

Improving Living Conditions in PALESTINIAN GATHERINGS Host Communities



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Quarterly Briefing | Issue 1

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HIGHLIGHTS



- ✓ **13** WASH and BUS projects launched in Saida, Tyre and Beirut, and **3** others completed
- ✓ **150** shelter units rehabilitated and equipped with WASH facilities in **17** Gatherings across the country
- ✓ **4150** dwellers targeted in **25** Gatherings in Phase I of WASH awareness campaign

Improving Living Conditions in Palestinian Gatherings Host Communities is a project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) that falls under the UNDP Lebanon Stabilization and Recovery Program – Supporting Resilience in a Time of Crisis.

Active in the 42 Palestinian Gatherings across Lebanon since 2012, this project is designed to help stabilize and develop the resilience of these host communities, home to 110,000 original Palestinian dwellers (PRL) and recently some 30,000 Palestinian and Syrian refugees (PRS and SRS) as a result of the Syrian crisis.

In 2014, we reached over 105,500 beneficiaries by upgrading WASH and Basic Urban Services (BUS), enhancing shelter conditions, and raising awareness on healthy and environmental practices, as well through efforts to coordinate NGOs and agencies' response in the Gatherings.



BENEFICIARIES

This quarter, we reached **29,000** dwellers in the Gatherings across Lebanon



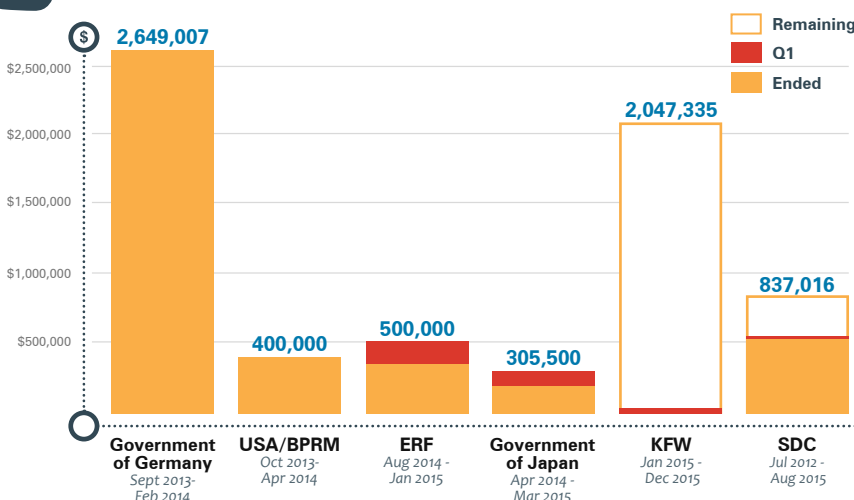
*SRS +Lebanese +other nationalities



GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE



FUNDS (as of July 2012)





BASIC URBAN SERVICES

550 m of main sewage network rehabilitated in Burghlieh, Tyre

400 m of sewage and storm water network rehabilitated in the Corniche Street of Nahr El Bared Camp Adjacent Area

13 WASH and BUS projects launched across Lebanon

7 electricity works launched in Shabriha, Tyre and 6 Adjacent Areas to Ain El Helwe camp

2 water projects started in Beirut and Tyre

Electricity Project in Maachouk , Tyre:

Responding to the deteriorating performance of the water well in Maachouk following the arrival of around 1,000 PRS, UNDP rehabilitated the well in March, by installing an electrical control panel, a voltage regulator, change-over switches, and electrical wires. The rehabilitated well, administered by Maachouk 's Popular Committee and the only available water source in the Gathering, is expected to enhance access to water for 5,600 Palestinian dwellers.



SHELTER

150 shelters rehabilitated and equipped with WASH facilities in 17 Gatherings

1300 additional shelters identified to be assessed across Lebanon, in coordination with popular committees' representative body

“My family used to sleep between buckets that we placed under the drips in the leaking ceiling of our one-room shelter. For hot water, we placed unprotected electrical wires in cold water barrels. We did not even have a door to protect us from cold. After UNDP rehabilitated and equipped our shelter last January, my family life has done a 180 degree turn! We definitely feel much more comfortable and safe.”

Bassam, a Palestinian father seeking refuge in Sekke Gathering adjacent to Ain El Helwe Camp in Saida, after his family fled violence in Syria in 2013



HYGIENE PROMOTION

4150 dwellers targeted in 25 Gatherings across Lebanon as part of Phase I of awareness campaign:

307 women attended home stations, in which interactive awareness sessions were delivered

1000 children participated in interactive activities

200 youth engaged in clean-up campaigns

1100 mothers and children visited open hygiene days

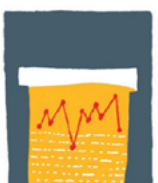
1513 children attended puppetry show on hygiene

30 women received a training on hairdressing and head lice treatment



32 animators and facilitators from implementing partners (PARD and Beit Atfal Assumoud) were trained last January on tools developed by UNDP to conduct WASH activities for children and women in the Gatherings.

The **tools**, available on the [UNDP website](#), include information and practical guides for service providers, an interactive board-game for 9 to 12 year-olds and a story coloring book for 6 to 8 year-olds.



COORDINATION AND INFORMATION SHARING

40 representatives of popular committees, municipal councils and reference groups attended two retreats organized by UNDP, with the aim of exploring community development needs and ideas. The retreats, moderated by the consultancy firm Beyond Reform and Development, will inspire new areas of interventions that the project seeks to embark on next year.

HAIRDRESSING TRAININGS:

An innovative approach to combat head lice in the Gatherings

"My dad placed a note in his shop announcing the upcoming opening of my beauty salon," told us Maha in great pride. After participating in a hairdressing workshop organized by UNDP for women in Palestinian Gatherings, Maha, 17 decided to turn the upper floor of her father's shop in Sabra, Beirut into a hairdressing salon. For her, this new project has re-shifted her life path, after she had left school few years ago.

Not far from Maha's salon, Marwa, 32 will join efforts with her sister and sister in law to open a hairdressing parlour at her home. After they attended the training, the three Palestinian young women residing in Daouk Gathering in Beirut will divide working shifts among themselves, which according to them will allow their business to grow, without really affecting their family commitments.

UNDP designed this training as an innovative approach to transfer positive and healthy practices relating to head lice treatment to communities, as part of the WASH awareness campaign that the UNDP national project "*Improving Living Conditions in Palestinian Gatherings*" has started a year ago, and which has targeted so far more than 9000 dwellers through different activities.

"Initiatives aiming at combating head lice in congested communities are often limited to shaving heads of children. This practice not only fails to treat head lice which feeds on blood rather than hair, but can also be emotionally traumatic for children," says Sheeraz Moujally, the project Communication Officer at UNDP.

"While developing their skills to earn a living, we thought that local women would be the best messengers to expose harmful and ineffective practices that some women might adopt to treat head lice in their families, such as applying excessive heat, liquid paraffin or vinegar."

"We learnt that lice don't fly or jump; lice can infest anyone regardless of personal hygiene," says Doaa, 17 a participant from the Gathering of Naameh in Beirut. "If one of my clients tells me she has a head lice problem, I would reassure her that head lice is common and show her how to apply its easy treatment."



Implemented in collaboration with UNDP local partner PARD in Beirut, Saida and Tyre, this business start-up workshop will not only increase the self-reliance of the 30 participating women, but will also reflect on communities' health by providing them with affordable services that will help them preserve their dignity and hygiene.

After completing eight training sessions tackling hair cutting, styling and lice treatment, every woman participant received a hairdressing kit allowing her to start a small hairdressing business at her home. The kit includes a hair dryer, a sterilizer, head lice shampoo and combs, and a variety of scissors, clips and brushes.

Fadia Dahshe, Coordinator of Women Empowerment projects at PARD, goes further in describing the benefits of a similar initiative: "we believe similar income-generating activities can actually protect girls from early or forced marriage," she says. "By granting them economic independence, similar initiatives also protect women from violence and exploitation."

This training has inspired a more ambitious dream for Samah, 27 from Burghlieh in Tyre. "This is the first step towards my dream to establish a big beauty salon bringing together young hairdressers and creating jobs for women like us in the Gatherings of Tyre," says Samah who is used to volunteer in community development projects.

During the closing ceremony of one of these trainings in Tyre, Mayor of Burghlieh Ghaleb Daoud underlined the impact of similar vocational trainings on individuals and communities alike. "We hosted this training in our municipality because we have faith that we will be soon hearing about success stories of women participants and witnessing the economic and social impact of their work in communities."



A glimpse into GAZA BUILDINGS

Gaza Buildings refer to four congested multi-storey buildings, bordering to the west the main street of Sabra in Beirut. First established as the “Ramallah-Gaza Hospital” in 1983, the buildings became refuge for Palestinians fleeing violence in Sabra and Tal El Zaatar camps in the 1980s. While main service providers are absent in Gaza Buildings, the Gathering is today home to 2,150 Palestinian original dwellers and 515 recent refugees from Syria, mostly Syrians. In December 2014, UNDP completed the rehabilitation of Sabra’s well and installed a water network to link Gaza Buildings to the well in Sabra.



Meet LUCA RENDA

UNDP Country Director in Lebanon



“As their sore reality is exacerbated by the arrival of Palestinian and Syrian refugees over the past three years, Palestinian Gatherings deserve more attention from the donor community in Lebanon. Building on lessons learnt from successive crises, UNDP believes forging innovative partnerships and maximizing dialogue opportunities in times of crises are the key to create sustainable change. Through this project, we work with Palestinian and local actors not only to respond to service gaps in Gatherings, but also to achieve breakthroughs in the governance of these grey areas, in order to address their social exclusion.”

Renda holds a Master of Science in Development Studies from the London School of Economics (LSE). Since 2000, he assumed different roles in UNDP offices in New York, Ecuador and Honduras, before joining the UNDP family in Lebanon in 2012.

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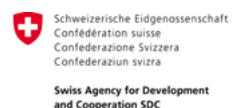
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