

unrwa response and services to palestine refugees from syria (PRS) in lebanon

lebanon

unrwa



monthly briefing

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highlights

- UNRWA is facing severe shortfalls in funding for cash assistance in all fields of operation. Without further donations, the Agency will be forced to make reductions to its cash assistance programme in the coming months
- Results of UNRWA's Post-Distribution Monitoring Survey indicate that PRS in Lebanon are becoming increasingly vulnerable, with UNRWA cash assistance representing the sole income for over 75% of PRS.
- UNRWA Lebanon's Syria Appeal for 2015 is USD 63.5 million to cover basic humanitarian needs Palestine refugees from Syria affected by the on-going crisis
- Approximately 44,000 PRS recorded with UNRWA in Lebanon (12,500 families)

humanitarian assistance

UNRWA is facing severe shortfalls in funding for cash assistance to Palestine refugees from Syria. In Lebanon, UNRWA will only be able to sustain cash assistance for food and/or shelter for 43,500 people through the end of the year if additional donations are forthcoming. This comes at a time when PRS in Lebanon are becoming increasingly vulnerable, with UNRWA cash assistance representing the sole income for over 75% of PRS.

UNRWA is the lead coordinating agency and main provider of humanitarian assistance to PRS. The Agency actively coordinates with donors and partners (NGOs and UN agencies) regarding PRS issues. Since February 2014, UNRWA has distributed cash assistance to PRS on a monthly basis. In January, 43,199 beneficiaries were credited, totalling USD 1.28 million for food and USD 1.18 million for housing. In February, 43,507 beneficiaries were credited, totalling USD 1.3 million for food and USD 1.19 million for housing. The Agency transitioned to vulnerability-based assistance following a vulnerability assessment and headcount conducted in July 2014. The majority of PRS remain eligible for UNRWA cash assistance on the basis of USD 30 per person for food and USD 100 per family for housing, pending availability of funds. All PRS continue to have access to UNRWA's core programmes. Unaccompanied and separated minors receive assistance in hard cash, rather than via ATM cards, following an assessment by UNRWA's protection team.

Since August 2014, UNRWA and the World Food Programme (WFP) have partnered to provide cash assistance for food to PRS. WFP funds up to 50 per cent of UNRWA's monthly food crediting.

Harsh winter weather has underscored the vulnerability of Palestine Refugees from Syria. UNRWA is working to mobilize resources to provide critical winterization assistance for PRS who have recorded with UNRWA in Lebanon through the Agency's Cash Transfer Programme. Through UNRWA coordination efforts and its partners, all PRS in the Beqaa and over 500 meters countrywide received assistance from ICRC through UNRWA ATM cards in November 2014 to support them through the winter. UNICEF also provided USD 30 per child countrywide for clothing through UNRWA ATM cards and fuel for schools in the Beqaa in December 2014. The Government of Japan has recently provided USD 50,000 to boost the Agency's emergency cash assistance in the final winter months of 2015.

protection, legal status and advice

The restrictions imposed by the Lebanese government in early May 2014 continue to result in the denial of entry to the majority of PRS fleeing Syria for safety in Lebanon as well as uncertain legal status for PRS already in-country. UNRWA monitoring of the implementation of the General Security Office (GSO) September circular, which announced that PRS with expired visas could approach GSO to regularize their status free of charge for three months, reveals that this is being applied inconsistently throughout the country. Many PRS did not approach the GSO for fear of arrest and/or deportation. Since 31st of December 2014, which corresponds to the end date of the similar circular for Syrians, UNRWA has identified very few successful renewals of PRS residencies. The Government of Lebanon has recently taken steps to reduce the number of Syrian refugees entering the country. As of January the 5th, a series of new restrictions on the entry of Syrian nationals into Lebanon are being applied. In parallel, MOSA announced the introduction of humanitarian criteria to be applied to extremely vulnerable cases of displaced Syrians seeking entry into Lebanon. The criteria are currently being revised by MOSA, and UNRWA has been providing inputs regarding the expansion of the criteria proposed and advocating for their application to PRS.

education

As of February 2015, there are 6,118 regularly attending PRS students (2,918 males; 3,200 females) in 60 schools throughout Lebanon. UNRWA remains committed to providing quality education to PRS and PRL students. The start of this year has seen a number of EU and UNICEF funded training courses conducted for PRS teachers including on inclusive education, refresher pedagogy courses and English language teaching courses. Recreational and psychosocial support activities are ongoing and play a crucial role in creating learning environments wherein PRS students feel psychologically and socially secure. In January and February, the Norwegian Refugee Council organized recreational activities in seven schools in Beqaa, Saida, and Tyre. Health tutors have also regularly been conducting awareness sessions in schools with PRS students on personal hygiene and nutrition.

environmental health

Worsening environmental health conditions in Lebanon's Palestine refugee camps since the outbreak of violence in Syria risks increased incidence of disease and ill health. Sewerage systems are coming under great strain and require urgent upgrade to deal with the extra inhabitants. The quantity of water provided in the camps does not meet the daily domestic requirements of the enlarged camp populations and vulnerable Palestine refugees are frequently forced to compromise on the quality of water they use. The additional PRS population has resulted in garbage production beyond the means of the current infrastructure increasing the likelihood of infectious disease outbreaks.

During January and February 2015, UNRWA has responded by continuing to rehabilitate the sewer network and water supply system in Burj Barajneh camp. In Ein el Hilweh camp, the Agency has made good progress on upgrading the water infrastructure network. Additional activities in support of the water supply systems in Rashidieh and Beddawi camps were also undertaken during this period. In an effort to improve the environmental health conditions inside the camps, extra sanitation laborers were deployed to assist with waste disposal and almost 3,000 refuse bins were being prepared for distribution to Palestine Refugee camps across Lebanon.

health

Thanks to generous contributions from donors, most recently Japan and the UK, UNRWA is covering the cost of primary health care services for PRS including medical consultations and free medications through its 27 health centres located throughout the country. In January, UNRWA health centres accommodated 19,119 consultations with PRS patients (including repeat visits). The health program is also covering the costs of secondary, and contributing towards, tertiary hospitalization for emergency and life-threatening conditions. Additionally, UNRWA provides financial support for Emergency Room Services at Palestine Red Crescent Society hospitals and partially covers these services at UNRWA contracted hospitals. Since April 2013, UNRWA has also supported PRS patients suffering from critical health conditions through services provided by the Catastrophic Ailment Relief Program (CARE) which provides financial support to patients with costly medical procedures. In partnership with UNICEF, UNRWA distributed baby kits in January which include essential supplies for newborns to 6,000 PRS at UNRWA health clinics and women's programme centres.

funding 2014-2015

The 2015 UNRWA Lebanon appeal, in line with the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan for the Syria crisis outlines the needs for USD 63.5 million to meet the minimum needs of up to 45,000 Palestine refugees in Lebanon suffering profound hardship as a result of the on-going crisis in Syria.

This builds on UNRWA's Syria response efforts, which have been ongoing since the beginning of the crisis. To date, a total of USD 51.2 million has been received from generous contributions of donors, including the US, EU, Germany, UK and Japan to cover PRS needs for 2014 and 2015 in all sectors.

DONORS	FUNDED
Contributions Carried forward from 2014 and 2015	
Germany (Ministry for Development)	\$6,195,787
European Union (total):	\$3,791,750
▪ EC	\$2,644,989
▪ IfS	\$1,146,761
UK Department for International Development (DFID)	\$6,504,151
World Food Program (WFP)	\$2,580,519
UNICEF	\$3,035,868
Japan	\$2,750,000
Ireland	\$1,019,579
Italy	\$155,499

Table: Total Contributions Carried forward from 2014 and 2015



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united nations relief and works agency
for palestine refugees in the near east

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UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and is mandated to provide assistance and protection to a population of some 5 million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip to achieve their full potential in human development, pending a just solution to their plight. UNRWA's services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, microfinance and emergency assistance. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions.