

REGISTRATION

The total number of Iraqis in Lebanon is estimated at 50,000 persons, out of whom 10,345 were registered with UNHCR as of 31 March 2009. 265 Iraqis were registered in March alone.

Country of origin	Refugees*	Asylum Seekers*
Iraq	10,345	-
Sudan	105	466
Somalia	32	11
Other	212	223
Total	10,694	700

* As of 31 March 2009

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

Promotion of Refugee Protection: Most refugees do not have legal status in Lebanon and are at risk of arrest and detention. UNHCR succeeded in 2008 in obtaining the release of 230 refugees from detention. In March 2009, UNHCR continued to intervene with the authorities to release persons of concern. UNHCR provided 91 refugees with legal counselling.

Resettlement: Resettlement to third countries is the only viable durable solution for most refugees in Lebanon. It is expected that around 2,500 persons will be resettled in 2009.

- **2,391** refugees were accepted for resettlement in 2008 (including 2,320 Iraqis).
- **1,373** refugees departed to third countries in 2008 (including 1,329 Iraqis).

2009	Departures	Submissions
USA	677	867
Australia	12	47
Sweden	9	29
Denmark	2	-
Norway	1	1
Canada	5	100
UK	3	-
France	-	1
Switzerland	-	3
Total	709	1,048

Health: UNHCR, through its partners, provides health assistance to both in-patients and out-patients based on a needs assessment. An office for the rehabilitation of victims of torture and violence run by UNHCR's partner, RESTART, also provides mental health services.

- **1340** persons received inpatient and outpatient services in 2009 (4560 persons received health care in 2008).
- **303** persons currently receive mental health services through UNHCR partner, Restart.

Education: In 2008, the Lebanese Ministry of Education issued an official circular calling on public and private schools to facilitate registration of all children of concern to UNHCR. UNHCR provides educational grants to all refugee children as well as remedial classes and vocational training through its NGO partners. 81% of refugee children between 4 and 17 years old are enrolled in formal education.

- **1,525** children received education grants for the scholastic year 2008- 2009 (296 so far in 2009)
- **139** persons received vocational training in 2009 (144 in 2008)

RECENT ACTIVITIES

- The dialogue with the Lebanese authorities at different levels continued throughout the month to advocate for a more favourable legal framework for refugees.
- The regularization process open to illegal foreigners that started towards the end of February continued in March. UNHCR is assisting the release of persons of concern through helping them regularize their status and partially covering the regularization lump sum imposed by the authorities.
- UNHCR continued to assist vulnerable refugees with financial and non-financial support including the payment of rent based on a needs assessment and case by case evaluation. 791 persons received financial assistance so far in 2009.
- UNHCR carried on the distribution of food coupons through its partners. 546 food coupons were distributed in 2009.
- UNHCR also assisted 215 refugees with hygienic material.
- In March, psychosocial activities targeted 73 refugee children and 34 youths at the UNHCR community centres.

COMMUNITY CENTERS

The office has two community centres for refugees and asylum seekers in Lebanon run by its partner, Amel Association. One is located in the southern suburbs of Beirut and the other is located in the east of Beirut with a focus on women empowerment. The centres are currently providing non-formal education classes to refugee students and vocational/skills training activities to adult males as well as music classes, football training, and drama therapy, to refugee children and youths with the aim to help them express themselves, boost their morale and develop their skills.

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

Implementing partners: Association Justice et Miséricorde (AJEM), Amel association, CARITAS- Migrant Centre, The Middle-East Council of Churches (MECC), and RESTART.

Operational partners: Arc-en-Ciel, Chaldean Charity Association, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Frontiers, International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), Institut Européen de Coopération et de Développement (IECD), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Medical Corps (IMC), Insan, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Lebanese Association for Development (Al Majmoua), Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Pinnacle, Right to Play, Save the Children – Sweden and World Vision International.

UNHCR PRESENCE

UNHCR has had a main office in Beirut since 1963. Since 2005, a Regional Resettlement Hub, based in Beirut, has been covering the Middle East and North Africa

Staffing

Total: 74 (24 International, 50 National)

2009 Budget

Total Budget in 2009: US\$ 2,508,183

