

SYRIAN REFUGEE RESPONSE IN LEBANON: EDUCATION UPDATE



17 October 2014

LEBANON



#FutureOfSyria

Agencies and the Government of Lebanon had requested US\$1.89 billion in the inter-agency funding appeal.

The mid-year review in June resulted in a downward revision of these requirements to US\$ 1.68 billion. US\$646 million - 38 per cent - has been received as of 15 October.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Some 219,000 children had access to education through formal and non-formal classes in 2013- 2014;
- 90,000 Syrian refugee children were enrolled in public schools in 2013- 2014;
- The Ministry announced the possibility to expand access to the first shift to Syrian refugee children depending on funding commitment from UN and donor community;
- Over 57,000 Syrian refugee children will have access to the second shift in public schools.

The 2013- 2014 school year

Formal education programs in Lebanon takes place in public and UNRWA schools, in classrooms of multiple students learning together with a trained teacher. The schools follow the Lebanese curriculum.

Non-formal education takes place in a diverse range of environments and situations outside the established formal system. These environments and situations may be temporary and intend to serve identifiable groups of children and learning objectives such as preparing children to be enrolled in school. These take place in various locations where refugees reside (e.g. informal settlements), Social Development Centers (SDCs) of the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) or community centres across Lebanon.

In the 2013-2014 school year, a total of 218,941 Syrian children accessed education services either through public schools (formal education) or through non-formal education efforts. This entails that of the over half a million children of school age (3- 18 years old), more than 300,000 children were out of school in 2013-2014.

Of those who were able to benefit from education services, 90,000 children were enrolled in public schools, and 88,200 Lebanese and Syrian children attended non-formal education programmes following extensive efforts by partners to ensure that as many children as possible are enrolled in some form of education.

Over the past year, over 90 schools were rehabilitated by humanitarian partners and more than 2,500 public school teachers were trained on language support, fostering social cohesion between Syrian and Lebanese as well as child welfare in various regions in Lebanon.

218,941 Syrian children accessed education in 2013-2014.

*88,200 children
enrolled in non-
formal education in
2014- 2015.*

The 2014- 2015 school year

In June-August 2014, 88,200 children continued to benefit from non-formal education programmes.

In September 2014, public schools opened their doors for the enrolment of Lebanese children. A ministerial circular issued by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) prioritizes the registration of Lebanese students and temporarily postpones the registration of non-Lebanese students until all Lebanese students have been enrolled in public schools.

MEHE is currently engaged in discussions with the relevant humanitarian actors and donor countries on the possibility of enrolling Syrian refugee children in the first school shift.

As to the second school shift, MEHE has agreed to the enrolment of 57,000 refugee children. The implementation modalities of the latter are currently being rolled out by all concerned parties.

MEHE is also exploring how best to meet the needs of children who will be unable to enrol in public schools, but who could benefit from various forms of non-formal education.

UNICEF, UNHCR and partners are working closely with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) to ensure the smooth enrollment of children in school as capacity and funding permit.

Hanane's Story

Many parents share the same fear: that their children cannot continue their education. The situation is also demotivating for children who had been in schools last year but are not sure they will continue to be in school this year.

Hanane is a very bright Syrian girl. She completed grade 6 in Syria before fleeing to Lebanon and thanks support from humanitarian partners; she attended school last year and is waiting now to be enrolled in the coming school year.

Unfortunately, many children were not as lucky as Hanane, as places proved very limited in the overstretched public schools. This is why

every day, after returning from school, Hanane taught her friends what she would have learnt during the day.

There is no classroom they can use, board or chalk for that matter – however, this has not discouraged Hanane or her friends. They gathered in front of the wooden door of the makeshift room she and her family live in, and the class began.



Hanane is teaching her friends how to write and spell words in English. She uses the door of a room where she lives with her family. © Lisa Abou Khaled/ UNHCR

UNICEF Raspberry Pi Computer Initiative

Ensuring adequate access to education and other services has been met with tremendous challenges, with resources in Lebanon being stretched to unprecedented limits.

To tackle this problem, UNICEF has been working on innovative solutions for children such as the Raspberry Pi computer.

The Pi was launched by UNICEF to support children in numeracy and literacy skills in classrooms and refugee informal settlements



The Pi, which can be used in classrooms and refugee informal settlements to support children in numeracy and literacy skills, is an affordable solution that UNICEF Lebanon has developed to respond to this challenge.

This pilot programme was launched in mid-September 2014 and will run for a six-week period. UNICEF's implementing partners Association of Volunteers in International Service (AVSI), Beyond Association, IQRA' and Mouvement Social are providing this opportunity to 150 children in five locations around the country and will take lessons learned for the potential scale-up of the project in the future.

University Education

The Annual Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative is UNHCR's main global programme for tertiary or university education, providing scholarships annually to refugees to study in host countries. It is centrally managed by UNHCR's headquarters in Geneva.

In Lebanon, 60 Syrian refugee students received university scholarships over a period of three to four years. For the academic year 2014/2015, 20 scholarships will be granted to high school graduates entering universities in Lebanon and 40 for second and third year students who are already enrolled.

The call for application for the scholarships this year 2014 has received 453 candidacies in two weeks, thanks to the efforts of education partners.

60 Syrian refugee students received university scholarships.

After pre-screening all application forms, 182 applicants were pre-selected, of whom 124 were finally interviewed by selection committees in different locations. Committees were composed of the MOSA, War Child Holland, Save the Children, UNHCR, Caritas Lebanon Migrants Center, and the Norwegian Refugee Council, in addition to members from Lebanese and American universities of Beirut.

Hany's Story

"If I am not a student, I am nothing."



The monotony burdens him deeply and it is with a heavy sadness that he adds, "I'm wasting a lot of time here, I cannot achieve my dreams."

Hani is 20 years old, and a refugee. Lost, in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley. "I am wasting time here."

With all his potential and passion for the world, Hany spends his days in the small shelter with his phone and occasional internet connection as his only means of escape.

Hany is missing out on his dreams. Hany was determined to graduate. He went to school every day, but the relentless sound of shooting made it hard to concentrate on his exams. Still, he excelled. Read his full story at http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/melissa-fleming/syria-conflict-3rd-anniversary_b_4964260.html.

DONORS

Australia, Canada, China, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, EU, France, Germany, Holy See, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, USA.

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AGENCIES THAT HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REPORT



This report is produced by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) on behalf of humanitarian agencies working on the Syrian refugee response in Lebanon. The report is based on information provided by UNHCR and partner agencies. For more information, please contact Dana Sleiman at sleiman@unhcr.org or Mona Monzer at monzer@unhcr.org.