

Universal Periodic Review of Lebanon, 4th Cycle

Submission by the United Nations Country Team¹

15 July 2025

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I. Introduction

1. Since Lebanon's 2021 UPR, the country has faced deepening socioeconomic, political, and security crises, marked by one of the world's worst economic collapses,ⁱ soaring inflation, and widespread poverty affecting nearly half the population.ⁱⁱ Public services, including healthcare, education, and electricity supply, have deteriorated, while the escalation of armed conflict with Israel in late 2023 and 2024 further worsened conditions, particularly for the most marginalised. In early 2025, the election of a new President and Prime Minister presented a critical opportunity to restore stability, drive reform, and strengthen human rights and the rule of law.

II. Promotion and protection of human rights

A. Institution-building for national human rights mechanisms

National Human Rights Institution

2. Lebanon accepted several recommendations to provide the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and the National Preventive Mechanism against Torture (NPM) with adequate resources including sufficient budget allocation.ⁱⁱⁱ
3. Although the NHRC, including the NPM, remains hindered by lack of dedicated premises, insufficient funding, and unapproved internal regulations, it remains committed to its monitoring and protection mandate.²
4. With the support of the United Nations (UN), the NPM has undertaken site visits and assessments of the human rights situation in places of deprivation of liberty and the treatment of the detainees.³
5. Recommendations:
 - Ensure the full operationalization and independence of the NHRC including the NPM by allocating adequate financial and human resources and dedicated premises, and finalise all outstanding procedural approvals in accordance with relevant laws and by-laws.

B. Human rights impact of the conflict

6. The conflict between Hizbullah and Israel, which began on 8 October 2023, escalated sharply between September and November 2024, causing heavy civilian casualties and widespread destruction in Lebanon.⁴ Israeli bombardments killed over 4,330 people—including women, children, medical workers, and journalists—and injured more than 17,700.^{iv} The UN verified the killing and maiming of 541 child casualties by Israeli forces,^v while Lebanon was the country with the highest numbers of

ⁱ "World Bank: Lebanon's Crisis Among World's Worst Since 1850s" Lebanese Ministry of Information (2 June 2021) <https://www.ministryinfo.gov.lb/en/64270>

ⁱⁱ Poverty in Lebanon more than tripled over the last decade, with 44% of the population living in poverty as of 2024, with some 1.17 million people experiencing acute food insecurity. World Bank "Lebanon: Poverty more than triples over the last decade reaching 44% under a protracted crisis" (23 May 2024) <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2024/05/23/lebanon-poverty-more-than-triples-over-the-last-decade-reaching-44-under-a-protracted-crisis>

ⁱⁱⁱ Recommendations 150.51; 150.52; 150.54; 150.55; 150.58.

^{iv} According to the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), as of 20 June 2025, there have been 4,355 people killed in the conflict with a further 17,765 people injured (to note that the MoPH does not distinguish between civilians and combatants). Sources of data: Ministry of Public Health (MoPH)/World Health Organisation Health Brief 19 May – 25 June 2025. Amongst those killed include more than 1,100 women and children, and 241 medical workers. See MoPH <https://moph.gov.lb/ar/Pages/127/77347/>. OHCHR recorded the killing of six journalists/media personnel.

^v mostly through the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. See 2025 Report by the Secretary-General on Children in Armed Conflict para. 116 (covering the period January - December 2024) <https://docs.un.org/en/S/2025/247>.

medical workers killed (241) and injured (296) in armed conflict in 2024.^{vi} Despite a fragile cessation of hostilities in late November 2024, Israeli military operations have continued into 2025, killing at least 83 civilians and causing ongoing destruction.^{vii}

7. Marginalised groups, including women, children, persons with disabilities, older persons, migrants, and refugees,⁵ have been particularly affected by the conflict, facing increased discrimination, abuse, exploitation, and exclusion.
8. At the conflict's peak, over a million people were displaced outside their areas of origin. By May 2025, more than 82,000 people remained displaced, while 980,000 returnees faced damaged homes, destroyed infrastructure, and lack of basic services. Nearly 64,000 buildings,^{viii} including 229,000 residential and non-residential units,⁶ and at least 39 places of worship were destroyed or damaged.⁷ UNESCO placed 34 cultural sites under enhanced protection due to serious risk of damage by Israeli strikes.^{ix} Displacement left some 400,000 children without stable homes, and schooling was disrupted for hundreds of thousands of students.⁸
9. The conflict severely damaged Lebanon's landscape, undermining the right to a safe, clean, healthy, and sustainable environment.⁹ Heavy artillery, incendiary weapons, and land clearing caused widespread degradation—particularly in southern Lebanon—destroying farmland,¹⁰ contaminating soil,¹¹ burning forests,¹² and damaging water infrastructure. Irrigation and electricity systems were damaged,¹³ while unexploded ordnance continue to threaten ecosystems and human health. Rural and marginalized communities were hardest hit, facing reduced access to water, food, and livelihoods.¹⁴
10. The conflict raised serious concerns under international humanitarian law, especially regarding the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure. It significantly impacted the rights to life, health, education, food, housing, work, safe environment, freedom of movement, and freedom of religion or belief, exacerbating Lebanon's humanitarian needs. Reconstruction and clearance of unexploded ordnance remain urgent, requiring extensive support.
11. **Recommendations:**
 - Continue to uphold the cessation of hostilities while working towards sustainable peace and ensuring the participation and leadership of women across the peacebuilding and security spectrum.
 - Undertake all efforts to accelerate the safe return of displaced communities.
 - With the assistance of the international community, ensure recovery and reconstruction efforts are grounded in a human rights-based and inclusive approach, prioritising the needs of affected communities.
 - Integrate a comprehensive environmental risk and vulnerability assessment into national recovery plans, prioritizing the needs of communities most affected by conflict-related environmental degradation.
 - Consider ratifying the Rome Statute to the International Criminal Court.

^{vi} Along with the Occupied Palestinian Territory. 2024 Report of the Secretary General on Protection of Civilians in armed conflict, para. 19 - <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/protection-civilians-armed-conflict-report-secretary-general-s2025271-enarruzh>. 241 healthcare workers were killed and 296 others injured, as per WHO/MoPH. The impact of the conflict in Lebanon included 163 incidents of attacks on healthcare (out of the 163 incidents, 46 impacted health facilities, 241 fatalities, 296 injuries, 113 impacted healthcare workers, 105 impacted medical transport). Source: Ministry of Public Health (MoPH)/World Health Organisation Health Brief 19 May – 25 June 2025

^{vii} Despite a fragile cessation of hostilities between Lebanon and Israel

^{viii} Despite a fragile cessation of hostilities between Lebanon and Israel, on 27 November 2024, civilians in Lebanon have continued to be killed and civilian infrastructure destroyed in 2025 by Israeli military operations. As per OHCHR initial review, 83 civilians have been killed since 27 November, including 56 men, 17 women and 10 children (as of 9 July 2025). See also OHCHR "Israeli operations in Lebanon continue to kill civilians" (15 April 2025) <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-briefing-notes/2025/04/israeli-operations-lebanon-continue-kill-civilians>.

^{ix} See further elaboration below in below in section "Combating poverty; Adequate standard of living including housing".

^x The UNESCO Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict took the decision to grant provisional enhanced protection to 34 cultural properties in Lebanon and to grant international financial assistance to support the implementation of emergency heritage measures. See UNESCO "Lebanon: 34 cultural properties placed under enhanced protection" (18 November 2024) <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/lebanon-34-cultural-properties-placed-under-enhanced-protection>.

C. Civil and Political Rights

Prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment

20. Lebanon received numerous recommendations on addressing the practice of torture and ill-treatment.^x
21. Proposed amendments to improve Lebanon's anti-torture law have been stalled.^{xi} However, article 47 of the Code of Criminal Procedure has been amended to strengthen due process by requiring audio-visual recording of interrogations to prevent torture and ill-treatment during preliminary investigations.^{xii} While implementation has remained modest, pilot projects have been developed with the support of the UN to strengthen safeguards.¹⁵
22. Recommendations:
 - Amend Law No. 65 to remove the statute of limitations on torture, ensure penalties reflect the crime's severity, and that cases are under the exclusive jurisdiction of civilian courts.
 - Guarantee victims full reparation, including rehabilitation, compensation, and civil remedies.
 - Ensure the full and consistent implementation of article 47 of the Code of Criminal Procedures

Administration of justice; Detention

23. Lebanon supported several recommendations to improve the conditions in places of detention.^{xiii}
24. Lebanon's prison system is critically affected by severe overcrowding, poor conditions, and prolonged detention without due process, largely due to judicial delays and limited legal aid, and further exacerbated by the economic crisis.^{xiv} Figures from 2024 suggest that within Roumieh prison alone – Lebanon's largest prison – the occupancy rate was at 360%, while some 70% of the prison population nationwide were pretrial detainees.¹⁶
25. Refugees and migrants remain particularly exposed to detention under Lebanon's criminal system, with penalization^{xv} of undocumented status exacerbating their risk.^{xvi} A refugee who irregularly entered or is lacking legal residency may be detained and sentenced by the court for a criminal offense,¹⁷ in contravention of principles of international refugee law.^{xvii}
26. The UN is providing comprehensive support to places of detention including the provision of healthcare, as well as strengthening the prison services and conditions including refurbishment of facilities and provision of rehabilitation programmes.¹⁸ The NHRC/NPM conducted an extensive assessment of human rights conditions in detention facilities, with the support of the UN.¹⁹
27. Recommendations:

^x Several recommendations called for the full implementation of Law No. 65/2017 on Law on Punishment of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (recommendations 150.16, 150.48, 150.126, 150.127, 150.128 – all supported). Other recommendations addressed the shortcomings in the law itself, including eliminating statutes of limitation, providing a comprehensive definition of torture, and ending the practice of military courts having jurisdiction (recommendations 150.124, 150.125, 150.129, which were supported/noted, with those elements related to ending the jurisdiction of military courts as well as the abolition of the statute of limitations noted). These recommendations echo the UN Human Rights Committee in its Concluding observations on the 3rd periodic report of Lebanon, para. 28 CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3 [distr. 9 May 2018].

^{xi} In March 2022, Lebanon's Human Rights Parliamentary Committee revisited proposed amendments to Law No. 65/2017, aiming to align it with international human rights standards. The proposed changes include broadening the definition of torture to encompass acts beyond investigation and judicial procedures, criminalizing cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, eliminating the statute of limitations for prosecuting torture offenses, and enhancing penalties to reflect the gravity of the crime. Additionally, the amendments seek to ensure that torture cases are exclusively tried in civilian courts and that victims have access to comprehensive remedies, including rehabilitation, compensation, and civil remedies independent of criminal proceedings. The proposed amendments have not been adopted to date.

^{xii} Law 191/2020 amended Article 47 of Lebanon's Code of Criminal Procedures, strengthening due process guarantees during preliminary investigations, including the right to legal representation and the confidentiality of lawyer-client meetings. It also mandates audio-visual recording of interrogations to prevent torture and ensure transparency.

^{xiii} Recommendations 150.117, 150.132, 150.181.

^{xiv} In 2022, the UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT) raised concerns about the prolonged pre-trial detention, overcrowding and deplorable living conditions in places of deprivation of liberty that it observed during its second visit to Lebanon. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/05/lebanon-little-progress-torture-prevention-un-experts-find>

^{xv} Chapter IX of the 1962 Law of Entry, Stay, and Exit; the Lebanese Constitution, the Lebanese Penal Code; and the Criminal Procedural Code.

^{xvi} As of end 2024: Total prison population - 6,086; Syrian nationals - 1,777 (29,2%). Source: UNHCR.

^{xvii} relating to non-penalization, detention and protection of those in need of international protection.

- Develop and implement a comprehensive national strategy to reform the criminal justice sector, focusing on reducing pre-trial detention and prison overcrowding including through alternatives to imprisonment, and improve detention conditions in line with international human rights standards.
- Ensure robust legal safeguards for all detainees, including the right to legal representation, timely judicial review, and the ability to challenge detention.
- Ensure the NHRC, including the NPM, is granted full, unhindered, and regular access to all places of deprivation of liberty.^{xviii}

Independence of the judiciary

28. Lebanon supported several recommendations to strengthen the independence of the judiciary.^{xix}
29. Lebanon’s judiciary remains subject to executive authority in key areas such as appointment, promotion, and transfer of judges. On a positive note, the Government has supported efforts to strengthen the independence of the judiciary, including the approval of 2025 bill on the organization of the judicial judiciary currently before parliament.²⁰
30. Lebanon supported all recommendations on ensuring accountability for the 2020 Beirut Blast, as well as providing support for survivors and their families.^{xx} However, the investigation has been fraught with allegations of political interference including efforts to threaten, undermine, and discredit the investigative judge.²¹ In a positive development, the investigation resumed in early 2025, including the interrogation of senior officials.²²
31. Recommendations:
 - Adopt without delay the draft laws on the independence of the judiciary in line with international standards.^{xxi}
 - Expedite a thorough, independent, and credible investigation into the Beirut Port explosion without political interference, and hold those responsible to account.

Prohibition of slavery; Trafficking

32. Lebanon supported numerous recommendations on combatting human trafficking.^{xxii} Lebanon is both a destination and source country for human trafficking.²³ Migrant domestic workers—especially women—are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, often living with employers in conditions restricting their freedom of movement. Excluded from labour protections, those fleeing abuse risk irregular status, detention, or deportation. Many, particularly outside urban areas, lack access to support. This legal limbo traps victims in abuse. Refugees, particularly from Syria, also face heightened risks of sex and labour trafficking. A law enforcement focus on legal infractions over victim protection discourages disclosure and perpetuates abuse.²⁴
33. Efforts to combat human trafficking are hampered by limited data²⁵ and systemic barriers to victim identification and protection.²⁶ In a positive step, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for a national referral mechanism^{xxiii} were endorsed in May 2025 by the Council of Ministers, while there are also legislative proposals that aim to enshrine the non-punishment principle for victims.²⁷
34. Recommendations:
 - Implement the SOPs for identifying, referring, and protecting victims of trafficking.

^{xviii} In line with Lebanon’s obligations under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OP-CAT).

^{xix} Recommendations 150.143; 150.136; 150.138; 150.148; 150.149.

^{xx} Recommendations 150.136-150.137; 150.186; 150.147; 150.203.

^{xxi} Drafts laws on both the organization of the judicial judiciary and the administrative judiciary, ensuring alignment with international standards and the recommendations of the Venice Commission, particularly regarding judicial governance, independence, and accountability. The revised laws should be supplemented by comprehensive and adequately resourced implementation plans, including measures to operationalize reformed oversight institutions, depoliticize judicial appointments and transfers, and strengthen inter-institutional coordination within the justice sector.

^{xxii} Recommendations 150.172; 150.168; 150.169-150.171; 150.242; 150.261.

^{xxiii} The SOPs were developed by a Counter-Trafficking Working Group Comprising representatives from the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Labor, Internal Security Forces, General Security, Lebanese Army Forces, and other key counter-trafficking stakeholders.

- Enhance the judiciary’s capacity to manage trafficking cases and prioritize the adoption of a law embedding the non-punishment principle for victims.
- Ensure the availability, accessibility and quality of trafficking survivor protection services including legal assistance, shelter, healthcare and psychosocial support.

Enforced disappearance

35. Lebanon supported several recommendations to investigate cases of enforced disappearances.^{xxiv}
36. The Lebanese National Commission for the Missing and Forcibly Disappeared (NCMFD) is the independent body tasked with determining the fate of the missing and forcibly disappeared persons in Lebanon.^{xxv} The UN has engaged closely with the Commission, including addressing the gender dimensions while facilitating dialogue with families of the disappeared, in particular women family members, bridging the gap between national institutions and grassroots actors.²⁸
37. The NCMFD has faced challenges in prolonged position vacancies.²⁹ It also requires adequate financial and administrative resources to fully implement its mandate.
38. Recommendations:
- Ensure the full operationalization and independence of the NCMFD by allocating adequate financial, human, and administrative resources.
 - Encourage greater engagement with affected communities, in particular women, both in the membership and decision-making process of the Commission.

Freedoms of expression, association and peaceful assembly

44. Lebanon received several recommendations to strengthen freedoms of expression,^{xxvi} association,^{xxvii} and peaceful assembly.^{xxviii}
45. Civic space has come under threat, both online and offline, particularly since the 2019 popular uprising. Although Lebanon supported recommendations to protect media freedom and investigate attacks on journalists and human rights defenders, such practices persist.^{xxix} Journalists, writers, and comedians have been frequently summoned by internal security forces for interrogation—some receiving harsh criminal penalties for defamation, including imprisonment, particularly for politically sensitive statements.^{xxx} New measures have been introduced to restrict the freedom of expression among legal professionals,³⁰ while the LGBTI community continues to face threats to both expression and peaceful assembly.³¹
46. In a positive development, the Minister of Information proposed a new media law to the Lebanese Parliament in 2024, supported by the UN.^{xxxi} The draft law represents a critical opportunity to modernize media governance in Lebanon, safeguard journalists, and foster a free, responsible and pluralistic media environment.
47. Recommendations:
- Ensure full respect for freedom of expression, including artistic and cultural expression.

^{xxiv} 150.130; 150.141; 150.146.

^{xxv} Established pursuant to Article 9 of Law 105/2018, and formed pursuant to Decree 6570 issued on July 3, 2020, and its amendments. See also the Committee of the Families of the Kidnapped and Disappeared in Lebanon <https://cfkdl.org/ncmfd>

^{xxvi} Recommendations 150.78; 150.156; 150.46; 150.133; 150.151; 150.159; 150.154.

^{xxvii} Recommendation 150.161 (supported).

^{xxviii} Recommendation 150.78; 150.156; 150.147; 150.152; 150.156 (supported).

^{xxix} Recommendations 150.135; 150.145; 150.150; 150.153; 150.160; 150.161; 150.163; 150.164.

^{xxx} In 2018, the Human Rights Committee raised concerns over laws criminalizing defamation, insult, and criticism of public officials, which can lead to imprisonment. It also highlighted the over broad interpretations of cybercrime used to restrict freedom of expression and reports of arrests of individuals criticizing authorities, including on social media. Additionally, the Committee highlights the broad powers of censorship, including bans on artistic works and movies. See Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Lebanon, para. 45 CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3 (distr. 9 May 2018).

^{xxxi} UNESCO supported the preparation of the draft legislation, which aims to strengthen media freedom in Lebanon by promoting freedom of expression, ensuring the safety of journalists, and upholding the public’s right to access reliable information. It also calls for the establishment of a national media authority to regulate the sector, safeguard journalists’ rights, issue licenses, and dismantle existing monopolies,

- Decriminalise defamation, in line with international best practices.^{xxxii}
- Protect journalists, human rights defenders and LGBTI persons from intimidation, harassment and attack, and ensure full investigation and accountability.
- Adopt the draft media law and related framework.

D. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Combatting poverty; Adequate standard of living including housing

48. Lebanon received several recommendations to combat poverty, improve living conditions, and strengthen social protection,^{xxxiii} including for asylum seekers and refugees.^{xxxiv}
49. Poverty in Lebanon has more than tripled over the last decade, with about 44% of the population living in poverty³² and 1.17 million experiencing acute food insecurity.³³ Marginalised groups—including refugees, people with disabilities, children, older persons, migrant workers, and LGBT individuals—have been disproportionately affected by the socioeconomic crisis and further exacerbated by the conflict. Lebanon hosts the highest number of refugees per capita globally,³⁴ with roughly 90% living in extreme poverty and dependent on aid.³⁵
50. The economic crisis, currency devaluation, and inflation have sharply increased rents while reducing tenants' purchasing power, leading to rising rent burdens, evictions, and housing insecurity among low-income households, displaced populations, and marginalised groups. The conflict and related housing destruction and displacement further worsened access to adequate, affordable housing³⁶ amid the absence of a comprehensive national housing strategy.
51. The UN has supported the Lebanese Government to provide assistance to those most in need,³⁷ including emergency response and social safety net expansion during the conflict.³⁸ In a positive step, Lebanon launched the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) in February 2025, with the support of the UN.³⁹
52. Recommendations:
- Ensure secure tenure and protection of housing, land, and property rights for all, with special attention to IDPs and secondarily displaced refugees.
 - Develop and implement a comprehensive national housing policy.
 - Ensure full implementation of the NSPS and ensure adequate national budget allocations to guarantee affordable basic services in the public system.
 - Consider expanding social protection systems to include broader beneficiary access including refugees and migrants in vulnerable situations.

Education

53. Lebanon supported numerous recommendations on strengthening the education system.^{xxxv}
54. Lebanon's education system has been severely affected by overlapping crises, disrupting the continuity and quality of services and infrastructure.⁴⁰ The recent conflict saw over 340 schools fully or partially damaged, 22 completely destroyed, and 60% of public schools repurposed to shelters.⁴¹ The 2024–25 school year was delayed, particularly affecting refugee children. Restrictive enrolment

^{xxxii} See Human Rights Committee General Comment No. 34 Article 19 (ICCPR): Freedom of opinion and expression, para. 47 "States parties should consider the decriminalization of defamation and, in any case, the application of the criminal law should only be countenanced in the most serious of cases and imprisonment is never an appropriate penalty." CCPR/C/GC/34 (distr. 12 September 2011).

^{xxxiii} Recommendations 150.22; 150.64; 150.189; 150.24; 150.100; 150.180; 150.182; 150.185; 150.188; 150.190; 150.191; 150.204; 150.275.

^{xxxiv} Recommendations 150.265; 150.280; 150.167; 150.268

^{xxxv} Recommendations 150.196; 150.200; 150.208; 150.210-150.212; 150.248.

criteria^{xxxvi} requiring legal residency or a UNHCR certificate prevented 43,000 refugee children from enrolling in public schools.⁴²

55. Approximately 27% of children and youth are out of school,^{xxxvii} with the highest rates among Syrian refugees.⁴³ Around a third of school-aged children and youth face barriers to enrolment or regular attendance, exacerbated by the conflict and financial constraints,^{xxxviii} and lack of required documentation for non-Lebanese children and youth. Another key concern is the practice of prioritizing child labour over education, particularly among adolescents.^{xxxix}
56. The socioeconomic crises, compounded by the conflict, have led to harmful coping mechanisms including school dropouts. Within schools, children—particularly Syrian and Palestine refugees, girls, and those with disabilities—are often exposed to violence, negatively affecting their psychosocial well-being and academic performance.
57. While Lebanon has moved toward outlawing corporal punishment in schools, enforcement remains inconsistent.⁴⁴
58. In a positive step, the government has launched initiatives to address learning gaps as part of its recovery efforts,^{xl} alongside measures to enhance vocational and technical training.^{xli}
59. **Recommendations:**
 - Remove legal and policy barriers preventing equal access to education for all children, regardless of residency or documentation status.
 - Issue the executive decrees for the full operationalisation of law 150/2011 on the right to education, which stipulates free, primary education for all.^{xlii}
 - Integrate learning recovery into ongoing curriculum reform to guarantee all children equitable access to quality education.
 - Enact laws and embed curriculum reforms to prevent violence against children and outlaw corporal punishment.

Labour rights

60. Lebanon received several recommendations related to labour rights, noting for the most part those related to abolishing the kafala (sponsorship) system,^{xliii} as well as expanding areas of work for Palestine refugees from Lebanon.^{xliiv} Lebanon supported recommendations related to strengthening

^{xxxvi} See Council of Ministers Decision number 2/2024 dated 17/09/2024 noting the eligibility criteria for registering non-Lebanese (specifying the temporarily displaced to Lebanon) in schools from grades 1 to 12. This decision also notes that the Government of Lebanon supported these students since the start of the Syrian crisis in 2011, allowing them to register and enrol in schools in Lebanon even in the absence of proper residency documentation. It further noted that moving forward for the academic years 2024-25 and 2025-26, one of two conditions (legal residency or a UNHCR certificate) is required for eligibility to register at schools without which schools would not be able to register the children. It is also important to note that the decision requests MEHE and the Ministry of the Interior to collaborate to address the cases of the students who do not have residency documentation.

^{xxxvii} Including both Lebanese and non-Lebanese students. This figure should be considered indicative, as the absence of comprehensive data makes it impossible to determine the exact number of out-of-school children.

^{xxxviii} such as the costs associated with transportation, school lunch, school supplies.

^{xxxix} See further discussion of child labour under section *Children* below.

^{xl} The learning loss resulting from these crises resulted in learning poverty specifically among the public school students. MEHE along with partners and donors within the sector are addressing this national learning crisis primarily targeting public schools nationwide. As a step towards recovery, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) launched the National Diagnostic Assessment, currently targeting all public school students in grades 1 to 6, in an attempt to identify the learning gaps, and design the Lebanon National Education Recovery Program (LNERP 2025–2027) that aims to deliver an evidence-based and equity-driven intervention to address foundational learning losses in literacy and numeracy among primary students (Cycles 1 and 2). The program will be progressively expanded to Cycle 3 and secondary levels to ensure continuity of support and educational resilience. (Reference: MEHE, 2025)

^{xli} The MEHE developed a National Strategic Framework for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) focused on improving the quality of formal and non-formal programs, including work-based learning and remedial education.

^{xlii} It is important to note that Lebanon has issued an implementation decree number 9706 dated 07/07/2022 stating that primary education is mandatory and free for all children in the country, and as for the non-Lebanese children who have a legal residency status in the country, they are to be treated equally, and that legal residency status is required. Therefore, the Law that states the right to education also references the requirement of a legal residency status, which is reiterated in the Council of Ministers Decision number 2/2024.

^{xliii} Recommendations 150.281-150.285. Abolishing the kafala system was noted, while recommendations to extend protection of migrant workers' rights were supported, through the development of a Standard Unified Contract, see Lebanon - Views on conclusions and/or recommendations, voluntary commitments and replies presented by the State under review, paras. 20-25 <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/47/5/Add.1>.

^{xliiv} Recommendation 150.277.

migrant workers' rights,^{xlv} and highlighted its efforts to finalize the "Standard Unified Contract" (SUC) for migrant workers.^{xlvi}

61. Migrants and refugees in Lebanon face significant challenges accessing the labour market, along with heightened risks of exploitation, abuse, and discrimination. Refugees' right to work is governed under general laws for foreign nationals.⁴⁵ Barriers to obtaining legal work permits limit employment security and legal protection.⁴⁶ Migrant workers are subject to the kafala system, which ties legal status to employers and limits job mobility. This power imbalance often results in abuse, with limited avenues for redress. Women migrant domestic workers are in especially vulnerable situations,⁴⁷ frequently exposed to withheld wages, restrictions on freedom of movement, document confiscation, and physical and sexual abuse, all of which are indicators of forced labour^{xlvii} and which further impedes their ability to seek help or exit exploitative situations.⁴⁸ In an initially promising development, the revised SUC was adopted by the Minister of Labour in August 2020, an important step towards dismantling the kafala system.^{xlviii} However, the SUC was subsequently suspended by the State (Shura) Council, and there has been no further progress on the file to date.^{xlix}
62. Palestine Refugees from Lebanon (PRL) encounter systemic barriers in accessing the labour market, despite legislation allowing free annual work permits.¹ PRL are also excluded from many social benefits like sickness and maternity allowances, although they contribute to the National Social Security Fund. Nationality-based restrictions for PRL on 39 professions deepen socioeconomic exclusion,⁴⁹ as do recent government measures that disproportionately affect PRL access to work.⁵⁰
63. **Recommendations:**
 - Remove nationality-based restrictions for Palestine Refugees from Lebanon and ensure their full access to social security benefits.
 - Dismantle the kafala system and implement comprehensive labour law reforms to guarantee migrant workers' freedom of movement, prevent exploitation, and establish effective pathways for regularization.ⁱⁱ
 - Ensure access to protection services, including free legal aid, shelter, healthcare, and psychosocial support for migrant workers exposed to abuse.
 - Simplify and reduce requirements and fees for work permits across all refugee nationalities.

Health

64. Lebanon supported several recommendations to improve the quality of healthcare.ⁱⁱⁱ
65. The right to health has been severely impacted by the socioeconomic crises, compounded significantly by the conflict, which had a detrimental impact on the healthcare system. Women and adolescent girls faced heightened risks, including pregnancy-related and reproductive health complications.⁵¹
66. Children's health and mental well-being have sharply declined since 2015, with increased mortality, reduced immunization, and high rates of anxiety and depression.⁵² Already by 2021, one in two children in Lebanon was at serious risk of physical, emotional, or sexual violence, as families struggled amid the country's deepening crisis.⁵³ Access to healthcare and psychosocial support for children and caregivers remains severely limited due to infrastructure damage, shortages, stigma, and financial

^{xlv} Recommendations 150.271; 150.261-150.264; 150.270; 150.273; 150.279; 150.176.

^{xlvi} Lebanon - Views on conclusions and/or recommendations, voluntary commitments and replies presented by the State under review, see paras. 20-24 <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/47/5/Add.1>

^{xlvii} See [ILO indicators of Forced Labour | International Labour Organization](https://www.ilo.org/en/indicators/forced-labour).

^{xlviii} On 8 September 2020, the Caretaker Minister of Labour issued the revised Standard Unified Contract. The contract stipulates clearly that domestic workers can leave the household during their weekly day off and annual leave, and that they are not required to pay recruitment fees or related costs. It also prohibits employers from withholding wages and confiscating passports and other personal documents. <https://www.ilo.org/resource/news/lebanon-takes-crucial-first-step-towards-dismantling-kafala-lebanon> .

^{xlix} Decision by the Shura Council in October 2020 <https://today.lorientlejour.com/article/1238540/new-contract-for-migrant-domestic-workers-on-hold-pending-the-results-of-a-lawsuit-by-the-syndicate-of-the-owners-of-the-worker-recruitment-agencies.html>

ⁱ Labor Law No. 129/2010.

ⁱⁱ In line with the longstanding observations of ILO supervisory bodies regarding the application of ILO Conventions ratified by Lebanon, particularly the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29).

ⁱⁱⁱ Recommendations 150.195-150.199; 150.201; 150.205; 150.207.

barriers.⁵⁴

67. The global aid downturn has directly impacted refugees' access to healthcare in Lebanon. Migrants also face barriers in access, especially hospitalization, due to lack of documentation, limited insurance coverage and discriminatory practices at public hospitals.
68. During the conflict, the UN provided essential medical support, treating injuries and trauma, and delivering healthcare services to internally displaced persons (IDPs), including child vaccination campaigns in shelters.⁵⁵ The UN further supported access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services,⁵⁶ and psychosocial/mental health services.⁵⁷
69. Recommendations:
- Make healthcare, including sexual, reproductive and mental health services, accessible and affordable for all.
 - Expand immunization programmes and strengthen outbreak prevention for vaccine-preventable diseases.
 - Scale up efforts for mental health strategies and follow-up care for children affected by conflict.
 - Support the implementation of the Reproductive Health Program^{liii} with the elaboration and implementation of a comprehensive SRH action plan.

E. Groups at risk

Women and girls

70. Lebanon received numerous recommendations on strengthening the rights of women and girls, including addressing discrimination in nationality and personal status laws,^{liv} combatting gender-based violence^{lv} including early^{lvi} and forced marriage;^{lvii} criminalising marital rape,^{lviii} and strengthening participation in political and public life.^{lix}
71. Lebanon's multiple crises have exacerbated pre-existing gender inequalities,⁵⁸ heightening risks for women and girls—especially among marginalized groups. Personal status matters remain regulated under 15 separate religious-based laws,⁵⁹ where women's rights vary, entrenching inequality and discrimination.⁶⁰ Lebanese women still cannot pass nationality to their children or spouses.⁶¹ While there have been efforts to strengthen legislation and policy, including Law No. 205 on criminalising sexual harassment,⁶² the Strategic Plan for the Protection of Women and Children (2020–2027)⁶³ and the National Strategy for Lebanon (2022-2030),⁶⁴ implementation has been limited.
72. Lebanon did not support recommendations to prohibit child marriage,^{lx} where there is still no unified minimum age.^{lxi} However, some religious authorities increased the age to 18,⁶⁵ and a draft law aims to harmonize this across sects,⁶⁶ supported by the 2023 National Action Plan on Child Marriage Prevention.⁶⁷
73. Gender-based violence (GBV) remains high, with weak enforcement of protective laws.⁶⁸ Refugee and marginalized women and girls are particularly affected, and further exacerbated by conflict-related displacement in 2024.⁶⁹ Harmful norms like child marriage also reduce educational opportunities^{lxii} and increase exposure to violence.

^{liii} Ministry of Public Health "Reproductive Health Services" <https://www.moph.gov.lb/en/Pages/6/758/reproductive-health-services>

^{liv} Recommendations 150.39; 150.70; 150.175; 150.216; 150.286-105.290; 150.292-150.294; 150.173 (all noted).

^{lv} Recommendations 150.239; 150.221; 150.23; 150.235; 150.236; 150.80; 150.78; 150.38; 150.82; 150.222; 150.223; 150.232; 150.238; 150.289.

^{lvi} Recommendations 150.254; 150.239; 150.241; 150.245; 150.249

^{lvii} Recommendation 150.214.

^{lviii} Recommendations 150.239; 150.222; 150.223; 150.232; 150.238 (all noted).

^{lix} Recommendations 150.217; 150.219; 150.220; 150.227; 150.231.

^{lx} Recommendations 150.254; 150.239; 150.241; 150.245; 150.249 (all noted).

^{lxi} Some religious-based laws allow girls as young as 14 years or even younger to marry.

^{lxii} Recent data finds that 22% of Syrian girls aged 15-18 do not attend school due to marriage. UNICEF "Adolescent Girls in Lebanon: Their Access to Education and Other Relevant Services: Barriers and Facilitators (5 July 2024) [https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/media/12266/file/AG%20Access%20Education%20EN.pdf#:~:text=Palestinian%20refugee%20girls%20in%20Lebanon%20\(4%25\).59.%20Recent,do%20not%20attend%20school%20due%20to%20marriage%2C](https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/media/12266/file/AG%20Access%20Education%20EN.pdf#:~:text=Palestinian%20refugee%20girls%20in%20Lebanon%20(4%25).59.%20Recent,do%20not%20attend%20school%20due%20to%20marriage%2C).

74. Despite women outnumbering men in higher education, women’s labour force participation remains low⁷⁰ at 22.2%.^{lxiii} Political representation is also limited, with women holding just 6.25% of parliamentary seats. However, in a modest improvement, women secured 10% of municipal council positions in 2025⁷¹—double the 2016 elections—and cabinet representation rose to 21% from 4% in the previous government.⁷² Barriers to female political representation include unequal campaign financing, high candidacy fees, lack of a gender quota, and compromised voter secrecy,⁷³ while female candidates often face political violence, both offline and in digital spaces.⁷⁴
75. The UN continues to support initiatives addressing discrimination and harmful practices against women, including promoting women’s economic⁷⁵ and political participation⁷⁶ and advancing the women, peace, and security agenda.⁷⁷
76. Recommendations:
- Withdraw reservations to CEDAW article 9(2) and article 16(1),^{lxiv} and amend the 1925 Nationality Law to enable women to pass citizenship to their children.
 - Raise the minimum legal age of marriage to 18 years without exceptions and accelerate implementation of the National Child Marriage Action Plan.
 - Ensure sustained, survivor-centered GBV services, including legal aid, shelters, healthcare, and psychosocial support, without discrimination in access.
 - Ahead of the 2026 parliamentary elections, reduce financial barriers related to candidacy, implement gender quotas to increase women’s political participation, and address the issue of violence against women in politics.

Children

77. Lebanon received numerous recommendations on child rights, including on the issues of child labour,^{lxv} education, child justice, and harmful practices including child marriage.^{lxvi}
78. Despite ratifying international conventions and strengthening national legislation on child labour,⁷⁸ enforcement remains weak due to institutional limitations, resource constraints, and the scale of the refugee crisis.⁷⁹ Child labour remains a serious concern, exacerbated by the socioeconomic crisis.⁸⁰ Syrian refugee children are particularly exposed, with over one in four families forced to send children to work.⁸¹ Many are engaged in street vending, begging, and factory work, facing exploitation and abuse.
79. Children in conflict with the law face significant protection risks,⁸² including detention with adults and extended pretrial periods often beyond legal limits. Child justice safeguards are hampered by a shortage of specialized courts and judges.⁸³ Although Lebanon supported raising the age of criminal responsibility to 18, it remains at 7 years.^{lxvii} Rehabilitation and reintegration programmes are scarce and underfunded. Lebanon lacks a national child justice strategy or coordination mechanism, while the Juvenile Department at the Ministry of Justice is not fully operational, hindering oversight. The recent conflict heightened risks for detained children, causing displacements, lost case files, and placements far from families. Children also continue to face prosecution for association with armed groups. Meanwhile, protection measures for children in contact with the law – such as child victims and those at risk – remain inadequate.
80. In a positive step, the government opened a dedicated rehabilitation centre for children/boys in conflict with the law in May 2025, with the support of the UN.⁸⁴
81. Recommendations:

^{lxiii} See Central Administration of Statistics of the Lebanese Republic and ILO “Lebanon follow-up Labour Force Survey January 2022” (2022) http://www.cas.gov.lb/images/Publications/LFS_2022/Lebanon%20FLFS%20Jan%202022%20EN.pdf.

^{lxiv} Lebanon has reservations under both article 9(2) and 16(1) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Article 9(2) guarantees women equal rights with men in respect of the nationality of their children, while article 16(1) enjoins States to eliminate discrimination in all matters relating to marriage and family relations. See further the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of Lebanon, paras. 11, 12.

^{lxv} Recommendations 150.243; 150.246; 150.251; 150.253; 150.257 – all supported.

^{lxvi} On the issue of child marriage, see section on *Women and Girls* above.

^{lxvii} Recommendation 150.244. The current age of criminal responsibility is 7 years under Law No. 422 (2002) “Protection of Children in Violation of the Law or Exposed to Danger”.

- Strengthen child protection systems to provide timely support and access to safe environments and psychosocial services.
- Develop a comprehensive, multi-sectoral national action plan to address all forms of child labour and raise the minimum working age to 15.
- Raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility to at least 14 years, strengthen the legal framework and expedite procedures for both children in conflict and in contact with the law to ensure an enhanced protection of their rights, and expand specialized juvenile courts with trained legal professionals.
- Ensure that children, including refugee children, are not detained with adults and prioritize non-custodial alternatives, with justice procedures tailored to the best interests of the child.

Youth

82. Lebanon supported youth-specific recommendations including strengthening economic and social rights,^{lxviii} in particular tackling unemployment.^{lxix}
83. Youth in Lebanon have been facing increasing vulnerabilities due to the multiple crises the country has endured and the deterioration of available public services. Lebanon's youth unemployment rate increased from over 23% in 2018-2019 to some 48% in 2022.⁸⁵ Over 29% of youth were not in education, employment, or training in 2022, and school enrollment dropped significantly, especially among adolescents.⁸⁶
84. Limited progress has been made in the implementation of the National Youth Policy and Action Plan (2022-2024),⁸⁷ as the deteriorating socioeconomic and political conditions have hindered concrete action on youth-focused policies.
85. Mental health concerns among youth are on the rise, with high levels of anxiety and depression, often resulting in the use of dangerous coping mechanisms as seen in the rise of substance use among youth.⁸⁸
86. The UN has undertaken various youth-focused initiatives to strengthen their role and representation in the community.⁸⁹
87. Recommendations:
- Promote meaningful youth participation in all decision-making processes, and strengthen pathways for leadership, civic engagement, and social entrepreneurship.
 - Ensure effective implementation of the Youth Policy Action Plan with increased funding and youth involvement.
 - Improve youth employment and skills programmes, especially for out-of-school youth and vulnerable communities.
 - Provide free access to psychosocial and mental health support to all youth populations without discrimination.

Persons with disabilities

88. Lebanon supported several recommendations on strengthening the human rights of persons with disabilities,^{lxx} and formally ratified the CRPD and its Optional Protocol in April 2025.^{lxxi}
89. Persons with disabilities continue to face significant barriers to political participation. The May 2025 municipal elections underscored persistent accessibility challenges for persons with disabilities, some of whom had to be carried to reach voting booths and ballot boxes—an indignity that compromised their right to vote independently.⁹⁰

^{lxviii} Recommendation 150.228.

^{lxix} Recommendation 150.193.

^{lxx} Recommendations 150.260; 150.259.

^{lxxi} In so doing implementing recommendations 150.26; 150.28; 150.22-150.25; 150.27. The President of the Republic of Lebanon signed the instrument of ratification on 10 April 2025, with the depositary notifications duly effected on 5 June 2025. The CRPD and Optional Protocol enter into force for Lebanon on 5 July 2025 in accordance with its article 45 (2) CRPD and article 13(2) OP-CRPD, respectively.

90. Women and girls with disabilities face heightened risk of gender-based violence, exploitation, and abuse, along with challenges in accessing protection services.⁹¹ Children and youth with disabilities struggle to access inclusive education, healthcare, and protection, exacerbated by social exclusion and limited resources, and high rates of institutionalization.⁹² Although the Ministry of Education has committed to making all schools inclusive by 2030, progress remains slow. Implementation of Law 220/2000,^{lxxii} which guarantees access to education for children with disabilities, remains inconsistent, resulting in continued exclusion from mainstream schools.
91. In 2023, with UN support, the Government launched the National Disability Allowance (NDA), a universal social grant to help persons with disabilities cover extra costs, access essential services, and receive basic income support.⁹³ The UN has supported several other initiatives to strengthen the rights of persons with disabilities, including the development of the National Strategy for the Rights and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities.⁹⁴
92. Recommendations:
- Accelerate implementation of the inclusive education policy, ensuring that all schools are inclusive by 2030.
 - Increase public spending and leverage funds to ensure the National Disability Allowance is inclusive of all age groups.
 - Expedite the adoption of the National Strategy for the Rights and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities and ensure its integration in all development and humanitarian response plans.
 - Ensure accessible voting locations that allow people with disabilities to vote autonomously and with dignity.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex persons

93. Lebanon received several LGBTI-related recommendations, most of which it noted.^{lxxiii}
94. Despite supporting a recommendation to combat harassment and intimidation of LGBTI people,^{lxxiv} the practice continues. LGBTI persons further face heightened risk of GBV while encountering barriers to protection services. Anti-LGBTI discourse has been mounting in recent years,⁹⁵ with hostile rhetoric pronounced by former ministers, state officials, religious figures and associations. Civil liberties, including freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, remain under threat.⁹⁶ Individuals, organizations, and public spaces perceived to be pro-LGBTI have faced attack.⁹⁷
95. Lebanese law continues to penalise same-sex relations,⁹⁸ although progressive judicial interpretations have recently moved away from criminalisation.⁹⁹ However, efforts to repeal criminal provisions have triggered significant opposition, harassment, and threats of penalties for LGBTI individuals and advocates.¹⁰⁰
96. The LGBTI community has faced acute marginalization in Lebanon's multiple crises and exacerbated further by the conflict. Individuals haven often been excluded from collective shelters¹⁰¹ and denied access to basic services including food, cash assistance and healthcare.^{lxxv}
97. Recommendations:
- Provide gender-sensitive training to the judiciary to uphold progressive interpretations of Article 534.^{lxxvi}
 - Ensure equitable access of services for LGBTI individuals, including humanitarian, health and psychosocial support.
 - Guarantee full protection of civil and political rights for LGBTI communities including freedoms of expression, association, and peaceful assembly, without discrimination.

Migrant workers

^{lxxi} Law 220/2000 on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (29/05/2000).

^{lxxiii} The following LGBTI-specific recommendations were noted: 150.72-150.77; 150.79; 150.81; 160.83-150.85; 150.88-150.90.

^{lxxiv} Recommendation 150.78.

^{lxxv} It is notable that Lebanon supported a recommendation to guarantee universal access to sexual and reproductive health information and services, including for LGBTI persons (recommendation 150.87).

^{lxxvi} While avoiding calls for its repeal to prevent regressive counter-legislation.

98. Lebanon supported several recommendations on strengthening the rights of migrant workers, including protection from discrimination and abuse.^{lxxvii}
99. The migrant population in Lebanon has grown significantly in recent years, increasing by 18% in 2023 and 10% in 2024, reaching a total of 176,504 migrants in 2024.¹⁰² Approximately 70% of migrants in Lebanon are women, mostly employed as domestic workers, with about half living with their employers. Migrants continue to suffer from exploitative labour practices under the kafala system, poor working conditions, and exclusion from labour protections (see section on “labour rights” above). Migrant workers, especially women domestic workers, are at high risk of exploitation, violence and abuse,¹⁰³ while their freedom of movement is also often significantly restricted by their employers.¹⁰⁴
100. During Lebanon’s recent socioeconomic crisis, and further compounded by the conflict, many migrant domestic workers faced serious human rights abuses, such as being abandoned in dangerous areas, locked inside homes without documentation or money, or left outside embassies without pay. These actions undermined their rights to liberty, security, fair wages, and freedom of movement, often forcing them into irregular status and increasing their risk of exploitation.
101. Recommendations:
- Ensure the inclusion of migrants in social safety net programs in line with the National Social Protection Strategy.^{lxxviii}
 - Improve regulation of private recruitment agencies to implement fair and ethical recruitment standards.
 - Establish robust labour complaints mechanisms for migrant workers to ensure their protection in line with the ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.^{lxxix}

Refugees and asylum seekers

102. Lebanon received numerous recommendations related to the situation of refugees and asylum seekers, including providing an effective registration process,^{lxxx} extending access services including education^{lxxxi} and healthcare,^{lxxxii} improving living conditions,^{lxxxiii} combatting discrimination,^{lxxxiv} and general recommendations to strengthen the protection of refugees including respect for the principle of *non-refoulement*.^{lxxxv}
103. Since 2022, the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) have increasingly conducted summary deportations of Syrian nationals,¹⁰⁵ bypassing due process safeguards like legal representation, right to appeal, or individual protection assessments—raising serious concerns about Lebanon’s compliance with the principle of *non-refoulement*.¹⁰⁶
104. In late 2024, Lebanon imposed stricter entry requirements on Syrian nationals, including visa requirements and proof of onward travel. These measures hindered many fleeing violence from entering regularly, pushing them to use informal crossings and increasing protection risks. The fall of Syria’s Assad government in December 2024 triggered a surge in arrivals, overwhelming Lebanon’s humanitarian infrastructure.¹⁰⁷ Despite some reforms, over 80% of Syrian refugees lack valid residency. Factors such as high renewal fees, restrictive policies, sponsor requirements, and fear of authorities hinder regularisation,¹⁰⁸ limiting access to livelihoods, housing, and essential services.
105. Refugees in Lebanon have been severely affected by the recent conflict, facing injury, displacement, restrictive access to collective shelters, limitations on movements, and constrained access to legal

^{lxxvii} Recommendations 150.269; 150.170; 150.275; 150.261. For recommendations related to labour rights of migrant workers and the kafala system see section on “labour rights” section above.

^{lxxviii} The National Social Protection Strategy includes provisions for legally residing migrant workers and their families insofar as they contribute through taxes or social security contributions.
<https://nwm.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/2025-01/National%20Social%20Protection%20Strategy%20-%20EN.pdf>

^{lxxix} Set out in the ILO fundamental labour Conventions recognized as human rights related to work.

^{lxxx} Recommendation 150.266 to allow UNHCR to resume issuing registration certificates (noted).

^{lxxxi} Recommendation 150.278 (noted).

^{lxxxii} Recommendation 150.87 on access to sexual and reproductive health and services.

^{lxxxiii} Recommendation 150.265; 150.280 (both noted).

^{lxxxiv} Recommendation 150.269 (supported).

^{lxxxv} Recommendations 150.106; 150.274 (supported); 150.123 to establish a pre-deportation adjudication mechanism within the judicial system to prevent non-refoulement (noted).

residency, livelihoods, and basic services.¹⁰⁹

106. Universal birth registration that includes refugee children remains out of reach, hindered by complex procedures, high costs, and burdensome documentation requirements.¹¹⁰ However, in a positive step, recent policy changes have eased birth registration for Syrian and Palestine refugee children born between 2011 and 2025, though inconsistent implementation remains a challenge.¹¹¹

107. Recommendations:

- Ensure full respect for the principle of *non-refoulement*.
- Allow civilians fleeing Syria to access Lebanese territory and guarantee their right to seek asylum.
- Take concrete steps to develop a national legal framework and mechanisms to provide international protection for refugees on its territory.
- Expand eligibility criteria for residency renewal to include more displaced Syrians, based on their UNHCR certificate.
- Reform the legal and administrative framework to ensure that all children born in Lebanon can obtain birth certificates, regardless of their nationality or legal status of parents in Lebanon.

The situation of Palestine refugees

108. Lebanon supported a recommendation to promote the human rights of Palestinian refugees,^{lxxxvi} while noting those related to property ownership, and access to the labour market.^{lxxxvii}

109. Palestine Refugees from Lebanon (PRL) face major legislative barriers that prevent them from owning property, registering businesses, or working in many professions,^{lxxxviii} deepening poverty and marginalization and increasing reliance on humanitarian aid.

110. Palestine Refugees from Syria (PRS) in Lebanon face multiple forms of discrimination and exclusion. The 2024 halt on residency renewals has left most without legal status,^{lxxxix} increasing their vulnerability to arrest, detention, deportation, and refoulement. It has further restricted their access to essential services and legal employment, severely affecting livelihoods. PRS also face significant educational barriers due to lack of legal residency, whereby PRS students are not formally authorized to enrol in schools or access national exams.¹¹²

111. Recommendations:

- Repeal legislative and administrative restrictions preventing Palestine Refugees from Lebanon from owning property and registering businesses and lift nationality-based barriers to access professions.
- Create pathways for Palestine Refugees from Syria to regularize their stay in Lebanon and ensure access to basic services and civil documentation without requiring legal residency documents.
- Ensure Palestine Refugees from Syria have equal access to education and scholarships regardless of legal residency, including school registration, national exams, and educational certification.

¹ The present submission was prepared by members of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Lebanon, with support from the Office of the Resident Coordinator. It was drafted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Regional Office for the Middle and North Africa (OHCHR-ROMENA), with substantive contributions from the following UNCT members: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the

^{lxxxvi} Recommendation 150.274.

^{lxxxvii} Recommendation 150.277. For more information on labour restrictions for Palestine refugees, see section on "labour rights" above.

^{lxxxviii} See further in "labour rights" section above.

^{lxxxix} In May 2024, the General Security Office (GSO) halted residency renewals for Palestine Refugees from Syria (PRS). Previously, about 50% of the 27,000 PRS held legal residency.

Empowerment of Women (UN Women), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon (UNSCOL), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Food Programme (WFP), and World Health Organization (WHO).

² The 2025 National Budget included an allocation for the NHRC, albeit it remains modest with regard to the operational needs of the Commission <https://nhrcb.org/en/archives/2835>. The NHRC, which includes the NPM, continues to face significant obstacles preventing it from becoming fully operational. To date, the Commission has not been granted dedicated premises, and its annual budget remains largely insufficient to cover rental and operational costs or to recruit dedicated personnel. Additionally, the executive authority has yet to approve the Commission's internal regulations. Despite these persistent challenges, the Commission remains committed to fulfilling its monitoring and protection mandate. In this context, and despite structural and political hurdles, UN support has remained steadfast in assisting the Commission across several fronts, including: Supporting the development of its organizational structure; Advancing steps toward its eventual accreditation by GANHRI, including through the publication of annual reports since 2022; Strengthening its monitoring mandate, notably by contributing to the development of a report on the human rights situation in detention centers and supporting a human rights assessment following the 2024 armed conflict; and Building its capacity to carry out effective monitoring in places of deprivation of liberty.

³ UNDP, in partnership with OHCHR, recruited and trained five investigators to support the NHRC/NPM in conducting visits to detention sites, documenting findings, and identifying alleged violations. Between 2022 and 2024, the NHRC/NPM conducted 180 visits to ISF detention facilities and 10 visits to LAF detention sites, along with 25 follow-up visits to ISF centers. A consolidated report of findings was published in August 2024. These assessments aim to provide an overview of detention conditions and identify potential human rights violations to inform appropriate responses.

⁴ Armed conflict broke out between Hizbullah and Israel on 8 October 2023, when Hizbullah initiated cross-border rocket attacks as a support front for the Israeli war on Gaza. While initially limited to the Blue Line (the demarcation line between Lebanon and Israel), the pace and impact of the conflict escalated significantly between September and November 2024. Israeli bombardments across Lebanon resulted in significant civilian casualties and widespread destruction of civilian property and infrastructure (including homes, schools, medical facilities, places of religious worship, agricultural land, as well as water and power infrastructure).

⁵ The conflict exposed refugees to secondary displacement, as well as restricted access to shelter and livelihoods. Migrants, especially domestic workers, faced similar hardships, many abandoned by employers, leaving them undocumented and vulnerable to detention and deportation. An estimated 25,000 migrant workers were displaced from regions like the South, Nabatieh, Southern Beirut Suburbs, and the Bekaa, primarily relocating to Beirut and Mount Lebanon.

⁶ United Nations Lebanon Recovery Assessment – May 2025.

⁷ As per OHCHR monitoring.

⁸ The conflict also compounded Lebanon's challenging education situation which had already left over 500,000 children out of school after years of economic strife, teacher strikes and the impact of COVID-19. Schools were destroyed or heavily damaged in the war and hundreds more were used as shelters for some of the 1.3 million people who were internally displaced due to the conflict. UNICEF, "Decline in children's mental health, nutrition and education after the war in Lebanon" (28 February 2025) <https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/press-releases/decline-childrens-mental-health-nutrition-and-education-after-war-lebanon-unicef>

⁹ In 2022, the UN General Assembly recognised the human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment, essential for the full enjoyment of all human rights. A/res/76/300 [distr. 1 August 2022].

¹⁰ Including significant losses in livestock and food systems.

¹¹ In affected areas, soil analysis has revealed elevated levels of heavy metals and toxic compounds, with phosphorus concentrations up to 900 times above normal levels, resulting in increased acidity and reduced fertility that threaten long-term agricultural productivity. Source: UNEP.

¹² Conflict-induced fires impacted a total of 5,745 ha of land including forest land (43%), cropland (16%), grassland (16%) and other natural lands (25%). The fire impacted areas protected areas and environmentally sensitive sites (362 ha), including nature reserves (47 ha), nature sites (16 ha), Himas (2.5 ha) and protected area buffer zones (297 ha). In addition, 1,076 ha of vegetated land were mapped as damaged due to direct and indirect shelling impacts. The proximity of fire events to water sources plays a critical role in assessing environmental risks. Approximately 25.1% of fire events occurred within 1,000 meters of rivers and streams, heightening the risk of sedimentation and water pollution. Additionally, 58.4% of fires were recorded at distances between 1,000 and 4,000 meters from rivers, while 16.5% occurred beyond 4,000 meters.

¹³ The conflict resulted in the destruction of an estimated 3,188 photovoltaic panel units, an equivalent of 16.67 MWp of power source, resulting in the loss of 21,300 MWh electricity production potential.

¹⁴ Large-scale displacement has placed additional pressure on natural resources and disrupted essential public services, such as solid waste management, exacerbating environmental degradation and public health risks. These impacts disproportionately affect populations in vulnerable situations and underscore the indivisibility of environmental protection and human rights.

¹⁵ In a project supported by UNDP, a two-tiered framework was established. The first tier promotes coordination among the judiciary, security forces (notably the Internal Security Forces - ISF), and Bar Associations. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were developed and validated to define roles and coordination mechanisms. The second tier focuses on equipping selected ISF stations to enable audio-visual recording, with technical assessments and designs completed for six pilot locations. In parallel, referral systems were established by the Bar Associations of Beirut and Tripoli to provide legal aid during preliminary investigations. Awareness sessions and informational materials have been disseminated to legal professionals, security forces, and the public.

¹⁶ According to a study by Beirut Bar Association's Prison Committee statistics, in collaboration with the Interior Ministry and the Internal Security Forces (ISF) <https://today.lorientlejour.com/article/1425496/prison-overcrowding-beirut-bar-association-blames-judicial-delays-among-other-factors.html>

¹⁷ Refugees, especially Syrians lacking legal documentation as well as Palestine Refugees from Syria (PRS), face widespread administrative detention by the General Security Office (GSO), risking arrest, imprisonment, or deportation under penal laws targeting illegal presence. Administrative detention of refugees pending examination of their legal status by the GSO remained widespread across Lebanon. Many Syrian refugees, regardless of whether they had a UNHCR registration certificate, lacked a residence permit or any identity document, and were subject to arrests at checkpoints or during raids carried out by the law enforcement agencies. Following the arrest, these individuals were normally transferred to the GSO offices, either regional or the Retention Centre in Beirut. Under the Lebanese 1962 *Law of Entry, Stay, and Exit*, the following immigration-related violations are considered as criminal violations: Irregular entry, use of forged identity papers and

concealment of identity; Remaining in the country following the rejection of a new residence permit and re-entry or exit via unofficial crossing points; Continued stay in the country after the issuance of a deportation order on security grounds; Irregular re-entry; and non-timely extension of a residence permit. Accordingly, a refugee who illegally entered or is lacking legal residency may be detained and sentenced by the court for a criminal offense - and fined, detained, and deported by the administrative body (GSO). This is in contravention with the principle of international refugee law relating to non-penalization, detention and protection of those in need of international protection and who show good cause for their illegal entry and presence. After being charged with criminal violations related to their irregular entry or stay, refugees be deprived of their liberty through: Pre-trial detention; Criminal imprisonment upon conviction; Administrative detention while awaiting removal from the country after the completion of a criminal sentence (frequently, at the GSO Retention Centre in Beirut). As a rule, after completion of sentence in prison or release from a pre-trial detention, refugees lacking legal residency are transferred to the GSO that undertakes a review of their legal status. Pending the examination of their legal status, such refugees remain in administrative detention at the GSO facilities.

¹⁸ The World Health Organisation (WHO) has been supporting a project in prisons, namely Roumieh, Qobbe and Zahle central prisons and female prisons, to improve access to quality care, health being a human right, for more than 4,000 inmates and detainees. The project introduced the people-centred primary care at the Roumieh central prison. Under the project, a team of physicians, nurses and social workers conduct a comprehensive assessment for inmates, including screening and early detection for noncommunicable diseases for inmates above 40 years of age, in addition to follow up in line with standardized protocols adapted from the national level to the prison context. This is in addition to procurement of basic equipment for the clinics in these prisons as well as provision of individual and group education sessions on common health conditions. In addition, the prison medical centre is linked to the National MOPH primary health care network, hence patients in the prison will benefit from medications and other services supported by the PHC. The project also developed an automated medical record for the inmates, facilitating medical conditions follow up, and improving quality of care. Accelerated health education on self-management of chronic medical conditions such as hypertension and diabetes is also introduced. This support is coordinated through the Prison Health committee established by the Ministry of the Interior with the Internal Security Forces (ISF), Ministry of Public Health (MOPH), WHO and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as members, and remains active and self-sustained. UNICEF is helping to limit the spread of infectious diseases inside the juvenile wing at Roumieh through the provision of hygiene items and clothing kits to the children in prison. UNODC has been supporting prisons to maintain and preserve the operationality of prison services through 1) preserving basic detention conditions by conducting small-scale refurbishment and maintenance services including sanitation and sewage system; 2) providing rehabilitation opportunities to prisoners while supporting the delivery of essential services within the prison system through the adopted balanced approach, which includes activities such as the bread-oven, vehicle maintenance, and sewing workshops 3) maintaining family connections for children in conflict with the law by securing essential telecommunication equipment, which allowed family members to stay in touch during the conflict, despite the hindrances to in person visits.

¹⁹ With UN support, the National Human Rights Commission conducted an extensive assessment of human rights conditions in detention facilities, culminating in the release of a report in August 2024. The report provided authorities and human rights advocates with a detailed overview of the current conditions, along with tailored recommendations aimed at upholding detainees' rights and improving their treatment. The findings were shared with key stakeholders, including the Public Prosecution Office, the ISF, the Ministry of Interior, and the Army. The report highlighted urgent issues such as hygiene standards, food distribution, service delivery, and the need for dedicated detention areas for women and children.

To support in alleviating overcrowding, the Ministry of Justice led, with UNDP support, the "access to justice working group" has spearheaded the opening of a legal aid helpdesk in two prisons (Roumieh and Baabda). In parallel, the NHRC has collaborated with the Public Prosecution Office to facilitate the release of detainees who had exceeded their legal detention period or could be released upon payment of minor fees. To do so, trained legal investigators were put at the disposal of the Commission to identify individuals eligible for expedited release through streamlined legal intervention.

²⁰ This includes engagement with the [Venice Commission](#), as well as the establishment of an inclusive multi-stakeholder "justice forum" to develop a national roadmap for the reform of the justice sector. In May 2025, the Government [approved](#) the bill on the independence of the judicial judiciary, [originally introduced in 2018](#), but which had faced significant delays and referrals. Although the bill was seen as a welcome step, it has raised concerns from the Lebanese Judges Association, including the process of appointment of judges to the Higher Judicial Council. The draft law will undergo further parliamentary debate.

²¹ Lebanon: UN expert concerned by interference in Beirut blast probe (April 2023)

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/04/lebanon-un-expert-concerned-interference-beirut-blast-probe>

²² Investigating Judge, Tarek Bitar, resumed his work on the Beirut Blast at the beginning of 2025. Judge Bitar's authority over the case was strengthened on 10 March when the State Prosecutor overturned a January 2023 decision prohibiting judicial and security authorities from cooperating with his investigation. Judge Bitar's questioning of suspects and defendants in the case subsequently gained traction. The first phase of interrogations between February and March 2025 reportedly included port and customs employees, as well as personnel from the General Security and Military Intelligence. The interrogations continued in April 2025, which reportedly included several senior political, security and judiciary officials including the former Prime Minister, former Interior Minister, former director of General Security, and former head of State Security.

²³ Between 2003 and 2022, the International Organization for Migration identified 1,457 victims of trafficking in Lebanon, though this does not capture the full extent of trafficking into the country (IOM 2021). The majority of identified victims reported being trafficked for the purpose of forced labour (91%). Five percent of victims reported being trafficked for sexual exploitation. A small proportion reported being subjected to both labour and sexual exploitation, as well as other types of exploitation – such as slavery and related practices, forced military service, and organ removal.

²⁴ Adults and children among the estimated 1.4 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon are also at high risk of sex and labour trafficking. Restrictions on Syrians' ability to work legally in Lebanon and the enforcement of residency permit laws increase this population's vulnerability to trafficking. Traffickers hold Syrian refugee adults and children in bonded labour to pay for food, and shelter. Children are at high risk for labour trafficking, especially on the streets of main urban areas as well as in the agricultural sectors. Many women and girls recruited from Syria with false promises of work were subjected to commercial sexual exploitation in which they experienced mental, physical, and sexual abuse and forced abortions.

²⁵ While comprehensive reform of the kafala system is unlikely in the short term due to the country's focus on the economic crisis, continued evidenced-based advocacy is required to effect long-term policy change that will reduce trafficking and exploitation.

²⁶ Barriers include: fear of detention/deportation; limited awareness of support channels; focus on legal violations over victimhood by authorities; lack of a national referral mechanism; minimal support in social safety nets; and labour migration policies that reinforce

vulnerability. Some recent informal measures show promise for future institutional reform.

²⁷ A law proposal was drafted by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) in 2018 with support from IOM to amend the counter-trafficking law 164/2011. It was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 19 October 2023 then sent to the parliament on 29 February 2024. The law is currently at the Parliament, awaiting the establishment of a joint committee who will revise the draft before final discussion, voting and adoption at the general assembly. The government has also made some efforts towards a more victim-centred approach, such as granting temporary residency and waiving fees to facilitate the exit procedures and the evacuation of migrants to their countries of origin.

²⁸ UN Women has engaged with the National Commission for the Missing and Forcibly Disappeared in Lebanon through its community dialogue initiatives, promoting inclusive approaches to transitional justice. As part of its efforts to ensure meaningful participation of affected communities, UN Women has created entry points for the Commission to engage in locally-led dialogues with women and families of the disappeared, bridging the gap between national institutions and grassroots actors. In parallel, the Women's Peacebuilding Network, facilitated by UN Women, met with the Human Rights Committee of the Lebanese Parliament to advocate for the inclusion of women in the recruitment process of the National Commission. This engagement emphasized the importance of gender representation and survivor-centered approaches in the implementation of Law No. 105.

²⁹ Two of the ten commissioner positions have been vacant since 2022, negatively impact progress and decision-making due to the lack of a legal quorum. See further <https://cfkdl.org/ncmf>

³⁰ In 2023, the Beirut Bar Association amended its code of ethics, which *inter alia* regulates lawyers' relationship with media outlets. The amendments stipulate that lawyers must obtain prior permission from the head of the Bar Association to participate in any legal seminars, conferences, interviews or discussions with media outlets, social media platforms, websites, or groups. Similar restrictions were also introduced in 2023 targeting judges. The decision was taken by the Minister of Justice, who issued two circulars in April 2023, requiring judges to apply for prior authorization from the Minister before undertaking several activities, including appearing on the media, communication with embassies, government or non-government organisations, and travel clearance.

³¹ See specific section below on the *Rights of LGBTI persons*.

³² World Bank "Lebanon: Poverty more than triples over the last decade reaching 44% under a protracted crisis" (23 May 2024)

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2024/05/23/lebanon-poverty-more-than-triples-over-the-last-decade-reaching-44-under-a-protracted-crisis>

³³ About 1.17 million Lebanese residents, Syrian refugees and Palestine refugees continued to experience high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) between April and June 2025. Among them, around 55,000 people are classified in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) while 1.1 million people are classified in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis). The situation is mainly driven by the prolonged impact of conflict, continued displacement, and the reduction of humanitarian food security assistance. The current situation represents a reduction in food insecurity compared to the previous IPC analysis of Lebanon when 1.65 million people were classified in IPC phase 3 or above. The reduction of food insecure populations is mainly attributed to the enforcement of the November 2024 cessation of hostilities, followed by a temporary surge in Humanitarian Food Security Assistance (HFSA) targeting the most vulnerable households.

³⁴ 1.4 million from Syria, almost half a million Palestine refugees, over 11,000 refugees of other nationalities, as well as over 176,000 migrants. Roughly 9 out of 10 all refugees in Lebanon are living in extreme poverty and dependent on aid. European Commission, *European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations: Lebanon*, December 2024, accessible at https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/where/middle-east-and-northern-africa/lebanon_en

³⁵ UNHCR, *Lebanon: Needs at a Glance 2024*, March 2024.

³⁶ The conflict has resulted in 63,962 destroyed or damaged buildings, corresponding to 229,125 housing and non-housing units (no distinction made) in Nabatiyeh, South, Beirut, Mount Lebanon, Bekaa and Baalbek-Hermel governorates, according to a remote assessment conducted by UN-Habitat Lebanon, in partnership with UNOSAT, Shelter Sector Information Management focal point, the University of Balamand (GIS Center), and Saint Joseph University Center for Environmental Research of the Eastern Mediterranean (CREEMO), based on post-cessation of hostilities (December 2024/January 2025) satellite imagery analysis (forthcoming publication).

³⁷ The National Poverty Targeting Programme was the first poverty-targeting social assistance programme for the poorest and most vulnerable Lebanese families. Initiated in 2011, it was implemented by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and the Presidency of the Council of Ministers (PCM). Since November 2014 until its conclusion in June 2024, the World Food Programme (WFP) has been supporting the cash-based assistance component of the NPTP through the implementation of cash transfers, and technical assistance to strengthen institutional capacity. Between January 2024 and June 2024, WFP has channelled cash assistance for up to 74,264 households registered with NPTP. Simultaneously, MoSA, in coordination with WFP, launched in 2024 a recertification exercise for all NPTP beneficiary households in view of integrating eligible NPTP households into the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) Programme.

³⁸ At the onset of escalation in the conflict in the last quarter of 2024, WFP, leveraging its expertise in emergency settings, aimed to support the Government of Lebanon's (GoL) Shock Responsive Social Protection system by delivering emergency cash assistance to households most affected by the ongoing conflict at the time, and to expand the existing national social safety nets to temporarily include populations not covered by regular safety net programmes. WFP and MoSA tapped into available verified and reliable data sets of households currently not assisted through any regular Social Nets or Emergency Programme, including especially households already identified as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) since October 2023. The intervention aimed at strengthening the GoL and MoSA Shock Responsive Social Safety Net system, and delivered emergency cash assistance for up to 61,503 households targeted based on their pre-existing vulnerability as well as the expected impact of the recent conflict in increasing this vulnerability further.

³⁹ The Lebanese Government launched its first National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) on 13 February 2024, with support from UNICEF and ILO. The NSPS envisions a universal, rights-based social protection system structured around five pillars. Following the NSPS launch, an Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) for Social Protection was established in March 2024 (PM Decision 29/2024), to oversee the development of the operational frameworks and documents and their respective implementation. The process had been delayed due to the September 2024 escalation of the conflict and resumed in January 2025. The strategy aims to establish a comprehensive, integrated, and resilient social protection system centered on five pillars: social assistance, social welfare, access to education and health, social insurance, and labor market activation. Since 2024, Lebanon has also increased domestic resources allocated for social grants, with the 2025 budget doubling to USD 10 million.

⁴⁰ For those attending school, ongoing challenges persist, as Lebanon's education system was already struggling with learning outcomes before the hostilities escalating. For instance, reading proficiency among grade 2 and 3 students in public schools was critically low, with only 2.9 per cent reading at grade level in Arabic.

⁴¹ UN Lebanon Recovery Assessment, including the coordination between UNESCO, UNICEF and Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE). More than 600 educational establishments, including 12 UNRWA schools and 72 Technical and Vocational Education and Training

(TVET) schools, were converted into shelters.

⁴² The start of the 2024-2025 school year was delayed until November 2024 for first-shift classes and higher education, while Syrian refugee children in second-shift classes began only in January 2025. The conflict severely impacted the mental health of children, families, and school staff, likely contributing to poorer education outcomes. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) in focus groups highlighted lack of education during displacement as a major concern. Syrian children faced discrimination, exclusion, and bullying in schools, further hindering their access to education. Further exacerbating the situation, a Council of Ministers decision required a residency permit or UNHCR certificate for formal school enrolment. Although MEHE and MoIM were tasked with finding solutions for children lacking these documents, and UNHCR and UNICEF advocated for waivers, alternative documents, and expanded birth registration, the decision remains unchanged. Consequently, about 43,000 refugee children were barred from public education in 2025, with only 13,000 referred to non-formal or semi-private education programs like Makani and Dirasa.

⁴³ Out-of-school refugee children in Lebanese consist of mainly Syrian (95%) with 5% being Palestine Refugees from Syria (PRS) and other minorities. Source: UNICEF estimates based on LRP population estimates and MEHE administrative enrolment data.

⁴⁴ While Article 186 of the Penal Code previously allowed physical discipline by educators, this was reversed through an amendment and reinforced by Ministry of Education directives banning the practice in public schools. Additionally, Law No. 286/2014, amending Law 422/2002, prohibits all forms of violence against children. However, gaps in enforcement persist, particularly in private schools, where some institutions continue corporal punishment due to the absence of a unified legal framework and oversight.

⁴⁵ Such as the 1962 Law and Decree no. 17561 of 1964. Refugees and migrants must acquire preapproved authorization before arriving in Lebanon, enter using this authorization, apply for a work permit from the Ministry of Labor, and then convert their visa or short-term residence permit into an annual residency permit based on the work permit. Syrian nationals are eligible for work permits if they have a valid residence permit, which can be renewed up to three years. The process involves costs, documentation, and restrictions on labour sectors.

⁴⁶ For instance, Article 59 of the Lebanese Labor Law stipulates that foreign workers enjoy “upon dismissal of the same rights that Lebanese workers enjoy on condition of reciprocity, and they shall be required to obtain a work permit from the Ministry of Labor [...]”. Most Labor Courts in Lebanon consider that the condition of having a work permit is essential so that a non-national worker benefits from the Labor Law provisions. This implies that refugees working in Lebanon without a valid work permit may not claim for damages in cases of wrongful termination, which impedes greatly the security of their employment. To note that Lebanon considers Syrian refugees working legally as “economic migrants,” and policies restrict work permit renewal if they previously worked without proper authorization.

⁴⁷ Lebanon’s labour law excludes both Lebanese and foreign domestic workers, denying them protections such as a minimum wage, limits on working hours, and other labour protections, as outlined in article 7 of the labour law. They are primarily women.

⁴⁸ The kafala system grants sponsors control over migrant workers’ legal status and employment, often resulting in exploitation and abuse. Workers face barriers in changing employers, and their legal status is tied to their employer, which increases vulnerability. Document confiscation is widespread, preventing many from reporting abuse or seeking legal redress, leaving them susceptible to mistreatment.

⁴⁹ Despite laws allowing free annual work permits, PRL face bureaucratic challenges and employer dependency. They are often excluded from social benefits like sickness, maternity, and family allowances. As of 2021, Law No. 221/2021 amended regulations to allow Palestine Refugees from Lebanon (PRL) to practice nursing under specific conditions, such as when no qualified Lebanese candidates are available. However, PRL are still barred from 39 liberal professions either due to nationality-based requirements or reciprocity conditions, perpetuating socioeconomic exclusion and inequality.

⁵⁰ In April 2025, the Lebanese Government increased the cost of obtaining a criminal record check – an official background check documenting whether or not an individual has a criminal record – to LBP 2,000,000 (approximately USD22) for Palestine refugees. Obtaining a criminal record check is a prerequisite for a range of basic civil and administrative transactions, including job applications. This increase is four times higher than the fee paid by Lebanese citizens which PRL were previously also required to pay. This higher fee aligns PRL with the fee structure applicable to foreigners and further institutionalizes discrimination based on refugee status. It also imposes a disproportionate burden on a population already struggling with extreme poverty, unemployment, and lack of legal protection, worsening their living conditions and access to livelihood opportunities.

⁵¹ Women and girls were at increased risks for sexual, gynaecological and urinary tract infections and increased risk for sexual abuse and exploitation. The risk of unsafe deliveries was exacerbated during the conflict, despite efforts made to secure safe and free-of-charge deliveries for pregnant women. Women’s poor economic situation further limited their ability to seek services. The crowding, water scarcity and poor living conditions in shelters increased risks for urinary tract and gynaecologic infections. In addition, the surge in stress among women affected their hormonal balance and caused irregular menstrual cycles, pregnancy complications and premature deliveries. The stigma, societal pressure, and poor legal protection for access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, especially for single, young women and migrants was another barrier for access to SRH services.

⁵² Ali, H. et al. "An urgent call for action: Lebanon’s children are falling through the cracks after economic collapse and a destructive blast." *Global Mental Health Journal*, Cambridge University Press, 2023.

⁵³ <https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/press-releases/least-one-million-children-danger-violence-crisis-intensifies-lebanon-un>

⁵⁴ Since 2015, newborn mortality increased by 40%, maternal mortality rose, immunization coverage dropped by 30%, and many children remain unvaccinated. Mental health issues of both children and caregivers alike have worsened, with limited access to mental health services due to damaged infrastructure, shortages, stigma, and financial barriers. A UNICEF survey revealed that 72 percent of caregivers reported their children were anxious or nervous during the war, and 62 percent noted signs of depression or sadness — an increase from previous years

⁵⁵ WHO support focused on ensuring the right to access timely, adequate and continued quality care. A primary focus was on mass casualty management capacity building, reaching more than 6,000 health workers in 118 hospitals. First Aid Kits to treat the most common uncomplicated conditions were provided at more than 1000 IDP shelters. Advocacy to stop attacks on health facilities and health workers was also intensified, in line with Global treaties. As the risk for outbreaks was heightened, WHO also expanded its support to the Surveillance team at the MOPH, in terms of surge capacity as well as supplies and accelerated training, to ensure early warning and alert and response systems remained operational at its full capacity. Support was also provided to vaccinate all children less than 10 years of age at the IDP shelters, to protect them against vaccine preventable diseases (mainly polio and measles). WHO also ensured that chronic non-communicable disease medications were continuously available at the primary healthcare centres, through the MOPH Chronic diseases program, accessed by more than 350,000 vulnerable patients. WHO also supported a lifesaving limb saving hospitalization program whereby vulnerable populations with life threatening diseases are covered, to ensure their right and timely access to advanced care. WHO further supported the full operationalization of the Public Health Emergency Operations center, which allowed coordination of the crisis, distribution and referral of casualties in a timely manner, and ensured the needs of the affected population in terms of healthcare were met.

⁵⁶ UNFPA support for the emergency response included availing reproductive health (RH) drugs and commodities at the health facilities by procuring interagency RH kits for basic and complicated deliveries as well as for sexual and reproductive health services at primary care level, and by ensuring logistic support for the delivery of drugs to primary health care centres and governmental hospitals across Lebanon. UNFPA supported deliveries by covering cost sharing for Lebanese internally displaced people and support to Syrians not known to UNHCR. UNFPA ensured support for continuity of SRH services at primary care level through support to PHCs, mobile units and mobile teams across Lebanon. SRH services provided include medical consultation, midwifery care, tests and awareness raising coupled with referral as needed. Midwives were deployed at community level and at primary care level to provide midwifery care services to pregnant and lactating women. Cash assistance was utilized to support pregnant women and new mothers to access needed care and basic items for their newborn babies in addition to the baby kits distributed to women upon delivery. UNFPA further ensured support to clinical management of rape.

⁵⁷ UNFPA also scaled up its support for mental health care services by supporting the national mental health (MH) program in dissemination of information on available MH services, enhancing national capacities in mental health especially maternal mental health and through direct service delivery i.e. first psychological aid, psychosocial support and mental health care services.

⁵⁸ Although Lebanon has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), it maintains substantive reservations to Articles 9(2) and 16(1), particularly those concerning nationality and personal status. These reservations continue to hinder key advancements in gender equality and the full realization of women's fundamental rights

⁵⁹ Lebanon lacks a civil code regulating personal status matters such as marriage, divorce, child custody, and inheritance, which are governed under 15 separate personal religious-based status laws and courts for the 18 recognized categories <https://www.un.org/democracyfund/news/equal-personal-status-law-lebanon#:~:text=Lebanon%20lacks%20a%20civil%20code,for%20the%20the%202018%20recognized%20categories>.

⁶⁰ Efforts to establish a civil personal status law have yet to succeed, leading to disparities in rights based on religious affiliation.

⁶¹ In contrast, foreign spouses of Lebanese men can acquire citizenship after one year. The 1925 Nationality Law prevents women from conferring their nationality to their children and foreign husbands, and to retain their Lebanese nationality on equal grounds with men. This gender discrimination in the Nationality Law is under discussion, and draft proposals aimed at addressing this issue have been presented by several parliamentarians and political parties.

⁶² Lebanon's Law No. 205, enacted in 2021, represents a significant step in combating sexual harassment in the Arab region. It criminalizes sexual harassment for the first time, imposing penalties of up to four years in prison and substantial fines for offenders. The law encompasses various forms of harassment, including speech, actions, and online means, defining it as acts involving psychological, moral, financial, or racist pressure for sexual gains. Notably, the law protects both victims and witnesses, establishing a specialized fund for support, rehabilitation, awareness, and compensation.

⁶³ In June 2020, Lebanon's Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) launched a Strategic Plan for the Protection of Women and Children (2020–2027), supported by UNICEF and the EU. It includes a strategy on social behavioural change around violence against children, violence against women, child labour and child marriage. The strategy promotes positive social norms and practices that protect children and women from violence and harmful practices. The Plan also focusses on legal reform, institutional capacity-building, service expansion via Social Development Centers, and social behavior change through initiatives like the "Quadwa" strategy - a national Social and Behavioural Change Communication (SBCC) strategy aimed at preventing child marriage, child labour, and violence against children and women in Lebanon. The strategy engages families, communities, and institutions through evidence-based communication and community mobilization approaches. However, so far, the strategy has been mostly led and implemented by UN and civil society organizations.

⁶⁴ In November 2023, UNFPA in partnership with the National Commission for Lebanese Women and ABAAD – Resource Center for Gender Equality, launched the National Women Strategy (2022-2030). This Strategy is the main strategic framework under which governmental and non-governmental entities, national and international NGOs working in Lebanon, will operate. In addition, a three-year national action plan was prepared and launched in 2023. <https://nclw.gov.lb/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/National-Strategy-for-Women-in-Lebanon-2022-2030-I-English-Final.pdf> and <https://nclw.gov.lb/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/National-Strategy-for-Women-in-Lebanon-National-Action-Plan-2024-2026.pdf>

⁶⁵ In December 2020, the Sunni Supreme Islamic Council raised the minimum age of marriage to 18 for both males and females.

⁶⁶ The draft law on child marriage that is currently in Parliament was endorsed in 2024 by the Parliamentary Committee for Human Rights and has been submitted to the Committee for Woman and Children for their inputs.

⁶⁷ The National Action Plan (NAP) on Child Marriage Prevention in Lebanon was developed by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) in collaboration with UNICEF and the Higher Council for Childhood in October 2023 with an overall objective to reduce risks for married girls and achieve a 60% reduction in the rate of child marriage in Lebanon by 2030. The NAP seeks to: establish a protective environment for at-risk and married girls; provide timely and sustainable services to the needs of at-risk and married girls and leverage social behaviour change to promote actionable awareness on the rights of girls (Recommendations 150.246, 150.245 and 150.239). A number of ministries including MOSA, the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) have adopted policies and strategies that address violence against children and violence against women, but challenges persist in implementation including political instability, competing priorities within ministries, limited public financing, weak accountability mechanisms, social norms.

⁶⁸ While the 2014 Law on the Protection of Women and Family Members from Domestic Violence was amended in 2020 to expand its scope, enforcement remains weak and access to justice is often limited. While there is no nationally representative prevalence data on GBV in Lebanon, the GBVIMS data of 2024 demonstrates that women and girls continue to constitute the majority (98%) of survivors of GBV. Female survivors disproportionately experience risks of GBV due to several contributing factors such as socioeconomic status, social and cultural norms, male patriarchy, nationality, education status, disability, and living or working conditions. In the GBV IMS report of 2024, for women and girls, physical assault and psychological/emotional abuse present the most reported types of GBV incidents, accounting for 31% and 30% respectively. Children in Lebanon are exposed to a range of protection concerns, including child labour, child marriage, human trafficking, and sexual exploitation and abuse. According to the gender findings of UNICEF's recent report on multidimensional child poverty, adolescent girls, regardless of their nationality, have experienced harassment in public spaces and restriction of their mobility, preventing access to services. Forced and child marriage is the third most reported GBV type with 18%, followed by sexual assault (11%), and denial of resources and opportunities (8%), and rape (2%). In 2023 and 2024, incidents of online sexual harassment and cybercrimes, including extortion cases remained a significant concern, including for adolescent girls and boys. According to 2024 GBVIMS Data, the increased reported risk of children being involved in child labour, including worst forms, during the conflict has increased their risk of exposure to sexual abuse and exploitation around places such as the street or agricultural sites, shops or domestic homes. Labour-related risks of GBV are also corroborated by the GBV IMS data where between September and November 2024 at the peak of the conflict, the workplace was identified as the third highest reported risk location with sexual assault, psychological/emotional abuse and rape as the highest reported

GBV incidents in the workplace. In 2023 and 2024, a negative gender discourse fuelled further sentiments against gender equality, women empowerment and GBV prevention programs that impacted significantly on the safe implementation of programs and safety risks of staff.

⁶⁹ The escalation of armed conflict and mass displacement in Lebanon during 2024 significantly increased GBV, disproportionately affecting women, girls, and marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities, unaccompanied children, refugees, migrants, and individuals with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC). According to the GBV Information Management System (GBVIMS) 2024 Annual Report, the most reported incidents included physical assault (31%), emotional abuse (30%), and forced marriage (18%), alongside a 25% surge in sexual exploitation between Q2 and Q3. Alarmingly, workplaces became the third most reported site for sexual violence. Conflict severely disrupted Lebanon's fragile protection systems, leading to service suspensions, particularly in the South and Bekaa, where GBV reporting dropped sharply. Survivors faced reduced access to case management, clinical care, and safe shelters, with refugee women without legal residency encountering significant barriers to justice. Intimate partner and family violence remained pervasive, fueled by poverty and displacement, while child survivors—26% of GBV cases—faced increased risks of forced marriage and exploitation. Despite the existence of Law 293/2014 on domestic violence, enforcement remained inconsistent, especially for Syrian refugees and marginalized groups, with specialized support services for survivors with mental health conditions, disabilities, or diverse SOGIESC still lacking across much of the country. Source: GBV Information Management System (GBVIMS) 2024 Annual Report. Exacerbating the situation, there has been a marked surge in anti-gender rhetoric, limiting the space for advocating women's rights, gender diversity, and programs addressing gender-based violence. Gender-related activities and services are increasingly targeted by various factions.

⁷⁰ Women are underrepresented in managerial roles, with only 4% of top management positions held by women, far below the global average of 19%. A significant proportion of women in Lebanon are employed in the public sector, which has been severely impacted by the ongoing crisis. Women's financial vulnerability is further compounded by their limited access to self-employment opportunities and financial independence, leaving them more exposed to socioeconomic shocks.

⁷¹ L'Orient le Jour, "Women's political representation in Lebanon: A losing battle without quotas" (3 June 2025).

<https://today.lorientlejour.com/article/1463010/womens-political-representation-in-lebanon-a-losing-battle-without-quotas.html> (data attributed to the Ministry of the Interior).

⁷² Of the 24 ministers in Lebanon's government formed in February 2025, five are women, compared to just one woman in the previous cabinet.

⁷³ The integrity of voter secrecy in Lebanon is inextricably linked to advancing women's political participation. The current electoral framework fails to adequately protect voter secrecy, disproportionately disadvantaging women as voters and candidates. This is an important reform that should be addressed before the upcoming parliamentary elections along with equal access to media that enhances the fairness of the electoral process.

⁷⁴ In 2022, 80% of women involved in municipal elections in Lebanon reported experiencing some form of political violence. This includes intimidation, threats, and gender-based violence, making political participation unsafe for many women.

⁷⁵ UNDP supports inclusive economies and meaningful women's economic empowerment by increasing women's access to and control over economic resources, enhancing the recognition of women as fully participating economic actors, and influencing institutions and public policies for transforming gender bias in the economic system and sustainable growth and development. This included supporting women to integrate and advance in value chains, supporting women-led business access to finance and export opportunities, and the creation of gender-responsive economic systems including promoting gender-responsive taxation systems. Additionally, UNDP supported advocacy for the harmonization of national laws with international human rights obligations, including support to legal aid services and capacity-building of judicial actors to ensure gender-sensitive approaches. Finally, UNDP supported LCRP sectors and partners to deliver a more gender-based response to the impact of the crisis (policies, strategies, programmes, and projects).

⁷⁶ In 2023, with support from UNDP, a gender quota law was developed as a temporary special measure to promote women's political representation and participation in municipal elections. The proposed law, signed by 10 Members of Parliament, was introduced to the relevant parliamentary committees for further discussion and approval. However, this legislation has yet to be adopted and was not in place for the May 2025 municipal elections leaving the challenges to women's political inclusion largely unaddressed. In April 2025, UNDP and UN Women launched the SALMA Agreement (Together for Equality), a national initiative aimed at promoting the fair and effective participation of women in municipal and mukhtar elections, particularly in the absence of a formally adopted gender quota law. As part of this initiative, 105 signatories, including 20 Members of Parliament and representatives from key political parties and parliamentary blocs, committed to nominating at least 30% women on their municipal electoral lists. However, this legislation has yet to be adopted and was not in place for the May 2025 municipal elections.

⁷⁷ In 2024, with technical and financial support from UN Women, the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW) began leading the development of Lebanon's second National Action Plan (NAP) on UNSCR 1325 – Women, Peace and Security. UN Women worked closely with NCLW to establish a structured and inclusive process that reflects lessons learned from the first NAP and aligns with national priorities. This included the development of a comprehensive framework guiding the implementation of regional and thematic consultations across all governorates. UN Women's support ensured that the process was participatory, grounded in diverse perspectives, and responsive to the needs of communities most affected by insecurity and gender-based violence. Additionally, UN Women supported NCLW in strengthening national capacity for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the WPS agenda. Building on the M&E system used for the first NAP, UN Women provided training and coaching to gender focal points and M&E staff within key national institutions. These efforts enabled new actors—including ministries and public institutions—to report on their contributions using the Activity Info platform, enhancing transparency and data-driven oversight. UN Women's ongoing technical assistance continues to ensure that the second NAP is developed in a gender-responsive and results-oriented manner, while reinforcing national ownership and civil society engagement at every stage of the process.

Under the WPS portfolio, UN Women has strengthened prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV) through parallel efforts at the community and institutional levels. As trust deepened among participants in ongoing community dialogue sessions facilitated by women leaders, disclosures of GBV and violence against women have increased. In response, UN Women organized a series of Training of Trainers (ToTs) for the women leaders on safe identification and referral pathways for GBV cases, as well as mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). These leaders are now cascading the training to participants across the eight dialogue groups, ensuring women are equipped with knowledge and access to support services. All activities prioritize the safety and confidentiality of participants, including the use of discreet communication methods and context-sensitive project visibility.

In parallel, UN Women is working closely with the Gender Department of the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) to train 130 female military academy graduates on the WPS agenda, GBV, leadership, and institutional protocol. This initiative aims to embed gender-sensitive practices within security institutions and empower female personnel to contribute meaningfully to institutional transformation. Together, these interventions reflect a comprehensive approach to GBV prevention and response, linking community-based action with institutional capacity

building.

⁷⁸ Lebanon ratified the convention on the rights of the child (CRC) and ILO Conventions 138 (minimum age) and 182 (on worst forms of Child Labor) and issued national decree 8987 (2012) on prohibition of hazardous forms of work in Lebanon (yet pending ratification of the Optional Protocol on Children and Armed Conflict (OPAC)). Under Lebanese Labor Law (1946), the minimum age of employment is 14 years, and it is further forbidden to set children below 18 years of age to work more than six hours per day. A National Child Protection Law 422/2002 on the protection children at risk of violence and those in conflict with the Law was endorsed in 2002 and is currently under revision by the Parliament; A labour law draft was submitted by ILO for raising the minimum working age for children from 14 to 15. The National Action Plan (NAP) on Worst Forms of Child Labour was updated in 2016 (but not endorsed). A National Steering Committee – established to oversee the implementation of the NAP - was established in 2012 and is chaired by the Ministry of Labour (MoL) with the involvement of key ministries, UN, civil society, and representatives of syndicates of employers and workers. However, the steering committee is not fully active and commitment from the Ministry of Labour (MOL) remains minimal.

⁷⁹ Ipsos & International Rescue Committee (IRC). *Protecting Street-Connected Children from Exploitation and Forced Labor in Lebanon: Report of Findings*. December 2024. On the issue of child protection in general, the government's social workforce is limited and heavily relies on the civil society often funded by the international community to provide child protection services.

⁸⁰ UNICEF Lebanon "Children hit ever harder by Lebanon's unrelenting crises – UNICEF report." 13 December 2023. <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/children-hit-ever-harder-lebanons-unrelenting-crises>

⁸¹ More than 1 in 10 families have been forced to send children out to work as a way of coping with the socioeconomic crisis, with this figure rising to more than 1 in 4 families amongst Syrian children. UNICEF Lebanon "Lebanon's crisis stretches families' coping ability to breaking point - UNICEF Survey" 20 June 2023. <https://lebanon.un.org/en/237273-lebanon%E2%80%99s-crisis-stretches-families%E2%80%99-coping-ability-breaking-point-unicef-survey>

⁸² Roumieh prison, which has a wing dedicated to juvenile offenders, is overcrowded and is in many instances at a distance from the child's place of residence. As for the girls held in the Moubadara prison in Dahr el Bashek, most of them are girls in need of protection rather than girls who are in conflict with the law. However, their placement in prison is due to the absence of alternatives that can ensure their protection.

⁸³ Only six juvenile judges are available nationwide, each overwhelmed with mixed caseloads. This contributes to delays in proceedings, inconsistent application of protective measures, and the frequent placement of children in pretrial detention. Reports by UN and national child protection actors indicate that some children have been detained alongside adults, especially in overstretched police stations or during large-scale security operations. Syrian refugee children without legal residency are particularly vulnerable to arbitrary detention and often lack access to legal representation or family support.

⁸⁴ Under the EU funded projects, a new facility for children/boys in conflict with the law was inaugurated on 28 May 2025 in the Warwar area of Beirut, with the technical support of UNODC in close collaboration with the Internal Security Forces (ISF) and the Ministry of Justice, in line with UN standards and international best practices. With their relocation to the new facility, children/boys will no longer be held in adult men's prisons but will benefit from a child-friendly environment receiving adapted services and rehabilitation programmes by trained staff increasing the chances of reintegration into the community upon release. <https://www.unodc.org/romena/en/press/2025/May/a-collaborative-milestone-in-lebanon-inauguration-of-the-rehabilitation-center-for-children-boys-in-conflict-with-the-law.html>

⁸⁵ ILO, Strengthening Lebanon's communities amid conflict: A holistic approach to education, training, and employment, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/article/strengthening-lebanon%E2%80%99s-communities-amid-conflict-holistic-approach>

⁸⁶ UNICEF (2022). *Adolescent and Youth Programme*. <https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/adolescent-and-youth-programme>

⁸⁷ Jointly developed by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNICEF. The Action Plan is part of the implementation of the Youth Policy framework that was approved by the Council of Ministers on 3 April 2012. The Action Plan is the outcome of countrywide discussions between ministries, stakeholders, and young people. The Action Plan's interventions fall within the scope of the 20 recommendations that were selected from the National Youth Policy document under five priorities, which are: Demographics and Migration, Employment and Economic Participation, Social Integration and Social Participation, Education and Culture, and Health and High-Risk Behaviours. Moreover, with the aim to enhance the inclusion and active participation of youth in Lebanon in public affairs and decision-making processes, UNFPA and UNICEF are currently supporting the Ministry of Youth and Sports in the development of Lebanon's first National Action Plan for the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda. This action plan aims at enhancing the active participation of youth in Lebanon in peace processes to ensure inclusive decision-making processes.

⁸⁸ Lebanon National Mental Health (2024-2030) Strategy, pg. 8 [https://www.moph.gov.lb/userfiles/files/National%20Mental%20Health%20Strategy%20For%20Lebanon%20\(2024%20-%202030\).pdf](https://www.moph.gov.lb/userfiles/files/National%20Mental%20Health%20Strategy%20For%20Lebanon%20(2024%20-%202030).pdf)

⁸⁹ For example, the UNDP Youth Leadership Programme (YLP) in Lebanon has played a critical role in supporting young people as active contributors to their communities and the country's development. YLP supports young women and men in developing innovative, sustainable, and community-driven solutions to national challenges. YLP equips youth with skills in leadership, civic engagement, social innovation, and entrepreneurship, and facilitates access to platforms for policy engagement and advocacy. Since its inception, the YLP in Lebanon has engaged over 4,000 youth and supported the implementation of more than 400 youth-led social innovation initiatives. These initiatives have addressed key development challenges, including social cohesion, climate action, digital inclusion, and local development. The programme has prioritized inclusion, particularly for young women, persons with disabilities, and refugees. UNICEF's community-based Youth Advisory Group enhances youth involvement in policy advocacy and program design through ongoing capacity-building by UNICEF, government counterparts and civil society partners. Its goals include advising UNICEF and the government counterpart on youth issues, shaping program priorities, boosting youth participation in planning, and amplifying their voices in policy advocacy.

⁹⁰ To address the accessibility of polling stations, the Lebanese Union for People with Physical Disabilities (LUPD) advocates for the use of ground floor rooms in polling centres as polling stations, use of elevators where available, and creation of polling stations in polling centre courtyards where the first two options are not available <https://lphu.com/en/ourrightscampaign/>

⁹¹ Based on UNFPA situational analysis on GBV against women and girls with disabilities in Lebanon, several barriers limit access of GBV survivors living with disabilities from accessing services, including negative stereotyping and social stigmatization, inaccessibility to information, inaccessibility to facilities, and installation of rules and policies that render people with disabilities in a disadvantaged position.

⁹² Family support services and specialized case management and referral systems remain largely reliant on external funding and severely impacted by changes in funding landscape, contributing to continued high rates of institutionalization.

⁹³ Lebanon's Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA), in partnership with the European Union (EU), UNICEF and the International Labour Organization (ILO) launched the country's National Disability Allowance (NDA). The allowance is Lebanon's first-ever social grant to provide direct income support to persons with disabilities living in the country. The NDA aims to support individuals with disabilities to face the extra

cost of disability and facilitate their access to key services. While all persons with disabilities would ultimately be eligible to receive the NDA, youth aged 18-28 (born between 1995-2005) are prioritized during the first roll-out to support them in their transition to higher education or to joining the labour market. At least 20,000 individuals will benefit from a monthly allowance of US\$40 each over an initial period of 12 months. The allowance is linked to the Personal Disability Card issued by MOSA's Rights and Access programme, which manages a digital registry of all card holders. Operational and technical support to the programme and its centres was provided through UNICEF and ILO to aid the enrolment of eligible persons in the NDA. [https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/press-releases/ministry-social-affairs-introduces-social-protection-programme-people-disabilities](https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/national-disability-allowance#:~:text=The%20NDA%20will%20provide%20direct,facilitate%20access%20to%20key%20services,https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/press-releases/ministry-social-affairs-introduces-social-protection-programme-people-disabilities)

⁹⁴ At the request of the Ministry of Social Affairs, UNFPA in collaboration with ESCWA, supported the formulation of the national strategy for the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities. This strategy was validated in a national validation meeting that took place in December 2023. The final version is currently pending the feedback and endorsement of relevant line ministries and the Prime Minister's Office to proceed with its official launch.

⁹⁵ Individuals identifying as LGBTI are subjected to increased abuse and violence, intensifying social insecurity, vulnerability, and a lack of access to jobs, protection services and safe spaces. Civil society reports concerns over roll-back by national authorities to provide equal protection for individuals identifying as LGBTI due to the absence of unified gender terminology and narrow interpretation of gender in a binary manner by public authorities.

⁹⁶ In June 2022, the Minister of the Interior issued an unlawful directive ordering security forces to ban pro-LGBTI events, which local organizations contested and successfully suspended via a November 2022 court order. Despite this, the Minister issued a second directive banning any "conference, activity, or demonstration related to or addressing homosexuality."

⁹⁷ In one such incident in August 2023, a group of men part of the far-right group "Jnoud al-Rab" (Soldiers of God) attacked an LGBTQ+ -friendly bar in Beirut, reportedly hurling insults and preventing people from leaving under threat of physical violence. <https://today.lorientlejour.com/article/1347241/men-surround-hurl-insults-at-lgbtq-friendly-bar-in-mar-mikhael.html>

⁹⁸ Lebanese law continues to criminalize "intercourse that is contrary to nature" (article 534 of the Criminal Code), and judges still consider that intercourse between persons of the same sex is contrary to nature and liable to prosecution. While a number of recent court rulings support the position that article 534 should not be used to prosecute consensual conduct between adults, the majority of judicial rulings in this regard continue to criminalize homosexual practices. The Government of Lebanon has opined that "the [Lebanese] judiciary imposes lenient penalties for the offence of intercourse contrary to nature. While the law prescribes a penalty of imprisonment, judges usually replace that penalty with a fine." See Human Rights Committee, List of issues in relation to the third periodic report of Lebanon – Replies of Lebanon to the list of issues, paras. 13-14 [distr. 16 May 2018] CCPR/C/LBN/Q/3/Add.1/Rev.1.

⁹⁹ In July 2018, a landmark ruling by the Court of Appeal of Mount Lebanon in Lebanon affirmed that same-sex conduct is not unlawful under Article 534 of the Penal Code.

¹⁰⁰ In July 2023, nine MPs submitted a draft law to repeal Article 534, triggering a backlash of online harassment and ultimately leading to withdrawal of support. In response, two retaliatory draft laws proposed severe penalties (7-10 years imprisonment for "promotion," 10+ years for same-sex relations), retroactive prosecution, and extraterritorial jurisdiction, targeting all LGBTQ+ advocacy as well as foreign NGOs. The draft laws have not progressed through parliament.

¹⁰¹ One reported incident highlighted a family expelled due to HIV status.

¹⁰² IOM Migrant Presence Monitoring (2024).

¹⁰³ Migrants experience a continuum of violence, abuse and exploitation akin to modern slavery and trafficking in persons, with limited access to protection. Migrant domestic workers frequently endure isolation, coercion, and various forms of abuse, including passport confiscation, excessive working hours, inadequate living conditions, and wage withholding (Fanous, 2022). Additionally, they become dependent on their employers for necessities like housing, food, and medical care. They also suffer emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, or in some cases are coerced into sex work. Women's ability to choose whether and how to seek migration opportunities outside of their home countries is taken from them. A woman's decision to migrate for work is often influenced by family, economic pressures, domestic violence, and false promises from recruiters about better opportunities or travel to other countries.

¹⁰⁴ While contracts generally grant them one day off per week, and restrict working hours, many migrant domestic workers are prevented from leaving the house (including on their days or hours off), and/or work exuberant hours.

¹⁰⁵ Particularly following the interception of individuals engaged in irregular onward movements. This practice has included those apprehended during failed movements, as well as individuals returned from Cyprus.

¹⁰⁶ On 15 April 2019, Lebanon's High Defence Council (HDC) adopted measures to tighten border controls and address the presence of Syrians, leading law enforcement to begin apprehending those who crossed illegally after 24 April 2019. The General Directorate of General Security (GSO) subsequently issued instructions on 13 May 2019 to deport these individuals to Syria, including those registered with UNHCR or who had previously stayed in Lebanon but returned irregularly. This practice of deporting Syrians based on verbal orders from the Public Prosecution without judicial review is inconsistent with Lebanese law (with Article 88 of the Lebanese Penal Code and Article 32 of the 1962 Law of Entry, Stay, and Exit) and may violate international principles of *non-refoulement* outlined in the UN Convention Against Torture and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, both of which Lebanon has ratified.

¹⁰⁷ Following the December 2024 fall of the Assad Government, Lebanon received a significant influx of new arrivals from Syria, largely driven by sectarian violence targeting minority communities in the country. This includes, *inter alia*, populations who crossed the border from the East through Bekaa/ Baalbeck – El Hermel from December onwards, estimated at around 91,000 (including 20,000 Lebanese), with some moving further to other governorates. Moreover, an additional surge occurred between March and April 2025, comprising more than 35,000 people fleeing the hostilities in the Tartous, Latakia, Homs, and Hama Governorates of Syria and crossing into northern Lebanon. This has generated pressing humanitarian needs in relation to shelter, food, water supply, sanitation, healthcare, protection services and psychosocial support, as the sudden scale of displacement has overwhelmed the already strained local capacities and response mechanisms.

¹⁰⁸ The low rate of Syrians holding legal residency in Lebanon can be attributed to several factors. The primary reasons include restrictive policies that limit eligibility for UNHCR-based residency, inconsistent implementation of the residency fee waiver across local GSO centers, and the requirement to secure a Lebanese sponsor—even in cases where individuals are technically exempt. Additional barriers include refugees' hesitation to approach authorities due to fear or lack of trust, as well as the introduction of new residency-related fees.

¹⁰⁹ UNHCR individually identified some 110,000 refugees who were internally displaced due to the conflict. Against the background of pre-existing administrative restrictions on movement and settlement of refugees in the country, the proportion of Syrians refugees moving out of areas most affected by the conflict was smaller as compared to Lebanese nationals. Many Syrian refugees reside in heavily bombed areas, with over 300,000 in regions most affected by airstrikes. During 2024, UNHCR's health program treated 237 war-related injuries among

refugees. Those remaining in conflict zones often could afford to relocate or access safer areas. Given the adverse conditions, some Syrians crossed to Syria during the high of the conflict, though most were not refugees known to UNHCR in Lebanon. The impact of these developments on Syrian refugees in Lebanon was multifold. The conflict had significantly exasperated their existing protection challenges, restricted their already limited freedom of movement, access to legal residency, livelihoods, and increased the risk of detention and/or deportation. As established by UNHCR, at least 9% of displaced Syrian refugees were homeless at the end of 2024, while only 5% were hosted in collective shelters during the crisis. The majority (55%) of Syrian refugees were hosted during the crisis by relatives or friends, while 34% lived under rental agreements in their displacement locations.

¹¹⁰ such as identity documents, marriage registration, and residency. Children born to unregistered stateless fathers are often excluded from official birth certificates, while late registration is long and costly, especially for those without legal residency

¹¹¹ Those that have been exempted from the late birth registration procedure may still have their birth registered administratively even if the registration passes the one-year deadline. This comes as part of the Government's policy changes to facilitate both birth and marriage registration for refugee children and their parents. These policies include a waiver of the requirement to have legal stay to register the birth of Syrian and Palestinian refugee children from Syria, a partial waiver (only one spouse) to have legal stay to register marriages among Syrian nationals and Palestinian refugees from Syria, and the facilitation of the proof of marriage in order to register births by allowing Syrian parents married in Lebanon to present a marriage certificate executed in Lebanon instead of the family booklet issued from Syria as previously required.

¹¹² Despite being under UNRWA's mandate, PRS students are not formally authorized by the MEHE to enrol in schools (including UNRWA-run schools) due to residency issues. Exemptions for exams are not assured, and delays or denials hinder formal recognition of their studies. Higher education barriers include denial of university registration and colloquium exams, further compromising educational rights. Exemptions are at the discretion of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) and not guaranteed, creating uncertainty and discouraging continued education. Even with exemptions, delays or denials in issuing certificates and academic recognition have often been reported. These barriers also extend to higher education and technical and vocational education, limiting university registration and scholarship opportunities, severely impacting their right to education.