



STRATEGIC PROGRAMME DOCUMENT

2009

DRC - LEBANON

1. SUMMARY

2. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The DRC Lebanon programme currently addresses two populations affected by conflict in the region. These include up to 300,000 Palestinians, the majority of whom fled, or are descendents from those who fled, from Palestine in 1948. Palestinians in Lebanon find themselves in a protracted refugee situation. While their lives are not at risk, their basic rights and essential economic, social and psychological needs remain unfulfilled after years in exile. To a very great extent, they remain reliant on external assistance amid a host population that tolerates but does not welcome them. Although the majority of Palestinians in Lebanon are eligible for UNRWA services, an estimated 15,000-30,000 unregistered Palestinians do not qualify for UNRWA support. An additional, approximately 1,800 Palestinians also have special protection needs due to personal documentation problems.

Also addressed by DRC are the 15-20 thousand vulnerable 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 has improved since 2006, though remains fragile, and some refugees are returning.

2.1 Root Causes of Conflict & Displacement

Palestinian refugees – Palestinians left Palestine in two main waves. An estimated 726,000¹ refugees, predominantly Arabs, fled or were expelled from their homes in the British Mandate during and after the 1948 Palestine War, creating the first Palestinian refugee crisis. Then, as a result the Six-Day War in 1967, around 280,000 to 325,000 Palestinians fled the territories occupied by Israel during the war.

Iraqi Refugees – The war in Iraq has resulted in massive displacements of population both within Iraq itself and within the Middle East region. According to UNHCR, more than 2 million are said to be displaced within Iraq, 1.4 million are in Syria, 750,000 in Jordan and an estimated 20,000 in Lebanon. Of those in Lebanon, although the large majority arrived from Iraq directly as a result of the conflict in Iraq, a small but important share arrived during the 1980s, having fled under real or perceived threats from Saddam Hussein's regime. Although the majority of Iraqi refugees in Lebanon do express an interest in return, most await improvements in the security and economic environment in Iraq.

2.2 Situation of Refugees

Palestinian refugees – Lebanon hosts an estimated 250,000 to 300,000 Palestinians. Half of these live in 12 official UNRWA camps, while many of the rest are located 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. These circumstances have evolved into a cycle of diminishing

¹ UNRWA estimated figure

opportunity and hope, resulting in increasing discontent and marginalization among Palestinians.

There are approximately 1800 non-ID Palestinian refugees, most of whom entered the country in 1970 when the PLO relocated from Amman to Beirut. Slightly under half of these are registered with UNRWA in a different field office, but UNRWA can not transfer their files to Lebanon unless they have a legal residency in the country. For the rest, UNRWA has been unable to register them in Lebanon because they do not fall within the category of 1948 refugees and their descendants; at the same time, they cannot be registered by the Lebanese authorities without verification of their true origin. As a result, they have resided in Lebanon in legal limbo, typically confined to camps and unable to marry legally, work, study or travel. Due largely to advocacy by DRC and others, the Lebanese Government has very recently agreed to provide one-year renewable residence permits for most non-ID refugees. Implementation of this policy began in September 2008, but is currently suspended.

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 between 15 and 20 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.

The two main “durable solutions” available to the Iraqis are return to Iraq or resettlement in a third country. Only for a few, who have married and settled in Lebanon, is local integration an option.

2.3 Actual and Potential Capacity and Willingness of Duty-Bearers

Government of Lebanon (GoL) – as host government, the Lebanese authorities have primary responsibility for the protection of refugees within their borders. Like other countries in the region, however, Lebanon has not signed the 1951 Geneva Convention on the status of refugees and other relevant protocols. Iraqi and other non-Palestinian refugees have typically entered Lebanon illegally or overstayed their visas, and are therefore treated under the law as illegal migrants. The GoL does allow Palestinians (with some exceptions among the non-ID population) to legally reside in Lebanon, but without full property rights or access to government services, and with restrictions on access to economic opportunities. The GoL’s main policy regarding Palestinians has been one of ‘containment’, allowing mainly UNRWA and NGOs to provide long-term care and maintenance while ensuring that Lebanon’s fragile ethnic balance and vested economic interests are not upset by citizenship and economic integration.

Within the Lebanese government are two agencies with which DRC interacts. The first is the Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee, within the Prime Minister’s office, whose remit includes improving living conditions for the Palestinians. The second is the General Security, under the Ministry of the Interior, which, among other responsibilities, issues stay permits and special residency cards to the non-ID Palestinian refugees and enforces migration laws among the non-Palestinian refugees.

PLO – recognized Palestinian representative by Lebanese Government. After an absence of 24 years, the PLO reopened its Lebanon office in May 2006. Accepted as the official representative of the Palestinians in Lebanon, the PLO has worked fairly closely with the GoL on certain issues, including resolving the non-ID refugee problem. The PLO’s influence among the Palestinian communities, however, is limited by its inability to influence the many

disparate political and militant Palestinian factions that vie for hearts and minds in the camps and gatherings.

At the community level, the PLO has established Popular Committees (PCs) composed mainly of representatives from each PLO faction present in the camp or gathering, plus some independent members selected for their status within the community. The PCs play the role of the municipality, carrying responsibilities for such services as garbage collection, provision of electricity and running water, and resolving small-scale conflicts in the camp. The PCs often serve as liaison between the Lebanese community and the camp population, and will sometimes assist in locating and handing over suspected criminals. Some camps also have oppositional committees, usually consisting of extreme left or religious elements.

UNRWA – internationally mandated responsibilities. UNRWA's role is mainly one of service provision, involving education, health, shelter and physical infrastructure, plus a special hardship programme targeting highly vulnerable families. Although UNRWA chronically lacks the resources it requires to fully meet its responsibilities, the services it provides—and the employment it offers—are of extreme importance in sustaining the Palestinian population in Lebanon. Recent initiatives within UNRWA relating to the integration of protection, increased transparency and greater collaboration with civil society demonstrate recognition of the need for change and improvement.

Although the UNRWA mandate extends only to those Palestinians, and their descents, displaced by the 1948 war, some services are available to other groups. UNRWA has no clear requirement or mechanism for accountability to the refugees it serves.

UNHCR – internationally mandated responsibilities. Although constrained by the Lebanese government's refusal to recognise refugee status and provide formal asylum, UNHCR works with refugees and asylum seekers coming mainly from Iraq. UNHCR activities in Lebanon include refugee registration, community services, domestic needs and household support, education and health services, legal assistance and resettlement. UNHCR coordinates and works with a network of international and national implementing partners and collaborating agencies, including DRC. For the 18 months following the 2006 war with Israel, UNHCR supported projects targeting IDPs and war-affected communities in southern Beirut, South Lebanon and the Bekaa.

In addition to the aforementioned lack of a legal refugee and asylum framework in Lebanon, UNHCR and its implementing partners are under-resourced in 2009, with only 40% of funds requested under the recent CAP committed to date by donors.

2.4 Humanitarian Activities by Other Assistance Actors

For Palestinians – As noted above, UNRWA has primary responsibilities for the Palestinian refugees, though its services are limited by sector and, increasingly, by budget restrictions. While there are many local NGOs working with the Palestinians, most are political or sectarian in nature and have limited resources. However, there is a core of excellent LINGOs with well-established funding and support networks and reputations for quality services and non-discrimination in service delivery. These NGOs frequently partner with international NGOs, who typically provide funding and technical support. A number of collaborative initiatives amongst local and international NGOs include the Network on Child Protection and the Palestinian Women's Forum that deals with women's protection issues. Recently, UNRWA has established coordinating forums for key service providers at the national level, with emphases on protection, education and medical support.

Key international and local NGO service providers are listed below, by sector:

- Education: Save the Children – Sweden (SC-S), Naba'a, Najdeh Association, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Welfare Association, World Vision Lebanon and DRC;
- Livelihoods: Palestinian Arab Women League (PAWL), Premiere Urgence, ILO, Mercy Corps and DRC;
- Medical/Health: Medical Assistance for Palestine UK (MAP-UK), MPDL and Handicap International;
- Shelter & Infrastructure (mainly wat-san): NRC and Premiere Urgence;
- Protection: Najdeh, Naba'a, SC-S, NRC and DRC; and,
- Other (including general): Beit Atfal Assoumoud,. General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW)

For Iraqis – There is a core group of local and international NGOs who deliver the majority of humanitarian assistance to Iraqi refugees. They include UNHCR's direct implementing partners (IPs), and several other organisations that largely coordinate under the UNHCR umbrella.

Key service providers, by sector, include:

- Education: Caritas Migrants, Insaan, Middle East Council of Churches, NRC and DRC;
- Livelihoods: International Medical Corps;
- Medical: Caritas Migrants, IMC, Medecins sans Frontieres (MSF) and MECC;
- NFI: Caritas Migrants, MECC, and DRC;
- Protection: Ajem, Frontieres, ICRC, Restart, MSF, NRC and DRC;
- Other (including general): Amel Association, Caritas Migrants, MECC and DRC.

2.5 Constraints & Opportunities

While DRC's global strategy supports the promotion of durable solutions for refugees and other war-affected populations, there are presently no viable durable solution short- or mid-term options for most of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. Palestinian refugees have been in Lebanon for 60 years and are not likely to go anywhere soon. Even in the event of a two-state political solution for Palestine, return for most Palestinians will not be an option; full local integration with Lebanese citizenship is not politically possible due to its potential effects on Lebanon's fragile ethnic balance. For Palestinian refugees, then, DRC's mission is simply to improve the quality of life and promote a more protective environment through direct assistance to vulnerable groups and joint advocacy, with UNRWA and civil society actors, to gain greater economic and social rights.

With regards to the Iraqi population, viable durable solutions include resettlement, for the qualifying highly vulnerable, and eventual return for the rest. Permanent integration with citizenship is an option only for Iraqi women who might marry Lebanese men. UNHCR expects that resettlement opportunities will diminish over the next couple of years, leaving return the only real option. While return to some areas of Iraq is already happening, UNHCR and other key actors agree that security conditions in most of the country, including Baghdad, are not appropriate for encouraged, let alone facilitated, return. For the time being, therefore, DRC will continue to directly support care and maintenance of the most vulnerable Iraqis while maintaining its outreach and information activities to help ensure that important decisions, from accessing services in Lebanon to returning to Iraq, are informed. When organised return does become possible, DRC would expect to facilitate that process until the majority, and most vulnerable, refugees have gone home.

3. DRC'S VISION & PROGRAMME IN LEBANON

DRC's programme objective is to promote protection and durable solutions for displacement-affected populations in Lebanon.

3.1 Vision & Exit Criteria

DRC's main goal in Lebanon is to help build and sustain a more protective environment for refugees and other war-affected populations through advocacy and capacity development with duty-bearers and the development of civil society and community-based protection services among refugee and host populations. Where durable solutions are a foreseeable option, as for most Iraqis, DRC would continue advocacy and support until those in need of DRC facilitation for their eventual return to Iraq is accomplished. For the Palestinians, DRC's work would be completed when effective community mechanisms are in place to provide a significant level of self-protection from violence and other key concerns.

3.2 Objectives, Target Groups & Sectors of Intervention

Objectives	Target Groups	Sectors
1. DRC emergency response capacity developed and maintained	Refugees & IDPs, as needed	no activity at present
2. Care and maintenance needs of vulnerable refugees are appropriately addressed	Iraqis & Palestinians	NFI and other household support, medical and legal aid
3. Sustainable livelihood & other coping mechanisms for refugees & host populations are promoted & supported	Palestinians	income generation and education
4. Protection environment enhanced through increased capacities of duty-bearers and rights-holders at local and national levels	Iraqis & Palestinians, UNHCR, UNRWA, Lebanese Govt.	information, advocacy, capacity development

3.3 Operational Principles

The Lebanon programme incorporates DRC's ten operational principles into all projects and activities, as relevant and possible. These principles are Participation, Capacity Development, GAD (Gender, Age and Diversity), Advocacy, "Do No Harm", Collaboration with local partners, Complementarity, General Replicability of methods and programmes, Sustainability and Environment.

Participation – DRC seeks the participation of beneficiaries, local civil society and other relevant stakeholders in all aspects of project development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Target groups, NGO service providers and relevant agencies and local authorities are typically consulted when a project is designed using surveys and assessments, focus group and key informant meetings, and other useful tools and forums. Project monitoring and evaluation entailing interaction and solicitation of opinion and feedback of these same groups takes place throughout each project period. Proper

coordination with service providers and other stakeholders is ensured bilaterally and through attendance at relevant formal coordination forums.

Capacity Development – DRC seeks to develop local capacities through partnerships with local NGOs, community groups and municipal authorities, and through surveys and other tools that bring relevant information to duty-bearers and other stakeholders. Three of DRC's current projects include funding for sub-grants to local NGOs, which receive technical support and implement project activities under contract to DRC. Under its Palestinian refugee projects, DRC is working with local community members to design and implement community-based mechanisms to address violence and other protection concerns. DRC has also supported both UNHCR and UNRWA through the secondment of professional staff; under one current project, DRC funds the Senior Protection Officer position in UNRWA's Lebanon office.

Gender, Age & Diversity – Throughout the project cycle, DRC ensures that the opinions and interests of all beneficiaries are solicited and addressed, respectively, to ensure that marginalized or otherwise under-represented groups receive gender- and age-appropriate support. Although most of DRC's assistance to Iraqis is family oriented, special attention is given to the participation of female household members in decisions relating to NFI and other needs, and their specific concerns are heard in focus group and other information activities. Palestinian protection activities give a high priority to women and youth at risk of domestic and community violence. All DRC project beneficiary data is disaggregated by gender and age.

Advocacy – DRC contributes to advocacy in Lebanon through a wide variety of information activities combined with targeted advocacy campaigns relating to specific issues of concern. For example, DRC has led an innovative multi-year, civil society effort to bring recognition and provide support to the estimated 1,800 'non-ID' Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. The campaign initially succeeded in convincing the Lebanese Government and UNRWA that non-ID refugees do actually exist and, since then, has helped bring about a joint Lebanese Government-PLO initiative to register and provide legal documentation for the non-IDs.

"Do No Harm" – DRC does its best to anticipate, design and implement its humanitarian activities with full consideration of potential, unintended, harmful consequences. With regard to protection, specifically, DRC acknowledges its responsibility to ensure that its activities (including those carried out by local partners) do not undermine protection or exacerbate protection problems; moreover, DRC seeks, where possible, to mitigate the effects of and prevent abuses and incorporate protection into all projects. All DRC staff members in Lebanon receive an orientation in the "Do No Harm" principle.

Collaboration with local partners – As discussed above, DRC works closely with local NGOs as both implementing and advocacy partners. With the Palestinian refugee activities, especially, DRC finds that local partners are often much more efficient and effective in communicating and intervening at individual and community levels due to local knowledge and ties with beneficiary communities.

Complementarity – DRC in Lebanon has a strong reputation for pro-active collaboration with other national and international actors. DRC is very transparent with regards to sharing information and designs its project in consultation with other NGOs and stakeholders in order to promote synergies rather than competition. As a general rule, DRC only provides direct assistance when a specific need cannot be addressed through referral to another service provider.

General replicability of methods and programmes – To the extent practicable, DRC Lebanon develops and uses project designs and activities that can be used as models that can be

readily adapted to use in other areas of Lebanon or elsewhere. Both of DRC's current Palestinian projects, for example, were designed as pilot projects to test strategies and specific models of intervention which DRC plans to fine tune and then duplicate across the wider Palestinian community in Lebanon.

Sustainability – DRC addresses sustainability at several levels, depending on type of project and activity. Livelihood activities, for example, focus on developing skills or providing tools and other assistance that increase individual household incomes over the long term. Sustainability is promoted also at institutional levels by developing the management and fundraising capacities of local NGOs to improve and sustain their activities beyond the period of DRC assistance. DRC commitment to sustainability is reflected in its long-term approach and focus on achieving durable solutions where possible. DRC's projects for Palestinian projects in Lebanon, for example, are designed as long-term interventions that seek permanent improvements on the protection environment, whereas DRC has a full commitment to support the Iraqi refugees until they are resettled or able to return to Iraq voluntarily, safely and in dignity.

Environment – Although DRC does not implement projects aimed at environmental preservation or awareness in Lebanon, DRC does consciously assess the extent to which its activities might have an effect, positive or negative, on the environment, and seeks interventions that, at a minimum, do not worsen environmental problems.

4. ENABLING FACTORS: CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES

4.1 Security & Logistics

The security situation in Lebanon has been reasonably good since mid-2008, with no major outbreaks of political or other violence having occurred since May that year. Although incidents of violence occasionally erupt, in Lebanon, mainly in the north and the Beqaa, most areas of the country have been generally calm. With regards to the Palestinian camps, DRC must occasionally restrict movement to the Ein el Helweh camp in Saida (South Lebanon) but has accessed other camps without any problems.

DRC continues to monitor the security situation in all areas of operation. As a standard procedure, DRC seeks clearance from its local partners before visiting the Palestinian camps. DRC also participates in an international NGO security forum that meets at least quarterly in Beirut and is part of an NGO 'security tree' network.

Having implemented large-scale procurement, warehousing and distribution projects over the last 3 years, DRC has the relevant systems, personnel, management and other capacities to effectively respond to new emergencies while maintaining current programming.

4.2 Stakeholders, Partners & Coordination

4.2.1 Stakeholders

International community – In addition to general humanitarian considerations, most regional and western governments, especially, have a strong pragmatic interest in sustaining a reasonable quality of life for Palestinians in Lebanon in order to limit the rise of lawlessness and radicalism that can lead to such incidents as the 2007 crisis in Nahr el-Bared and spill over into neighbouring countries. International governments, especially in the West, provide quite generous support for the Iraqi refugee caseload in Lebanon and neighbouring

countries, where mainly care and maintenance assistance is provided until conditions for return improve.

Lebanese Government – see section 2.3

UNHCR and UNRWA – see section 2.3

Civil society – Lebanon possesses a vibrant civil society working on a wide variety of social, economic and political issues. A number of NGOs, including Palestinian, work with refugees mainly in the provision of humanitarian assistance but also, increasingly, in advocacy, especially for the Palestinians. DRC works closely with and supports many NGOs working with both refugee groups, with some serving as strategic long-term partners and others as short-term contractors for delivery of specific services. See section 2.4, above.

Host Lebanese population – The Lebanese public perceives and deals with Palestinian and Iraqi refugees quite differently. Palestinians, now constituting up to 10 percent of the Lebanese population and have been present in Lebanon for 60 years. Though generally tolerated, they are resented and discriminated against both socially and economically. Iraqi refugees, more newly arrived, receive more sympathy but no special considerations from the Lebanese.

Refugees – see section 2.2.

4.2.2 Partners

DRC has four key Palestinian partners, General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW); Naba'a, Najdeh Association and Palestinian Arab Women's League (PAWL). The latter three are registered NGOs in Lebanon and all four have significant experience in protection and other relevant activities. GUPW, Naba'a and Najdeh assist in information campaigns and community outreach, and in identifying individual cases for special assistance. PAWL implements income generation activities, including business training and provision of in-kind grants.

DRC also provides subgrants to Lebanese and Palestinian NGOs for various project activities and services. Many of these include a capacity development aspect.

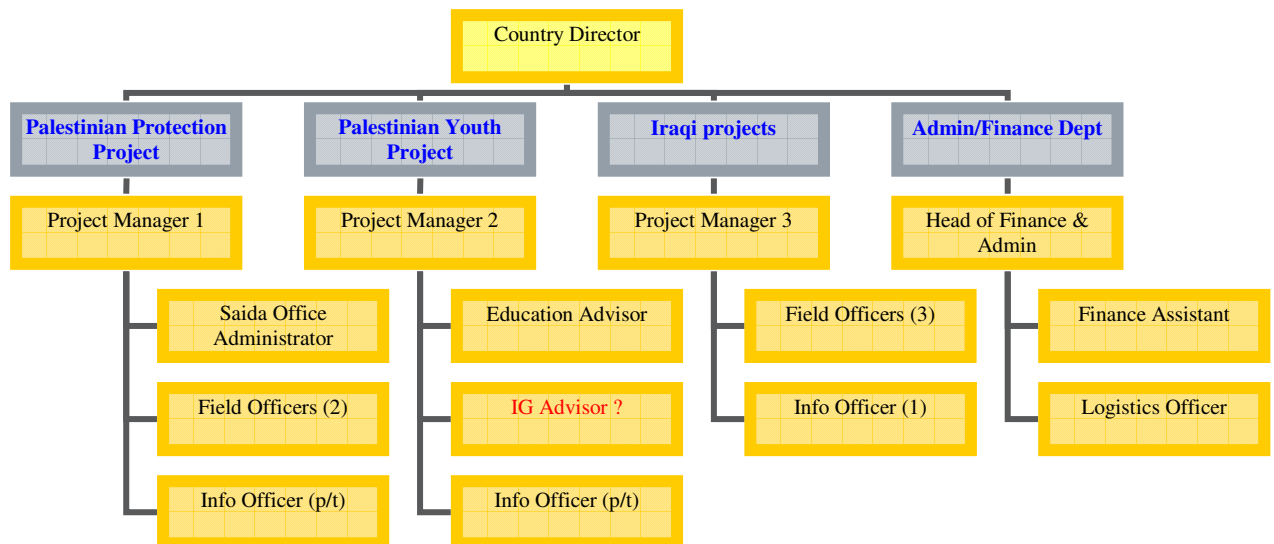
4.2.3 Coordination

DRC remains a committed participant in relevant coordination forums relating to Iraqi and Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. These currently include general coordination, protection and relevant cluster meetings held by UNHCR and UNRWA. In addition, DRC coordinates bilaterally with many organizations on a regular basis during implementation of its humanitarian assistance and advocacy activities. DRC has excellent relations with the Ministry of Social Affairs, at national and local levels, and has cordial communications with the Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee, the office of General Security, the PLO representation in Lebanon and the Iraqi embassy in Beirut.

DRC has helped build and actively works with case-management network of local and international NGO service providers that actively refer cases to one another and frequently share costs for expensive medical and other interventions.

4.3 DRC's Capacity

4.3.1 Organisation & Staffing



4.3.2 Funding (as of August 2009)

European Commission Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO)	500,000 EUR
US Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM)	1,253,000 USD
British Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO)	750,000 GBP

5. ANNEXES

5.1 Maps (attached)

5.2 Scenario Matrix (attached)

5.3 Strategic Focal areas for Next Year (attached)