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**FINAL PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the U.S. Department Of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration

**Improving Living Conditions in Palestinian Gatherings Host Communities**

A UNDP project in partnership with UN-Habitat and the Lebanese – Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC)

1 May 2014

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**Table of Content**

[1. LIST of ABBREVIATIONS 3](#_Toc387150679)

[2. PROJECT BACKGROUND 4](#_Toc387150680)

[3. PROJECT OUTCOME 5](#_Toc387150681)

3.1 [Update on Project Outcome 5](#_Toc387150682)

[4. PROJECT OUTPUT 6](#_Toc387150683)

[4.1 Update on Project Output 8](#_Toc387150684)

[4.1.1 Small-scale infrastructure projects 8](#_Toc387150685)

[i. Sewage project in Qasmieh Gathering and surrounding in Burj Rahhal in Tyre: 9](#_Toc387150687)

[ii. Sewage project in Baysarieh Gathering in Tyre: 10](#_Toc387150688)

[iii. Sewage project in Baraksat, Bustan el Kods and Tawari in Saida: 10](#_Toc387150689)

[iv. Water project in Qasmieh Gathering in Tyre: 11](#_Toc387150690)

[v. Solid waste project in Adloun Gathering in Tyre: 11](#_Toc387150691)

[vi. Roads and public domain project in Jim Jim Gathering in Tyre: 11](#_Toc387150692)

[vii. Roads and public domain project in Qasmieh Gathering in Tyre: 12](#_Toc387150693)

[viii. Roads and public domain project in Tawari Gathering in Saida: 12](#_Toc387150694)

[4.1.2 Awareness raising campaign designed and piloted in 12 Gatherings 12](#_Toc387150695)

[4.1.3 Capacities of local actors in 7 Gatherings in South Lebanon enhanced 13](#_Toc387150696)

[5. APPROACH & PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES 14](#_Toc387150697)

[6. CHALLENGES & RISKS 16](#_Toc387150698)

[7. LESSONS LEARNED 17](#_Toc387150699)

[8. INDICATORS BASED PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT 18](#_Toc387150700)

1. **LIST of ABBREVIATIONS**

APR Annual Progress Report

APR Annual Project Report

AWP Annual Work Plan

MOIM Ministry of Interior and Municipalities

GoL Government of Lebanon

LAF Lebanese Armed Forces

LPDC Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee

M&E Monitoring and Evaluation

MOIM Ministry of Interior and Municipalities

MOSA Ministry of Social Affairs

NGO Non-governmental organizations

PC Popular Committee

PLO Palestine Liberation Organization

PM Prime Minister

PMO Prime Minister Office

PRL Palestinian Refugees from Lebanon

PRS Palestinian Refugees from Syria

QPR Quarterly Progress Report

SRS Syrian refugees from Syria

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UN-HABITAT United Nations Agency for Human Settlements

UNRWA United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees

CDR Council for Development and Reconstruction

DPRA Department of Palestinian Refugee Affairs

BOQ Bill of Quantity

BUS Basic Urban Services

RRP Regional Response Plan

1. **PROJECT BACKGROUND**

**Project Title:** Improving Living Conditions in Palestinian Gatherings Host Communities

**Project Duration:** October 2013 – December 2014

**Donor:** The U.S. Department Of State, Bureau for Population, Refugee and Migration (PRM)

**Period covered:** October 2013 – April 2014

This is a project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project, implemented in partnership with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the Lebanese – Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC). It aims at improving living conditions in the Palestinian Gatherings and their Lebanese host communities, which are increasingly called upon to host both Palestinian and Syrian refugees from Syria in addition to the original resident population. The project proposed falls under the UNDP *Lebanon Stabilization and Recovery Program – Supporting Resilience in a Time of Crisis,* designed to help stabilize and develop the resilience of the communities who are hosting refugees as a result of the Syrian crisis. The project also falls under the *Regional Response Plan* (RRP) framework which aims to respond to the humanitarian immediate needs generated by the Syrian crisis.

Falling outside the geographic mandate of UNRWA in terms of basic urban services provision and left unattended to by local authorities, the 42 Palestinian refugee Gatherings in Lebanon are considered to be among the most vulnerable (for a map of Palestinian Gatherings, refer to Annex 1). The ongoing influx of Palestinian and Syrian refugees coming from Syria to these Gatherings has only amplified a sore situation putting more pressure on an already weak infrastructure and contributing to increased tensions between Palestinian Gatherings host communities and neighboring Lebanese communities. A Rapid Needs Assessment undertaken by UNDP and UN-Habitat in the Gatherings from April to July 2013 showed that most of displaced refugees from Syria are concentrated in the 27 Gatherings of South Lebanon. Around 21,500 Palestinian and Syrian refugees displaced from Syria live in the twenty-seven Gatherings in Saida and Tyr, doubling the population in many of these Gatherings.

Building on the existing collaboration between the UNDP and UN-Habitat and support by LPDC and UNRWA to enhance living conditions in Palestinian Gatherings, UNDP in partnership with UN-Habitat have proposed in the RRP5 to implement water and sanitation projects in the Palestinian Gatherings of South Lebanon with a total value of USD 887,000. The project sought to strengthen the resilience of the Palestinian Gatherings host communities in the South by enhancing access to sufficient basic urban services in order to reduce tensions and ensure sustainability of services. Basic urban service interventions include the sectors of water, sewage, solid waste management, electricity and public domain. Project interventions were implemented using a participatory bottom-up approach bringing together local actors, surrounding municipalities, and NGOs to agree on priorities and initiate discussion around maintaining services. In this context, the U.S. Department of State, Bureau for Population, Refugee and Migration contributed a total of USD 400,000 to the project. This Final Progress Report will detail the progress, against set targets and indicators, of project activities implemented till the end of April 2014. The period extending from October till December 2013 represented a preparatory period to identify urgent projects and develop feasibility and engineering studies; implementation of activities started in January 2014, as agreed with the donor.

1. **PROJECT OUTCOME**

**Outcome:** Living conditions in the Palestinian Gatherings in Lebanon, that host Palestinian and Syrian refugees from Syria, improved through better access to basic urban services.

**Objectives:** The project has the following specific projects:

* Improving living conditions of the inhabitants of the Palestinian Gatherings, both original dwellers and refugees from Syria, through enhancing the access to sufficient basic urban services;
* Promoting enhanced coordination between local actors in the Gatherings and the concerned municipalities to face common challenges and building their capacities;
* Reducing conflicts and tensions by ensuring equal response in the Gatherings hosting refugees from Syria as that in the camps and Lebanese hosting communities.

**Beneficiaries:** By the end of the project (December 2014), the following will be achieved:

* 40,000 original dwellers and 30,000 refugees from Syria will have access to improved basic urban services;
* 275 refugee households approximately (estimated 2,000 refugees) in the most vulnerable Gatherings will benefit from enhanced shelter conditions;
* 20,000 Lebanese inhabitants in the surroundings of the Gatherings will benefit from enhanced access to basic urban services.

**3.1 Update on Project Outcome**

In a first step towards the realization of the project outcome, the project gained the **national endorsement of the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR)** as the national coordinating authority as well as the LPDC. CDR is a governmental organization that was established to plan and supervise the reconstruction of the damaged infrastructure of the country following the civil war (1975 – 1990). Also on the national level, the Lebanese – Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC) represents the implementing partner of the project on behalf of the Government of Lebanon. LPDC, through its role as a consultative inter-ministerial committee that gathers official representatives from ministries and decision-makers at the national level, represented the optimal platform to advocate for change and raise awareness on living conditions of Palestinian refugees in the country. Such political commitment represented a significant approach undertaken by the Government of Lebanon to enhance relationships with the Palestinian refugee community and improve their living conditions.

The project has also gained the **endorsement of the Local Partner Appraisal Committee (LPAC)**, which represents the project board and includes representatives from the Council of Development and Reconstruction (CDR), the Lebanese – Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC), UN-Habitat and UNRWA. In this context, UNRWA has been committed to collaborating with the project in order to enhance living conditions of refugees living in Palestinian Gatherings. UNRWA has been involved in the planning of project’s activities, coordinating infrastructure activities especially in the case of camps’ Adjacent Areas and offered the technical expertise of its staff. For the same purpose, the project has been coordinating its activities with the Department of Palestinian Refugee Affairs (DPRA), which represents the umbrella under which Popular and Local Committees in the Gatherings organize themselves and work. The DPRA has cooperated with the project to build the capacities of popular and local committees for better managing and sustaining basic urban services and share information and data.

At the more local level, the project contributed to improving living conditions in the Gatherings of South Lebanon through the implementation of small scale infrastructure projects, which responded to urgent needs in these host communities. The project used a participatory bottom-up approach in the planning and implementation of activities, **bringing the various stakeholders and actors together.** These include the popular and local committees in the Gatherings, concerned municipalities and local NGOs. In addition to improving the living environment, this approach contributed to enhancing coordination between local actors in the Gatherings and the concerned local authorities to face common challenges. This had been translated by the engagement of two municipalities in South Lebanon so far in directly implementing infrastructure projects targeting both Lebanese and Palestinian communities, including Palestinian Gatherings, within their municipal domain. These municipal initiatives, supported through grants from the project, represent a unique step towards enhancing the relationships between local communities in the Gatherings and local authorities and created channels for coordination. The project also launched a hygiene awareness raising campaign that was piloted in 10 Gatherings for future replication. The campaign brought together women and children from both PRS as well as the host PRL communities.

**Activities at the local level:**

* **10** urgent basic urban service projects implemented in the sectors of sewage, water, solid waste management and roads and public domain.
* Basic urban services systems and networks enhanced in **7** host Gatherings and **1** surrounding town.
* **2** municipalities supported to implement infrastructure projects in Palestinian Gatherings.
* Maintenance of water and sewage networks and hygiene conditions enhanced in 15 Gatherings in South Lebanon through support to local NGO.
* Hygiene awareness raising campaign designed and piloted in 12 Gatherings through support to local NGO.

These environment improvement activities were also seen to have had an impact on **reducing the levels of inter and intra communal tensions** in the Gatherings of the South and their surroundings. Within the Gatherings themselves, the dramatic increase in population caused by the influx of Palestinian as well as Syrian refugees from Syria, sometimes doubling the population in one Gathering, has its implications. These include the additional pressure on the already deteriorated services, the competition on resources and on aid, and the lack of sufficient jobs. All these factors are contributing to increasing tensions inside the Gatherings, overwhelming both the host communities and the refugees displaced from Syria. Through implementing infrastructure projects, the project aimed at lifting the weight form the host communities as well as covering urgent needs to the newly arriving refugee families. In addition, these projects provided jobs to daily workers from the local communities. Furthermore, the project aimed at improving access to basic urban services in the Gatherings taking into consideration the impact on surrounding networks and areas. The ad-hoc connections and disposals to surrounding areas have been a factor in increasing intra communal tensions between the Gatherings and their surroundings. In this context, the project extended its interventions to include Lebanese communities who were affected and who were equally hosting refugees from Syria.

1. **PROJECT OUTPUT**

Output 1: Access to basic urban services improved in host Gatherings in South Lebanon through the implementation of infrastructure projects and service interventions, taking into account the impact on and connections with surrounding networks.

*Output 1 aims at improving access to basic urban services in the Gatherings through the implementation of upgrading projects, service delivery interventions and rehabilitation of infrastructure networks. Of particular interest are projects that address service gaps and problems in the Gatherings as well as their surrounding Lebanese host areas. This shall be achieved through providing support to municipalities, local committees and NGOs to benefit some 40,000 dwellers in the Gatherings, 30,000 refugees from Syria and 20,000 dwellers in the surroundings. In addition, the interventions shall promote enhanced communication and coordination between Palestinian refugee communities in the Gatherings and the Lebanese local authorities. Municipalities will be encouraged to implement projects through grants that benefit both Palestinian and Lebanese dwellers living within their domains.*

The PRM funds were contributed to enhance access to basic urban services (sewage, water, solid waste management and public domain) as well as hygiene in the most vulnerable Gatherings of South Lebanon. Based on the Project Document and Budget for the PRM share of funding, the following targets were set for implementation out of the whole project’s targets:

* 5, out of 12, infrastructure projects to be implemented in the host Gatherings, taking into consideration connections with surrounding networks;
* Active organizations (NGOs and CBOs) supported to operate and maintain basic urban services in up to 10 Gatherings to benefit 10,000 out of total 20,000;
* Capacities of 5, out of 9, municipalities built on issues related to water & sewage operations and maintenance;
* Coordination mechanisms for improved service delivery in the Gatherings set up with up to 2 out of 5 municipalities;
* Hygiene awareness raising campaign designed and piloted in 10 Gatherings, for future replication in the remaining 32 Gatherings.

Targets were achieved successfully in the context of the PRM funded project, in many cases exceeding allocated number of projects or beneficiaries:

* 10 infrastructure projects were implemented in 7 host Gatherings and one surrounding town, exceeding initial target;
* 2 local NGOs and 7 popular / local committees supported to operate and maintain basic urban services in up to 10 to benefit 25,000, exceeding initial target;
* Capacities of 5 municipalities built on issues related to water & sewage operations and maintenance;
* Coordination mechanisms for improved service delivery in the Gatherings set up with up to 2 municipalities in Tyre;
* Hygiene awareness campaign designed and piloted in 12 Gatherings, 8 of which in South Lebanon.

Out of a total of 90,000 beneficiaries targeted in the whole project, a total of 40,000 persons directly benefited from activities implemented through the PRM contribution:

* 9,000, including 3,240 PRS, 5,660 PRL, 100 Lebanese dwellers in the surrounding, benefited from infrastructure projects;
* 15,000, including 7,500 PRS and 7,500 PRL women and children benefited from the hygiene campaign;
* 16,000, including 6,000 PRS and 10,000 PRL, benefited from support to local NGOs in operating and maintaining basic urban services.

In addition, the project contributed to building the capacities of 2 municipalities (Kharayeb and Burj Rahhal) and 2 local NGOs (PARD and Nabaa) operating in the Gatherings of South Lebanon. Sewage upgrading projects also benefited Saida General Hospital located near the Baraksat Gathering in Saida.

1. **Update on Project Output**
2. **Small-scale infrastructure projects**

A total of 10 urgent small-scale infrastructure projects implemented in the Gatherings of South Lebanon and their surrounding

Based on a the results of the Rapid Needs Assessment undertaken mid 2013 by UNDP and UN-Habitat in Palestinian Gatherings, the project conducted a participatory mapping of most pressing needs and priorities in October 2013 in order to identify a list of urgent infrastructure projects in the 27 Gatherings of South Lebanon (for summary of results, refer to Annex 2). The exercise consisted of conducting field visits and two consultative meetings with the local / popular committee and another local group (women, youth, CBO) in each Gathering. In additions, NGOs working in the Gatherings as well as UNRWA area offices were consulted to assess the needs and the feasibility of the projects. The list of final projects in each Gathering was selected in participation of the local committees in these areas. In addition, the project addressed the impact of basic urban services in the Gatherings on their surroundings and assured the efficiency and continuity of implemented infrastructure networks. For this purpose, the project team conducted meetings with the 12 concerned municipalities in order to identify the extension of projects to the surrounding areas attended to by the municipalities. These areas also suffer the increased pressure on infrastructure networks caused by the influx of Palestinian as well as Syrian refugees displaced from Syria.

In November and December 2013, the project contracted civil engineers to develop feasibility studies, detailed engineering studies, BOQs and maps for each project. 6 projects were implemented through the PRM funds, and 3 projects were implemented through co-funding from PRM and the Government of Germany. These projects are as follows:

* Upgrade and build sewage networks in Qasmieh, Baysarieh, and the surrounding town of Burj Rahhal in Tyre and Baraksat, Bustan el Kods and Tawari in Saida;

**Basic Urban Service Projects:**

* 5 sewage projects in Tyre & Saida
* 1water project in Tyre
* 1 solid waste management project in Tyre
* 3 roads and public domain projects in Saida and Tyre
* Upgrade water supply system in Qasmieh in Tyre;
* Provide solid waste containers to support collection in Adloun in Tyre;
* Rehabilitate alleys in Tawari in Saida; rehabilitate and pave main road in Qasmieh and build retaining wall to protect UNRWA school and its surrounding in Jim Jim in Tyre.

Further details on each project are provided at the end of this section.

The project contracted local contractors to implement the infrastructure works in the Gatherings. This strategy was proven not only to reduce time, costs and potential conflicts, but also to generate jobs for local dwellers living in the Gatherings. In addition, 2 municipalities agreed to take the lead, through grants provided by the project, to implement infrastructure projects in the Gatherings as well as in the mixed inhabited areas that fall within their domain, as the case of Kharayeb and Burj Rahhal in Tyre.

In an attempt to support local NGOs operating and maintaining basic urban services in the Gathering of South Lebanon, the project provided a grant to 2 local NGOs active in Palestinian Gatherings in Tyre and Saida areas. The grant to the Popular Aid for Relief and Development (PARD) assisted the NGO purchase and utilize chlorine and chlorination pumps, sanitation maintenance tools, insecticides and rodenticides in those Gatherings. This intervention enhanced access to water and sewerage and improved hygiene conditions in 15 Gatherings in Tyre and Saida (for further details, refer to Annex 3). Another grant was provided to the local NGO Developmental Action Without Borders-Nabaa to conduct field work in 12 Gatherings to design and pilot hygiene awareness raising campaign, 8 of which were in Tyre and Saida, which will be extended to the remaining 30 Gatherings in Lebanon in 2014 (for further details, refer to section 4.2).

**Results and Targets**

These project activities contributed to achieving the following results and targets:

* Enhance access to basic urban services to some 5,000 living in the Gatherings in South Lebanon and inhabitants in the surrounding areas;
* Support local NGO (PARD) carry out basic urban services provision and hygiene maintenance in 15 Gatherings;
* Promote the engagement of 2 municipalities in improving access to basic urban services in 9 Gatherings that fall within their municipal domains;
* Improve communication and coordination between the municipalities and local communities in 7 Gatherings in South Lebanon.

1. **Sewage project in Qasmieh Gathering and surrounding in Burj Rahhal in Tyre:**

**Objective:** upgrade / install sewage networks in the Gathering

**Implementation modality:** Grant to the municipality of Burj Rahhal

**Estimated Number of beneficiaries:** 1,560 (1,060 PRL; 500 PRS) & 100 Lebanese dwellers

**Funding source**: PRM & the Government of Germany

Qasmieh falls within the municipal boundaries of Burj Rahhal and originally accommodates for around 2,000 Palestinian refugees as well as around 75 Lebanese dwellers. Most recently an additional 1,380 Palestinian as well as Syrian refugees displaced from Syria have been living in the Gathering, exerting additional pressure on the inadequate services and infrastructure networks.

In addition, in an area known as Malaab in Qasmieh, there exist around 70 houses that are not connected to the sewage network and use unprotected pits instead. The pits flood into the streets and mix with grey water, causing environmental problems and health risks. Sewage and grey waters overflow to the nearby groves causing increased tension between the neighboring communities.

In order to address these problems, the project installed a total of 550m of sewage pipes, 15 manholes and 30 septic tanks in the Gathering. In addition, the project extended the works in Qasmieh to install 100m of sewage pipes and 5 manholes in a near neighborhood in Burj Rahhal. Works were also undertaken to install pumps that would connect the implemented network to the sewage treatment plant in the town. In the Malaab area, the project built a sewage system in place, consisting of 375m sewage pipes and 16 sewage manhole, and connected the implemented system to the main network in the Gathering.

1. **Sewage project in Baysarieh Gathering in Tyre:**

**Objective:** Install sewage network in one neighborhood

**Implementation modality:** Local contractor

**Estimated Number of beneficiaries:** 830 (700 PRL & 130 PRS)

**Funding source:** PRM

Baysarieh Gathering originally accommodates for more than 1,000 Palestinian refugees. Most recently and following the Syrian crisis, the Gathering has accommodated for more than 200 additional Palestinian refugees displaced from Syria, exerting additional pressure on the already inadequate sewage network.

In a neighborhood in the Gathering, around 150 households still rely on unprotected pits due to the absence of network. The pits flood into the streets and mix with grey water, causing environmental problems and health risks. Sewage and grey waters overflow to the nearby groves causing increased tension between the neighboring communities.

Works in that area aimed at installing a new sewage network to these households, consisting of 600m sewage pipes and 20 sewage manholes, and connected the implemented system to the main network in the Gathering.

1. **Sewage project in Baraksat, Bustan el Kods and Tawari in Saida:**

**Objective:** Upgrading sewage networks

**Implementation modality:** Local contractor

**Estimated Number of beneficiaries:** 2,310 (1,480 PRL & 830 PRS)

**Funding source:** PRM

The three Gatherings of Baraksat, Bustan el Kods and Tawari are adjacent to Ain el Helwe Camp. These Gatherings have hosted a large portion of the 5,000 refugee families displaced from Syria to Ain el Helwe Adjacent Areas, causing additional pressure on the already insufficient sewage networks.

In addition to the continuous floods, the sewage network in the Gathering of Baraksat is connected to the network of Saida General Hospital, located near the Gathering. Improper sewage connection resulted in floods in the area hosting the hospital as well as in the part of the Gatherings near the hospital.

Works in these Gatherings consisted of upgrading the sewage networks in each area and by the Saida General Hospital. In Baraksat, works consisted of installing 70m of sewage pipes and 1 manhole, in addition to upgrading the sewage network along the main wall of the hospital. In Bustan el Kods, works consisted of installing 110m of sewage pipes and 6 manholes. The project in Tawari consisted of repairing and maintaining sewage networks in the alleys in the Gatherings where no NGO has previously worked. It should be mentioned that these projects represent continuation of works to upgrade the sewage systems in these areas undertaken by UNDP in 2013.

1. **Water project in Qasmieh Gathering in Tyre:**

**Objective:** upgrade pumping electricity room

**Implementation modality:** Grant to the municipality of Burj Rahhal

**Estimated Number of beneficiaries:** 590 (370 PRL & 270 PRS)

**Funding source**: PRM

Pressure on water supply has increased in Qasmieh following the accommodation of increased numbers of new refugees. The local community needed longer pumping hours, which the available system did not provide.

In order to enhance water pumping, the project built a pumping electricity room in the Gathering and installed all necessary electrical connections to pump water from the well to the households.

1. **Solid waste project in Adloun Gathering in Tyre:**

**Objective:** provide solid waste container

**Implementation modality:** local contractor

**Estimated Number of beneficiaries:** 1,570 (610 PRL, 575 PRS and 385 SRS)

**Funding source**: PRM

The quantity of solid waste has more than doubled in Adloun, with the accommodation of some 960 Palestinian as well as Syria refugees from Syria. In order to address this problem, the project provided a total of 40 solid waste containers (240 liters each) in the Gathering. Coordination was ensured with the local NGO PARD, which collects solid waste form the Gathering.

1. **Roads and public domain project in Jim Jim Gathering in Tyre:**

**Objective:** Build retaining wall between school and neighborhood

**Implementation modality:** Grant to the municipality of Kharayeb

**Estimated Number of beneficiaries:** 420 (370 PRL & 50 PRS); UNRWA school

**Funding source**: PRM

The retaining wall that existed in Jim Jim to support UNRWA elementary school was in an unsound condition, threatening to collapse on the adjacent area of the Gathering. The project undertook civil works to build a new retaining wall (45m²) in order to protect the school as well as households who live near the school.

1. **Roads and public domain project in Qasmieh Gathering in Tyre:**

**Objective:** Rehabilitate road networks

**Implementation modality:** Grant to the municipality of Burj Rahhal

**Estimated Number of beneficiaries:** 150 (100 PRL & 50 PRS)

**Funding source**: PRM

An area known as “the lower neighborhood” in Qasmieh is located in parallel to the water channel of the Litani River. Dwellers have built bridges over the water channel, one of them to cross from Qasmieh to the highway leading to the major cities of Tyre and Saida. This bridge is under threat of collapsing and was in urgent need of replacement, especially that it constituted the only access to the surrounding cities. In addition, to protect dwellers and particularly children walking along the water channel, there was a need to complete the fence established around the channel and to pave the road that runs parallel to it. To address this problem, the project rehabilitated and paved the main road (1,800m²), replaced the concrete bridge, and installed a fence around it (450m).

1. **Roads and public domain project in Tawari Gathering in Saida:**

**Objective:** Rehabilitate internal alleys

**Implementation modality:** Local contractor

**Estimated Number of beneficiaries:** 1,420 (970 PRL & 450 PRS)

**Funding source**: PRM

The road network in Tawari consists of narrow internal alleys between the houses; these alleys are poorly maintained which causes floods of sewage rain water and spreading of rodents. In parallel to upgrading the sewage network, the project rehabilitated the alleys through paving with concrete layer to cover the floor with an average width of 125 cm and raising the level and maintenance of existing manhole covers.

1. **Awareness raising campaign designed and piloted in 12 Gatherings**

In order to promote hygiene awareness and viable approaches on utilizing environmental resources, the project developed a strategy for a WASH and hygiene awareness raising campaign, piloted in 12 Gatherings. These include 8 Gatherings in South Lebanon: Chabriha, Jal el Bahr, Qasmieh and Maachouk in Tyre and Bustan el Kods, Baraksat, Sekke and Old Saida in Saida. The pilot campaign primarily targeted 15,000 children, youth and women equally divided between PRL and PRS, as well as active local committees in the Gatherings. The campaign was designed and is being piloted in partnership with UNDP, UN-Habitat and the local NGO *Developmental Action without Borders-Nabaa.* The purpose of the campaign is articulated in the following objectives:

* Promoting change in hygiene behavior in the communities;
* Raising awareness on viable methods to access and use available and implemented basic urban services and environmental resources;
* Advocating for the right of Palestinian Gatherings to healthy environments.

By the end of March 2014, Nabaa had finalized the hygiene assessment in the 12 Gatherings using the following methods:

* Semi structured interviews with local committees;
* Focus groups with women and youth;
* Participatory activities with children;
* Field team observations.

These methods aimed at discovering the WASH and Hygiene unsatisfied needs and priorities as well as investing the main findings in designing the best tools and actions to be used within the Pilot phase to address the most marginalized groups among the PRS and PRL in 12 Gatherings, and planning of the best methods of interventions (for the hygiene assessment report and tools, refer to Annex 4). The main needs that emerged were categorized along the following sectors:

* Shortage of WASH facilities and systems to provide for the increased numbers of refugees in the Gatherings;
* Pressure on health coverage and facilities with the arrival of PRS on host communities;
* Lack of personal hygiene tolls and items;
* Inadequate environmental and WASH conditions in shelters mostly inhabited by PRS households;
* Lack of women specific hygiene items and preventive measures against hygiene born diseases;
* Lack of a local reference system in the Gatherings to alert NGOs on needed priorities;
* Increased production of solid waste;
* Risky behavior in terms of using resources (such as electricity and sewage systems).

**Results and Targets**

These project activities contributed to achieving the following results and targets:

* Increase awareness raising on WASH and hygiene of local communities for 15,000 refugees in 12 Palestinian Gatherings;
* Support local NGO in their hygiene promotion activities in the Gatherings in South Lebanon.

1. **Capacities of local actors in 7 Gatherings in South Lebanon enhanced to maintain basic urban services and devise coordination mechanisms**

In order to build the capacities of local actors, including local and popular committees and municipalities, on viable approaches to basic urban service provision, these local actors have actively participated in:

* Needs appraisal of basic urban services and available networks;
* Prioritization of response and identification of projects to address urgent needs;
* Planning of solutions and projects;
* Follow-up on implementation;
* Coordination mechanisms to maintain and sustain implemented services.

These were done through a number of consultative meetings, field visits and forming of local follow-up committees. This approach targeted the 5 municipalities that accommodate for the 7 Palestinian Gatherings within their domains. In this context, the three municipalities of Saida, Darb el Sim and Mieh Mieh held a workshop in the municipality of Saida with local and popular committees of Ain el Helwe Adjacent Areas that aimed at mapping urgent needs and discussing ways of addressing them. The two municipalities of Burj Rahhal and Kharayeb in Tyre area led the implementation of basic urban service projects in the Gatherings of Qasmeih and Jim Jim respectively.

**Results and Targets**

These project activities contributed to achieving the following results and targets:

* Enhance maintenance of infrastructure networks in the Gatherings;
* Improve the technical capacities of local and popular committees to carry their role in maintaining basic urban services in the Gatherings;
* Promote the engagement of local authorities in Palestinian Gatherings;

1. **APPROACH & PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES**

Throughout the planning and implementation of the project particular, emphasis was paid to **mainstreaming gender issues** within its various key components. The participatory approach adopted for needs assessment, planning, monitoring as well as the capacity building processes was designed to be inclusive across genders. Women groups as well as potential female beneficiaries in the Gatherings were engaged in the needs assessment and prioritization of activities. The needs assessment revealed that women and girls are the most affected by inadequate WASH and shelter conditions. While improving WASH conditions would benefit whole communities in one area / neighborhood, impact is significant on women and children who suffer the most from WASH born diseases and protection issues. During implementation and monitoring of activities, the engagement of both women and men were ensured. Specifically, the hygiene awareness campaign mainly targeted women and children in its design and execution.

Furthermore, the activities of the project were designed and implemented taking into account **conflict sensitive principles**. Addressing the needs of Palestinian refugees from Syria as well as the host communities in the Gatherings was crucial for reducing tensions between the two groups. Similarly, engaging local authorities and promoting their intervention to improve living conditions in the Gatherings contributed to enhancing relationships between the two sets of actors. In order to ensure conflict sensitivity, the project followed the following principles:

* Foster a participatory community approach in the different stages of the project including decision-making, planning and follow-up. Local actors and potential beneficiaries were actively involved to identify and prioritize urgent needs, assess damages and shortcomings of existing services, suggest solutions and potential projects for implementation, and form committees to follow-up on the execution of projects and activities. Local ownership of implemented projects and interventions guarantees their efficiency and sustainability.
* Enhance the resilience of the local host communities to respond to the escalating needs resulting from the increase in population and the pressure on water sources and sanitation services. In parallel, create complementarity between humanitarian response and development in implemented activities.
* Bring local actors together, including popular / local committees and municipalities, in order to create communication channels and coordination mechanisms on common basic service issues. This enhances the management and sustainability of services that are connected between the Gatherings and their surroundings, such as in the case of water and sewage systems and solid waste management.
* Build the capacities of popular / local committees in the Gatherings in order to better operate and manage basic urban services. These committees are considered the local BUS actors in the Gatherings as they assume the responsibility of water organization and distribution, repairs of damaged sewage and water networks and solid waste collection. This presents a cost-effective approach to enhancing BUS in the Gatherings.
* Recall the responsibility of local authorities and public service agencies in provision of basic services to the vulnerable Palestinian communities that live within the municipal domains. This is done through engaging municipalities and agencies in the planning and the solutions as well as implementation of activities in the Gatherings and surrounding areas that host Palestinian refugees.
* Ensure cost effectiveness through building on existing systems and local resources. BUS projects focused on rehabilitating and repairing existing systems and facilities before constructing new ones. Initiatives to better organize and manage BUS and resources will also serve the same purpose.
* Ensure efficient and timely response to local needs through working with local contractors and small companies. This has proven efficient to: economize on time and costs, mitigate conflicts that could impede implementation, and generate local jobs.

The active engagement of key partners contributed to the achievement of the project results and to maximizing the effectiveness of interventions. The main contribution of each partner could be summarized as follows:

Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC)

* Provide a national umbrella for the project which encourages participation and cooperation of other institutions and actors
* Enable a more comprehensive approach to enhancing living condition of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon through coordination with other institutions
* Build knowledge base on Palestinian Gatherings through the *National Observatory for Palestinian Gatherings*, earlier established by UNDP and UN-Habitat, and hosted by LPDC.

UNRWA

* Provide technical expertise on field for assessment of interventions and technical consultations
* Coordinate with the project to ensure proper linkages of services and networks between the camps and the adjacent Gatherings, such as the case for Ain el Helwe Adjacent Areas

Department of Palestinian Refugee Affairs (DPRA)

* Facilitate networking with Popular Committees (PCs) in the Gatherings in Lebanon
* Provide knowledge on main needs of PCs to engage properly in the project

Popular and local committees in the Gatherings

* Participate in information collection, needs appraisal, prioritizing interventions and projects planning
* Follow-up on and facilitate implementation of projects
* Maintain and sustain implemented projects and networks

Municipalities

* Participate in needs appraisal, prioritizing interventions and projects planning
* Implement projects in the Gatherings through grants from the UNDP and UN-Habitat
* Engage in maintaining and sustaining implemented projects and networks through coordination with PCs

Local NGOs

* Share knowledge and data on the Gatherings and participate in finding solutions and planning interventions
* Partner in implementation (such as PARD, Nabaa).

1. **CHALLENGES & RISKS**

**At the Political Level:**

In Lebanon, initiatives that aim at improving living conditions of Palestinian refugees and providing them with an enhanced livable environment could be associated in political discourse with the fear of their permanent resettlement in the country ‘*tawtin’*.

At the national level, the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC), which is a project partner, has shown commitment towards the objectives and activities implemented within the context of this project. LPDC, through its role as a consultative inter-ministerial committee that gathers official representatives at the national level, represents the optimal platform to advocate for improving living conditions of Palestinian refugees in the country, especially after the arrival of Palestinian refugees displaced from Syria. This contributed to dissolving some of the fears from *tawtin* at a higher political level. This initiative also supported by UNRWA, who exhibited its commitment to the project’s objectives through offering its technical expertise.

**At the Institutional Level:**

At the local level, the weak capacities of municipalities and local Palestinian committees represent an obstacle towards the successful implementation of the more localized project components. Similarly, the lack of communication and coordination between the two entities, as well as the unequal interest of municipalities to intervene in the Gatherings, compromise consensus building about the nature of common initiatives and the sustainability of implemented projects.

The project has built on existing good practices of municipalities intervening in the Gatherings, facilitated by UNDP in the past, and building a sustainable relationship with the local Palestinian communities. The capacities of the municipalities were strengthened through grants to support them carry out works in the Gatherings. Local and popular committees in the Gatherings were involved in the prioritization of needs and identification of responsive projects in the Gatherings.

**At the Implementation Level:**

Challenges related to difficulty in implementing the infrastructure projects were due to worsened security situation in the areas of implementation and extreme weather conditions in winter. The security challenges were particularly relevant in the case of camps’ Adjacent Areas, which have been witnessing some conflicts and security incidents.

In order to mitigate security risks, close and continuous coordination with the popular and local committees in the Gatherings were ensured to avoid any risky situations. In addition, working with the municipalities and local companies and contractors in areas of implementation mitigated delays related to security situations that might impede access of workers and material.

1. **LESSONS LEARNED**

Working in particular contexts such as Palestinian Gatherings in Lebanon demand a certain level of commitment and ownership of local communities. For this purpose, the project implemented a participatory bottom-up approach that involved local community-based organizations and groups, local and popular committees and local NGOs in the Gatherings, in addition to the concerned municipalities. Projects implemented were guaranteed to respond to the urgent needs provided by the field through the active engagement of local actors. Similarly, projects were implemented by local contractors who possess knowledge and experience in working in Palestinian Gatherings and camps. This mitigated potential conflicts and risks at implementation.

Further to the project interventions in the Gatherings, a major issue was revealed of particular impact on the living conditions of dwellers in these areas. This is mainly related to the lack of responsible institutions to cater for the needs of refugees in the Gatherings. Experience has shown that communication and coordination among key actors, mainly local committees, municipalities, the Department of Palestinian Refugee Affairs and UNRWA, has a critically positive effect on improving the environment and access to services in these areas. As such, an added value of the project would be to devise a sustainable and institutionalized coordination mechanism to better manage aspects of the living environment in Palestinian Gatherings before its ending.

Addressing the needs of both new refugee communities and host communities, within the same context, is crucial to avoid tension and prevent conflicts. This is particularly important in the context of Palestinian Gatherings, where resources are scarce, urban services are already inadequate and response is limited to address gaps and needs in all sectors. This has been leaving the host PRL communities in the Gatherings as vulnerable and needy as the PRS. Future interventions shall build on and continue this practice in the Gatherings.

1. **INDICATORS BASED PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Expected results (outputs and targets)** | **Accomplished Activities - PRM** | **Achieved Indicator Targets** | **Means of verification** |
| **Output 1:** Access to basic urban services improved in host Gatherings through the implementation of infrastructure projects and service interventions, taking into account the impact on and connections with surrounding networks.  **Targets (whole project):**  • Up to 4 water projects delivered in the Gatherings and their surroundings to benefit 20,000  • Up to 4 sewage projects delivered in the Gatherings and their surroundings to benefit 20,000  • Up to 4 solid waste management interventions completed in the Gatherings in the Gatherings to benefit 20,000  • Active organizations (NGOs and CBOs) supported in up to 10 Gatherings to maintain and operate basic urban services and implemented interventions to benefit 20,000  • Capacities of up to 9 municipalities built on issues related to water & sewage operations and maintenance  • Coordination mechanisms for improved service delivery in the Gatherings set up with up to 5 municipalities  • Hygiene awareness raising campaigns carried out in all Gatherings in South Lebanon | • Undertook mapping and analysis in Palestinian Gatherings to identify urgent upgrading needs.  • Developed feasibility and engineering studies of final projects in the selected Gatherings;  • Implemented 10 small-scale infrastructure projects in 7 Gatherings and 1 surrounding town;  • Strengthened mechanisms for communication and coordination among Palestinian Gathering communities and 5 municipal authorities;  • Built the capacity of local committees in the Gatherings and concerned municipal authorities to enhance access to basic urban services and maintain implemented projects;  • Designed and piloted hygiene awareness campaigns in 12 Gatherings, 8 of which in South Lebanon. | • 10 water and sanitation projects implemented in the Gatherings and their surroundings to benefit 9,000  • 2 municipalities supported to implement infrastructure projects that benefit Palestinian and Lebanese communities living within their domains  • Coordination mechanisms for improved service delivery in the Gatherings set up with 5 municipalities  • Capacities of 5 municipalities and 7 local committees in the Gatherings built to enhance management of basic urban services  • Local NGO operating in 15 Gatherings supported to maintain and operate basic urban services and implemented interventions to benefit 16,000  • Hygiene awareness raising campaigns designed for the Gatherings and piloted in South Lebanon through support to local NGO | Mapping of needs  Engineering studies / BOQs  Infrastructure contracts / TORs  Grants to municipalities  Grants to NGOs  MoU with DPRA  Hygiene awareness raising strategy |