

## SYRIAN REFUGEE RESPONSE IN LEBANON: WINTER ASSISTANCE UPDATE



31 October 2014

LEBANON



#FutureOfSyria

*Agencies and the Government of Lebanon had requested US\$1.89 billion in the inter-agency funding appeal for 2014.*

*A mid-year review in June resulted in a downward revision of these requirements to US\$ 1.68 billion. US\$646 million - 38 per cent - has been received as of 15 October.*

### HIGHLIGHTS (Jan- Oct 2014)

- More than 837,815 people (167,563 families) were supported with relief items such as blankets, heating stoves and winter clothes;
- A total of 596,350 people (119,270 families) received cash or vouchers for heating fuel;
- Weatherproofing materials have been provided to 163,484 people (32,697 families);
- Site improvements were carried out for 16,691 people (3,338 families).

## Overview

Fifty-five percent of Syrian refugees (132,000 families) in Lebanon live in substandard housing, including 38 percent in insecure dwellings such as warehouses, garages, unfinished buildings and other makeshift shelters; and 17 percent in improvised informal settlements.

For the coming winter, 92,400 of those families living in both informal settlements and substandard buildings need some kind of shelter support, including sealing off unfinished houses to shield them from the cold. And more than half a million people (104,000 families) need basic winter assistance and aid items such as fuel, clothing and, blankets.

The inter-agency winter response aims to provide all of these vulnerable refugee families with the necessary resources to stay warm, dry and healthy during winter months.

The response includes a whole range of items and activities, including the distribution of blankets; stoves for refugees living above 1,100 meters who arrived after last winter's distribution; warm clothes; fuel for heating in the form of coupons redeemed at petrol stations; cash for the provision of winter items; kits to seal off shelters from the cold (plastic sheeting, timber, wooden poles); and site improvement kits for flood prone areas.

Site improvement consists of ensuring that shelters are not located in the direct path of floods; digging ditches for drainage channels; sandbagging around shelter units; and leveling, spreading of gravel, and other earth works to render settlements more habitable and safe for refugees. The response also includes the provision of fuel for heating in public school classrooms.

Shelter interventions are coordinated with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA), which is co-leading the shelter response along with local municipalities.

In the winter of 2013, the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) and the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) were quick to respond to manpower shortages and provided much-needed assistance in the distribution of fuel and other winter items in remote areas.

## Who receives assistance?

Most of the families that benefit from weatherproofing either live in elevated and cold, informal settlements in Akkar and the Bekaa, or in insecure shelters across Lebanon.

Winter items are distributed to refugees and some vulnerable Lebanese living in the most destitute conditions. Vulnerable families living in high elevations where temperatures drop below freezing and who have no means to make ends meet, are prioritized for assistance.

## Achievements (Jan- Oct 2014)

Humanitarian organizations have pre-positioned emergency stocks in addition to relief items to respond immediately in high-risk areas. As part of an emergency response preparedness plan, several possible scenarios were outlined to determine the level and type of intervention required for shelter improvement and distribution of weatherproofing kits.

Winter programmes, including drainage works, distribution of sealing-off kits and site improvements are ongoing activities. They have recently been stepped up in light of the considerable drop in temperatures in elevated areas.

Since January 2014, some 596,350 people (119,270 families) have received cash or vouchers for heating fuel. More than 837,815 people (167,563 families) were supported with relief items such as blankets, heating stoves and winter clothes. Over 163,484 people (32,697 families) have benefited from weatherproofing kits to protect them from rain and cold wind, while an additional 16,691 people (3,338 families) benefited from site improvement works.

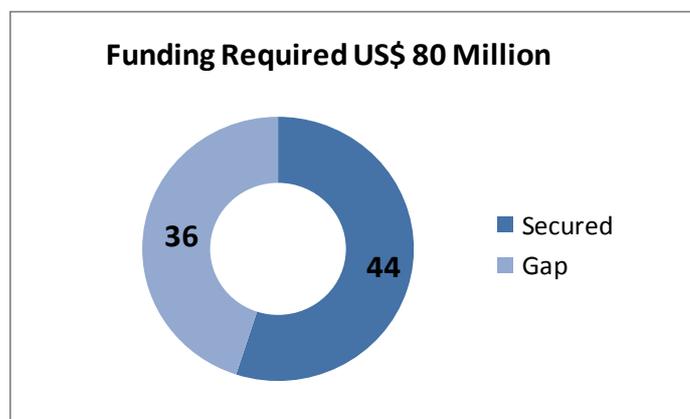
In the past week alone, almost 1,500 people living in informal settlements in central and west Bekaa received weatherproofing kits through MEDAIR and Save the Children.

In Tripoli, more than 230 people have been assisted with winter kits, while in the South; around 1,270 people living in unfinished houses received sealing-off kits from CISP and Solidar Suisse.

*More than 837,815 people (167,563 families) were supported with relief items such as blankets, heating stoves and winter clothes.*

## Challenges

### Funding shortfalls



With current funding levels, humanitarian organizations are able to provide fuel vouchers or cash for winter for 400,000 people (80,000 families) for November and December 2014; and for 300,000 people (60,000 families) for two or three months in 2015. As for shelter, current funding shortfalls mean that only 59.1 percent (54,600 families) of the targeted population living in substandard dwellings can be assisted, leaving many refugees in cold, adverse conditions.

Agencies will work to prioritize vulnerable families who live in the coldest areas and optimize the provision of winter assistance as funding comes in.

### Security and weather impediments

The delivery of aid was at times interrupted due to heightened tensions or security incidents or due to difficult weather conditions in areas where temperatures can drop considerably.

Programmes typically resume as soon as insecurity subsides and access is possible.

## DONORS

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Contributions have also been received from the Emergency Response Fund (ERF) and the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) as well as from private donors, national and international organizations.

## AGENCIES THAT HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REPORT

