

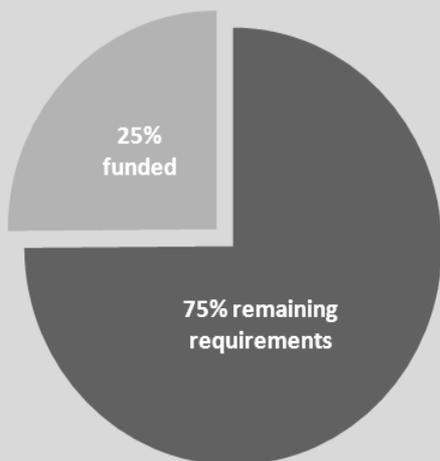
Core Relief Items (CRI) Update February 2014

Key figures

945,461	Individuals registered or pending registration
35%	refugees targeted for winterization assistance supported by UNHCR's programme
15%	refugees targeted for UNHCR's newcomer assistance

Funding

UNHCR requirements 2014: USD 468 m



CRI requirements: USD 61 m

February developments

- Over 7,750 additional refugees received blankets, stoves and fuel from UNHCR's winterization programme during February reaching a total of 280,250 people.
- Solidar Suisse, SCI and UNHCR Zahle Field Office, provided 5,275 new arrivals in Saida, Akkar and Bekaa with newcomer assistance including kitchen sets, blankets, mattresses, buckets, jerry cans, hygiene kits and baby sets.

Achievements: January - February

Activity	reached February	March Target	December 2014 Target
Refugees supported with cash for winter fuel, through ATM cards or fuel vouchers	280,250*	311,000	-
Refugees supported with high thermal blankets or quilts	269,700*	311,000	-
Refugees supported with heating stoves (in-kind)	67,765*	75,000	-
Newcomer assistance	11,185		96,780

* Figures are since November 2013 (winterization 2013-2014 programme)

Needs

Winterization: During the winter, refugees are in need of items to protect against the cold, including blankets, heating stoves and fuel for five months (November – March). This is particularly true for refugees living in informal settlements, or in substandard dwellings that do not provide adequate protection against the winter weather.

Newcomer Assistance: In addition, over 90% of refugees have neither basic household items nor the means to purchase them upon arrival. These items include blankets, mattresses, kitchen sets, water storage containers, as well as hygiene and baby items.



Refugees in Aarsal receiving core relief items.
@UNHCR/ A. McConnell

Challenges

Dispersed refugee population:

Refugees live in over 1,600 locations in Lebanon. This presents obstacles for the distribution of CRI to those in need. This increases logistics costs and also makes it difficult to conduct quality needs assessment and tailor assistance according to needs, as well as on the gender and age composition of the family. It is especially difficult to find and provide support to newcomers in order to ensure they receive basic items.

Poor infrastructure, weather and insecurity:

Given the dispersed refugee population and the large number of refugees, distribution of CRIs requires the coordinated procurement, transportation, storage and distribution of items. Challenges to distribution include the limited warehouse capacity in Lebanon, poor transport infrastructure, and lack of suitable public facilities for use as distribution sites. In addition, severe weather conditions during the winter have delayed some deliveries and security problems – especially in Tripoli and Bekaa, which can lead to the suspension of distribution.

Strategy

UNHCR's strategy is to provide support to refugees – both registered and unregistered – when they are at their most vulnerable, during the cold winter months, and upon their arrival in Lebanon.

Winterization:

Over half a million refugees (and Lebanese returnees and vulnerable host community families) need assistance during the 2013/2014 winter. They were targeted based on their vulnerability, the severity of the weather in their locations, the quality of their shelters, or other special needs they may have.

Newcomer Assistance:

UNHCR has assumed the role of 'provider of last resort' to the newcomer programme implemented through a dozen agencies with independent funding. When they do not have the resources to support the newcomers in their area of responsibility, or a sudden emergency occurs, UNHCR steps in to provide refugees who arrived in the past month (or earlier, if they were missed), with a standardized package of essential items.

Emergency Stocks:

The capacity to respond to a sudden increase in new arrivals needs to be maintained through 2014. Supplies of CRI therefore need to be regularly replenished, and more warehouse capacity is still needed, especially in North Lebanon.

Use of a new assistance modality – CASH via ATM card:

UNHCR introduced the use of cash assistance via ATM card in lieu of in-kind assistance for the 2013 winterization programme. Based upon vulnerability criteria agreed with inter-agency partners, UNHCR targeted over 58,500 registered refugee households to receive ATM cards to provide cash-for-fuel and stoves by the end of February 2014, reducing costs related to distribution and increasing the autonomy of refugees to use assistance as they deem best. In 2014, UNHCR will continue with CASH via ATM card to monetize some forms of assistance, but it will not replace distribution of all CRI. UNHCR will also upscale outreach and market monitoring to gauge the impact of cash assistance on refugees and hosting communities.

UNHCR implementing partners

ACTED; Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center (CLMC); CISP; Danish Refugee Council (DRC); Makhzoumi Foundation; Save the Children International (SCI); Social Humanitarian Economical Intervention for Local Development (SHEILD); Solidar Suisse; World Vision International (WVI).