

HIGHLIGHTS

- US\$120 million of assistance has been channeled to Lebanese public institutions so far in 2016.
- Five years into the crisis, more than half of the 500,000 Syrian refugee children in Lebanon are not in school.
- By mid-2016, the LCRP had received increased funding in most sectors as compared to this time last year, with the exception of Social Stability and Livelihoods – the two most underfunded sectors this year.
- World Humanitarian Day is on 19 August. Get involved at [#OneHumanity](#) [#ShareHumanity](#)

FIGURES

(as of 30 June 2016)

# of estimated refugees	1,500,000
# of registered refugees	1,033,513



# of returnees	35,000
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# of Palestine Refugees from Syria (PRS)	40,807
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# of Palestine Refugees from Lebanon (PRL)	277,985
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# of targeted host communities	1,500,000
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Total Lebanese population	4,400,000
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Children from the Dom community in Lebanon.
Source: OCHA/ Anne-France White

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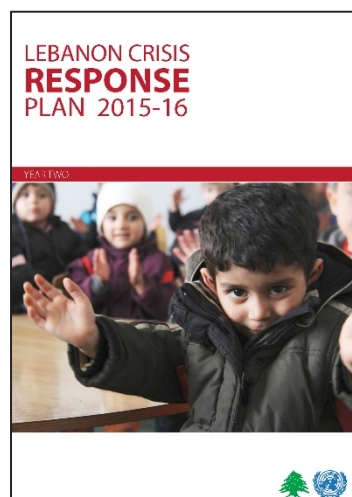
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Crisis Response Plan focuses on vulnerable Lebanese

Meeting Lebanon's humanitarian and development needs

The [Lebanon Crisis Response Plan \(LCRP\)](#) has a strong focus on service delivery, the improvement of public infrastructure, and trainings to help public institutions' staff respond to the crisis. For 2016, as part of an increasing focus on the needs of host communities, nearly 20 per cent of the US\$726 million received for the LCRP have gone to supporting vulnerable Lebanese.

Education and social services have been a priority this year, with 197,000 vulnerable Lebanese children enrolled in public schools for the academic year 2015-2016. As for social services, 57 Social Development Centers received financial, technical and additional staffing support to implement the [National Plan for Women and Children](#) run by the Ministry of Social Affairs.



By June 2016, more than US\$120 million of assistance was channeled to public institutions, and hundreds of staff were supported to enhance their crisis-response capacity. The Prime Minister's office, seven ministries and five governors' offices received fully operational crisis rooms and support in crisis management and planning.

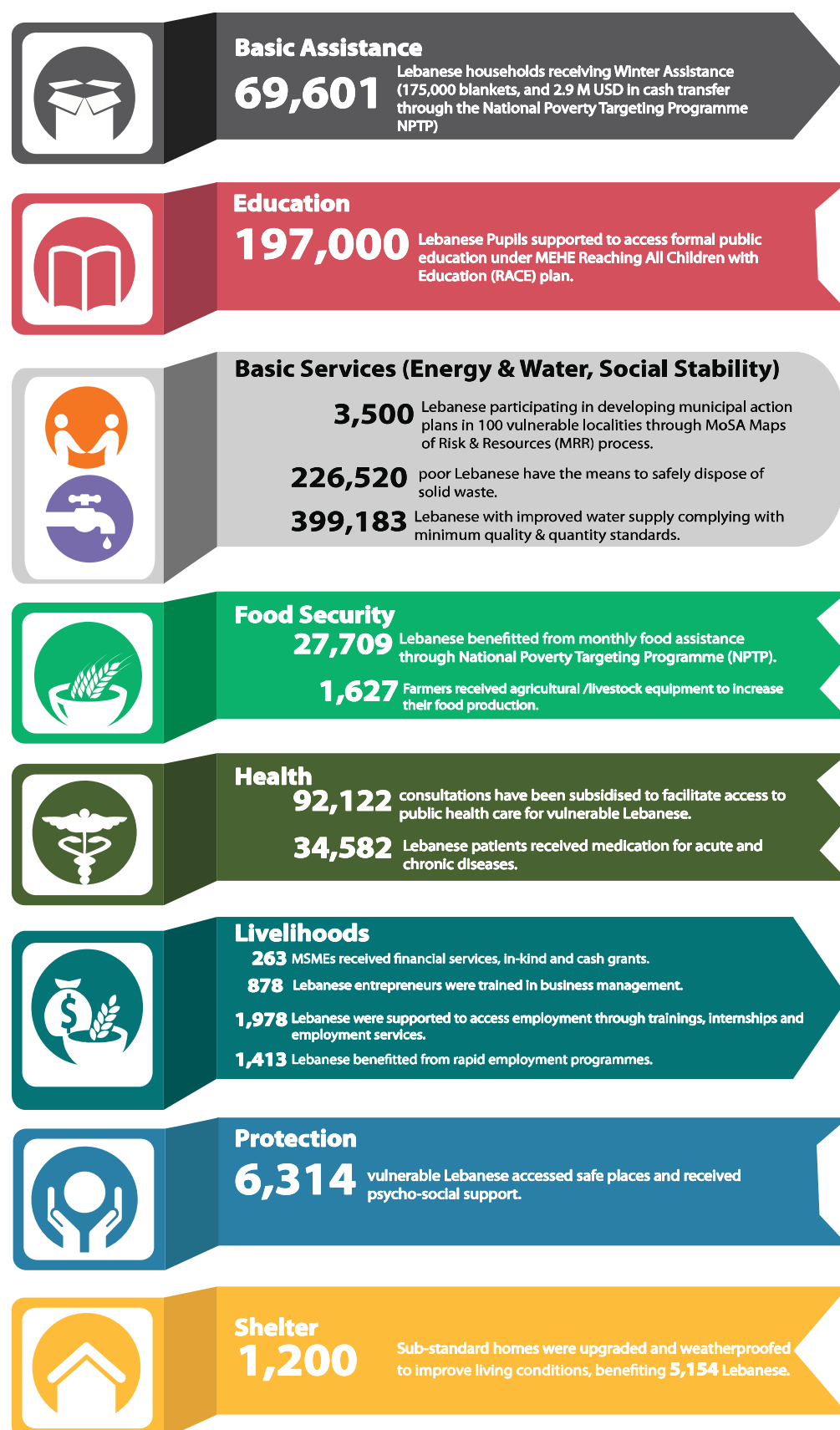
Supporting public institutions and municipalities

At the local level, 229 municipalities – almost one quarter of the 1,005 municipalities across the country – received support in implementing their Municipal Action Plans, as prioritized by the local communities themselves. Projects have invested in public gardens, irrigation canals, water networks and solid waste management, and 86 km of water networks were rehabilitated this year.

What is the LCRP?

The LCRP is a two-year joint Government of Lebanon–United Nations and NGO plan to ensure a response to the humanitarian and development needs triggered by the spillover of the neighboring Syrian crisis in Lebanon. In its second year, the plan continues the important work of delivering humanitarian assistance to refugees from Syria and other vulnerable groups, while expanding plans to invest in Lebanese services, economies and institutions to support host communities. US\$2.48 billion are requested for the overall plan, with 40 per cent for stabilization programmes and 60 per cent for humanitarian programmes. At the end of June 2016, the plan is nearly 30 per cent funded.

The following graph, from UNDP's mid-year update, details the support provided to public institutions and Lebanese communities under the LCRP 2016.



LCRP Mid-Year Review underway

More broadly, the mid-year review shows that humanitarian partners in Lebanon have made significant achievements towards the strategic priorities of the LCRP, through emergency interventions as well as structural assistance that strengthen stability in Lebanon.

LCRP partners have continued to bring wide-ranging support to the most vulnerable communities in Lebanon in 2016, while significantly increasing their focus on local economic development. There have been marked advances in the education sector, with 150,000 Syrian refugee children enrolled in Lebanese public schools for the 2015-2016 academic year, in addition to the 197,000 vulnerable Lebanese children mentioned above. However, the Lebanon response also faces extensive challenges, including the high cost and complexity of reaching and assisting the urban poor, comprising 21 per cent of refugees; severe funding shortfalls in key sectors including Social Stability and Livelihoods; the lack of long-term funding to enable more in-depth and predictable programming; and policy constraints that lead to illegal and exploitative labour.

The Dom: helping one of Lebanon's most marginalized communities

Small community faces extreme poverty and vulnerability

More than 76 per cent of Dom live under the poverty line, compared to 70 per cent of Syrian refugees.

As large-scale humanitarian needs persist in Lebanon, the little-known Dom community remains one of the most marginalized and under-assisted communities in the country. The minority group, estimated to number around 8,000 people in Lebanon, is thought to descend from travelling performers who migrated from India between the 3rd and 10th centuries, and to be distantly related to the Romani people of Europe. The Dom communities in Lebanon, which are no longer nomadic, were granted Lebanese naturalization in 1994.

Dom communities are found across Lebanon, with the largest concentrations in and around Beirut, the Bekaa, Saida, Tyre and Tripoli. They primarily live in poor peri-urban areas alongside other marginalized communities such as Palestinians and vulnerable Lebanese. Many of these communities are located in high-security zones such as the Sekke 'Gathering' adjacent to the Ein-el-Helweh Palestinian camp, making it difficult for humanitarians to reach them and respond to their needs.

Serious discrimination and extreme poverty

Attitudes toward the Dom among Lebanese society are overwhelmingly negative, and discrimination commonly excludes them from access to education, healthcare and basic services. School attendance rates amongst the Dom are extremely low: the Dom did not have access to public schools in Lebanon until 1994, and a 2011 report by Terre des Hommes (TdR) found that 68 per cent of school-age Dom children had never attended school. The 2011 report is the most recent



Dom children in Sekke, next to Ein el Helweh Palestinian camp.

Source: OCHA/Anne-France White

comprehensive research on the Dom community, and more recent data on the community is unavailable. This lack of information shows the extent to which the Dom have been neglected as part of the overall response in Lebanon. As a small and difficult-to-access community, their needs are overshadowed by the country's more sizeable vulnerable populations, including refugees. To date, very few organizations are implementing projects to support the Dom community in Lebanon.

With Dom families struggling to meet their needs through informal unskilled labour, the TdR report showed that more than 76 per cent live under the poverty line – compared to 70 per cent of Syrian refugees. The vast majority of Dom families live in makeshift shelters made of scrap materials with no sewage or proper electricity supply, exposing them and their children to a wide range of diseases and respiratory infections. Dom children face many protection risks, from domestic violence to child marriage, parental neglect, child labour, begging, sexual exploitation and exposure to drugs. Evictions are also a common threat, as Dom families cannot afford to buy property and therefore do not own the dwellings they live in.

Responding to the Dom community's severe humanitarian needs

The few organizations supporting the Dom include local NGO [Tahaddi](#), which runs a school and a health clinic in the extremely poor area of Hay el Gharbeh (south Beirut) and was created specifically to help the Dom. The NGO now provides schooling for 187 students, half of which are Dom and the other half Syrian. A few other organizations work with the Dom as part of their broader programming for Syrian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese: [UNDP](#) and [UNICEF](#) have worked to support the Dom community in Sekke, and the [Danish Refugee Council](#), [Palestinian Red Crescent](#) and [Arcenciel](#) are among the NGOs that provide assistance to the Dom as part of their overall work in Lebanon.

While these initiatives bring much-needed support to the Dom, the community is extremely vulnerable and continues to face severe humanitarian needs. In a bid to help the Dom community, OCHA and UNICEF visited Dom families in Sekke on 14 June to see the situation on the ground and look into ways of supporting them. As the humanitarian community continues to respond in Lebanon, it should support this highly vulnerable ethnic minority which stands among the country's poorest and most marginalized communities. Dom families need access to schools, safe spaces and protection for their children; cleaner, safer housing; and advocacy to promote their inclusion and acceptance within Lebanese society. The organizations supporting the Dom, meanwhile, need better, more predictable funding to be able to help them sustainably.

Take action: For more information and to learn how you can help, visit: <http://www.tahaddilebanon.org/>

Humanitarian Updates

HRW reports that over 250,000 Syrian children are out of school

The NGO Human Rights Watch published a report, [Growing up Without an Education](#), this month highlighting serious shortcomings in the provision of education to Syrian refugee children in Lebanon, and calling upon stakeholders to do more to avoid a lost generation of Syrian children. The report underlines that, despite laudable efforts by both national authorities and the international aid community to support education for Syrian children, more than half of the 500,000 Syrian refugee children in Lebanon are not in school five years into the crisis. The report cites myriad reasons for this high number of out-of-school children: from structural issues, with national-level enrolment instructions for Syrian refugee children being inconsistently adopted by schools across the country, to the personal, with families fearing for the safety of their children in the classroom and on the way to distant schools. The report also highlights the rising importance of the role of informal education to support and prevent out-of-school children, despite its declining popularity among

"My kids hate school, they don't want to go... [teachers] insult the kids in class, calling them cow or donkey. The way that Syrian children are treated differently makes them close their minds."
Halima, mother of Iman, 12 years old, on how her daughter is treated in school.

national policymakers. The report uniquely contributes to the data on out-of-school Syrian refugee children by providing personal testimonies of those at the forefront of issue: Syrian refugee families and their children.

€100 million to help 750,000 vulnerable Syrians and Lebanese

The government of Germany is providing ~100 million (US\$113 million) to WFP-Lebanon to support vulnerable Lebanese families and Syrian refugees through the end of 2016. Germany's contribution will provide food assistance to over 700,000 Syrian refugees and more than 50,000 Lebanese in need of assistance through the electronic food card (e-card) program. The e-card program provides each vulnerable person with US\$27 and allows families to purchase their own food from any of 450 local shops across Lebanon. In operation since 2013, the e-card programme has injected over US\$650 million into the Lebanese economy to date. Since the onset of the Syrian crisis, Germany has been among WFP's largest donors, supporting emergency food assistance programmes for displaced people inside Syria as well as refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt with a total of ~802 million (US\$917.7 million).

One humanity: World Humanitarian Day 2016

[World Humanitarian Day](#), celebrated every year on 19 August, recognizes humanitarian personnel and those who have lost their lives working for humanitarian causes. The yearly event marks the day on which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Iraq, Sérgio Vieira de Mello, and 21 of his colleagues were killed in the bombing of the UN Headquarters in Baghdad in 2003.

The purpose of World Humanitarian Day is to raise public awareness about humanitarian assistance activities worldwide and the importance of global participation in tackling humanitarian challenges. This year's theme will be One Humanity: the [#OneHumanity](#) event in New York will unite Member States, specialists, media, public figures, influencers and youth to inspire global citizens to continue to demand action to support the most vulnerable and most in need of humanitarian assistance. [#ShareHumanity](#) will be the campaign hashtag and will be used on Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat. WHD celebrations will also take place around the rest of the globe on 19 August: in Lebanon, OCHA will organize a day to celebrate the event. For information on the event – along with news, information and insights on the humanitarian situation in Lebanon – follow us on twitter at [@OCHALebanon](#).



Funding update

US\$828 million disbursed for Lebanon so far in 2016

The UN has released the latest update of donor support provided to Lebanon since the beginning of the year, both as part of the LCRP (see article p.1) and through other funding streams. The funding level at mid-year indicates the continued high commitment by donors to support Lebanon in mitigating the impact of the Syrian crisis. As of the end of June, available resources stood at US\$1.17 billion, with US\$828 million disbursed this year and US\$344 million carried over from last year. Out of this, US\$726 million have been allocated in support of activities under the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan, 29 per cent of the overall appeal of US\$2.48 billion.

Oum Nidal's story

Helping Syrian refugees through social media

The Arabic-language Facebook group “[I am a Syrian in Lebanon](#)” is becoming increasingly popular with Syrian refugees around the country. With almost 32,000 members, it has become the simplest way for Syrian refugees to access important information including how to renew residency permits, how to enroll children in school, and how to report abuse.



92 per cent of Syrian refugees in Lebanon have access to a cellphone. Source: UNHCR

“When we return to Syria, we need to rebuild. We can’t do that if we are weak or depressed.”
- Oum Nidal

The woman who led the initiative, Oum Nidal

[pseudonym], is a Syrian refugee herself – she fled from Homs with her husband and four children in 2012. Oum Nidal is currently a UNHCR Outreach Volunteer who answers more than 200 questions daily, spending over 16 hours a day online. She says social media was the “obvious choice” to form a platform of communication for the Syrian community in Lebanon, as it offers more freedom and an extensive scope for outreach.

The majority of the questions Oum Nidal receives are about maintaining a legal status in Lebanon. Other questions include food, health, and cash assistance, education, livelihood, and housing. Occasionally, abuse or missing children are reported and those cases are confidentially and urgently referred to the relevant authorities.

Oum Nidal received training from UNHCR on counselling. She provides valuable contact numbers and sometimes refers cases to support services. The Facebook group has become so popular that Oum Nidal now runs a weekly discussion on the facebook page on a specific topic, such as child labour.

The group has built its strong support base in part because of the increase in smartphone usage. According to UNHCR, 92 per cent of Syrian refugees in Lebanon have access to a cellphone, compared to just 54 per cent back in Syria. Similarly, internet access, which hovered around 10 per cent in Syria, is around 75 per cent among Syrians in Lebanon.

Oum Nidal says her goal is to ensure that the Syrians in Lebanon remain strong: “When we return to Syria, we need to rebuild. We can’t do that if we are weak or depressed.” To contact Oum Nidal and find out more, visit the Facebook page [here](#).

For further information, please contact:

Manal Sarrouf, sarrouf@un.org or **Anne-France White**, white5@un.org, or email: ochalebanon@un.org

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