

## LRP Sector Strategy

### Basic Assistance

#### 1. Situation Analysis

For the sixth consecutive year, Lebanon continues to face multilayered crises driven by severe economic and financial instability. These crises have resulted in a significant governance breakdown across public institutions, leading to the interruption of basic services and a sharp increase in social and economic vulnerabilities. The lack of a comprehensive package of crisis resolution plan makes long-term investment impractical, exacerbating the deterioration in Lebanon's constrained physical, human, social, and natural resources.

The conflict at Lebanon's southern border, which has spread to other regions, has intensified challenges and needs, impacting both displaced individuals and those unable to relocate from high-risk areas. It has also led to severe economic repercussions, particularly affecting commodity markets and driving notable price increases.

In October 2024, Lebanon's Consumer Price Index (CPI) surged by almost 1,000 points compared to October 2023, primarily due to the conflict's impact on the cost of living<sup>1</sup>. Local authorities in affected areas have identified urgent needs that fall under the Basic Assistance sector's scope, including essential items such as pillows, mattresses, blankets, kitchen sets, heaters, and mats, while around 603,000 items were distributed as of December 12, 2024, reaching an estimated 263,000 individuals<sup>2</sup>. Despite these efforts, the efficacy of the response remains contingent on the capacities, budgets, and resource reallocations of partnering organizations, especially in the aftermath of the cessation of hostilities, where emergency cash assistance is prioritized to address the needs of the conflict-affected population. However, significant funding gaps and constraints threaten to leave many affected individuals without essential items crucial for survival and overall well-being. Urgent attention and additional resources are imperative to address these pressing vulnerabilities.

The conflict has inflicted profound economic damage on Lebanon, with total economic costs (direct and indirect) estimated at \$10–13 billion by late 2024, far exceeding the \$5–7 billion incurred during the 2006 conflict<sup>3</sup>. Direct damages to physical assets alone surpassed \$4 billion by November, while indirect costs—spanning lost economic activity, disrupted exports, and displaced populations—are conservatively estimated at \$8 billion, with some local estimates exceeding \$20 billion. Lebanon's GDP is projected to contract by an average of 7.2% in 2024<sup>4</sup> (over 9% according to UNDP projection) worsening an already dire economic collapse that saw nominal GDP fall by 66% between 2019 and 2023. The crisis is expected to persist into 2025, with GDP contraction estimates ranging from 2.3% to 10%, depending on national and regional stability. Without substantial recovery efforts, Lebanon faces prolonged economic stagnation, further exacerbating social and fiscal vulnerabilities.

Tourism, a critical economic driver, has also been severely disrupted, erasing earlier gains and worsening Lebanon's economic challenges<sup>5</sup>. Fiscal indicators showed modest improvements in 2023, with revenues reaching 15.3% of GDP and a primary surplus of 1.6%. However, inflation surged to an alarming 221.3%, driven by the sharp devaluation of the Lebanese Pound early in the year<sup>6</sup>. Since October 2023, the informal exchange

---

<sup>1</sup> Central Administration of Statistics (CAS)

<sup>2</sup> At a Glance Report – 12 December 2024

<sup>3</sup> World Bank – Atlas Assistance – December 2024

<sup>4</sup> World Bank, UNDP, IIF

<sup>5</sup> World Bank, 2024

<sup>6</sup> IMF, 2023

**Disclaimer:** This is a DRAFT version of the Basic Assistance sector strategy pending endorsement by the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) Steering Committee.

## LRP 2025 Basic Assistance Sector Strategy

---

rate has stabilized at around USD/LBP 89,500<sup>7</sup>, supported by rising foreign exchange inflows and reduced currency circulation<sup>8</sup>. These measures provided temporary relief, but long-term recovery remains hindered by persistent political deadlock, a lack of structural reforms, and the absence of a comprehensive crisis resolution plan<sup>9</sup>.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI), which measures the average price change over time, recorded its most significant increase on record in October 2024. As of October 2024, the CPI had increased by 16% compared to October 2023<sup>10</sup>, while the yearly inflation rate for 2023 stood at 221%, the highest since the crisis began in late 2019<sup>11</sup>. The cost of the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) increased by 19 percent in both LBP and USD terms between October 2023 and October 2024 by reaching LBP 40.3 million (\$443) in October 2024 for a family of five<sup>12</sup>. The food component of the SMEB, consisting of essential food items providing 2,100 Kcal per day for a month, reached LBP 3.4 million (\$37.4) per person per month in October 2024, significantly surpassing its pre-crisis value, while the non-food SMEB reached LBP 23.2 million (\$259) for a family of five<sup>13</sup>.

The social implications of these crises have disproportionately impacted vulnerable groups, including Lebanese<sup>14</sup>, displaced Syrians, Palestinian Refugees from Syria (PRS), refugees from other nationalities, Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon (PRL), and migrants.

The economic crisis has disproportionately affected socially vulnerable groups, including female-headed households, families with members facing lifecycle vulnerabilities such as children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Female-headed households are relatively poorer in multidimensional terms where 81% of females are outside the labour force compared to 25% of their male counterparts<sup>15</sup>. Gender disparities remain stark in Lebanon, with women facing fewer assets, higher unemployment rates, lower wages, and limited access to social and cultural resources. Restricted access to these resources further hinders women's human capital development and workforce participation.

Crisis conditions have led to job and income losses, making it increasingly difficult for vulnerable households and individuals to meet basic needs. Historically, data from Lebanon has consistently revealed significant gender gaps in labour force participation and employment rates. In 2022, the gender gap widened, with only 22% of women participating in the labour force compared to 66% of men. Employment-to-population ratios show that only 15% of women are employed compared to 47% of men, while the unemployment rate for women stands at 33%, higher than the 28% rate for men. These disparities highlight the persistent challenges women face in accessing stable and decent employment opportunities (CAS & ILO, 2022).

## 2. Overall Sector Strategy

The Basic Assistance sector aims to prevent socio-economically vulnerable households and individuals from falling deeper into poverty while minimizing reliance on negative coping mechanisms. This is done through

---

<sup>7</sup> WFP Market Monitor – October 2024

<sup>8</sup> UNDP, 2024

<sup>9</sup> World Bank, 2024

<sup>10</sup> Central Administration of Statistics (CAS)

<sup>11</sup> Latest reported CPI values as of January 2023

<sup>12</sup> WFP Market Monitor – October 2024

<sup>13</sup> WFP Market Monitor – October 2024

<sup>14</sup> According to the IPC Acute Food Insecurity Phase Classification PINHA analysis, 31% of Lebanese households were classified in Phase 3 and above.

<sup>15</sup> Vulnerability assessment for Syrian Refugees 2024

**Disclaimer:** This is a DRAFT version of the Basic Assistance sector strategy pending endorsement by the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) Steering Committee.

### LRP 2025 Basic Assistance Sector Strategy

the provision of cash assistance to improve access to basic goods and services for poor households in all their diversity while providing additional support to susceptible groups and those facing social challenges, such as female-headed households, children, older persons, and persons with disabilities on regular and seasonal and/or during emergency shocks. Moreover, the sector aims to support the National Social Assistance system under development as part of the broader National Social Protection Strategy (2023).

The intervention logic is summarized as follows:

- If financially disadvantaged and socio-economically vulnerable households receive unconditional, unrestricted cash assistance grants, their basic needs will be met.
- If households or individuals with specific socio-economic needs that result in additional financial burdens are identified, providing unconditional, unrestricted cash grants will address their specific basic needs.
- If populations affected by displacement, seasonal hazards, and/or emergencies/conflicts, representing socio-economic diversity, receive cash grants and/or in-kind assistance guided by a comprehensive gender and diversity analysis, they will be able to meet additional needs without compromising expenditures on necessities.
- If humanitarian actors within the sector establish operational and technical connections with the national social assistance system (including the National Social Protection Strategy, National Disability Allowance, National Child Grants - under design, the National Poverty Targeting Program, and the Emergency Social Safety Net Program), as well as with other relevant sectors, then assistance and services can be delivered effectively and efficiently, contributing to the overall strengthening of the system.

The Sector's focus on cash-based interventions stems from evidence that cash offers households the flexibility to determine and prioritize their needs, empowers, and promotes dignity and autonomy of choice for recipients while stimulating local markets and achieving economies of scale (compared to in-kind modalities).<sup>16</sup> While the on-going economic, banking, and financial crisis in the country has made the provision of cash assistance challenging, the experience from cash actors over the past three years has shown that cash transfers remain relevant and feasible in the current context. This is evident in high redemption rates of over 97.5 per cent<sup>17</sup> and scarce reports of any serious risks to redeeming and spending assistance (98% of beneficiaries stating that they were able to assess cash assistance safely), even though accessibility to ATMs in remote and hard-to-reach areas remains a concern.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, vulnerable families, including displaced Syrians, Lebanese, and Palestine Refugees in Lebanon (PRL), Palestinian Refugees from Syria (PRS), and Migrants, have continued to voice a preference for receiving support through unrestricted cash.<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore, the sector adopts a flexible and agile approach to the delivery of assistance given the current logistical and structural challenges imposed by the economic crisis, which also apply to the currency of disbursement. As a result of the rapid devaluation of the currency and the heightened pressure on commercial

---

<sup>16</sup> Shannon Doocy and Hannah Tappis, *The Effectiveness and Efficiency of Cash-Based Approaches in Emergencies: A Systematic Review*, 2015

<sup>17</sup> Redemption rates from the Lebanon One Unified Inter-Organizational System for E-cards (LOUISE)

<sup>18</sup> UNHCR (2023), multi-purpose cash assistance program Post Distribution and Outcome Monitoring Endline 2023, November 2023

<sup>19</sup> REACH, *Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment*, September 2022

## LRP 2025 Basic Assistance Sector Strategy

---

banks, particularly in relation to redemption channels, a dual currency disbursement of cash assistance has been reintroduced for displaced Syrians as of May 2023 following the good practice of dollarization of other national programs such as the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN), the National Poverty Targeting Program (NPTP) referred to below as “AMAN”, and the National Disability Allowance (NDA). The redemption experience among assisted families was enhanced, with recipients expressing more efficient, secure, and dignified access to assistance<sup>20</sup>. Some sector partners have already shifted away from bank centric models to cash over the counter modalities, and dollarized assistance to preserve the value of the transfers provided at earlier stages.

While cash transfers remain the preferred modality for supporting families to meet their basic needs, the sector will continue to maintain in-kind assistance, on a smaller scale than cash, particularly in a tailored response to individual, household, or community level emergencies. In-kind assistance, which includes the distribution of non-food items such as blankets, mattresses, sleeping mats, clothes, kitchen sets, jerry cans and solar lamps, supports families in recovering after having lost essential household assets due to emergencies, floods, fires, evictions, and/or relocation.

The Government of Lebanon approved and adopted the National Social Protection Strategy in November 2023 and launched it in February 2024, which sets a unified vision for social protection through a life cycle and sectoral approach. The strategy encompasses five pillars of the social protection system in Lebanon: Social Assistance, Social Insurance, Social Welfare, Financial Access to Basic Services, and Economic Inclusion and Labor Market Policies. The Basic Assistance sector aligns with the Strategy and includes interventions that aim to address poverty as well as lifecycle vulnerabilities through cash-based assistance. The 2025 sector strategy continues to provide a flexible framework for partners to tailor responses to recipients' needs, adapt programmatic approaches, and maintain an overall harmonized approach for large-scale programs.

Specifically, the Basic Assistance sector aims to establish linkages with the Social Assistance Pillar of the National Social Protection Strategy. Specifically, these linkages will focus on existing humanitarian cash assistance programs, and national programs such as “AMAN” and National Social Grants programs – especially the National Disability Allowance (NDA) which was successfully designed and rolled out in 2023, pending the launch of the National Child Grant (NCG) as soon as funding becomes available. Coordinating between humanitarian assistance and national social assistance programs enhances the effectiveness and sustainability of service delivery, increases coverage, and addresses gaps and additional needs while leveraging the extensive experience of sector partners in designing, implementing, and delivering social assistance programs, ensuring effective coordination with other sectors as required.

Building on the existing structures of the nascent social assistance system, sector partners have managed to provide immediate support to Lebanese households and vulnerable individuals in response to the immediate needs following the conflict at Lebanon’s southern border through a series of interventions, using the structures of both the poverty targeting (AMAN) and also the social grants (NDA) both vertically and horizontally. The successful implementation and timely disbursement of assistance, in addition to the identification process followed in close coordination with MOSA was positive and promising and underscores the critical need to further develop the system and institutionalize shock-response elements to face future crises. And lastly, a significant milestone has been reached in 2024, which also paves the way towards further strengthening of the national system with an increased ability to expand coverage of social assistance is represented by the creation of fiscal space and allocation of resources in the national budget for MOSA to

---

<sup>20</sup> UNHCR and WFP (2023). Joint Report on Dual Currency Disbursement.

**Disclaimer:** This is a DRAFT version of the Basic Assistance sector strategy pending endorsement by the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) Steering Committee.

## LRP 2025 Basic Assistance Sector Strategy

---

implement social assistance (social grants and AMAN) which were successfully used during the last quarter of 2024 in response to the emergency and building on the AMAN and NDA mechanisms.

### **Assumptions and Risks**

The anticipated economic contraction resulting from the intensification of the conflict in late September 2024 onwards is expected to exacerbate the country's already fragile social and economic stability throughout 2025. This worsening economic outlook is likely to deepen vulnerabilities among conflict-affected populations, creating additional barriers to accessing basic assistance. The sector's strategy to maintain and scale up cash-based assistance remains heavily reliant on the operational functionality of Lebanon's financial service providers, particularly banks and money transfer operators. While many partners have shifted to provide cash-over-counter modalities, the larger bulk of cash assistance under the Sector continues to be delivered through ATMs, and thus with a heavy reliance on key functionalities of the banking sector.

Another key factor linked to economic instability in the country that is expected to further deteriorate in 2025 is the affordability of goods and services, due to the persistent inflation trends, fiscal challenges and declining aid affecting the delivery of public services. Sector achievements at the outcome and impact levels are very much tied to the ability to provide a meaningful assistance package regarding the transfer values of cash grants. The high levels of inflation in the markets pose a risk to the ability of the sector to match the transfer value with the growing needs, while at the same time maintaining a scalable operation. The sector will maintain an evidence-based approach to determine adequate transfer values while remaining cognizant of conflict sensitive and protection considerations, and advocate for appropriate transfer value to ensure "meaningful assistance" as well as for guidelines for harmonization of programs across sectors to avoid potential disparities between beneficiaries of different organizations and those who do not receive aid. The lack of harmonization could contribute to perceived unfairness among recipients and complicate efforts to ensure equitable support.

Funding availability is also an important factor in keeping up with the increasing cost of living. As of 2023, funds available for regular and emergency/seasonal cash assistance under the Sector started to decline and remains low in 2024 (only 16% of the sector budget were received as of quarter 3, 2024)<sup>21</sup>, with the increasing level of needs across populations, maintaining a high coverage of families while scaling up transfer values may be challenging.

Available data reveals the disproportionate impact of poverty on various individuals and communities of female-headed households, households with persons with disabilities, older persons, etc., suggesting that they require programmatic considerations and adjustments to accommodate their needs better. Such changes ought to be guided by a gender and social inclusion analysis of the different vulnerable groups.

In 2025, the sector recommends keeping the cash disbursement under a dual-currency system while mainly relying on delivery assistance in US Dollars to preserve the value of the package provided. The sector has developed guidance<sup>22</sup> on the calculation of transfer values in both currencies to ensure harmonization of

---

<sup>21</sup> Lebanon Aid Tracking

<sup>22</sup> BA multi-purpose cash guidance note

**Disclaimer:** This is a DRAFT version of the Basic Assistance sector strategy pending endorsement by the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) Steering Committee.

## LRP 2025 Basic Assistance Sector Strategy

---

methodologies across partners aiming to bridge partners' capacity to respond and the meaningfulness of the response.

The Basic Assistance sector developed a Protection Risk Analysis tool (PRA) to mainstream protection under the process of "Incorporating protection principles by promoting meaningful access without discrimination, safety, dignity and do-no-harm, accountability, participation and empowerment through the program cycle." This involved consensus-building amongst sector members to identify and prioritize protection risks, such as tensions at ATMs, inter and intra communal tensions, loss of value of money and exchange rates, and advocate for mitigation measures and actions to minimize harm, such as staggered uploads, expanded ATM networks and alternative delivery methods. This tool will be updated in the first quarter of 2025 in close coordination with the Protection sector.

The on-going collaboration with the Protection and the Social Stability sectors ensures continuous monitoring of protection risks (including Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse – PSEA and Gender Based Violence – GBV). The ongoing advocacy efforts also focus on aligning transfer values with the cost of living and regularly guiding meaningful assistance. Committed to resilience and positive impact, the sector is actively working on practical mitigation measures, enhancing monitoring, and prioritizing the safety of vulnerable groups when accessing cash assistance.

### **Sector Results: Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) Impacts, Sector Outcomes, and Outputs**

The interventions under the Basic Assistance sector contribute to two of the LRP's impact and strategic objectives:

*Strategic Objective 2: Provide immediate humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations to ensure critical needs are met.*

Regular and seasonal/emergency cash or in-kind assistance represents a primary source of income for Lebanon's poorest and most vulnerable households. Cash received through these programs (to be achieved through Outcomes 1 and 2) is primarily used by beneficiaries to cover non-food needs, rent, health, and fuel for winter heating. In-kind assistance covers the distribution of core items to families in immediate need.

*Strategic Objective 3: Support service provision through national systems including national rapid response capacity.*

Engagement, coordination and alignment with national programs and strategies, mainly the National Social Protection Strategy and its Social Assistance pillar (encompassing national poverty targeting and lifecycle social assistance programs: AMAN and NDA) will increase the coverage and effectiveness of interventions, reaching more vulnerable groups with basic cash assistance to cover their non-food needs. These improved mechanisms are intended to facilitate the transfer of social assistance towards vulnerable groups as well as increasing the system's shock responsive capacity. The suggested work under Outcome 3 of the Basic Assistance sector connects directly to this objective.

The sector's planned outputs, and interventions feed in to three outcomes:



**Disclaimer:** This is a DRAFT version of the Basic Assistance sector strategy pending endorsement by the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) Steering Committee.

## LRP 2025 Basic Assistance Sector Strategy

---

**Outcome 1: Strengthen the ability of poor and vulnerable households and individuals, including female-headed households, persons with disabilities and children, to meet their basic needs<sup>23</sup>.**

**Output 1.1: Poor and vulnerable households and individuals benefit from regular unconditional and unrestricted cash grants.**

The sector will achieve this Outcome through the provision of regular unconditional and unrestricted cash assistance under three main categories: poverty targeted (large scale), social grants (large scale), and niche programs (small scale). Poverty targeted cash assistance to Lebanese, displaced Syrians, Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS), Palestine refugees in Lebanon (PRL) and migrants supports poor households to meet survival non-food needs as defined through the SMEB. Social grants refer to two national programs: (1) a national child grant currently under design and (2) a national disability allowance which started disbursing to Lebanese and non-Lebanese as of April 2023 and reached around 27,000 persons with disabilities aged between 15 and 30 years old across the country during 2024 (both programs are anchored in the National Social Protection Strategy). Other complimentary social assistance programs provide cash grants to individuals in all their diversity and families that face additional financial barriers to securing basic needs, including women, children, older persons, and persons with disabilities. These specific niche programs have smaller reach and are not considered duplicative with the regular larger scale program as they respond to additional needs identified by the partner.

Cash assistance for basic needs<sup>24</sup> This is the largest type of yearlong assistance within the Basic Assistance sector. Serving as a lifeline to assist women, girls, men, and boys in all their diversity, this program aims to strengthen households' ability to meet their basic non-food needs through a monthly unrestricted and unconditional multi-purpose cash transfer. Through socio-economic vulnerability profiling, the poorest households are targeted and assisted. Due to the high poverty level across population groups, some partners may decide to support households with cash for basic non-food needs and food assistance separately to spread assistance to a larger number of poor households. However, the overlap of these two programs will ensure that households are fully supported and have a strengthened ability to meet their basic food and non-food needs. Technical and comprehensive reviews of the expenditure baskets (MEB and SMEB) have taken place annually since 2020, following the release of the annual VASyR results. The costs of respective components in the baskets are monitored monthly relying heavily on WFP retail price data<sup>25</sup>, the CPI, and UNHCR protection monitoring data. Partners must also weigh other factors when deciding to update transfer values, including available funding, protection risks, and social stability considerations.

The sector-recommended<sup>26</sup> transfer value (TV) is calculated based on the gap between the S/MEB values and the ECMEN (excluding the value of assistance and including credit). The non-food TV is equivalent to 45% of the calculated per capita gap. The food TV, is therefore, equivalent to 55% of the calculated per capita gap multiplied by five that corresponds to the average household size, which also reflects the percentage cost of the food MEB basket against the total MEB basket in the last 12 months. In 2023, and based on available

---

<sup>23</sup> Multi-Purpose Cash Guidance Note to be reviewed and disseminated to partners.

<sup>24</sup> Commonly referred to as Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA)

<sup>25</sup> WFP Lebanon Market Monitor – December 2024

<sup>26</sup> Food Security Sector Approach

**Disclaimer:** This is a DRAFT version of the Basic Assistance sector strategy pending endorsement by the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) Steering Committee.

### LRP 2025 Basic Assistance Sector Strategy

---

evidence, MEB per capita GAP for Food Assistance was determined at US\$ 25 per person per month up to a maximum of five household members. The non-food package was set at US\$ 100 per household per month.

In 2025, the sector will focus on updating the recommended transfer value for non-food items, while advocating for 100% coverage of the needs gap. This gap will be calculated based on the estimated monthly costs of all SMEBs, considering the portion that households can cover through their own economic capacity (expenditure and consumption data collected from targeted households).

As of December 2024, the majority of assisted Syrian households were receiving only \$45 per month for non-food needs, which represents a very low percentage compared to the actual needs. Social concerns, and funding limitations prevented some partners from further increasing the value. Several partners, with relatively smaller coverage, have provided the full recommended value in US Dollars (ranging from \$100 to \$150 in 2024). Continuous advocacy to increase transfer values to meet market prices is vital to curb harmful coping mechanisms and ensure households and individuals can meet their basic non-food needs.

The assistance is planned and implemented, considering other complementary interventions and services available within different sectors, and responding to other types of needs and vulnerabilities – an informed gender analysis would guide such interventions. These include cash for food assistance provided under the Food Security and Agriculture sector and other cash programs, targeting more specific needs under different sectors (e.g., Protection, Shelter, Education). Ensuring households can meet their basic survival needs through cash assistance will allow for the maximization of the impact of other sectoral cash interventions, which may be otherwise diluted.

Additionally, as the Basic Assistance sector aims to increase households' access to specific services through the provision of cash assistance, understanding the functionality and accessibility of specific services that are intended to be covered through cash transfers remains a priority. The sector will increase efforts to work and coordinate with the relevant sectors, which may have components covered under the objectives of the basic assistance cash transfers, to better monitor and assess other services made available (e.g., fee waivers for education or health) for a more holistic approach to supporting households meet their needs. This will include clearly defining the expectations and objectives for each sector relating to the Basic Assistance sector to ensure complementarity and harmony of interventions. This would also include a better understanding of referral pathways from the Basic Assistance sector to other sectors, to increase knowledge and ability to access specific services.

### Other Social Assistance Programs

These programs also aim to strengthen the ability of households to meet their basic needs through regular unrestricted cash transfers. However, they are based on understanding inherent vulnerabilities of specific groups of individuals. This includes specifically targeting and supporting children, older persons, and persons with disabilities or other medical conditions, knowing that these groups incur additional expenses, have lower income generating capacities, and/or whose needs in the household may be de-prioritized when faced with financial strife. In most cases, cash transfers are coupled with providing other services to address specific vulnerabilities and enhance service delivery.

The main distinction between social assistance programs under the Basic Assistance sector and other potentially similar sectoral cash-based programs is the unconditionality of cash transfers intended to alleviate



**Disclaimer:** This is a DRAFT version of the Basic Assistance sector strategy pending endorsement by the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) Steering Committee.

#### LRP 2025 Basic Assistance Sector Strategy

---

poverty and address socio-economic vulnerability while re-enforcing the availability of other services for specific outcomes. The sector will coordinate closely with the Protection and Education sectors, which provide specific protection, emergency, and education cash assistance programs, to avoid duplication and ensure full complementarity of the different assistance packages through proper outcome monitoring and clearly distinguished indicators. The sector will also maintain and coordinate intersectoral cash with the Cash Working Group.

Other key activities linked to this Output include the annual review of the targeting system to identify poor Syrian households; developing guidance for targeting Lebanese host communities and streamlining efforts for harmonized methodologies within the sector; contributing to research and learning; developing a gender action plan for the sector; regular and consistent reviews of the potential impact of risks and the evolving context; and the review of previously developed post-distribution and outcome monitoring tools.

#### **Outcome 2: Strengthen the ability of populations affected by seasonal hazards and emergencies to secure additional basic needs.**

Building on Outcome 1, Outcome 2 strives to ensure that households do not fall deeper into poverty when faced with shocks or additional contextual challenges outside of their control. Direct assistance provision under this Outcome encompasses both cash and in-kind assistance, under two distinct Outputs.

##### ***Output 2.1 - Population affected by seasonal hazards and emergencies benefits from cash grants.***

During specific times of the year, or when households face unexpected shocks, needs may increase while capacity to keep up decreases. In most cases, these additional needs can be covered through the purchase of goods and access to services in the local market, making a cash-based response relevant.

In winter, needs and vulnerabilities are heightened, and households are faced with compounding challenges to secure additional basic needs that range from purchasing heaters, winter clothes, and blankets to securing enough fuel for heating. In parallel, income generating opportunities (particularly in agriculture and construction) decrease in the winter, adding additional barriers for already poor households. Vulnerable households and individuals who receive seasonal cash assistance can better cope with seasonal shocks and have an increased ability to meet their needs, without resorting to negative coping mechanisms or de-prioritizing other essential needs.

Through consultations with the core and working groups, the Basic Assistance sector has developed a winter basket to outline winter specific needs and their respective costs in the market, which is reviewed on an annual basis to maintain relevance.<sup>27</sup> The basket includes both a non-food item (NFI) component and estimations for heating costs. The non-food items component includes heaters, blankets, mattresses, mats, and clothing kits for various age groups and genders. Heating costs were estimated for three different fuel costs- diesel, gas, and wood, using averages across the different regions. Seasonal cash assistance is provided as a monthly cash transfer or as a one-off transfer, preferably at the start of the winter season to help households prepare. The

---

<sup>27</sup> A guidance note was developed and shared with the partners at the WG level in addition to a cadaster elevation sheet allowing partners to prioritize areas of interventions due to limited resources and funding.

**Disclaimer:** This is a DRAFT version of the Basic Assistance sector strategy pending endorsement by the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) Steering Committee.

## LRP 2025 Basic Assistance Sector Strategy

---

determination of the method and timing of disbursement should be based on the determined transfer value and expected coverage while also considering the best use of received assistance.

Targeting for seasonal cash assistance for displaced persons usually follows a blanket approach where all households living in poverty are targeted for assistance. In 2022, all Syrian households living in poverty were targeted for winter assistance, to optimize on limited resources, agencies prioritized households that do not receive regular assistance with larger assistance packages for winter than for Households who do receive regular assistance. Targeting Lebanese households for winter has occurred through partner outreach, including liaising with local authorities (e.g., municipalities) as well as providing households that receive regular cash assistance for basic needs with a top-up. For the winter of 2024-2025, as funds have declined, and given the competing priorities with the ongoing situation in the south, a winter response at scale has yet to take place (as of January 2024). The sector will further engage in comprehensive discussions with partners to define any needed prioritization strategy, including discussions on prioritization of households based on geographic location, regular assistance states, poverty, and categorical targeting.

Addressing seasonal needs requires a multi-sectoral approach. While monetized winter assistance for basic needs is intended to cover increased expenses faced during the season, the program's impact may be diluted if households prioritize other critical unmet needs (for example gaps in shelter weatherproofing or food).

Outside the winter season, poor households may be susceptible to other economic shocks and emergency contexts that compromise their ability to meet their basic needs. In 2023, the sector developed an Emergency Response Guidance with different planning assumptions for controlled conflict scenario and escalation given the conflict started at the Lebanese southern borders and updated it several times during 2024. Emergency cash assistance will be used to support vulnerable households affected by the conflict in responding to their most urgent needs, including internally displaced population and those who remain at the border areas. Another prioritized activity is transitioning the conflict affected people from immediate to a more sustainable and long-term assistance of 3 to 6 months, benefiting from emergency multi-purpose cash assistance under the national social safety nets and large-scale programmes.

In 2024, basic assistance, working closely with the protection sector, which also provides emergency cash assistance for protection-related emergencies, will work towards clearly defining different types of economic shocks and emergency contexts that may warrant cash intervention over the short term, as well as defining complementarity and gaps across the different programs.

### ***Output 2.2 - Population affected by seasonal hazards and emergencies benefit from in-kind assistance.***

In-kind assistance is provided to households affected by seasonal hazards and/or emergencies on an ad-hoc/needs basis. Activities under this Output include maintaining and monitoring contingency stocks, identifying households, and distributing core household items. The added value of providing in-kind assistance in these cases is that the specific basic needs of households can be met. This follows a household level assessment to determine which households' assets are needed and cannot be secured by the family due to socio-economic constraints and emergency contexts such as the escalating conflict on the Lebanese southern borders.

Targeting for in-kind assistance during the winter typically follows a geographical and needs-based approach, providing assistance to households living in areas that have been affected by adverse weather, leading to a

**Disclaimer:** This is a DRAFT version of the Basic Assistance sector strategy pending endorsement by the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) Steering Committee.

## LRP 2025 Basic Assistance Sector Strategy

---

loss in household assets. It is important that the sector maintains sufficient capacity to deliver in-kind assistance in the event of an unprecedented emergency that may require a higher level of in-kind response. In 2024, the sector developed a guidance note for in-kind assistance to ensure rationale and methods are streamlined across partners (including a list of winter-specific Non-food Items – NFIs – reflecting the needs and estimated costs for heating, wood, and Gas). As for the Emergency Response guidance, in addition to the Emergency multi-purpose cash assistance, it includes in-kind Core Relief items distribution to respond to the most urgent needs of individuals who found refuge in collective shelters and inadequate buildings, ensuring their safety and dignity. In 2024, the sector will work closely with regional partners to ensure that in-kind assistance is appropriately coordinated and provided, and gaps are identified in a timely and efficient manner wherever an in-kind response is needed, relevant, and applicable. Work will also be prioritized to focus on conflict-sensitive considerations for in-kind support, particularly for large-scale distributions.

The sector will coordinate with the protection sector in relation to the provision of emergency assistance, precisely, in response to evictions, including for the referral of individuals/households in need of further protection support and in line with the individual eviction guidance note developed jointly with the protection and shelter sectors to promote a cross-sector response to eviction.

### **Outcome 3: Technical Assistance to the National Social Assistance System is Provided**

This Outcome represents the only system building / strengthening component of the sector, and it is composed of one output.

#### ***Output 3.1 - Operational linkages between partners supporting vulnerable and extremely poor Lebanese with the national social assistance system are identified and established.***

The Basic Assistance sector will align with the Social Assistance pillar of the strategy. The Social Assistance pillar is based on a multi-pronged system that focuses on (1) both addressing poverty and life-cycle vulnerabilities through expanding coverage, (2) reducing inclusion/exclusion errors, (3) integrating more effective shock-responsive measures within the national system while (4) catering for improved social cohesion.

Technical assistance through system building alignment activities will be conducted under this Outcome through the following: (1) Establishing and operationalizing linkages between humanitarian assistance and the national social assistance system; (2) Creating de-duplication protocol between BA sector actors and the national social assistance system; (3) Establishing referral pathways for assistance and complementary services between BA sector actors and national social assistance system.

#### **Identification of Sector Needs and Targets at Various Levels**

##### **Displaced Syrian households.**

Vulnerability under the basic assistance sector is measured following a hybrid approach combining the household's economic capacity, based on expenditures with specific vulnerability profiles based on specific needs and characteristics observed in the VaSyR. PIN and target calculation for Syrian refugees is based on evidence from the Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees (VASyR) conducted in 2024, combined with

**Disclaimer:** This is a DRAFT version of the Basic Assistance sector strategy pending endorsement by the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) Steering Committee.

## LRP 2025 Basic Assistance Sector Strategy

---

the conflict impact index, which capture the effect of the conflict<sup>28</sup>. VASyR is a comprehensive assessment conducted periodically on a yearly basis to assess the socio-economic conditions, needs, and vulnerabilities of displaced Syrian households living in Lebanon. The tool collects data on various aspects, including household demographics, shelter, food security, livelihoods, access to services, and protection concerns. As such, the Economic capacity to meet Essential Needs (ECMEN) and the Multidimensional Deprivation Index (MDDI) are calculated. Households falling below MEB or scoring poor MDDI or residing in areas that had a scoring of 3 or higher on the Conflict Impact Index are considered in need. Moreover, for the target calculation, the percentage of households below the SMEB line or scoring poor MDDI or residing in areas that had a scoring of 3 or higher on the Conflict Impact Index is considered.

As a result, for the displaced Syrian population, a total of 1,337,114 individuals are estimated to be living in poverty and are thus in need a total of 1,261,355 individuals to be targeted by the sector.

In 2023, like in previous years, UNHCR and WFP identified poor households through an econometric model building off socio-economic indicators gathered through the VASyR and applied to the UNHCR database, which houses data on all Syrian refugees known to UNHCR in the country. The model identifies the strength of a household's observable characteristics that act as predictors of expenditure levels. It generates welfare scores at the case level used to rank the Syrian population from the most to the least economically vulnerable. Since 2021, UNHCR and WFP, who led the development of the econometric model with the support of Development Analytics, have adjusted scoring to balance the proportion of assistance allocated to each district. Based on evidence collected by Development Analytics in their "2022 Effectiveness Study", 2023 predicted scores were adjusted using the Multidimensional Deprivation Index (MDDI), bringing in non-monetary dimensions of poverty (food deprivation and food-related coping strategies, hampered access to education and health services, degraded shelter, unimproved water and hygiene facilities, lack of safety) into the scoring system<sup>29</sup>. Scores were used by UNHCR and WFP to allocate part of the cash assistance for all basic needs to the most vulnerable families. In complement, part of UNHCR's cash assistance was allocated using a categorical profiling approach, prioritizing families with no or low income-generating abilities, at heightened protection risks, and facing additional burden/expenses due to the presence of multiple members with specific needs. WFP allocated its food vouchers to vulnerable households residing within specific cadasters with high retail functionality per WFP's monitoring and retailing analysis.

In addition, UNHCR and WFP continue to rely on an alternative inclusion pathway, the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), to identify and assist families who fall under certain vulnerability profiles and have been deprioritized for assistance by the targeting model. The GRM, which serves as an accountability mechanism, is a refugee driven approach to inclusion whereby vulnerable families submit a claim to be re-considered for assistance following the yearly eligibility announcements.

In 2023, UNICEF, the ILO and MOSA successfully launched the National Disability Allowance, Lebanon's first social grant program in alignment with the National Social Protection Strategy. In addition, UNICEF and MOSA have finalized the design of the National Child Grant program, which still needs to be funded to date. Social Grants programs support vulnerable individuals throughout their lifecycle; targeting of Syrian and Palestinian

---

<sup>28</sup> For Additional Information on the Conflict Impact Index, please check the WFP/FAO CFSAM report: <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000162747/download/>

<sup>29</sup> A categorical profiling methodology based on the presence of breadwinners and dependents with specific needs in the family is recommended to complement this set-up. This would be revisited alongside the MDDI (to include specific needs and disabilities) through planning and implementing of the 2024 assessment and identifying people in need.

**Disclaimer:** This is a DRAFT version of the Basic Assistance sector strategy pending endorsement by the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) Steering Committee.

## LRP 2025 Basic Assistance Sector Strategy

---

individuals is done in coordination with UNHCR and UNRWA. Targeting for these social grants, provided by UNICEF or other partners, follows a categorical approach, identifying individuals with specific lifecycle vulnerabilities.

### **Lebanese Households**

The vulnerability of Lebanese households is evaluated using the IPC PINHA methodology. Evidence from Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) Acute Food Insecurity Analysis is used to assess and analyse the levels and patterns of poverty and inequality for different groups within the country. The IPC analysis was completed for the different districts for Lebanese residents. The standard IPC analysis estimates the population in IPC Phase 3 and above for both, the current and projected periods. Humanitarian food assistance is accounted for either implicitly (in the current period) or explicitly (in the projection period), meaning some households may experience reduced food insecurity and fall into lower IPC phases due to the aid received. Therefore, IPC population estimates do not represent the total number of people needing assistance, especially in contexts where large-scale aid is provided.

As such, the PINHA analysis allows to estimate the share of population that are in Phase 2 due to the assistance they are receiving/will receive, and who would likely be in Phase 3 or more severe in absence of assistance. The results from the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) Acute Food Insecurity PINHA Analysis are adopted for the pin and targets calculation. Accordingly, the population that would have been classified at IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) and above in the absence of large-scale humanitarian food aid is considered vulnerable and in need. Additionally, targets were calculated based on 100% of households in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) and 90% in Phase 3 (Crisis).

As a result, for the Lebanese population, a total of 1,202,212 individuals are estimated to be living in poverty and are thus in need, and a total of 1,142,102 to be targeted by the sector.

In 2024, the sector will prioritize developing guidance on targeting and eligibility for Lebanese, including gender and diversity, leveraging the experience and expertise of partners to date. The Sector will also work closely with the Food Security and Agriculture Sector under the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) to ensure that efforts are complementary. The Social Grants target Lebanese in all their diversity including gender, age and disability, through categorical targeting and are identified in collaboration with organizations and the Government of Lebanon.

While efforts over the past year filled in several gaps in knowledge and information surrounding Lebanese, the sector will look towards more detailed upcoming assessments in 2024, to fill further gaps and gain a more comprehensive understanding of the needs, vulnerabilities, and poverty levels of this population.

### **Palestinian Refugees from Syria (PRS)**

Based on the high levels of vulnerability and needs among this population, all Palestinian refugees from Syria are targeted for basic assistance, and this includes 23,026 individuals who are registered with UNRWA.

### **Palestine Refugees in Lebanon (PRL)**

Almost 81% Palestine refugee population in Lebanon are targeted for basic assistance, where the total population in need is 200,000 individuals and the targeted are 162,000 individuals. Individuals and households

**Disclaimer:** This is a DRAFT version of the Basic Assistance sector strategy pending endorsement by the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) Steering Committee.

## LRP 2025 Basic Assistance Sector Strategy

---

are targeted through UNRWA's Social Safety Net program, in addition to identification of households with specific needs and vulnerabilities (persons with disabilities, children, persons with chronic disease, and older persons).

### **Migrants and Persons of Other Nationalities**

Since 2019, migrants have been heavily impacted by the compounded crises in Lebanon, with increasing unemployment, lower wages, and a higher prevalence of wage theft and risk of exploitation. With the escalation of hostilities, more than 25,000 migrants were also displaced, largely sheltering in self-settled sites, hosted by their own communities, or in NGO-managed shelters requiring basic assistance support (both cash and in-kind). The majority of the displaced migrants were unable to return post-cessation of hostilities, and those having returned to the South and Southern Beirut suburbs report struggling to cover basic needs, especially with many of them having lost their livelihoods and/or homes. Finally, with the escalation of the conflict, many live-in domestic workers were left behind by their employers and are facing high vulnerabilities while waiting to return to their countries of origin, or while seeking new employment. As Lebanon is recovering from the escalation of hostilities (as seen in previous crises), the risk of a larger number of migrant domestic workers being left by their sponsors and facing unemployment and inability to cover basic needs, even after the cessation of hostilities, is high.

### **Internally Displaced population due to the conflict at the Lebanese Southern borders**

Given that around 1,000,000 individuals will be affected by the conflict at the Lebanese southern borders, the Basic Assistance sector will respond by providing in-kind and emergency cash assistance as prioritized activities. The in-kind assistance, considered as emergency and winter support, will be used to respond to the most urgent needs of conflict affected individuals. It will be immediately implemented through a blanket distribution of emergency core relief items kit based on the need and prioritizing those residing above 500m altitude (30% based on the IOM data) addressing critical gaps in CRI needs, such as blankets, mattresses, clothes (for winter), heaters and solar lamps.

The sector will prioritize transitioning conflict-affected households assisted through a one-off emergency cash assistance under the Flash Appeal to more sustainable support mechanisms. This will involve referring and integrating these households into national social safety net programs or regular multi-purpose cash assistance schemes. A phased approach will be adopted to move from immediate emergency response to sustainable, longer-term interventions (Emergency multi-purpose cash assistance for 3 to 6 months). By addressing residual life-saving needs and embedding emergency measures into the LRP framework, the sector ensures a unified and coherent strategy that responds to evolving vulnerabilities while fostering recovery, resilience, and a sustainable humanitarian response.

**Short input for FA: 400 Words (deadline 12 Dec 2024)**

**Target: 780,000 Individuals**

**Budget: USD40,000,000**

Sectoral impact:



## LRP 2025 Basic Assistance Sector Strategy

- Conflict-affected households are struggling to meet their essential basic needs due to loss of livelihoods, increased needs or costs, ongoing displacement or widespread damage to housing and infrastructure in many areas.
- Conflict-affected households living in higher altitude areas face increased winter needs as exacerbated by ongoing displacement or damage to housing and infrastructure.
- Market function was impacted in some heavily damaged and/or hard to reach areas, affecting the availability of goods and prices, and impacting the feasibility of using cash-based interventions in the short term.

### Immediate needs:

- Individuals who are still displaced outside their original areas need continued help to meet their basic needs beyond the initial emergency provision of non-food items.
- Individuals returning to or near to their homes, and those who never left need help to meet their basic needs while they try to re-establish their households and/or livelihoods.
- Individuals living in higher altitude areas need support to meet their winter needs, including warm clothing and bedding and costly household heating.
- Some markets and service providers need support to recover their ability to supply needed goods and services, and widespread cash assistance is an effective way to promote and support such recovery.
- Where market function remains weak, individual needs can be met through continued in-kind provision of bedding, kitchen sets and other household items according to need.
- The response must remain adaptable, adjusting the geographic prioritization and type of assistance (cash or in-kind) based on cessation of hostilities status, population movements, damage assessments and market functionality, ensuring that timely, needs-based and safe support reaches the most-affected populations.

### Priority activities:

Basic assistance partners will prioritize the following response activities in the first three months of 2025:

- Distribution of 'one-off' emergency basic assistance cash– i.e. the non-food component of the SMEB – to conflict-affected households in or from prioritized areas, regardless of nationality.
- Distribution of 2-months of cash for winter heating for conflict-affected households living outside collective shelters at higher altitudes, or in-kind winter clothing and quilts for those remaining in collective shelters.
- Distribution of non-food items (NFI)/Core Relief Items (CRIs) for basic assistance needs where markets are not functional or access to financial service providers and/or markets is not safe.
- Regular market and service provider assessments, and conflict sensitivity and ongoing needs analysis to adapt response strategies.
- Coordination with local authorities for affected-household identification and with national level MoSA for deduplication with emergency social protection cash assistance.
- Household level verification prior to distribution, and ongoing post-distribution monitoring.

## 3. Mainstreaming of Gender and GBV, Protection, Conflict sensitivity, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), Environment

The Basic Assistance (BA) sector has taken strategic measures to address various aspects of its operations, focusing on gender, protection, conflict sensitivity, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), and environmental considerations.

**Disclaimer:** This is a DRAFT version of the Basic Assistance sector strategy pending endorsement by the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) Steering Committee.

## LRP 2025 Basic Assistance Sector Strategy

---

In terms of gender, Gender-Based Violence (GBV), the BA sector has integrated gender experts and GBV focal points into its Monitoring and Evaluation Taskforce, ensuring that assessments consider social and gender components. A survey, supported by the GBV Mitigation Committee, identified priorities for GBV mitigation, leading to recommendations for training on practical GBV risk implementation and better collaboration with the GBV sector. The sector also includes GBV-specific risks in its Protection Risk Assessment and commits to ongoing gender capacity-building initiatives in 2025.

The sector includes post-distribution monitoring tools that involve women and girls in monitoring and prioritizes their needs when defining distribution items and price panners. It has appointed a gender and GBV focal point that supports members in prioritizing gender in interventions and has developed a gender and GBV Tipsheet that will be rolled out in 2024 to support gender and GBV risk mitigation mainstreaming. In addition, the sector has developed a gender analysis of key basic assistance needs and gaps.

In the realm of protection, the sector has regularly updated its Protection Risk Assessment (PRA) to identify and mitigate critical protection risks. Efforts have been made to improve the disaggregation of outcome indicators by gender, age, and disability. The BA sector collaborates with the Protection sector to integrate safety-focused indicators, ensuring a streamlined approach across interventions. The commitment to annual PRA reviews, progress measurement, and risk integration into regular work reflects the sector's dedication to enhancing protection measures and preventing any potential harm to the targeted population.

The Basic Assistance sector acknowledges tensions within and between communities and aims to strengthen ties with the Social Stability sector in an effort to mitigate them. This includes the participation of sector partners in Conflict Sensitivity and Do No Harm trainings, collaborating on adhering to Conflict Sensitivity guidance produced in Lebanon, and incorporating conflict analysis into regular interventions. Proactive and transparent communication with vulnerable communities about assistance, addressing misperceptions and countering misinformation is prioritized. This aligns with conflict-sensitive programming that mitigates aid perception bias and prevents the dissemination of false information. Monitoring community tensions will continue to prevent adverse impacts of increased transfer values or in-kind distributions, the two risks closely associated with the basic assistance sector. The sector will keep abreast of the latest conflict sensitivity guidance especially that which relates to conflict-sensitive cash assistance, which constitutes a main pillar of activities under the sector and disseminate it widely among sector members.

In terms of PSEA, the sector recognizes the heightened risk of sexual exploitation and abuse. It has initiated measures such as surveys, training packages, guidance notes, and the SEA Risk Assessment checklist. A dedicated PSEA focal point ensures ongoing attention to PSEA, including participation in PSEA network meetings and communications and reporting on tools and best practices. Furthermore, the sector commits to making complaint, feedback, and response mechanisms accessible, known, and responsive. Emphasis is placed on gender- and child-sensitive complaint mechanisms and adherence to standards (Relevant Code of Conducts to be in place).

Lastly, the sector addresses environmental concerns by providing seasonal assistance to meet domestic energy needs and reduce conflicts over natural resources. Monetization efforts decrease energy costs, and during the winter season, the sector collaborates with the Environmental Task Force to mitigate risks of natural resource exploitation. This involves systematic monitoring, program modifications, and discussions around potential mitigation measures.

**Disclaimer:** This is a DRAFT version of the Basic Assistance sector strategy pending endorsement by the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) Steering Committee.

LRP 2025 Basic Assistance Sector Strategy

---

#### 4. Logframe

**Refer to EXCEL**