

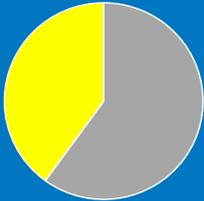


## SEPTEMBER UPDATE

- Latest Developments
- Winter Preparations Begin
- Looking for Hany: an aspiring young artist who fled Syria with his family and must cope with a debilitating eye condition



## FUNDING



Agencies and the Government of Lebanon have requested US\$ 1.87 billion in the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) (revised downward from US\$ 2.1 billion). As of 24 September 2015, agencies reported to having received US\$ 763 million (40% of the requirements)

## REGISTERED REFUGEES

A total of 1,113,941 are currently registered with UNHCR

## LEBANON

### INTER-AGENCY UPDATE

## SEPTEMBER DEVELOPMENTS

### Back To School

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE), with the support of USD94 million through UNICEF, UNHCR, and international donors, launched its 'Back to School' campaign for free education on 21 September. Free education up to grade nine will be provided for all children – Lebanese and non-Lebanese – in public schools this year. Education partners and over 500 Refugee Outreach Volunteers (ROVs) are working to raise awareness among parents about this year's free enrolment and ensure the referral of children to schools in their neighborhoods. Outreach efforts are focused on children who have been out of school for over a year, those working to support their families and children with disabilities who have not been able to integrate in schools. Refugee Parents will be assisted by ROVs to set up homework support groups, which aim to support retention of students in schools.

### Onward and transit movement of Syrians from and through Lebanon

An increasing number of Syrians have been observed using the maritime route from Lebanon to Turkey presumably to join the Eastern Mediterranean route to Europe.

Currently, the largest number observed in Lebanon using this route are Syrians coming directly from Syria on legal transit visas and departing within 24 hours. At the same time, as the situation for Syrians in Lebanon deteriorates, notably with respect to the lack of livelihoods opportunities and their inability to renew their residency, more refugees are indicating their intention to move onward to third countries.

### Erroneous Information on Resettlement

Fraudulent information on resettlement has circulated in the public domain in September, misleading refugees about their resettlement prospects. UNHCR has worked to clarify the matter with refugees across Lebanon. UNHCR explained that it did not call on refugees to apply for resettlement to the country of their choice. Resettlement places remain limited within the programme operated by UNHCR together with resettlement countries. UNHCR identifies refugees in need of resettlement based solely on humanitarian criteria that have been agreed upon globally and targets only the most vulnerable refugees. Although UNHCR assists in

the identification and selection process, the final decision to accept a refugee for resettlement rests with resettlement countries.

### **Inactivation of 58,000 refugees from UNHCR’s database**

At the end of August, UNHCR inactivated more than 58,000 Syrian refugees from its registration database in Lebanon, following a verification exercise of several months to confirm those still present in the country.

UNHCR conducts regular verification exercises to update its information about registered Syrian refugees, review their needs, and deactivate the files of those deemed to be no longer present in the country of asylum. Verification is made through various means including visits to UNHCR offices, regular activities and home visits to refugees by UNHCR and other humanitarian staff, and WFP’s annual food distribution validation exercise. After multiple attempts to reach those not found, some 15,300 families (58,812 people) were inactivated from the registration database.

### **Breastfeeding campaign**

With the support of UNICEF and UNHCR, the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) held training sessions with ROVs on the benefits of breastfeeding in order for them to participate in promoting the practice among Lebanese and refugee mothers.

### **Raids**

Security checks were reported in Tripoli, Akkar, Central and North Bekaa throughout September. Tens of men were arrested thereafter for lack of valid residency permits. Most were released shortly after their arrest and were given an average of two weeks to renew their residencies.

### **Evictions**

Two informal settlements in Iaat, North Bekaa, were issued eviction notices by their landlord who intends to use the land for agricultural purposes. The tenants relocated to nearby pieces of land. Shelter, and Water, Hygiene and Sanitation (WASH) partners are following up on the residents’ needs in the new sites.

Residents of an informal settlement located in Zahlé Haouch El-Oumara Aradi were also given a month’s notice to vacate the site comprising 69 tents (400 individuals). The Bekaa evictions committee is following up with the tenants and working to assist the most vulnerable families.

Similarly, an informal settlement in Barelias hosting 192 refugees is also under the threat of eviction. Residents were given until the end of September to find alternative solutions. Half of the families have rented private accommodation in Barelias and Sawiri, while the other half have rented land in the village of Anjar.

Shelter and WASH partners have started to assess the new site in order to provide assistance.

### **Sandstorm**

Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) witnessed a spike in the number of Lebanese and Syrian refugee patients complaining from respiratory problems after a storm hit Lebanon on 8 September. Most received appropriate treatment at the PHCs and did not need referral to hospitals but several hundred people were transferred by the Lebanese Red Cross to various hospitals for emergency care. During the storm, agencies, ROVs, and healthcare providers in mobile medical units attended to those in need, provided face masks and referrals to clinics and hospitals when needed.

Despite these efforts, a refugee woman in Akkar and another in Maghdoushe, South Lebanon, passed away following respiratory complications before being able to reach a health facility.

## WINTER PREPARATIONS

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Last winter, over 45 humanitarian agencies worked around the clock to provide winter assistance to refugees and vulnerable Lebanese as three harsh storms hit Lebanon between November and January.

The assistance included a combination of cash to help the most vulnerable refugees withstand the winter months as well as the provision of stoves and blankets to all those in need. Winter support also includes fuel vouchers and sealing off shelter kits to all those who are living in insecure dwellings.

The 2015 UNHCR-UNICEF-WFP-led vulnerability assessment of Syrian refugees showed that 70 per cent of refugee households currently live below the poverty line, on less than US\$3.84 per person per day. The need for additional support during the ruthless winter months is ever more pressing.

In addition to providing cash, agencies will distribute shelter and core relief items such as stoves, blankets and warm clothes to ensure that refugees and vulnerable Lebanese are well equipped to weather low temperatures. In areas where the cash programme will prove difficult to implement such as in Aarsal, in-kind support and fuel vouchers will be provided. Partners will also ensure that shelters are protected through the distribution of weatherproofing kits and that classrooms in elevated areas are warm through the provision of fuel in schools.

Partners estimate that over 190,000 economically vulnerable Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian refugee families (950,000 individuals) will be exposed to the cold and in need of basic assistance and shelter improvement / weatherproofing support this winter.

Of those, a segment identified as 'highly vulnerable' (11,500 families) through ongoing home visits will receive a monthly \$175 for four consecutive months starting November. Other families living above 500 meters (95,000 families) will benefit from \$100 per month while families living below 500 meters (74,000 families) will receive \$66 per month over the same period. Additionally, some 10,000 families in hard-to-reach areas will be assisted with fuel vouchers.

Agencies are currently working to raise the necessary funds in order to beef up their capacity and prepare for the implementation of the programme at the beginning of November.

## Looking for Hany



Hany Al Moliya never imagined he'd become a refugee. But three years ago, after members of his family were killed in their homes in Syria, he and his remaining relatives fled the country.

Follow Hany's journey of self-discovery, and his family's quest for resettlement, in this five-part series from UNHCR and Channel 4 News starting on Monday, 21 September. We'll be adding a new episode each day this week.

You can check it out here: <http://tracks.unhcr.org/2015/09/looking-for-hany/>

## DONORS

Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, European Union, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Luxemburg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America.

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