

SYRIAN REFUGEE RESPONSE: LEBANON INTERAGENCY UPDATE



Syrian refugees amidst the snow in Bekaa. © Lisa Abou Khaled/ UNHCR



#FutureOfSyria

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LEBANON

Agencies and the Government of Lebanon had requested US\$ 2.1 billion in the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) launched on 15 December 2014

HIGHLIGHTS

- Humanitarian partners continue to provide winterization items to vulnerable refugee and Lebanese families all over Lebanon;
- Registration opened for the second-shift of school (mostly for Syrian refugee children) this week on Monday 12 January and will continue until the 23rd of Jan;
- Approximately 902,571 people received food assistance through e-cards and food parcels since the beginning of January;
- A total of 204,200 Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian children benefited from winterization aid since November 2014;
- Around 155,000 children in 583 public schools are staying warm thanks to fuel distribution this winter;
- At least 8,215 consultations were conducted for primary and secondary health care in the past week.

WINTER ASSISTANCE

UN agencies and partners continued the distribution of winterization items in different areas in Lebanon over the past week. Low temperatures persist and several villages have witnessed another wave of snowfall. This made access to affected locations challenging especially above 1,600 meters of altitude.

Since November, UNICEF and partners have distributed winter clothes for children, blankets, tarpaulins, and high energy biscuits (wheat biscuits containing high-protein cereals and vegetable fat) in addition to providing drainage kits and safe drinking water to a total of 204,200 Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian refugee children in the most affected areas. Emergency mobile health teams, alongside continuing mobile medical units have treated over 1,600 patients living in informal settlements.

Around 80,000 children (aged up to 14 years old) living in high-altitude tented settlements received winter kits between November and December 2014, prior to the winter storm. That represents approximately 72 percent of the overall number of Syrian children residing in informal settlements across Lebanon. Winter kits included blankets, warm clothes and fuel for heating.

An additional 20,000 winter kits were also provided to poor Lebanese children and another 20,000 Palestinian children (16,500 Palestinian Refugees from Syria and 3,500 hardship cases) received vouchers for clothing.

A total of 104,200 children benefited from UNICEF immediate response measures, including drainage kits, plastic sheeting and access to safe drinking water.

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) has assisted almost 8,000 Syrian refugees with winterization items. DRC activated its emergency plan in Bekaa and North Lebanon when the storm hit the country. The organization worked closely with municipalities and partners to intervene in 70 informal settlements and assist around 7,850 people with waterproof kits and blankets.

In Aarsal, refugee families living in shelters that do not provide enough warmth and protection from snow and rain, moved to six emergency shelters that were set up. These included collective centers,

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abandoned buildings, mosques and schools.

Dar Al Fatwa continues to distribute 3,000 hot meals a day to vulnerable Syrian and Lebanese families. Médecins Sans Frontières and Amel Association field hospitals in Aarsal are operational and receiving patients on a daily basis.

UNICEF distributed through partner NGOs around 22,000 winter kits for children in addition to vaccines, acqua tabs, and high energy biscuits. Medical services were also provided to women and children through medical mobile units.

In Tripoli, an additional 31,000 blankets are being distributed by the Lebanese Red Cross to vulnerable Lebanese and refugee families.

In Mount Lebanon, winterization assistance is being delivered by humanitarian agencies in elevated areas that were not reachable at the height of the storm. Last weekend, around 348 plastic sheets, 871 blankets and 890 mattresses were distributed in informal settlements and collective shelters.

How to keep warm in winter

CARE's emergency shelter team is distributing Arabic information leaflets on how to keep warm along with winterization kits to refugees in Syria and neighboring countries. They include a short guide that instructs refugee families on how to protect their shelters from cold and rain. It also gives key safety measures they should take such to avoid fires and carbon monoxide poisoning. Leaflets were produced with clear graphics so that they can be comprehensible to those who cannot read instructions. The leaflets can be found here <http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/how-keep-warm-winter-enar>

SHELTER

UNHCR estimates that some 55 percent of Syrian refugees in Lebanon live in sub-standard shelters, including in more than 1,435 informal tented sites – 852 of them in Bekaa Valley alone. Others are living in every kind of shelter imaginable, including abandoned buildings,

sheds and garages. With no government approval for refugee shelter construction or significant renovations to existing structures, humanitarian agencies supply refugees with various materials to reinforce their shelters as best they can.

With refugees scattered across 1,700 locations all across Lebanon, ensuring that each and every family in need of assistance gets help is an enormous logistical undertaking. Any refugee family in urgent need is encouraged to contact UNHCR and its partners for emergency help.

In Akkar, Concern distributed 467 plastic sheeting in addition to weatherproofing kits in 11 informal settlements.

In Tripoli, out of 65 informal settlements assessed by humanitarian agencies (1,523 shelters hosting 8,245 individuals), a total of nine were heavily affected by the storm while 38 were slightly damaged and another 18 not impacted at all.

The International Committee for the Development of People (CISP) provided 27 sealing-off kits while the International Organization for Migration (IOM) distributed 67 additional kits. Solidarité Internationale provided 100 plastic sheets and 61 weatherproofing kits in Minieh, Dennieh and Zgharta villages.

In Bekaa, the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC), Save the Children and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) distributed 155 heavy tents to make sure refugee families were protected from snow and cold. More than 1,456 plastic sheets were provided by KAFA, SAWA, LRC and NRC to those living in North Bekaa. Concern continued the distribution of fuel vouchers benefiting more than 179 families in the town of Khirbet Rouha.

In Mount Lebanon, the Cooperative Housing Foundation International (CHF) and Première Urgence provided more than 300 plastic sheets and weatherproofing kits in Chouf, Metn and Keserwan areas.

UNICEF and partners assisted 73,000 Syrian children living in flood-prone informal settlements through site improvements. These included the provision of 1,100 drainage kits as well as access to safe drinking water.

WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene)

In December 2014, UN-Habitat and UNICEF started sewage system improvements in the Chouf and the south in order to avoid pollution of streets and agricultural fields, reduce contamination of springs and drinking water, improve the connection coverage to ensure sewage treatment downstream and repair damaged sewage networks.

Sewage and storm water networks in Sarafand (south), for example, were upgraded with an additional secondary sewage pipe to connect a collective shelter and an informal settlement. This project benefited 12,483 vulnerable Lebanese and 3,125 Syrian refugees.

Four municipalities in Saida which faced similar sewage problems also benefitted from the rehabilitation of over eight kilometres of a sewage network serving 9,638 vulnerable Lebanese and 6,396 Syrian refugees.

Daraya sewage network (Chouf) has also been extended by approximately 1,300 meters benefiting 2,895 Lebanese and 1,104 Syrians.

In Katermaya (Chouf), extensions ensured sewage treatment by Jiyeh treatment plant. This project benefited 3,979 Lebanese and 1,763 Syrian refugees.

A 450-meter sewage network was repaired in Chhim (Chouf), serving 13,565 Lebanese and 5,386 Syrian refugees.

UN-Habitat and UNICEF also finalized a project in partnership with the private sector aimed at reducing the contamination of the spring of Yamounneh in the Bekaa Valley through the replacement of the sewage pipe system. Since the spring is used to provide drinking water to 15 villages, the estimated number of beneficiaries is 50,000 Lebanese and 15,000 Syrian refugees.

Around 50,000 Lebanese and 15,000 Syrian refugees have access to drinking water

HEALTH

In coordination with the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH), around 7,000 primary health care consultations were conducted by UNHCR, AMEL, Caritas Lebanon Migrants Centre (CLMC), International Medical Corps (IMC), Makassed and Union of Relief and Development Associations (URDA).

In addition, humanitarian agencies provided treatments, referrals, medication, antenatal and postnatal care, family planning, child health care and diagnostic tests through mobile or center-based clinics. Some 1,215 individuals were hospitalized this week, including 696 deliveries.

Another 3,070 individuals benefited from awareness sessions provided by UNHCR, IMC, CLMC, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) and URDA. Sessions covered malnutrition screening, nutritional awareness, reproductive health, infant and young child feeding (IYCF), contraception, first aid and health promotion for children.

IMC provided 545 social and mental health consultations in five different governorates through its outreach and center-based activities. A further 190 awareness materials and sessions were conducted on mental, health, gender based violence and early marriage.

MOPH, Beyond Association and UNICEF provided around 3,200 children with high-energy biscuits through 25 mobile medical units in 650 informal settlements. These units also attended 1,600 patients in their tents with pre-positioned medical supplies. Children were treated for flu, fever and skin diseases due to the cold weather.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) is touring informal settlements and collective shelters in Bar Elias, Al Marj, Majdel Anjar and Aarsal to provide psychosocial first aid to women and girls who were most affected by the storm.

The Nutrition Sub-Working Group, led by MOPH, has started updating the National Nutrition and Food Security Strategy plan for Lebanon developed in 2009. It includes nutrition in emergencies. This is an important step towards strengthening the nutrition surveillance system countrywide in order to monitor the nutrition status of the

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most vulnerable children in light of the anticipated reduction in food aid assistance.

As part of the initiative to build in-country capacities, UNICEF and partners have continued to support trainings of health workers. Trainings aim at increasing knowledge and capacity on various health topics such as immunization, disease outbreak management and epidemics. They will allow nurses to support medical staff in the Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs).

FOOD SECURITY

Since the beginning of January, the World Food Programme (WFP) and its partners reached approximately 902,571 beneficiaries through e-cards and food parcels.

URDA distributed 2,328 food parcels and 3,500 bread parcels to 1,691 refugees in and around informal shelter settlements in Akkar, Beirut and Bekaa.

IOCC is supporting a community kitchen in Akkar for the distribution of hot meals and bread parcels for vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian refugee families in the regions of Minyara, Halba and Tal Abbas with the support of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH). In the past week, IOCC distributed 720 meals for 240 families (1,200 individuals).

WFP is continuing to expand the number of partner shops where beneficiaries can redeem their e-cards. To date, WFP has contracted 403 partner shops across Lebanon.

National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP)

The e-card (food voucher) component of NPTP was launched by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) in November 2014 for 35,000 vulnerable Lebanese families needing monthly food assistance. While WFP is providing technical assistance, UNHCR's funding through November and December 2014 ensured that 5,076 Lebanese households representing around 27,209 beneficiaries received much needed food assistance.

Beneficiaries redeem their food vouchers at WFP contracted retailers and buy food items they need at their convenience.

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2015*

CHILD PROTECTION

As part of the coaching plan to transfer capacities to local partners, training was conducted by UNICEF on the basic concepts of child protection and gender based violence (GBV), including detection, referral and psychosocial support.

In order to build the capacities of service providers to engage with adolescent girls in an effective manner, training was conducted in the past month by humanitarian agencies on the implementation of 'My Safety, My Wellbeing' curriculum. The programme was developed as a result of an assessment conducted in Lebanon with adolescent girls and their caregivers in 2014. The curriculum targets Syrian and Lebanese adolescent girls between the ages of 11-18 and aims to equip them with knowledge and skills to help mitigate, prevent and respond to GBV. The course also enables adolescent girls to develop positive coping mechanisms and establish a secure network of friends and supporters which can be drawn upon if they encounter GBV or other types of violence.

EDUCATION

The 2015 annual work plan led by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) in line with RACE - Reaching All Children through an education strategy and the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) has been finalized and approved by the Cabinet.

As part of the UNICEF's winterization program, and in coordination with MEHE, the distribution of fuel started in 583 public schools located in areas above 500 meters all over Lebanon, benefitting 155,000 children.

At least, 5,000 children living in informal settlements could access non-formal education activities in the South, Bekaa and Akkar after UNICEF and partners used 350 plastic sheets and put up nine tents to substitute damaged ones used as learning areas.

Enrollment in the second-shift of school started this week on Monday 12 January and is open until 23 January, with a target of 57,000 children supported by UN agencies. MEHE provided a list of 147

schools where second shift could be open, including, eight schools in Beirut, 38 in Mount Lebanon, 40 in the Bekaa, 11 in Nabatieh, 13 in the south and 37 in the north.

Efforts to share information with parents on the registration in second-shift of school continue through refugee outreach volunteers (ROVs), SMS, posters available in registration and community centres, and schools.

On Thursday 15 January, MEHE and UNHCR participated in the weekly UNESCO radio programme 'Refugees and their Concerns' supported by UNHCR. The programme, which is broadcasted on Voice of Lebanon (93.3 FM), focused on education and enrolment in public schools. You can listen to the last episode here <http://vdl.com.lb/new/images/2015-1-2015%20نزوحو20%هموم20%20.mp3>

In order to compensate the late start of schools in Lebanon, MEHE is considering extending school shifts to Saturdays and shortening breaks during weekdays. MEHE has also approved 61 schools to be rehabilitated with funds from the European Union (EU), Italy and Canada in order to meet safety and accessibility standards.

DONORS

Australia, Canada, China, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, EU, France, Germany, Holy See, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Mexico, Monaco, 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

