



LEBANON

Lebanon Inter-Agency Response: Syrian Refugees

September, 2013



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH:

- 615,000 people benefited from food vouchers and food parcels;
- Over 82,500 individuals benefited from the provision of non-food items including mattresses, blankets, kitchen sets, diapers, bed sheets and other household items;
- 35,000 people benefited from shelter interventions;
- 22,600 refugees nationwide received primary healthcare services;
- 2,400 patients were admitted to the hospitals nationwide;
- Over 60 refugees and 16 Lebanese completed courses in sewing, English language and handicrafts;
- 107 Syrian refugees departed to Germany from Lebanon as part of the German Humanitarian Admissions Programme (HAP);
- Over 67,000 persons registered with UNHCR.



REGISTRATION AND NEW ARRIVALS

In September, over 67,000 persons registered with UNHCR, bringing the total number of Syrian refugees assisted by UNHCR and partners to over 768,000 (over 665,200 people registered and 103,000 awaiting registration).

Current geographical distribution of the registered population is as follows:

North Lebanon: 215,000

Bekaa: 222,500

Beirut and Mount Lebanon: 140,000

South Lebanon: 88,000

The average waiting period across UNHCR's four registration offices continues to decrease averaging about 36 days, close to the global standard. Efforts to further decrease this waiting period continued in September, with the continuation of a one weekend/month shift.

UNHCR organized the transportation to the Beirut registration centre of approximately 67 refugees unable to for their transport from areas remote areas in Mount Lebanon. The process was successful and will be replicated on a weekly basis as of 1 October with the coordination of Terre des Hommes.

PROTECTION

September marked the launch of the participatory assessment exercise -structured discussions with refugee women, men, adolescents, girls, boys and elderly living in different settings (tent settlements, rented apartments, collective shelters, etc).

These discussions aim to identify problems encountered by refugees of all ages – focusing age and gender-specific protection problems and their causes. They also examine existing capacities within the refugee communities to respond to problems (e.g. skilled refugees such as teachers who are able to assist) and in turn roll-out a tailored response.

A total of 95 facilitators from UNHCR, Amel Association, IRC, NRC, Caritas, Shield, DRC and other agencies were trained on how to conduct the exercise which has now started in the North, South, Beirut, and Mount Lebanon. The results of these assessments should be finalized by the end of October and will be incorporated in agency interventions.

Refugee volunteers have also been extremely helpful in identifying and reporting any education, health, shelter or protection-related matters to UNHCR and agencies for their follow-up. This month, refugees were most concerned about being able to enroll their children in school, an issue being addressed as best possible by the Ministry of Education (MEHE) and agencies.

So far this month, 107 Syrian refugees departed to Germany from Lebanon as part of the German Humanitarian Admissions Programme (HAP). Through this programme, 5,000 Syrian refugees will have temporary residence in Germany until they are able to return home in safety and dignity or until they find other durable solutions.

DISTRIBUTION

This month, more than 615,000 people benefited from World Food Programme (WFP) food vouchers and food parcels distributed by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Islamic Relief, Premiere Urgence (PU-AMI), Action Contre la Faim (ACF), Solidarites International, Gruppo di Volontariato Civile (GVC), Handicap International, SHIELD, Islamic Relief and World Vision.

WFP continues to assist Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR mainly through food vouchers for US\$27 per person per month. The voucher programme targets the most vulnerable refugees. Food vouchers can be redeemed against a variety of food items, including fresh produce, dairy products, vegetables, fruits, meat, chicken and fish. WFP also distributes food parcels to vulnerable, newly arrived families who have not yet registered with UNHCR.

In October, WFP will begin to roll out electronic pre-paid cards in Lebanon, aimed to reach around 800,000 Syrian refugees by year's end. The roll out follows a pilot project that was successfully finalized in September, as WFP began transitioning away from paper food vouchers to electronic cards. With the new system, the money will be automatically wired to the cards, so refugees don't have to wait in line to receive their entitlements. They can also purchase food as needed, throughout the month, saving on transport costs and allowing them to buy fresh food. The system also benefits the local economy.

Over 82,500 individuals benefited from the provision of non-food items including mattresses, blankets, kitchen sets, diapers, bed sheets and other household items provided by UNHCR, Caritas Lebanon Migrant Centre (CLMC), International Rescue Committee (IRC) and DRC.

EDUCATION

As school started on the last week of September, education awareness flyers encouraging all Syrian students to enroll in school were disseminated by agencies and refugee volunteers. Over 270,000 refugees spread across over 1,400 municipalities are currently school-aged.

Their enrolment in public schools started this month. The Ministry of Education (MEHE) estimates that some 100,000 Syrian children will be accommodated in the regular programme provided in public schools with support from UNHCR, UNICEF and other agencies.

UNHCR is working in coordination with MEHE to launch an afternoon school shift to accommodate more students. These students will also be supported with tuition fees, stationary, uniform and other costs with the support of UNICEF, UNHCR and partners.

These efforts will make an enormous difference to the 100,000 refugee children that are planned to benefit. But the public schools are stretched and do not have the means to meet all needs. Current estimates suggest that there may as many 200,000 refugee children requiring other education options. Agencies are therefore planning, as funding permits, to provide as many as possible with informal education (literacy and language classes) in their place of residence. These efforts have already started in tented settlements in the Bekaa.

The benefits of accelerated learning programmes provided in summer (condensed educational support targeting out-of-school children) have already been felt amongst hundreds of children who had missed out on one or more school years but were able to enrol this year.

Agencies will continue to prioritize school enrolment in the coming phase, while also closely monitoring children to ensure they stay enrolled in schools as the drop out rate last year reached 10 per cent, especially among those about 12 years old.

Over 60 refugees and 16 Lebanese completed courses in sewing, English language and handicrafts this month.

HEALTH

More than 22,600 refugees nationwide received primary healthcare services including consultations, treatment, referrals, medication, vaccinations and diagnostic tests provided by the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH), UNHCR, International Medical Corps (IMC), Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF-Switzerland), Amel Association, Premiere Urgence (PU-AMI) and Caritas Lebanon Migrant Centre (CLMC).

Also this month, over 2,400 patients were admitted to the hospitals nationwide. Additionally, over 14,800 individuals were provided with information on various topics including pre/post natal care, mental health, nutrition, early marriage and the importance of breastfeeding provided by UNHCR, UNICEF, IMC, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), and PU-AMI. In addition, some 4,000 individuals benefited from clinical and social consultations provided by IMC.

Over 9,800 refugees have received medical assistance from UNICEF-supported mobile medical clinics in tented settlements in association with the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) and Beyond. There are currently 12 mobile medical units providing health care to refugees in their places of residence.

Some 10,480 children under the age of 18 have been vaccinated by UNICEF and MOPH vaccination teams in tented settlements and in UNHCR registration centres, bringing the total number of Lebanese and Syrian children having benefited from this vaccination programme to 730,000.

SHELTER

A mix of shelter interventions continued to be provided by agencies in September. These include the rehabilitation of informal tented settlements, collective shelters, and other shelter structures, in addition to the provision of cash to vulnerable families who are not able to pay for their rent.

In September alone, over 35,000 people benefited from shelter interventions, bringing the total number of beneficiaries in this sector to 152,000.

Agencies have prioritized the identification of additional structures that could serve as collective shelters in preparation for winter. Various private unfinished buildings in Kherbet Daoud and Ilat near Halba have been identified so far and approved by the Ministry of Social Affairs. UNHCR and partners will proceed with their refurbishments in order to prepare them to host refugee families.

Of note this month is an increase in the number of refugees being evicted from their places of residence, either because they were no longer able to pay their rent on time, or because they settled on private land. The total number of evicted people reached over 1,300 in eight different locations in the Bekaa this month. UNHCR and DRC relocated those deemed most vulnerable to alternative shelters, while work is underway amongst agencies to further systematize the referral of vulnerable families for counseling and care.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

Over 600,000 individuals received hygiene and baby kits distributed by UNHCR, UNICEF, SHIELD, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Caritas Lebanon Migrant Centre (CLMC), Makhzoumi Foundation and World Vision and the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC). Other water, sanitation and health interventions included the installation of latrines, water tanks and hand-washing stations by UNHCR, UNICEF, and World Vision in addition to the distribution of generators to four municipalities in south Lebanon by CHF and UNHCR.

With winter just around the corner, agencies continue the winterization efforts sanitation planning amidst joint concerns over possible flooding in areas across the country mainly in informal tented settlements in West and Central Bekaa in addition to areas close to the Litani river. Planning includes the installation of waste and drainage pipes, the construction of latrines on higher grounds supported with concrete floors ensuring refugees have access to adequate and safe water etc.