



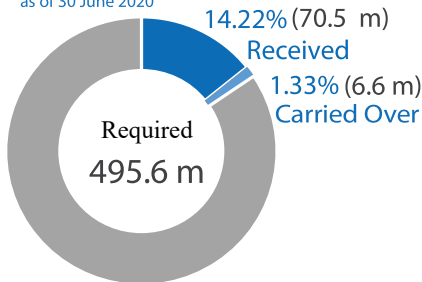
Basic Assistance 2020 Jan-June Update



Inter-Agency
Coordination
Lebanon

The Jan - June dashboard summarizes the progress made by partners involved in the Lebanon Crisis Response and highlights trends affecting people in need. The Basic Assistance Sector in Lebanon is working to: OUTCOME 1) Strengthen the ability of vulnerable households, including female-headed, to meet their basic survival needs; OUTCOME 2) Ensure that In-kind assistance in support of populations affected by seasonal hazards and emergencies is provided; OUTCOME 3) Develop National Social Safety Net Strategy.

2020 Funding Status in USD as of 30 June 2020

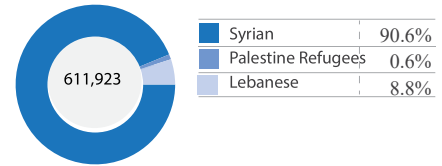


Programmes are funded by a combination of flexible/unearmarked funds and funds specifically earmarked to the sector

Targeted Population groups



Population reached by cohort



Progress against targets



Key Achievements

reached / target

# of households reached with regular cash transfers (Syr, Leb, Pal)*	95,613 / 187,269
Total USD amount distributed as regular cash transfers (Syr, Leb, Pal)	\$ 59 m / \$ 283.9m
# of Syrian households reached with multi-sector/ purpose cash transfers	86,563 / 146,000
# of Lebanese households reached with multi-sector/ purpose cash transfers	600 / 42,935
# of Palestinian households reached with multi-sector/ purpose cash transfers	8,450 / 8,450
# of households reached with temporary COVID-19 cash assistance	10,978 / -
Total USD amount injected into economy in forms of cash assistance so far in 2020 (seasonal + regular)	\$ 60.19 m / \$ 495.6 m

0% 100%

* Includes UNICEF child focused cash transfer



Outcomes

OUTCOME 1:
% population that is severely vulnerable²

OUTCOME 2:
% of assisted severely economically vulnerable households report being able to meet their basic survival needs³

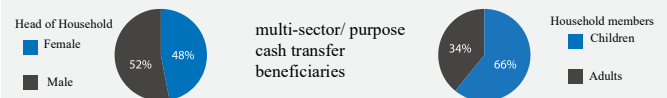
OUTCOME 3:
National Social Safety Net Strategy endorsed

	LCRP 2017/2020 Baseline				June 2020 Current				2020 Target			
	SYR	LEB	PRS	PRL	SYR	LEB	PRS	PRL	SYR	LEB	PRS	PRL
OUTCOME 1: % population that is severely vulnerable ²	53%	10%	89%	65%	75%	-	-	-	50%	10%	89%	65%
OUTCOME 2: % of assisted severely economically vulnerable households report being able to meet their basic survival needs ³	90%	-	90%	-	20%*	-	-	-	90%	-	90%	-
OUTCOME 3: National Social Safety Net Strategy endorsed					No				No			Yes

* WFP July 2020 Multi-Purpose Cash Outcome Monitoring. The figure represents the proportion of surveyed families that had expenditures equal to or above the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket

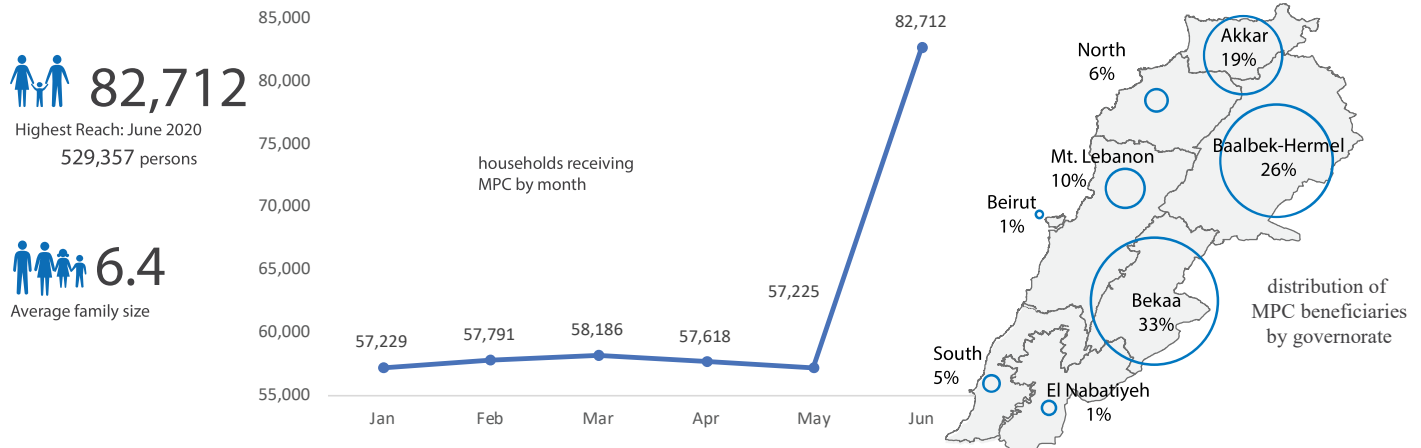


Age/Gender Breakdown of MPC (SYR) Beneficiaries



Analysis

Syrian Households Receiving Multi-Purpose Cash (MPC) in 2020





ANALYSIS OF ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE SECTOR AT THE OUTPUT

95,613 severely socio-economically vulnerable households from different population cohorts (SYR, LEB, PRS and PRL) have improved access to essential basic goods and services on local markets that are critical to their daily basic survival needs.

This has been achieved so far through the identification of 86,563 Syrian households (58,090 in 2019), 8,450 PRS households (8,771 in 2019) and 600 Lebanese households (916 in 2019) who are living below extreme and survival monthly expenditure levels and who benefited from multiple types of unrestricted, unconditional cash-based monthly interventions. Some 51 % of targeted households have been reached so far in 2020, an improvement from 36% reached by the mid-year point in 2019.

The total value of the regular assistance (monthly multi-purpose cash) received by vulnerable beneficiaries in direct transfers was \$59,019,742 by end of June 2020 (excluding winter cash assistance). In addition to improving the ability of vulnerable households to meet their basic survival needs, cash support also represents an important injection of cash into the local economy. Research from previous years has shown that humanitarian cash assistance had a multiplier effect varying between 1.6 and 2.13 for every dollar injected.

Given Lebanon's deteriorating economic situation and the compounded effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 so far, partners have scaled up their support to reach more vulnerable families across different population groups now facing additional heavy economic burden. The assistance package was also increased to 400,000 LBP (from 260,000 LBP) to mitigate the loss in purchasing power due to the inflation. As a response, 10,978 households received temporary cash assistance (400,000 LBP for 3 months) in response to economic vulnerability exacerbated by COVID-19.

National system for social assistance strengthened.

Since its establishment in 2015, the Basic Assistance sector has been supporting existing national systems to strengthen the delivery of social assistance to vulnerable Lebanese communities. Through the Basic Assistance Sector, partners who are targeting vulnerable Lebanese are directed through the National Poverty Targeting Program (NPTP) to identify and assist families in need. Following the economic crisis and COVID-19 emergency, more partners have shown interest to support Lebanese families affected by this emergen-



CHALLENGES

The Sector has faced overarching challenges related to the current operating context, from the deterioration in the overall economic situation in the country, to the shrinking of protection space for displaced Syrians, and finally the COVID-19 emergency had negative consequences on the vulnerability of families already living in poor conditions. The economic slowdown has led to the closure of thousands of businesses and the layoff of thousands of employees in Lebanon.

Levels of economic vulnerability are estimated to continue to increase among the affected population from different population cohort in 2020. To date, the sector has not been able to reach more than 5% of the targeted vulnerable Lebanese through the NPTP with basic assistance.

In addition, there exists critical information gaps on the current vulnerability and poverty levels of Lebanese households. World Bank estimates indicate an increase in the percentage of Lebanese people living in poverty during 2019, with an expectation to reach 40% during 2020 (around 10% increase since 2011). No new figures were officially published in the first half of 2020.

The unprecedented economic crisis has featured a rapid increase in prices, supply shocks, informal devaluation of the exchange rate and widespread loss of livelihoods for many households from different population groups. Additional consequences include an immediate degradation in purchasing power, which has contributed to a decrease in the ability of individuals and families to meet their basic needs, even among those who are being assisted by the Sector. Cash transfers to refugees and vulnerable Lebanese families should continue to be increased, especially under the current economic situation as the number of vulnerable populations has increased dramatically due to inflation and lack of opportunities to earn income.

Partners were also challenged by COVID-19 lockdowns and movement restrictions, which also prohibited refugees to access ATMs to withdraw their cash assistance. Despite the lockdown, ATMs were reportedly overcrowded in April but the situation improved in May once banks started gradually reopening. Overcrowding was mainly due to restrictions that were imposed by banks that did not allow the use of ATM cards issued by other banks. As such, assisted families could only use the ATMs that pertain to the partners' financial service provider. This was especially an issue for partners with larger caseloads. Critical operational milestones based on home visits (such as the VASYR, retargeting exercise and post distribution monitoring) and validation exercises were delayed because of suspension of face-to-face activities and home visits. Alternative working modalities were adopted and explored by partners. Partners have also adapted programmes and are taking preventive measures to mitigate further spread of COVID-19 within communities, including distribution of in-kind assistance in accordance to the joint recommendations and guidance for a multi-sector support package.

Partners are also now feeding into a new exchange rate tracking exercise that will support the close review and standardization of assistance package values across partners. It will also help to accurately track the amount of cash being injected in the economy through these interventions.

¹ Syrian households Expenditure Baskets thresholds;

Minimum expenditure levels: \$571/family of five/month;

Survival minimum expenditure levels: \$435/family of five/month;

² Impact of Humanitarian Aid on the Lebanese Economy; UNHCR, UNDP, 2015;

<https://www.lb.undp.org/content/lebanon/en/home/library/poverty/impact-of-humanitarian-aid-undp-unhcr.html>

³ Emergency Economies: The Impact of Cash Assistance in Lebanon; International Rescue Committee, 2014;

<https://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/document/631/emergencyeconomiesevaluationreport-lebanon2014.pdf#page=32&zoom=100,164,945>

The Sector has also continued to monitor key indicators (such as assistance redemption rates, inflation and informal exchange rate values) to serve as proxies of the impact of the current situation on households and programmes. Programme adaptation and resource mobilization will require ongoing discussion during the second half of 2020.



KEY PRIORITIES AND GAPS FORESEEN FOR 2020

The main priority for the second half of 2020 is to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable in Lebanon in order to mitigate the impact of the economic and health crisis in the context of a shrinking protection space and significant social and economic impacts.

Funding received by the mid-year point are not enough to meet the additional needs that have emerged. It is estimated that an additional 420,000 Syrian individuals⁴ are in need of basic assistance by the end of 2020. In previous years, regular targeted assistance has never reached more than 30% of prioritized households, and major gaps in extending assistance to vulnerable Lebanese families have persisted.

In the case of supported Syrian households, cash-based assistance has always been calculated based on a local market-based expenditure basket. From September 2019 and June 2020 there was an increase of approximately 116% to the local food price (SMEB basket). Local currency also lost more than 80% of its value by the end of June. This has led to wider livelihood gaps and additional unmet needs with cash and food assistance packages to the most economically vulnerable (73% pre-crisis) unable to reach the survival minimum expenditure basket level. It is worth mentioning that these market dynamics have affected all population groups in Lebanon, pushing people to change their expenditure patterns, incur more debt and resort to negative coping mechanisms.

Inflation is expected to continue to increase and the value of the local currency to continue decreasing over the remainder of 2020. Partners anticipate that value of the basic assistance package will also continue to decrease and will be compounded by diminishing purchasing power and more limited formal and informal income generating opportunities. In response, some sector partners have been able to negotiate preferential exchange rates with financial service providers and use the exchange rate gain to increase the value of the assistance package and reach more families.

Moreover, available funds for the rest of 2020 remain limited. In 2019, the Sector was funded at 45%, which helped to address gaps in the response. For 2020, additional funding is needed to ensure partners can respond to increasing needs. While managing the current situation is an integral part of the ongoing interventions for the Sector, meeting existing gaps such as assistance to vulnerable Lebanese families is equally important.

In terms of key priorities for the second half of 2020, finalizing the VASyR exercise is a key activity to prevent any further delays in the revision of the Desk Formula and the adaptation of the annual targeting exercise.



CASE STUDY

82,712 vulnerable displaced Syrian households benefited from the unconditional, unrestricted multi-purpose cash assistance programmes implemented by partners under the Basic Assistance sector⁵. For the fifth consecutive year, the Basic Assistance sector still maintains this critical type of support to the most economically vulnerable Syrian families at a large scale.

Multi-purpose cash assistance is provided together with food assistance⁶ with the aim to deliver a meaningful package of assistance to families with poor financial means who are unable to meet their basic needs on their own. This meaningful package is meant to cover 71% of the survival expenditure basket (\$435/LBP652,500) for a family of five members.

Since economic vulnerability overlaps with other types, a typical poor displaced household identified to receive this type of assistance usually live in low quality unprotected shelters, require spending on medication, food, clothing for their children, and to repay parts of their debt burden. This situation was further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and countrywide lockdown that has led to more inflation and devaluation of the Lebanese Lira, pushing more families into more poverty.

Nayfa⁷, a widow and mother of five children (four sons and one daughter), lives in Al-Shohada Camp in Aرسال by herself. Nayfa had no income other than the food assistance from the World Food Programme (WFP), and all of her married sons are not working due to the labour restrictions for Syrian refugees imposed by the Government. "Resorting to debt was the only solution at that time," Nayfa stated. Nayfa has a slipped disc and she suffers from high blood pressure and gallstones. Nayfa was among those who lost their home during the demolition of tents in Aرسال, and she had to move to another camp for two months while her old tent was rebuilt. Nayfa borrowed 1,000,000 LBP (\$667) from her relatives and neighbours to add more wood in the tent to strengthen it, as the foundations initially installed during the rebuilding were not strong enough. With cash assistance from Relief International (RI), Nayfa was able to pay 100,000 LBP of her debt to her relatives and neighbours. On a monthly basis, she pays 75,000 LBP for electricity, water, gas and phone fees. She also covers her medications and doctor checkups with 50,000 LBP.

⁴ Based on WFP and UNHCR estimate of 89% of Syrian Refugees living under the SMEB in 2020

⁵ ICRC IOM- Lebanese Red Cross- OXFAM- Relief International- UNHCR- WFP

⁶ Provided by WFP under the Food Security Sector

⁷ "I wish everything would be as it was in the past ...". Relief International Cash for Protection and Education (CPE) project funded by United States Government (USG)/Bureau of Population- Refugees and Migration (PRM)



"I want to go back to my homeland, but I own nothing there. Even my house is destroyed to the ground," Nayfa shares. When she was asked what she will do in case the cash assistance stops, she said: "There is no power but from God. I'm desperate because of what happened and what is happening to me. I wish everything would be as it was in the past." (photo 1)

Poor families across Lebanon struggle to meet their needs, especially during the cold winter months when opportunities for informal income generation linked to seasonal work decrease. On average, vulnerable families need between 112,000 LBP to 225,000 LBP per month to cover heating, fuel, winter clothing, weatherproofing and extra food needs to survive winter months. Every year, sector partners deliver a large-scale winter campaign with cash being the primary modality for assistance. In some cases, additional distributions of in-kind core relief items are required to cover the specific needs of vulnerable families leaving at high altitudes, especially during storms. Uprooted from her family home in Homs by shelling in 2012, Manar sought refuge in neighbouring Lebanon the following year. After her husband was killed in a traffic accident, she is now head of the family. "I allocate this cash assistance so that my children can attend the morning shift at school," she explains.



Photo 1: Nayfa's portrait picture in Aرسال, Lebanon. March 5, 2020.

"I use [it] to pay for my children's school transport and I am very happy that I am now able to pay for something," she adds. Cash in hand, with support from UNHCR, she can now prioritize her monthly spending for herself and her three children, Aseel, six, Abdullah, nine, and Osaima 12.

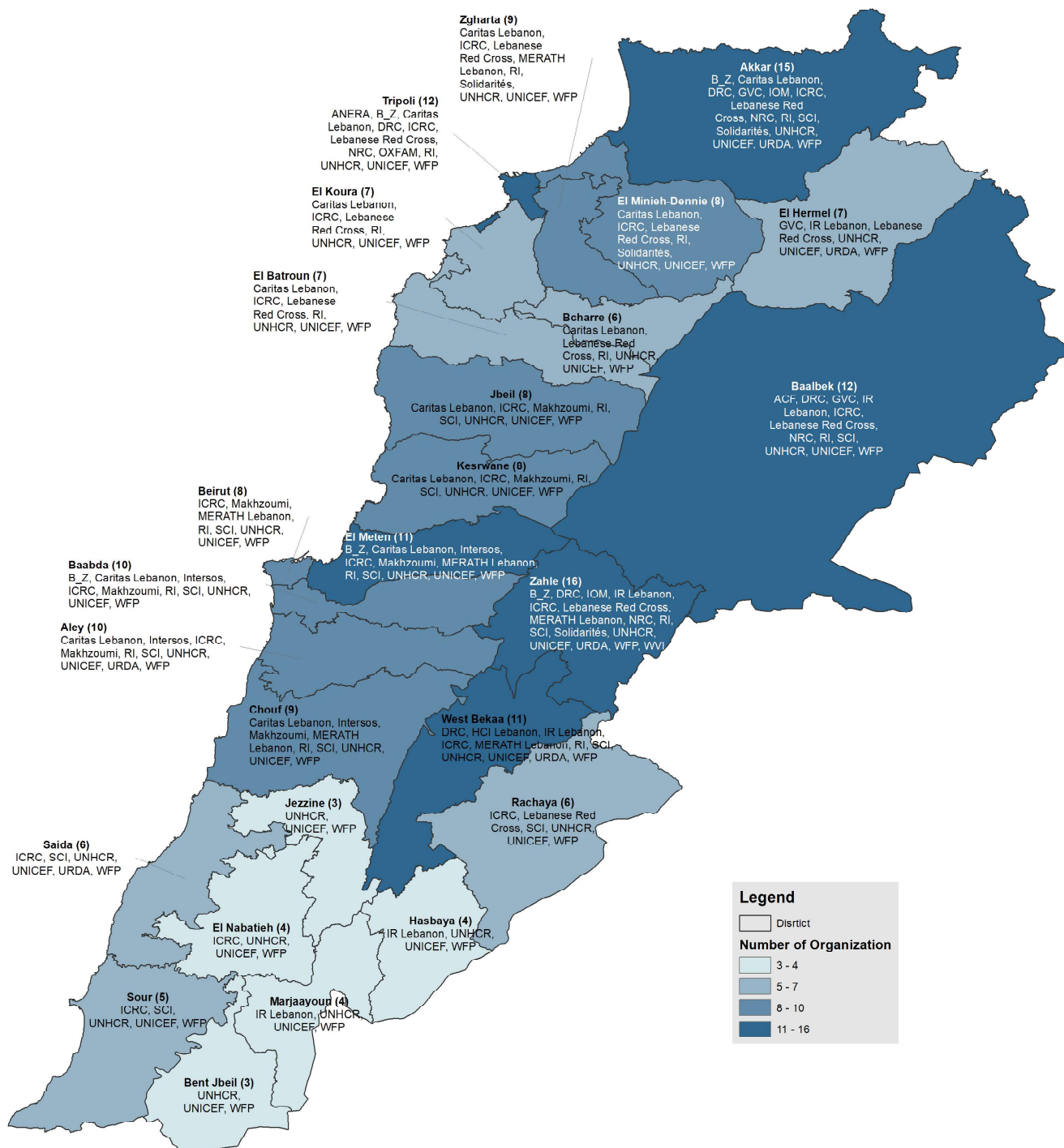
Basic Assistance partners ensure a blanket coverage of poor households during similar response plans. This year and given the severe economic conditions the country is witnessing; large scale cash and in-kind assistance were carried out to respond to the growing critical needs.

It is worth noting that the sector partners adopted mitigation measures to safeguard their operations and ensure actions are in place to respond in case of a second wave of COVID-19. As an example, LOUISE agencies resorted to a staggered schedule of loading (between 7 and 10 days) to prevent overcrowding on ATM machines. They are also monitoring ATMs to track issues and manage overcrowding. In addition, four new ATMs were established as of July in Aرسال, Qobayat and old Akkar, and one to be installed in the second half of 2020.



Organizations per district

ACF, ANERA, B&Z, Caritas Lebanon, DRC, GVC, HCI Lebanon, ICRC, Intersos, IOM, IR Lebanon, Lebanese Red Cross, Makhzoumi, MERATH Lebanon, NRC, OXFAM, RI, SCI, Solidarités, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNRWA, URDA, WFP, WVI



Note: This map has been produced by UNHCR based on maps and material provided by the Government of Lebanon for UNHCR operational purposes. It does not constitute an official United Nations map. The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.