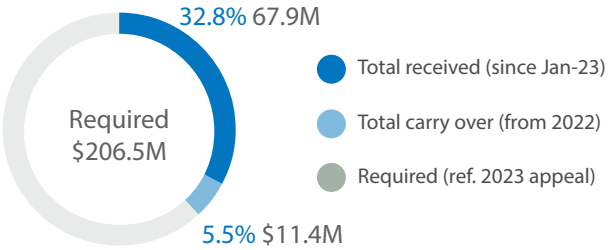
2023 Q2 SECTOR DASHBOARD
Water

Inter-Agency Coordination Lebanon

This dashboard summarizes the progress made by partners involved in the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan and highlights trends affecting people in need. The Water Sector in Lebanon is working towards its expected outcome: more vulnerable people in Lebanon are accessing sufficient, safe water for drinking and domestic use with reduced health and environmental impacts from unsafe wastewater management.

2023 Sector Funding Status
as of 30 June 2023



2023 population reached

2,750,709 People in need

20%
476,249 reached
2,338,103 targeted
1,180,689 female
1,110,214 male

2023 population figures by cohort

1,357,427 Lebanese individuals in need

14.4%
166,387 reached
1,153,813 targeted
624,000 female
576,000 male

1,154,813 Displaced Syrians in need

26%
295,653 reached
1,058,032 targeted
384,540 female
369,460 male

25,143 Palestinian Refugees from Syria (individuals)

65.5%
14,000 Reached
21,372 targeted
6,032 female
5,568 male

67,866 Palestine Refugees in Lebanon (individuals)

0%
209 reached
57,,686 targeted
52,749 female
48,692 male

Progress against targets

Key Achievements

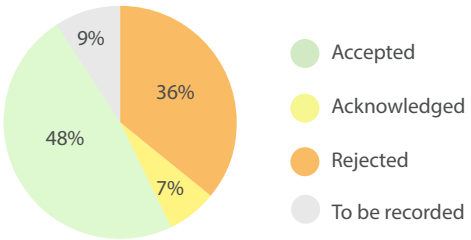
of affected people assisted in permenant location with improved access to adequate quantity of safe water for drinking and for domestic use
227,339 / 1,932,871

# of affected people assisted with temporary access to adequate quantity of safe water for drinking and water for domestic use
231,910 / 358,032

# of affected people with access to improved safe sanitation in temporary locations
219,090 / 270,000

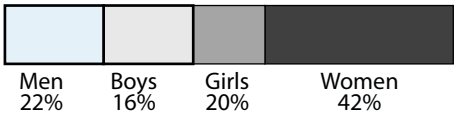
# of individuals who have experienced a WASH behaviour change session/activity
125,686 / 436,500

Nearly half of all referrals to the Water sector (48%) have been accepted, 7 per cent were acknowledged, and 36 per cent were rejected, while for the remaining ones, feedback has yet to be recorded. The main reason for referral rejection was not meeting the eligibility criteria for the service (55%), followed by a lack of capacity to provide the service (29%). The majority of all referrals made to the Water sector were from Mount Lebanon Governorate (36%), followed by Bekaa (26%) and Akkar (21%).



Age/Gender Breakdown

men/women/boys/girls who have experienced a WASH behaviour change session/activity



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MULTI-SECTORAL SITUATION UPDATE

The economic situation in Lebanon continued to deteriorate during the second quarter of 2023, leading to a significant decline in purchasing power for families. In June 2023, the annual inflation rate reached a record high of 260 per cent compared to June 2022, the highest level since comparable records began in 2018. The cost of living, as measured by the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) covering food, essential goods and services, reached LBP 24,925,064 in May 2023 (down slightly from LBP 27,214,894 in April, but an overall increase from earlier in the year). The food SMEB increased by 94 per cent between January and May 2023. The average price of bottled water in Lebanon during the first six months of 2023 amounts to a 1,400 per cent increase in Lebanese pound and 135 per cent increase in USD value when compared to the price in January 2021. The price of trucked water increased by over 1500% (15-fold) in Lebanese pounds and over 350 per cent in USD value during the same period. In April and May 2023, a series of raids and arrests were conducted by the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) leading to the deportation of displaced Syrians. These events created anxiety amongst the displaced community, coinciding with the implementation of restrictive measures by various municipalities, leading to families reducing their movements and access to services. This represented an overall reduction in the protection space in Lebanon. Disturbingly, gender-based violence is on the rise across all areas of Lebanon. Reports indicate an increase in sexual violence and harassment, particularly in workplaces such as farms, agricultural sites, and domestic housework employment. Additionally, child marriage, a continuous violation of child rights, has seen a concerning shift in the age of forced marriages, with girls as young as 12-13 being subjected to early marriages. Gender disparities persist in the labour market, with women and girls being underrepresented in cash-for-work opportunities and facing limited employment opportunities overall. Inter-communal relations in Lebanon have reached their lowest point since 2017. The UNDP-ARK perception survey from March 2023 reveals that 46 per cent of respondents reported negative inter-communal relations, compared to 34 per cent in April 2022 and 21 per cent in July 2018. The main drivers of tension include competition for lower-skilled jobs and access to vital services such as electricity, healthcare, and waste management.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE SECTOR AT THE OUTPUT LEVEL

The sector output 1.1 "Develop institutional governance to adopt key water strategies" continued to be enhanced through the work of several Task Forces (Water Source Monitoring, Updating Customer Database, Collaboration with Municipalities, Solarization and Energy Management, Water Quality, Non-Revenue Water, Support of Water Establishments' Staffing, Wastewater, and Digitalization) established by the Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW) in early 2023. The outputs from those Task Forces will play a role in achieving sectoral output 1.1. Moreover, depending on the particular focus of each task force, their outcomes may also contribute to achieving output 1.2., 2.1 and 2.2., in line with the updated National Water Sector Strategy (NWWS) and with the five-year recovery plan of the Water Sector introduced in mid-2022. In terms of direct support to water institutions' operations and building their capacity [Output 1.2 supporting water institutions operations and building their capacities], in the first half of 2023 AFD Technical Assistance, UN and NGOs continued to second 14 technical staff to all regional Water Establishments. During the first six months of 2023, the Sector continued to assist people living in temporary locations, mainly displaced Syrians, with access to adequate quantities of safe water for drinking and domestic use [Output 2.1] and with improved access to sanitation and safely managed wastewater services [Output 2.2]. Around 232 thousand people have been reached for both outputs: (2.1.) The most vulnerable people have secured access to sufficient quantity of quality, reliable and equitable Water services and (2.2) The most vulnerable people have secured access to sufficient quantity of quality, reliable and equitable Sanitation services. More than 715,000 m3 of safe drinking water was delivered via water trucking services, 107 m3 of household water storage was provided, and over 175,000 m3 of sludge was removed from the informal settlements and safely disposed of in wastewater treatment plants. Most of that was removed through regular service provision, while only 20 per cent were removed on a call or upon referral. In addition, 344 latrines were rehabilitated or constructed including 183 rehabilitated just to meet the environmentally friendly practices. Water supply and sanitation systems in permanent locations [outputs 2.1. and 2.2.] continue to receive significant support to maintain a minimum level of service provision and to reduce reliance on the public electrical grid and fossil fuel as main energy sources. Stabilization projects with WaSH outcomes benefiting all population groups in permanent locations, regardless of the response framework, are visualized on this dashboard (https://t.ly/3-Qu). Under the 2023 LCRP response framework so far 6 WaSH sector partners have reported 33 planned, ongoing or completed activities supporting 24 pumping stations. Those activities will benefit an estimated 407,000 people (more than 320,000 Lebanese). The activities include the installation of 1,880 kW of photovoltaic panels. Some grant agreements with donors are not yet being finalized and more projects are expected to commence in Q3 of 2023. In addition to stabilization projects, the sector continues to support four regional Water Establishments with the operation and maintenance program for the water supply systems (like provision of chlorine, spare parts, fuel and other consumables etc.). During the first half of 2023, more than 317 repairs across the country have been conducted that sustained the delivery of 267,295 m3/day benefiting over 2 million people. Repair of 41 chlorination systems maintained proper treatment of nearly 103,000 m3/day and supply of safe water to estimated 223,710 people. Chlorine stock for all four Water Establishments has been replenished with more than 100 tons of chlorine. Activities conducted under outputs 2.1. and 2.2., both in temporary and permanent locations, are crucial

During Q2 the programme supporting the wastewater sector has commenced, which aims to: 1) support the rehabilitation, operation and maintenance of critical wastewater treatment plants across Lebanon, 2) support the MoEW sectoral reforms related to wastewater, and 3) raise public awareness on wastewater and its impact on the environment. To date, the support to Batroun, Chekka and Tripoli Wastewater Treatment Plants (WWTP) and relevant infrastructure has started benefitting estimated 344,000 people. The support to another 8 WWTP will commence in Q3 of 2023. Those activities are critical to mitigate the public health risk including another wave of cholera outbreaks. Nearly 126,000 individuals (25,696 girls, 20,196 boys, 52,012 women, and 27,782 men) had experienced a WaSH behaviour change session/activity, including menstrual hygiene activities. This represents about 29 per cent of the sector target and will be scaled up in the year's second half in link with the anticipated waves of water-borne diseases, including cholera. Menstrual hygiene activities hold great importance as it addresses the specific needs of girls and women, reaching a significant number of individuals, contributing to sector targets, and challenging societal norms. By prioritizing menstrual hygiene within the broader WaSH program, it strives to improve health, dignity, and empowerment, promoting positive behavioral changes and fostering a more inclusive and informed society.

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Referrals Trends

There were fewer referrals to the Water sector in Q2 than in Q1 of 2023, respectively 199 (35%) vis-a-vis 376 (65%). Overall, referrals to the Water sector in the first half of 2023 represent less than 1 per cent of the total referrals made in Lebanon. Nearly half of all referrals to the Water sector (48%) have been accepted, 7 per cent were acknowledged, and 36 per cent were rejected, while for the remaining ones, feedback has yet to be recorded. The main reason for referral rejection was not meeting the eligibility criteria for the service (55%), followed by a lack of capacity to provide the service (29%). The majority of all referrals made to the Water sector were from Mount Lebanon Governorate (36%), followed by Bekaa (26%) and Akkar (21%).

Mainstreaming activities: On 15 May 2023, the training on Integrating Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) in the WaSH Sector had been delivered to the sector partners. The main learning topics were: 1) AAP integration in the WaSH sector and activities, 2) Implementing Do-no-Harm principle in the Lebanon context with a focus on safety, dignity and accessibility, and 3) Providing partners with insight about the minimum requirements for functioning Complaints and feedback mechanisms (CFMs). Over 20 WaSH practitioners from local and international NGOs participated in the training. In mid-March, the sector held the conflict sensitivity workshop facilitated by Ripple Peace Research & Consulting in collaboration with the Social Stability sector, aiming to support conflict sensitivity mainstreaming for WaSH partners, with a focus on Informal Settlements programmes. The two half-day sessions were focused on issues around access to water. They were followed by another session facilitated by the WaSH in temporary locations thematic group of the WaSH sector dedicated to issues around sanitation. In total, nearly 30 people from over 20 organizations attended the workshop. Further to this, the Sector worked with the Social Stability briefing note on water-related tensions to be published in Q3 to Water Sector partners to prioritize interventions that can mitigate, and diffuse tensions related to water quality, access, and scarcity and ensure more conflict-sensitive interventions in a context of increasing constraints.

KEY CHALLENGES OF THE SECTOR

Lebanon is facing significant challenges in its water supply and wastewater treatment systems due to limited electricity supply through the public grid. The lack of electricity impacts the operation of the public grid, which is main energy source for 87 per cent of water supply systems in the country. Despite some improvement in electricity supply, energy remains a major bottleneck. The water establishments responsible for water supply and wastewater treatment are also facing issues related to inadequate tariffs, low collection rates, and a shortage of critical technical and managerial staff. The situation is exacerbated by an economic crisis, leading to a brain drain of personnel. Without external humanitarian and stabilization support, including infrastructure repair and maintenance assistance, these utilities continue to be at risk of collapse. The impact is severe, particularly on vulnerable households, as the cost of water from private tankers and bottled water has soared, leaving many unable to access sufficient water.

Only a fraction of all wastewater generated in Lebanon is safely managed, and together with the widespread use of unregulated and often unsafe water sources for private water trucking, this poses high public health risks, including another cholera outbreak. In the second half of 2023, the sector will be supporting the operation of only 13 wastewater treatment plants across the country, serving no more than 26 per cent of the population, mainly with primary treatment. Both immediate emergency funds to maintain the functionality of critical systems, as well as longer-term development investments in the sanitation sector, are necessary to mitigate the risks.

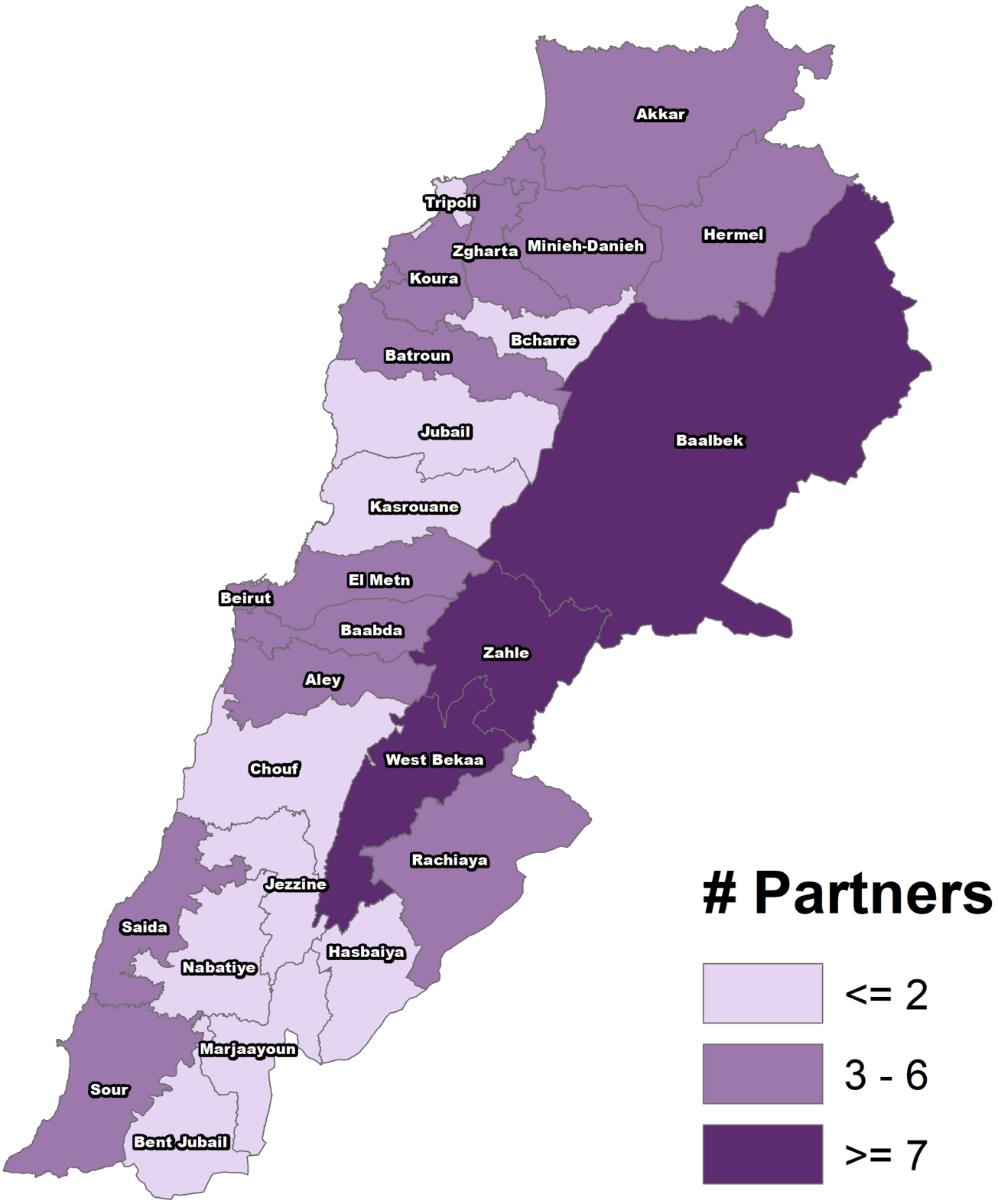
The Ministry of Energy and Water has officially instructed Water sector partners to cease the implementation of Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems in Informal Settlements, effectively halting all activities related to the Sanitation Action Plan that aimed to reduce the cost of wastewater management in Informal Settlements and to reduce environmental risks. Partners are following the decision and sanitation in Informal Settlements is now limited to regular desludging services and installation of holding tanks. Sector partners supporting Informal Settlements continue to face challenges to provide adequate access to WaSH in line with the agreed sector standards, in particular in the sites that solely rely on the trucked services. Localized, joint actions with the health sector actors are immediately required to support areas with a high prevalence of skin diseases.

KEY PRIORITIES FOR THE FOLLOWING QUARTER

One of the top priorities for Q3 is to enhance preparedness efforts for the Cholera outbreak. During Q3, the sector will take the following actions: 1) improve subnational coordination between Health and Disaster Risk Management entities for referring positive and suspected cases using the Referral Distribution and Monitoring System (RDMS), 2) implement a Water Quality surveillance system in critical settings (Water Quality Thematic Group of the WaSH sector and Ministry of Public Health ESU), 3) continue updating the Cholera Risk Map, partners' geographical coverage, and response capacity mapping, 4) conduct refresher training for partners on CATI and RDMS, and 5) continue advocating for funding to support WaSH initiatives in temporary locations and target high-risk areas with High-Intensity Operation for WaSH infrastructures. Basic operationalization of 11 wastewater treatment plants and 25 related pumping/lifting stations is supposed to be achieved in Q3 nevertheless, supporting the functionality of a further 17 critical WWTP requires an additional USD 31 M, while solarization of 11 feasible WWTP further USD 6 M. Prioritizing support to the sanitation sector is critical to mitigate the public health risk including another wave of cholera outbreaks.

A vital humanitarian support to water supply systems across Lebanon is facing a critical funding shortfall in the second half of 2023, seriously undermining sectoral efforts for the prevention of water-borne diseases, including cholera. The sector is lacking USD 9 M for the repair and maintenance support to the Water Establishments to maintain the minimum level of water supply, while rehabilitation of key water production and supply infrastructure requires a further USD 21 M. In addition, a USD 30 M investment in solarization of feasible water production and supply infrastructure would reduce the reliance of the sector on costly fossil fuel and unreliable electricity supply from the public grid, and would significantly increase water supply safety across Lebanon.

Access to adequate, up-to-the-sector minimum standards WaSH services in temporary locations requires additional support, both in terms of immediate short-term funds injections to mitigate outbreaks of water-borne and water-related diseases in specific areas, as well as in terms of investments in cost-efficient solutions aiming to reduce reliance on water trucking and desludging services provided by humanitarian actors, such as the implementation of the Water Action

Reporting Partners by Q2 2023

The achievements described in this dashboard are the collective work of the following organizations: UNICEF, ACF Spain, ACTED, ADRA, ANERA, ARCS, AVSI, Borderless, DPNA, DRC, ICRC, IMC, Intersos, IR Lebanon, IRC, Leb Relief, Lost, Mada, Nabad, NRC, Oxfam, RMF, Sawa Group, Save the Children, Solidarites International and World Vission.