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LCRP launch at the Grand Serail

Photo credit: RCO

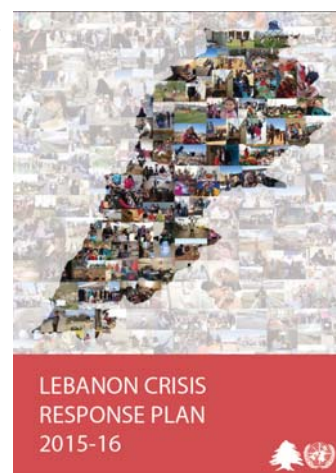
HIGHLIGHTS

- LCRP serves the needs of the most vulnerable
- Syria SRP seeks \$2.9 billion to assist 12.2 million people
- Food assistance to refugees affected by funding gaps
- "Zina" snow storm hits Lebanon affecting access
- News procedures applied to Syrians entering Lebanon
- Visa delays affect humanitarian operations
- ERF announces first call for proposals in 2015

Lebanon's new Crisis Response Plan serves stability and the needs of the most vulnerable

The Prime Minister, Tamam Salam, and the UN Deputy Secretary-General, Jan Eliasson, launched the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) on 15 December. The plan outlines the priorities of the Government and the international community for the coming two years to respond to the impact of the Syrian crisis on Lebanon.

"What we hope is for the LCRP to act, not only as a wake-up call, but as a concrete roadmap, allowing donors to focus on sectors toward which they can channel an amount of funds, significant enough to make a difference," said PM Salam before an audience made of ministers, senior officials, representatives of more than 30 countries, UN agencies, as well as national and international NGOs attending the event.



Four years into the crisis, Lebanese communities that have generously welcomed refugees are reaching a critical point. Public services are overwhelmed, economic growth has faltered and unemployment is rising. As social tensions grow, Lebanon will need to protect its fragile stability.

"Addressing the challenges of Lebanon is a burden that no country in the world could or should face alone," said DSG Eliasson who called on UN member states, on behalf of the Secretary-General, to "show solidarity and step up their assistance to Lebanon and its people."

The LCRP aims to address these challenges. The plan was jointly developed by the Government of Lebanon and the United Nations, and 77 local and international NGOs – under the leadership of Minister of Social Affairs, Rasheed Derbas and the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Ross Mountain.

The LCRP also aims to ensure that the response to the impact of the Syria crisis benefits Lebanon and keeps the country stable during this difficult period. It continues the necessary work of delivering protection and humanitarian assistance to families displaced from Syria, while expanding plans to invest in Lebanese services, economies and institutions in the poorest and at-risk areas. With funding requirements estimated at \$2.1 billion, the plan aims to reach up to 2.9

FIGURES (8 January 2015)

# of refugees	1,148,844
# of returnees	17,510
# of PRS	44,283
# of PRL	270,000
# of targeted host community	1,500,000

FUNDING

(Extracted from FTS)

RRP6 funding as at end December 2014

49% funded

LCRP

US\$ 2.14 billion requested

\$2.14 billion funding required

\$724 million exclusively
for stabilization programmes

\$1.9 billion requested
as new funding

77

National &
International
Organizations

Humanitarian assistance & protection

- 1.5 million Syrian *de facto* refugees
- Over 336,000 poorest Lebanese
- 315,000 Palestine refugees
- 50,000 Lebanese returnees

Support to services, economies & institutions

- 1.9 million vulnerable Lebanese
- 1.3 million Syrian *de facto* refugees
- 225,000 Palestine refugees

million people most in need; more than half of whom are Lebanese.

“Beyond the humanitarian dimension, the priority of keeping Lebanon stable must be recognized” said Mountain during the launch. “To this end, we would ask that development budgets be mobilized for activities that support Lebanese institutions to that end.”

Developments inside Syria

Whole-of-Syria approach ensures greater coherence to the response

The Strategic Response Plan (SRP) for Syria was launched in Berlin on 18 December alongside the LCRP as the Lebanon chapter in the 3RP. The SRP is based on the Humanitarian Needs Overview and takes a Whole-of-Syria approach to the response. It seeks \$2.9 billion to assist 12.2 million people inside Syria, including over 5.6 million children.

In her briefing to the Security Council on 15 December in relation to Resolution 2139, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Valerie Amos, highlighted the indiscriminate use of force, the lack of protection for civilians, and the increase in needs resulting from violence. She asked the Security Council to ensure the parties comply with Resolution 2139 in particular to; (1) end indiscriminate use of weapons; (ii) protect children from the wide range of violations they are subject to; (iii) lift sieges; (iv) facilitate unhindered access, including for medical assistance and respect neutrality of facilities; (v) end the pervasive climate of impunity; and (vi) ultimately find a political end to the conflict.

The initial six-month mandate of UN Security Council Resolution 2165 was renewed for one year on 17 December. The first six months of the Resolution saw regular humanitarian assistance being provided from Turkey and Jordan by several sectors.

People in Need

Funding gaps put food assistance at stake

In the wake of WFP's warning that food assistance to Syrian and Palestine refugees would have to be suspended in December, a global fundraising campaign raised enough money to ensure beneficiaries would benefit from the usual monthly assistance through e-cards. However, the January WFP uploaded the food assistance e-cards of Syrian refugees consisted of only \$19 per individual due to lack of funds. This is 70 percent of the now planned \$27 per individual per month. Forecast for February remains uncertain amidst concerns for future funding.

Through the upcoming targeting survey, food assistance coverage is expected to be gradually reduced from the current 76 per cent of the registered Syrian refugees to 55 per cent during 2015. Food assistance support to vulnerable Lebanese is not affected by the current funding gap. In January, WFP plans to assist 27,209 Lebanese as part of the National Poverty Targeting Programme.

Humanitarian response

Snow storm “Zina” leaves three refugees dead; tents under snow

A storm swept across Lebanon during the second week of January cutting off roads across the country, isolating some villages, and leaving at least three refugees dead.



Snow covers the tents in Ghazze ITS (Bekaa)

Photo: UNDP



132,000 Refugee families supported by humanitarian partners since last autumn



80,000 received
Cash support
Fuel coupons



50,000 received
plastic sheeting,
wood and basic tools



30,000 received
blankets and
heating stoves



40,000 receiving
winter clothes



4,600 sites underwent
drainage
improvement

Source: UNHCR



Source: UNDP

Two Syrians, including an eight-year-old boy, reportedly died while they were trying to cross from Syria into Shebaa and were caught by the storm. Also, a boy reportedly died in Akkar as a result of the cold weather.

Many mountain roads in Akkar and in the Bekaa were blocked by snow and most tents in Informal Tented Settlements (ITSs) were covered by snow. Strong winds and heavy rains also flooded some areas.

On 10 January, the Humanitarian Coordinator, Ross Mountain together with MoSA visited an ITS in Bekaa and met with humanitarian partners responding to winterization needs. It was decided that up to \$1 million from the Lebanon Emergency Response Fund (ERF) will be allocated to support the emergency response to the snow storm "Zina".

Refugees need more assistance to manage harsh winter

Winterization efforts for those most vulnerable is provided in three forms: weatherproofing of shelters, basic assistance, and assistance targeting children. Weatherproofing of shelters for Syrian refugees took place throughout Lebanon from August targeting families living in substandard buildings. However, an approximate 47 per cent gap is recorded in weatherproofing assistance for substandard shelters; while there is no gap for ITSs. UNICEF has recently received approval from the Ministry of Education to commence delivery of fuel for classroom heating for 583 schools to benefit 155,000 children.

Lebanon joins 16 Days Campaign to end gender based violence

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women was marked on 25 November and coincided with the UN launch of its annual 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence that ended on 10 December, International Human Rights Day. The campaign aimed to raise awareness and trigger action to end violence against women and girls globally. The campaign focused on three key areas:

- Addressing protection needs of adolescent girls through prevention and response to early marriage;
- Engaging men and boys in preventing gender-based violence and promoting gender equality; and
- Addressing impunity and reinforcing access to justice and protection for survivors.

The campaign saw high level advocacy initiatives, in addition to the participation of 22,000 community members in multiple community events such as focus group discussions, theater, photo galleries, and a video on gender violence organized by UNHCR, UNICEF and UNFPA's partners. Politicians, religious leaders, men, women, and youth discussed the causes of gender-based violence, and more importantly identified means to address this human rights violation and committed to end it.



The 16 Days Campaign also constituted the beginning of a longer term campaign in Lebanon that will focus on early marriage as one of the main protection concerns for adolescent girls.

Humanitarian access

Twin suicide attacks in Jabal Mohsen; overall security incidents decrease

At least seven people were killed and three dozens wounded in a double suicide attack that targeted a café in Tripoli's neighborhood of Jabal Mohsen on Saturday 10 January. The Nusra Front claimed responsibility for the attack on its Twitter account.

Meanwhile, an overall decrease in the number of security incidents was recorded between 1 December 2014 and 10 January 2015, the majority of which occurred in the Aarsal-Baalbeck area. Ten instances of armed clashes between the LAF and armed elements left at least seven people killed on the LAF side, three from armed elements and several injuries. Syrian warplanes reportedly entered Lebanese airspace on at least three occasions, killing at least one person.

Syrians to enter Lebanon upon entry permits only

As of 5 January, Lebanon's General Security Office (GSO) issued a new procedure for Syrian nationals entering Lebanon to be applied at all border crossings. Syrians must now report their reason for coming and provide relevant documentation. All Syrians can apply for a visa for one of eight areas: tourism, work visit, property owner, student, travelling to another country, medical visit, and appointment with a foreign embassy, or a visit with a Lebanese national's sponsorship. The permitted duration of the stay varies according to each category.

In October 2014, the Government adopted a policy paper on new border management policies and committed to defining "humanitarian criteria". The Ministry of Social Affairs has given indications that vulnerable persons in immediate need of international protection will be admitted on a case-by-case basis after review, in accordance with this policy. The humanitarian community urges these humanitarian criteria to be shared as a matter of urgency, and for these to ensure that persons fleeing conflict and seeking international protection are allowed to do so.

INGOs face work permits challenge; visa delays affecting humanitarian operations

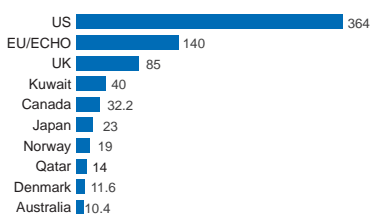
A backlog of work permits and delays in issuing visas for international staff is forcing INGOs to take measures to possibly reduce their operations in Lebanon which will negatively affect their work and the vulnerable Lebanese, Syrians and Palestinians they are assisting.

Lebanese regulations stipulate that only registered INGOs only can apply for work permits for their staff to be issued by the Ministry of Labour. The registration of INGOs is usually a long process which requires a Council of Ministers' decision. Several INGOs have submitted their registration documents and are awaiting a decision. In addition, dozens of work permits for registered INGOs are still pending.

INGOs' international staff members have until now been able to obtain a six months multi-entry residency visa issued by Government authorities extendable for three months. However, authorities have recently informed INGOs that a work permit is mandatory for staff to stay longer in Lebanon.



Children playing in Ghazze ITS (Bekaa) Photo by: UNDP



Donors contributions to the RRP6 in US\$ millions from FTS as of end of December 2014.

Funding

Overall humanitarian funding in 2014 decreases compared to 2013

At the end of December 2014, the overall humanitarian funding allocated to Lebanon reached \$941 million, with the top ten donors accounting for 78 per cent of that amount. The 2014 contributions represent \$95 million less than what humanitarian and development agencies received in 2013, despite growing needs.

The RRP6 was funded at 49 per cent only with \$829 million received.

Lebanon's ERF announces first call for proposal mid-January

The newly established ERF Advisory and Review Boards held their first meeting in December 2014 and endorsed the Funds' strategy. The first call for proposals has been launched focusing on winterization needs after the Humanitarian Coordinator, Ross Mountain allocated up to \$1 million for that purpose.

The HC along with the HCT and the Lebanon ERF boards, will ensure that the Lebanon ERF is strategically positioned to respond to the current humanitarian situation affecting Lebanon, and initiate life-saving activities targeting the affected local communities, refugees (Syrian and Palestine) and other vulnerable communities (Lebanese and Palestinian) alike.

Moreover, the Lebanon ERF will focus on strengthening the capacity of national NGOs by increasing their access to funding. It will also ensure coordination with the relevant national and local authorities and will explore ways of engagement with the private sector.

ERF allocations will be guided by, and aim to support the implementation of the LCRP, in consultation with the sectors. So far, funds have been received from India, Denmark, Sweden and Germany amounting to \$4.6 million.

Sahel Akkar's water story

Sahel Akkar in northern Lebanon hosts almost 60,000 Syrian refugees outnumbering the total local population. Most refugees reside in ITSs scattered across the privately owned lands.

Sahel Akkar suffers from weak public services and the refugee influx has increased the strains on the area's economy and limited resources. Sahel Akkar does not have a public network of potable water and its inhabitants rely on boreholes for their daily consumption as most of them cannot afford to purchase potable water. Contaminated water coming from the boreholes has caused diseases, especially among children.

The situation worsened last summer and access to water became a real challenge as more than 50 boreholes dried out due to the dry and mild winter which Lebanon witnessed in 2013-2014. Water scarcity led to tensions between the host community and refugees. Landlords of three ITSs had asked the refugees to remove the water pumps installed in private boreholes. Also, a few women had reportedly been harassed on condition of access to water.

This situation prompted the Lebanese Relief Council (LRC), with support from the Emergency Response Fund (ERF), to establish four Public Water Points (PWPs) that provide purified and clean water to both Lebanese and Syrians. More than 2,800 Lebanese and Syrian families (14,000 individuals) now benefit from these PWPs located along the main road, and are thus easily accessible. The municipalities where the PWPs are located will take over the management and maintenance of these and ensure appropriate use of them.



Polluted water refugees used to drink from before establishing the public water point Photo by: LRC

"I have no problem if the Syrian refugees come collect water from the public water point. On the contrary, I think this will facilitate and organize our access to water," says a Lebanese woman beneficiary.

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