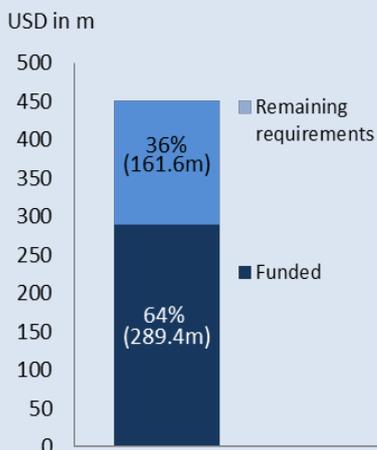


Key Figures

1,158,995	individuals registered or pending registration
39%	persons with specific needs

Funding

UNHCR total requirements: USD 451 m



December developments

Access to territory and timely registration

- Following a tightening of entry restriction since summer 2014 onwards, a reduction of refugee admissions has been observed leading to a decrease of requests for registration appointments and consequently to lower numbers of registrations of Syrian refugees. Requests for new registration appointments were at 66,700 per month in January and had decreased to 18,600 by December 2014. The number of Syrians registered per month decreased from an average of 52,300 in January to 13,400 in December. Nonetheless, throughout the year, the number of Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR in Lebanon increased by 42 per cent reaching above 1.1 million by the end of December 2014. Registration of Iraqi refugees increased in the second half of the year, with over five times as many refugee registered per month in December than in January 2014 as a result of increased violence in Iraq. The total number of registered Iraqi refugees in Lebanon reached 14,550 by end December.

Protection needs identified and addressed

- The regularization scheme allowing all Syrian refugees without legal stay to regularize their residency without paying the usual fines and fees ended on 31 December 2014. In view of the approaching deadline, Syrians continued to approach General Security Offices (GSO) in great numbers. Together with protection partners, Refugee Outreach Volunteers (ROVs) and Protection Monitors, UNHCR informed and assisted refugees in regularizing their status through awareness raising sessions and individual counselling, reaching some 35,000 by year end. The benefits of regularization include greater freedom of movement, access to services and recourse to administrative procedures such as birth registration.
- A total of 2,566 refugees were reached through protection monitoring visits in December, out of which 206 persons with specific needs for assistance in winterization, shelter and unconditional cash were identified and referred to partners to receive the required support. Protection monitoring visits allow UNHCR and partners to identify vulnerable refugees and gaps in assistance which are then followed up on a local or central level. In 2014, the total number of refugees reached through protection monitoring visits reached 54,839.
- 58 detention visits were conducted by UNHCR and AJEM during December, bringing the annual total to 4,009. This corresponds to an average of 360 Persons of Concern per month who are being registered, and provided with legal, medical and psychosocial assistance in detention.

Durable solutions made available

- UNHCR met the overall submission and departure targets for 2014 with a total of 9,181 submitted and 6,289 departed.
- 333 non-Syrians were submitted in December, bringing the annual total to 1,866 persons for 2014.
- 57 Syrians were submitted in December, bringing the annual total to 7,315 for 2014.
- At the end of 2014, pledges have been received for the resettlement of approximately 2,500 Syrians.

Achievements: January – December Needs

Activity	reached Jan- Dec	2014 Target
Persons interviewed at the border	11,118	8,000
Persons registered (and pending registration)	441,677	467,500 ¹
Monitoring visits	54,839	50,000
Legal counseling	18,135	11,400
Detention visits	4,009	3,000
Persons submitted for HAP and resettlement*	9,181	8,900
Departures (HAP and resettlement)*	6,289	5,900

Refugees fleeing violence in Syria often undertake perilous journeys through conflict-affected areas. Some of them are forced to resort to unofficial border crossings. Upon arrival in Lebanon, prompt registration and documentation remain priority to ensure access to services, relief assistance, and effective protection interventions.

Challenges

Lack of legal or administrative refugee framework: Lebanon is not a state party to the 1951 Convention or its 1967 Protocol and it does not have specific legislation or administrative practices for refugees and asylum-seekers. As such, refugees lack domestic legal safeguards beyond those applying to foreigners.

Irregular legal status: An average of 13% of registered refugees have entered through unofficial border crossings and are not able to pay the prohibitive regularization fees. In addition, those who have entered through official crossings have difficulties meeting the residency renewal fees. UNHCR continues to advocate for the waiver of such fees.²

Dispersed refugee population: Refugees live in over 1,750 different locations in Lebanon making protection monitoring and information dissemination challenging. Compounded upon this, restrictions on freedom of movement due to security checkpoints, curfews and lack of identification expose refugees to myriad vulnerabilities.

Lack of civil status documentation: Many refugees lack civil status documentation. Lack of documents can create obstacles for refugees in accessing basic services like healthcare and education, and in obtaining other critical documentation, such as birth registration.

Physical safety and security and limited access to justice: The overall security situation in locations such as the Bekaa and northern Akkar, conflict-prone neighborhoods in Tripoli, and tensions in some villages, places the physical safety of refugees at risk. Solutions remain limited due to the lack of relocation alternatives as well as lack of access to justice, particularly for those considered irregularly present in Lebanon.

Strategy

UNHCR's protection strategy addresses key challenges and priority concerns of refugees including:

- Ensuring access to territory and reducing the risk of *refoulement*,
- Ensuring timely registration and adequate reception conditions,
- Preventing, monitoring and addressing protection violations,
- Providing access to legal services and civil status documentation to ensure the rights of refugees are respected, and
- Ensuring durable and humanitarian solutions are made available.



The widow Faten and her four children came from Aleppo to Lebanon by foot. At the time, she was pregnant with her youngest son. The psychological, material and medical support she and her children received from UNHCR and Intersos helped them to survive, but so much more is needed to give them back only a fraction of what they lost /UNHCR/D.Khamissy/2014

UNHCR implementing partners

Association Justice et Miséricorde (AJEM), Caritas Lebanon Migrants Center (CMLC), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), International Relief and Development (IRD), International Rescue Committee (IRC), INTERSOS, Makhzoumi Foundation, Mercy Corps, Ministry of Interior and Municipalities(MOIM), Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Oxfam, and Social, Humanitarian, Economical Intervention For Local Development (SHEILD).

¹ 2014 projections were revised in October and decreased from the original estimate of 630,000 to 467,500 based on actual registrations to date and changes in the operational context, mainly the restrictions at the border since August.

² This applies to those whose status became irregular after 21 August 2014, either as a result of entering through unofficial border crossings or of the expiry of their residency.