

UNHCR Monthly Update

Community Development

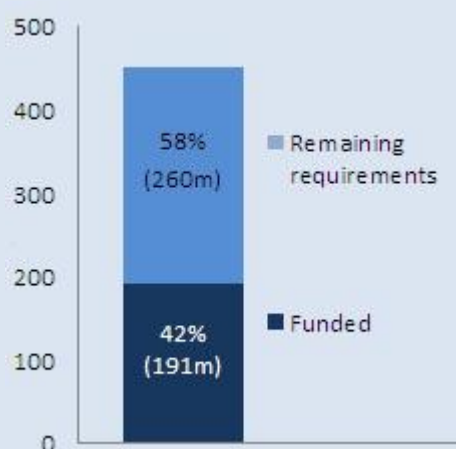
August 2014

Key Figures

1,176,971	individuals registered or pending registration
79%	women and children
39%	persons with specific needs
25%	children at risk

Funding

UNHCR total requirements 2014: USD 451m



August Developments

Community empowerment

- Over 3,000 families at risk were referred this month by refugee outreach volunteers (ROVs) to UNHCR and partners for assessment and support.
- ROVs reported increased tensions between the local and refugee communities and increased security incidents and raids especially within informal settlements in the Bekaa.
- 1,325 persons, 20% Lebanese and mostly women, participated in life-skill activities, at 28 community centers.
- 57 Social Development Centers affiliated with the Ministry of Social Affairs are supported to carry out counselling activities. Ten among them will be running activities for older persons and persons with disabilities.



Case management

- To ensure that refugees receive adequate and timely support, agencies are working to enhance referral and response systems.
- 213 persons received one-time protection cash assistance; 44.6% of them are living in the South, 8% in Beirut/Mount Lebanon, and 47.4% in Bekaa. 2,083 persons have received such assistance to date.

Self-reliance

- 129 persons (50% Lebanese) benefitted from entrepreneurship training, e.g., business development training.
- 46 persons, 76 % Lebanese, attended trainings on wage earning employment.

Achievements January – August

Activity	 reached January- August	 2014 Target
Specific needs cases referred through volunteers	44,200	75,000
Life-skills and vocational training provided	15,629	30,030
Refugee outreach volunteers mobilized	396	1,000
Community centres established	28	50

Needs

Shelter, health care, education and self-reliance are among the main needs voiced by Syrian refugees. At the same time, each sub-group of the refugee population faces different protection risks related to their specific needs. Various assessments to date indicate a strong correlation between protection risks and limited self-reliance opportunities e.g. working children, survival sex, early marriage, etc. According to UNHCR's Women Alone report issued in July 2014, many of the challenges facing female-headed households stem from

their increasing economic distress. The report further highlighted the need to build on refugee women skills and to counter isolation through expanding the network of community centers and safe spaces. A UNFPA assessment on Syrian youth (15-24 year olds) showed that 89% described themselves as depressed, anxious or afraid most of the time. Youth considered unemployment and security conditions as negatively affecting their psychological status and their propensity to violence, as well as gender relations within households.

Persons living with disabilities have low self-esteem, feel unproductive and are finding it difficult to integrate in their communities. Older persons expressed feelings of isolation, neglect and of being a burden on their families. With a dispersed Syrian population and limited capacities, UNHCR is exploring innovative ways to reach out and timely identify needs, risks and priorities, as well as to engage and support refugees in offering solutions.



Lebanese woman instructs a class of Syrian and Lebanese children at the Women's League in Halba, Tripoli
Lebanon@UNHCR/ S. Baldwin

Challenges

Dispersed refugee population: With the widespread dispersal of refugees in over 1,700 locations throughout Lebanon, there is a need to build upon existing outreach and support initiatives to prevent and respond to the immense scale of protection risks.

Overstretched social services and limited job opportunities: According to a livelihood assessment of the ILO, 30% of the refugees are unemployed and 88% of the employed are unskilled or semi-skilled laborers are paid 40% less than the minimum wage in Lebanon with an average salary of 277 USD per month. Female Syrian workers earn 30% less than male workers with an average salary of 165 USD per month.

Increasing tensions: Pressure on services and increasing economic competition threaten the wellbeing of both refugees and vulnerable Lebanese. Diminishing salaries and opportunities linked to an increasing workforce have brought about tensions and restrictive government policies regarding self-reliance programmes for Syrians. The impositions of curfews in a growing number of local villages and a recent spate of evictions of refugees from informal settlements are testament to rising tensions.

Strategy

To effectively address vulnerabilities and safeguard protection space for refugees, UNHCR's strategic priorities are:

- Assist refugees at risk to access basic services;
- Strengthen outreach to refugees and host communities;
- Empower and promote self-management in communities;
- Increase self-reliance opportunities;
- Strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Development Centres.

UNHCR implementing partners

Caritas Lebanon Migrants Center (CMLC), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Amel Association-Lebanese Popular Association for Popular Action (AMEL), INTERSOS, International Rescue Committee (IRC), Makhzoumi Foundation, Restart Centre for Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence and Torture, Right to Play, Social Humanitarian, Economical Intervention For Local Development (SHEILD), Search for Common Ground (SFCG), International Alert, UNDP, Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA).