



SITUATION ANALYSIS

In April, implementation of the Ministry of Social Affairs' National Plan to Safeguard Children and Women in Lebanon began, with the endorsement of 31 local development action plans outlining implementation of prevention and response activities delivered through Social Development Centres (SDC). Multiple services aimed at mitigating risk and harm to children, and supporting parents and families will be implemented in 57 SDCs by the end of 2015 as part of the National Plan.

Child marriage and child labour continued to be raised as issues within sub-national child protection working groups. Reports in the media revealing identities and photographs of children working on the streets in Beirut resulted in harmful consequences. Child protection actors are working to improve communication on services available to support these children and their families, and meanwhile encourage the public and media to think twice before sharing and publishing revealing information that may cause unintended harm. Referrals for street children in need in Beirut and Mount Lebanon can be made to +961.76.074.941. The number can also be distributed to children.

Child protection and sexual- and gender-based violence actors are planning a joint initiative on child marriage. Child protection takes an ecological approach to this issue that involves empowering adolescents girls' and boys' and engaging the family, and community members in prevention, behaviour and social norms change, and response work. The two sectors collaborate in coming months on systematic evidence generation, communication, advocacy, and response work where a joint mapping exercise was agreed upon as a first step.

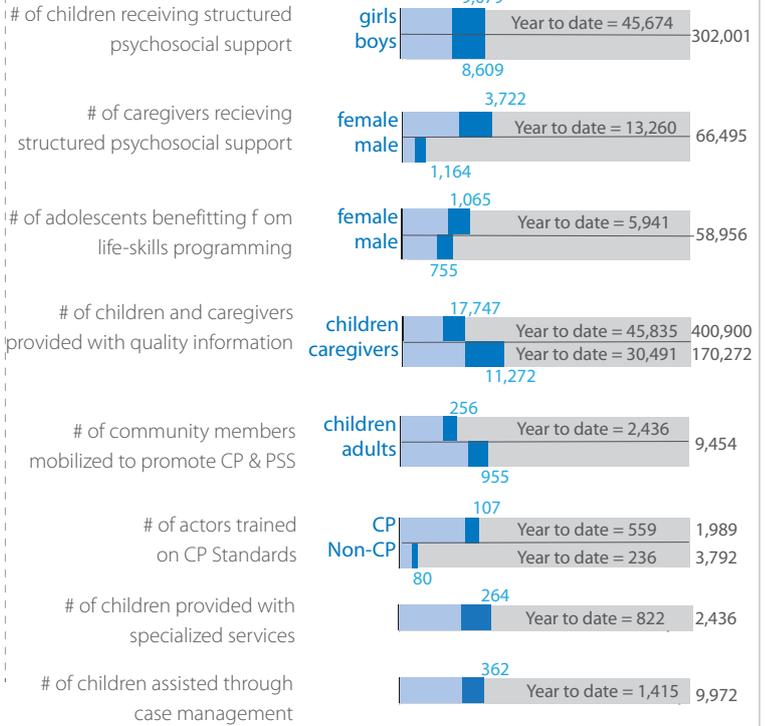
Lastly, the sector decided in April to undertake a contextualization process of the Child Protection Minimum Standards, the sphere companion for child protection. The process will be carried out over 4-5 months and involves adapting selected standards from their global guidance form, including terminology, indicators, and targets, to better suit the Lebanon context. These will be published and launched, and used to inform programming and planning, standardizing indicators and targets, support capacity building in thematic and technical areas, and contribute to advocacy and fundraising efforts.



PROGRESS AGAINST 2015 TARGETS

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Given that adolescent refugee girls are most exposed to risks of SGBV, 7,136 adolescents participated in structured discussions on the various types of violence they may be at risk of, how to protect themselves against these risks, and sexual and reproductive health. These sessions also helped them to build their self-esteem, gain confidence and feel less isolated. As one girl recalls, "We didn't expect this activity to be as interesting as it is. It includes important information, it is fun, we made new friends and are surrounded by love and care from our girl group and the staff. It has raised our confidence".

While several partners offer services for adolescent unmarried girls and adult married women, services available for young married girls are currently lacking. Married girls feel increasingly isolated due to social stigma attached to their status, including within their own family. The lack of registration of marriages leaves adolescent girls further exposed to risks of abuse.

In April, the Special Representative to the Secretary General (SRS) on Sexual Violence in Conflict Ms. Bangura visited Lebanon. She met with refugee women and adolescent girls from Syria in informal settlements and community centres who expressed their concerns over their safety and lack of access to basic services such as education. Refugees also explained that the lack of economic opportunities is pushing families to resort to child marriage or child labour.



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