



## protection at unrwa in 2017 the year in review

### Protection Environment in Lebanon

#### Key protection issues for Palestine refugees from Lebanon (PRL)

- Right to adequate housing and property
- Right to work and access to employment
- Lack of legal documentation and/or lack of registration with Lebanese authorities for non-ID Palestinians
- Exposure to child protection and gender-based violence (GBV) risks

More than 60 per cent of PRL are living in 12 overcrowded refugee camps with substandard housing conditions limited work opportunities and restricted freedom of movement.

#### Key protection issues for Palestine Refugees from Syria (PRS)

- Access to territory
- Legal stay in Lebanon
- Civil registration
- Freedom of movement and detention
- Onward movement to third countries
- Barriers to access to services and exposure to child protection and GBV risks

Of the more than 32,000 Palestine refugees from Syria:

- 44 per cent are children and 52 per cent are women
- 34 per cent of households are headed by women
- 93 per cent of households rely on UNRWA assistance as their main source of livelihood

### The Situation of Palestine Refugees in Lebanon

- More than five million Palestine refugees, the largest refugee population in the world, are registered by UNRWA in five areas of operation in the Middle East, including over 521,592 registered in Lebanon.
- According to an estimate from the 'Survey on the Socioeconomic Status of Palestine Refugees in Lebanon, 2015' by the American University of Beirut, between 260,000 and 280,000 Palestine refugees from Lebanon currently reside in the country.
- Many Palestine refugees have historically been excluded from key aspects of social, political and economic life with the result that they face restrictions on the enjoyment of their human rights.
- They also have severely restricted access to public services and job opportunities, which leads to marginalization and increased vulnerability.
- Palestine Refugees from Syria (PRS) escaping the conflict and seeking safety in Lebanon have faced limitations on their legal access to Lebanese territory since August 2013, while those PRS already in the country (32,610 recorded as at February 2018) faced specific protection threats due to their precarious legal status, in relation to legal stay and access to civil registration procedures.

### UNRWA Protection Response in Lebanon

The Agency's response to an increasingly challenging protection environment in Lebanon focuses on safeguarding and realizing the rights of Palestine refugees, with a particular focus on the needs of the most vulnerable groups.

The approach adopted is multidimensional and includes:

- Identification of vulnerable individuals faced with protection concerns, including violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation and referral to seek solutions that meet their protection needs.
- Engagement in high level advocacy with national authorities, duty bearers, donors and the international community to promote Palestine refugees' rights under international law.
- Documenting, monitoring and reporting protection risks and trends that provide evidence for advocacy and help shape programming.

## Key Results in Lebanon, 2017

- More than **520 individuals** facing a protection risk identified and referred to services and support (45 per cent PRS, 50 per cent children and 57 per cent female).
- Almost **7,000 individuals** accessed legal services, including awareness raising, counselling, assistance and representation.
- Close to **1,000 frontline staff** trained on protection topics, including: safe identification and referral; protection mainstreaming; gender-based violence; child protection and parenting skills.
- Over **850 Palestine refugees** women, girls, men and boys (17 per cent PRS) reached through GBV sensitization and **872 women and girls** were rolled in psychosocial support group activities (24 per cent PRS).
- Over **4000 children** accessed psychosocial support services in Ein El Hilweh (EEH) camp.
- Over **200 caregivers** reached by parent support interventions in schools and health clinics
- Over **130 unaccompanied and separated PRS children** provided with emergency assistance following household assessments.
- Over **650 people** interviewed in relation to cross-border movements in and out of Syria.

- Coordination with external partners, with the aim of ensuring that Palestinian issues are reflected in the wider humanitarian programming and planning.
- Provision of emergency protection cash transfers to increase the coping capacity of Palestine refugees facing unexpected and significant shocks and protection risks
- Monitoring cross-border movements of PRS through interviews, surveys and data analysis to contribute to advocacy.
- Provision of legal aid services such as counselling and formal representation services (civil matters) to Palestine refugees, in addition to awareness-raising on the rights of Palestine refugees.
- Mainstreaming protection standards and principles across UNRWA programs through capacity building of staff, implementation of Protection Audits and technical support for programmatic protection mainstreaming work plans.
- Provision of GBV case management and psychosocial support to survivors of GBV.
- Capacity building of frontline workers in safe identification and referral as well as prevention and response to GBV and child protection (CP) incidents.
- Facilitation of community protection groups across Lebanon to strengthen community-based prevention of GBV and protection activities.
- Provision of parent support interventions in schools and health clinics.
- Coordination and roll out of multi sectorial plan of action to end violence affective children.
- Coordination and delivery of mental health and psychosocial support service (MHPSS), as well as capacity building for frontline staff on MHPSS assessment, intervention and referral.



## UNRWA psychosocial support activities helped Farah to deal with stress and anger

Farah is a 12 year old PRS girl from Yarmouk camp in Syria who fled to Lebanon with her family seeking refuge. She currently lives in Ein El Hilweh and is enrolled in an UNRWA school in the camp. The welcoming atmosphere at the school from her teachers and classmates gave Farah a sense of comfort in her new environment. However, the recurring armed clashes in the camp exposed Farah and the camp residents to numerous risks. Farah missed 22 school days in 2017 and her school was also damaged. Farah says "Every time there are shooting or clashes in the camp we live again the fear and the terror and our school is closed". Armed violence is not only compromising Farah's fundamental right to education by disrupting schooling, but it also has direct consequences on her psychosocial wellbeing.

In an aim to strengthen psychosocial support (PSS) activities in UNRWA schools (during and after emergency situations), UNRWA developed, in collaboration with UNICEF and MAP UK, a PSS in emergency program for children. The positive impact of this program is evident through Farah's words "I felt scared due to the intensity of the clashes and I was afraid to go back to school. But my school teacher and two animators from an organization called Tadamon always organize activities at school following such clashes. For instance, we do breathing exercises to feel the fresh air and this makes us feel happy and reassured. Through these activities, we learnt how to keep our calm and push away anger and fear."



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