

## HIGHLIGHTS

- OCHA conducts mission to Tfail
- Competition over low-skilled jobs a key source of tension between Syrian refugees and Lebanese
- Empowering national NGOs
- Syrians and Lebanese interacting less often
- LHF leads field visit to Tripoli

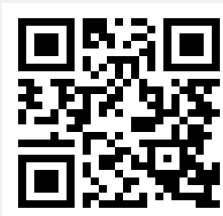
## FIGURES

(As of 1 November 2018)

# of estimated refugees	1,500,000
# of registered refugees	952,562
# of returnees	35,000
# of Palestine Refugees from Syria (PRS)	32,000
# of Palestine Refugees from Lebanon (PRL)	270,000
# of vulnerable Lebanese	1,500,000
Total Lebanese population	4,400,000

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The town of Tfail. Source: Manal Sarrouf/OCHA

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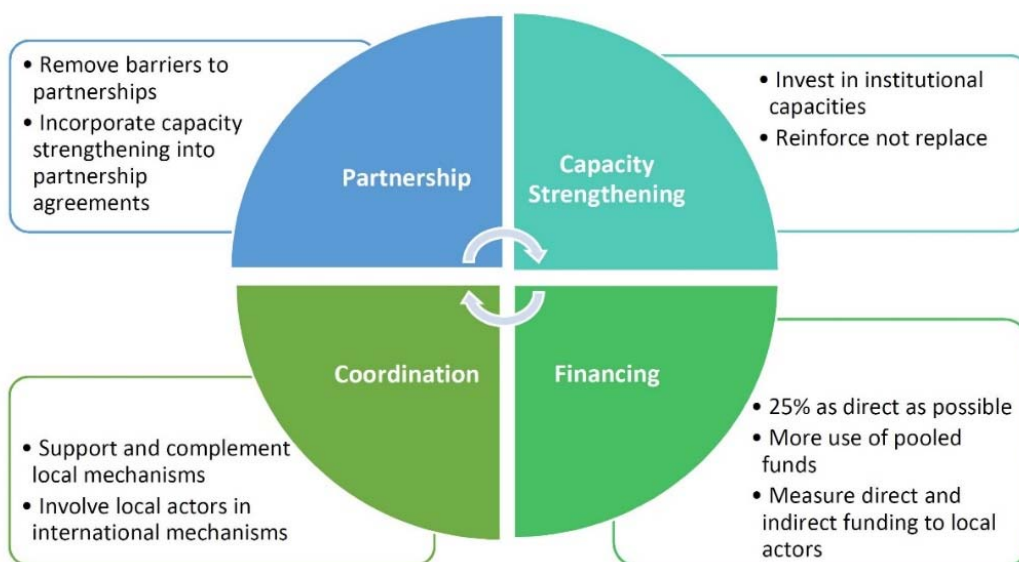
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In this issue, we provide an update on OCHA's recent localization efforts, which are in line with the Grand Bargain and the commitments made at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit. We report on the first humanitarian mission to the marginalized Lebanese town of Tfail, located on Lebanon's easternmost border with Syria. We shed light on relations between the Syrian refugees and host communities based on the findings of the latest Perception Surveys. In addition, we present the findings of two recent studies: dignity in displacement; and understanding masculinity in the Middle East and North Africa. Finally, we tell the story of Ahmad who participated in a Masculinities programme with ABAAD NGO.

## On the road to 2020: Empowering national NGOs

### Strengthening localization in Lebanon

At the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, the world's key humanitarian organizations and donors committed to a set of major objectives through the Grand Bargain, including localization: making humanitarian action "as local as possible and as international as necessary". Grand Bargain signatories made localization-focused commitments to be delivered by 2020 in the four areas of partnership, capacity strengthening, financing and coordination.



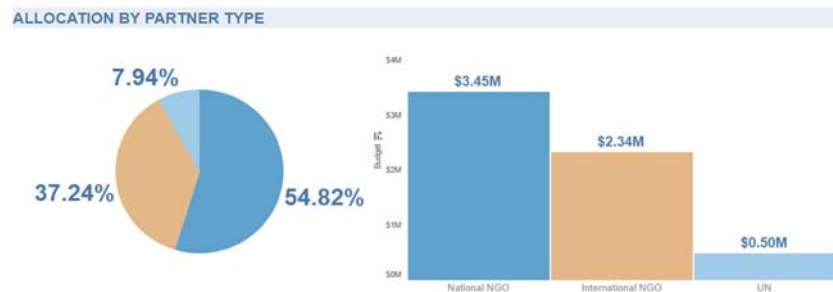
Source: Group URD website

Eight years into the Syria Crisis, the protracted nature of the crisis has made the Grand Bargain and the concept of localization increasingly relevant to the Lebanon context.

*OCHA has committed to meeting the objectives of the Grand Bargain and has been engaging with local partners and donors to explore the best way to reach this goal.*

## OCHA Lebanon commitments towards localization in Lebanon

OCHA has committed to meeting the objectives of the Grand Bargain and has been engaging with local partners and donors to explore the best way to reach this objective. In 2018 so far, the Lebanon Humanitarian Fund has given almost 55 percent of its funding to national NGOs, funding 19 projects through 18 trusted partners.



In order to contribute to localization in Lebanon, OCHA is aiming at the following strategy:

- Providing greater funding for National NGOs (NNGOs) through LHF allocations, whenever possible and adequate;
- Broadening the base of eligible local partners for the LHF by selecting new partners and working with them to build their capacity through mentoring, coaching and partnerships;
- Supporting the Lebanon NGO Forum by financing the recruitment of a new Coordinator and helping professionalize and support the network.

While an increasing number of localization projects are being implemented in Lebanon, there is no overall coordination of these initiatives. In response to this, OCHA is planning to launch a Localization Task Force intended as an ad hoc group under the LCRP that will lead a reflection on the state of localization initiatives in Lebanon, map all the initiatives underway, and develop a common strategy.

## Lebanon Humanitarian Fund organizes donor day

### Field visit to Tripoli to meet beneficiaries and learn about LHF-funded projects

On 23 October, the Lebanon Humanitarian Fund organized a day for current and potential donors to visit some of the projects benefiting from the funds and interact with beneficiaries.

Many donors showed interest in participating in the visit, including Germany, Sweden, Ireland, Denmark, Japan, Netherlands and Switzerland, alongside Humanitarian Coordinator Philippe Lazzarini.

In Tripoli, donors were split into two groups; some of them visited the Makarem Al Akhlak Care Service Centre, where the World Rehabilitation Fund (WRF) is implementing a project to alleviate the burdens of displacement on persons with disabilities for Lebanese and Syrian communities. Other donors visited the Specialized Services for Refugee Children with Disabilities implemented by Association Des Jeunes Islamique (ADJI), which aims at helping children with special needs access public education. During the visit of both projects, the donors interacted with the beneficiaries and their parents discussing their needs and concerns and were touched by the efficiency and professionalism of the staff delivery the projects.

*Many donors participated in the visit, including Germany, Sweden, Ireland, Denmark, Japan, Netherlands and Switzerland.*

The second part of the visit took the donors to Beirut where they visited two more protection projects. The first group was welcomed by Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), in parallel, the other group of donors visited the MOSAIC centre where they were introduced to the Community Based and Survivor Centric Response to Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) project. Both interventions address the unique needs of marginalized groups and the most at-risk populations, including those with alternative sexualities. The donors affirmed that it is crucial to assist vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian refugees' communities and to address the challenges they face daily, especially those related to protection.



*During the visit to ADJI project in Tripoli. Source: OCHA*

The field visit was followed by a meeting to discuss the achievements of the LHF and future prospects. Chaired by the HC, the meeting intended to strengthen relations with current and potential donors, and to introduce the LHF's new localization initiative which aims to empower national NGOs and equip them with international standards and skills to implement their projects. LHF partners explained to the donors the advantages of contributing to the pooled fund as it is extremely cost-effective, inclusive and flexible; stressing that the Fund adapts its priorities along the year through successive allocations, to respond in a timely manner to new gaps and changing needs in line with LCRP gaps and priorities. The LHF can also bring donors with limited representation in Lebanon closer to the field. Moreover, allocations are decided locally by all the partners, in a coordinated manner, ensuring a good knowledge of the situation and the selection of the most pertinent priorities and gaps. The LHF is also a space for innovation, experimentation, thinking out-of-the-box for donors. Moreover, pooled funds allow for a rigorous and specific support including to less structured partners, opening the doors of international funding to local NGOs. For all these reasons, OCHA called on donors to help support the Lebanon Humanitarian Fund with additional funding in the fourth quarter of 2018, as Q4 is a key funding time for the fund but the LHF currently has low visibility on any new contributions for the rest of this year.

## Lebanon's forgotten Tfail meets its needs from Syria

### OCHA conducts humanitarian mission to remote border town of Tfail

The long mountainous road from Baalbek to Tfail is completely deserted. The landscape is one of very arid hills and valleys, interspersed with some rare cultivated patches of land with fruit trees like cherries, apples, plums, and apricots. The only encounters you will make throughout the one-and-a-half-hour drive in the mountains are with Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) checkpoints. The dirt road gives you a sense of how remote and marginalized the area has been for long years. Tfail, located on Lebanon's easternmost border with Syria, stands on its own without any adjacent Lebanese villages.



*The road to Tfail. Source: OCHA*

*Tfail has a poor infrastructure, no public services and no health or social services.*

Since the onset of the Syria crisis, access to the town had been strictly denied by the Lebanese authorities for security reasons, notably due to the infiltration of militants and the battles in the adjacent region of Qalamoun. With security concerns now decreased, OCHA took the journey to Tfail on 17 September 2018 to meet with the local community, composed of Lebanese and Syrians, and examine the humanitarian situation in the town. According to the town mayor, Tfail has an overall population of 5,000 individuals: 3,500 Lebanese and 1,500 Syrians. The mayor and the locals emphasized that the town's Lebanese and Syrian residents form one united community, with high rates of inter-marriage and Syrians owning property and houses in town.

The mission was held jointly with the LAF's Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) Unit and the local NGO Union of Relief and Development Associations (URDA), which helped organize meetings with the mayor and a group of local Lebanese and Syrian residents.

### **Locals prioritize water and healthcare needs**

The main priorities flagged by the community during the visit focused on improving the water networks as the town relies on one insufficient water well; and the need for a dispensary/Primary Healthcare Center (PHC), as the nearest one is 30 minutes away on the Syrian side of the border. The town has a 24/7 power supply from Syria, but the electricity network requires expansion. Tfail has an extremely poor infrastructure and has no public services; no telephone and mobile networks; no sewage network; and no water network. The town has no health or social services provided by the Lebanese Government and relies entirely on Syria for the provision of goods such as groceries, fuel, and shopping. There is one Lebanese Primary Public School which currently hosts around 64 students. For secondary schooling, students either move to other areas in Lebanon or go to Syria and switch to the Syrian curriculum. Due to its remoteness and historical marginalization, the town has very limited education and livelihood opportunities, especially for the youth. Residents are mostly shepherds and farmers, and many resort to smuggling of goods and fuel at the borders to make a living.

Previous humanitarian interventions in the town were limited to polio vaccinations in summer 2018; food distributions for returnees in March 2018 and in 2015; and compensation of US \$1,000 per family for the affected families by the Higher Relief Commission in 2015-2016.

### **Bearing the brunt of the Syria Crisis**

The mayor of Tfail confirmed that the situation in the town has significantly improved in the last year, particularly with the recently-resurfaced the road which was previously only accessible for 4x4 vehicles. The mayor added that the town was affected by the Syrian crisis, with the battles in the Qalamoun area in Syria as well as shelling that damaged around 20 houses in the town. The Syria crisis has also affected the agricultural activities in the town. Some inhabitants of Tfail were displaced to the north-eastern town of Aarsal as well as to Syria, although the mayor confirmed that all the inhabitants have now returned.

After the mission, OCHA shared its report with UN agencies working in the Baalbeck governorate. The LAF CIMIC cell also noted that they would consider possible interventions to bring some of the required infrastructure improvements to the town.

## **Survey shows that Lebanese and Syrian interact less and less**

### **No significant deterioration in relations, but interactions limited**

The fast population growth in Lebanon due to the presence of refugees has put significant pressure on infrastructure, social services, and host communities. This



*From May 2017-July 2018, relations between Syrian refugees and Lebanese host communities were relatively stable and feelings of safety steadily improved, especially in the South and Nabatieh.*

pressure has translated into incidents of social tensions. due to factors including the increased demographics; the country's economic challenges; the strained social services; the complex political situation; and the worsening socio-economic conditions of the Syrian refugees.

In order to monitor and assess relations between the Lebanese communities and Syrian refugees, the Social Stability Sector conducts regular perception surveys with the ARK Group. The latest survey, which covers the period between May 2017 and July 2018, found that relations between Syrian refugees and Lebanese host communities are relatively stable and feelings of safety have steadily improved, especially in the South and Nabatieh. Nevertheless, Syrians and Lebanese are interacting less and less often noting that the frequency of communal contact is strongly correlated with the quality of the relationship.

### **Competition for lower-skilled jobs increases tensions**

There are multiple and compounding sources of tension from the structural to the proximate. Competition for lower-skilled work that has been the primary point of tension – as 60 per cent report – through all waves of the survey. Vulnerability is only weakly correlated with tensions between communities. According to the survey, tensions have not risen in the 251 most vulnerable cadasters in Lebanon.

As next steps, the social stability sector has suggested to foster a more positive and enabling environment to address tensions fueled by misperception. Conflict dialogue mechanisms should be strategically initiated, particularly in hotspots and places of high risk of tension.

## **ODI research assesses dignity in displacement**

### **Sharing experiences to better understand dignity in the context of displacement**

*The research aimed to better understand the idea of dignity in the context of displacement, and the humanitarian action in response to it*

Lebanon is one of the case studies of new research on dignity in displacement by the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) at the Overseas Development Institute (ODI). The researchers, who studied Bangladesh as their other test case, shared some of their initial findings with the humanitarian community in Beirut in August at a meeting organized by OCHA.

Centred on interviews with displaced Syrians and humanitarian workers, the research aimed to better understand the concept of dignity in the context of displacement, and the humanitarian action in response to it. The overall goal of the research is to inform the work of humanitarian organizations so that their response can better align with a shared notion of dignity and generate debate around this key non-material component of humanitarian action.

In Lebanon, the researchers came out with the following key findings and recommendations based on their field observations and interviews with hundreds of refugees:

- The need to enhance transparency as well as information sharing on aid allocation, as many displaced Syrians feel that there is a lack of fairness in terms of how assistance is distributed;
- A call for better coordination between humanitarian agencies so that the same families do not receive aid from multiple sources while others receive nothing, and the response covers different types of needs;
- The need for enhanced accountability, with a better-enforced code of conduct for aid workers who interact directly with the displaced Syrians;

- A call to better leverage the skills of displaced Syrians as part of the design, implementation, and evaluation of aid programmes and thereby enhance their ownership over the humanitarian response.

The final report on the Lebanon case study will be publicly available at the end of 2018. In the meantime, for more information, please visit: <https://www.odi.org/projects/2916-dignity-displacement-rhetoric-reality>

## Funding

### LCRP activities 45 percent funded

At the end of September 2018, indicative figures show that available resources for the LCRP amount to US\$ 1,19 billion, including around US\$ 886 million received in 2018 and US\$ 310 million carried over from 2017. In total, this suggests partners have 45 percent of the funding required to implement activities under the 2018 LCRP.



## Ahmad's story

### Masculinities Programme addresses gender discrimination in Lebanon

In 2011, the NGO ABAAD lunched the Masculinities Programme to increase awareness about masculinities and masculine gender socialization. The project was launched in order to help decrease gender discrimination and work towards creating a culture of partnership, empathy and equality in Lebanon.

Ahmad (pseudonym), a Syrian refugee living in the small village of Marj in the Bekaa valley, enrolled in the Masculinities Programme - specifically 'Programme P', which equips men with concrete strategies and activities to engage in an active fatherhood role, from their partner's pregnancies, to their child's early years. Before taking part in this programme, Ahmad, a husband and a father of two sons and a little daughter, believed that men and boys must be in control and violent. After being brought up with the idea that violence was a strength for men and that women and girls were too weak to bear physical violence, he neglected his daughter and passed the same ideas on to his sons. After few sessions within the programme, the dynamics within the family changed dramatically. Ahmad made huge efforts to confront the constraints of the 'Man Box' he was born in and allowed himself to question the principles he inherited from his society. His approach towards his sons and daughter changed, and violence is no longer a solution to every problem in his family now. Instead of wearing a mask of control, he now plays the role of a caregiver to his children, teaching them the complexities of human nature and the importance of compassion, growth and empathy. After getting rid of his violent reactions, Ahmad feels relieved, he is closer to the needs of his family and more present in the life of his wife and children.



*After few sessions within the programme, the dynamics within the family changed categorically. Ahmad made huge efforts to confront the constraints of the 'Man Box' he was born in.*

Through the Masculinities Programme, ABAAD conducts local and regional capacity building trainings on masculinities, engaging men and boys in gender equality, stress and anger management, gender sensitive active non-violence, among others, for local and international NGOs, as well as for community members.

### **Men centre for counselling**

As part of the same initiative, ABAAD has opened a psychological counselling centre to help men address issues of masculinities and provide them with rehabilitation services if they suffer from abusive behaviours. Those services are available for the Lebanese host communities and refugees.

In 2017, ABAAD moved the Men Center to a polyclinic that includes two psychotherapy rooms, with three psychotherapists providing support. This change aimed at scaling up the Men Center to be able to provide more psychotherapy sessions to beneficiaries.

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