

Key Figures

1,132,849 individuals registered or pending registration

39% persons with specific needs

Funding

UNHCR total requirements: USD 451 m



Syrian refugees with an aid worker in a tented settlement in Ghazze, Lebanon @UNHCR/S. Baldwin

October developments

Access to territory and timely registration

- Admission at the borders remained heavily restrictive for Syrians, resulting in an overall reduction of refugee admissions. While authorities have not publicly shared the basis for admissibility, reports indicate those considered economically self-sufficient are more likely to be granted access. As a result, Syrian nationals fleeing in need of international protection may not be allowed to enter. UNHCR maintains a presence at the borders to observe and assist individual cases.
- UNHCR registered 17,660 individuals this month. The number of new appointments for registration decreased by 60% to 9,699, mainly due to restrictions at the border and high no show rate related to the security situation in Aarsal.

Protection violations prevented, monitored and addressed

- Following relative calm in the first week of October, the security situation in the north deteriorated following a number of armed incidents and attacks against LAF. Clashes in Tripoli caused temporary displacement of an estimated 20,000 Lebanese, as well as refugees in more than 8 informal settlements. By the end of the month, most residents had returned or relocated to other informal settlements.
- 570 persons were evicted by security forces in October, including 450 persons evicted from one informal settlement in the Tripoli (Bhanin). Most evictees relocated to other locations in Bhanin or different areas of Minnieh and Akkar. This was a significant reduction from the 3,855 persons evicted by security forces in 23 separate events in September. Through field-based eviction committees, UNHCR and partners continue to address the needs of the most vulnerable refugees and mediate with landlords and municipalities.
- IRC, Mercy Corps and Intersos visited over 6,000 refugees in 700 locations and referred 376 persons with specific needs for assistance. This month, partners focused on awareness of the regularization policy and challenges to access. As a result, UNHCR jointly with partners increased the number of awareness sessions and is discussing with the authorities the support required to facilitate the regularization process. Partners also focused on security raids in informal settlements and evictions and made referrals for WASH interventions in underserved areas and school placement following the circulars of the Ministry of Education.

Access to legal services and civil status documentation enhanced

- UNHCR and partners monitored 427 Syrian refugees in detention across Lebanon, an 8% increase from September. Of these, 87 Syrians were detained solely on the basis of their irregular status, a 19% increase from last month. UNHCR received referrals of 410 Syrians for short-term arrest in October. 67 detention visits were carried out by UNHCR and partners, reaching out to 269 individuals for legal counseling, release requests and 92 received psychosocial and medical assistance.
- Individual legal counseling was provided to 3,125 persons on regularization of legal status, birth registration. 4,508 individuals took part in legal awareness sessions mainly on the regularization process, as well as marriage and birth registration. As a result, refugees were able to complete administrative procedures, like birth registration, and better access services or make better informed legal decisions. Counselling on birth registration has contributed to an increase in the number of birth registered by 15% since the end of last year.

Durable solutions made available

- A total of 1,189 Syrians were submitted for resettlement in October, with a total number of 7,207 Syrians submitted in 2014 and reaching yearly targets. A total of 289 non-Syrians were submitted, bringing the total submissions for 2014 to 1,468 persons. 368 persons departed Lebanon to resettlement/HAP countries, bringing the total departure number for 2014 to 5,398 persons.

Achievements: January – October

Activity	 reached January-October	 2014 Target
Persons interviewed at the border	9,386	8,000
Persons registered (or pending registration)	398,289	600,000
Monitoring visits	36,721	50,000
Legal counseling	15,533	11,400
Detention visits	2,722	3,000
Persons submitted for HAP and resettlement*	8,670	8,400
Departures (HAP and resettlement)*	5,398	5,900

*Includes Syrian and other nationalities

Needs

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 nor to 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.

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 a myriad of vulnerabilities.

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.

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 Social Affairs (MOSA), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Oxfam, and Social, Humanitarian, Economical Intervention For Local Development (SHEILD).