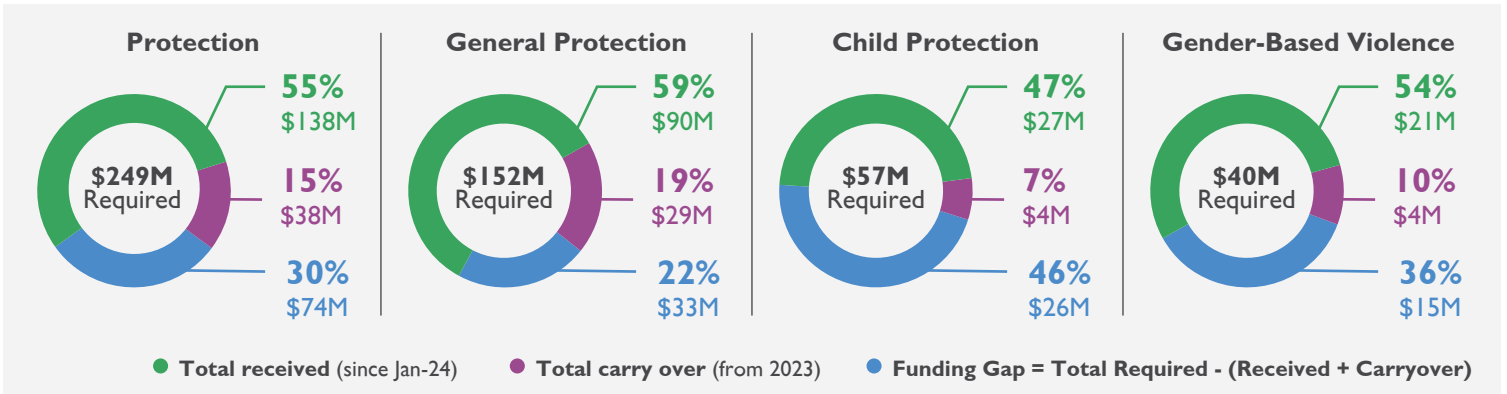




The 2024 Annual Protection sector dashboard summarizes the progress made by Protection sector partners involved in the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP), identifies key challenges and priorities, and highlights trends affecting people in need. The Protection sector in Lebanon is working to achieve three outcomes: **OUTCOME 1)** Individuals at heightened risk from all affected populations in all their diversity, including age, gender, and disability, have their fundamental rights respected and have access to an effective justice and protection system; **OUTCOME 2)** Individuals at heightened risk from all affected populations in all their diversity, including age, gender, and disability, are safe, supported, and empowered in their community to contribute to positive change; **OUTCOME 3)** Individuals from all affected populations in all their diversity, including age, gender, and disability, at heightened risk have safe, inclusive, and targeted access to specialized protection services and are resilient to shocks.

2024 Sector Funding Status

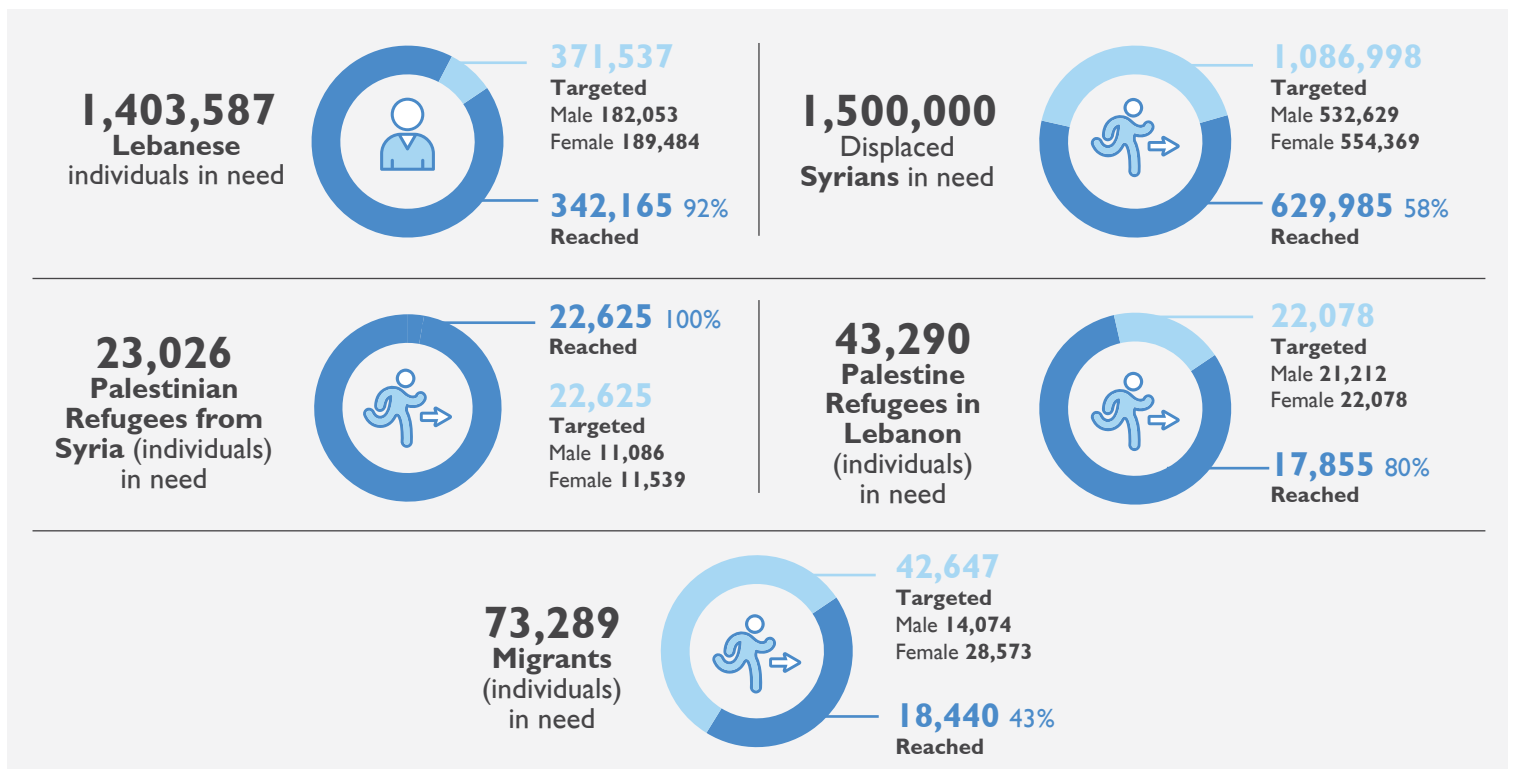
As of December 31



2024 Population Reached



2024 Population Figures by Cohort





Progress Against Targets

Reached

Target

Outcome 1: Individuals at heightened risk from all affected populations in all their diversity, including age, gender, and disability, have their fundamental rights respected and have access to an effective justice and protection system.



of persons reached through awareness sessions on legal topics

85,050

162,200



of persons who benefitted from legal counseling/ individualised consultation, legal assistance, and legal representation regarding their legal needs

129,600

180,000

Outcome 2: Individuals at heightened risk from all affected populations in all their diversity, including age, gender, and disability, are safe, supported, and empowered in their community to contribute to positive change.



of persons participating in protection interventions at the community centers, including CDCs, SDCs, and mobile protection activities held outside the center

85,015

87,130



of caregivers engaged in activities to promote the well-being and protection of children

26,280

35,483



of women, girls, men, and boys who participate in targeted gender equality and empowerment activities aiming at social behavioral change in safe spaces or at community level as part of GBV prevention programs

59,820



of girls and boys engaged in community-based Child Protection activities at the community centers, including CDCs, SDCs, and mobile protection activities held outside the center

97,345



of women and adolescent girls who received dignity kits as part of GBV programs and who reported being satisfied with the quality of the product

44,920



of children and adults reached through awareness-raising activities and community mobilization interventions on PSEA

17,369

55,953

Outcome 3: Individuals from all affected populations in all their diversity, including age, gender, and disability, at heightened risk have safe, inclusive, and targeted access to specialized protection services and are resilient to shocks.



of persons receiving protection quality case management services

16,015

18,860



of unique persons supported with protection cash or emergency cash (protection)

60,876

73,504



of women, girls, men, and boys accessing quality GBV response services, including case management and focused and non-focused PSS

42,620

81,800



of girls, boys, and caregivers receiving specialized/ focused PSS to address Child protection issues and improve their psycho-social wellbeing

29,215

35,182



of girls and boys receiving life-saving quality CP case management services

11,320

14,649



Analysis of achievements of the sector at the output level

Outcome 1: Individuals at heightened risk from all affected populations in all their diversity, including age, gender, and disability, have their fundamental rights respected and have access to an effective justice and protection system.

Output 1.1: Individuals at heightened risk from all affected populations in all their diversity, including age, gender, and disability, have increased knowledge of their rights and have access to effective legal aid services, including counselling, assistance, and representation.

During 2024, 85,052 people (52% of the target; 60% women and girls, 40% men and boys) benefitted from awareness sessions on legal topics to increase understanding of legal frameworks, particularly those facing vulnerabilities such as displacement or marginalization. Additionally, 129,599 individuals (72% of the target; 74% women and girls, 26% men and boys) directly benefitted from individual legal services, including counseling, consultations, and representation, addressing a wide range of issues such as legal residency (73%), civil documentation (27%), housing, land, and property (HLP), gender-based violence (GBV), detention, child protection, trafficking, and various other legal matters. This intervention ensured that individuals could access rights, protection, and justice and helped resolve critical issues such as securing legal residency, obtaining civil documentation and addressing housing, land, and property (HLP) concerns. In relation to the escalation of hostilities, legal actors provided emergency legal aid to those most affected including on issues related to risks of evictions, particularly for Syrians, as well as support to Lebanese and other nationalities to provide information on issues such as loss of documentation and registration of civil events. During the emergency, legal aid awareness raising sessions were deprioritized – resulting in an overall lower percentage of the target reached for legal awareness raising than legal aid services. Due to shrinking protection space for Syrians, including limited options for legal residency and other restrictive measures (see below), over 85 per cent of the beneficiaries for legal awareness and legal aid were Syrians for whom these services are crucial in addressing the range of legal issues they face resulting from low levels of legal residency.

Output 1.2: Protection and legal frameworks are strengthened and barriers to accessing legal procedures are addressed

Despite the high numbers of people receiving support, the barriers to legal residency remained high (see below), and as a result, only 2,011 individuals (20% of the target) who were provided with legal aid successfully obtained legal residency, securing their status, freedom of movement and enhancing their access to rights and services. Legal residency is also key to protecting refugees from the risk of deportation and other related protection risks.

Barriers to marriage and birth registration were slightly less (see below) and as a result 5,219 people (36% of the target) successfully registered their marriages and the births of their children at the *Noufous*¹ level ensuring link with parents, legal identity and prevent the risk of statelessness. Furthermore, legal counseling, assistance, and representation were provided to 1,481 people, particularly in cases of gender-based violence (GBV) to provide legal services for persons at risk of or survivors of this

form of violence. The provision of legal aid for those at risk of GBV was significantly impacted by the overall deteriorating situation in 2025 resulting in a de-prioritization of legal activities over life-saving activities of the sub-sector.

Legal actors, worked with authorities to document and advocate for good practices to reduce financial barriers to legal, legal residency and civil registration procedures. Legal Protection sector partners mapped costs for marriage identifying recommendations to harmonised procedures and affordable feeds across locations for Mukhtar fees and proof of marriage at Shariah religious courts, which with a few exceptions was largely achieved. The Protection sector also provided technical inputs into the National Birth Registration Action Plan, led by the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs. In the Bekaa region, the first pilot project on birth registration was rolled out in the third quarter of the year aiming at increasing birth registration rates amongst Syrians by easing procedural steps for parents and vulnerable families through selected Mukhtars. However, the escalation of hostilities into the entire country, particularly affecting the Bekaa area has paused those efforts which are to be resumed and followed up in 2025. Other work streams on policy and standards development and implementation had to be deprioritized during the escalation in the last quarter of the year, putting on hold much of the progress on these issues made in the first three quarters of 2024. Assuming the cessation of hostilities holds, this work will resume in 2025.

Under the GBV sub-sector, partners supported the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) to develop ‘Standards for Safe Shelters for GBV survivors’ which were launched in the second quarter of the year. The standards present a comprehensive guidance document for all agencies with existing or upcoming projects rolling out safe shelters for GBV survivors. The sector also held an in-depth meeting on safe shelters capacities and admission criteria with all safe shelter actors identifying critical gaps for persons with severe mental health conditions or those with disability who face access challenges to shelters due to limited available funds to provide those specialized services.

The sector also provided training and capacity building to over 400 authorities and national and international humanitarian organisations prior to and after the emergency. Training included child protection and GBV case management, disability and older person inclusion, protection sensitive site management, IHL, protection mainstreaming and orientations to partners on issues such as how to report conflict related violations of international humanitarian law. To increase the knowledge of non-specialized actors on GBV, several gender and GBV mainstreaming sessions were rolled out in the first two quarters of 2024 resulting in Gender and GBV checklists established across all sectors. Several actors also provided training sessions to national stakeholders such as internal security forces (ISF) on GBV minimum standards aiming at increased reporting of incidence of violence to law enforcement actors. The development of standardized tools for the sector alongside capacity-building efforts, strengthened the overall emergency response, allowing legal services to be delivered more efficiently, consistently, and with greater impact in addressing the urgent legal needs of individuals during the crisis. As such, the sector developed guidance tools to respond to the emergency such as guidelines on remote facilitation of case management and psychosocial support PSS activities in hard-to-reach areas. Protection sector partners also worked across the shelter, Site Management and Coordination and WaSH sectors to develop and support the roll-out of trainings for site managers in collaboration with DRM as well as coordinators of other humanitarian sectors.

¹ *Noufous* refers to the Civil Registry Office in Lebanon. It is the governmental department responsible for registering births, marriages, deaths,



Outcome 2: Individuals at heightened risk from all affected populations in all their diversity, including age, gender, and disability, are safe, supported, and empowered in their community to contribute to positive change.

The Protection sector continued to work with affected communities to foster an environment that is safe, inclusive, participatory, and empowers affected populations, including Lebanese, displaced Syrians, and other refugee groups. This includes sharing reliable information and assistance to enhance community empowerment and foster informed decision-making. In 2024, the Protection sector supported 134,579 people (69% of the target; 63% women and girls, 27% men and boys, 36 Persons with Disabilities) to access reliable and timely information on assistance and services through the dissemination of regionally specific, accessible, and up-to-date information on services, assistance, and protection-related issues. While in the first three quarters the focus was predominately on Syria, migrant and Palestinians, during the emergency the provision of information to IDPs significantly increased, particularly to Lebanese IDPs who were less familiar with the humanitarian services available than other affected populations. As a result, while over half of those who benefited from information were Syrian, over 50,000 Lebanese benefited (179% of the original target²). For the emergency, Protection sector partners, through the Protection Working Group (PWG), developed and disseminated a range of tools to facilitate communication with communities, including GBV and protection key messages, winterization flyers and consolidated information on accountability to affected populations (see below). Refugee website was updated throughout the year with information for displaced population which had almost 2.3 million views in 2024. WhatsApp group is also used to provide timely updates to over 56,000 IDPs and refugees of all nationalities throughout the year including in the emergency. Additionally, an emergency HELP page was created and includes [information on the emergency for all populations](#), including Lebanese IDPs which provided a valuable source of up-to-date information on the services available – with over 320,000 views. These tools and key counselling lines on return of IDPs within the country were used by all Protection sector partners particularly frontline staff when providing information to affected people. Child Protection sector partners also developed tools and implemented widespread [unexploded ordnance and white phosphorus awareness](#) throughout the year, but particularly during the escalation of hostilities in the last quarter.

Community-based protection and engagement activities were a key priority of the sector this year. Partners supported 47 centers across the country, including Community Development Centers, Social Development Centers, child-friendly spaces and women and girls' safe spaces, and partnered with over ten women-led, refugee-led, youth specific or other local organisations to enhance their protection capacities. As a result, 77,472 people (98% the target; 66% women and girls and 34% men and boys) benefited from centre-based and mobile protection activities. These activities have been critical in facilitating protection assessments and disclosure of protection, child protection or GBV incidents or to engage through peer support structures and recreational activities that aim at improving resilience and wellbeing of the different communities affected. 4,790 community focal points/outreach workers (54% of the target) provided information, outreach, feedback, and referral and supported community-led initiatives on protection. During the emergency, many of the protection community focal points were themselves displaced during the conflict, disrupting the community networks and centers that are needed for this work. None-the-less protection actors quickly mobilized to implement community-based protection activities in collective sites and other locations where IDPs were living, such as informal settlements but limitations posed by these sites meant that the activities had to be adapted – for instance, supporting the community engagement and feedback mechanisms within these sites. In community-based child protection, child

protection actors implemented a social and behavioral change initiative called Qudwa to address the root causes of protection violations against girls and boys. Community influencers engaged 153,348 girls, boys, women and men (128% of the target) by providing information, challenging harmful social norms, and encouraging positive behavior regarding child protection and gender equality. Local leaders, educators, and others who are trusted within the community played a key role in providing information and facilitating community dialogue to promote protective attitudes and norms. In addition, 97,345 girls, boys benefited from community-based child protection activities and 26,278 caregivers (74% of the target) were engaged in positive parenting sessions to promote well-being and protection of children.

GBV prevention programs aim at longer-term changes in behaviours and of norms to reduce or prevent GBV from happening in the community and society. In the context of Lebanon, several awareness and prevention programs have been rolled out over the past years, amongst those the girl shine program to empower adolescent girls or engaging men and boys in changing gender norms and prevent violence against women and girls. Due to the escalation of hostilities in 2024, prevention programs have been significantly impacted and were refocused on awareness on GBV risks during the conflict and displacement as well as on ensuring all those at risk of GBV are accessing information on available services. Under this output, a total of 59,816 people (89% women and girls and 11% men and boys) which is 66 per cent of the annual target participated in targeted gender equality and empowerment programs at safe spaces (53% SYR, 44% LEB and 3% others).

Financial challenges have reportedly led to a de-prioritization of hygiene or menstrual hygiene items which resulted in an upscaling of the provision of dignity kits under the sector which resulted in exceeding the sector's targets by 236 per cent. As part of GBV programs, 44,919 dignity kits were distributed to women and girls in reproductive age (53% LEB, 34% SYR, 13% migrants, PRL, PRS and other nationalities). In addition, the GBV sub-sector drafted [Guidelines on Dignity Kits as part of GBV programs](#).

Between July and November 2024, the GBV sub-sector, rolled out the first comprehensive Inter-Agency GBV Safety Audit using a contextualized Inter-Agency tool. The assessment aimed at identifying the main GBV risks per location for diverse population groups across ages, gender and nationality; assess GBV prevention, mitigation and response programming in Lebanon; highlight community recommendation and identify areas of improvement and programmatic course correction. Persons with Disability have faced specific risks and increased barriers in accessing GBV services in Lebanon. To enhance the inclusion of disability-specific aspects in the assessment, a 2-day training on the adaptation of the FGD questionnaire using inclusive approaches and methodologies was provided to all members which have greatly increased the inclusion component of the assessment. Key findings indicate that the compounded economic and sociopolitical crises have deepened vulnerabilities, particularly for women and girls and marginalized groups. Displacement has escalated intimate partner violence, sexual violence including Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, and exploitation risks. Legal and economic marginalization has left undocumented individuals susceptible to coercion and abuse and service disruptions in hard-to-reach and unsafe conflict-affected areas, such as South Lebanon and Bekaa, have reduced access to GBV support. The full report can be found on the GBV Portal of the GBV sub-sector in Lebanon.

Accountability to affected populations, including participation of different groups, information sharing and ensuring inclusive complaint and feedback mechanisms (CFM) are available, was another key priority of the sector this year.

² Note that this target was set at start of 2024, and therefore did not account for the needs during the escalation.r civil status records



Throughout the year, 17,369 children and adults (31% of the target) were reached through awareness-raising activities and community mobilization interventions on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and child safeguarding. Accessible complaint and feedback mechanisms have allowed children and adults to report abuse, exploitation, or neglect in a confidential and safe environment, and protection sector partners provided information to communities throughout the year about these mechanisms. While the target was not reached, Syrians reported high levels of awareness of feedback and response mechanisms prior to the emergency (see below). During the emergency, the PWG developed a summary for front line workers of the available hotlines, feedback mechanisms and tools to provide to frontline protection staff to disseminate to the community (available [here](#)). None-the-less there was a clear gap in providing information to communities in the emergency about feedback and response mechanisms at displacement sites, particularly for Lebanese IDPs and in collective sites. Although Protection sector partners working in these sites did commonly provide information about the CFM for their own services, there was limited information on how to provide feedback or complaints on other services in the sites. Throughout the year, Protection sector partners engaged affected communities in protection programming with 18,247 persons engaged in the assessment, development and monitoring of programs at the community level through various participatory activities collecting Age, Gender and Diversity-specific feedback.

Outcome 3: Individuals from all affected populations in all their diversity, including age, gender, and disability at heightened risk have safe, inclusive, and targeted access to specialised protection services and are resilient to shocks.

Output 3.1: Protection, Child Protection, GBV case management, psychosocial support, protection cash, and other specialised services are available, accessible, safe, and informed by women, men, girls, and boys in all their diversity.

Case management services provided by trained and experienced social workers constitute a critical priority of the sector to address the individual protection risks and needs of those at heightened risk. As part of regular and emergency-based programming, case management services have been prioritized across GBV, Child Protection and Protection sector partners providing support to Persons with Disability, older persons, those with psychosocial needs across population groups.

Child Protection sector partners provided child protection case management to 11,318 girls and boys (4,418 or 39% female and 6,900 or 61% male, that is 77% of the target), while 29,213 girls and boys and caregivers received specialized/focused Psychosocial support (20,600 or 70% female and 8,613 or 30% male, that is 83% of the target). These child protection services were both accessible and informed by the needs of the community, ensuring that boys and girls, regardless of gender, age, or disability received support to address child protection violations and/or psychosocial distress, as well as having a voice in shaping the services available to them. These services became even more essential after the escalation of hostilities in which more than 240 children were killed and 1400 injured, and many lost family members and were exposed to extreme stress and violence. Given security concerns, partners had difficulty reaching the most affected children in need in the conflict affected areas with face-to-face services and therefore adapted to provide remote case management services where necessary.

GBV case management services and the provision of focused or non-focused psychosocial support is a sector priority and a

life-saving activity for those affected. In 2024, 42,619 (36% LEB, 62% SYR, 2% others including PRL, PRS, migrants) people benefitted from survivor-centered social work services and psychosocial support representing around. Due to the displacement and exposure to violence and depleting financial resources, risks of GBV have significantly increased in 2024 with lack of privacy, hygiene and adequate shelter being reported by most women and girls in IDP shelters which created fears to use wash facilities and increased sexual assault and intimate partner violence. Most case management agencies have been severely impacted by the ongoing escalation of hostilities, with services near the southern borders and Baalbek El-Hermel being unavailable in the last quarter of the year. The GBV working group developed emergency specific case management SOPs to guide partners on the implementation of remote or online case management where necessary. However, several women and girls' safe spaces had to close due to the insecurity and limited safe access. Psychosocial support was identified as one of the most critical activities across population and age groups due to the significant and detrimental impact the war had on children, women, men and older persons. As modalities for implementation had to shift to remote and alternative ways to reach affected people and provide life-saving services, partners developed online or remote tools and modalities on psychosocial support through phone or online counseling. Psychological first aid (PFA) sessions were done for all frontliners with the support of the national Mental Health & Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Task Force and sector partners. To increase safe disclosure and referrals of GBV survivors to relevant services, the GBV Referral Pathways were translated into Arabic, regularly updated and training was provided by sector partners on PFA and safe referrals of GBV survivors. In addition, the GBV sub-sector developed a community leaflet in English, Arabic and the main migrant-specific languages that includes information on access to specialized GBV actors and hotlines.

The sector provided a range of protection services to respond to specific protection risks, including for older persons and Persons with Disability. Specialized services included 15,746 women, girls, boys and men who received mental health and psychosocial services (180% of the target) – demonstrating the effective scale up of this crucial service in response to the escalation in the last quarter of the year. The sector strengthened its engagement with Organisations for Persons with Disability (OPDs) by including them in the Protection Core Group and as members in the GBV Core Group and supporting MOSA to convene OPD to scale up support to Persons with Disability in the emergency. None-the-less the needs vastly outweighed the capacity of the sector to provide services reaching only 19 per cent of the target or 8,548 Persons with Disabilities with specialized services and rehabilitation devices. During the emergency response, Persons with Disability faced challenges including exclusion, lack of adapted services and isolation, and there was substantial lack of capacity to scale up timely specialized services, as well as to ensure inclusive emergency shelter and services. The sector also reviewed a checklist to assess the inclusion - Disability Gender Age checklist, to further enhance the sector's collective commitment to inclusive services.

In addition, 16,012 people benefited from protection case management (85% of the target; 80% women and girls, 20% men and boys; 64% Syrians, 26% migrants and 6% Lebanese) and around 13,582 households or 61,121 people benefited from protection cash to address, prevent or mitigate a wide range of protection risks. The Protection sector provides two types of cash interventions - emergency cash assistance addressing a short-term, immediate protection risk and recurrent protection cash aimed at providing longer-term support to structural protection risks, the latter of which is coupled with case management service provision. While the protection cash was a lifeline for those who received it, post distribution monitoring found that the transfer value of



USD90 was insufficient to address protection needs, a situation which was exacerbated by the rising costs that resulted from the emergency – the recommendation to increase the transfer value of protection cash will be discussed with the authorities and partners in 2025 to address this gap.

During the escalation of conflict and due to the high numbers of displaced people, protection cash activities were upscaled and emergency protection cash guidelines were developed to ensure that the specific context of displacement and conflict-based protection needs were addressed. Across Child Protection, GBV and Protection sector partners, emergency protection cash was provided to some 8,940 households or 40,233 individuals while recurrent cash assistance was received by around 4,372 households or 19,676 individuals with complex protection risks. Under the Protection sector, all partners who implement cash for protection programs - across Child Protection, GBV and Protection sectors – take part in the Protection Cash Task Force. The comprehensive Cash for Protection Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) were finalized mid-2023 and are detailing objectives, modalities, Transfer Values, modalities and standard forms to support partners in the implementation and harmonization of protection-specific cash programs. From the Post Distribution Monitoring of partners of the Task Force, information on the effectiveness is collected and shared by all members. In support of persons at heightened risk in the displacement crisis, the Task Force developed a short [emergency guidance note to support and guide the upscaling of cash assistance during the escalation](#). Based on the Post Distribution Monitoring of Cash TF members, some 96 per cent of those asked about the effectiveness of protection cash stated that Emergency Cash contributed to addressing their protection situation or reduced the risk of further deterioration. In addition, 71 per cent said that the Emergency Cash provided during the displacement situation improved feelings of dignity and safety.

Output 3.2: Displaced Syrians and other Refugees have access to durable solutions

Displaced Syrians and other refugees with protection needs were referred to resettlement program or other humanitarian admission programs where durable solutions were required. Protection sector³ made 7,718 submissions of persons for resettlement and supported the departure of 6,246 refugees. Sector partners supported access to complementary pathways, including family reunification, labour opportunities, and other legal migration solutions available to refugees through provision of counseling, documentation and legal support for cases requiring custody and travel authorization, and coordination with receiving countries and the Lebanese authorities as needed.

Output 3.3: Migrants have access to facilitated return to their country of origin

Since early September 2024 and continuing through the end of January 2025, the sector⁴ provided safe return to 923 individuals (72 men, 757 women, 36 girls, and 58 boys) out of 1371 registered migrants (1101 women, 92 men, 79 girls and 99 boys) who expressed their willingness to voluntary return. These services supported migrants both during their time in Beirut and upon their return to their countries of origin. Key support activities included maintaining a dedicated info-line, conducting individual counseling sessions, vulnerability screenings, and immediate direct assistance. Migrants were further assisted with obtaining travel documents and completing nationality screenings and other consular services in coordination with embassies and consulates in Lebanon. Pre-departure health checks, safe accommodation, and tailored support to meet the basic needs of the most vulnerable were provided for those awaiting departure. Additionally, departure and

transportation assistance, coordination with General Security (GS) for exit clearances and other administrative and immigration formalities, and close collaboration with relevant local authorities were integral to ensure the smooth facilitation of returns. The sector also worked with countries of origin to coordinate specific post-arrival assistance.

Gender analysis:

The protection sector gender-specific trends in service provision vary according to intervention. Under Outcome 1, numbers of women participating in awareness sessions on legal topics were higher compared to men (59% women and 41% men). However, interestingly, individualized legal counseling and representation in front of the court shows higher numbers of men and boys benefitting from this service (56% men/boys and only 44% women and girls). Women and girls have significantly more benefitted from residency support by legal actors compared to men (63% of women and only 27%) which is in line with the overall exacerbated challenges to obtain legal residency for women compared to men (see VASyR 2023 and 2024). In contrast, 83 per cent of those receiving legal assistance to document civil events such as childbirth or marriage were men, while only 17 per cent include women or girls.

Sector results under outcome area 2 demonstrate males and females from affected population groups participated equally in assessments or consultations such as focus group discussions (FGDs) or other feedback processes. Women were more actively engaged in awareness sessions on protection risks and how to access services, including awareness on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) (63% women and girls and only 37% men and boys). Women also show much higher access to protection activities and initiatives in community centers as well as social development centers or mobile activities with 66 per cent women and 34 per cent men benefitting from the service.

Under outcome area 3, women are much more likely to benefit case management services compared to men (62% women and 38% men) and to a lesser extent specialized MHPSS services (57% women and 43% men) while women and men are equally likely to benefit from specialized assistance for older persons and persons with disability (49% women and 51% men).

Referral trends: include the number of referrals made to your sector, the percentage success rate categorized by governorate, and highlight notable achievements and challenges in referral response. Additionally, outline any necessary follow-up actions.

The Protection sector is the largest sector receiving referrals across the Lebanon response. Out of the total of 103,609 referrals made in 2024 across sectors, 69,292 were received by the Protection sector (66%), with the remaining 34 per cent divided between the Basic Assistance, Health, Child Protection, Shelter, GBV, Education and Food security sectors. Most protection referrals include persons at heightened risk that are referred for individualized support. Mount Lebanon and the Bekaa are the regions with the highest number of protection referrals. Significant achievements were made in the reduction of referrals not being accepted by agencies due to lack of eligibility from five per cent in 2023, and only two per cent in 2024. Same applies to unanswered referrals to the Protection sector which decreased significantly between 2023 and 2024 with 11 per cent of all referrals unanswered in 2024 compared to 21 per cent in 2023. This is a significant achievement of the sector in ensuring accountability and timely follow up on protection concerns received by members of the sector despite the escalation of conflict and significant deterioration of security and work conditions. Trainings and focus

³ UNHCR

⁴ IOM



on accountability and referral follow up could be potential reasons for this improvement.

To strengthen the interagency referrals, several tools and referral mechanisms have been developed over the years guiding partners across sectors on good practices and minimum standards and harmonized referral tools. The Protection sector also regularly reviews the [interagency tools](#) to enhance cross-sectoral referrals. As part of the emergency response, the sector also enhanced knowledge on partners presence, including in collective sites through a coordinated geographical division of labour for protection, Child Protection and GBV activities through the affected areas. The impact and higher demand for protection assistance is also evident in the increase of referrals to protection services across the quarters. While 15,000 referrals to Protection sector partners were made per quarter prior to the escalation in hostilities, in the last quarter of the year, there was a 20 per cent increase in referrals. Child Protection and Gender-based Violence sub-sectors also have dedicated tools to enhance access to life-saving services. Trainings to all humanitarian sectors were conducted in 2024 to enhance safe referrals for GBV referrals.

Mainstreaming activities: focus on gender, protection, conflict sensitivity and environment where applicable, provide insights into how these activities are integrated within your sector's operations.

The Protection sector together with the GBV and Child Protection sub-sectors supported protection mainstreaming across the sectors throughout the year. Sector coordinators provided regular feedback on protection issues and highlighted risks and gaps in services for different population groups. Key achievements this year included the training of over 2,100 sector staff on protection mainstreaming, the development of protection risk analysis and mitigation plans for all sectors as part of the 2025 LRP planning process, and the monitoring and analysis of protection issues with the collective sites through the site management monitoring tool. Risks for women and children have been raised by all Protection sector partners as well as limited access to specialized services. The monitoring identified where the sites met protection standards and where action was needed to ensure gender-segregated toilets, provide separate spaces for women and girls, provide information on services and feedback and complaint mechanisms, ensure accessibility and response mechanisms for Persons with Disabilities and limited mobility and ensuring protection desks or safe spaces. Further, to strengthen inclusive coordination and sector programs, a survey was undertaken to assess the sector's inclusion of persons with disabilities. Key areas of improvement were identified in the preparedness phases through engagement and participation of community-leaders as active participants in the sector coordination; on the systematic inclusion of persons with disabilities in all assessments and linked to that the publication of relevant studies.

Under the GBV sub-sector, efforts continued to work closely with a team of trained gender and GBV focal points across sectors. Gender analyses, tip sheets on gender mainstreaming and GBV risk mitigation as well as annual action plans have been established and were followed up by sectoral focal points.

Prioritization and Localization:

To respond to the escalation, the protection sector identified and implemented a package of prioritised emergency protection activities across all partners. Pre-existing funds were repurposed by the sector to respond to the emergency, and other non-emergency protection programming were deprioritised during the last quarter of the year.

A significant proportion of the protection sector partners were local civil society organisations, and the sector supported local partners to access available funding including during the escalation of hostilities. Protection sector partners worked closely with community-led organisations and networks to support their protection prevention and response initiatives. The sector also worked closely with national authorities to support their capacity to respond including the Ministry of Social Welfare, Civil Registration authorities and the General Security Office.

KEY CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE SECTOR TO LRP OUTCOME AND IMPACTS

The three Protection Sector Outcomes described below contribute to the LRP Strategic Objective 2, Enhance protection of the vulnerable populations. Enhance protection of the vulnerable populations, that in turn contributes to the impact that Vulnerable populations live in a safe, protective environment. Despite the significant achievements of the protection sector outlined above, 2024 saw a dramatic deterioration of the protection of Lebanese, Syrian other refugee and migrant people in the country due to armed conflict, the socio-economic situation in the country and the limitations in access to legal residency for Syrians and other refugees and migrants.

Outcome 1: Individuals at heightened risk from all affected populations in all their diversity, including age, gender, and disability, have their fundamental rights respected and have access to an effective justice and protection system.

The armed conflict impacted the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure throughout the year, particularly in the South with a dramatic escalation in September – the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah resulted in just over three times as many casualties and injured persons, a significant proportion of which were civilians, from mid-September to the end of the 2024, as there was since the start of hostilities to mid-September 2024⁵. At the height of the conflict an estimated 1 million IDPs were spread throughout the country and while the ceasefire in early December allowed almost 820,000 IDPs⁶ to start returning to their areas of origin, these returning IDP faced a wide range of protection and other challenges, including lack of adequate shelter, services and risks from unexploded ordinance and continued shooting and shelling⁷. Syrians IDPs faced particular challenges to return with only 64% of Syrians returning to their area of origin within Lebanon immediately following the ceasefire, compared to 82% of Lebanese⁸.

⁵ Lebanon: At a Glance - Escalation of hostilities in Lebanon, as of 09 January 2025

⁶ Lebanon Crisis | Displacement Tracking Matrix

⁷ Document - Lebanon: UNHCR - Protection Monitoring Findings - December 2024

⁸ Document - Lebanon: UNHCR - Protection Monitoring Findings - December 2024



Throughout 2024, Syrians, Palestinians and other refugees and migrants faced range of other protection issues. Only 18% of Syrians had legal residency prior to the escalation, down from 20% in 2023. Since 2015 Syrian refugees are unable to register as refugees with UNHCR, and in 2024 the General Security Office implemented additional regulations that increased financial and legal barriers for Syrians to renew their legal residency through UNHCR registration or access other forms of legal residency (for instance, through sponsorship, education or labour pathways). The increased cost of regularization (i.e. residence fees, penalties, mukhtar fees) also impacted Lebanon's migrant population. In addition, in May 2024, the authorities suspended renewal of legal residency for Palestine Refugees from Syria (PRS) leaving them without legal status in Lebanon. Refugees and migrants without legal residency faced heightened risks, including arrest and deportation, restricted movement, barriers to civil documentation, limited access to education, healthcare, and livelihoods, increased vulnerability to exploitation and forced eviction, as well as severe psychosocial distress. Syrians and Palestinians from Syria are only able to work in a limited number of sectors, leaving them, together with vulnerable migrants at risk of exploitative labour, particularly in the informal sector. Palestine Refugees from Lebanon face severe restrictions on the right to work as they are legally barred from practicing 39 professions, including fields such as law, medicine, and engineering, forcing them to rely on low-paying, informal, and precarious job, with families struggling to afford basic necessities. Syrians continued to face a range of restrictive measures including movement restrictions, checkpoint arrests, data collection, taxes and fees and limitations on rental agreements, although there was a 5% decrease in the number of reported measures in 2024 (compared to 2023). In 2024 Syrians faced a 37% increase in deportations, especially in December and a 78% increase in group evictions, although there was a 48% decrease in raids (compared to 2023). The % of households reporting curfews specifically imposed on Syrians in the area where they live continued to increase in 2024 to 10% (up from 2% in 2023).

The escalation in the conflict in September, while seeing a reduction in measures such as deportation, increased other risks – for instance, significant numbers of migrant domestic workers were left behind or locked up when their employers left the conflict areas, and 26 municipalities issues restrictions for Syrian IDPs to return within the country. Unequal access to services, particularly shelter for Syrians and migrants during the escalation, with collective sites being almost exclusively available for Lebanese IDPs and the authorities not authorizing the expansion of informal tented settlements or any other shelter options for Syrians, other refugees and migrants. These actions resulted from a trend that continued throughout 2024 of continuing social tensions between Lebanese and Syrian, with 41% reporting tensions, the most common source was competition for job (18% up from 15% in 2023) while there was a reduction in the % of Syrians reporting tensions due to political differences (3% in 2024 down from 12% in 2023). There was also increasing intra-communal tensions within the Lebanese communities.

Key policy, legal and capacity gaps in the national protective framework remained – including that a significant proportion of people in detention are arbitrarily detained. Survivors of gender-based violence, victims of trafficking, and vulnerable groups struggle to access legal remedies, contributing to underreporting and fear of seeking justice. Birth registration continues to be a complex and lengthy birth registration process with a reduction in the birth registration for Syrians to 50% registered at the Nafous level (compared to 55.6% in 2023) – and only 9% completed the entire process in 2024. The main barriers to birth registration were the costs as well as lack of awareness of the procedures. For

type of violent discipline. Prior to the escalation, 7% of Syrian children between the ages 5 to 17 years were engaged in child labor, with a significant difference between girls and boys, at 5% and 9% respectively. 17% of Syrian adolescent girls ages 15 to 19 were married at the time of the survey. According to protection actors, the escalation of the conflict increased the numbers of children engaged in child labour and affected by child marriage among the Syrians, but also reportedly among the other affected populations.

Outcome 2: Individuals at heightened risk from all affected populations in all their diversity, including age, gender, and disability, are safe, supported, and empowered in their community to contribute to positive change.

Prevention and behavior change programs were significantly impacted by the escalation of conflict and displacement in 2024. Programs refocused on life-saving interventions, including information on protection risks, access to critical services, provision of emergency case management services for those at heightened risk, support with cash-based interventions to prevent, mitigate or address protection risks as well as specialized assistance to persons with disability, older persons and those with other specific needs, including psychosocial and mental health needs. Safety and security constraints existing prior to the escalation increased for vulnerable population groups, including women and children, older persons, persons at risk, people with diverse Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC), and also those of non-Lebanese nationalities.

There was a slight reduction in Syrian peoples of all genders feeling of safety between 2022, 2023 and 2024 according to the annual refugee survey (VASyR). According to this survey, the main security concerns for women and girls continue to be verbal and sexual harassment as well as risks of kidnapping and being robbed. Women and girls in Beirut and Mount Lebanon (BML) report significant increased risk of kidnapping (BML: 9% of all girls raised this in 2023 and 19% in 2024 as well as 7% of all women in 2023 and 12% in 2024). In addition, BML, the South and El Nabatiyeh have particularly high rates of girls and women avoiding certain locations due to insecurity, reflecting both the overall security situation specific risks for women and girls in these areas. In addition, the GBV Safety audit showed increasing concerns around safety particularly for women, persons with disability and migrant women in public, private, and virtual spaces. The safety audit identified widespread and intersecting GBV risks exacerbated by compounded crises, with certain groups face greater risks due to their intersectional vulnerabilities and structural inequalities due to gender, legal status, social status and nationality. Unsafe locations include crowded areas, poorly lit streets, agricultural sites and pathways, and public transportation. Displacement centers and informal settlements pose significant risks due to overcrowding and lack of privacy. Community members, especially women and girls, also reported diminished safety during nighttime. This limitation on mobility heightens isolation and restricts access to essential services and opportunities. Homes were largely identified as a paradoxical space in terms of safety. While homes are reportedly perceived as a refuge, they were also identified as the primary site for interpersonal and family violence, as well as sexual violence. Overcrowded homes shared by multiple families exacerbate these risks. Intimate partner violence (IPV) and Family Violence remain the most pervasive GBV types in Lebanon, further intensified by economic hardship, displacement, and entrenched gender norms affecting mostly women and girls. Sexual violence is another prevalent form of GBV, encompassing rape, sexual assault, and harassment, which occur frequently in public spaces, workplaces, displacement centers, and transportation hubs.



Refugee and displaced women in camps or shelters report alarmingly high levels of sexual violence. Vulnerable groups, such as adolescent girls and women with disabilities, are at heightened risk of exploitation, especially when confined and isolated within their homes.

Technology-Facilitated GBV (TFGBV), such as online harassment, stalking, and digital blackmail through social media tools were also on the rise, and adolescent girls, female migrant workers, and public-facing women were disproportionately targeted. The lack of digital literacy and awareness about reporting mechanisms compounds these risks. As a result of a high-profile case of severe child sexual abuse through a trafficking ring through TikTok GBV and child protection actors enhanced prevention programmes for child online sexual exploitation. Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) risks were reported in humanitarian aid contexts, with marginalized groups such as adolescent girls and undocumented refugees being most vulnerable. Coercion into sexual acts in exchange for aid is exacerbated by power imbalances and underreporting due to stigma and dependency.

To address these issues and other protection issues, engagement with the community, information sharing and awareness on risks and access to services was a key priority of the sector in 2024, particularly during the emergency. Protection and other sectors also provided trainings on Psychological First Aid, reporting mechanisms and PSEA. Data from the VASyR indicates an increase in the total number of households that have filed a complaint up from 31% in 2023 to 38% in 2024.

With the significant increase in humanitarian needs in 2024, the percentage of Syrians who reported receiving humanitarian aid reduced significantly from 63% in 2023 to only 40% in 2024. However, among those who received aid there was a remarkable 80 per cent level of satisfaction with the aid received. There was also a decrease of number of households worrying about exploitation when accessing services across male and female respondents from 2023 (highest in the south followed by Akkar and the North and lowest in Mount Lebanon and Baalbek El-Hermel). While still high, the percentage of households satisfaction with the behavior of aid workers has reduced from 87% in 2022 to 79% in 2024, indicating need to scale up Code of Conduct and Accountability to Affected Population (AAP) refresher trainings. Communities indicate that the main reasons for their dissatisfaction are lack of change to community feedback, agencies mainly using local leaders and men as respondents in surveys and feedback mechanisms and limited reach to community members of more marginalized groups.

Outcome 3: Individuals from all affected populations in all their diversity, including age, gender, and disability at heightened risk have safe, inclusive, and targeted access to specialized protection services and are resilient to shocks.

The escalation of hostilities had a significant impact on the overall safe access to services, including protection services. Response services, including case management coupled with cash assistance as well as specialized support for persons with disability and older persons were prioritized throughout the year and particularly during the significant escalation of conflict in the last quarter. Cash interventions across sectors were re-focused to support those at heightened risk and most affected by displacement. Due to the deterioration of the security situation, the implementation of face-to-face services and client satisfaction surveys for case management services was often not possible. These will be reestablished in 2025, including for those survivors of GBV who received services during the last quarter.

The Protection Sector enhanced its cross-population reach through diverse tools of different actors. The National Call Center and partner-managed hotline systems were adopted to include different population groups and information material was adopted

to the needs of Lebanese and migrants.

Eligibility criteria and prioritization criteria for cash assistance was revised to meet the needs of newly displaced persons especially those unable to ensure their basic needs are met and those who were unable to access collective shelters. Partners also amended the modalities for cash assistance in hard-to-reach areas ensuring safe access to cash assistance. Despite the challenges and risks, 90% felt safe when receiving assistance and 98% didn't not perceive or experience any harm as a result of receiving cash.

CHALLENGES, RISKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The Protection sector faced a number of key difficulties this year. Below these issues are outlined along with the key mitigating measures and/or lessons learnt.

1. Rapid, repeated displacements. The displacement of hundreds of thousands of IDPs and their return back to their area of origin, together with the new arrivals from Syria at the end of the year, made it difficult for Protection sector partners to adapt and readapt the geographical location of their programming. This movements create particular difficulties due to the large number of partners, the displacement of staff members, the complex geographical division of labour and the nature of protection activities that require significant trust and community connections to effectively function. The Protection sector partners did rapidly respond to IDPs within collective sites but struggled to adequately respond to displaced persons displaced within the community. The Protection sector rapidly developed a core set of emergency protection activities will help to harmonise the response across partners but the information management tools that had been developed for the stable refugee response where not adapted to allow rapid tracking of partners geographically shifting programming, hence making it difficult to identify protection programming and gaps. Simplification and streamlining of the information management tools will be a priority in 2025 to make these tools more nimble and able to inform geographical programming priorities in real time.

2. Protection space and systems strengthening. The limited protection space for refugees and migrants hindered longer term work to develop more sustainable inclusive protection programming. In addition, promising longer term development initiatives, such as the implementation of the Standards for Safe Shelters for GBV survivors, were largely put on hold due to the escalation of the conflict. The judicial system was affected by lack of payment for judicial authorities prior to the escalation, and was seriously disrupted during the escalation, further limiting access to legal remedies for affected people. In 2025, Protection sector partners will have a renewed focus on strengthening protection systems, including the social, judicial and civil registration systems, particularly in light of the new opportunities for reform that may be presented by the new government.

3. Limited predictable and long-term funding for the sector: At the end of the third quarter (prior to the escalation) the Protection sector was only 32 per cent funded, some of which had to be reallocated to respond to the conflict in the South, thus leaving limited funding for the rest of the response. As a result, when the escalation occurred, most protection organized further reallocated existing funding to the emergency response, further stretching the financial and staffing capacity to respond at scale. This flexibility allowed Protection sector partners to rapidly respond to the emergency but did require difficult prioritization of activities and locations leaving some populations unreached. In 2025, geographical prioritization is being undertaken by the Protection sector partners in order to ensure that the most vulnerable populations are reached with protection services and ensure an equitable approach.



CASE STUDY

Title: "Community Resilience in Crisis: The Role of Outreach Volunteers in Responding to GBV During the Hostilities in South Lebanon"

Theme: GBV Response

Author: INTERSOS

With the escalation of hostilities in South Lebanon, thousands of individuals—especially women and girls—found themselves at increased risk of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). The ongoing conflict led to displacement, loss of livelihoods, and restricted access to essential services, creating an urgent need for localized, community-driven support.

Recognizing the importance of trusted community networks, INTERSOS strengthened its **Outreach Volunteers (OVs)** program to serve as the frontline responders within their communities. This case study highlights how OVs effectively mitigated protection risks, provided life-saving information, and supported individuals facing heightened GBV risks during the crisis.

In the early days of the escalation, through FGDs with displaced families, the **OVs identified key protection concerns** in Nabatiyeh and Tyre districts. Women expressing fear of harassment in overcrowded displacement shelters, and adolescent girls facing early marriage pressures due to economic instability. Additionally, there was limited knowledge of GBV services available. In response, OVs coordinated with INTERSOS caseworkers to prioritize interventions for those at the highest risk.

To increase the community's awareness, OVs conducted **door-to-door awareness sessions**, ensuring women and girls received vital information about available GBV support services and self-protection strategies. The activity was implemented with careful consideration due to sensitivity during the hostilities. In one instance, an OV in Saida visited displaced families. She shared information about INTERSOS' remote counseling services and distributed referral cards. A young mother who had been facing domestic violence, later reached out for support via the provided contact details, leading to timely intervention.

Given the limited access to formal service providers in some areas, OVs' role is vital in the **community-based referral pathways** to ensure survivors could seek help confidentially. In Marjaayoun, an OV was approached by a young woman who faced verbal abuse from a host family. Through her knowledge of safe referral processes, she connected her with an INTERSOS caseworker who provided remote counseling and linked her to cash assistance to secure alternative housing.

Beyond referrals, OVs played a crucial role in **providing emotional support**, particularly to displaced women struggling with stress and anxiety due to the hostilities. Using Psychological First Aid (PFA) techniques, OVs helped individuals cope with distress and regain a sense of control. For example, the OVs in Chebaa conducted informal support circles in their homes, allowing women to share their concerns and fears in a safe space. These sessions helped reduce feelings of isolation and provided women with coping strategies.

Recognizing the role of men and boys in addressing GBV, OVs organized **small-scale awareness sessions** tailored for male community members, emphasizing their responsibility to foster a protective environment and reduce harmful gender norms. In Jezzine, a male OV facilitated discussions among displaced male community members on how to support their families, recognize signs of stress and trauma among women and children, and ensure privacy and confidentiality inside Collective Shelters.

It is evident that strengthening community-led protection mechanisms is the key to fostering safer environments for women and girls.

3W Map at Governorate level

Protection Partners (71)

ACF Spain, AICA, Al Fayhaa, AMEL, AND, ANERA, ARCPA, AVSI, Beit el Baraka, CARE, Caritas Lebanon, CESVI, Common Space for All, CONCERN, DRC, Embrace, FEMALE, FISTA, Handicap International, HelpAge, Himaya, Imam Sadr Foundation, IMC, Intersos, IOCC Lebanon, IOM, IRC, ISWA, KAFA, Key of Life, Lebanese Social Responsibility - LSR, LECORVAW, LOST, Madanyat, Magna Lebanon, Makhzoumi, MECC, Michel Daher Social Foundation - MDSF, Migration Services and Development - MSD, MMKN, Mouvement Social, Naba'a, Nabad, Near East Foundation, NRC, Organization Nationale de Développement Economique et Social - Ondes, OXFAM, Plan International, PU-AMI, RDFL, RI, Right to Play, RMF, Sama for development - SFDO, Sawa Association, SAWA Group, SCI, SEEDS For Legal Initiatives, Seenaryo, SHEILD, SIF, SKOUN, Tabitha-Dorcas, TdH-It, TdH-L, UNHCR, URDA, USJ, War Child Holland - WCH, WRF, WVI

Source: Sector reporting partners on ActivityInfo.

