

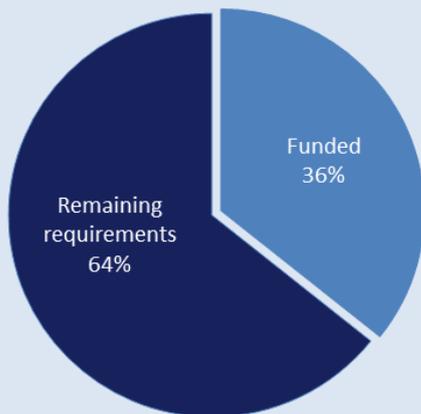
Key figures

1,119,585 individuals registered or pending registration

38% persons with specific needs

Funding

UNHCR total requirements: USD 468 m



Protection requirements: USD 106 m

A family of Syrian refugees take shelter in the ground floor of a house in Chebaa, Lebanon @UNHCR / A. McConnell



June developments

Access to territory and timely registration

- The Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MOIM) on 31 May publically announced that all Syrian refugees who go back to Syria should no longer be considered refugees by the Government of Lebanon. UNHCR informed refugees of the government's decision. It reiterated its commitment to working with the government to ensure civilians facing persecution or generalized violence will continue to have access to Lebanon. The borders remained relatively calm on 3 June, the day of the Syrian Presidential election.
- 42,323 Syrian refugees were registered in May. The average waiting time for registration in decreased by one day to 28 days.
- Over 48,850 refugees approached UNHCR for verification and renewal of their registration certificates. To date, approximately 47,000 individuals have been inactivated through the renewal-verification exercise.
- 30% of refugees surveyed lacked or had expired residency permits, a 5% increase from May.

Protection violations prevented, monitored and addressed

- Protection monitoring partners IRC, Mercy Corps, DRC Intersos and Oxfam met with 2,527 individuals in 177 different locations. Issues highlighted include increased inter-community tensions, including, due to water scarcity and an increase in employers withholding wages from refugee employees and requests for work permits, including for daily labour.
- UNHCR supported a security sector analysis entitled 'Policing the Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon: Policies, Procedures and Prescriptions' identifying needs and recommendations for the ISF and municipal police in responding to the refugee crisis. The findings are being reviewed before presentation to MOIM.

Access to legal services and civil status documentation enhanced

- 158 refugees (97% Syrian nationals) arrested were referred to UNHCR. 18% of the individuals were referred solely for reasons related to illegal entry and stay.
- In June, 53 detention visits were carried out by UNHCR and partners, reaching 361 individuals in total. 112 individuals received legal counselling and 168 received medical and psychosocial assistance. At the end of June, 358 asylum seekers and refugees were detained in different prisons in Lebanon.
- 1,604 persons were provided legal counselling by UNHCR and partners and 41 persons with legal representation before the courts on matters of personal status, including custody documents and marriage registration.
- 6,373 individuals attended legal information session primarily focused on marriage and birth registration.

Durable solutions made available

- In June, 606 refugees were submitted to third countries for resettlement or humanitarian admission and 962 departed, including 539 to Germany. These are the highest numbers since the beginning of the year.
- A delegation from the Netherlands arrived at the end of the month to interview 125 Syrians for resettlement.

Achievements: January - June

Activity	 reached January-June	 2014 Target
Persons interviewed at the border	2,574	8,000
Persons registered (or pending registration)	279,571	600,000
Monitoring visits	12,921	50,000
Legal counseling	6,346	11,400
Detention visits	1612	3,000
Persons submitted for HAP and resettlement*	3,022	8,400
Departures (HAP and resettlement)*	3,774	5,900

*Includes Syrian and cases of other nationalities

mistreatment, evictions, secondary displacements and other protection incidents. Lack of legal representation, awareness and irregular legal status complicate access to justice and remedies for these and other rights violations.

Challenges

Lack of legal or administrative refugee framework:

Lebanon is not a state party to the 1951 Convention or to its 1967 Protocol nor does it have specific legislation or administrative practices for refugees and asylum-seekers. As such, refugees lack safeguards beyond the domestic law applying to other foreigners.

Irregular legal status:

An average of 13% of registered refugees enter through unofficial border crossings and are not recognized as legally present in Lebanon. In addition, the vast majority of refugees are unable to pay the often prohibitive residency renewal fees at the expiry of 12 months. Based on a legal decree that exempts Syrians from paying these fees, discussions are ongoing with the Government of Lebanon.

Dispersed refugee population:

Refugees live in over 1,700 different locations in Lebanon making protection monitoring and information dissemination critical to address protection incidents and ensure access to registration and essential services. Restrictions on freedom of movement due to security checkpoints, curfews, distance and lack of documentation also present serious challenges.

Lack of civil status documentation:

Many refugees lack civil status documentation. Worn out documentation can cause delays or rejections at the border, and sometimes, separation of family members. 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. The inability to register births may put refugees at a heightened risk of statelessness and increase vulnerability of individuals to exploitation and trafficking.

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 of violence. Solutions remain limited due to the lack of shelter or 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.

Needs

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

Refugees who entered through unofficial border crossings or who are unable to renew their residency are not recognized as legally present in Lebanon. The consequences of irregular legal status can be vast, not least relating to risks of arrest and detention, severe limitations on freedom of movement, limited access to livelihoods/employment, risks of exploitation, civil registration and problematic access to essential services, including birth registration.

Physical safety remains an issue of concern, particularly in communities affected at times by shelling or shootings from Syria. Refugees and members of the host community have been exposed to threats, physical

UNHCR implementing partners

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