
Quarterly Report

DRC Lebanon,

July – September 2011

BACKGROUND AND CONFLICT

Description of conflict

The DRC Lebanon programme currently addresses needs of four displaced population groups. The priority group is the estimated 280,000 Palestinians, the majority of who fled from Palestine in 1948. Most others arrived in Lebanon following the “six-day war” in 1967.

The second refugee group is the 10,000 Iraqi refugees who have fled the ongoing sectarian violence in Iraq. Following the defeat of Iraqi military forces in the spring of 2003, an uprising began against coalition forces. The uprising was mainly supported by the previously dominating Sunni group, redundant militaries and eventually, radical Islamic insurgents. As Iraqi civilians have come increasingly under attack, however, the conflict has taken on the characteristics of sectarian-based civil war complicated by the involvement of external players, including neighbouring countries and Al Qaeda. While a full political or military solution is not expected soon, the security situation is gradually improving and some refugees are returning.

Thirdly, DRC has begun working with female economic migrants who work as domestic staff in Lebanon. Although generally not displaced by conflict, many of them suffer severe human rights abuses and have little protection or recourse under Lebanese law.

Syrian displaced - fleeing the ongoing conflict in Syria - constitute the 4th displaced group DRC assists in the northern Lebanon. The number reached 3,000 as per the October 2011 UNHCR report. More than 90% of the displaced are staying with hosting families. 2 collective shelters are already hosting around 200 individuals. UNHCR, the MOSA (Ministry of Social Affairs), HRC (Higher Relief Committee) and other local and international NGOs are responding to basic needs: Food, non food distribution, shelter, education, health and protection.

Displacement situation

Palestinian refugees: Lebanon hosts an estimated 280,000 Palestinians. 60% live in 12 official UNRWA camps, while the rest are located mainly in dispersed Palestinian communities called “gatherings”. Despite the efforts of UNRWA, living standards for most Palestinians are far below those of the host

Lebanese communities, with overcrowding and poor quality infrastructure and services, and lack of access to quality employment opportunities. Violence against women is as well an acute problem due to legal vacuum. Palestinian refugee women face particular risks of protection. These circumstances have evolved into a cycle of diminishing opportunity and hope, resulting in increasing discontent and marginalization among Palestinians.

Iraqi refugees: Widespread sectarian violence in Iraq following the US-led invasion in 2003 and overthrow of Saddam Hussein has led to large-scale population displacement both within Iraq itself and to neighbouring countries. DRC estimates that 10 thousand Iraqis currently in Lebanon require some level of assistance. Lebanon has not signed the 1951 UN convention or 1967 protocol relating to refugees, and has no domestic refugee law. The majority of Iraqis in Lebanon do not have legal permission to stay in Lebanon and therefore live in hiding with little access to social services or legal employment. If caught, they are subject to arrest and deportation as illegal migrants.

Migrant domestic workers:

Lebanon currently hosts an estimated 200,000 female migrant domestic workers from several Asian and African countries. These women, who come to Lebanon under contract to families as domestic services, are often subject to exploitation and abuse, including sexual, with denial of appropriate legal recourse.

Syrians displaced in northern Lebanon:

6,000 Syrians fled the Syrian region of Homs, affected by civil unrest and governmental crackdown, in May 2011 and found refuge in the Northern Lebanon region of Wadi Khaled and Berri. Since then, Syrian families have partly returned to Syria while others came in. As of October 2011. About 3,000 Syrian displaced, temporarily hosted by the Lebanese communities, face serious protection issues, and remain reliant on the aid provided to satisfy their basic needs (food, NFI, health, education...).

DRC'S PRESENCE

DRC history

DRC opened its Lebanon mission in September 2004. Until mid-2006, DRC's core programme provided legal assistance, material support and advocacy for the Palestinian non-ID refugee population in Lebanon. After a brief closure due to the summer 2006 war, the 'non-ID' project was reactivated, with co-funding from ECHO and the Lisa og Gudmund Joergensens Fond, a private Danish foundation.

After the 2006 summer war, DRC expanded activities to address the short-term, emergency needs of IDPs and returnees in areas directly affected by the conflict. In addition to managing UNHCR's central warehousing and distribution network, DRC's emergency activities included distribution of non-food items (NFI) to IDPs in West Beirut and Mount Lebanon and provision of

NFI, winterisation assistance and shelter repair to returnees in two areas of south Lebanon, both funded by ECHO and Danida.

With emergency needs diminished, these activities transitioned, in early 2007, into livelihood support in the form of in-kind grants (mainly tools & equipment) to restart businesses, vocational training and community infrastructure repair/improvements to improve local economies in three war-affected areas: South Lebanon, the Bekaa and southern Beirut (Dahieh). These activities, funded by ECHO and Danida, were completed in March 2008, respectively. Between October 2007 and April 2008, DRC also provided technical support for housing reconstruction in Southern Lebanon and the Beqaa under a UN-Habitat-funded project.

Between late 2006 and December 2007, DRC implemented a project to develop the capacities of the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs' social development centres (SDCs) in war-affected areas. DRC provided equipment, furnishings and other material items to 30 SDCs, along with staff training and funds for mini-projects targeting vulnerable groups within their communities. Under the same project, DRC also funded protection-related small projects to extend the capacities and outreach of 21 local NGOs to complement government services and programmes.

Since mid-2008, DRC has begun several new initiatives for the Palestinian refugees. The first, funded by the British government, targets marginalised youth in Ein el Helweh camp, with a focus on education and livelihood support. In March 2009, DRC received ECHO funding for a general Palestinian protection programme focusing primarily on the Saida and Tyre areas in South Lebanon, and in early 2010, with CIDA funding, DRC initiated a small project, also in South Lebanon, providing protection support to elderly Palestinians.

Also in 2008, DRC Lebanon initiated its Iraqi refugee programme (funded by the U.S. Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration) targeting vulnerable Iraqi refugees, with an emphasis on reaching those in the outlying, under-served areas of Lebanon.

Finally, in December 2009, DRC, with local partner Kafa, initiated a pilot project to provide female migrant domestic workers (MDWs) with legal counselling and to carry out public advocacy in support of female migrant worker rights in Lebanon.

DRC Lebanon has also produced the following survey and assessment reports:

- *Palestinian Non-ID Refugees in Lebanon*, March 2005 (funded by ECHO); updated September 2007;
 - *Profile of the Iraqi Population in Lebanon*, July 2005 (funded by UNHCR);
 - *Needs assessment on Palestinian refugees in gatherings in Lebanon*, August 2005 (funded by ECHO);
 - *Iraqi Population Survey in Lebanon*, November 2007 (funded by UNHCR);
 - *Community Perspectives on Protection: a Knowledge, Attitudes and*
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Practices Analysis of Palestinian Communities in South Lebanon, October 2009 (funded by ECHO);

- *Iraqis Taking Refuge in Lebanon – Estimating the Size and Geographical Distribution of Iraqis in Lebanon from a Service Need Perspective, November 2009* (funded by PRM).
- *Incomplete Entitlement: an overview of the living conditions of Palestinian refugees residing legally in Lebanon but not registered with UNRWA (NRs), May 2011* (funded by ECHO).

Brief narrative description of current DRC programme

DRC is currently implementing several projects in support to Palestinian refugees, Syrian refugees in the north and local communities. DRC coordinates closely with all relevant stakeholders and service providers, including UNRWA and UNHCR, local Lebanese and Palestinian authorities, and local and international NGOs.

I. Palestinian Refugee Programme

Life Skills Development for Young Palestinians in Lebanon (July 2010-June 2013)

Under this 3-year project, DRC is supporting 3 local NGO partners to provide life skills training and associated activities to 500 young Palestinians, aged 12 to 18, in Ein el Helweh camp, Saida. Participants will include at-risk students referred from UNRWA schools plus mainly unemployed school dropouts. Partner NGOs will also improve the quality of their educational services through training centre upgrades and procurement of educational materials and equipment.

II. MoSA capacity building and emergency preparedness (since Jan. 2011)

The project aims at improving the capacity of 20 displacement-affected Social Development Centres (SDCs) to intervene locally, to provide relevant and timely assistance to refugees and IDPs and to take the lead of the local coordination aid mechanisms. The activities of the project vary from provision of training to SDC's on emergency preparedness, mapping of the community key actors, training on the UNHCR's Refugee Assistance Information System (RAIS) in order to initiate a database system within the SDCs, or supporting the SDCs with the necessary equipments needed to enhance their activities in this field.

III. Emergency response for displaced Syrians in Northern Lebanon

Since May 2011, UNHCR and partners are working with the Lebanese Government in the border areas of Wadi Khaled and Bireh to provide assistance to families who have fled the crackdown of unrest in Syria since mid-March 2011.

The partnership initiated between UNHCR and DRC aims at providing a small-scale emergency response to the existing displacement affected families

	<p>as well as at upgrading the local emergency preparedness needed in case of larger-scale displacement scenario. DRC intervention is described below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide basic domestic and hygiene items (registration and distribution), 2. Provide support to persons with special needs (outreach activities and referral mechanisms), 3. Provide coordination support (coordination, management support and logistics), 4. Rehabilitation of abandoned schools to be used as collective shelters, 5. Implementation of Quick Impact Projects
Strategic objective of programme	Protection and promotion of appropriate solutions to displacement-affected populations in Lebanon on the basis of humanitarian principles and human rights.
Immediate objectives of programme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Immediate needs of most vulnerable displaced are appropriately addressed, 2. Sustainable livelihood and other coping mechanisms for refugees and host populations are promoted and supported, 3. Protection environment is enhanced through increased capacities of duty-bearers and rights-holders and local and national levels.
Target group(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Palestinian refugees, communities & civil society, ▪ Syrian displaced, ▪ Iraqi refugees, ▪ Asian & African female migrant domestic workers, ▪ Local hosting communities,
Main sector(s) /type(s) of intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protection (including advocacy, awareness raising, information management, legal aid, counselling, monitoring), ▪ Food and Non-food assistance, ▪ Shelter, ▪ Quick Impact projects, ▪ Livelihood support, ▪ Capacity and community development, ▪ Education.

List of donors

- Currently: UNHCR and Thunes Foundation,
- For years:
 - Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission (ECHO)
 - British Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO)
 - Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

MAIN DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE PAST QUARTER

Main external developments and challenges faced during the past quarter – in terms of politics, displacement situation and security

- Internally, the Lebanese politics has not faced any major changes. The dispute continues between the 14th of March and 8th of March parties (leading the government) about the funding of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon in charge of the ex-Prime Minister Hariri's 2005 assassination.
- Another dispute with the Israeli neighbour emerged recently relating to the discovery of offshore gas reserves in front of the Lebanese territory.
- The Syrian unrest keeps having consequences in Lebanon dividing communities further. Pro and anti-Assad groups regularly confront each other in street fights. The most serious clash happened in late June in the northern city of Tripoli where Sunni and Alawite Lebanese groups clashed for a full night during which 7 persons were killed.
- The last months have witnessed several incursions of the Syrian army in the northern Lebanese territory, chasing opponents and deserters. The absence of reaction from the Lebanese government has triggered debate and verbal attacks from the opposition,
- The internal political debate in Lebanon has become more aggressive in the past months where threats of assassination are now made in public between political parties.

Main internal achievements and challenges during the past quarter

a. Life Skills Development for Young Palestinians in Lebanon (Thunes)

- Project was suspended while the Year-1 final report and following proposal are being reviewed. Preparations for the second year are taking place

b. Enhanced Protection for Elderly Palestinian Refugees in Southern Lebanon (CIDA)

- The final event took place and the training for volunteers on social media. DRC delivered the final narrative and financial report.

c. Support the MoSA in assisting refugees and displaced people (UNHCR)

- A second in-depth needs assessment was conducted over the 20 selected Social Development Centres. Capacities and equipment needs were defined along with the SDCs. The procurement was launched for equipping the centres.
- The mapping exercise was launched in the 20 centres which aims at

reinforcing the networking with local actors and therefore the local coordination mechanisms. Activities are ongoing.

d. Responding to displaced Syrians in Northern Lebanon (UNHCR)

- DRC keeps assisting Syrians on:
 - Shelter
 - Food and non food distribution
 - Protection through outreach work
 - Implementation of Quick Impact projects
 - Total number of beneficiaries is around 3000 Syrian Displaced

e. Emergency preparedness

- Safety assessment conducted by the DRC Global Safety Advisor, Response preparedness evaluation conducted by the DRC Head of Emergency unit.

Main funding developments during the past quarter

- Both UNHCR projects were extended up to the 31/12/2011 for a total amount of 1.2 million USD,
- The Swiss agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) officially approved a 15-months proposal entitled “Empowering vulnerable women in Lebanon”, worth a million USD and starting on October 1st, 2011.