

Key Figures

607,683	registered refugee children
77%	of registered children are under 11
25%	of registered children are at risk

Funding

UNHCR total requirements: USD 451 m



October developments

- As part of the national coaching program, UNHCR and IRC have finalized the design of the Best Interest Determination (BID) training to be conducted in the field. The objectives of this training are to improve participants' understanding of the legal child protection system in Lebanon and how UNHCR's Best Interest Determination links with it, to strengthen participant's skills in assessing and analysing complex child protection problems and to build skills in documentation and reporting for case management.

Identification and referral of children-at-risk

- 276 children at high risk, including unaccompanied minors and separated children, were identified and provided with support, including psychosocial counselling by case management agencies and refugee outreach volunteers (ROVs).
- In Tripoli, a total of 31 children-at-risk were provided with individual case management. Analysis of children at risk shows prevalence of child labor, neglect and abuse. UNHCR and partners continues to work with children identified to be engaging in child labor and their families in order to address the challenges that they are facing so as to mitigate resorting to this harmful practice. Interventions include the urgent removal of the child from place of work, provision of psychosocial support, and reintegration in school through remedial classes.
- In Qobayat five children in need of psychosocial support were referred for counseling and recreational activities in child friendly spaces and weekly visits by caseworkers; one child with a serious medical condition and mental impairment was referred for medical services, including mental health for the family to cope with the disability.

Training/coaching

- 27 newly recruited ROVs in the Bekaa were trained on identification and the safe referral of children (including unaccompanied and separated children) to specialised service providers.
- 18 child protection service providers working with a range of NGOs were trained by IRC on child protection concepts and practical skill required to manage complex cases and child survivors of SGBV.

Achievements: January - October

Activity	reached January-October	2014 Target
Identified children at risk referred and assisted	2,582	1,515
Training for persons working with refugee children(# individuals trained)	691	600

Needs

Many refugee children are in need of psychosocial support due to their exposure to violence and other forms of traumatic events. Refugee children who need assistance require proper identification and safe referral. Their needs include prevention and response to physical violence, verbal harassment, exploitation or pressure, particularly among adolescent boys to return to Syria to fight. Refugee children subject to sexual violence, child labour and early marriage also require proper identification and referral for appropriate assistance by trained professionals. Separated or unaccompanied children need safe living arrangements and assistance to help trace and reunite them with their families, whenever possible.

Educational opportunities, support to parents, activities targeting adolescents and youth can contribute to protecting refugee children against negative coping mechanisms and a wide range of child-specific protection risks.

Challenges

Fragile national child protection system: The national child protection system is struggling to provide appropriate care and services to refugee children at risks of abuse and exploitation and children survivors of violence. The Union for the Protection of Children is the only organization mandated by the Ministry of Justice to investigate cases involving child abuse and violence. UNHCR works together with implementing partners to provide support to both refugee children and national institutions providing services to refugees.

Protracted displacement: With limited access to livelihood opportunities, and dwindling resources, some families resort to child labour and other negative coping mechanisms such as child marriage. As their time in displacement prolongs, the lack of educational opportunities for the majority of school-aged Syrian children presents a significant challenge. Currently, there are over 200,000 school-aged refugee children who lack access to age-appropriate education due to the fact that the capacity of the public education system is overstretched.

Dispersed refugee population: Since refugees live in over 1,750 different locations in Lebanon, outreach to refugee children to identify and respond to their needs is both a challenge and priority. Outreach is crucial to ensuring that refugee children are registered with UNHCR and have access to basic services. It is also important in ensuring that parents register the birth of newborns, and that school-aged children living in remote areas and those with specific protection risks have access to education, health care and other services.

Strategy

UNHCR works to ensure that refugee children at risk and/or victims of violence have timely access to appropriate services by:

- Improving outreach to ensure identification and safe referral of children at risks and victims of violence through training of refugee outreach volunteers, frontline workers and others providing services to refugee children;
- Building capacity of child protection actors to better prevent and respond to child protection needs particularly through the establishment of a coaching mechanism for social workers;
- Strengthening national child protection system to ensure emergency referral and provision of adequate care for children at high risks, and reinforce to existing services such as psychosocial support and legal counselling;
- Mainstreaming child protection into all activities carried out within refugee and host communities especially within the health, education and shelter sectors;
- Advocating for expanding access to services for both refugee and Lebanese children;
- Contributing to the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on grave child rights violations committed in Syria.

UNHCR co-leads the inter-agency working group on child protection together with the Ministry of Social Affairs and UNICEF, and works to ensure the complementarity of interventions benefiting refugee children.

UNHCR implementing partners

Amel Association-Lebanese Popular Association for Popular Action (AMEL), Caritas Lebanon Migrants Center (CMLC), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), International Medical Corps (IMC), International Relief and Development (IRD), International Rescue Committee (IRC), INTERSOS, Makhzoumi Foundation, Restart Centre for Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence and Torture, Social, Humanitarian, Economical Intervention For Local Development (SHEILD), Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA).

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