

1. Protection (Child Protection / SGBV)

- With a refugee population scattered across 1,750 localities, working with communities is key to ensuring that the most vulnerable individuals are better protected against risk and victims have access to adequate services. One of the modalities to achieve this is through the establishment of community groups across Lebanon. In April, the sector has conducted a survey among 18 partners on existing practices in establishing and managing these groups. The survey results confirmed that these groups are playing a key role in supporting their own community to be aware of existing services, in liaising with service providers to ensure referral of individual cases, and in promoting participation in activities organized by various partners such as information sharing sessions, counseling sessions and recreational activities. Support to these groups lasts for a limited amount of time, usually up to 12 months. It is therefore important to put in place a phase out strategy to ensure that NGOs hand over to the community the responsibility to maintain the mobilization of its members. This is to ensure continuity of key activities such as service mapping and referrals after the support to the group has stopped. The sector will use the survey results to develop a Lebanon-specific guidance note for all partners and toolkit on best practices to support community groups.

Persons with disabilities feel isolated and may be exposed to increased protection risks. This has been confirmed through participatory assessments conducted by MOSA and sector partners with more than 1,300 Syrian refugees and refugees from other countries. Protection partners specialized in assistance to persons with disabilities will conduct capacity building activities to ensure that protection actors design inclusive programs and have the required skills to remove physical and communication barriers and refer those in need to specialized services.

2. Health

- MOPH/WHO announced that between January and March 2016 a total of 148,062 patients (90.6% Lebanese, 8.6 % Syrian refugees and 0.8% other) received chronic medications through the MoPH program operated by YMCA and supported by WHO.
- In response to a rumor circulating among refugees that children became sick due to vaccination, a communication leaflet was jointly prepared by WHO, UNICEF, and MoPH, to be shared with refugees providing clarification as to the entities having the legitimacy to provide vaccination. Attention is also drawn on identifying the badges of the vaccinating entity (MOPH/Beyond).
- April 20th marked the Lebanon switch date from trivalent oral polio vaccine (t-OPV) to bivalent oral polio vaccine (b-OPV). The switch date was followed by monitoring visits to PHCs to make sure that ALL t-OPV vials have been removed from the vaccine cold chain and as such will not be used.
- In celebration of the World Immunization Week (April 25 to April 30), MoPH in coordination with UNICEF and WHO organized different activities aiming to promote the use of vaccines to protect people of all ages against vaccine preventable diseases.
- In line with the Mental Health and Substance Use Strategy (Lebanon 2015-2020), MoPH in collaboration with WHO, conducted two two-day training of trainers (TOT) workshops on Psychological First Aid (PFA). A total of 45 participants from the MOPH, UN agencies, and NGOs, with background in psychology, social work and psychiatric nursing, have attended the training which aimed at enhancing their capacities in delivering PFA trainings to non-mental health front-liners. PFA involves humane, supportive and practical assistance for people who are distressed, in ways that respect their dignity, culture and abilities.

3. Education

- On March 7, WFP started its school feeding pilot. From experience in other parts of the world, school feeding has proven to lead to improved micronutrient status of school children, increased enrolment in schools, increased attendance, increased retention and decreased drop-out and higher numbers of children completing basic education. The pilot is being implemented in 13 schools in Beirut, the North, the South and Bekaa, located in the most vulnerable communities (251) as identified by UNICEF/UNHCR and with inputs from MEHE. The

project targets around 10,000 students from kindergarten to grade 9 in first and second shift classes. Total nutritional value given per child is around 400 Cal. If successful, the programme might be extended to more schools.

- Out-of-Schools snapshots were finalized. The mapping of the Out-of-School children was undertaken in 2015 to get an understanding of the information available on children not attending formal Lebanese education, guide next steps and support advocacy on opening more schools for first and second shift. Insufficient pre- and basic schooling opportunities and lack of coverage in remote areas were cited as major barriers for enrolment, in addition to the distance between home and school, and the ability of children to integrate into formal education due to interruption of studies and language of instruction. Other barriers identified were livelihoods restrictions and economic pressure forcing families to expose children and youth to risks of exploitation, such as early marriage and worst forms of child labor. The mapping was not a comprehensive study of children who do not go to school, and more thorough assessments of children and youth out of schools are planned for 2016. The printed booklet is available at https://www.dropbox.com/s/bt5qzbyy4ty8918/OOSC%20final%20booklet%2001-04-2016_PRINT%20FILE.pdf?dl=0
- In the last quarter of 2015, the Ministry of Education & Higher Education in partnership with UNESCO, UNICEF, UNHCR, and international donors launched a structured dialogue around the issue of regularizing non-formal education (NFE) in Lebanon, with a view to come up with a policy framework that creates synergies between non-formal and formal education. Under the leadership of MEHE, the UNESCO office in Beirut is supporting this initiative by producing the National NFE Policy for Lebanon in line with Lifelong Learning and Education for Sustainable Development. The policy aims to assist MEHE and development partners by mapping and analyzing the current status of NFE, conceptualize NFE in the Lebanese context and address NFE policy issues related to capacity building, service delivery, resource mobilization, partnership development and sustainability. As such, UNESCO is starting a consultation process with all relevant stakeholders.

4. Basic Assistance

An interagency winter workshop was held on the 25th of April to review the achievements of the concluded winter support plan and inform next year's response. 25 different partners, donors, and government agencies were represented. Discussions and recommendations focused on how to better identify, target, and assist vulnerable families from the refugee and host communities. Cash was highlighted to be an effective assistance modality. Partners discussed the need for a feedback mechanism that would allow refugees to get immediate answers to questions or provide feedback on the services provided. A suggestion was to establish a joint call center during the winter months. For next winter it is also suggested to have a common Q&A and key messages that can be used by any one working in the communities and in daily contact with refugees. Lastly, it was recommended to start next year's winter programme at the beginning of October and finish by end of February to give ample time for preparatory activities to mitigate as much as possible the impact of the winter weather.

- The revision of the survival and minimum expenditure basket model is ongoing. Consultations with sector coordinators were held in April to determine the relevant sectoral components of the baskets. The revised basket is expected to better reflect basic needs and the costs needed to meet these needs. In addition, the research is also looking at any significant regional difference in cost of living. Refugee families participating in the consultation highlighted that food, shelter, and health are the top priorities while paying back debt was a common problem across the board.

5. Food Security

- In April, 691,640 persons were reached with food assistance through various modalities (such as vouchers/cash/in-kind). Beneficiaries assisted include 586,827 displaced Syrians, reached through e-cards (95%) and vouchers. 41,708 Palestine refugees from Syria were provided with food assistance through ATM cards and 176 with vouchers. 493 Palestine refugees in Lebanon were assisted through

vouchers. 27,208 vulnerable Lebanese were also supported by the National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP). In-kind food parcels and hot meals were provided to complement the food assistance to more than 35,228 refugees and host communities. Among those assisted, 690 households were served through community kitchens.

- In April, around 800 farmers (of which 8% women) were trained across Lebanon on surveillance and management of plant diseases
- The 2016 First Standard allocation of the Lebanon Humanitarian Fund (HF) was concluded this month. The FS sector received six projects that were scored by the review committee. As per the decision made by the fund Advisory Board, two projects were endorsed for funding: INTERSOS and Terres des Hommes (this latter has a 50% component of FS and a 50% component of protection). The INTERSOS projects aims at increasing nutrition for Vulnerable Syrian Refugees and Vulnerable Lebanese via micro gardening while the TdH looks at addressing the food needs of the highly vulnerable Palestine and Syrian refugee families and hosting community, living in the Palestinian Camps.
- Colleagues from the Protection sector including SGBV task force members attended the food security sector meeting to give a presentation on the updated 2015 IASC Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action. The aim was to start brainstorming about possible relevance and implications for Food Security. During the meeting it was agreed to hold a half day workshop for FSS partners and their respective protection focal points to work on the contextualization of the Guidelines for the Food Security sector/Lebanon.

6. Shelter

- The month of April witnessed a shift from winterization activities to rehabilitation and minor repairs in substandard buildings as well as to shelter enhancement in informal settlements. This month, around 3,600 vulnerable refugees and 400 Lebanese homeowners benefited from having their shelters upgraded to acceptable minimum living standards. In addition, 4,400 vulnerable refugees living in informal settlements were able to have their tents insulated against the upcoming increasing summer temperatures.
- Shelter partners took advantage of the dry season to boost site improvement activities in informal settlements located in Bekaa, Baalbeck-EI Hermel, Akkar, and the North. Around 2,300 vulnerable refugees had their sites leveled and pathways established for them to be protected against flooding and other hazards in preparation for next winter. Due consideration was given to ensure the needs of persons with disabilities were taken into account through, among others, enhancing internal circulation in the sites and providing easier access to water and sanitation facilities as well as communal areas.

7. Energy and Water

- In the Bekaa by end of April, E&W sector partners were able to cover the basic WASH needs of 15,186 individuals evicted from 83 sites in addition to the regular WASH service provision.
- In South Lebanon solid waste was not collected since the beginning of the year in Debbani informal settlement located in Ghaziyeh area. This waste, in addition to the agricultural waste generated in the area, has been burned on-site creating a serious health hazard to those in and around the area. Efforts to convince the municipality to collect the waste have not been successful nor was it possible to send the waste to Saida waste recycling plant. Finally UNHCR was able to engage a private contractor to provide all the necessary tools to clean the site and remove around five tonnes of solid waste to Saida waste recycling plant.
- For energy, UNDP has developed a TOR for assisting MoEW in conducting an assessment to determine the impacts on electricity use. The study will look at the Syrian refugees' time-of-use, additional quantity of use, and regional variations in use. The assessment is expected to prioritize interventions and actions required to meet the additional electricity demand in Lebanon created by the Syrian crisis while ensuring that these interventions are technically, financially, and environmentally sustainable (e.g., reliance on sustainable energy and energy efficiency). They will sample 340 households across the country. Follow up is in course to ensure that the variables are well captured.
- To promote water conservation, in collaboration with MoEW and MEHE, UNICEF supported a drawing competition in the Lebanese public schools. Drawing sheets, water conservation leaflet and

description of the competition were delivered to MEHE regional offices and distributed in 697 public schools. More than 2,000 drawings were received.

- MoE is coordinating with UNICEF, UNHCR and UNDP to mobilize needed technical assistance for implementing the recommendations of the Environmental Assessment of the Syrian Conflict of 2014 and its update of 2015. ToRs for a short-term solid waste management expert were prepared by MoE and will be funded by UNHCR to support MoE in coordinating and following up on solid waste management activities under the LCRP. Other environmental assessments are also being planned by MoE and will be followed up by MoE in the coming weeks.

8. Livelihoods

- Given the high interest of partners in developing value chain upgrading programmes, the sector consolidated lessons learned from the existing value chains interventions. ILO, Save the Children and Mercy Corps are currently implementing various value chains valorization programmes highlighted several common factors of success, notably the importance of investing from the start in inclusive participatory process, of involvement of government institutions, and of constant coaching and mentoring of local partners. Partners also emphasized the need to implement activities targeting in specific women in addition to mainstreaming gender aspects in all value chain interventions. The difficulty to expand markets and the fact that several years are generally needed to demonstrate impact on jobs and income remain the main challenges of value chain programmes.
- The sector target is to initiate upgrading work in 21 value chains this year. The main progress in April in that area was related to valorizing the traditional Syrian embroidery value chains: partners worked with Artisan du Liban to provide technical and business management trainings for 50 Syrian refugees and host community, through an embroidery workshop, to maintain the supply of Aghabani embroidery, a highly sought-after art in the Middle-East region
- A review of the market based skills training provided by partners is currently taking place. Since 2014, livelihoods partners have developed the skills of close to 20,000 beneficiaries (80% female). 20 partners are delivering close to 50 types of skills training programmes throughout the country, with a concentration in the Mount Lebanon area. 80% of trainings are based on market analysis and include follow-up support to beneficiaries to find a job afterwards. The sector will facilitate a lessons learnt sharing between partners providing these trainings to improve their impact on employability of beneficiaries, as the proportion of beneficiaries who later find employment ranges from 15 to 66% depending on partner and programmes.

9. Social Stability

- A new analysis of conflict incidents occurring in Lebanon over 2015 by Lebanon Support shows that most armed clashes almost exclusively concentrated around a few hotspots, namely Aarsal & Ras Baalbeck in the Bekaa, Chebaa and Ein El Helwe in the South, and Tripoli in the North. However other types of incidents (raids/arrests by security forces, demonstrations and collective actions) were much more spread throughout Lebanon. New social stability analysis reports (Oxfam in the North, UNDP in Nabatieh) concur to add that the combined political polarization and economic dropdown caused by the crisis as well as local security policies remain factors of marginalization of refugees in the short term and of potential instability in the medium term.
- In terms of partners' activities and progress, 10 new projects were completed to support municipal services: in the South, benefitting two Unions (with 87 municipalities' members) and four municipalities through provision of equipment, and in the North, rehabilitating roads and installing solar lighting in three municipalities. While over 70 other projects are currently under implementation, the upcoming municipal elections to take place throughout May will probably delay the identification and inception of new ones.