

LEBANON/SYRIA SITUATION

CHILD PROTECTION MONTHLY UPDATE

July 2014

JULY DEVELOPMENTS

Identification and referral of children-at-risk

- 223 children at high risk including unaccompanied minors and separated children were identified and provided with support including psycho-social counseling by case management agencies and refugee outreach volunteers across the operation.

Training/coaching

- In Mt. Lebanon, INTERSOS organized awareness-raising sessions for children and adolescents on their rights, methods of non-violent discipline, and importance of hygiene. 22 sessions were attended by 419 Syrian children and adolescents as well as 45 Lebanese.
- As part of the ongoing national coaching programme on child protection, IRC conducted trainings for 29 case workers and frontline workers from the Bekaa and Akkar. The training focused on safe identification and referral of children for support.
- Peer-to-peer sessions for case workers were held in the Bekaa for 21 NGO staff. The sessions focused on staff self-care and practical guidance on child protection case management services.

Needs

Many refugee children are in need of psycho-social support due to their exposure to violence and other forms of traumatic events. Refugee children who need assistance require proper identification and safe referral. Their needs include prevention and response to physical violence, verbal harassment, exploitation or pressure, particularly among adolescent boys to return to Syria to fight. Refugee children subject to sexual violence, child labour and early marriage also require proper identification and referral for appropriate assistance by trained professionals. Separated or unaccompanied children need safe living arrangements and assistance to help trace and reunite them with their families, whenever possible.

Educational opportunities, support to parents, activities targeting adolescents and youth can contribute to protect refugee children against negative coping mechanisms and a wide range of child-specific protection risks.

Challenges

Dispersed refugee population: Since refugees live in over 1,700 different locations in Lebanon, outreach to refugee children to identify and respond to their needs is both a challenge and priority. Outreach is crucial to ensuring that refugee children are registered with UNHCR and have access to basic services. It is also important in ensuring that parents register the birth of newborns, and that school-aged children living in remote areas and those with specific protection risks have access to education, health care and other services.



Protracted displacement: With limited access to livelihood opportunities, and dwindling resources, some families resort to child labour and other negative coping mechanisms such as child marriage. As their time in displacement prolongs, the lack of educational opportunities for the majority of school-aged Syrian children presents a significant challenge. Currently, there are over 200,000 school-aged refugee children who lack access to age-appropriate education due to the fact that the capacity of the public education system is overstretched.

Fragile national child protection system: The national child protection system is struggling to provide appropriate care and services to refugee children at risks of abuse and exploitation and children survivors of violence. The Union for the Protection of Children is the only organization mandated by the Ministry of Justice to investigate cases involving child abuse and violence. UNHCR works together with implementing partners to provide support to both refugee children and national institutions providing services to refugees.

Strategy

- UNHCR works to ensure that refugee children at risk and/or victims of violence have timely access to appropriate services by:
- Improving outreach to ensure identification and safe referral of children at risks and victims of violence through training of refugee outreach volunteers, frontline workers and others providing services to refugee children;
- Building capacity of child protection actors to better prevent and respond to child protection needs particularly through the establishment of a coaching mechanism for social workers;
- Strengthening national child protection system to ensure emergency referral and provision of adequate care for children at high risks, and reinforce to existing services such as psychosocial support and legal counselling;
- Mainstreaming child protection into all activities carried out within refugee and host communities especially within the health, education and shelter sectors;
- Advocating for expanding access to services for both refugee and Lebanese children;
- Contributing to the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on grave child rights violations committed in Syria;



UNHCR co-leads the inter-agency working group on child protection together with the Ministry of Social Affairs and UNICEF, and works to ensure the complementarity of interventions benefiting refugee children.

Achievements: January - July

| Activity | reached Jan - Jul | 2014 Target |
|--|----------------------|----------------|
| Identified children at risk referred and assisted | 1,837 | 1,515 |
| Training for persons working with refugee children (# individuals trained) | 492 | 600 |

Key figures

- 592,042 registered refugee children
- 77% of registered children are under 11
- 25% of registered children are at risk

Funding (UNHCR total requirements: USD 451 m)



UNHCR implementing partners

Caritas Lebanon Migrants Center (CMLC), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), International Medical Corps (IMC), International Relief and Development (IRD), International Rescue Committee (IRC), INTERSOS, Amel Association-Lebanese Popular Association for Popular Action (AMEL), Makhzoumi Foundation, Restart Centre for Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence and Torture, Social, Humanitarian, Economical Intervention For Local Development (SHEILD), Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA).

Contacts: Elsa Laurin, Senior Child Protection Officer, laurin@unhcr.org, Tel: +961 1 849 201 ext. 2460

Links: Inter-agency Information Sharing: <http://data.unhcr.org/lebanon>

Twitter: @UNHCRLebanon - Facebook: UNHCR Lebanon