the job market, affect wage rates, and work conditions. Though variations exist across countries, demographic pressures have exacerbated challenges related to the management of natural resources, particularly water and land, as well as, the management of solid waste and wastewater. It has also impacted energy demand and consumption, as well as air quality with significant implications for the living conditions, health and livelihoods of populations, particularly for the most vulnerable.<sup>14</sup>

A key aspect related to demographic characteristics is social cohesion. Relations in and between different communities are complex in some 3RP countries, and the influx of a large-scale refugee population has added more layers of complexity across the region. While 3RP countries have managed to ensure a strong level of social cohesion during nearly a decade of hosting large-scale refugee populations, this has required significant effort and has not been without challenges. Numerous assessments point to the key sources of tension across the region, including increased job competition, rising costs of living, and access to basic services. This has created intense pressure on municipalities, including related to local service provision. These drivers can often be fueled by misperceptions, frustrations, and higher levels of stress across communities. This has been accelerated further by the pandemic which exacerbates many of the negative trends.

Youth population



Unemployment rate<sup>15</sup>



# Regional Needs & Vulnerabilities

**There are over 5.5 million refugees and 4.8 million vulnerable members of host communities in 3RP countries that need continuous support.**

Understanding their specific needs and potentials is vital to ensuring that they can receive the required protection and assistance support.

Notably, in 2020, COVID-19 has particularly exacerbated the need for access to services across sectors given movement restrictions and other public health containment policies enacted by governments to halt the spread of the virus.

There is a need to remove socio-economic barriers to participation at household level by expanding social protection schemes linked to national systems (including school-feeding programmes, transportation support, equal access ICT devices and internet and other support) to ensure access to education, training and decent livelihoods opportunities and alleviate the direct, indirect and opportunity costs of education for children, youth and families. Targeting may be required to reach the most vulnerable – particularly adolescent boys and girls, children with disabilities, married girls and adolescent mothers.

The following section provides an overview of the key regional needs and vulnerabilities. To ensure a holistic and inter-sectoral perspective, it is presented according to the four main areas where people require support – as reflected in the 3RP regional strategic directions:

1. Protecting people
2. Pursuing durable solutions
3. Ensuring dignified lives
4. Enhancing national and local capacities

It is important to note that the needs outlined in the following pages are not exhaustive; there are a range of specific sectoral and country-level needs that have been identified. Such needs are presented in section 3 and in the relevant country-level needs documents.

## Abdallah (13) and his mother

Syrian Refugees

“I help her separate the coloured washing from the white. I help her at the market pick the good fruit and not the bad.”

Syrian refugee Abdallah and his visually impaired mother have been living in Jordan for eight years after fleeing their home in Homs, Syria. Um Abdallah lost her sight as a result of the psychological effect of the conflict. Abdallah and his mom are reliant on cash assistance to pay their rent and bills and allow Abdallah to continue to go to school rather than be forced to find work.



## Socio-economic impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 and the ensuing confinement policies, along with other economy-wide shocks have been felt throughout the Mashreq, not least by marginalized communities. To assess their welfare impact UNHCR and the World Bank launched a joint Study (funded by the Joint Data Center) aimed at identifying changes in poverty on Syrian refugees and host communities. The study focuses on Jordan, KRI and Lebanon.

Establishing the joint effect of COVID-19, and of other compounding crises on welfare, has implications for the response both as the pandemic unfolds, during the recovery period and in terms of maintaining social cohesion. The Study will help guide the COVID-19 responses of governments, international agencies and others.

The Study relies on dynamic simulations to show changes in poverty (measured at the international \$ 5.50 poverty line) on a monthly basis. The poverty impact is modelled by relating macroeconomic changes in various sectors of the economy, informality status, changes in remittances and price levels to household characteristics. The models reveal changes in poverty amongst host and refugee communities and estimate the poverty-reducing effects of government and UNHCR assistance.

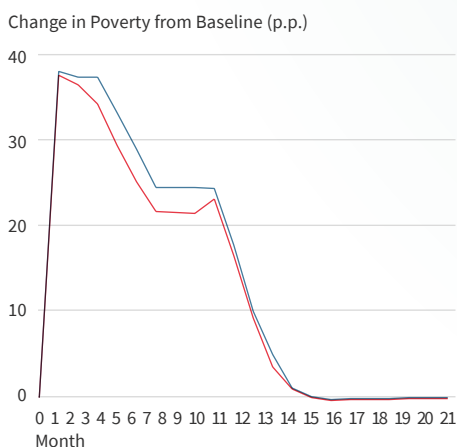
## Key findings include

- Underdeveloped national statistical systems limit the ability to accurately estimate the impact of major policy shocks. The absence of official statistics creates reliance on non-official data and leads to estimates based on bold assumptions that come with serious caveats. To inform decision makers adequately, greater efforts are needed to regularly collect and publish (welfare) surveys and other official statistics.
- In Jordan, the COVID-19 crisis increased poverty by around 38 percentage points (p.p.) among Jordanians, and by 18 p.p. among Syrian refugees, noting that refugees started off at a higher rate of poverty at baseline.
- In Lebanon, changes in poverty are largely driven by inflation. Poverty increased by around 33 p.p. among the Lebanese community and by as much as 56 p.p. among Syrian refugees. These estimates are slightly lower if households are assumed to mitigate the impact of price changes on their welfare through behavioral responses, such as changing their consumption patterns by substituting for cheaper goods.
- In KRI, hosts, refugees, and IDPs faced a similar starting level of poverty prior to the onset of COVID and experienced increases of 24 p.p., 21 p.p., and 28 p.p.
- Mitigation measures – cash and assistance programmes by host governments and humanitarian organizations - have been effective at absorbing some of the shock and bridging the gap between the onset of the crisis and the recovery of the economy. These measures would need to be scaled-up in magnitude and scope to fully mitigate the increases in poverty.

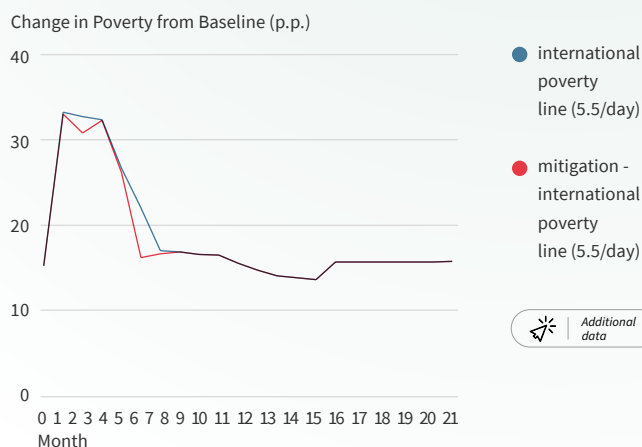


## Changes in Poverty using the International Poverty Line - JORDAN

### JORDANIAN



### SYRIAN



- international poverty line (5.5/day)
- mitigation - international poverty line (5.5/day)





# Protecting People

**Syrians continue to require access to international protection and asylum. Therefore, the protection needs of Syrian refugees across the 3RP countries drive the priorities of the 3RP response. Aside from continued access to asylum in the host countries, protection vulnerabilities related to legal status, gender, age and specific needs are among the most urgent needs identified in regional assessments. Such assessments also point to the fact that host community members may also face some of these protection risks in some countries.**



**Families with children with disabilities live in isolated situations where they are exposed to additional risks such as stigma, exploitation and abuse.**

Moreover, children with disabilities, unaccompanied children, girls and those from economically and socially disadvantaged groups have been significantly impacted and are likely to have most difficulty resuming their education.

## Access to Specialized Services to Prevent and Respond to SGBV

Women and girls are disproportionately at risk of high rates of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) which prevail in the 3RP countries. Among the frequently reported forms of SGBV affecting refugees and host communities, forced and child marriage, sexual violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, and domestic violence are the most common. However, economic and social stress coupled with measures related to COVID-19, are increasing the risks of SGBV (in particular, intimate partner and domestic violence). In several of the 3RP countries, a rise in the percentage of intimate partner violence has been observed during the second and third quarters when the confinement measure and the movement restrictions were adopted.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, precarious access to healthcare services and/or preventative equipment including services for women and girls who are survivors of violence have been disrupted by measures taken to mitigate COVID-19. Given this context, there is a need for a restoration and expansion of services for both individuals at-risk of SGBV as well as survivors. Similarly, it is essential to take into account the need to best adapt the modality of service delivery to respond to SGBV.

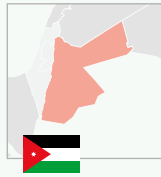
## Child Protection Awareness and Services

In addition to heightened protection risks for children, increased parental anxieties and frustrations caused by social isolation, especially in the context of COVID-19, and fears around livelihoods and financial difficulties further aggravate tensions increasing the risk of child abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation. In some 3RP countries, nearly half of Syrian refugee children are involved in child labor while also experiencing high levels of sadness and fear caused by the loss of employment of their parents, and due to limited access to education. Female-headed households face additional vulnerabilities and rely on child labor twice as much as male-headed households. Families with children with disabilities often live in isolated situations, due to discrimination against persons with disabilities which may result in situations where they may be exposed to additional risks like stigma, exploitation including child trafficking and abuse, and inadequate access to services. In some 3RP countries, the COVID-19 prevention and containment measures have forced many children to isolate in unsafe households, with limited child protection, health and education services. To address these risks, additionally there is a need to strengthen quality, inclusivity, adaptability and accessibility of national child protection systems and legal frameworks that guarantee their rights, while maintaining and improving psychological support and specialized case management interventions.



### LEBANON

Between March and September of 2020, **8%** of refugee families indicated psychological distress or anxiety, with more than **70%** indicating mild or isolated symptoms like disrupted sleep and appetite and **over 20%** reported increased aggressiveness or anger.



### JORDAN

**41%** of all respondents witnessed a negative impact on their children's well-being due to the COVID-19 crisis and curfew.



### EGYPT

Frontline psychosocial workers are providing 24/7 online support to refugees as a **major increase** in psychosocial distress has been identified.



### IRAQ

**26%** of Syrian refugee households reported at least one member needing access to psychological support services and treatments.



### TURKEY

Syrian women and girls under temporary protection reported that they were **unaware** of various support services available to them and that they did not know where to seek assistance related to violence or harassment.

## Civil Documentation

While Syrian refugees generally enjoy access to civil documentation across the 3RP countries, ensuring their ability to obtain, replace, and renew civil documentation remains a key need across the region. Such documentation is often needed to access government services, schools, health care and other rights and entitlements. The registration of vital life events, such as births, deaths and marriages in a timely manner is critical to avoiding more complex challenges in the future, including related to voluntary return to Syria or resettlement opportunities. Yet, refugees often face challenges in accessing these documents, including, for example, complex and often bureaucratic procedures; a lack of awareness of requirements and processes to obtain legal and civil documentation; limited access to legal support; inconsistencies in the application of laws and procedures. The COVID-19 pandemic, for example, also meant that people missed applications deadlines for renewals.

Meanwhile, family separation and gaps in nationality and family laws are creating new risks of statelessness.

While strenuous efforts have been made in 3RP countries to reduce the incident of statelessness, it remains an on-going need across the region. Related, Syrian refugee children separated from parents, families and caregivers require suitable alternative care arrangements, whilst efforts are underway to trace and reunify them with their families.

For Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS), specifically in Lebanon and Jordan, issues related to documentation are an added protection challenge for this vulnerable group. Around 55 percent of PRS in Lebanon do not possess valid legal residency documents where the lack of a valid legal status results in reduced freedom of movement due to fear of arrest and detention. Similarly, in Jordan, PRS without a valid Jordanian identification document face restrictions on employment, limited access to courts, civil status and registration processes, and are continuously exposed to the risk of arrest, detention and potential forced return to Syria.



### A number of assessments have confirmed the increase in GBV as a result of measures put in place to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

In Iraq, 65 percent of the service provision points reported an increase in one or more types of GBV. In Jordan, 69 percent of survey respondents felt that GBV has increased since the beginning of the pandemic. In Lebanon, the vulnerability of female refugees to sexual exploitation and abuse was noted, as well as marginalized and under-discussed forms of GBV, such as economic violence and cyber harassment, began to emerge during the lockdown. Domestic violence hotlines have been strained in Turkey amid COVID-19.

As this crisis continues, it is paramount that we keep addressing violence holistically, including social unrest and instability, and the increases in violence that this creates against women and girls. In the Syria crisis region, as in the rest of the world, preventing, mitigating and responding to the risks of GBV remain a shared responsibility.



# Pursuing Durable Solutions

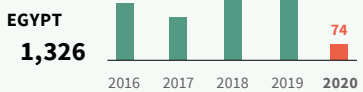
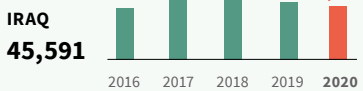
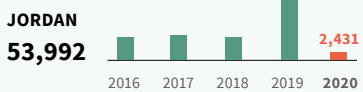
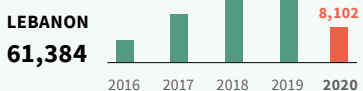
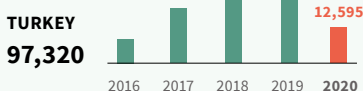
**Refugees continue to require access to territory, international protection and support in countries of asylum. Given the protracted nature of the crisis, opportunities for durable solutions are urgently needed so refugees can look to the future with hope and dignity.**



**Total Voluntary Refugee Returns**  
(From 2016 to 31 October 2020)

**259,613**

Data as of 31 October 2020  
Additional data



## Supporting Safe, Voluntary, and Dignified Returns

Pursuing voluntary return in safety and dignity is the fundamental right of every refugee. The 3RP respects the decision of those refugees who make the choice to return based on a free and informed decision at a time of their choice. While there is no current facilitation of returns, 3RP partners have gradually strengthened support to refugees who choose to return and requested advice and support, in full collaboration with host governments. Such advice and support are based on identified needs, and can include, but not limited to, the provision of information, pre-departure counselling or return monitoring, as well as help with documentation, and assisting persons with specific needs. With refugees' own decisions as the main guidepost, providing and looking at ways to enhance such support remains critical given it yields important protection dividends, reduces the risk of harm, and contributes to an informed and dignified return. Maintaining an agile and operational posture is also required in view of the changing situation in Syria and host countries in the region and the diversity of perspectives among refugees themselves.

## Resettlement Opportunities

Syrians remain the largest refugee population globally in need of resettlement in 2020, with an estimated 579,031 Syrian refugees currently in need of resettlement. Despite resettlement mechanisms re-commencing by mid-2020 and the provision of resettlement guidance in keeping with global public health guidance, 2020 will be a record low for refugee resettlement. However, the outlook for 2021 and beyond forecasts a continuing downward trend, despite the ongoing and critical needs in the region. And while only a solution for a small subset of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees, meeting more of the needs in this area will help to reduce pressure on assistance programmes and vital services. When international movement restrictions fully lift, there is need for a renewed focus on resettlement and complementary pathways, as a very tangible form of responsibility sharing and a solution for the most vulnerable subset of refugees.





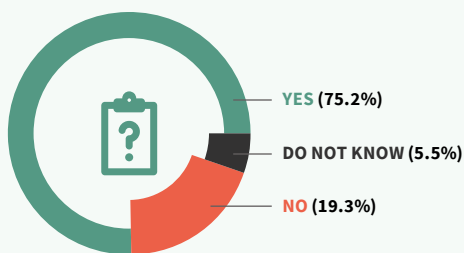
### Access to Local Opportunities and Solutions

As many Syrian refugees are likely to remain in host countries into the medium term, expanding local opportunities and solutions remains a key need across the refugee population. It builds self-reliance in the short term, while enhancing the prospect of achieving a successful durable solution in the future. It also reduces the risk of considering irregular movements to third countries, which are often associated with perilous journeys under exploitive conditions. While the scale and scope of such opportunities are different in each of the 3RP countries, people’s needs in this area include strengthened advocacy for a supportive legal framework and enabling environment, increased access to job opportunities, bridging the gap between the skills of refugees and local market demands through training and certification opportunities, recognition of education and skills, and helping people re-gain full agency of their legal, material, and physical safety.

**Survey - March 2019**  
**Syrian refugees’ perceptions and intentions on return to Syria**

**QUESTION:**

**“Do you hope to go back to Syria one day?”**



Data as of March 2019



**The provision of vocational training and access to financial resources and sustainable livelihood opportunities for both the refugees and affected host community, particularly women is crucial for the realisation of durable solutions.**

Safaa, who left Syria a few years ago, is a plumber and hires other people like herself, creating livelihood opportunities and building up the skills of women.

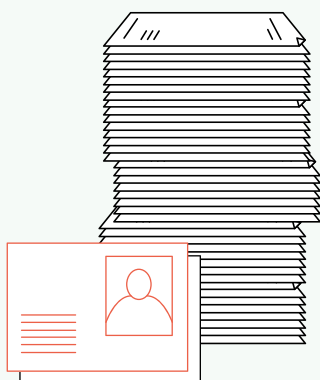
# Supporting Dignified Lives

**The crisis continues to impact protection and socio-economic well-being of vulnerable populations. 3RP partners estimate that some 10 million people require some form of assistance in terms of supporting their efforts to live a dignified life. Such needs are wide-ranging and multi-sectoral in nature. Addressing the multiple deprivations facing refugees and vulnerable host populations and supporting enabling conditions and opportunities for all is a priority for 3RP partners across sectors.**

*Children out of school in the region end-2019*  
36%



*Work permits in Jordan*



**207,073**  
*work permits were issued since Jan 2016 to Sept 2020*

### Availability and Quality of Education

At the end of 2019<sup>17</sup>, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, were hosting slightly more than 2 million school-aged Syrian refugee children (5-17 years old). Around two thirds of these school-aged refugee children were enrolled in education, but 36 per cent of them were out-of-school, recording a small improvement compared with 2018, when the share of out-of-school refugee children was 39 per cent. While children have benefited from quality and capacity improvements made in education systems across the 3RP countries over the past decade, ensuring inclusive and flexible education systems are available to all children requires increased efforts to mainstream the refugee response in long-term education development plans. In addition to quality-related needs, learning spaces in formal and non-formal settings need to be made safe for children, eliminating violence in and around schools and training education personnel to promote positive pathways to discipline and learning. Learning settings need to integrate mental health and psychosocial support programs to benefit children and parents from affected communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the critical need for a holistic approach to education as systems have transitioned to

home-based learning models, often with limited access for marginalized children. The short and long-term impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak are exacerbating pre-existing inequalities related to both access to education and achievement of quality learning outcomes. Certain groups of children including refugees, children with disabilities, girls and those from low socioeconomic backgrounds are likely to be affected the most. Consequently, present learning losses threaten to erase previous progress and learning gains especially for these groups of children. Education systems need to focus on addressing learning losses and preventing dropouts, particularly of marginalized groups; offer skills for employability programmes (for out-of-school children and overage learners) and support the teaching profession and teachers' readiness for home-based learning.

Consistent access to learning is dependent on sufficient, predictable internet and/or telephone-based technology. Children need living spaces that accommodate learning at home and psychosocial support as well as other support for children and their caregivers in order for this type of learning to be achieved. One example is a support to make up for missed nutritious school meals that now are a further burden on the household.



## Ensuring Food Security

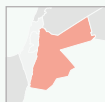
Food Security Sector partners have worked to reach the most vulnerable across the region with life-saving food assistance, while increasingly focusing on the promotion of dietary diversity, sustainable agriculture and rural livelihoods. In 2020, challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic and socioeconomic stresses have exacerbated existing vulnerabilities significantly, including vulnerability to food insecurity. Assessments indicate higher needs among both refugees and vulnerable host communities who are rather homogeneously poor. Moreover, groups who have so far withstood the effects of the Syria crisis are now considered extremely vulnerable to food insecurity. This is creating public tensions and social insecurities.

The four dimensions of food security (food availability, access, utilization & stability) have been strongly affected by the pandemic and its containment measures, with potential threats of other waves to come.

Food Security Sector consolidation and intensification of efforts is becoming more critical to address increasing needs within a challenging environment. Regional governments in the region need also to take bigger steps in facilitating the work and mitigating the economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis, while utmost importance should be given to ensure food security and good nutrition for their populations, which will, as well, support personal immunity against the pandemic.

### Muraf and Obada

Syrian Refugees







**Although women may be engaged as part of regular assessments, evidence clearly shows that engagement of women’s leadership in humanitarian and resilience responses remains extremely low with limited space for affected women and girls/women-led organizations at national and regional levels to define their own priorities, influence decision-making and the kind of support they receive.**

### Livelihoods Opportunities for Refugees and Host communities

High levels of multidimensional poverty and reliance on negative coping mechanisms to meet basic needs among vulnerable populations necessitate the expansion of social assistance and income support programs in the immediate term. However, linking these forms of support to demand-driven skills development (identified in consultation with private sector and market needs) which increases employability; financial inclusion (for accessing credit to open businesses); and other critical socioeconomic and environmental recovery needs will facilitate the graduation of vulnerable refugee and host community members from social assistance. It will be especially important to focus on strengthening vulnerable Syrian refugee and host community women’s resilience with decent livelihoods and employment opportunities.

As indicated by early needs and impact assessments, the extensive lockdowns and other strict measures taken by governments to prevent and contain COVID-19, as well as other compounding factors in some countries, have had dramatic impacts on the livelihoods of refugees and vulnerable households in host communities, which depend primarily on informal employment, mainly daily work/casual labor, with limited compliance with decent work standards, including social security. Businesses, particularly micro and small enterprises (MSEs) have also been disproportionately affected by these measures, as well as remittances sent by workers from abroad. UN different livelihoods programs were suspended to comply with safety regulations impeded by governments. These are only starting to resume recently.

Income losses coupled with the absence or limited capacity of social safety nets in most 3RP countries have led to an increased use of negative coping strategies by vulnerable individuals, especially as most of the population of concern do not qualify or have limited eligibility for government assistance due to their concentration in the informal sector where they have little access to social protection and social safety nets. Many households are using their already limited savings or taking out loans to face the crisis leading to increased indebtedness and exposure to extortion by loan sharks using high-interest rates. In addition to debts, households also report cutting down the number of meals and other “non-priority” household expenses.

The loss of jobs and income among both refugee and host communities have exacerbated competition over scarcer employment opportunities, particularly for low-skilled workers. Coupled with more limited access to services, this has contributed to rising social tensions in some countries, both between refugees and host communities and between host community members themselves. This underscores conflict sensitive programming, in targeting both host and refugee populations as essential to ease tensions at the community level.

In this context, livelihoods programs that focus on skills enhancement, including digital skills, and re-profiling of vulnerable people, particularly women and disadvantaged youth, to changing job market requirements will be critical to facilitate entry and/or re-entry to the job market. Support for business continuity and job retention of MSEs (including home-based, digital business) in vulnerable host communities, particularly in the context of COVID-19, is also needed.

### Access to Quality Health Services

Access to health services for vulnerable individuals is limited not only by capacity in the health system, but also by their own financial capacity. While Syrian refugees in the sub-region have access to subsidized primary health care service through government systems, often at similar rates to that of vulnerable host communities, out-of-pocket costs in several of the 3RP countries remain a barrier to these services for both Syrian refugees and vulnerable host community members.

These individuals need to have access to basic and specialized health care services including access to diagnostics and to medicines specially for chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, mental illnesses and cancer. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these needs due to reduced access to health and nutrition services during the pandemic and additional demand for COVID-19 specific health services including diagnostics and treatment and, eventually, vaccinations when available. In addition to needs for basic health care services, reproductive, non-communicable diseases, and mental and psychosocial stress are major health problems.

Displaced children and vulnerable community members, particularly those directly exposed to conflict, require sustained and accessible Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS). The needs of MHPSS are extremely high in order to protect the psychosocial well-being and strengthen resilience of refugees and host communities, as well as to treat mental health distress such as depression, anxiety, PTSD and toxic stress. The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered or compounded a wide range of mental health conditions, increasing levels of anxiety and uncertainty that can lead to significant long-term mental health and psychosocial consequences. Some of the most vulnerable are showing high degrees of psychological distress attributed to challenges like lack of resources, fear of evictions, risks of exploitation, violence and discrimination, disruption of social networks, as well as lack of livelihood opportunities. Furthermore, movement restrictions have complicated access to existing service networks.



# Enhancing National & Local Capacities

**3RP partners are working closely with national and local partners in responding to the needs of refugees and host community members. This includes not only providing direct support to public institutions and local entities to help them strengthen basic service delivery, but also encouraging civil society and the private sector, as per the localization principles, to take part in the response.**

## Improvements in capacities of public institutions

The influx and the protracted presence of refugees in 3RP countries has had a significant impact on the available resources, public services and infrastructure (e.g. housing, education, health, sanitation and waste management, water, etc.). Host governments have been providing public services for refugees in the various environments that they live in but are limited by the capacity of existing infrastructure and service delivery systems coupled with mounting social and economic challenges. The challenges of strengthening the capacities of public institutions to provide quality and equitable services (education, health, WASH, waste management, justice) to all, refugees and host communities alike. Competition over limited resources delivered via stressed infrastructure and systems threatens social cohesion among refugees and host communities.

Though the WASH sector has made great efforts to support host governments by providing basic WASH needs to refugees in these countries, there remain key challenges for all vulnerable individuals to meet their WASH-related needs including access, funding shortfalls, and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Support to improve waste management infrastructure in the face of these COVID-19 associated increases is also needed.

Water consumption increases associated with the pandemic, particularly in Jordan, has put acute financial and structural pressure on public infrastructure. The impact of increased water demand includes the use of more expensive desalination, additional wear and tear on assets, and significant increases in non-revenue water loss (due to increased pressure and periods of supply).



**More sustainable WASH services by implementing durable approaches in a cost-effective manner is required.**

There also needs continued efforts to transition to resilience programming, providing WASH services at improved standards through expanding, rehabilitating and building systems and partners' capacities in impacted countries.



### Continuity and Expansion of Public Services for Refugee and Host Community Populations

Equitable service provision for Syrian refugees and vulnerable host community members is among the challenges significantly impacted by COVID-19. Critically, physical and social distancing requirements have prevented public institutions at national and subnational levels from working as usual, calling for new processes and technologies, including sound data and information management systems to secure business continuity in the delivery of services and meet the growing needs of vulnerable populations with the appropriate level of speed, responsiveness and accountability. This is particularly key to preserving social cohesion and maintaining and rebuilding trust in the public sector as it is noted that competition for services, like water or electricity, can be a source of tension among refugees and their host communities.

Particular areas of need to ensure continuity and, in some cases, expansion of services are support for online working modalities (particularly in areas like education, health, legal services) for national and local institutions. Efforts have been made to strengthen the outreach of existing social assistance systems, including through leveraging digital technologies for the identification of beneficiaries and provision of payments. These transformative changes will need to be nurtured and sustained in future 3RP programmatic efforts in synergy with other broader response frameworks that seek to improve national and local governance systems, including through strengthened data, information management and communication systems for improved crisis management and service delivery.

### Support to Employers and Businesses

As noted earlier, with livelihoods and economic opportunities representing key needs of refugees and vulnerable host community members, there is a strong need to support small business, cooperatives and other private sector entities that are involved in economic activity, job creation, and skills training. Such support is needed to help them expand their activities and also business development services to identify new clients or market linkages. In doing so, this can support employment and business opportunities for refugees and vulnerable host community members. The need to support the digitalization of businesses and investment in e-commerce, digital platforms and other online livelihoods activities has also increasingly come to the fore during the COVID-19 pandemic. With regard to skills training and the education-to-work transition, there is also a need to develop better linkages with faith-based and civil society organizations who play an important role in this across 3RP countries.

### Social Protection and Safety Nets

Within host countries, the sizeable learnings from years of humanitarian assistance provision, using innovative approaches in building effective and efficient targeting, validation, data management, M&E, and delivery mechanisms, particularly for cash-based transfer programmes has been leveraged in support of national poverty targeting systems to better address the needs of vulnerable populations affected by the crisis.

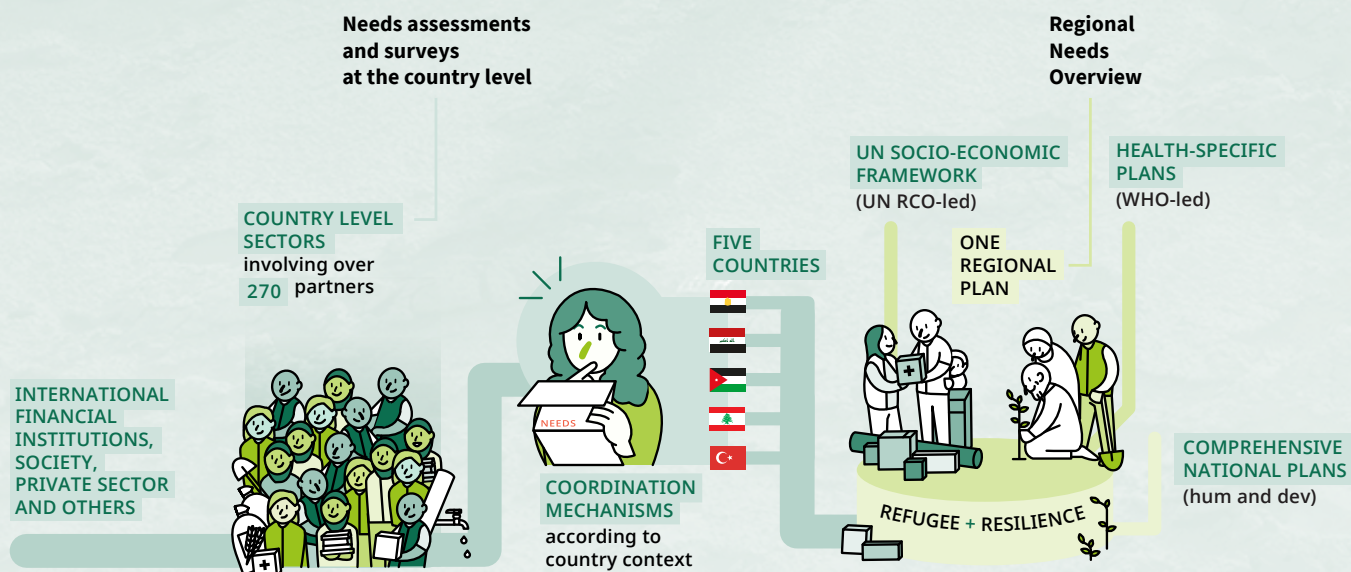
To combat the dire impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations, multiple sectors, including the food security sector, need to continue implementing and scaling up their support to national initiatives including through strengthening needs assessments, supply chains and social protection activities and enhancing national social protection frameworks and systems.

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*The example of SGBV response illustrates the intersectoral impact of COVID-19 on already precarious and complex service provision to survivors. In the context of lockdowns and social distancing, social, judicial, police and health services that are the first responders for those affected by SGBV, have been sometimes unable to reach out to survivors to provide needed help. With the health crisis, healthcare providers have also been overwhelmed and often had to shift priorities, while civil society organizations have also been affected by the reallocation of resources (for example, a number of domestic violence centers have had to close or have been repurposed as health centers). With health resources and medical supplies being diverted to the pandemic, access to GBV lifesaving services, such as Clinical Management of Rape, as well as sexual and reproductive health services, have become more limited. In addition, in a number of countries, accessing justice has proven challenging in the context of the current COVID-19 measures, as legal hearings have been postponed, and courts closed or have only addressed emergency cases. In addition, several women's shelters were at full capacity due to the conditions created by the pandemic and have reported no longer being able to host new survivors.<sup>18</sup>*

# Country Contexts

While there are many similarities across the region in terms of the scale and scope of needs and vulnerabilities, there are also differences as a result of the unique country contexts. Each country undertakes a wide range of assessments throughout the year, including sectoral, inter-sectoral, thematic, and agency specific assessments to identify the needs, including since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. This section provides a snapshot of the key needs and vulnerabilities in each of the countries.





# TURKEY

REGISTERED SYRIAN REFUGEES AS OF 18 NOVEMBER 2020

**3,621,968**

PROJECTED REGISTERED SYRIAN REFUGEES BY DECEMBER 2020 (AS OF DECEMBER 2019)

**3,621,968**

ESTIMATED TOTAL NUMBER OF SYRIANS

**3,621,968**

NUMBER OF IMPACTED HOST COMMUNITY MEMBERS

**1,800,000**



*73% of Syrian women and girls under temporary protection in Turkey do not know where to seek assistance related to violence or harassment.*<sup>43</sup>

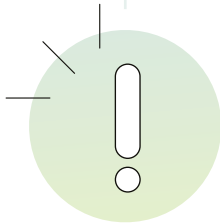
Over the last six years, Turkey has been hosting the largest number of refugees and asylum seekers globally of which 3.6 million are Syrians under temporary protection most of whom live among the host community. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, humanitarian and development partners have adapted service delivery modalities to continue their efforts in support of the affected population.

Yet, there is a need for increased efforts aimed not only at expanding access to quality services, but also at investing in sustaining achievements by supporting the resilience of systems and targeting those who face particular difficulties in accessing services in the current circumstances (e.g., children to continue their education through adapted modalities).

households receive much needed assistance to meet these types of basic needs.<sup>19</sup> A recent WFP study showed that Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) assistance was the primary source of income (during the 30 days preceding the survey) for households headed by women (65%) and around one in five female-headed households had no income source other than ESSN/humanitarian assistance.<sup>20</sup> Research shows that regular livelihoods projects in the southeastern region are not equally accessible to women because of specific social barriers that women face in their employability due to their gender.<sup>21</sup> Adult women are far less likely than men to speak Turkish (64% of women vs. 33% of men aged 18-59 years do not speak Turkish at all) or to have received any formal education which increases barriers to livelihoods for women.<sup>22</sup>

A survey conducted in May 2020 showed that 69 percent of MSEs had stopped operations as a result of lockdowns (38 percent Syrian-led and 30 percent Turkish-led MSEs).<sup>23</sup> Whilst lockdown measures were being gradually lifted, most of the enterprises surveyed believed that the crisis would continue to impact their businesses in 2021 and beyond, and most (particularly Syrian-owned enterprises) were not prepared for a second wave.<sup>24</sup> Robust support will likely need to be provided to them (e.g. grants, access to digitalization, support staff retention, common information business platform with Turkish enterprises) in 2021 and

The sudden and unexpected loss or reduction of livelihoods and income as a result of the pandemic has been devastating. It has been reported in a recent rapid needs assessment that 80% of households face negative changes in employment and income status, which has resulted in increased basic needs across the board. More than half of the households reported struggling to meet the costs of accommodation, food, hygiene and other daily expenses. Consequently, refugees are facing higher debts and risk resorting to negative coping mechanisms to cover household needs. One of the negative coping mechanisms is de-prioritization of adequate food consumption—it has been reported that 96% of the households consider food as their priority need. Refugees cope by relying on less preferred, less expensive food and by reducing the portions and/or number of meals per day. The sudden loss of livelihoods for vulnerable refugee households is often compounded by a lack of savings. Efforts to remove barriers to registration (e.g. no eligibility, language) to access social protection are needed to help some of the most affected



*Syrian women remain unaware of various support services available to them: 68% reported not knowing about free legal counselling; 59% reported not knowing about psychosocial support and 57% reported not knowing about childcare services.*<sup>44</sup>



*More than 460,000 school-aged children were still out-of-school and did not have any access to education opportunities.*





beyond. In regard to protection risks and needs, the national and local authorities including the Directorate General of Migration Management and key line ministries remain under pressure to provide timely and effective protection services. Based on a rapid assessment, the aforementioned negative changes in working status have increased various protection concerns like persons with specific needs being at heightened risk of exposure to protection risks, including increased stress, increased conflict within households and increased domestic violence in their communities. The reduction in service capacity and outreach has made it harder to identify and protect vulnerable individuals, especially women and children, despite efforts to increase support through helplines and psychosocial counselling. There is a need to focus on investment in robust referral mechanisms and in services to respond to the specific needs of women and children-at-risk. Syrian women and girls under temporary protection reported that they were unaware of various support services available to them and that they did not know where to seek assistance related to violence or harassment.<sup>25</sup>

As of the start of the 2020/21 school year, more than 750,000 Syrian children under temporary protection were enrolled in Turkish public schools.<sup>26</sup> However, more than 460,000 school-aged children were still out-of-school and did not have any access to education opportunities. Out-of-school children are one of the most vulnerable groups in Turkey, and face multiple child protection risks, including psychosocial distress, child labour, child marriage and other forms of exploitation and abuse.

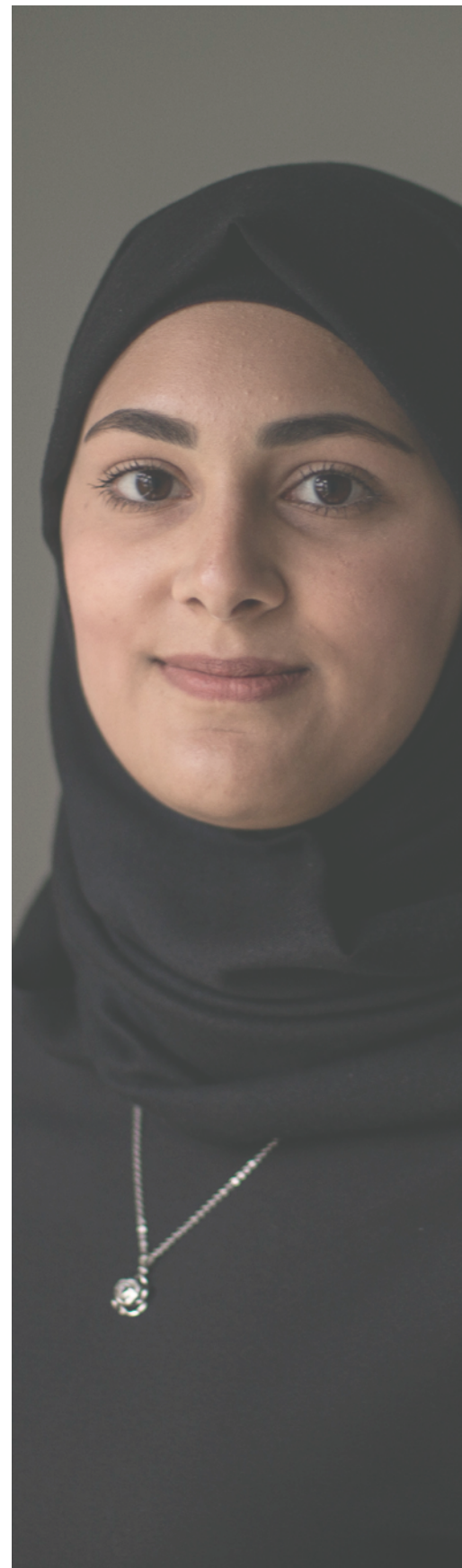
The socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, discontinuation of face-to-face learning, lack of interaction with peers and a reported increase in the level of domestic violence are likely to result in reversed learning gains and loss of learning for vulnerable children, including host community members and refugees. Further negative effects on school enrollment, attendance and retention at all levels are also expected, likely resulting in the adoption of negative coping mechanisms affecting children, such as child labour mostly for boys and the exposure of girls to child marriages. Continued investment is needed for sustained support to systems and accredited programmes that provide a wider range of

relevant pathways to learning to enhance access to formal education, vocational training and life skills development, as well as accelerated learning programmes for those who have missed several years of schooling.

From assessments, there are also signs that the social distance between refugees and host communities continues to grow. The pandemic has affected entire communities, resulting in both increased poverty and heightened anxiety. The added stress placed on individuals, families and communities is undoing the positive trends toward social cohesion made thus far, while increasing competition for limited resources, livelihoods and assistance risks placing further strains on community relations. Social cohesion activities need to be mainstreamed in programs and activities to counter any deterioration in community relations.

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*Since 2016, the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) has offered a lifeline to hundreds of thousands of refugees. However, the number of vulnerable households has grown far beyond what was anticipated at the beginning of 2020, requiring emergency and one-off cash support to help reduce the impact of the pandemic. According to the September 2020 inter-agency needs assessment, 54% of the participants are receiving assistance out of which 89% are receiving cash assistance and of those 61% are beneficiaries of ESSN, 17% are benefiting from Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE). 30% of the participants stated they rely on humanitarian assistance as their only source of income. Recent research shows that women have experienced more severe pandemic-triggered employment disruption.*





# LEBANON

REGISTERED SYRIAN REFUGEES AS OF 18 NOVEMBER 2020

**879,529**

PROJECTED REGISTERED SYRIAN REFUGEES BY DECEMBER 2020 (AS OF DECEMBER 2019)

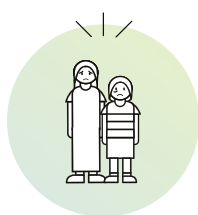
**800,000**

ESTIMATED TOTAL NUMBER OF SYRIANS

**1,500,000**

NUMBER OF IMPACTED HOST COMMUNITY MEMBERS

**1,500,000**



*Incidents of harassment, discrimination and verbal, physical and economic abuses have been seen amongst particularly vulnerable groups, including domestic house workers, LGBTQI+ communities, and youth.*

Lebanon continues to host the highest number of Syrian refugees per capita in the world with November 2020 estimates of 1.5 million Syrians living in Lebanon, including 879,598 registered as refugees with UNHCR and 257,000 Palestine refugees.<sup>27</sup>

On September 2, 2019, Lebanon declared a “state of economic emergency” as a result of the country’s long-standing structural problems, including the mounting public debt of \$85 billion (close to 150 percent of GDP), low GDP growth and a high fiscal deficit.<sup>28</sup>

catalyzed by the deteriorating socio-economic situation and political differences.<sup>32/33</sup> Perceived aid bias is also increasing, with perceptions that Lebanese have been neglected in international aid at 84.1% as of July.

The political and economic concerns led to widespread protests beginning in October 2019, accompanied by a rapid economic contraction: in 2020, the real GDP is expected to contract by 18.6%.<sup>29</sup> The Lebanese lira has rapidly depreciated and has lost nearly 80% of its value. In addition, the emergence of a parallel exchange rate has resulted in major price increases across key items. The shortage in dollars coupled with the currency depreciation has led to a major risk of shortage in basic supplies. The planned removal of import subsidies on items like food, fuel and medicine is also expected to put an unbearable strain on household purchasing power.

The compounded shocks have also further deteriorated the business environment, especially for the smaller businesses, endangering important sources of income and thus capacity to cover basic needs for both refugee and host families.



*The GBVIMS reported increases of several forms of Gender-Based Violence during the first quarter of 2020. 99% of GBV victims were female.*

In five out of eight governorates, more than 20 percent of the total population reported having lost their job or having an activity interruption without pay due to COVID-19. The main problems faced by families are linked to economic pressures such as lack of money to buy food and non-food items, inability to cover health costs, increase in rent fees, shortage in medications, children dropouts of schools, inadequate and dangerous shelter conditions, community disputes, increase in transportation costs and electricity cuts. The two main sources of income for displaced Syrians remain food assistance and informal credit and debt.<sup>34</sup> Up to two million people are in need of food assistance in Lebanon today.



*In addition to the Beirut blast, nutrition has been a growing need in Lebanon with the percentage of households with poor or borderline consumption doubling in 2020.*

Food insecurity is increasingly a concern for refugees and host communities as the cost of the national food Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) increased 168 percent between October 2019 and August 2020<sup>30</sup> and the percentage of households with poor or borderline food consumption has doubled from 2019.<sup>31</sup>

The multiple crises have heightened the risks of social instability with tensions increasing as people compete for the scarce resources. Tensions continue to be primarily driven by competition in access to jobs and services,

Poverty is known to incentivize the entry of children into the labour market at an age they would normally be attending school and there are reported increases in child labour for all population groups, especially in agriculture and particularly in the North and Bekaa, as



well as an increase in the number of children working on the streets. There is also an indication that the prevalence of child marriage among displaced Syrians has risen due to the compounded crises.

As of June 2020, 26,929 Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) were registered with UNRWA in Lebanon.<sup>35</sup> PRS in Lebanon live in conditions of vulnerability, experiencing high levels of poverty and marginalization, due to their uncertain legal status and limited access to basic services and assistance, other than that provided by UNRWA. The vast majority of PRS in Lebanon (89 percent) live in poverty and for 80 percent UNRWA cash assistance is the main source of income.<sup>36</sup> During the COVID-19 pandemic, UNRWA has recorded increased requests for support from PRS regarding threats of eviction, as PRS families who have seen their income lost or reduced struggle to pay landlords.

When asked about the top priority need for their family in relation to COVID-19, around 40% of refugee households report need for assistance to cover rent.<sup>37</sup> Eviction threats and evictions are a major concern in 2020.<sup>38</sup> Due to the deteriorating economic situation, increased debt and enforcement of payment of rent by landlords (who are also affected by the overall economic decline), families with limited finances are either downgrading shelter conditions or downgrading shelter types and are moving from residential shelters into informal settlements and non-residential shelters. This, in turn, increases the demand for unsustainable humanitarian shelter support exacerbating the shelter sector resources.<sup>39</sup>

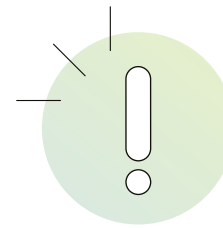
There is a continued reliance on water-trucking and desludging services provided by international organizations. The amount of water provided remains insufficient, especially considering the recommended preventive measure against COVID-19.

The devaluation of the currency, lack of financial and human resources and inability or unwillingness (due to lack of trust) of users to pay fees have significantly affected water provision by Water Establishments (WE). Shortages in electricity power and in availability of basic consumable materials has reduced the availability of water. This

results in increased use of alternative sources of water, mainly unprotected, by refugees and host communities. An estimated 64% of the population lack access to safely managed drinking water and 92% of Lebanon's sewage is not receiving secondary biological treatment.

Access to healthcare services is increasingly challenging and negatively affecting health indicators and putting the vulnerable population at a higher risk of morbidity and mortality over the medium and longer term. COVID-19 movement restrictions and fear of infection have directly impacted service demand, especially for preventive care. Sixty-two percent of Syrian households reported reducing expenses on health costs in the past month (May 2020) as a coping strategy for income loss. From the supply side, COVID-19 has decreased the availability of acute and chronic disease medications. The situation is more acute among the displaced Syrians with specific needs, where around 60 percent reported shortage of medicine as one of the main problems, they are facing in relation to COVID-19. Additionally, understaffing, reduced working hours and measures to prevent the spread of the virus have affected the capacity of the health system.

A higher rate of out-of-school children is expected compared to last year as well as some migration of children from private to public schools creating funding problems for private schools and adding pressure to the public system. In June 2020, 80 percent of the country's private schools, which provide education for 700,000 students (compared to 490,000 enrolled in public education institutions), reported facing closure due to economic reasons. Remote learning presents additional challenges in the absence of a distance learning plan in the National Education system, teachers and administrators lacking technical skills to manage online modalities and learning remaining inaccessible to those who cannot afford to pay for a reliable internet connection and those with special needs.



*With GBV response services relying more heavily on mobile and online platforms, technology gender gaps, limited access to communication devices and internet as well as lack of privacy have left some women and girls cut off from reliable sources of information and services, contributing to reporting challenges.*



*60% of Syrian respondents had been permanently laid off from their jobs, compared to 39% for Lebanese citizens. Job losses have also significantly impacted Palestinian refugees.*



*Around 55% of PRS in Lebanon do not possess valid legal residency documents and the lack of a valid legal status results in restriction of freedom of movement due to fear of arrest and detention.*





# JORDAN

REGISTERED SYRIAN REFUGEES AS OF 18 NOVEMBER 2020

**659,673**

PROJECTED REGISTERED SYRIAN REFUGEES BY DECEMBER 2020 (AS OF DECEMBER 2019)

**633,314**

ESTIMATED TOTAL NUMBER OF SYRIANS

**1,300,000**

NUMBER OF IMPACTED HOST COMMUNITY MEMBERS

**520,000**



**95.2%** of SGBV survivors who reported exposure to SGBV were women or girls while **88%** GBV perpetrators were husbands or family members, mainly males. <sup>45</sup>



**69%** of survey respondents felt that GBV has increased since the beginning of the pandemic.

**Over 50%** of adolescent girls reported that they are doing more household chores as a result of the pandemic and the lockdown measures. <sup>46</sup>



**54%** of the 24,000 shelters in the Za'atari camp had leaking roof and damaged structure.

Jordan hosts 740,000 refugees (661,000 Syrians) with the majority living in host communities (13% live in camps). In addition, 17,552 Palestine refugees from Syria were registered in Jordan including 300 persons with disabilities.

Following the first case of COVID-19 in March 2020, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan announced a series of Defense Ordinances to prevent the spread of the pandemic which suspended all private sector activities and government services except for some health and security services. Significant restrictions on people's movement were also introduced. A recent rapid assessment on COVID-19's impact on households in Jordan shows that more than 85 percent of the most vulnerable households (amongst Jordanian and refugee communities) reported facing difficulties in meeting basic needs like food and rent during the first few weeks of the lockdown. Though businesses and public services have resumed their activities with limited capacities, there are occasional lockdowns and movement restrictions ongoing which disrupt access to health and education services, basic service provision and employment opportunities.

Access to food has become more and more difficult, due to increasing poverty<sup>40</sup> and unemployment<sup>41</sup> with almost all refugees and 55% of Jordanians resorting to negative coping strategies to cover their essential needs. If this situation persists, asset depletion will push even more households into food insecurity.

In the camp setting, refugees often occupy shelters beyond recommended lifespans, increasing the risks associated with inadequate or substandard housing. Given self-isolation and quarantine at home measures in place to mitigate the pandemic and the higher risk of COVID-19 transmission associated with

inadequate or overcrowded living conditions, the need for safe and adequate housing is essential and upgrades to existing substandard as well as the creation of new housing units are needed.

Large-scale support is needed for water and sanitation infrastructure maintenance, reconstruction or rehabilitation, both in vulnerable communities and at schools. Advocacy for the implementation of minimum WASH standards across all schools in Jordan and support for communities with little or no access to clean drinking water is also critical. Currently, humanitarian programs are facilitating water and wastewater services for over 113,000 Syrian refugees in camp settings. COVID-19 has also heightened the protection risks faced by refugees and vulnerable Jordanians, especially women and girls. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic much of the protection response switched to remote service delivery which allowed service providers to continuously deliver life-saving services for beneficiaries. However, the need for continued support for remote service delivery and coordination with key government partners is needed to meet growing protection-related concerns faced by both Syrian refugees and host community members.

Given the increase in vulnerabilities that have occurred due to COVID-19, including swelling debts, overdue rent, lack of available job opportunities and higher living costs, the need for a strengthened and coordinated protection response is critical in the upcoming year.

Livelihoods and access to income for refugees and vulnerable host community members have been significantly impacted by COVID-19 and measures taken to mitigate its spread. As economic conditions continue to deteriorate and livelihoods opportunities shrink, short-term COVID-19 assistance provided to vulnerable refugees has provided temporary relief. However, the general loss of livelihoods. Support for the Government of Jordan's commitments to increase social security enrollment (in particular for self-employed and informal workers), to support flexible work permits for refugees and to increase access to digital financing will be critical, for refugee and vulnerable host community members alike, to counteract these negative trends. From a policy perspective, advocacy efforts will be needed to emphasize the criticality of lower skilled workers' (especially women) re-entry into the labor market and increasing economic opportunities which will also contribute to fortifying social cohesion.

The number of PRS in Jordan has remained relatively stable over recent years, with 17,581 PRS individuals recorded by UNRWA as of August 2020.<sup>42</sup> The number of PRS in Jordan is expected to remain stable in the coming months, with low numbers of returns to Syria. The COVID-19 outbreak has exacerbated existing socio-economic distress among PRS in Jordan and is likely to worsen their multi-dimensional vulnerability, with reduction in households' income and disrupted access to livelihood opportunities. PRS in Jordan, already living in extreme poverty and heavily relying on UNRWA assistance to cover their basic needs, are at risk of slipping into further poverty. PRS living below the poverty line, women, children and persons with disabilities are also particularly vulnerable to protection risks and are exposed to different forms of violence, including GBV and social exclusion.

It is estimated that 74,000 refugees in Jordan will be in need of resettlement in 2021. The anticipated quota will allow for resettlement submissions of some 5,500 refugees of all nationalities. For those who will not take part in these programs, UN agencies and partners will work to support the Government in addressing vulnerabilities at individual, household and community levels as well as at local and national institutional level; emphasis will be on ensuring that the services provided are supporting the development of an equitable social protection system that will provide access to Jordanians and non-Jordanians based on needs and vulnerability.

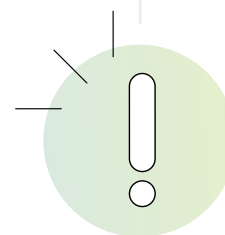


**35%** of Syrian refugees who were employed before the outbreak had **lost their jobs during the lockdown** and only 35% of refugees said they had a secure job to return to after the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions<sup>47</sup>



**67%** of PRS were **food insecure** or vulnerable to food insecurity.

**86%** of PRS households were reported to be **indebted**, mainly to purchase food or to pay for non-food items such as rent and utilities.



Almost **all refugees** and **55% of Jordanians** resorting to negative coping strategies to cover their essential needs.



# IRAQ

**REGISTERED SYRIAN REFUGEES AS OF 18 NOVEMBER 2020**

**242,704**

**PROJECTED REGISTERED SYRIAN REFUGEES BY DECEMBER 2020 (AS OF DECEMBER 2019)**

**255,000**

**ESTIMATED TOTAL NUMBER OF SYRIANS**

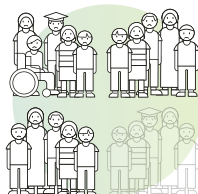
**245,810**

**NUMBER OF IMPACTED HOST COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

**231,938**



Since COVID-19 started in Iraq, **60%** of Syrian refugee households reported needing access to health services and hospitals.



Roughly **three out of four** Syrian refugee households reported COVID-19 increased the level of stress in their household.



**Four out of ten** Syrian refugee households with at least one child of school-age reported not having access to alternative types of school during COVID-19.

Despite the challenging political climate in Iraq, the elections and new Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) cabinet last year and the negative economic climate, and drop of oil price, as well as COVID-19 situation, the protection environment in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I) remained largely favorable in 2020. However, the absence of an effective legal framework for refugee protection in Iraq continues to preclude longer-term residency rights and other legal benefits for Syrian refugees.

The difficult economic situation pre-COVID, and the major drop of oil price, already negatively affected the livelihood opportunities of Iraqis and Syrian refugees alike and stretched existing public services and hosting capacities. Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA) findings suggest that economic vulnerability lies at the core of most sectoral and overarching needs of refugee households living out of camps in the KR-I. The majority of households reported being in debt and using debt as a coping mechanism, with levels of accumulated debt demonstrating a continuously high level of economic vulnerability of Syrian refugee households in the KR-I. Lack of access to sustainable employment and livelihood opportunities remained the main vulnerability reported by Syrian refugees and the root cause of protection issues, such as child labour and child marriage, and has also led to refugees seeking relocation to camps. The COVID-19 situation exacerbated these already existing protection concerns.

The limited access to livelihoods opportunities increased negative coping mechanisms such as children dropping out of school, child labor and child marriage and increased the risks for some forms of SGBV. Risks such as psychosocial distress, abuse and neglect may also increase. Some of the protection services are still temporarily conducted through remote and alternative modalities. These trends have led

to refugees seeking relocation to camps and risks increasing dependence on humanitarian assistance. Economic vulnerabilities such as heavy reliance on debt and lack of sustainable income sources directly affects the households' ability to cover costs related to their needs, such as renting adequate accommodation, purchasing food for the household, ensuring children's school attendance, and accessing adequate healthcare services. To counter the negative economic effects of the COVID-situation on already vulnerable households, newly identified food insecure households residing in camps were included into the food assistance program and multi-purpose cash assistance for eligible households in urban areas was extended to 18 months and frontloaded for 3 months. Newly identified vulnerable households, due to the COVID-19 situation, will be included in the regular multi-purpose cash assistance. Additionally, vulnerable refugee families, mainly in camps, were provided with additional one-off cash assistance to guarantee the necessary means to access adequate basic hygiene items. Additional resources are necessary to continue to support refugee households that are unable to cover their basic needs due to COVID-19. This need for additional resources to support vulnerable households is expected to remain high in 2021 as the high level of need for continuous food and cash assistance persists.



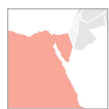
Most basic primary and secondary health services continued to be delivered to refugees in camps and in areas outside camps with a high density of displaced populations. However, additional capacity building and material support is needed to support the COVID-response by the Department of Health (DoH) and public health labs. Greater financial investment is also needed to continue to support DoH for the provision of comprehensive primary and secondary healthcare to refugees.

Inside refugee camps, camp management activities continued during the COVID-19 situation to ensure that essential services, such as desludging, water trucking, and garbage collection, within the camps were available to all camp residents. However, the COVID-19 situation exacerbated specific vulnerabilities and challenges refugee households are facing and puts additional strains on essential services, such as lack of access and ability to purchase key hygiene materials that are otherwise available. Addressing these system weaknesses is essential to ensure continuity of these basic services. The limited access to livelihood opportunities, also increased the risk for some forms of SGBV and negative coping mechanisms. Child protection cases are also increased due to risks presented by specific COVID-19 and related control measures, including children identified as unaccompanied after being separated from their parents/ caregivers. Risks such as psychosocial distress, abuse and neglect may also increase. Some of the Protection services are still temporarily conducted through remote and alternative modalities.

Even prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, enrollment of students living in both camp and urban environments into a parallel refugee education system was a standing concern. The closure of schools due to COVID-19 led to an increased education gap. Support was provided to the KRG Ministry of Education to produce new education content for online and offline use; to establish a system of online/offline support for content related queries, technical glitches and psychosocial support; and to train Department of Education personnel and teachers on how to support learners using distance and e-learning platforms. Independent of the COVID-19 impact on refugee education, low rates of enrollment necessitate investment in remedial and catch-up classes for out-of-school children to facilitate re-enrollment in formal education.







# EGYPT

REGISTERED SYRIAN REFUGEES AS OF 18 NOVEMBER 2020

**130,187**

PROJECTED REGISTERED SYRIAN REFUGEES BY DECEMBER 2020 (AS OF DECEMBER 2019)

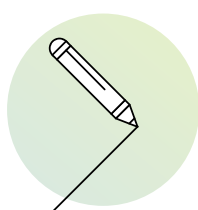
**136,000**

ESTIMATED TOTAL NUMBER OF SYRIANS

**500,000**

NUMBER OF IMPACTED HOST COMMUNITY MEMBERS

**804,480**



### Growth

is expected to be undermined by the effects of COVID-19 on production and exports with a slowdown in growth from **5.8%** in 2018/2019 to **3.7-3.8%** in 2020-2021.



### Unemployment

reportedly reached **9.6%** in the second quarter of 2020, compared to 7.5% in the same period last year.



### More than half

of refugees reduced the number and portions of meals per day, while 55 per cent had to reduce their adults' food consumption to allow for children to eat.

As of November 2020, 258,862 refugees and asylum-seekers from 58 different nationalities are registered in Egypt, including 130,085 Syrian refugees. Refugees live in urban areas mostly in overcrowded accommodations with inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene.

Prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, the majority of them were considered socio-economically vulnerable. Factors contributing to increasing vulnerability among Syrian refugees included increase in cost of living, legal and administrative barriers to formal employment and inadequate access to finance services.

Even before the spread of the virus, two-thirds of Syrian refugees reported that they faced difficulties in meeting their basic needs and were dependent on humanitarian assistance to meet them (36 percent receive monthly humanitarian cash assistance and 58 percent receive food vouchers). Constraints related to residency, labor policies and their implementation as well as challenging market conditions have also compelled many refugees to resort to informal labor in order to meet the basic needs of their families. Many refugees and asylum-seekers have now lost their sources of income due to COVID-19 resulting in an inability to meet basic needs, pay rent and afford housing cost. The data shows that nearly half of households adopted emergency coping strategies, such as begging or working in degrading exploitative jobs. The pandemic has also forced many vulnerable refugees to adopt serious food consumption and livelihood coping mechanisms. About 75 per cent of refugees were found to rely on less preferred foods and more than half of refugees reduced the number and portions of meals per day, while 55 per cent had to reduce their adults' food consumption to allow for children to eat. Among them, female headed households of Syrian refugees are

considered to be food insecure. An upsurge in food and non-food commodity prices has affected refugee communities in terms of their ability to purchase adequate food to cover their households' needs in addition to overall food shortages in markets (given high food import dependency). Support for vulnerable communities to improve food security and to eliminate the use of consumption based coping strategies is critical.

Women and girls face also acute and unique protection concerns, closely attributed to gender inequalities. The current circumstances suggest therefore that a more tailored humanitarian and development response be considered in support of women and girls to help them strengthen participation, leadership and responsibilities, fundamental for increasing social spending, accountability and inclusion. Equally, meeting women's basic needs through increased access to recovery and livelihood opportunities, paired with comprehensive protection services and support to the justice sector to promote accountability for gender-based violence.

Moreover, according to UNHCR Egypt's latest study on the impact of refugee businesses on local economy, while Syrian businesses have contributed considerably to local economic development, the situation for many of them remains uncertain due to challenges in gaining the required approvals and operational licenses.

In order to meet the healthcare needs of vulnerable individuals and foster systemic resilience, Egypt's healthcare system is in need of ongoing support to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic particularly the provision of medical supplies, including those that are related to surveillance, prevention and control activities.

In terms of education-related needs, many issues are related to COVID-19 disruptions, including inadequate or unreliable access due to poor internet connectivity and/or lack of device (smart phone, tablet, television); incomplete online learning materials (not adequately covering all subjects); and lack of curricular assistance. Better support for these online educational modalities can begin to combat some of these COVID-19 related educational needs.

In terms of Syrian refugee children, who have been facing psycho-social issues for years even before the outbreak of COVID-19, they have increased needs for mental health and psychosocial support. The mental wellbeing of Syrian refugee children has continued to deteriorate, and such problems have become more complex and profound. In addition, there is a need for specialized services for all boys and girls at risk, including unaccompanied and separated children, child spouses and children with disabilities. Sufficient resources need to be allocated for community-based child protection services to address basic needs (predominantly housing rents and food, the costs of which have exponentially risen), strengthen community and family support and access to case management, counselling, family visits and emergency cash-based interventions.



# Links and Sources

## Photos

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UN Women / Sinem Aydın Lopez / Turkey

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## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> IMF, Regional Economic Outlook Update: Middle East and Central Asia, October 19th 2020  
<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/REO/MECA/Issues/2020/10/14/regional-economic-outlook-menap-cca>

<sup>2</sup> IMF, Regional Economic Outlook Update: Middle East and Central Asia, October 19th 2020  
<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/REO/MECA/Issues/2020/10/14/regional-economic-outlook-menap-cca>

<sup>3</sup> In Jordan, the rate of informal employment (incl. in agriculture) is estimated at 35.5 percent (LMPS 2016) but is estimated to exceed 65 percent in Egypt (LMPS 2018) and Iraq (Labor survey 2012). In Turkey, the rate of informal/unregistered employment is estimated at 31.3 percent see: <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1732501/business-economy>; In Lebanon, 55 percent of workers are estimated to be informal workers (ILO).

<sup>4</sup> UN Women, 2018, Unpacking Gendered Realities in Displacement - Syrian Refugees (Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq); UN, March 2019:  
<http://arabstates.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/12/unpacking-gendered-realities-in-displacement>

<sup>5</sup> <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/72200>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20arab%20states/attachments/2018/16-days/syriacrisisimpact-lebanon-final2.pdf?la=en&vs=3545>

LCRP 2017-2020

<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/67780.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP (2018), Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon 2018

<sup>8</sup> [Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt: MENA Economic Update: Trading Together — Reviving Middle East and North Africa Regional Integration in the Post-COVID Era \(worldbank.org\)](#)  
[Turkey: Turkey Overview \(worldbank.org\)](#)

<sup>9</sup> The Economic Toll of COVID in the Middle East; NRC, IRC, DRC briefing note, 2020:  
<https://www.alnap.org/system/files/content/resource/files/main/The%20Economic%20Toll%20of%20COVID-19%20in%20the%20Middle%20East%2C%20DRC%2C%20NRC%2C%20IRC%20statement.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Some of these studies are:

<https://www.unfpa.org/press/new-unfpa-projections-predict-calamitous-impact-womens-health-covid-19-pandemic-continues>

Iraq: [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/assessments/gbv\\_sc-iraq-covid-19\\_assessment\\_report-april-may\\_2020.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/assessments/gbv_sc-iraq-covid-19_assessment_report-april-may_2020.pdf)



UNFPA, 2020, Daring to Listen Report and Act, A snapshot of the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls sexual and reproductive health and rights [https://jordan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/20200511\\_Daring%20to%20ask%20Rapid%20Assessment%20Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://jordan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/20200511_Daring%20to%20ask%20Rapid%20Assessment%20Report_FINAL.pdf)

Lebanon: <https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20arab%20states/attachments/publications/2020/06/lebanon%20gender%20alert%20issue3/update%20652020/gender%20alert%20on%20covidlebanon%20issue%203english.pdf?la=en&vs=3305>

Turkey: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2020/04/turkey-domestic-violence-rises-coronavirus.html>

<https://arabstates.unfpa.org/en/publications/gender-based-violence-donor-advocacy-brief-critical-services-during-covid-19>

<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/78683>

<sup>11</sup> Rapid Assessment: The Effects of COVID-19 on Violence Against Women and Gendered Social Norms - A Snapshot from Nine Countries in the Arab States Preliminary Findings: [https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20arab%20states/attachments/publications/2020/08/evaw%20briefs/rapid%20assessment%20of%20the%20effects%20covid19\\_en.pdf?la=en&vs=0](https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20arab%20states/attachments/publications/2020/08/evaw%20briefs/rapid%20assessment%20of%20the%20effects%20covid19_en.pdf?la=en&vs=0)

<sup>12</sup> <https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/MENA-Gen2030-April2019.pdf>, p. 89 MENA Generation 2030

<sup>13</sup> UNHCR VASyR 2020. Vulnerability assessment of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Preliminary findings

<sup>14</sup> For a comprehensive assessment of the Syrian crisis environmental impacts in Lebanon, see for instance: Lebanon Environmental Assessment of the Syrian Conflict & Priority Interventions, Updated Fact Sheet - December 2015; <https://www.undp.org/content/dam/lebanon/docs/Energy%20and%20Environment/Publications/FINAL-EASC-FactSheet2015-EN.pdf>; for water-related challenges specifically, see also Hadi Jafaar et al., Refugees, water balance, and water stress: Lessons learned from Lebanon, November 2019, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13280-019-01272-0>: domestic water use is estimated to have increased by 20 percent, with the increase reaching 89 percent in the governorate of Bekaa and 59 percent Baalbeck-Hermel (+ 59%). 25% of the municipalities in Lebanon have reportedly confronted from a 90% to more than 1 000% increase in domestic water use; the overall shortage in electricity in the country also carries environmental risks, as many Lebanese and refugees are being pushed to further rely on private and environmentally-unfriendly generators to meet energy needs, which is expensive and further increases socio-economic vulnerability – see <https://www.unhcr.org/lb/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2019/04/LCRP-EN-2019.pdf>; For an overview of environmental vulnerabilities in Jordan,

see the Jordan Response Plan (JRP 2020-2022) Public Sector Services Situation Analysis, p 18. <http://www.jrp.gov.jo/Files/JRP%202020-2022%20web.pdf>: reportedly, the influx of Syrian refugees increased medical, solid and hazardous waste by 30 percent. Most municipalities discharge solid waste in open dump sites with no lining, leachate management, or biogas collection. Only seven percent of organic and packaging waste is (informally) recovered. Syrian refugees are found to be particularly vulnerable to solid and water waste related environmental and health risks, whereby 80 percent of cases have experienced solid waste vector evidence more than twice in the last year, and 20 percent of cases have experienced wastewater overflows more than once in the last year (see 2019 Vulnerability Assessment Framework <https://reliefweb.int/report/jordan/vulnerability-assessment-framework-population-study-2019>)

<sup>15</sup> Additional data:

*Egypt*

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20200818-egypt-unemployment-rate-rises-to-9-6/>

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*Lebanon*

1. <http://www.businessnews.com.lb/cms/Story/StoryDetails/8681/550,000-unemployed-InfoPro-survey-shows>

2. Abi Rached, J. and I. Dlwan, The Socioeconomic Impact of COVID-19 on Lebanon: A Crisis Within Crises. Retrieved from <https://www.euromesco.net/publication/the-socioeconomic-impact-of-covid-19-on-lebanon-a-crisis-within-crisis/>

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*Jordan*

1. <http://dosweb.dos.gov.jo/category/unemployment-rate/>  
2. WFP MENA, *The Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security: Macroeconomics Section, September 2020*

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*Turkey*

<https://www.tuik.gov.tr/Home/Index>

<sup>16</sup> The impact of COVID19 on violence against women and girls in the Arab States through the lens of women's civil society organizations: [https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20arab%20states/attachments/publications/2020/08/evaw%20briefs/cso%20assessment%20brief\\_en.pdf?la=en&vs=0](https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20arab%20states/attachments/publications/2020/08/evaw%20briefs/cso%20assessment%20brief_en.pdf?la=en&vs=0)

<sup>17</sup> NLG report 2020: We don't give up! Continuous learning for Syrian children and youth Report on school year 2019/2020

[https://www.nolostgeneration.org/sites/default/files/webform/contribute\\_a\\_resource\\_to\\_nlg/21821/nlg--continuous-learning-for-syrian-children-and-youth.pdf](https://www.nolostgeneration.org/sites/default/files/webform/contribute_a_resource_to_nlg/21821/nlg--continuous-learning-for-syrian-children-and-youth.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> COVID-19 and Essential Services Provision for Survivors of Violence Against Women and Girls - A Snapshot from the Arab States



<https://arabstates.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/08/covid-19-and-essential-services-provision-for-survivors-of-violence-against-women-and-girls>

<sup>19</sup> WFP Turkey, Comprehensive Vulnerability Monitoring Exercise (Round 5), June 2020

<sup>20</sup> WFP Turkey, Comprehensive Vulnerability Monitoring Exercise (Round 5), June 2020

<sup>21</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/turkey/women-s-economic-empowerment-protracted-crisis-syrian-refugee-women-southeastern>

<sup>22</sup> WFP Turkey, Comprehensive Vulnerability Monitoring Exercise (Round 5), June 2020

<sup>23</sup> [https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/news-centre/news/2020/Study\\_finds\\_COVID19\\_hits\\_Syrian-owned\\_businesses\\_harder\\_.html#:~:text=August%2010%2C%202020-,In%20Turkey%2C%20COVID%2D19%20hits%20Syrian%2D,owned%20businesses%20harder%2C%20study%20finds&text=Some%2050%-20per cent%20of%20businesses,inclusing%2032%20Syrian%2DDowned%20enterprises](https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/news-centre/news/2020/Study_finds_COVID19_hits_Syrian-owned_businesses_harder_.html#:~:text=August%2010%2C%202020-,In%20Turkey%2C%20COVID%2D19%20hits%20Syrian%2D,owned%20businesses%20harder%2C%20study%20finds&text=Some%2050%-20per cent%20of%20businesses,inclusing%2032%20Syrian%2DDowned%20enterprises)

<sup>24</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/turkey/against-virus-private-sector>; [https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/news-centre/news/2020/Study\\_finds\\_COVID19\\_hits\\_Syrian-owned\\_businesses\\_harder.html#:~:text=August%2010%2C%202020-,In%20Turkey%2C%20COVID%2D19%20hits%20Syrian%2D,owned%20businesses%20harder%2C%20study%20finds&text=Some%2050%20per cent%20of%20businesses,inclusing%2032%20Syrian%2DDowned%20enterprises](https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/news-centre/news/2020/Study_finds_COVID19_hits_Syrian-owned_businesses_harder.html#:~:text=August%2010%2C%202020-,In%20Turkey%2C%20COVID%2D19%20hits%20Syrian%2D,owned%20businesses%20harder%2C%20study%20finds&text=Some%2050%20per cent%20of%20businesses,inclusing%2032%20Syrian%2DDowned%20enterprises)

<sup>25</sup> UN Women, Needs assessment of Syrian women and girls under temporary protection status in Turkey (2018): <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/08/needs-assessment-of-syrian-women-and-girls-under-temporary-protection-status-in-turkey>

<sup>26</sup> MoNE data (as of November 2020), Gross Enrollment Rate noting that the number of boys and girls enrolled is nearly equal

<sup>27</sup> 27,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS), a pre-existing population of an estimated 180,000 Palestinian refugees and other eligible persons

<sup>28</sup> Source: Ministry of Finance

<sup>29</sup> <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/650091598854062180/Beirut-Rapid-Damage-and-Needs-Assessment.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/lebanon-vam-update-food-price-trends-august-2020>

<sup>31</sup> VASyR 2020, preliminary data

<sup>32</sup> The key findings of the ARK Perception Survey (Wave 8)

from July 2020 show that both Lebanese (67%) and Syrians (44%) consider competition for low-skilled jobs as the main source of inter-community tensions

<sup>33</sup> ARK/UNDP (2020). Perception Survey (Wave 8), July 2020

<sup>34</sup> Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR), preliminary data, 20

<sup>35</sup> As recorded by UNRWA Lebanon Field Office

<sup>36</sup> UNRWA 2020 Emergency Appeal for the Syrian regional crisis

<sup>37</sup> UNHCR Protection Monitoring, Impact of COVID (20 March - 6 September, 2020)

<sup>38</sup> Report: In Constant Fear of Eviction: An Analysis of Shelter Insecurity for Vulnerable Refugee Households in Lebanon During COVID-19, Lebanon Protection Consortium (LPC) and International Rescue Committee (IRC), July 2020: <https://www.nrc.no/resources/reports/in-constant-fear-of-eviction/>

<sup>39</sup> Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR), preliminary data, 2019

<sup>40</sup> National Social Protection Strategy-Jordan (2019). GoJ and UNICEF

<sup>41</sup> Department of Statistics, 2020, <http://dosweb.dos.gov.jo/23-0-unemployment-rate-during-the-second-quarter-of-2020/>

<sup>42</sup> UNRWA Jordan Field Office PRS records, August 2020

<sup>43</sup> UN Women, Needs assessment of Syrian women and girls under temporary protection status in Turkey (2018): <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/08/needs-assessment-of-syrian-women-and-girls-under-temporary-protection-status-in-turkey>

<sup>44</sup> UN Women, Needs assessment of Syrian women and girls under temporary protection status in Turkey (2018): <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/08/needs-assessment-of-syrian-women-and-girls-under-temporary-protection-status-in-turkey>

<sup>45</sup> Jordan GBV Information Management System (IMS) data of 2019

<sup>46</sup> UNFPA, 2020, Daring to Listen Report and Act, A snapshot of the impact of covid-19 on women and girls sexual and reproductive health and rights [https://jordan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/20200511\\_Daring%20to%20ask%20Rapid%20Assessment%20Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://jordan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/20200511_Daring%20to%20ask%20Rapid%20Assessment%20Report_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>47</sup> ILO/FaFO, May 2020: Facing Double Crises Rapid assessment of the impact of COVID -19 on vulnerable workers in Jordan The survey covered 1,580 respondents from ILO program databases, of which 46 per cent were women [https://www.ilo.org/beirut/media-centre/news/WCMS\\_743388/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/beirut/media-centre/news/WCMS_743388/lang--en/index.htm); [https://www.ilo.org/irut/publications/WCMS\\_747070/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/irut/publications/WCMS_747070/lang--en/index.htm)





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