

Health Care Programme - Lebanon

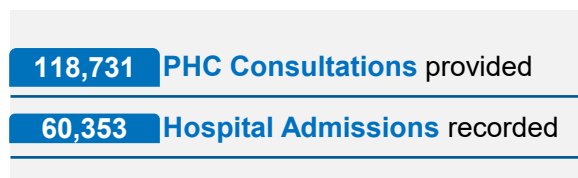
December 2023

Lebanon remains the country hosting the **largest number of refugees per capita**, with the Government estimation of **1.5 M Syrian refugees** and **11,238** refugees of other nationalities.

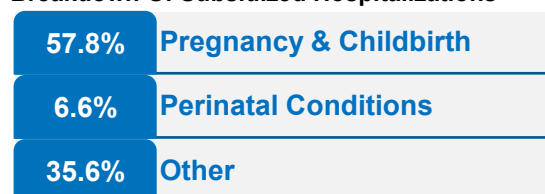
With the country facing its worst socio-economic crisis in decades, **nine out of ten Syrian refugees** need humanitarian assistance to cover their basic needs.

The **health services are largely privatized in Lebanon** and due to the crises, even **accessing basic lifesaving care** has become challenging for refugees.

Health Achievements



Breakdown Of Subsidized Hospitalizations



Working with Partners

UNHCR jointly leads the health sector together with WHO under the framework of the Government-led Lebanon Response Plan (LRP). In 2023, UNHCR also took a key role in the national Cholera Response for Lebanon under MoPH leadership and coordination with other partners. In 2023, UNHCR has partnership agreements with four implementing partners: IOCC, Relief international, Amel Association, and Restart for primary health care interventions including mental health. Next Care is also contracted as the Third-Party Administrator for Referral Health Care Services (Hospital Care).

Main Activities

The ongoing crises in Lebanon has drastically affected access to healthcare for all vulnerable populations. In addition, the conflict in the South exerted additional pressure on the health system in the areas of displacement. UNHCR's health care interventions aim to ensure access for refugees and vulnerable host communities in Lebanon to primary health care and access to refugees to secondary, and tertiary health care (hospitalization care).



©UNHCR, The Newborn Intensive Care Unit in the Rafik Hariri University Hospital, Beirut, Lebanon.

Hospital Care

UNHCR is the leading humanitarian aid agency working to ensure access to secondary and tertiary health care for refugees in Lebanon. In a network of 33 contracted hospitals, refugees can access treatment for urgent life- and limb saving conditions, in addition to obstetric care at a subsidized cost. By the end of December 2023, UNHCR supported 60,353 hospital admissions, of which 57.8% were related to pregnancy and childbirth.

Referral Health Care (RHC) Standard Operational Procedure Change

The UNHCR RHC program implemented changes in May 2023, to accommodate the reduction in funding while maintaining its efficiency. This resulted in a reduction of UNHCR coverage for refugees accessing secondary and tertiary health care. With additional budget cuts for the year 2024, UNHCR has further amended its coverage plan for refugees starting January 2024. The transitional period activities were implemented and associated communications were shared during Quarter 4 of 2023 with partners, UN agencies, the Ministry of Public Health, and most importantly refugees.

Primary Health Care (PHC)

Refugees have access to PHC services such as free childhood vaccinations, subsidized consultations for acute illnesses, reproductive health, non-communicable diseases and mental health. Furthermore, subsidized diagnostic tests for the most vulnerable groups are supported at more than 140 PHC facilities across the country by either UNHCR, its implementing partners or by other actors. By December 2023, a total of 118,731 consultations including mental health consultations were provided to refugees and other vulnerable Lebanese through 11 facilities receiving support from UNHCR and its implementing partners.

Cholera Response

In the first quarter of 2023, UNHCR completed the Cholera Vaccination Campaign which was implemented in collaboration with partners and UN agencies under the patronage of Ministry of Public Health. By the end of the project, UNHCR administered more than 1.14 million doses to residents of all nationalities residing in high-risk areas. In 2023, UNHCR supported the Lebanese healthcare System by supporting 10 hospitals with medical equipment, supplies, and PPEs and supported the MoPH with testing kits and Oral Rehydration Solution as Contingency Stock for Communicable Disease Preparedness and Response.

Remaining Gaps

Due to limited financial resources, UNHCR is focusing on referrals of urgent conditions that are life-threatening, including obstetric care or conditions that might lead to severe permanent disability, if left untreated. Therefore, refugees with conditions requiring long-term, specialized, and high-cost treatment – such as cancers, blood disorders, immunological, dialysis and neurological conditions– are not covered. The same applies to diagnostic tests carried out at the out-patient level for severe but non-urgent health conditions. This can include expensive radiological procedures (MRI, CT, and PET scans) as well as laboratory examinations. Additionally, due to reduced resources, refugees are asked to gradually takeover the financial burden in terms of payment of their share to the total bills for their hospital admissions.

Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the support provided by donors who have contributed to the Health Programme as well as major donors of flexible and unearmarked funds in 2023:

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