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REPUBLIC OF LEBANON
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH

FACT SHEET

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*Conflict Reduction through improving Healthcare Services
for the Vulnerable Population in Lebanon*

About the Project

Lebanon is experiencing an unprecedented increase in population from neighboring Syria. Primary Healthcare Centers are overstretched and the Ministry of Public Health’s communicable disease surveillance and response system is being put under stress.

This project, funded by the European Union and led by the Ministry of Public Health, is committed to addressing the identified primary health gaps in the health system for the vulnerable populations in Lebanon and where shortage in resources and capacities can lead to tension.

This project is implemented by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in partnership with the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children’s Fund, International Relief and Development and International Alert.

Project Goal/Objective

The main goal of the project is to enable the Ministry of Public Health to meet the increased challenge of serving and protecting the residents of Lebanon, through strategic institutional support to the Lebanese primary healthcare system.

The project, using a conflict sensitive approach, intends to increase both the access to primary healthcare services and the capacity to monitor and respond to communicable disease outbreaks. Overall, this project aims to contribute to a reduction of community level conflict by improving service delivery and access.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

1-Reinforcement of quality primary health care

1.1 Equipping health facilities and supplying vaccines and medicines

- 6,200 medical equipment items were provided to 180 primary healthcare centers to enable a 40 percent increase in the utilization of health services, representing around 400,000 patients.
- Increased stock of vaccine for free of charge vaccination to all children below 5 years (based on Ministry of Public Health National Vaccine Calendar) made available in more than 700 dispensaries and primary health care centers with cold chain system and solar fridges provided for safety storage of these vaccines.
- Increased stock of acute medications made available to the beneficiaries of the 200 national primary healthcare centers.
- Distribution of 102,376 insulin vials to primary healthcare centers to replenish stocks for around 500 diabetic patients for a period of one year.
- Tuberculosis medications that cover around 200 patients were delivered to the Ministry of Public Health National Tuberculosis Program.
- 10,000 ampules of Glucantime for the treatment of leishmaniasis were delivered to 12 leishmania clinics run by the Ministry of Public Health and around 1,100 patients were treated in 2014.
- In order to prevent and/or contain waterborne disease outbreaks, 325 chlorine barrels were delivered to the Ministry of Public Health centrally and 258 barrels were distributed throughout Lebanon (Bekaa 40, Nabatieh 40, Baalbak 40, Tripoli 40, Qobayat 20, Halba 20, Mount Lebanon and Baabda 58)..
- 500,000 medical files, 20,000 vaccination cards and 100,000 pregnancy cards and other primary healthcare material and forms are being printed and will be distributed and available for use at all primary healthcare centers in Lebanon.

1.2 Expansion and reinforcement of programs

- “Mother and Child Health Care”: this initiative allows Lebanese pregnant women and children who do not have any form of health coverage to benefit from a comprehensive package of healthcare services at no cost. This initiative was initially implemented in Wadi Khaled in 2003. Since March 2015, this project has expanded the initiative to 3 new regions; Tripoli, Rashayya, and Beirut where 350 pregnant women and their children will benefit.
- Integration of Mental Health: To address the need for mental health care in vulnerable communities, training on the mental health Gap Action Programme - Intervention Guide was completed in 48 primary healthcare centers, whereby a total of 106 Lebanese health care providers (doctors, nurses, social workers, etc.) were trained on assessment, management, follow-up and referral of mental health conditions. In addition 59 staff from 37 primary healthcare centres were trained on Psychological First Aid.
- Non-Communicable Disease Initiative: 275 primary healthcare staff were trained on risk assessment and early detection of hypertension and diabetes in addition the number of primary healthcare centers included in the initiative were increased from 60 to 124 centers. Furthermore, 56 non-communicable disease early detection kits that serve around 25,200 patients were delivered to primary healthcare centers. The distribution of essential medications for chronic diseases to 435 primary healthcare centers was ensured, aiming to serve a total of 150,000 patients suffering from hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, dyslipidemias, diabetes, asthma, mental health and other chronic health conditions.



1.3 Building capacity of health care personnel

- 125 doctors/pharmacists and 256 healthcare workers were trained on the rational use of medicines, the management of medicines and the role of health workers.
- 164 nurses and physicians at primary healthcare centers were trained on the revised national guideline for Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses to strengthen child health services, rationalize the used of medications and reduce morbidity and mortality among Lebanese and refugee children.
- 130 obstetrics/gynecology physicians and 50 midwives, working in primary healthcare centers located in areas with high density of displaced Syrians, were trained on emergency obstetrics care to improve delivery outcomes.
- 365 healthcare providers working in neonatal wards were trained on neonatal resuscitation and stabilization to decrease infant mortality from high-risk pregnancy births.
- 400 medical doctors and nurses from primary healthcare centers were trained on the updated national guidebook for clinical management for the most common health conditions in primary health care.

1.4 More conflict sensitive care

- 120 health workers (from 71 health centers) trained on understanding conflict, dealing with stress and enhancing their communication skills.
- Mentoring staff in 15 primary healthcare centers to deal with tensions and conflict in their everyday work in a constructive way.
- 15 social workers and community outreach staff of two Nongovernmental Organizations trained on conducting dialogue-based inter-community awareness sessions; subsequently, 100 awareness-raising sessions were organized by the trained staff for mixed groups of Lebanese nationals and Syrian refugees.
- Collaboration with health non-governmental organizations to enhance their capacities to understand and address tensions in the communities where they work.

2-Reinforcement of communicable diseases monitoring, early warning and response system

2.1 Development of guides and training

- Standard operating procedures were updated for the response and surveillance of 43 selected diseases and hazards (AFP, Anthrax, Bilharzia, Brucellosis, Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease, Cholera, Diphtheria, Food Poisoning, Gonorrhoea, Hepatitis A, B, C, D, E, HTLV1, Hydatid Cyst, Haemorrhagic Fever, Influenza new virus subtypes, Invasive Coronavirus infection, Invasive meningococcal disease, Intestinal Infections Legionellosis, Leishmaniasis, Leprosy, Malaria, Measles, Mumps, Pertussis, Plague, Rubella, Rabies, Smallpox, Syphilis, Tetanus, Typhoid Fever).
- 9 newly developed surveillance guidelines will be distributed to hospitals, medical centers, private clinics, laboratories, schools and epidemiology surveillance unit and response teams; the Ministry of Public Health official surveillance reporting and investigation forms were also updated and will be disseminated to hospitals, medical centers, private clinics, laboratories, schools and epidemiology surveillance unit team.
- 133 personnel from the Ministry of Public Health response team and epidemiology surveillance team, Qada Doctors, head of health departments at Mohafaza level, airport health team and Rafik Hariri University Hospital teams were trained on Standard Operating Surveillance and Response procedures for the priority notifiable diseases.
- 1,624 health educators from private (477) and public (1,147) schools were trained on school-based surveillance and response system.



2.2 Food safety

- 77 public health inspectors and Ministry of Public Health staff were trained on food safety principles and standard food sampling and inspection, and necessary sampling equipment were distributed.

2.3 Water lab

- 8 water laboratories were established across the Lebanese governorates in the following public hospitals: Rafik Hariri University Hospital, Dahr El Bachek, Tripoli, Halba, Zahle, Baalback, Saida and Marjeoun through the rehabilitation of the water lab and provision of equipment and reagents to monitor water quality and alert for any potential infectious disease outbreaks.
- 16 recruited laboratory staff trained on standard operating procedures, modalities of testing and quality control to ensure regular drinking water monitoring and environmental municipality staff for around 20 caza per mohafaza to be trained on water sampling techniques.

2.4 Negative pressure rooms

- 8 negative pressure rooms for outbreak containment were established; 4 rooms in RafikHariri University hospital and 1 negative pressure room in each of Baabda, Baalback, Tripoli and Bent Jbeil Governmental Hospitals.



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