

FACTSHEET / January - August 2025

PROTECTION PROGRAMS

Refugees and Lebanese participate in English classes at a UNHCR Community Development Center in Beirut. The centers provide safe spaces for learning and protection activities, enabling people to strengthen skills and resilience.
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Why Protection?

Lebanon hosts the highest number of refugees per capita worldwide. More than a decade into the Syria crisis, refugees and Lebanese communities face growing risks in a context marked by economic collapse, political uncertainty, and recurrent hostilities. **Nine out of ten Syrian refugees** live in poverty, with limited access to legal residency, livelihoods, and basic services—leaving many exposed to exploitation, detention, and the risk of refoulement. Refugee and stateless communities also struggle with civil documentation, child protection risks, gender-based violence, and rising mental health concerns, while host communities bear the strain of overstretched services amid rising costs and deteriorating infrastructure. Since the fall of the Assad regime in December 2024, Lebanon is also experiencing fluid cross-border movements, including both new arrivals and returns to Syria, alongside a population of refugees who remain secondarily displaced due to the escalation of hostilities in 2024.

In this environment, UNHCR is mandated to safeguard rights and dignity while supporting social cohesion. Together with the Government of Lebanon, UN agencies, and partners, **UNHCR coordinates the protection response** to address needs of new arrivals from Syria, increase dignity in stay for long-staying refugees, and support voluntary return for Syrians who wish to go home. This includes ensuring access to legal aid, case management, and community-based services, while strengthening resilience, empowering communities, and advancing voluntary solutions—including return and resettlement.

Key protection programmes

ACCESS TO TERRITORY

UNHCR works to ensure persons seeking international protection can access Lebanese territory safely and that procedural safeguards are respected at borders and in detention. This includes monitoring practices, advocating and intervening with authorities to prevent refoulement, and building capacity of state actors in applying international protection standards. In 2025, UNHCR protection and border monitoring responded to increased movements after the fall of Assad regime.

REGISTRATION

UNHCR carries out identity management and verification to maintain accurate data on refugees and other displaced populations, essential for protection, assistance, and solutions. While registration of Syrian refugees has been suspended since May 2015 by Government decision, UNHCR continues to update data. Since 2025, activities have been streamlined and centralized in Beirut, with mobile teams and a nationwide Presence Verification Exercise.

CIVIL DOCUMENTATION AND LEGAL AID

UNHCR works with partners to provide legal aid to asylum seekers and refugees on legal residency, civil documentation, protection from refoulement and detention, addressing exploitation and abuse (evictions, trafficking, human rights violations, harassment), family and labor law, and access to nationality/documentation for stateless persons.

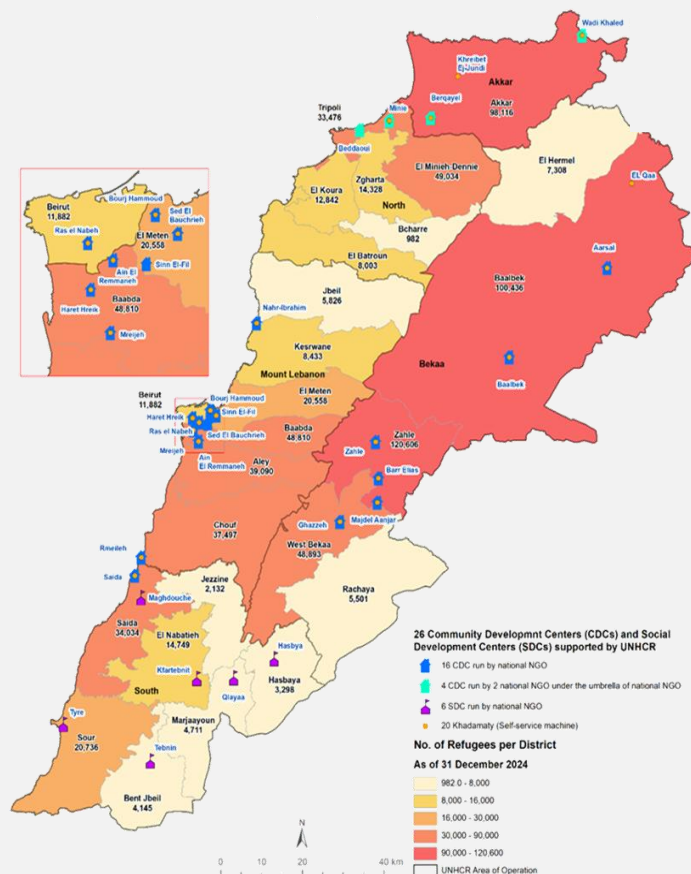
COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE

UNHCR engages refugees to identify, prevent and respond to protection issues as part of its Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) Policy and its commitment to Accountability to Affected People (AAP). In Lebanon, this is done through community-based protection (CBP) mechanisms including 26 Community Centers, 440 refugee Outreach Volunteers (OVs), 187 community groups, support to community-led initiatives, and structured dialogue.

Community centers apply a one-stop-shop model for delivering protection interventions, empowering refugees, and building synergies with development actors such as ILO and UNWOMEN. Activities include information provision, skills building, psychosocial support (PSS), case management, and community networking. Centers also provide refugees access to remote assistance such as presence verification and card validation for cash support. Recently, centers have become spaces where UNHCR conducts voluntariness assessments and issues Repatriation Forms for those who express their intention to return to Syria.

In addition, OVs and Community Groups play a key role in identifying protection risks, sharing information, linking persons at heightened risk to services, and delivering solutions. Select OVs deliver structured evidence-based PSS, while refugee-led initiatives support thousands of community members.

Amidst large-scale displacement, movement restrictions and crises, these mechanisms quickly respond by adapting to emergency interventions and extending outreach activity to affected communities. Together, these efforts reduce vulnerability and offer protection.



Outreach Volunteers are the first point of contact for many refugees, ensuring timely referrals for people at heightened risk, sharing life-saving information, and providing PSS. **64% are women.**

ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED PEOPLE (AAP)

UNHCR manages information provision, two-way communication, and complaints and feedback across multiple platforms, enabling people to access information, raise concerns, benefit from referrals to services, and shape programming. AAP is strengthened by engaging community structures in participatory dialogues to ensure diverse voices—including women, youth, and persons with specific needs—inform decisions and responses.

Information repositories



HELP website



WhatsApp Channel



National Call Center



Contact Form



Community centers



Staff/partners



Outreach Volunteers



Community Groups



Participatory Assessments & Monitoring

Two-Way Communication and Community Engagement

Structured exchange

MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

As mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) needs grow, UNHCR applies a cross-sectoral approach to programming for children, caregivers, and adults of all ages and backgrounds. This includes information provision and awareness raising; identification, referral, and case management for persons at heightened risk, including children; targeted community-based PSS activities for children, caregivers, and others; and community mobilization, engagement, and empowerment.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

UNHCR works with partners to prevent and respond to GBV, ensuring survivors have access to timely, safe services such as case management, PSS, safe shelters, and legal aid. Activities also include awareness-raising, men's engagement, and training staff to ensure safe referrals. In 2025, UNHCR has supported over 17,000 persons at risk of GBV and survivors with specialized services, dignity kits and community-based activities.

CHILD PROTECTION

UNHCR supports protection of children at risk from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence. This includes case management, access to Best Interest Procedures, psychosocial support (PSS), and collaboration with partners to promote safe environments for children and adolescents. In 2025, UNHCR and partners conducted over 1,800 Best Interest Procedures and supported 22,000 children through community-based prevention activities while addressing risks such as child labor, child marriage, and distress.

INCLUSION FOR PERSONS WITH SPECIFIC NEEDS

UNHCR ensures that persons with disabilities, older persons, and others with specific needs have access to case management, PSS, specialized services, cash, and shelter adaptation. Through a twin-tracked approach, UNHCR prioritizes inclusion in regular programming and targeted interventions for persons with disabilities.

PROTECTION MONITORING

UNHCR undertakes protection monitoring to identify risks, inform interventions, and guide advocacy with authorities and partners. Monitoring covers displacement trends, protection incidents, and access to services, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the protection environment of refugees and host communities. In 2025, monitoring captured the impact of new arrivals, evictions, administrative measures, and deportations.

SUPPORT TO NEW ARRIVALS

UNHCR conducts targeted headcount exercise and has developed tools for data deduplication of new arrivals from Syria since December 2024 for facilitation of protection interventions, and in-kind distributions to the most vulnerable.

VOLUNTARY RETURN

In coordination with the Government of Lebanon and partners, UNHCR supports the self-organized voluntary return of Syrian refugees through counselling, cash assistance, and guidance on exit procedures provided via community structures, the National Call Center, and other channels. UNHCR has increased staffing to process returns and streamline procedures, with over [119,000 individuals expressing interest in 2025](#). In parallel, and in [partnership with IOM](#), UNHCR also facilitates [organized returns](#) by providing transportation support, though most individuals continue to opt for self-organized return.

RESETTLEMENT & COMPLEMENTARY PATHWAYS

UNHCR identifies and refers refugees at heightened risk for resettlement to third countries when local integration or return is not possible. The process includes counselling, case preparation, and coordination with receiving states to ensure departures are safe and dignified. Resettlement contributes to responsibility-sharing and protection space for the most vulnerable.

2025 Achievements

ACCESS TO TERRITORY

1,500 detained refugees and asylum-seekers at risk of refoulement assisted

REGISTRATION & DOCUMENTATION

661,367 Syrian
refugees registered in
UNHCR's database

98,000 new arrivals
monitored across
Lebanon since Dec 2024

1,880 refugees
supported in obtaining
civil documentation
including birth, marriage,
and death certificates via
legal aid partners

1,408 refugees
supported with
residency documents

COMMUNITY-BASED PROTECTION

243,00 participations by
69,200 people through
26 community centers
(65% female,
30% children & youth)

440
Outreach Volunteers
(OVs) reached 60,200
people and referred
4,500 persons at
heightened risk

38,000
PSS interventions
delivered by OVs and
community center staff
(80% female, 49% children, 16%
host community)

3,500 people
participate in
community groups and
community initiatives
each year

ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED PEOPLE

2.9 million page views
on the HELP website,
including 640,000 on
the presence verification
page

370,000 calls
accommodated by the
National Call Center

114,000 messages
processed via the Online
Contact Form

68,000 followers
receive messages from
the UNHCR Lebanon
WhatsApp Channel

MONITORING

38,760 refugees reached through Protection Monitoring assessments. [See the last report here](#)

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

5,000
survivors received
psychosocial support
(PSS)

1,800
survivors received case
management services

**14,000 women, men,
& youth** reached with
empowerment and
awareness activities

CHILD PROTECTION

3,600
Best Interests
Assessments (BIA)
conducted

1,800
children received case
management support

**22,000 children,
adolescents and
caregivers** engaged in
prevention and
psychosocial activities

INCLUSION AND PERSONS WITH SPECIFIC NEEDS (PwSN)

12,700 PwSN
received non-cash
support

3,200 PwSN
received case
management

3,900 PwSN
received psychosocial
support (PSS)

VOLUNTARY RETURN

119,000+ refugees
expressed interest in
voluntary return

17,291 individuals
departed and received a
USD 100 cash grant (in
addition to 278,000
spontaneous returns)

351 Syrians supported
through Organized
Return movements with
IOM

RESETTLEMENT & COMPLEMENTARY PATHWAYS

468,570 refugees
identified in need of
resettlement

**Submissions to 10
resettlement
countries** despite
shrinking quotas

Promoted
**complementary
pathways** in education
and labour mobility to
expand protection space

MENTAL HEALTH

Children & adolescents:

Promote wellbeing to cope by addressing trauma and distress, restoring a sense of normalcy, strengthening social connections, and building resilience

Caregivers:

Strengthen wellbeing and enhance capacities to support children by enhancing parenting skills, building coping mechanisms, and encouraging support networks

Adults & community members:

Maintain well-being through empowerment by helping access community and family support mechanisms - family reunification, mourning and communal healing ceremonies, information on constructive coping, life skills (e.g. positive parenting), education and livelihood, activation of social networks (women's groups, youth clubs, sports clubs community kitchens).

10,700

individuals received PSS as
part of case management
programs

3,743 PSS interventions
delivered by OVs
(72% females)

33,654 PSS interventions
delivered through
community centers
(81% females, 54% children)

Strong collaboration
with the National Mental
Health Programme, UNICEF
and WHO



With UNHCR's support, a young girl who had fled abuse and found safety in Hermel, Lebanon was reunited with her mother in Syria after two years of separation. Through close cooperation with partners and ICRC, protection and family tracing efforts ensured her safe reunification. © UNHCR/ H. Hariri

UNHCR, together with the wider humanitarian community, is facing an unprecedented and steep decline in funding. Uncertainty around funding flows and limited visibility on future projections are already forcing UNHCR Lebanon to make difficult decisions on the scope of its activities. With both flexible and earmarked contributions increasingly scarce, UNHCR has had to focus primarily on lifesaving and core mandate activities. At the same time, in light of cross-border movements triggered by the conflict escalation and the fall of the Assad regime in 2024, UNHCR launched a nationwide presence verification exercise in 2025 as part of its population data management strategy. This effort aims to ensure accurate data for protection and assistance targeting within the new operational and funding landscape.

Despite the generous support of donors, UNHCR's response in Lebanon has been consistently underfunded, with less than 60 per cent of the USD 545.2 million required in 2024 covered.

In 2025, the situation has worsened significantly: as of 31 August, only 26 per cent of the resources needed have been received.

The cuts are already having a severe impact on protection:

- **Registration:** The centralization of registration in Beirut, following the closure of the Al Qoubaiyat office and reduced staffing in Zahle and Tripoli, has limited access for refugees—especially those in remote or high-risk areas—who now rely on mobile teams with constrained reach.
- **Education:** Over 15,000 children lost access to community-based learning and retention support after education programmes were phased out in July.
- **Community-based protection:** Funding shortages forced a reduction in community activities and outreach; hundreds of initiatives were discontinued, limiting safe spaces and community engagement.
- **Mental health:** No new enrolments in specialized mental health services since March 2025, leaving thousands without psychosocial care.
- **Detention monitoring and legal aid to detainees:** The phase out of detention monitoring ended reliable access to core relief items, legal aid, medical support, and PSS for detainees and reduced on-site monitoring and access to information about rights and procedures.

In addition, support for up to 400,000 refugees wishing to return may be jeopardized if resources are not mobilized. Without urgent additional funding, UNHCR will be unable to sustain essential safety nets, exposing refugees and host communities to heightened protection risks.

Thank You!

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to UNHCR programmes as major donors of earmarked and unearmarked funds.



Other softly earmarked or unearmarked contributions:

Belgium | Finland | Iceland | Ireland | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Island
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