

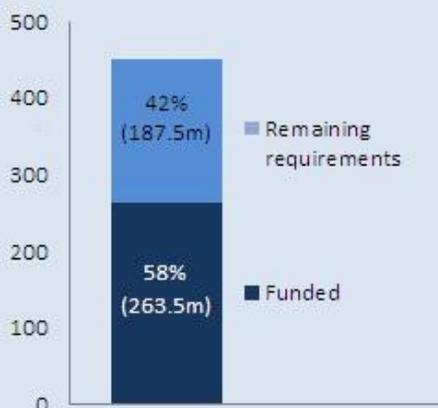
Community Development Update September 2014

Key Figures

1,164,004	individuals registered or pending registration
80%	of refugees are women and children
39%	of women and girl refugees have specific needs
25%	of children are at risk

Funding

UNHCR total requirements 2014: USD 451m



September developments

Community empowerment

- Over 2,300 families were referred this month by 396 Refugee Outreach Volunteers (ROVs) to UNHCR and partners for assessment and support.
- Refugee concerns and questions received by ROVs this month related to the recent regularization of legal status and border restrictions. Increased numbers of evictions of refugees in the Bekaa and the North were also reported.
- Countrywide, 28,000 refugees and Lebanese participated in educational, recreational and life-skills development activities or benefitted from psychosocial support offered by UNHCR and partners.
- More than 12,000 individuals received basic counselling and referral to existing services through MOSA Social Development Centres (SDCs).
- A countrywide assessment of 28 UNHCR-supported community centres was conducted, indicating high levels of satisfaction among beneficiaries regarding centre activities and programmes for refugees and Lebanese host-communities. UNHCR is addressing gaps noted at the level of management committees, refugee structures, and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.

Case management

- 284 refugees received one-time cash assistance this month for urgent protection-related needs. 183 of them are living in the South, 30 in Qobayat, 53 in Beirut / Mount Lebanon, and 18 in the Bekaa. 2,367 persons have received such assistance since beginning 2014.

Self-reliance

- 325 persons (30% Lebanese) benefitted from vocational trainings, and entrepreneurship training, such as business development training.
- 101 persons (30% Lebanese) received training on wage-earning employment.

Achievements: January – September

Activity	Reached January - September	2014 Target
Specific needs cases referred through volunteers	46,500	75,000
Life-skills and vocational training provided	43,629	30,030
Refugee outreach volunteers mobilized	396	750
Community centres established	28	50

Needs

Shelter, healthcare, education and self-reliance are among the main needs voiced by Syrian refugees. At the same time, each sub-group of the refugee population faces different protection risks related to their specific needs. Various assessments to date indicate a strong correlation between protection risks and limited self-reliance opportunities e.g. working children, survival sex, early marriage, etc. According to UNHCR's *Women Alone* report issued in July 2014, many of the challenges faced by female-headed households stem from their increasing economic distress. The report further highlighted the need to build on refugee women's skills and to counter isolation by expanding the network of community centers and safe spaces. A UNFPA assessment on Syrian youth (15-24 year-olds) showed that 89% described themselves as depressed, anxious or afraid most of the time. Youth considered unemployment and security conditions as negatively affecting their psychological status and their propensity to violence, as well as their gender relations within households.

Persons living with disabilities have low self-esteem, feel unproductive and are finding it difficult to integrate in their communities. Older persons expressed feelings of isolation, neglect and of being a burden on their families. With a dispersed Syrian population and limited capacities, UNHCR is exploring innovative ways to reach out and timely identify needs, risks and priorities, as well as to engage and support refugees in offering solutions.



Challenges

Dispersed refugee population: With the widespread dispersal of refugees in over 1,750 locations throughout Lebanon, there is a need to build on existing outreach and support initiatives to prevent and respond to the immense scale of protection risks.

Increasing tensions: Pressure on services and increasing economic competition threaten the wellbeing of both refugees and vulnerable Lebanese. Diminishing salaries and opportunities linked to an increasing workforce have brought about tensions and restrictive government policies regarding livelihood programmes for Syrians. The imposition of curfews in a growing number of local villages and a recent spate of evictions of refugees from informal settlements are testament to rising tensions.

Overstretched social services and limited job opportunities: According to a livelihood assessment of the ILO, 30% of the refugees are unemployed and 88% of the employed are unskilled or semi-skilled labourers, paid 40% less than the minimum wage in Lebanon, with an average salary of 277 USD per month. Female Syrian workers earn 30% less than male workers, with an average salary of 165 USD per month.

Strategy

To effectively address vulnerabilities and safeguard protection space for refugees, UNHCR's strategic priorities are:

- Assist refugees at risk to access basic services;
- Strengthen outreach to refugees and host communities;
- Empower and promote self-management in communities;
- Increase self-reliance opportunities;
- Strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Development Centres.

UNHCR implementing partners

Amel Association, Caritas Lebanon Migrants Center (CMLC), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), INTERSOS, International Alert, International Rescue Committee (IRC), Makhzoumi Foundation, Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA), Restart Centre for Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence and Torture, Right to Play, Search for Common Ground (SFCG), Social, Humanitarian, Economical Intervention for Local Development (SHEILD), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).