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Cover photo: Diego Ibarra Sanchez/UNICEF
FOREWORD

2017 marked the first year of the implementation of the UN Strategic Framework 2017–2020. The framework sets out our common vision in support of Lebanon’s security, political, human rights and developmental priorities.

This strategic framework marks a new chapter in the partnership between Lebanon and the United Nations, which has grown in depth and magnitude over the past years to respond to the multi-dimensional challenges Lebanon is facing across the areas of peace and security, stability, and socio-economic stabilization.

While supporting the Government in mitigating the impact of the Syrian crisis on Lebanon remains at the center of our collective efforts, the strategic framework aims also at facilitating progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Jointly, we have achieved significant results. The successes and lessons highlighted in this report are attributable to the collective efforts of many, most and foremost the citizens and communities of Lebanon as well as the leaders who have worked to ensure the stability of Lebanon taking into consideration the needs of all.

2018 will be a critical year for Lebanon. In May, the Lebanese went to the polls for the first time in nearly a decade – an important step towards stronger governance and for the functioning of state institutions. A key priority of the new Government will be to put Lebanon back on the path of economic growth and sustainable development. Success will depend not only on the continued international assistance to the country, but also the commitment by the Government to implement its structural, sectoral and fiscal reform agenda.

The UN looks forward to working closely with all of its partners to assist the Government and the people of Lebanon on their journey towards a prosperous and stable future where no one is left behind.

Philippe Lazzarini, UN Resident Coordinator

In 2017, the UN in Lebanon supported ten communities to improve cedar forest maintenance.  

Photo: UNDP
This report summarises progress made in the first year of implementation of the United Nations Strategic Framework for Lebanon 2017–2020, which was endorsed and signed by the Government of Lebanon on the 4th of October 2016. This strategic framework is the UN’s response – through a “Whole of Lebanon” approach – to the multi-dimensional challenges Lebanon is facing. It outlines the UN’s common vision and the expected contribution of the members of the UN family in support of Lebanon’s security, political, human rights and developmental priorities. The strategic framework is the result of a consultative process, involving Government counterparts, civil society and international partners in identifying key areas of UN support, taking into consideration the comparative advantage of the UN and building on best practices and lessons learned from previous engagement.

The UNSF is built around three pillars:

1. **Peace and security**, with a focus on the mitigation of external threats to Lebanon, strengthening domestic security and law and order, preventing violent extremism and defusing local inter-communal tensions.
2. **Domestic stability**, including strengthened governance, with a focus on promoting accountability and inclusive participation, strengthened core state capacities, and the empowerment of youth and women.
3. **Mitigation of the socio-economic impact of the Syrian conflict and addressing pre-existing structural constraints**, recognizing the need for greater integration of efforts across the humanitarian-development nexus.

Whilst the primary goal of the Strategic Framework is to contribute to maintain the stability of Lebanon at a time of increased exposure to the regional crisis, it also lays down the ground to facilitate progress towards meeting the Sustainable Development Goals. The report assesses results achieved in the first year of implementation. It also includes significant development trends, an update on the progress of joint coordination and the results of efforts to increasingly communicate effectively as one. Finally, the report outlines key challenges encountered, lessons learned, and priorities moving forward and includes the financial overview for 2017.
2017 Highlights

More than 400,000 children, whereof half are Lebanese, received education.

Police professionalised in 40 municipalities to promote rule of law and ensure equal access to justice for all.

Food assistance provided to over 1,000,000 persons in need.

Human rights oriented legislation developed and passed, including the law criminalizing torture and the law on access to information.

Basic health care provided to more than half a million people in Lebanon.

Democratic parliamentary elections prepared, through technical assistance, voter information, and material support.

Safe water provided to about 1.3 million vulnerable people in Lebanon.

Renewable energy produced by installation of solar panel systems in 13 sites for industry and schools.

The Government produced a national strategy for gender equality (to be endorsed).
The National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) was established to help Lebanon deliver on human rights obligations.

21 Lebanese municipalities improved waste management.

239 enterprises and cooperatives empowered to grow businesses and create jobs.

Security improved along the Eastern border through provision of winter gear and equipment to the Lebanese Armed Forces.

Three industrial zones planned to benefit 200 companies and create thousands of jobs.

Thousands of farmers supported to scale up production and ensure food safety.

More than 100,000 refugees and poor Lebanese built their resilience and job skills through trainings.

Lebanon developed a national anti-corruption strategy and an action plan.

70,000 youth strengthened as individuals and citizens through training, including leadership, conflict resolution skills, and civil society work.
The year 2017 saw important developments which helped to restore Lebanon’s political and institutional stability. The election of President Michel Aoun in October 2016, after nearly two and a half years of a presidential vacancy, and the subsequent formation of a national unity government headed by Prime Minister Saad Hariri, not only diffused tension and reduced polarization, but also generated hope for the restoration of the political process and the revival of its institutions, including the revival of the parliament as a functional institution.

As a further step towards effective governance of Lebanon’s institutions of state, an agreement was reached in June 2017 on a new electoral law for parliamentary elections, which took place in May 2018 the first parliamentary elections since 2009. A national budget was approved in 2017 for the first time in 12 years, and important legal steps were taken towards the exploitation of Lebanon’s maritime resources. In late 2017, the country overcame a deep political crisis with Prime Minister Hariri’s unexpected resignation during a trip to Saudi Arabia. Following a unified call by Lebanon’s political leaders for Hariri’s return and a surge of international diplomacy, the Prime Minister returned to Lebanon and rescinded his resignation on 5 December after the cabinet agreed to commit to a policy of “dissociation” from regional conflicts. Tensions along the “Blue Line” at the Lebanese-Israeli border continued to be managed through the UN-facilitated tripartite mechanism.

Lebanon saw significant achievements on the security front, most notably in containing and ultimately defeating Daesh, al-Nusra and other extremist militant threats and consolidating its control along its Northern and Eastern borders.

The needs continue to grow despite a large-scale response by the government, the UN and other partners.
with Syria. The Lebanese armed forces, together with the country’s internal security forces and intelligence services, continued to coordinate effectively in preventing terrorist attacks and disrupting terrorist networks and capacities inside Lebanon. Yet, despite progress on the political and security fronts, the spill-over of the Syria crisis continued to impact Lebanon’s economy and public services, compounding pre-existing pressures on the country’s electricity, water supply, waste disposal and telecommunications’ systems, which continued to lack maintenance and investment.

Economic trends remained sluggish, with all segments of the economy struggling and competitiveness being undermined by the loss of major trading routes and regional markets. Against this background, in 2017, Lebanon began developing its vision for stability and sustainable long-term growth and job creation, which is accompanied by important sectoral and structural reforms as well as a major infrastructure programme, the Capital Investment Plan (CIP).

The CIP calls for over $20 billion in funding for 250 projects scheduled over the next decade, until 2030, focusing on investments in priority sectors, such as water, energy, transportation, and solid waste among others.

Seven years into the Syrian war, the humanitarian and local development needs continue to grow – despite a large-scale response by the Government of Lebanon and international partners. 76% of the Syrian refugee households subsisted below the poverty line and more than 50% of Syrian households live in extreme poverty. In addition, over 1 million Lebanese live below the poverty line.

Host community fatigue became more and more pronounced, and tensions between and within communities were on the rise. Perceived competition for lower-skilled jobs was identified as a key driver for these tensions. Between 2014 and 2017, the percentage of Lebanese who did not report any inter-community tensions dropped from 40 to 2 per cent.
RESULTS OF THE UNITED NATIONS STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK
PRIORITY 1: PEACE & SECURITY

TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND SECURITY STRENGTHENED IN ACCORDANCE WITH HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES (I.E. EXTERNAL SECURITY)

The UN worked to encourage its member states to increase support to the Lebanon Armed Forces (LAF) and security services as a key element of the prevention strategy in Lebanon. Comprehensive international military assistance was mobilized during 2017 and played an important role in fortifying Lebanon’s institutions and strengthening the state’s authority and monopoly over the legitimate use of force. The UN engaged directly in preparations for an international conference to support Lebanon’s armed forces and security services held in Rome, Italy in March 2018.

The UN facilitated the procurement by the LAF of winter gear, mountain climbing equipment and snowmobiles to three border regiments in the Eastern border areas. This assistance has helped improve the security and indirectly improved the lives of people in border areas by restoring livelihood opportunities and enhancing the socio-economic situations in these communities. Farmers could utilize more of their land for crops and cattle, and quarries along the eastern borders, one of the main economic activities in this area, are back to full operation.

Border management was strengthened by the construction of a new arrival terminal at the Aboudiyeh border crossing, facilitating more than 3,000 daily cross-border movements. At the land border of Al Masnaa and at the sea port in Tripoli, interventions contributed to the creation of a safe and comfortable environment for migrants and travellers awaiting clearance. These facilities were equipped with suitable seating and counters where migrants could complete the required documentation leading to a more effective management of migrants and refugees entering and exiting Lebanon.

In addition, security agencies were supported and sensitized to work in line with human rights principles and international law. For example, about 300 officers were trained on national laws, international human rights law and key refugee protection principles.

Other activities promoted 100 cases of appropriate management of investigations with regards to persons in need of humanitarian protection and affected by trafficking.
The UN support has helped Lebanon in its efforts to manage borders, increase security and improve safety, for example through actions to clear areas of landmines and explosive remnants of war. Photo: UNDP.
Professionalisation of the police in 40 municipalities

The capacity of municipal police services was strengthened through the launch of a training curriculum by the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) and the International Security Forces (ISF) Academy, by the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and a code of conduct for the municipal police. As a result of trainings, the municipal police personnel became more focused and motivated at work and individual performances improved.

ISF was supported by the UN to deliver the first trainings in Lebanon for police in 40 municipalities to uphold professional standards, improve case management and investigations, and increase effectiveness. The training was led and paid for by the Government, signalling sustainability and ownership to these development efforts. At least nine police stations were equipped to promote quality police service, in line with agreed procedures and professional standards. In the south of Lebanon, the UN utilised in-house resources for capacity building of 36 law enforcement officers to upgrade their professional skills in policing and consequently their contribution to reinforcement of the peace and stability.

Information and mapping of incidents

The UN assisted Lebanese authorities to better track security incidents, produce more accurate analysis and improve preparedness to handle tensions. The capacity to gather data on cases of tension was expanded, underlined by security cells in 25 districts performing data collection compared to only six districts in 2016. More than 230 incidents related to extremist violence or armed conflict were recorded in 2017.

An initiative was launched in cooperation with the World Customs Organization, INTERPOL, and the UN to strengthen the detection and interdiction capacities and establishment of real-time operational communication at the international airport in Beirut.

Supporting the state to protect children

Within the overarching framework of strengthening the child protection system in Lebanon, the UN formalised a supportive partnership with the Ministry of Interior & Municipalities to institutionalise and standardise a capacity development programme for ISF and municipal police personnel in dealing with cases of children in contact with the law. The partnership paves the way for the development of Standard Operating Procedures for the ISF on handling cases involving children, the adaptation of existing training materials for the ISF and municipal police to include child protection in policing practices, the development of new supporting materials and the establishment of a pool of core trainers from the ISF and municipal police specialized in child protection.
Capacity strengthening against terrorism

The UN continued supporting Lebanon’s counter-terrorism efforts, notably by strengthening the Government’s investigation, prosecution and adjudications capacities to deal with terrorist threats. Trainings were provided to promote efficient investigations on open sources and analyse and manage criminal intelligence.

The new techniques and knowledge were used in complex terrorism cases, and enabled evidence-based investigations and prosecution.

To promote and protect human rights while countering terrorism, the UN entities and the Lebanese authorities developed a training tool for security and judicial training institutions, highlighting human rights considerations while using special investigative methodologies in terrorism cases and other investigations related to organized crime.
Government to monitor tensions between host communities and refugees, and to establish a network of actors that could be drawn upon for early response. Through this system partners develop short monthly “early-warning” updates and quarterly analytical notes to guide decision-makers on local and national responses.

Identifying tensions and risks
Local government responses in poor urban neighbourhoods continued to be informed through a UN mapping of conflict risks in these areas. In 2017, eight neighbourhood profiles were developed to identify community stresses/tensions, giving a basis for developing multi-sector and multi-stakeholder planning and interventions.

Area-based profiling proceeded at city level, with a profile being published for Tyre and the 2016 profile for the Tripoli area being updated. The city profiles are a multi-sectoral spatial tool to improve understanding of vulnerabilities in urban settings and inform the response. The multi-municipality Tripoli profile became the basis for coordination and joint programming with a range of UN entities and major donors involved.

In the South of Lebanon, 35 quick impact projects...
were implemented to address critical needs and promote social stability, focusing on: 1) Youth, sports and education; 2) Improving the physical and social infrastructure in municipalities to increase access to basic services; and 3) Capacity development for elected female municipal officials and civil defence actors. The activities positively impacted around 95,000 residents, contributed to the creation of more peaceful living conditions, and defused local conflicts over resources.

**Working against violent extremism**
The UN supported Lebanon’s efforts against violent extremism. Capacity development support was provided to prison authorities/staff and social workers to prevent and respond to violent extremism. Activities in prisons focused on young adults convicted/accused of offences related to violent extremism, including terrorism, and various rehabilitation programs were conducted. Risk-assessment tools were introduced to monitor the evolution of young adults upon their admission and during their stay in prison, and psychological support was given individually and through parole groups.5

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**Strengthening women, peace & security**
The Government and the UN supported the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW) in the development of the country’s first National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR1325)6 to promote women as actors for peace and security. The planning was done in close cooperation with the office of the Minister of State for Women’s Affairs. To further support the process, a steering committee for Women, Peace and Security was established and convened its first meeting in October 2017.

**Supporting a national action plan**
To help the Government ensure an inclusive and participatory process, the UN conducted more than 17 focus group discussions during the last quarter of 2017, with various displaced and refugee populations in addition to sessions with religious leaders, to raise awareness on Women, Peace and Security7, and solicit perceptions and concerns. National priorities were developed around the four pillars of UNSCR 1325, including Prevention, Participation, Protection, and Relief and Recovery and a draft National Action Plan is expected mid-2018.
Cooperating for improved legislation

The UN assisted Lebanon in advocating for and preparing human rights oriented legislation through technical assistance, advocacy, and partnerships with civil society organisations. As such, UN support helped the abolishment of Article 522 of the Lebanese penal code – a legislation that was allowing rapists to avoid criminal prosecution by marrying their victims.

Activities included the nation-wide public campaign "A White Dress does not cover the Rape", a workshop named “Voice Matters” (with 120 women and girls, survivors of gender-based violence), and a song by Mike Massy.8

The passing of The Law on Access to Information was a positive development. This law is meant to promote transparency and citizens’ increased access to information9.

In addition, there are several draft laws and proposals which have been supported by the UN but have not been approved yet, including regulations that contribute to the reduction of corruption in all sorts, including: the illicit enrichment law, the establishment of the national anti-corruption committee, the protection of whistle-blowers, the conflicts of interest law and the E-government platform.

Lebanon’s democracy supported through electoral assistance

According to the new electoral legal framework, parliamentary elections were held in May 2018 – after nine years without elections at the national level. The UN has supported this process, among others, through unified advocacy and engagement with relevant interlocutors, technical assistance and advisory support to promote reforms according to international standards.

Within assisting Lebanon’s preparation for democratic, inclusive and transparent elections, the UN has focused on promoting measures to enhance the political participation and representation of women, youth and vulnerable groups.
Helping Lebanese institutions
Anti-corruption efforts moved forward through the finalization of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and its implementation plan. With UN support, the Minister of State for Administrative Reform initiated activities to develop the implementation plan for the national anti-corruption strategy,10 including the following measures:

- The establishment of a coordination structure to develop and guide an implementation plan for the strategy;
- A dialogue with the private sector;
- Appointment of sectoral focal points in the Ministries of Finance, Health, Energy and Water, Education and Higher Education, and Environment – in addition to the procurement administration at the Central Inspection Bureau;
- Organisation of a national workshop on the role of the justice system within the national anti-corruption strategy.

Modernising civil registry centres
During the year, the UN provided assistance to modernise ten civil registry centres, where the registration records of citizens were handwritten and in danger of being damaged and lost (in places such as Baalbek, Saida and other remote regions).

Digitalization and reproduction of records for citizens in these civil registry centres helped save the records and facilitate birth certificates, marriage, divorce and other changes in personal status records for the citizens in these regions. The improved registers are essential to ensure and sustain political and civil rights for people in Lebanon.

Improving urban planning
Together with the State Minister for Planning Affairs, the UN launched a ‘National Urban Policies’ project in July 2017, an important step towards updating urban planning policies to ensure inclusive and sustainable growth. As a part of this initiative, a national technical committee and inter-ministerial steering committee for National Urban Policies were established in partnership with the office of the State Minister.
Data to reach the most vulnerable: A Palestinian census

With the support of the UN, the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC) facilitated discussions between the Lebanese and Palestinian authorities to carry out a census during 2017/2018 under the management and supervision of Lebanon’s Central Administration of Statistics (CAS) and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS).

According to the census there are 174,422 Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon (PRL)\(^\text{11}\) in the 12 camps and the 156 gatherings (areas outside camps with concentration of Palestinian households) across the country. Of the Palestinian refugees in camps and gatherings, almost 55 percent reside in the gatherings, where the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, UNRWA, covers limited services, such as infrastructure and shelter improvement. The LPDC’s envisaged way forward is that the results of the census will benefit all concerned stakeholders to develop human rights-based policies towards Palestinians, such as respecting, protecting and fulfilling the right to work and the right to own and inherit property and initiating a dialogue around the governance of Palestinian camps.

Key figures published
Numerical distribution of individuals according to the type of geographic region and the nationality of the individual:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Camps</th>
<th>Gatherings adjacent to camps</th>
<th>Other gatherings</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Palestinian refugees in Lebanon</td>
<td>78897</td>
<td>37652</td>
<td>57874</td>
<td>174422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palestinian refugees from Syria</td>
<td>8957</td>
<td>4322</td>
<td>5322</td>
<td>18601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanese</td>
<td>4357</td>
<td>1407</td>
<td>7068</td>
<td>12832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syrian</td>
<td>28314</td>
<td>708</td>
<td>1347</td>
<td>30368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>641</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>1390</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Photo: Diego Ibarra Sanchez, UNICEF
Empowering youth and promoting social cohesion is essential to build the social capital needed for sustainable development, stability and prosperity in Lebanon. The UN supported youth to enable them to engage as active citizens in decision-making processes, to strengthen them as individuals and to increase their economic opportunities.

Activities in 2017 included:

- Support to and cooperation with more than 260 youth groups and youth focused NGOs, to build capacity and implement activities.
- Support to more than 770 youth-organized progressive projects/activities benefiting peers and communities, including micro-grants for youth initiatives.
- Mobilization of more than 120 youth outreach volunteers to support in the identification and referral of refugees in need of specialized services and/or urgent assistance.
- Support to more than 690 refugees and Lebanese youth to design and implement solidarity initiative projects that respond to common protection concerns and enhance social cohesion at the community level.
- Training and activities for about 70,000 youth (including innovative problem-solving, effective leadership, advocacy, conflict resolution, work against gender-based violence, media, local development initiatives, literacy skills, healthy lifestyles, and access to psychosocial support groups).

Training programmes were arranged for youth on gender equality, prevention of violent extremism and human trafficking.\(^\text{12}\)
STATE HAS INSTITUTIONALISED MECHANISMS FOR ENHANCED PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, RULE OF LAW AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL PEOPLE IN LEBANON

Working for human rights
Several recommendations of the 2015 Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Lebanon referred to the establishment of a National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) in line with the 1992 Paris Principles. In 2017, the UN continued its advocacy to promote the establishment of the NHRI and a National Preventive Mechanism (NPM). The NHRI and NPM are not functional yet pending selection of their members and allocation of a budget.

As part of its advocacy activities, the UN reached out to civil society and officials to encourage the nomination of candidates as potential NHRI commissioners. The expectation is that the institution will be fully operational in 2018 and contribute to strengthened protection of human rights in Lebanon.

Promoting efforts against torture
Other UPR recommendations related to torture and similar human rights violations were implemented, including:
- The adoption of the law criminalizing torture, and the preparations to establish complaints mechanisms in prisons (yet to be launched by ISF);
- The establishment of human rights departments at the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and Internal Security Forces (ISF); and
- The adoption of new codes of conduct by The General Directorate of General Security (GSO) and ISF in line with human rights obligations.

Lebanon submitted reports to both The Committee Against Torture (CAT) and The Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) for reviews in May and June 2017.

Improving prison conditions
Conditions in the Roumieh prison improved, for example by roof waterproofing, installing washing machines and a comprehensive assessment of the sewage network. The central kitchen (3500 meals per day) as well as a building for mentally ill prisoners were made fully operational mid-2017, after refurbishment and the equipment/furniture provided.

In addition, health conditions in prisons improved for vulnerable groups (children and women) through the provision 2,400 health kits in 2017. The UN interventions included psychological counselling, legal support, core relief items and medical attention to thousands of refugees in detention.

Supporting access to justice
Following advocacy efforts by the international community, in line with the priorities set out in the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) and the commitment towards this end expressed by the Government at the 2016 London Conference on Supporting Syria and the Region, important steps have been taken by the Government of Lebanon to address issues relating to the legal status of Syrian refugees and their access to basic rights.

In February and March 2017, the General Security Office (GSO) announced the Government’s decision to waive the fees for overstaying and renewal of legal residency (USD 200 per year per person aged 15 years and above). The waiver applies to Syrian refugees who were registered with UNHCR before 1 January 2015 and who had not renewed their residency in 2015 or 2016 based on tourism, sponsorship, property ownership or tenancy.

Simplifying registration procedures
Additionally, in September 2017, the Personal Status Department in the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities announced a simplification of birth and marriage registration procedures, which foresees that valid legal residency of the parents of a child is no longer required for birth registration. In addition, only one spouse requires valid legal residency or an entry card to register their marriage. This measure will enable a much higher number of children to obtain birth registration in Lebanon.

Providing legal assistance
Legal assistance remained paramount to the protection of vulnerable communities as many legal issues are at the core of limited access to basic human rights and services to lead a dignified life within Lebanese society.
Legal assistance to thousands of people

15,000 interventions supported detainees, including legal and protection counselling and interventions, material support, basic medical assistance and psychological support.

A pilot information centre was established, facilitating access to information and legal counselling on civil Documentation and Housing, land and property rights (HLP) issues. Capacity development support was provided to government institutions to protect migrant workers from exploitation and abuse resulting in a policy recommendation on addressing the most exploitative elements of the sponsorship system, presented to the National Steering Committee on Domestic work.

Awareness raising on rights was promoted through outreach activities at community centres, via protection hotlines, protection desks at UN reception centres, during outreach visits as well as via counselling desks.

Overall about 27,000 refugees were reached through awareness sessions on legal topics.

Almost 7,000 Palestine refugees benefitted from counselling, awareness raising, legal assistance and legal representation regarding legal stay, civil registration and family and labour law matters.

Over 39,000 people received legal aid during 2017 from the UN and its partners, including 37,000 Syrian refugees, more than 2,000 asylum seekers and refugees of other nationalities and 500 stateless persons. Legal aid includes individual legal counselling, legal assistance as well as representation in front of a court or administrative bodies. The counselling focused mostly on legal residency status and the process of renewal and regularization, as well as birth, marriage, death and divorce registration, harmful effects of early marriages, juvenile justice system and other relevant national laws.

 Advances have also been made in promoting justice for children. Within the overarching framework of strengthening the child protection system in Lebanon, the UN signed a work plan with the Ministry of Justice in 2017, which sets out a package of support to the government and statutory bodies over the next two years, to make the justice system and its practices more child-friendly and bring it further in line with international standards. The UN has formalised strategic partnerships with the Ministry of Interior & Municipalities and Beirut Bar Association to build the technical skills of law enforcement personnel and lawyers in dealing with cases of children in contact with the law.
Speaking up for women’s rights
The UN’s advocacy and awareness on human rights issues included activities such as campaigns and awareness raising on gender equality and women’s rights, including activities against child marriage, marital rape, harassment, etc. The activities reached hundreds of thousands of people in Lebanon in 2017 and increased public awareness.

UN entities used media communication and advocacy to shed light on GBV and violence against girls (i.e. incest, sexual abuse, and early marriage) through nationwide public awareness campaigns, including TV spots and billboards. Government and other state institutions were strengthened in terms of knowledge and skills on prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and response. For example, the UN supported the Ministry for Social Affairs in developing a strategic plan against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) and provided training sessions for ministry staff on issues such as survivor-centred approach, self-care, Intimate Partner Violence, and suicidal attempts.
In addition, the cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs led to supporting more than 36 social development centres to provide prevention and response packages with a special focus on vulnerable women and girls, including Syrian refugees. The centres are managed by the civil society organisation ABAAD and cover several regions within Lebanon.

Supporting police work against SGBV
The UN agreed with the Internal Security Forces (ISF) Academy to develop and institutionalize a curriculum on Gender-Based Violence and safe identification and referrals for the Municipal Police as proxy actors within the affected communities.
Capacity development support was delivered to the ISF and The General Security Office (GSO) staff on human trafficking, with a special focus on sex trafficking of women and girls in Lebanon, as well as on GBV core concepts with a special focus on family violence. A total of 84 GSO officers and 170 ISF officers were trained within this framework in 2017, with support from UN entities and in partnership with the civil society organisation Kafa.
Development of industrial zones for inclusive growth and jobs

Several UN interventions have promoted economic development, inclusive growth and job creation. For example, the Government collaborated with the UN in developing feasibility studies and a design master plan for three industrial zones in Baalbek, Torboul and Jleiliye.

Approximately 31,000 jobs will be needed to develop the zones (of which at least 5,000 will be new jobs). The initiative is expected to positively affect some 200 enterprises across Lebanon and create opportunities for sectors such as agro-food, construction, recycling materials, innovation, technology, industrial and manufacturing, as well as for agricultural cooperatives.

The investment cost to develop the three zones is estimated at 118 million US dollars, to be financed by soft loans from Italy, European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. In 2018, the UN will continue supporting the Ministry of Industry in a phase II of the project by providing additional advisory services.

The Rehabilitation of Saida Dumpsite. Photo: Ramzi Haidar, ILO
employment opportunities were created for tens of thousands of the most vulnerable people in Lebanon. The activities enabled them to improve living conditions and contributed to local development in disadvantaged areas and gave long-term benefits for Lebanese host communities. For instance, investment in and rehabilitation of productive infrastructure created more than 65,000 working days and upgrading environmental resources gave income generating opportunities to 8,000 people.

Enhancing farming and food security
In the agricultural sector, Lebanese small-scale and family farming producers received assistance to promote sustainable agricultural and livestock production and to apply climate smart technologies. Farmers and government stakeholders enhanced their capacities in areas such as postharvest management, plant pest prevention, food losses as well as monitoring of plant and animal diseases through training activities and distribution of agricultural inputs and tools. For instance, 2,500 farmers benefited from training on identification and control of fruit flies. An awareness campaign targeting airline passengers arriving at the Beirut airport on the prohibition of bringing fresh fruits and vegetables into Lebanon took place. Materials and equipment were provided to enhance food security and livelihoods of farmers. For example, 1,500 beneficiaries received building materials and equipment to make egg production more efficient. Another initiative supported 620 farmers to improve their agricultural yields through the rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure.

Assistance was given to the Green Plan and its eight regional centres - a government body under the Ministry of Agriculture responsible for preserving greenery in Lebanon and engaging in environmental projects. In 2017, with the support of the UN, Green Plan helped 155 farmers (of which 26 percent are women) benefit from financial support to perform land reclamation and investments in their farms, and thereby increasing the opportunities to scale up production and create jobs.

Investing in jobs and local development
Labour intensive investments in the productive sectors infrastructure have contributed to job creation. Through construction, restoration and improvements of public infrastructure,

Lebanese communities supported
One UN initiative included 5,600 participants (with 28,000 direct beneficiaries), making them less vulnerable and food insecure.

This initiative created jobs and contributed to:

- Reconstruction of 45km of irrigation canals
- Plantation of 113,000 trees
- Rehabilitation of 4,6 km of rural roads
- Regeneration of 10 hectares of farmers’ lands
- Support to 10 communities for cedar forest maintenance
- Rehabilitation of 10 community assets including women agro-food cooperatives, seedling nurseries, and public gardens
Improving job skills and employability for more than 100,000 people

The employability of the workforce was strengthened through a broad spectrum of UN interventions covering all of Lebanon, in particular for youth and women. Close collaboration with government has been key to achievements. As a result, tens of thousands of vulnerable people in the poorest areas of the country have higher prospects to generate income and improve their living standards. Some examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>More than 100,000 refugees and poor Lebanese received trainings provided at community and social development centres. The trainings included life skills, marketable skills, information and communication technology, AC maintenance and innovation.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,540 women were trained on various market-oriented professions, including food processing and catering in social development centres and women cooperatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>560 women developed their income generation opportunities, including support for start-up businesses, vocational training, and job placements in cooperation with 86 private sector companies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,181 Palestine refugees registered at the Employment Service Centres (ESC), out of which 758 benefited from individual coaching and 395 benefited from job placements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>686 youths were provided with internships to boost professional experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>984 Palestine refugee students enrolled in technical and vocational training centres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400 Palestine refugee youths benefited from an innovation lab, designed to train them on social entrepreneurship and digital skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250 people, including youth and professional carpenters, were trained in carpentry techniques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>642 students (aged 15–24) were enrolled in vocational training on agricultural topics such as beekeeping, vegetable production and greenhouse management, complemented by improvement in quality of schooling by training of 56 teachers in the technical agricultural schools belonging to the Ministry of Agriculture.</td>
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Support to health care provision

The ability of Lebanese national institutions and civil society organizations to deliver quality health services to all people in Lebanon was strengthened. UN collaboration with the Government contributed to a stronger and more sustainable national public system for health services and improved access and quality of social services.

At the national level, reforms of health policies and strategies, improvements of health information systems and application of technology took place. Key results include standardisation of fees for health services in primary health care centres. In addition, mental health care and non-communicable diseases early detection and referral were included in the standard primary health care package and a national infant and young child feeding strategy and a national family planning strategy was developed. Public institutions have become better equipped to provide quality health services. For instance, 31 health institutions have received medical equipment, and the digitalized Early Warning and Response System for Outbreak Monitoring was established at regional and district levels. Furthermore, at local level, contingency plans for health response in emergencies were developed for each governorate, and pandemic influenza preparedness and response plans were updated.

Community mobilization activities reached 80,000 beneficiaries and influenced behaviour changes, thereby improving the demand for routine vaccinations. Campaigns and outreach interventions were conducted to increase knowledge on health among the most vulnerable people. For instance, around 23,000 pregnant and lactating women were reached during the world breastfeeding week (August 2017), and 10,000 women by a campaign promoting PAP-tests to identify cervical cancer. Critical evidence for health planning and monitoring purposes was generated through national studies, including a Global School Health Survey targeting students aged 13–17, both Lebanese and Syrian.

Public and private hospitals received financial support to cover partial costs of hospitalization as well as laboratory and radiology tests for refugees. For example, more than 82,000 individuals (Syrians, Iraqis, Palestinians and other nationalities) received hospital services that were financially supported by the humanitarian community. Several hospitals have received medical equipment for maternity wards and intensive care units and increased staff capacity.

Improvements in the coverage of selected health services such as preventive oral health interventions and advanced referral care for mental health to community mental health centres and to selected mental health hospital wards were made.
Health care provided for the most vulnerable

Vulnerable people have directly benefited from subsidies to improve their access to health services. Selected examples include the following:

- More than 540,000 people received subsidized primary healthcare consultations.
- More than 100,000 children received routine vaccinations according to national calendar and as very high-quality immunizations campaigns carried out from house to house in localized areas (so called mop-up campaigns).
- Over 170,000 patients received medications for chronic, non-communicable diseases, and about 130,000 people received acute disease medication, contributing to saving lives.
- More than 100,000 women accessed family planning counselling services through Public Health Centres belonging to the Ministry of Public Health as well as through reproductive health dispensaries.

These efforts have been complemented by several capacity development interventions targeting healthcare staff all over the country to improve quality of service delivery. This included, among others:

- About 950 community health workers trained to screen, track and refer all children who lack immunization.
- More than 100 midwives capable of advising on family planning and reproductive health.
- 3,300 health workers, including medical doctors, nurses and health inspectors, trained on mental health care, medication practices, lab proficiency for bacteriological testing, Early Warning Alert and response system.
- Capacity development support was provided to 140 hospitals on vital data observatory for maternal and neonatal surveillance.
- 450 medical/paramedical staff trained on maternal mortality surveillance, family planning counselling and application of reproductive health guidelines.
- About 80 health leaders and 70 staff in UN clinics for Palestinian refugees were trained on providing infant and young child feeding package services.
Supporting water management
The UN supports national efforts to increase quality, quantity and reliability of equitable water services for vulnerable populations in Lebanon. Key achievements were made in three areas. Firstly, the UN contributed to increased access to safe drinking water and sanitation in close collaboration with sector partners (see textbox). Secondly, quality of water services increased due to improved environmental conditions through construction, expansion and upgrade of the water system and irrigation canals. For instance, more than 280 km of infrastructure, 16 storage reservoirs and nine water sources have been upgraded serving more than 530,000 people. About 180 km of infrastructure was upgraded, five water reservoirs constructed, three reservoirs were rehabilitated, and four new water sources were made accessible through borehole drilling and equipped with pumping stations. Coordination and governance in the public water sector, including management capacity, have been strengthened. Interventions aimed to identify evidence-based approaches to transitioning informal settlements out of emergency water and wastewater service modalities while avoiding adverse impact on the environment and quality of services to the host community. In addition, the UN has initiated implementation of communication plans with three of the four water establishments, aiming at improving trust between customers and establishments.

Thirdly, water quality monitoring systems have been improved through training of municipalities and outreach/hygiene campaigns. For instance, more than 157,000 people participated in interventions aiming to improve people’s behaviour in water, sanitation and hygiene related matters. The UN has established five mobile water labs, and kits for water quality testing and monitoring in Palestinian camps.

The UN has developed an Environmental Health Response Plan for the Palestinian camps, including not only governance issues but also covering wastewater and measures to improve water quantity and quality in prioritised areas.

Providing safe water to about 1.3 million people
As a result of close collaboration between the government, UN and partners under the framework of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan, more than one million people in Lebanon, including Syrian and Palestinian refugees, were assisted with sustained access to an adequate quantity of safe water for drinking and for domestic use through interventions targeting water supply infrastructure, expanding, rehabilitating, or introducing water production, storage, distribution, or treatment systems. This was complemented with temporary access to safe water for around 300,000 affected people living in informal settlements, through activities such as provision of water storage containers and water points, and delivery of trucked potable water.13

Regarding access to improved safe sanitation in temporary locations, more than 175,000 affected people have benefited through various measures such as installations of latrines. Permanent access to improved sanitation was provided to more than 100,000 people through construction of storm water drainage infrastructure, onsite septic tanks and new connections to wastewater networks. Finally, in all 12 Palestinian refugee camps 78 water sources were maintained to ensure the availability of water, while sanitation and water infrastructure improvement, maintenance and rehabilitation activities benefited all residents.
Ensuring access to education
The UN in Lebanon supported the Ministry of Education and Higher Education to improve delivery and access to quality formal and non-formal education for vulnerable Lebanese and non-Lebanese children. Complementing financial support to enrolment, in-kind contributions and subsidies of costs of textbooks and stationery, transportation and special needs equipment have contributed to better access to education. To improve the environment for children and teachers, a total of 123 public school buildings have been rehabilitated, of which 55 were specifically rehabilitated to strengthen access for children with special needs into existing classrooms.

Moreover, the UN supported the equipment of 19 public vocational schools and provided learning material to all 269 secondary public schools to improve access and learning environment for youth. To increase demand for education, and regulated non-formal education, a national Back to School campaign was conducted through media, community mobilization and dedicated case management. Over 69,000 households, including 180,000 children and youth, were reached with education messaging, out of which 0.6 percent have disabilities. As a result, the 2017/2018 school year witnessed a 13 percent increase in enrolment of non-Lebanese children and a three percent increase in enrolment of Lebanese children in public schools, compared to the previous school year.
More than 400,000 children received education

Major progress was made in increasing access to education at all levels and increasing enrolment rates in schools and non-formal education centres. Under the leadership of Ministry of Education (MEHE) and as part of the Reaching All Children with Education (RACE II), the UN in close partnership with other education sector partners has contributed to improving the learning environment and creating learning opportunities for vulnerable Lebanese and non-Lebanese children and youth (3–18 years).

- **220,842** Non-Lebanese children and 209,759 Lebanese children were enrolled in basic education for the 2017/18 scholastic year.

- **36,170** Palestinian refugee children enrolled in 66 UN schools in Lebanon during the 2017/18 scholastic year.

- **26,750** children enrolled in the regulated Accelerated Learning Programme.

- **140** Palestine refugees and 2,000 Syrians enrolled in Universities through scholarships.

- **92,615** children enrolled in other non-formal education programmes such as Community Based – Early Childhood Education, Basic Literacy and Numeracy Training.

Photo: UNICEF
Training of teachers and development of standards and interventions to create a positive learning environment improved the quality of education. Teachers and educational staff have been trained in social inclusion, nonviolence, psycho-social support, peace building, life skills, and gender sensitive reproductive health, among other pedagogical skills. Complementing training, resources and guidelines have been developed to improve teaching skills and teachers’ access to professional development opportunities. For instance, an open source electronic library on early childhood care and education has been launched, agricultural schools have revised curriculum to better provide technical and life skills training in rural areas, and resources on preventing violent extremism and psychosocial support have been developed.

Preventing school dropout

In addition, to prevent dropout and improve learning outcomes, 63,400 children have benefited from homework and foreign language programmes. In addition, awareness raising reached more than 37,500 parents on the importance of education for the future of their children. To promote inclusive schools, 66 children with learning difficulties have received educational support and specialized services, and 76 teachers became more professional in taking care of them through special needs trainings. Relations and communication between school management and refugee communities have also been strengthened, through training of almost 400 Education Community Liaisons and collaboration to deploy a second shift in 254 schools.

The importance of creating a culture of non-violence, peacebuilding and responsible citizenship was promoted, through advocacy for violence-free schools and development of codes of conduct. About 100 teachers have been trained on the values, attitudes and behaviours that support responsible global citizenship: creativity, innovation, and commitment to peace, human rights and sustainable development.

To strengthen the education system further, technical assistance was provided to key government stakeholders. For example, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education was assisted in the development of an inter-ministerial Child Protection Policy which provides an integrated and systematic approach to the protection of children. The policy lays out legal referral pathways that the concerned Ministries (including the Ministry of Social Affairs and Ministry of Justice) are meant to coordinate in support of child victims of violence and/or abuse both in and outside schools.

Another key achievement at the policy level is the Ministry of Education and Higher Education's lead to develop a coherent framework for regularization of non-formal education.
Research to inform programming in education on issues such as out-of-school children and youth is ongoing, and the government has become better able to monitor progress in the education sector, as capacity to collect and analyse data has improved. The UN supported the application of the School Information Management System with IT human resources based at the Ministry of Education.

**Working with Lebanon against violence**

Quality prevention and response services have reached boys and girls at risk and survivors of violence, from both the refugee groups and the local communities. Access to national and community level systems for protection services has improved. The protection system has been strengthened by the review and update of the Ministry of Social Affairs National Strategic Plan on Child Protection and the Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence (2018–2021). The understanding of child protection and children's rights was improved, through capacity development of more than 550 civil society staff on early identification and safe referrals. The interventions aimed at improving access to services for the most vulnerable. For example, a network of 350 specialized outreach volunteers were trained to identify persons in need of assistance. They have been equipped to provide remedies and referrals to specialized services. Family support networks were established to strengthen social development centres as sustainable platforms of service-delivery.

Interventions preventing sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) involved several UN entities. More than 750 institutional actors, including professional staff and caregivers, have increased knowledge and capabilities on prevention, protection, and support to the affected persons.

More than 85,000 women, girls, men and boys at risk, and survivors of violence, accessed SGBV prevention and response services in safe spaces, including case management, personal safety surveys, risk mitigation and response actions. They benefited from life skills training, psychological support, and recreational activities. This was further complemented by sensitizing more than 340,000 women, girls, men and boys on SGBV issues.

To support comprehensive case management, including judicial protection, mental health and specialized services for children with disabilities, Best Interest Determination (BID) panels were conducted for more than 3,300 children, before taking certain major decisions. The decisions may include separation of a child from his or her parents against their will and determination of parental and custody rights in the case of separation and adoptions.

**Improving safety for children**

Capacity development interventions in broader protection related issues contributed to creating a safer environment for children. The results include the following:

- **Understanding of child protection increased among**
  - 165,000 children and
  - 140,000 adults

- 78,000 people accessed community centres to build competencies in communication and decision-making skills as well as how to manage early marriage issues

- 48,500 children and community members participated in explosive weapons awareness and avoidance training

- 13,500 children are better informed about the worst forms of child labour

- About 200 staff in the Ministry of Agriculture, child protection actors and farmers have increased their knowledge of child labour and occupational safety and health issues in agriculture, including special features for girls and pregnant women
Strengthening social protection

The Ministry of Social Affairs and other government counterparts increased their understanding of social protection through technical support, joint studies and training interventions. This contributed to the Government taking the lead in important reform efforts to strengthen the system and define the minimum standards of living, such as the formulation of a Social Protection Action Plan and the establishment of multi-sector coordination structure, reform of the retirement system and the establishment of a pension scheme for private sector workers. Additionally, close collaboration was established to jointly design a national social safety net programme, in alignment with existing systems such as the World Bank supported National Poverty Targeting Programme.

In parallel, the UN supported the design of an innovative farmers register in the Ministry of Agriculture, to be used as a basic tool for agricultural development and provision of agricultural services as well as for social assistance programmes. The registry will be complemented by a legislative and institutional framework thus enabling farmers access to social security benefits under the National Social Security Fund.

Providing shelter

The most disadvantaged refugees and vulnerable Lebanese families received shelter assistance. More than 182,000 refugees (33,700 households) benefited from interventions to improve their living conditions. Of those, 154,000 refugees (29,100 households) were facing weather challenges, mostly in informal tented settlements, but also in substandard buildings. They received shelter materials and tools such as weather proofing and insulation kits. Through this support, refugees could maintain their shelters at livable conditions prior to the winter season, recover from another displacement due to evictions or reconstruct and/or rehabilitate their damaged shelters after an emergency such as a fire or a flood.

In addition, 19,000 refugees (3,850 households) living in substandard housing in existing urban or rural settlements had their homes upgraded to adequate standards in exchange for written occupancy agreements with their landlords. Rent freeze, rent reduction or rent-free arrangements for refugee tenants were negotiated with owners in exchange for rehabilitation or upgrading of properties. The agreements contributed to alleviating the refugees’ financial burden (rent and debts) towards the landlords and ensured security of tenure spanning over a period of 12 to 18 months.

Giving direct assistance

Direct assistance was provided to Syrian refugees, Palestine refugees from Syria, and vulnerable Lebanese primarily through an electronic card (e-card) system. Since 2016, the UN and the Lebanon Cash Consortium introduced a common card, under the Lebanon One Unified Interagency System for E-cards (LOUISE), allowing for a unified system for cash-based transfers. The e-card can either be used to withdraw cash from any ATM, or to purchase food from any of the 495 UN-contracted shops located throughout the country. This initiative was implemented to eliminate duplication, simplify processes, share resources, significantly reduce costs and provide accountability to the rights holders. The initiative contributed to strengthened harmonisation and bridging the humanitarian and resilience agenda.
Producing data to improve conditions in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

Using an area-based approach where space/geography is the entry-point rather than a sector or population group, the UN produced city profiles as well as neighbourhood profiles. The profiles are geographical data platforms that inform spatial and thematic joint programming across a range of inter-sectoral and cross-cohort interventions. They also serve as a basis to foster coordinated actions between partners in the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP), UN Strategic Framework (UNSF) and local authorities to improve the response in urban areas. Profiles integrate and analyse data on an areas’ governance, population, social stability, livelihoods, and protection issues, in addition to its social services (education and health) and basic urban services (housing, water, sanitation and hygiene, solid waste, electricity etc.).

Two city profiles were published in 2017 for Tripoli and Tyre, and four are forthcoming (Saida, Beirut, Zahle and Baalbek, 2018). Within the most disadvantaged sub-cadastral areas in Lebanon, eight neighbourhood profiles are forthcoming and twenty-three are planned.

In 2017, awareness raising reached more than 37,500 parents on the importance of education for the future of their children.

Photo: Dalia Khamissy
Food assistance to 1,000,000 persons in need

Food security continued to deteriorate in 2017, with 91 percent of Syrian refugee households presenting some level of insecurity (mainly associated with high economic vulnerability and limited income earning opportunities). UN interventions targeted vulnerable food-insecure people, including infants, to provide them with access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food. In 2017, the UN together with partners supported more than one million people from all population groups with food assistance through food and agriculture interventions. The assistance contributed to social stabilization by ensuring poor and food-insecure families can meet their basic food needs.

More than 880,000 displaced Syrians were reached and supported, for different periods, through e-cards and vouchers. In partnership between the UN and the Ministry of Social Affairs, about 50,000 vulnerable Lebanese were also supported through e-cards within the framework of the National Poverty Targeting Programme.

Around 32,500 Palestinian refugees from Syria were provided with food assistance through ATM cards. About 425 Palestinian refugees benefited from vouchers.

In-kind food parcels and hot meals were provided as a complement to up to 112,000 individuals from all population groups.

Helping vulnerable families survive

In addition, direct assistance includes winter assistance in the form of cash, e-vouchers for fuel, core relief items and shelter improvement kits to 800,000 vulnerable Syrians to meet their direct survival needs. This assistance ensured that vulnerable families were not exposed to hazardous weather, and at the same time did not reduce their expenditures on food and medical needs. For example, some 4,500 poor Lebanese families benefited from fuel-card distribution. For the vulnerable Lebanese households registered in the National Poverty Targeting Programme support was provided in-kind, for example 20,000 children under 15 received winter clothing kits for winter 2017–2018.

The United Nations organisations, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, provided monthly cash transfers for approximately 50,000 children (under 15) to support school enrolment and retention in the 2016–2017 school-year.

Photo: WHO
Economic opportunities promoted in the cooperative of Khraibet El Jundi. Photo: Fair Trade Lebanon.
LEBANON HAS IMPROVED ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

Addressing climate change
To promote low-emission climate-resilient actions, the understanding of climate change and capacity to implement relevant and effective mitigating measures were strengthened among key stakeholders. For instance, renewable energy was produced through installation of small-scale solar panels in 13 sites for industries and schools (2.56 MW capacity increase). The UN supported production of two Lebanese action plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transport and solid waste management and the plans were adopted by the Council of Ministers.

Furthermore, eight enterprises were assisted to adopt cleaner production practices and technologies to improve efficient resource use, and six companies in the foam, air-conditioning and refrigeration business were supported by the UN to phase out pollutant gas (HCFC) consumption.

The government’s capacity to monitor and implement multilateral environmental agreements in line with international best practice has improved. Technical support and guidance were provided to key stakeholders, with a focus on the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Montreal Protocol, as well as the Barcelona and Minamata agreements.

Supporting waste management
Collaboration between the government and the UN has strengthened sustainable solid waste management. A key result at the national level was that the government committed to developing an integrated national strategy on solid waste management, including overarching objectives and guidance on interventions and priorities.

The UN assisted the Ministry of Environment to improve its capacity to coordinate and follow up the inspection programme of environmental complaints arising from the Syria conflict.

A major dumpsite in Saida was transformed into a public garden. Photo: UNDP
Improved waste management in municipalities

In Lebanon, policies and action plans on solid waste management have been weak in implementation and generally insufficient to address waste challenges. This situation was aggravated by the Syrian crisis. Among others, lack of funds, weak technical know-how and absence of sanitary landfills have caused a widespread and growing environmental problem. Nearly 1,000 illegal and unsafe dump sites were registered throughout the country in 2016, with negative effects on the environment and the health of people. The UN, in close cooperation with the government, aimed to improve the waste management through several targeted interventions at municipal level. Some examples:

- 21 municipalities were supported through measures such as equipment to improve effectiveness in sorting centres.
- 6 municipalities in the North of Lebanon and 1 municipality in the Beqaa developed integrated solid waste management solutions.
- 200 garbage bins were placed in the North of Lebanon and desludging and garbage trucks were donated.
- More than 44,500 beneficiaries raised their understanding of waste management in the South of Lebanon.
- Local authorities in Tyre and Qaraoun were assisted in the development and implementation of a comprehensive and integrated multi-municipality plan for solid waste management.
Rationalizing coordination structure
Led by senior UN entity representatives, three UNSF pillar working groups were established and engaged in joint planning, coordination and reporting. The groups identified several areas of joint strategic importance relevant to potential joint programming. The purpose was to jointly review the context and current UN interventions, to identify gaps, opportunities and complementarities, and to agree on priorities and steps to increase sustainable results.

Developing joint programming
Ten areas for potential joint programming were identified: Rule of Law/Security & Human Rights; Economic Opportunities (Productive sectors); Women, Peace & Security (Agenda 1325); Elections (Women’s Participation & Representation); Environmental Governance; Employment & Peacebuilding (with a focus on youth at risk); Children and Armed Violence; Social protection; Education; and Health & Water.

Activating thematic groups for analysis, data and advocacy
Three thematic working groups on gender equality, human rights and data/statistics met regularly through the year. The main activity of the Gender Working Group was the campaign to mark the 16 days of activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV), which took place in November and December 2017. The campaign managed to raise public awareness on GBV, women’s rights and gender discrimination in all sectors (particularly with regard to employment, education, agriculture, health and political participation).

Cooperating for Human Rights
The Human Rights Working Group continued to monitor the human rights situation in Lebanon. It coordinated efforts and responses where possible and advocated for the endorsement of pending and full implementation of existing human rights legislations, regarding the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (CAT). The group concluded its work pertaining to the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy by finalising the risk assessment on Lebanon, which was reviewed and adopted by the United Nations Country Team in June 2017.

Increasing access to data
Members of the Data and Statistics Working Group (DSWG) completed an inventory of data production activities and cooperated with the UNSF pillar groups to conduct a data gap analysis of the UN Strategic Framework monitoring plan. Key agencies initiated cooperation to improve the coordination of interventions and better support the Central Administration of Statistics (CAS), a public Administration within the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.
Establishing task forces on PVE and the SDGs
The UNSF coordination structure established temporary task forces. In 2017, there were two active task forces: one dedicated to Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) and one for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The PVE task force strengthened coordination and developed common approaches towards PVE in Lebanon. It serves as a platform for the UN to engage with the Lebanese Government in its efforts to develop a national strategy for prevention of violent extremism. The SDG Task Force supported the Government in the preparation of rolling out the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Lebanon and promotion of a common approach to the 2030 Agenda.17

Moving forward for efficient operations
The Operations Management Team intensified the UN work to jointly reduce transaction costs and to make business operations increasingly integral to effective delivery of programmes and activities. Development of a strategy for UN business operations was initiated 2017 to help the UN capitalize on existing agency operational capacities and to identify ways to consolidate service provision.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are universal in scope, and their call to leave no one behind puts the world’s most vulnerable and marginalized people – including children – at the top of the agenda. 

Photo: Rana Sweidan, UNDP
2017 saw important progress regarding the roll-out of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Lebanon. The immediate priority of the Government is to prepare for Lebanon’s first Voluntary National Review and report to the UN High Level Political Forum in July 2018.

The UN, under the leadership of the SDG Taskforce (established in mid-2017), has engaged a consultant to work closely with the National Committee and other key stakeholders to prepare the draft document.

At the request of the Office of the Prime Minister and in order to kickstart the preparation of the Review, the UN organized a series of workshops at the beginning of December to (1) brief and familiarize the recently established a National Committee – an inter-ministerial body chaired by the Prime Minister to oversee the roll-out of the SDGs – on the 2030 Agenda and agree on steps in the preparation of the Voluntary National Review and (2) initiate a dialogue with civil society and the private sector on the SDGs and their role in advancing the 2030 agenda and supporting the Voluntary National Review.

Going forward, the UN will agree on the next concrete steps for the roll out of the SDGs in Lebanon – potentially including the development of a national sustainable development vision for the country.
COMMUNICATING AS ONE

In 2017, the UN developed a four-year joint UN communication strategy – a first for the UN Communications Group (UNCG) in Lebanon. To operationalize the strategy, the UNCG developed and implemented a communication plan, including activities to promote Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the UNSF and the perception of the UN in Lebanon.

In 2017, activities focused on:

- Regular teach-in sessions reached over 7,000 students from across the country and introduced them to the work of the UN in Lebanon, the SDGs and the UN’s campaign for refugees “TOGETHER: Respect, Safety and Dignity for All”.

- The UNCG developed a radio program on SDGs with Radio Voice of Lebanon that included 23 episodes where youth presented development challenges faced in Lebanon and how the UN is dealing with them;

- Production of informative inter-agency media packages consisting of background information, basic facts, messages, and a comprehensive social media package on nine UN international days;

- A four-day social media campaign was conducted around the UN Day. It highlighted results of UN work in Lebanon during the past year;

- The social media campaign “The UN Listens” was initiated at the end of 2017 targeting all citizens in Lebanon and the Lebanese diaspora. The campaign aims at engaging people in sharing their ideas on how they can improve their own community.

The UN reached thousands of students in Lebanon. They were introduced to the work of the UN and the sustainable development goals. The communication activities were also seeking to support youth as key agents of change and critical actors in conflict prevention and peace promotion.
Through the United Nations Gender Working Group (GWG) in Lebanon, the UN joined hands in the last quarter of 2017 in a broad media campaign called 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence. The initiative raised awareness to increase action against Gender-Based Violence (GBV), a widespread problem in Lebanon that continues to disproportionately affect women and girls. According to the Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS), since 2015, an average of 90 percent of incidents of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) reported to specialized services providers has involved women and girls. The most commonly reported type of violence involves physical violence, accounting for 40 percent. Gender parity is still low and inequalities persist, with women having less access to opportunities in all spheres. The Human Development Report 2015 ranked Lebanon 78 out of 188 on the gender inequality index.

The campaigns included TV spots, infographics, social media communication, and joint media statements. It reached out widely and contributed to public awareness on GBV and gender discrimination in Lebanon in all sectors (i.e. employment, education, agriculture, health, political participation, etc).
Lebanon continued to receive substantial donor support in 2017. Overall, available resources for Lebanon amounted to USD 1.68 billion, with donors reporting a total of USD 1.37 billion disbursed throughout the year and taking into consideration USD 309.6 million that carried over from 2016 by implementing partners.

The UN entities spent around USD 950 million on humanitarian and development activities in 2017, with UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, UNRWA and WFP accounting for a near totality of the expenditures (around 906 million USD) and the remaining 14 UN entities for 43 million USD all together. Mainly due to the ongoing Syria crisis, deteriorating conditions of vulnerable groups and limited reforms to the financial needs for Lebanon are increasing.

The total UNSF budget for 2018 is 1.7 billion USD, whereof approximately 710 million USD is already allocated for activities in 2018.

Action to ensure the mobilisation of adequate resources will be a priority for the UN’s collective efforts in 2018, with a focus on increasing impact through multi-year joint programmes and decrease fragmentation of funding.
CONCLUSIONS
TO BUILD ON

Delivering as one
Through the UNSF, UN entities in Lebanon committed to “Delivering as One”. In the first year of implementation, the coordination architecture was laid out and priority joint programming initiatives were identified. Going forward, the UN will build on these efforts and achieved results, and for UN entities to continue to actively engage in the joint planning and implementation of the UNSF. In 2018, efforts will ensure the active and regular engagement of the UN with government and donor partners in the coordination architecture, programmatic planning, implementation and monitoring.

Strengthening strategic partnerships
In recognition of the multi-faceted challenges facing Lebanon and the protracted crisis in the region, the UN in Lebanon is committed to building and strengthening partnerships with key counterparts to strengthen impact across the humanitarian, development and peace spectrum by leveraging comparative advantages and aligning financing instruments. In 2018, a key focus will be on strengthening the partnership with the World Bank and the European Union (EU), building on past and ongoing collaboration and identifying priority areas for engagement. A Joint National/UN Steering Committee, co-chaired by the Government and the Resident Coordinator, will be activated in 2018 to facilitate reviews and guide the strategic direction of the UNSF. This committee will not only discuss joint work plans and reports, but also provide high-level oversight and support for implementation by identifying key bottlenecks, risks, and emerging needs/opportunities.

Improving analysis and access to data
Data availability and access to information remain major and cross-cutting challenges. The lack of timely, up-to-date and reliable statistical data, especially with respect to the economy, poverty and inequality, is undermining evidence-based policy making in Lebanon. It places constrains on the ability of citizens to hold government to account and creates obstacles for democratic consolidation. Therefore, it is important to increase production and availability of timely, up-to-date and reliable statistical data – especially with respect to the economy, poverty and inequality. The UN aims to improve country level analysis, planning and coordinated action, to establish tools and structures, such as the UNSF and coordination groups, and to articulate risks and responses, including risk analysis and coordination for crisis prevention. The UN is planning to step up efforts to strengthen the cooperation between the Central Administration of Statistics (CAS) and other public institutions.

Rationalising business operations
In line with the proposed Secretary General reform agenda of the UN Development System, the UN remains fully committed to reducing transactional costs, eliminating the duplication of processes within business operations, leveraging common buying positions of the UN and reducing costs per entity. The initiative taken in 2017 to draft a Business Operations Strategy is therefore one of the top joint priorities 2018. Successful improvements within this field require engagement and decisiveness among UN entities. The UN plans to rationalize operations and increasingly work together to provide effective services and reduce costs.
ENDNOTES

1. VASYR 2017: Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon.
2. Regular Perception Surveys on Social Tensions throughout Lebanon (ARK, 2017), and Defining Community Vulnerability in Lebanon, REACH (2014).
3. A quarry is the same thing as an open-pit mine from which minerals are extracted.
4. Submitted for validation by the Shoura Council.
5. 54 groups were supported.
6. The Security Council adopted resolution (S/RES/1325) on women and peace and security on 31 October 2000. The resolution reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and post-conflict reconstruction and it stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.
7. The Steering Committee includes six ministries (OMSWA, Defence, Interior, Foreign affairs, Justice, and Social affairs), six UN entities, and 2 civil society organizations.
8. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3EC1fYjtk
9. The Access to Information Law No.28 dating 10/02/2017 is not yet fully implemented. A decree is needed to explain how it should be implemented and OMSAR is following up on clarifying the implementation of this law and the appointment of access to information officers in all public institutions.
10. Formal announcement of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and its implementation plan is expected in April 2018 (at a national conference).
11. The definition of a Palestinian refugee in Lebanon (PRL) applies to every individual known to have registered both with UNRWA Lebanon and to the General Directorate of Political Affairs and Refugees (DPRA) or either one of them. In addition, a special category was specified for the Palestinian refugees displaced from Syria (PRS) as a result of the crisis since 2011. The figures are adding the post-enumeration corrections percentage (5.6 percent).
12. Vocational training and creation of economic opportunities for youth are documented under outcome 3.1 and 3.2 in UNSF priority area 3.
13. The results achieved in water in 2017 have been achieved as part of the broader government lead framework of the Lebanese Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) and the national water sector strategy. The UN is a major contributor, but results also include achievements by water sector partners such as non-governmental organisations.
14. The results achieved in education in 2017 have been achieved as part of the broader government lead framework of the Lebanese Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) and the Reaching All Children with Education (RACE). The UN is a major contributor, but results also include achievements by education sector partners such as non-governmental organisations.
15. E-cards are debit cards which allow resources to be transferred to vulnerable populations. Each beneficiary receives a card and can buy food according to their needs, observing the programme’s guidelines.
17. More about the SDGs task force in the chapter on “Advancing Agenda 2030”.