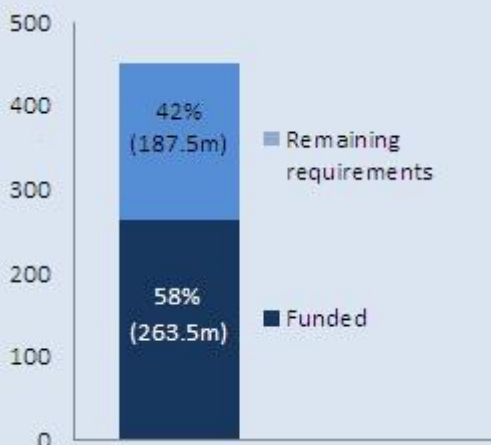


Key Figures

609,217	registered refugee children
77%	of registered children are under 11
25%	of registered children are at risk

Funding

UNHCR total requirements: USD 451 m



September developments

- In the South, UNHCR and partners jointly held focus group meetings with both Syrian refugee and Lebanese children. Key concerns and problems raised by the children include discrimination, child labour, exploitation, limited education opportunities and inability to afford covering basic needs.
- Youth committees in Kherbet Daud and Wadi Khaled organised four information sessions on self-protection and SGBV prevention, which were attended by 117 refugees and Lebanese children.

Identification and referral of children-at-risk

- 247 children at high risk, including unaccompanied minors and separated children, were identified and provided with support, including psychosocial counselling by case management agencies and refugee outreach volunteers (ROVs) across the operation.
- In the Bekaa, Intersos identified and assisted 17 children involved in child labor, including working in agricultural fields, barber shops and grocery stores. These children were provided with psychosocial counseling and families received emergency protection cash assistance to cover transport fees, rent and purchase basic essential items.
- In Qobayat, 139 children were identified and assisted to access specialized services.

Training/coaching

- Peer-to-peer sessions for case workers and ROV's in Bekaa and Akkar focused on responding to child labour and working with parents to address the psychosocial needs of children related to the impact of war and displacement. Sessions were also held for caseworkers and ROVs on working with child survivors of sexual abuse.
- Basic child protection trainings were held for 44 specialized child protection ROVs in Mount Lebanon, Tripoli and South.
- 52 child protection service providers working with different NGOs were trained on child protection concepts, practical skill required to manage complex cases and referral pathways.



Needs

Many refugee children are in need of psychosocial 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

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.

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.

Dispersed refugee population: Since refugees live in over 1,750 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.

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.

UNHCR implementing partners

Amel Association-Lebanese Popular Association for Popular Action (AMEL), Caritas Lebanon Migrants Center (CMLC), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), International Medical Corps (IMC), International Relief and Development (IRD), International Rescue Committee (IRC), INTERSOS, 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).

Achievements: January – September

Activity	 reached January- September	 2014 Target
Identified children at risk referred and assisted	2,306	1,515
Training for persons working with refugee children (# individuals trained)	646	600