



Brussels, 15.12.2021
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COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 15.12.2021

on the financing of the special measure in favour of Lebanon for 2021

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012¹, and in particular Article 110 thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/947² of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 June 2021 establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe and amending and repealing Decision No 466/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU) 2017/1601 and Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 480/2009, and in particular Article 23(4).

Whereas:

- (1) In order to ensure the implementation of the special measure for Lebanon for 2021, it is necessary to adopt an annual financing Decision, which constitutes the annual work programme for 2021. Article 110 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 (“Financial Regulation”) establishes detailed rules on financing Decisions.
- (2) The envisaged assistance is to comply with the conditions and procedures set out by the restrictive measures adopted pursuant to Article 215 TFEU³.
- (3) The objective pursued by this special measure is to support the country’s efforts in hosting refugees from Syria for the benefit of both refugees and vulnerable host communities.
- (4) The Special measure is justified by the EU response to the Syrian crisis and its effects on Lebanon. It will be implemented in line with commitments and financial pledge of the Brussels V Conference on Syria⁴. The Response to the Syrian crisis answers to evolving needs on the ground and is not programmed.

¹ OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p.1.

² OJ L 209, 14.6.2021, p.1.

³ www.sanctionsmap.eu Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

⁴ https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/20210330_b5c_co-chr_final_en_1.pdf

- (5) The action entitled ‘Improving living conditions and resilience of refugees displaced by the Syrian crisis and vulnerable hosting communities in Lebanon’ aims at providing vulnerable refugees and host communities with support to meet their basic needs and facilitate access to social services.
- (6) The action entitled ‘EU programme in support of Primary Health care access and immunization for vulnerable population in Lebanon’ aims at ensuring healthy lives and promote well-being of vulnerable populations in Lebanon.
- (7) The action entitled ‘Access to quality education for all vulnerable children in Lebanon in times of crisis -support to a national Education Sector Plan post-2021 for a resilient system’ aims at facilitating access to quality education for all vulnerable children in Lebanon.
- (8) It is appropriate to authorise the award of grants without a call for proposals and to provide for the conditions for awarding those grants.
- (9) Pursuant to Article 26(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947, indirect management is to be used for the implementation of the measure.
- (10) The Commission is to ensure a level of protection of the financial interests of the Union with regards to entities and persons entrusted with the implementation of Union funds by indirect management as provided for in Article 154(3) of the Financial Regulation.
- (11) To this end, such entities and persons are to be subject to an assessment of their systems and procedures in accordance with Article 154(4) of the Financial Regulation and, if necessary, to appropriate supervisory measures in accordance with Article 154(5) of the Financial Regulation before a contribution agreement can be signed.
- (12) It is necessary to allow for the payment of interest due for late payment on the basis of Article 116(5) of the Financial Regulation.
- (13) In order to allow for flexibility in the implementation of the measure, it is appropriate to allow changes which should not be considered substantial for the purposes of Article 110(5) of the Financial Regulation.
- (14) The measure provided for in this Decision is in accordance with the opinion of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe Committee established under Article 45 of Regulation (EU) 2021/947.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1
The measure

The annual financing Decision, constituting the annual work programme for the implementation of the special measure in favour of Lebanon for 2021, as set out in the Annexes, is adopted.

The measure shall include the following actions:

- Annex I: Improving living conditions and resilience of refugees displaced by the Syrian crisis and vulnerable hosting communities in Lebanon.
- Annex II: EU programme in support of Primary Health care access and immunization for vulnerable population in Lebanon.

- Annex III: Access to quality education for all vulnerable children in Lebanon in times of crisis - support to a national Education Sector Plan post-2021 for a resilient system.

Article 2
Union contribution

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of the measure for 2021 is set at EUR 90 000 000, and shall be financed from the appropriations entered in the budget line 14.020110 of the general budget of the Union.

The appropriations provided for in the first paragraph may also cover interest due for late payment.

Article 3
Methods of implementation and entrusted entities or persons

The implementation of the actions carried out by way of indirect management, as set out in the Annexes, may be entrusted to the entities or persons referred to or selected in accordance with the criteria laid down in point 4.3.2 of the Annexes I, II and III.

Article 4
Flexibility clause

Increases⁵ or decreases of up to EUR 10 million and not exceeding 20% of the contribution set in the first paragraph of Article 2, or cumulated reassignments of funds between actions contained in an action plan not exceeding 20% of that contribution, as well as extensions of the implementation period shall not be considered substantial within the meaning of Article 110(5) of the Financial Regulation, where these changes do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the actions.

The authorising officer responsible may apply the changes referred to in the first paragraph acting in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and proportionality.

Article 5
Grants

Grants may be awarded without a call for proposals in accordance with the conditions set out in the Annexes. Grants may be awarded to the bodies selected in accordance with point 4.3.1 of the Annexes I and II.

Done at Brussels, 15.12.2021

For the Commission
Olivér VÁRHELYI
Member of the Commission

⁵ These changes can come from external assigned revenue made available after the adoption of the financing Decision.



EN

THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

ANNEX I

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the special measure in favour of Lebanon for 2021

Action Document for Improving living conditions and resilience of refugees displaced by the Syrian crisis and vulnerable hosting communities in Lebanon

ANNUAL MEASURE

This document constitutes the annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and action plan/measure in the sense of Article 23(4) of NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1. SYNOPSIS

1.1. Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS Basic Act	<u>Improving living conditions and resilience of refugees displaced by the Syrian crisis and vulnerable hosting communities in Lebanon</u> Annual measure in favour of Lebanon for 2021 CRIS number: NDICI-GEO-NEAR/2021/043-560 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe)
2. Team Europe Initiative	No
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out in Lebanon
4. Programming document	NA
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives/expected results	NA
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	NA
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG (1 only): <u>SDG 1- No poverty</u> - End poverty in all its forms everywhere Other significant SDGs: - <u>SDG 5- Gender equality</u> - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>SDG 8- Decent work and economic growth</u> - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. - <u>SDG 10- Reduced inequalities</u> - Reduce inequality within and among countries, - <u>SDG 16 - Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions</u> - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels 			
8 a) DAC code(s)	16010 - Social Protection Sector : 50% 16020 - Employment creation : 25% 72010 - Material relief assistance and services : 25%			
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	20 000 Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil society 21 000 International NGOs 40 000 Multilateral Organisations			
9. Targets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
10. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Climate change adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Internal markers	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Digitalisation Tags: digital connectivity digital governance digital entrepreneurship job creation digital skills/literacy digital services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	<u>Connectivity</u> Tags: transport people2people energy digital connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Migration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	COVID-19	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

BUDGET INFORMATION

12. Amounts concerned	Budget line: 14.020110 – Southern Neighbourhood Total estimated cost: EUR 40 000 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 40 000 000
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MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

13. Implementation modalities (type of financing and management mode)	Project Modality Direct management through Grants Indirect management with the entities to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.3.2
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1.2. Summary of the Action

The Overall Objective (Impact) of this action is to improve the living conditions and the resilience of refugees displaced by the Syrian crisis and vulnerable hosting communities in Lebanon. It builds on interventions funded by the EU Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis to ensure the follow-up of EU's involvement on social protection and self-reliance¹ of refugees and host communities in Lebanon.

This action is particularly relevant in the current context in Lebanon, due to the sharp increase in poverty and vulnerabilities among refugees and host communities, and given the limited prospects for durable

¹ "Self-reliance" is the term used in the humanitarian field to refer to the social and economic ability of an individual, a household (HH), or a community to meet its essential needs in a sustainable manner.

solutions to the displacement of close to 1.5 million Syrian refugees in the country. Taking into account the Council conclusions on Lebanon of the 7 December 2020², this Action will provide support for a people-centred recovery in Lebanon in line with priorities of the “Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework”. It feeds into the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP)³.

This action also responds to the political commitments made at the Brussels Conferences on "Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region" co-hosted by the European Union and the United Nations in 2020 and 2021. It is in line with the priority “Strengthen resilience, build prosperity” of the Renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood⁴ and is part of the Flagship 6 “Inclusive economies” of its Economic and Investment Plan. It will contribute to several Sustainable Development Goals – the main one being SDG 1: No poverty - End poverty in all its forms everywhere.

The action will improve the living conditions of refugees and hosting communities through two components, which will be closely interlinked under a comprehensive approach to strengthen the social protection efforts in the country. Through the first component, the most vulnerable refugees and host communities will be provided support to meet basic needs and access social services. At the same time, livelihoods opportunities for their self-reliance will be promoted at local level, in collaboration with civil society and local authorities.

Thus, the Action will contribute to an efficient and effective social protection system in Lebanon, while improving the ability of vulnerable population to meet basic needs, access social services and increase their economic self-reliance capacity.

Through the action, the EU will provide refugees and vulnerable host communities with social assistance and social services, notably through the National Poverty Targeting Programme, refugee response programmes and the local Social Development Centres operated by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA). The action will also contribute to a gradual decrease of the dependency of vulnerable and poor families on social assistance allowances providing them with services to progressively build their self-reliance. The approach will be implemented in selected municipalities with high concentration of refugees and increasing levels of poverty and social tensions and in Palestinian refugee camps. This Action is mainly focused on the supply side of the labour market and will be complemented by other EU funded programmes to support the demand side.

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Context

Lebanon has been hosting the largest number of refugees per capita for more than a decade; the country currently hosts an estimated number of over **1.5 million refugees displaced by the Syrian crisis**, a number equivalent to 25% of its population. The economic situation of the refugees in Lebanon has been deteriorating gradually following the multiple crises the country has been facing since the social unrest in October 2019, aggravated by the political crisis and an unprecedented economic and financial depression. The **dramatically deteriorating economy**, the steep inflation, the COVID-19 pandemic and finally the Beirut blast have pushed vulnerable communities in Lebanon - including refugees - to the brink, with thousands of families sinking further into poverty, while social tensions, violent attacks and public rhetoric calling for the immediate return of Syrian refugees have increased. A new government under Prime Minister Mikati has been announced on 10 September 2021 following several months of political deadlock. The international community positioned

² <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/47184/st13730-en20.pdf>

³ The LCRP is a joint plan between the Government of Lebanon and its international and national partners aiming to respond to the challenges of the Syrian crisis in Lebanon.

⁴ https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/joint_staff_working_document_renewed_partnership_southern_neighbourhood.pdf

such formation as a necessary first step for the implementation of the needed reforms to address the multiple crisis.

Lebanon's severe and prolonged economic depression has long-term negative implications on its society⁵, severely **increasing poverty**. The economic indicators are worrying, with hyperinflation rates and the devaluation of the Lebanon local currency having direct social impact and becoming catastrophic, according to the World Bank⁶. Lebanon's real GDP is estimated to have declined by 20.3% in 2020. Monetary and financial turmoil continue to drive crisis conditions, with interactions between the exchange rate and high inflation. The percentage of poor Lebanese in the crisis-hit country jumped from 28% in 2019 to a whopping 74% in 2021⁷, while the percentage of people categorized as extremely poor rose from 8% to 23% during the same period⁸. According to the results of the Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon conducted in 2020⁹, 88% of the Syrian refugees live in extreme poverty and are not capable of covering expenses through employment; and over half of the total Syrian refugee population is now food insecure (55%), up from 29% in 2019. A socio-economic survey of Palestine refugees from Syria (PRS) conducted by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in March 2020 indicated that 87% of PRS are living in poverty. The groups projected to be most affected by the current economic crisis are individuals who have suffered from cumulative exclusion including those who were already poor, women, discouraged jobseekers, informal workers, families raising children, people with disabilities, and people aged 65 and above¹⁰.

Concerns over **child labour** have equally grown with the COVID-19 lockdowns in the country¹¹. According to recent reports¹², there have been 306 reported cases of children working on Lebanon's streets in the first half of 2021 as economic and social crises engulf the country, compared to 346 cases overall for 2020, and 15% of families have interrupted their children's education. Children as young as five are being pushed into dangerous and exhausting work and they are subjected to violence. Recent reports also document an increase in **gender-based violence** against women and girls and in the cases of sexual abuses in children¹³. Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in Lebanon, 57% of women and girls have reported feeling less safe in their communities and 44% of women and girls reported feeling less safe in their homes.

With the rising poverty among Lebanese due to the impact of the economic crisis and COVID-19, **competition over jobs and resources** for survival is increasing. An International Rescue Committee (IRC) nationwide survey in April showed that half of Lebanese and 60% of Syrians were permanently laid off. 94% reported that their household income significantly decreased due to the crisis (by 50% for Lebanese and 75% for Syrians)¹⁴. The unemployment rate was in 2020 around 39%¹⁴ with youth unemployment even higher. In some areas, unemployment is nearly double the national average. Income inequality is extreme in Lebanon, and labour income distribution shows that the informal sector's share is very large and probably larger than official

⁵<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/05/01/lebanon-sinking-into-one-of-the-most-severe-global-crises-episodes>

⁶<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/factsheet/2020/04/21/targeting-poor-households-in-lebanon>

⁷<https://www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/news/docs/21-00634- multidimensional poverty in lebanon -policy brief - en.pdf>

⁸<https://www.unescwa.org/news/Lebanon>

⁹<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/VASyR%202020.pdf>

¹⁰ ILO (2021) Vulnerability and Social Protection Gaps Assessment – Lebanon, Report.

¹¹ Save The Children (April 2020). Policy Brief: Child Labor in Lebanon: the economic crisis and the compounding impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹²<https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/save-childrens-global-covid-19-response-situation-report-no-6-13-july-2020>

¹³https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/GBVIMS_Annual%20Overview%20of%20Incidents%20of%20GBV%20in%20Relation%20to%20Lebanons%20Situation_2020.pdf

¹⁴ ILO - FAFO Facing Multiple Crises. Rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable workers and small-scale enterprises in Lebanon. May 2020.

estimates¹⁵. Over the period from January to September 2020, private sector activity was contracting at the lowest rate recorded for Lebanon¹⁶.

Recent months have seen an **increase in violent crime**, with subsidies cuts¹⁷ resulting in people fighting over goods, long queues for fuel and drastic electricity shortages. As fewer Lebanese can afford to pay for private schools, medical care, and psychosocial support, pressure on the already weak national social services is increasing and contributing to a notable rise in **intra and intercommunal tensions** across the country. Scapegoating of the refugees, for being a cause of the economic, social, and security problems in the country is rising and fuelling calls for return of the refugees to Syria. However, UNHCR's recent return perceptions and intentions survey finds that only some 2.5% refugees are planning to return within the next 12 months. As refugees are becoming more destitute and continue to live in displacement, they face increasing psychosocial challenges. The UNDP perception survey reflects that "competition for jobs" is one of the main cause of tensions, around 80% surveyed consider that the economic conditions regarding access to cash are driving tensions between groups.

The programme is aligned with the EU, UN and World Bank "*Lebanon Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF)*" operationalizing the findings of the Rapid Disaster Needs Assessment (RDNA). "*Jobs and opportunities*" (Pillar II) and "*Social protection, inclusion and culture*" (Pillar III) of the 3RF are among the four strategic pillars of the 3RF. Pillar II recognises the importance to **promote resilience** and short-term employment and refers to the need of cash-for-work initiatives. **Social protection** is considered a prerequisite for any progress foreseen on governance and socio-economic reforms. The action complements and builds on past and current interventions to strengthen the social protection system and the access to livelihoods opportunities financed by the EU and other partners. The programmes supporting the private sector complement this action and will be essential to enable the beneficiaries to access employment opportunities. The EU has reinforced its support to the private sector, including Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in order to increase the demand side of the labour market. The action is also aligned with the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) objectives.

This action falls under the *European Commission Priority 5- Governance, Peace and Security, Human development*, by contributing to stability in Lebanon and promoting resilience of the most vulnerable communities, and under *Priority 4- Migration Partnerships forced displacement, given its specific assistance to refugees displaced by the Syrian crisis*. According to the EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy for 2020 on Lebanon, challenges to the respect of human rights and rule of law remain, including military courts' jurisdiction over civilians and lack of progress in the budgetary operationalisation of the National Human Rights Commission and the National Preventive Mechanism against Torture (NPM). Discriminatory laws on custody, marriage and divorce faced by women remain in place¹⁸.

This action has been prepared as a continuation and expansion of the EU's significant involvement on social assistance and employment in Lebanon. It is complementary with recently approved actions by the EU Trust Fund in response to the Syrian Crisis (EUTF) in March 2021 on social protection and social assistance in particular, and with the actions currently being implemented in the sector of livelihoods and support to local authorities, approved by the EUTF" at the Board of December 2019¹⁹, or the support to private sector under bilateral funds. The strategic nature of the action places the EU at the centre of the policy agenda on building an effective social protection system while assisting refugees and host communities in Lebanon.

¹⁵ <https://carnegie-mec.org/2021/01/14/lebanon-s-political-economy-from-predatory-to-self-devouring-pub-83631>

¹⁶ World Bank, "Lebanon Economic Monitor: The Deliberate Depression," December 2020.

¹⁷ <https://socialprotection.org/discover/publications/fossil-fuel-subsidies-lebanon-fiscal-equity-economic-and-environmental-impacts>

¹⁸ https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2020_eu_human_rights_and_democracy_country_reports.pdf

¹⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/trustfund-syria-region/state-play-action-documents_en

Complementarity will be sought with efforts undertaken by major actors, including relevant donor countries, the World Bank²⁰ and the private sector.

This action is also in line with the new Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment in External Relations 2020 – 2025 (GAP 3) adopted in 2020. The GAP 3 provides an ambitious external policy framework for achieving progress on gender equality and women’s empowerment, in coherence with the Gender Equality Strategy.

2.2. Problem Analysis

Short problem analysis

Lebanon does not have a tradition of re-distributing resources and managing poverty and inequality. Social protection budgetary allocations are largely directed to civil and military pensions. **Targeted social safety nets are limited**, less than 0.5% of GDP, (the lowest in the MENA region), overshadowed by high spending on energy subsidies at 3.8% of GDP. **The coverage is low and the Lebanese social protection system does not include refugees.** To cover poor Lebanese, support is provided through the National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP) managed by MoSA and the Presidency of the Council of Ministers (PCM)²¹. Support to refugees rely mainly on external partners and international support. The system leaves large proportions of the population vulnerable, and “sectarian-based welfarism” leaves the gaps to be filled by *international and civil society organisations*. In the last months, religious associations and political parties are increasingly providing social services reinforcing social fragmentation, leaving many vulnerable refugees and host communities without coverage²².

The *Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA)* does not have sufficient budgetary resources available to implement its mandate in social protection²³. The international community has been investing in a social safety net for poor and vulnerable refugees and host communities and providing cash and food assistance to Syrian and Palestinian refugees, as well as to vulnerable Lebanese families. The social protection system is insufficient, with public entities having limited institutional capacity for service delivery. The international community has been investing in a social safety net for poor refugees and host communities and providing cash and food assistance to Syrian and Palestinian refugees, as well as to Lebanese families but exacerbated by the multiple crisis the country is facing, the needs increasingly surpass the amount of aid available²⁴. Despite all the support, the coverage is insufficient and regular allowances do not allow to cover the cost of food and other basic needs, as measured by the Survival Expenditure Basket²⁵, this cost is currently estimated at three times the amount received by families. For the Palestine refugees, UNRWA’s 2020 Post Distribution Monitoring Surveys (PDMs) indicates that while the cash assistance is considered to be essential, it is not always enough

²⁰ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/lebanon/brief/lebanon-emergency-crisis-and-covid-19-response-social-safety-net-project-essn>

²¹ The National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP) was established in 2011 as the first poverty-targeted social assistance program for the poorest and most vulnerable Lebanese families. The NPTP has 43,000 registered households receiving the regular package of NPTP benefits: (i) comprehensive health coverage for beneficiaries in public and private hospitals through the waiver of 10-15% co-payments for hospitalization; (ii) coverage of chronic disease prescription medications; (iii) registration fee waivers and free books for students in primary and secondary public schools; and (iv) food assistance for eligible households. The government has so far financed health and education benefits (US\$ 34.7 million since 2012) and the poorest NPTP households receive food assistance from donor funding.

²² https://carnegeendowment.org/files/Assouad_Lebanons_Political_Economy.pdf

²³ 2017, Capacity Assessment of the Ministry of Social Affairs in Lebanon.

²⁴ SP and LCPS (2020) Addressing Protracted Displacement in Lebanon <https://dsp-syria.org/addressing-protracted-displacement-lebanon>

²⁵ <https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-lebanon-country-brief-june-2021>

to cover the basic needs or to reduce the economic vulnerability, especially in the case of the most vulnerable: persons with disability, female-headed households, and the elderly.

The **lack of national capacities to provide integrated social protection services** affects children and women primarily, as they are most exposed to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. The increase in poverty and restricted access to livelihood opportunities and services are strong push factors towards negative coping mechanisms harmful to children such as child labour and child marriage. Child labour in Lebanon has traditionally been concentrated in the informal sector, street trades, and family-based agriculture. Findings from International Labour Organization (ILO) research on the labour market impact of the Syrian refugee influx show that seven per cent of refugee children in the age group 10 to 14 are economically active. Concerns over child labour have grown after the end of the first COVID-19 lockdown²⁶. The pandemic has equally resulted in immediate exacerbation of gender inequalities. During the early stages of the outbreak of COVID-19 many humanitarian organizations in Lebanon reported an increase in gender-based violence (GBV) incidents linked with lockdown restrictions and family confinement. From February to November 2020, the Internal Security Forces (ISF) reported a 102% increase in calls to their domestic violence hotline number, mostly from Lebanese nationals. Available specialised services are insufficient to address these needs, leaving the poorest and most vulnerable of the Lebanese population without systematic support.

Lebanon continues to face a serious and increasingly **challenging labour market situation**, exacerbated by the financial and economic crisis of 2019 and the more recent COVID-19 pandemic²⁷ bringing the economic activity to a halt. The multiple crises have worsened the already fragile socio-economic conditions, resulting in heightened levels of vulnerability, poverty and informality (estimated at around 55% of total employment), and disproportionately affecting marginalized groups including refugees²⁸. The country's weak labour market institutions, coupled with a deficient demand for labour and low levels of job creation, have long contributed to the weak employment outcomes in Lebanon, including high rates of unemployment, around 30%, especially among youth and women. Other structural challenges, such as skills mismatch, have also hindered progress towards full and productive employment in the country. For the refugees, sectoral and occupational restrictions for employment, inconsistent enforcement of regulations²⁹ and job irregularities are added. Refugees can also be subjected to hazardous work, arrest and detention. Vulnerable groups face several employment constraints, including lack of information, skills development and access to employment-oriented public services. To support moving progressively out of poverty and to effectively manage the risks and stresses, social assistance must be coupled with livelihoods opportunities; however, the country lacks effective linkages between social assistance programmes and other services providing economic inclusion of the most vulnerable.

The **poor linkages/referral systems between livelihoods opportunities, social assistance and social services** provided to the most vulnerable beneficiaries needs to be reinforced to strengthen a comprehensive social protection strategy and vision, instead of the current multiple interventions, which risk leaving extremely vulnerable and poor families, the most in need, without any assistance. Social protection services to the most vulnerable groups of the society are key elements of a functional system and should be sustained in close coordination, to avoid further **fragmentation** of efforts and vulnerable individuals being left behind without assistance and/or permanently depending on humanitarian relief without building a path to self-reliance. The Government needs to consolidate and advance the efforts already underway to build a government owned vision, plan and approach for **creating a national social protection system**; including responsibilities of all involved parties, efficiency, transparency and accountability, based on collaboration, and to support the creation of a unified registry for social protection beneficiaries at national level. Discussions

²⁶ Save The Children (April 2020). Policy Brief: Child Labor in Lebanon: the economic crisis and the compounding impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

²⁷ ILO, Rapid Diagnostic Assessment of Employment Impacts Under COVID-19 in Lebanon.

²⁸ ILO (forthcoming), Social Protection Needs and Gaps Assessment in Lebanon.

²⁹ in practice, PRL are prevented from employment in at least 39 professions (such as medicine, law, engineering); Syrians are only allowed to work in three sectors: construction, agriculture and sanitation.

among the different stakeholders, led by UNICEF and ILO and including relevant Ministries representatives have resulted in a framework document for a national Social Protection Strategy laying out a comprehensive approach to social protection linked with the activation of the labour market, the first and only initiative in this area. It is envisaged to provide the basis for the Strategy to be adopted by the government.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action.

The Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) is the key actor in terms of social assistance, social protection and livelihoods, for which it is responsible for providing guidance and support. However, it has limited capacity to ensure its leadership in the coordination and alignment of the complex interventions provided by the different actors (EU, ILO, UNICEF, UNESCWA, WFP, UNHCR, NGOs). The diversity of support coupled with the sharpened political focus on social protection in Lebanon requires strengthened sector coordinated and strategic response, and reinforced leadership and coordination³⁰ of the initiatives to ensure complementarity. **MoSA** implements the social development policies at local level through the **SDCs**. The SDCs are the main institutions at the local level for accessing both social assistance and social services and strengthen the capacities for self-reliance and reduction of the socio-economic vulnerability among at-risk groups, including refugees. The SDCs are the main point where vulnerable and poor Lebanese submit their application for social assistance. These centres constitute the backbone of social assistance delivery in Lebanon and are a major asset in terms of infrastructure and capacity to deliver programmes and services to a significant number of the population, reaching hundreds of thousands of people but suffering from lack of capacities, skills and resources. Since the beginning of the Syrian crisis and the influx of refugees many SDCs became the primary social and healthcare services outlet for Syrian refugees as well as vulnerable Lebanese³¹. Currently, MoSA has 220 SDCs distributed in different regions of the country, but work is underway to optimise the number and role in order to improve its performance. The SDCs are mandated to: i) establish a comprehensive development strategy (education, health, social, development) based on the identification of available resources/needs within local community; ii) gather and keep updated demographical/ economic data on the targeted area; promote community-based development; iii) provide skills trainings and other forms of support (tools, business development services, etc.) which increase employability and ‘transferable skills’; iv) Implement capacity building programs for the community; v) coordinate with civil society and local authorities. The limited resources allocated limit the scope of the services provided, differing depending on the localities.

The **Ministry of Labour (MoL)** governs the labour market, regulates labour relations and enforces labour law. Understaffed, with a limited budget and low technical capacity, its activities are restricted mainly to administrative work and limited labour inspections. It co-leads the *Livelihood Sector*. It has authority over the **National Employment Office (NEO)**, a financially and administratively independent agency, currently based in Tripoli, Beirut and Saida and partially operational with no major activities. NEO is mandated to deploy employment-oriented services as an online job database but there are no regular services or database updating due to a lack of funds and staff. The programme will support the capacities to access employment-oriented services at local level through the SDCs in partnership with the NEO.

³⁰ SO 2 of the EUTF action “EUTF support to social assistance to vulnerable refugees and host communities affected by the Syrian crisis in Lebanon” was the strengthening of MoSA’s coordination structure; the efforts already undertaken have achieved the institutionalisation of a Steering Committee on the implementation of the National Poverty Targeting Mechanism, with the participation of all stakeholders and chaired by MoSA and the EU. Increased coordination is needed at the Ministry and Prime-minister office to ensure the coherent implementation of different types of social assistance to refugees and Lebanese beneficiaries.

³¹ <https://socialprotection.org/connect/communities/social-protection-crisis-contexts/documents/european-commission-span-2019-case-0>

The municipalities play an important role to reinforce the cohesion and reduce tensions at local level but suffer from substantial lack of funding and permanent delays in receiving their state budget allocations. They rely on external support to ensure the provision of basic local services and especially for local development activities. Municipalities are the entry point for all community programs which they approve and will play a crucial role in the definition of priority short-term employment investments projects through a participatory approach. The municipalities selected for the programme will respond to defined criteria mainly based on the level of poverty, number of refugees and level of tensions.

Civil society organizations have a key role in the implementation, monitoring and advocacy related to assistance in Lebanon provided both to Lebanese and for refugees. A consortium of NGOs called Cash Monitoring Evaluation Accountability and Learning Organisational Network(CAMEALEON), is engaged in third-party monitoring on the food assistance for Syrian refugees. Lebanese and international NGOs will be engaged in regular forums for coordination, including the Social Safety Net Forum and the Livelihoods Working Group. In addition, international and national NGOs will be key players in the preparation and implementation of component 2 of this Action, managing the delivery of employment services and livelihoods at local level.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1. Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective (Impact) of this action is *to improve the living conditions and the resilience of refugees displaced by the Syrian crisis and vulnerable hosting communities in Lebanon.*

The Specific Objectives (Outcomes) of this action are to

1. Improve social safety nets and services for refugees and host communities
2. Increase the access, with a gender sensitive focus, to livelihoods opportunities for the self-reliance of refugees and vulnerable host communities

The Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives (Outcomes) are:

- 1.1 contributing to Outcome 1 (or Specific Objective 1): *Essential needs of refugees and host communities are met.*
- 1.2. contributing to Outcome 1 (or Specific Objective 1): *The ability of refugees and host communities to access social services is increased*
- 1.3. contributing to Outcome 1 (or Specific Objective 1): *Increased strategic capacities and coordination are facilitated, as a pre-condition of an efficient social protection system*
- 2.1 contributing to Outcome 2 (or Specific Objective 2): *Employment-oriented services provided to vulnerable households, including households benefiting from social assistance and social services interventions*
- 2.2. contributing to Outcome 2 (or Specific Objective 2): *Local priority projects are developed to promote short-term employment opportunities and social stability*

3.2. Indicative Activities

Activities related to Output 1.1 - Essential needs of refugees and host communities are met.

- *Provision of social assistance to vulnerable refugees over the period 2022-2024:*
Assistance will be provided in the form of multipurpose cash assistance and/or food assistance delivered regularly or on a monthly basis, coupled with emergency cash assistance. Specific attention to necessary safeguards will be given.

- *Provision of social assistance to vulnerable Lebanese households in 2022-2023 through the National Poverty Targeting Programme + (NPTP +):*

This activity will cover basic needs, including access to food. The selection will follow the methodology in place to estimate those living in poverty and vulnerability, verified through household visits. The selection will follow the methodology in place to estimate those living in poverty and vulnerability, verified through household visits. This activity will be implemented in collaboration with the relevant institutions, mainly the Ministry of Social Affairs.

- *Third-Party Monitoring of social assistance provided to poor and vulnerable refugees and host communities:*

The Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) will be overseen by a consortium of NGOs, continuing the support already provided for food assistance to Syrian refugees. The TPM uses research on key issues which so far has greatly helped improve the programme during its implementation through targeted recommendations³².

Activities related to Output 1.2 - Refugees and host communities are able to access social services

- *Vulnerable and poor populations are provided quality social services at local level:*

Increased access to social services, in line with the recently adopted policy framework³³, including child protection, prevention of gender based violence and access to justice for victims of gender based violence. Activities will include mapping of the skills and referral for livelihood activities, through 20 local Social Development Centres placed in pre-selected municipalities responding to defined vulnerability criteria mainly based on the level of poverty, tensions and number of refugees. Consolidating an efficient referral mechanism for social assistance, social services and access to livelihoods opportunities, at the SDCs level will be part of this activity, and linked to activities under Outcome 2.

Activities related to Output 1.3 - Increased strategic capacities and coordination are facilitated, as a pre-condition of an efficient social assistance and social protection system

- *Technical assistance for increased capacities and strategic coordination among relevant stakeholders:*

Technical assistance and accompaniment provided to the relevant institutions in charge of providing social assistance and social protection, to enhance leadership, policy analysis, and coordination capacities on key social protection capacity building initiatives already underway (establishing a national social protection integrated registry for Lebanese beneficiaries, with a view to including refugees in the long term, implementation of nation-wide transparent targeting approach for social assistance interventions, among others).

Activities related to Output 2.1. - Employment-oriented services provided to vulnerable households, including households benefiting from social assistance and social services interventions

- *Technical support to link self-reliance and social protection services:*

Based on a distributional impact assessment, the action will provide strategic guidance to link employment and social assistance/protection, facilitating the access of poor and vulnerable households benefitting from social protection services to decent employment opportunities in a coordinated manner.

- *Local institutions are reinforced to promote and refer to livelihoods services:*

The 20 pre-selected SDCs and local organisations will receive support, tools and methodologies to deploy and refer to gender-sensitive employment-oriented services: skills assessments, career counselling, planning individual employability paths, job opportunities databases. The support based on the needs of

³² For example, through targeted monitoring of the ongoing programme and key research, the consortium has identified the need for alignment of WFP/UNHCR Multi-Purpose Cash (MPC) and UNICEF transfers to minimize the number of visits to ATMs that need to be made by refugee families and increasing the number of ATMs available to refugees.

³³ National Child Marriage Action Plan, the Strategic Plan on the Protection of Women and Children for 2020-2026, the National Strategy for Older Persons for 2020-2030.

the market, will include market assessments. The collaboration with NEO, the private sector, professional associations, civil society organisations and the municipalities will be reinforced.

- *Refugees and hosting communities improve their employability capacities:*

Beneficiaries selected and having followed the skills assessment, will receive employment-oriented services: career guidance, skills development, entrepreneurship trainings, referrals to TVET trainings, work-based learning, etc. Grants for self-employment and the creation of small income-generating businesses could be promoted. Female headed households and with elder people and persons with disabilities will have priority.

Activities related to Output 2.2. - Local priority projects are developed to promote short-term employment opportunities and social stability

- *Local development activities promoted:*

Support to participatory local needs assessments at the selected municipalities and Palestinian camps in order to define and implement priority employment intensive projects (EIP) and reduce tensions. The methodology to select the EIP with the local authorities, will ensure they facilitate the integration into the labour market and can deliver tangible benefits to the communities. Beneficiaries will be selected among those receiving social assistance and employment-oriented services, with particular attention to women, youth and households with persons with disabilities.

- *Capacity-building for conflict prevention and social stability:*

Local staff will receive training and support to monitor local tensions, deploy participatory conflict analysis, peacebuilding and social stability interventions and early warning mechanisms.

3.3. Mainstreaming

Environment, climate change and biodiversity

Outcomes of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening

The EIA screening classified the action as Category B (not requiring an EIA, but for which environment aspects will be addressed during design.

Outcome of the Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening

The CRA screening concluded that this action is no or low risk (no need for further assessment).

This Action does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment or a Climate-Related Risk Assessment. Selected Intensive Employment Projects (Output 2.2) will be assessed to determine whether they require an environmental screening and / or and environmental impact assessment.

Gender equality & rights-based approach

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that gender equality and empowerment of women will be addressed through the provision of social assistance support to socio-economically vulnerable households, with the objective of reducing vulnerability and activities providing livelihood opportunities will give priority to women and girls. The action will contribute towards the GAP III priorities: “ensuring freedom from gender based violence”; “promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights”; “strengthening economic and social rights and empowering girls and women”; “advancing equal participation and leadership”.

Human rights

In line with the New European Consensus on Development, this Action integrates the Rights-Based Approach (RBA) to ensure that no one is left behind. Specific activities are addressed to women and children to prevent risks. While all initiatives leading to increase the resilience of the beneficiaries will be implemented in alignment with the national laws and policies regarding employment and job creation, the EU will continue to advocate for increasing the number of sectors where the refugees are allowed to work and for a simplification of the administrative procedures and requirements to obtain work permits. The social protection system promoted will be based in inclusiveness of all people living in Lebanon, with independence of their nationality,

covering all individuals and leaving no one behind. The action will apply the human rights based approach (HRBA)³⁴ and its working principles (participation, non-discrimination, accountability and transparency) throughout.

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D1. This implies that the Action will pay particular attention in benefiting households integrating People with Disabilities (PwD). Indeed, families with PwD members face increased financial costs implying more vulnerability due to the limited public services available.

Democracy

Working under a participatory approach with the municipalities in order to decide the priority areas for EIP will reinforce the democratic participation of the population residing in the area of intervention.

Resilience and Conflict Sensitivity

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

Social stability is a significant focus of this Action. Social cohesion activities will be implemented in a participatory and transparent approach involving refugees residing in Lebanon and Lebanese beneficiaries in need, regardless of their different societal, economic, political and religious background. Livelihoods interventions will be in line with the do-no-harm principle. It will imply continuous monitoring of the local situation and tensions that may affect the project and adopting the necessary mitigation measures to avoid harm and conflicts. The intervention will work with other partners and will deliver training at local level in social stability, conflict prevention and early warning mechanisms. The implementing partners will be requested to include social tensions monitoring and prevention in the regular reporting. Participatory analysis of the context to understand the dynamics and drivers will be encouraged.

Civil society

Civil society organisations will be in charge of Third party monitoring and will be supporting the implementation of the livelihoods component. CSOs already working in the sector and women’s organisations have been consulted in order to prepare the Action and to take into account their experience and methodologies. Besides, the Action aims to foster the connections between public services and civil society organisations at local level in order to link with the labour market and employment-oriented services. The Action also fosters participatory approaches to decide the priority investment projects to be financed.

Other considerations: Transparency and accountability will be addressed through the programme, in addition to safeguards that will further enhance transparency and accountability in all the programme and the administration of NPTP that are being rolled out as part of the ongoing action. The Action will undertake at the inception phase a corruption risk assessment to identify potential areas of risk and will design a corruption-risk management framework. The Action will deploy strong monitoring and evaluation (M&E) structures at the level of the implementing partners.

3.4. Risks and Lessons Learned

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures

³⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/news/taking-forward-commitment-reducing-inequalities-human-rights-based-approach-toolbox-adopted_en

External environment: Political	Increasing political opposition to the presence of Syrian refugees in Lebanon	H	M	This risk is already being witnessed to a large extent. A change in the narrative of international partners (including EU partners) that moves to focus of conversations towards a greater recognition of Lebanese concerns, resilience, burden sharing, reciprocity and the temporary nature of Syrian displacement, as well as emphasising solidarity with the refugee situation, is expected to create greater traction in terms of entry points for evidence-based policy dialogue.
	Increased social tensions due to deterioration of economic situation results in conflicts affecting host and refugee populations.	H	H	Each component of the action will use a conflict sensitive approach in the implementation, and implementing partners will monitor the social tension in their regular reporting. Livelihoods interventions will deploy tensions monitoring mechanisms and will seek participatory approaches leading to reduce tensions. Improved communication on assistance packages will be critical in countering misperceptions.
	Socio-economic and protection situation of refugees deteriorates	H	M	EU Delegation will continue to advocate for Lebanon to adhere to obligations for refugee protection, as per international law. Continuous dialogue will take place with the authorities during programme implementation, to ensure that a clear framework is established to safeguard refugee protection and livelihoods.
	Political violence that could escalate and impede provision of assistance	M	M	The EU Delegation and partners implementing this action will continue to monitor the security situation closely and will assess the conditions for the implementation with a view to adapt the implementation.
	Partners ability to deliver services is impeded due to no access to fuel, water, electricity and civil unrest	M	M	The international community will continue to advocate for ensuring an operating environment that is conducive to the implementation of assistance.
External environment: Financial	The Lebanese pound is further devalued, resulting in high levels of inflation and increased levels of poverty among populations in Lebanon. Also the reduction of	H	H	Mitigating measures will need to be seen from a systemic perspective, notably through the introduction of macroeconomic stability measures. From an operational point of view, the EU Delegation, the UN, and the World Bank, as well as the implementing partners have already adopted the decision to move to dollarization of the financed operations and have a close policy dialogue with the

	subsidies and absence of support package to extremely poor populations			authorities to facilitate the access to USD. This is seen as a temporary measure until Lebanon has a unified exchange rate and adopts the macroeconomic and financial reforms necessary to overcome this crisis.
	USD/LBP exchange rate used by implementing partners differs from the open-market exchange rate, negatively impacting the overall efficiency of interventions.	H	M	For those costs requiring payments on the national currency, continued multi donor negotiations with Lebanese Government to obtain an exchange rate which corresponds to the open-market rate.
Planning, processes and systems: Operational	Insufficient involvement of concerned Government Ministries, Departments and municipalities.	H	H	In the spirit of the 3RF, and the LCRP, EU Delegation will pursue continued policy dialogue with national authorities, emphasising the mutual benefits of the action for host communities and refugees. The direct support to SDCs mitigate the lack of commitment from the ministry. Livelihoods interventions will closely associate local authorities.
	Continued institutional fragmentation in the social protection / assistance fields.	H	M	Consultations undertaken in the context of the National Social Protection framework should facilitate policy dialogue on a comprehensive approach. The technical assistance component will ensure the synergies between the provision of social assistance, social services and livelihoods activities.
	Restricted access to livelihoods opportunities for non-Lebanese	H	H	Memorandums of understandings will be signed with the municipalities where the interventions would take place in order to establish the clause 50/50% of the beneficiaries being Lebanese and non Lebanese.

Lessons Learned:

The experience and lessons learnt from the current programmes supported by the EU on social assistance for Lebanese, Syrian and Palestine refugees, are expected to inform the current action. The Third-Party monitoring established in the context of the cash assistance has played a critical role in assessing the achievements and providing room for further improvement of the programme. Research conducted (e.g. on accountability to affected populations, value for money and the longitudinal study of the impact of the programme) is expected to inform the next phase of the programme. Donor coordination on social assistance for refugees in Lebanon, in which the EU plays a key role, has also informed best approaches with regards to social assistance to Lebanese, thus providing a good ground for the set up of a social safety network in Lebanon. To date, the NPTP remains the only programme of the Lebanese Government that employs an

objective means of selecting beneficiaries using a standard set of criteria applied in a proxy-means test targeting (PMT) formula.

The EU, together with Italy and other major donors, has been supporting social protection services, including access to justice of victims/survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), and more specifically of domestic violence, as well as economic empowerment activities for women through its partnership with Expertise France under the EUTF. In addition, ongoing collaboration with UNICEF under the EUTF³⁵, on child protection and GBV enabled provision of specialised services through the *Social Development Centres (SDCs)* in Lebanon, administered by the Ministry of Social Affairs. These initiatives helped to build a strong policy and legal framework³⁶ for provision of social services for the most vulnerable groups of the society but additional efforts are needed to create an environment that protects women and children.

Ministerial collaboration, with especially the Ministry of Social Affairs, has been crucial in advancing some of the strategy and policy documents that the programme has developed over the past few years and this has been a prominent conclusion of the evaluation conducted for the programme implemented by Expertise France through the EUTF³⁷. Moreover, close coordination with ministries and sector partners has proven beneficial in order to quickly adapt implementation of quality services to girls, boys and women, especially after the COVID-19 outbreak. Increased collaboration with the Social Development Centres in identifying beneficiaries of different interventions, and linking social assistance, social services and income generating activities, associating the National Employment Office will be sought.

For the livelihoods component, the action takes into account the analysis and recommendations provided by the 2019 “Evaluation of EUTF Syria-funded Programmes/ Projects for Livelihoods”. The evaluation alerts that “*generation of additional income is the key factor while achieving financial sustainability goes beyond these interventions*”. The proposal is focused on preparing the beneficiaries to access the labour market and relies on complementary programmes supporting the private sector in order to increase employability opportunities. The evaluation advise that “*the objective to provide for sustainable employment for refugees may be in conflict with the host countries’ restrictive labour market regulations*”. The Action takes into account the restrictions applied in Lebanon and will promote IEP in the sectors officially allowed for refugees. Finally, it considers that “*the inclusion of significant short-term cash-for-work initiatives or any short-term employment approach remains relevant as a secured source of income for the most vulnerable households*”. The intervention has retained this recommendation and will provide to the beneficiaries involved in livelihoods activities with basic social assistance and with IEP in order to allow them following employment-oriented services.

The Result-Oriented Monitoring of a livelihoods programme to foster social cohesion through youth activities recommends to integrate a thorough livelihood and resilience component. Indeed, the Action implements livelihoods activities while aiming to reinforce social stability. The LCRP/Livelihoods sector report of 2020 concludes that supporting medium-term capacity-building within local institutions is essential to ensure a more sustainable impact of the sector, as research demonstrates that residents’ trust in local institutions is a key component of social stability. The support to reinforce the SDCs responds to this recommendation.

The Action will also take profit of the lessons learnt of the current implementation of the livelihoods programmes financed by the EUTF

³⁵ “Advancing Child Protection and Gender Based Violence system strengthening” TF-MADAD/2019/T04.189 ending December 2021

³⁶ Government of Lebanon Strategic Plan on the Protection of Women and Children (2020-2026)

³⁷ “Strengthening access to protection, participation and services for women refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities” September 2018- December 2020

3.5. Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is that providing livelihoods opportunities to enhance the economic capacity of the poorest and marginalized communities, with particular attention to female-headed and households integrating child, persons with disabilities and elder people, while providing social assistance and specialised social services and support to cover their basic needs and protection to children and women, will allow the poorest and vulnerable households to strengthen their capacities to access the labour market and become self-reliant in municipalities with reduced social tensions. This action aims to prepare the ground for reduced dependency on social assistance for the extremely poor and vulnerable, in an effort to provide social protection integrated services in a coordinated manner.

Assuming a renewed commitment of the Ministry of Social Affairs and government commitment to policy dialogue on the necessary long-term reforms and the support to the most vulnerable, together with the commitment of partners to coordinate the actions, IF the government, local and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and UN agencies facilitate the access to social assistance to cover the basics needs AND provide integrated specialised social and employment-oriented services based on the needs of the market, while strengthening people-oriented national capacities to bridge the nexus between humanitarian relief and development assistance through national policies and local strategies THEN the poorest refugees and the vulnerable communities will be able to reinforce their capacities to access the labour market, will access to self-employment and reinforced employment oriented services provided at local level and short-term employment opportunities defined through participatory approaches to reinforce social cohesion and reduce tensions. IF the beneficiaries follow the livelihoods opportunities, THEN they will be prepared to improve their living conditions and resilience.

While the current situation in Lebanon is extremely demanding basic assistance and social assistance for the poorest and most vulnerable, diversified initiatives providing livelihoods opportunities based on the needs of the market, will provide a holistic approach building the path to self-reliance. This action proposes to provide cash assistance support and social services to refugee and host communities, while increasing the coordination in the provision of assistance and stressing the importance of continuing third party monitoring by NGOs for the assistance provided to Syrian refugees extended to the monitoring of the NPTP. This third party monitoring will ensure that lessons learnt from one operation feed into the other and that best practices and standards are applied.

3.6. Indicative Logical Framework Matrix

Results	Results chain: Main expected results	Indicators	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	To improve the living conditions and the resilience of refugees displaced by the Syrian crisis and vulnerable hosting communities in Lebanon.	Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex, nationality and age	75 % Lebanese 89% Syrian refugees, 87% Palestinian refugees from Syria 2021, 65% Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon, 2015	65% Lebanese and 79% Syrian refugees, 77% Palestinian refugees from Syria, 65% Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon by 2024	World Bank, UNRWA and United Nations reports	Political stability and economic recovery in Lebanon; continued commitment to host Syrian refugees in Lebanon
Outcome 1	Improve social safety nets and services for refugees and host communities	1.1. Percentage of households benefiting from the programme not incurring new debts to meet basic needs 1.2. Percentage of households benefiting of the programme with per-capita expenditure equal to or below the SMEB, disaggregating female-headed households. 1.3. Percentage of beneficiaries benefiting from comprehensive social services, disaggregated by sex, age and community of origin	1.1. 0% 1.2 0% 1.3. 0%	○ 20% for Syrian refugees over 3 years 1.2 reduction of 10% over 3 years after year 1 1.3. 100% of the identified cases each year	1.1 and 1.2 WFP Food Security Outcome Monitoring and UNRWA's reports 1.3 SDCs individual report	Government commitment to support the programme concept, including a commitment to policy dialogue on necessary long-term reforms and support to the most vulnerable populations living in Lebanon;
Outcome 2	Increased access to livelihoods opportunities with	2.1. Percentage of households receiving cash assistance with 1 member receiving employment-oriented services	2.1. 0	2.1. At least 50% of the households receiving cash assistance per year	2.1. Project documents: reports	Commitment of all partners to coordinate

	gender sensitive focus for the self-reliance of vulnerable and poor refugees and host communities	<p>2.2. Number of SDCs centres providing or referring employment-oriented services</p> <p>2.3. Percentage of beneficiaries of employment-oriented services having found a job during the programme</p> <p>2.4. Number of women with increased management and leadership skills through government initiatives (disaggregated by sector – public/private)</p>	<p>2.2.0</p> <p>2.3.0</p> <p>2.4.0</p>	<p>2.2. At least 20</p> <p>2.3. At least 30%</p> <p>2.4. At least 800</p>	<p>2.2. Project documents</p> <p>2.3. Project documents</p> <p>2.4. Project documents</p>	<p>activities in the social protection sphere;</p> <p>Commitment to comprehensive vulnerability assessments/ analysis for all persons in Lebanon;</p> <p>Commitment to explore fiscal space For longer term Government financing under NPTP.</p>
Output 1.1 related to Outcome 1	<i>1.1 Essential needs of refugees and host communities are met.</i>	<p>1.1.1. Number of poor Lebanese individuals receiving cash assistance monthly, disaggregated by sex and age</p> <p>1.1.2. Number of vulnerable refugees receiving cash assistance, disaggregated by sex, age and community of origin</p>	<p>1.1.1. 180 000</p> <p>1.1.2. 216 000</p>	<p>1.1.1 375 000</p> <p>1.1.2 216 000 maintained over the course of the action</p>	<p>1.1.1 project reports/ bank reports</p> <p>1.1.2 project reports/ bank reports</p>	
Output 1.2 related to Outcome 1	<i>1.2 The ability of refugees and host communities to access social services is increased</i>	<p>1.2.1 Percentage of refugees and host community members reporting improved psychosocial wellbeing</p> <p>1.2.2 Number of women benefitting from Gender Based Violence related services</p> <p>1.2.3. Number of individuals trained on child protection and gender-based violence</p>	<p>1.2.1 0%</p> <p>1.2.2 0</p> <p>1.2.3. 0</p>	<p>1.2.1 60%</p> <p>1.2.2 2000</p> <p>1.2.3. 80</p>	<p>1.2.1 MOSA progress reports</p> <p>1.2.2 MOSA progress reports</p> <p>1.2.3. MOSA progress reports</p>	
Output 1.3 related to	<i>1.3 Increased strategic capacities and coordination are facilitated, as a pre-</i>	1.3.1. Number of advocacy initiatives supported at the national and regional level	1.3.1. 1 (NPTP Steering Committee)	1.3.1. 5 (NPTP Steering committee maintained and at least 3 relevant initiatives promoted),	1.3.1. Minutes of Steering	

Outcome 1	<i>condition of an efficient social protection system</i>	1.3.2. Number of SDCs equipped to provide integrated assistance and social and employment services	1.3.2. 0	(MPCA Steering Committee maintained and at least 2 relevant initiatives promoted) 1.3.2. 20 selected SDCs	Committees meetings 1.3.2. Projects monitoring reports	
Output 2.1 related to Outcome 2	2.1 <i>Employment-oriented services provided to vulnerable households, including households benefiting from social assistance and social services interventions</i>	2.1.1 Status of a National strategy for social protection linking with labour activation 2.1.2 Number of public sector offices or staff from local institutions trained in employment services, disaggregated by gender 2.1.3 Number of Syrian refugees and host communities participating in employability, vocational and entrepreneurial skills training programmes, disaggregated by nationality and gender	2.1 No National strategy 2.1.2 0 2.1.3 0	2.1.1 1 National Strategy 2.1.2 At least 2 per municipality targeted 2.1.3 At least 2200 (50% women; 50% Lebanese, 50% non Lebanese)	2.1.1 Project documents: registers 2.1.2 Project documents: registers 2.1.3 Project documents: registers	
Output 2.2 related to Outcome 2	2.2 <i>Local priority projects developed to promote short-term employment opportunities and social stability</i>	2.2.1 Number of municipalities benefitting from improved infrastructure improvements 2.2.2 Number of beneficiaries of Employment Intensive Projects, disaggregated by nationality and gender	2.2.1 0 2.2.2 0	2.2.1 20 municipalities and 5 Palestinian refugee camps 2.2.2 At least 1200 (50% Lebanese, 50% non-Lebanese)	2.2.1 Project documents: registers 2.2.2 Project documents: registers	

		2.2.3 Number of staff (from institutions and local organisations) trained in social cohesion related topics, disaggregated by gender	2.2.3. 0	2.2.3 At least 60 persons (50% women)	2.2.3 Project documents: registers	
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4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1. Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country.

4.2. Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 60 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3. Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures³⁸.

4.3.1. Direct Management (Grants)

a) Purpose of the grant(s)

The grant should contribute to the implementation of Output 1.1 Third-Party Monitoring of social assistance provided to poor and vulnerable refugees and host communities.

b) Type of applicants targeted

Non-Governmental Organisations active in Lebanon in the monitoring of social assistance.

(c) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grant(s) may be awarded without a call for proposals to a Non-Governmental Organisation (or a consortium of NGOs), selected using the following criteria:

- Active in Lebanon
- Experience in the monitoring of social assistance (data analysis, reporting, etc)
- Proven track-record in working with relevant Lebanese authorities at various levels
- Experience in multi-stakeholders coordination
- Proven track-record in working with UN agencies implementing large scale programmes
- Active member of thematic coordination structures in Lebanon (Basic assistance working group, Social Safety Net, etc).

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified given the crisis situation in Lebanon (Article 195 (a) FR), and the fact that the action has specific characteristics requiring a specific type of beneficiary for its technical competence and nature of the component 1 of the action, (Article 195 (f) FR).

³⁸ www.sanctionsmap.eu Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

4.3.2. Indirect Management with a Member State Organisation or international organisation

4.3.2.1. A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- Experience and capacity to work with Syrian refugees and poor Lebanese.
- Capacity to implement a variety of monthly allowances for the extremely poor and vulnerable people in Lebanon.
- Capacity to implement large scale cash assistance programmes
- Experience in adapting social assistance according to changes in the socio-economic context
- Track record of working with government institutions implementing social assistance programmes
- Experience in emergency contexts implementing large scale assistance for the most vulnerable population

The implementation by this entity entails implementing the activities leading to the *Output 1.1. Essential needs of refugees and host communities are met*, and *Output 1.3. Increased strategic capacities and coordination are facilitated, as a pre-condition of an efficient social protection system*

4.3.2.2. A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- Experience and capacity to work with vulnerable refugees and host communities.
- Experience in the implementation of social services for the extremely poor and vulnerable people in Lebanon.
- Capacity to work closely with national and local authorities, including government institutions
- Capacity to monitor and improve the referral system for vulnerable population at large scale in challenging contexts

The implementation by this entity entails implementing the activities leading to the *Output 1.2 - The ability of refugees and host communities to access social services is increased*

4.3.2.3. A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- Operational presence in Lebanon
- Experience and capacity to work on social protection, livelihoods opportunities and promoting decent labour access to refugees and host communities.
- Experience in the provision of social protection benefits to all while setting the standards for intensive labour initiatives such as cash for work.
- Capacity and experience in working with civil society organisations and community-based organisations
- Capacity to coordinate large scale programmes and policy initiatives in the sector of social protection and livelihoods

The implementation by this entity entails implementing the activities leading to the *Output 2.1. - Employment-oriented services provided to vulnerable households, including households benefiting from social assistance and social services interventions* and *Output 2.2 - Local priority projects are developed to promote short-term employment opportunities and social stability.*

4.3.2.4. A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- Operational presence in Lebanon
- Experience and capacity to work with Palestinian refugees including inside the camps
- Experience in cash assistance interventions and in providing employment-oriented services
- Capacity to monitor the implementation of the activities
- Experience in implementing large scale projects at national level

The implementation by this entity entails implementing the activities leading to *Output 2.1- Employment-oriented services provided to vulnerable households, including households benefiting from social assistance and social services interventions* and *Output 2.2 - Local priority projects are developed to promote short-term employment opportunities and social stability*

4.3.3. Changes from indirect to direct management (and vice versa) mode due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)

Under exceptional circumstances duly justified, the implementation modalities above described could be modified.

If direct management for the *Activity "Third-Party Monitoring of social assistance provided to poor and vulnerable refugees and host communities"* as covered by section 4.3.1 cannot be implemented due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control, the alternative modality would be indirect management with a Member State Organisation/ EU specialised (traditional/regulatory) agency/ international organisation with the same criteria.

If indirect management (as per section 4.3.2) with any of the entities foreseen for the above mentioned parts of the action cannot be implemented due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control, the alternative modality would be direct management through grants or procurement. If direct management through grants is the chosen modality, the purpose of the grants will correspond to the description of Output 1.1, Output 1.2, Output 1.3, Output 2.1 and Output 2.2. Applicants would be Non-Governmental Organisation (or a consortium of NGOs). For each of the 4 indirect management subsections mentioned above, applicant will meet the criteria laid out in section 4.3.2. Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to the direct grant beneficiary selected using the above mentioned criteria.

4.4. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provisions.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.5. Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Part of Output 1.1: <i>Essential needs of refugees and host communities are met</i> and Output 1.3. <i>Increased strategic capacities and coordination are facilitated, as a pre-condition of an efficient social protection system</i> - Indirect management cf. section 4.3.2.1	13 000 000
Output 1.2: <i>The ability of refugees and host communities to access social services is increased</i> - Indirect management cf. section 4.3.2.2	10 000 000
Output 2.1.: <i>Employment-oriented services provided to vulnerable households, including for households benefiting from social assistance and social services interventions</i> and Output 2.2 <i>Local priority projects are developed to promote short-term employment opportunities and social stability</i> - Indirect management cf. section 4.3.2.3 and 4.3.2.4	15 000 000
Part of Output 1.1: <i>Essential needs of refugees and host communities are met</i> Grants – total envelop under section 4.3.1	2 000 000
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2 Audit – cf. section 5.3	will be covered by another Decision
Communication and visibility – cf. section 6	0
Total	40 000 000

4.6. Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The Action will set up a Steering Committee in charge of take the strategic decision guiding the implementation of the programme. It will be chaired by the European Union Delegation in Lebanon (EUD). The Steering Committee will be the policy decision-making body of the programme. It will assess the overall implementation of the programme and will measure the risks, the mitigation measures and will approve the substantial modifications required, if any. Meetings will be organised yearly and when requested by MoSA or by any of the Implementing partners. Representatives of the Implementing partners and MoSA will participate at the meetings. Other entities, forming part of the stakeholders of the programme will be invited to join discussions in the Steering committee for the relevant matters of their responsibility. The Steering Committee will oversee the work of programme Steering committees supported at national level through other EU initiatives, such as the National Poverty Targeting Programme.

A Technical Committee will be established in order to quarterly discuss implementation technical issues: to analyse and monitor programme implementation of the programme, to decide how to manage new challenges, to share information and to coordinate the interventions in order to achieve the defined targets. Programme managers and other technical staff from the implementing partners, MoSA and representatives of the EUD will take part at the quarterly meetings. Extraordinary meetings will be organised if requested by one of the Implementing partners. The EUD will be the responsible of organising the meetings.

Other partners and donors could be invited to the technical meetings groups as observers and external experts could be invited if considered necessary.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action.

5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1. Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partners shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (quarterly and annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring:

The *Implementing partners* will be the ones in charge of preparing, presenting and submitting the reports. The reports must respect the contractual documents and be submitted as defined at the contract. The *EUD* will be in charge of the analysis and approval of the reports in collaboration with the services at Headquarters. The EUD will require additional information to complement the reports or specific clarifications when considered necessary.

5.2. Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, a mid-term, final and ex-post evaluation(s) will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission.

The **mid-term evaluation** will be carried out for problem solving, learning purposes, in particular with respect to the methodologies applied for the pilot implementation of the approach linking social assistance and social services with livelihoods opportunities to increase the self-resilience of the beneficiaries. The evaluation will allow to take decisions regarding the Action in order to adapt the solutions envisaged and to provide with new resources if justified.

The **final and ex-post evaluations** will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that this Action is a pilot to test the feasibility of the approach linking social assistance and social services with livelihoods opportunities.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partners at least 4 months in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation missions. The implementing partners shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partners and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

The financing of the evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.

5.3. Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Communication and visibility is a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to advertise the European Union's support for their work to the relevant audiences.

To that end they must comply with the instructions given in the [Communication and Visibility Requirements of 2018](#) (or any successor document), notably with regard to the use of the EU emblem and the elaboration of a dedicated communication and visibility plan, to be completed for every action at the start of implementation.

These obligations apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, the partner country (for instance, concerning the reforms supported through budget support), contractors, grant beneficiaries or entrusted entities. In each case, a reference to the relevant contractual obligations must be included in the respective financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and delegation agreements.

Communication and visibility measures may be funded from the amounts allocated to the action. For the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action, the Commission may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, as part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union. Visibility and communication measures should also promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

Effectiveness of communication activities on awareness about the action and its objectives as well as on EU funding of the action should be measured.

Implementing partners shall keep the Commission and concerned EU Delegation/Office fully informed of the planning and implementation of specific visibility and communication activities before work starts. Implementing partners will ensure adequate visibility of EU financing and will report on visibility and communication actions as well as the results of the overall action to the relevant monitoring committees.



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THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

ANNEX II

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the special measure in favour of Lebanon for 2021

Action Document for the EU programme in support of Primary Health care access and immunisation for vulnerable population in Lebanon

ANNUAL MEASURE

This document constitutes the annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and action plan/measure in the sense of Article 23(4) of NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1. SYNOPSIS

1.1. Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS Basic Act	EU programme in support of Primary Health care access and immunisation for vulnerable population in Lebanon Annual measure in favour of Lebanon for 2021 CRIS number: NDICI-GEO-NEAR/2021/043-561 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe)
2. Team Europe Initiative	No
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out in Lebanon, nationwide.
4. Programming document	N.A.
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives/expected results	N.A.
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	N.A.
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG: SDG 3 “Good health and well-being” - ending all preventable deaths under 5 years of age; ensure reduction of mortality from non-communicable diseases and promote mental health; grant universal access to sexual and reproductive care, family planning and education; achieve universal health coverage; support research, development and universal access to affordable vaccines and medicines; support health workforce in developing countries.

	Other significant SDGs: SDG 1 “No Poverty” while also contributing to SDG 5 “Achieve Gender Equality”; SDG 10 “Reduced Inequalities”; and SDG 16 “Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions”			
8 a) DAC code(s)	12220 Basic health care – 30% 12250 Infectious disease control – 10% 12261 Health education – 10% 12264 COVID-19 control – 15% 12281 Health personnel development – 10% 12310 NCD control, general – 10% 12340 Promotion of mental health and well-being 10% 15110 Public sector policy and administrative management 5%			
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	20000 Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society 21000 International NGO 40000 Multilateral Organisations			
9. Targets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development ¹ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
10. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women’s and girl’s empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

¹ For the Neighbourhood, activities related to education shall be marked as part of the “Social Inclusion and Human Development” target, in line with the NDICI-GE programming guidelines.

	Combat desertification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Internal markers	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Digitalisation Tags: digital connectivity digital governance digital entrepreneurship job creation digital skills/literacy digital services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Connectivity Tags: transport people2people energy digital connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Migration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	COVID-19	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	BUDGET INFORMATION			
12. Amounts concerned	Budget line: 14.020110 – Southern Neighbourhood Total estimated cost: EUR 35 000 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 35 000 000			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
13. Implementation modalities (type of financing and management mode)	Project Modality Direct management through - Grant Indirect management with the entities to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.3.2.			

1.2. Summary of the Action

The overall objective of this Action is to contribute to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being of vulnerable populations in Lebanon. Its specific objectives are to improve equitable access to quality primary health care, community health, mental health with a specific focus on specialised services and to strengthen access to routine and COVID-19 immunisation services.

Lebanon continues to host the largest concentration of Syrian refugees per capita and the fourth largest refugee population in the world with considerable unmet needs among Syrian refugees, Palestinian refugees and other vulnerable populations in the country. Building on on-going interventions funded by the EU Trust

Fund in response to the Syrian crisis, this Action will benefit to both refugees and vulnerable Lebanese. It will support primary health care centres (PHCC) within the national network coordinated by the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) in an effort to promote universal health coverage in the country as well as access to immunisation. The Action will contribute to Sustainable Development Goal 5: “Good health and well-being”

This action is particularly relevant in the current very challenging context in Lebanon. The country is experiencing multi-faceted crises, including the consequences of the Syrian crisis, the economic, social and financial crisis, in addition to the Beirut Blast Explosion that occurred on 4 August 2020 all compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the summer of the 2021, the crisis has worsened again with limited power and fuel supplies which is affecting the daily life of everyone. In addition, a dollar shortage has restricted the import of medicine, medical equipment and led banks to curtail credit lines. The health sector was among the sectors most affected by the Beirut Blast with about 36% of health facilities, including warehouses suffering from damages. In parallel, primary health care services had to deal with a sharp increase in general caseload equal to 40%.

Taking into account the Council conclusions on Lebanon of the 7 December 2020², this Action will provide support for a people-centred recovery in Lebanon in line with the “Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework”(3RF). This action builds upon actions of the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis implements pledges of the EU made at the Brussels conferences on the future of Syria and the Region in 2020 and 2021.

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Context

Lebanon has been hosting the largest number of refugees per capita for more than a decade, following the displacement of close to 6 million Syrian refugees from Syria to neighbouring countries, namely Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Egypt, and Iraq. Lebanon currently hosts over 1.5 million Syrian refugees, a number equivalent to 25% of its population and around 200,000 Palestinian refugees, including those coming from Syria.

The situation of the refugees in Lebanon has been deteriorating gradually following the multiple crises that the country has been facing since the social unrest in October 2019. A new government under Prime Minister Mikati has been announced on 10 September 2021 following several months of political deadlock. The international community positioned such formation as a necessary first step for the implementation of the needed reforms to address the multiple crisis. Major political and economic reforms remain stalled owing to a lack of political consensus stemming from entrenched confessional divisions and vested economic interests. The dramatically deteriorating economy, the steep inflation, the COVID-19 pandemic and finally the Beirut blast have pushed vulnerable communities in Lebanon - including refugees - to the brink, with thousands of families sinking further into poverty, while social tensions, violent attacks and public rhetoric calling for the immediate return of Syrian refugees has increased. The spread of the COVID19 pandemic in Lebanon since February 2020 has exacerbated the multifaceted economic, social, and political crisis and has added a health and humanitarian dimension at a time when the state institutions and policies are unable to deal with its repercussions. The August 4 2020 Beirut Blast, causing thousands of victims, added to the country’s crisis by severely damaging the infrastructure, shelters, hospitals and services that were in proximity to the blast site.

On 31 August 2020, the European Union (EU), United Nations (UN) and World Bank (WB) released a “Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA)” to identify priority reconstruction needs as well as estimation of the damages and the impact of the blast on the population, infrastructure and service delivery.

² <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/47184/st13730-en20.pdf>

On 4 December 2020, the same institutions launched the “Lebanon Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF)” to operationalise the findings of the RDNA. The 3RF is a people-centred recovery and reconstruction framework integrating the needs and priorities of 15 sectors affected by the disaster, and guided by the overarching principles of transparency, accountability and inclusion, focuses on assisting in short and medium-term recovery and reconstruction efforts to put Lebanon on a path of sustainable development. Due to the explosion, almost 300 health facilities suffered damage, reducing access to care, especially for the vulnerable. With higher demand for health services and the population’s vulnerability after the blast coming on top of the COVID-19 pandemic, the situation presents an unprecedented setback to the health system. The 3RF, in particular pillar IV, will contribute to restore key public and urban services including health in a sustainable and resilient manner.

While the Health sector in Lebanon has been able to provide access and quality care to meet the needs of a large part of the population, it remains characterised by a strongly privatised and highly costly sector. In hospital care, public services make up on 15% of the total hospitalisations under the guidance of MoPH. The rest of the secondary and tertiary sector is served by the private sector. The primary health care sector on the other hand remains well coordinated by MoPH and served through a network of private and public primary health care centres under the umbrella of the MoPH national network. The PHCCs which are included in this network are further supported by the international community through UN, INGOs and NGOs to provide the basic care package at a very low and reduced cost for end beneficiaries, remaining the most affordable entry point into the Lebanon health system for most. With the beginning of the Syria crisis in 2011 the PHC sector recorded an increased 40% in demand for services resulting from the increased caseload of Syrian refugees needing access to these services. With the economic and financial crisis that Lebanon is facing, the demand on these PHC services will further increase as persons including vulnerable Lebanese and Syrians become increasingly poor and can no longer rely on private alternatives for their care. The public network of PHCC will become increasingly strained with the increase in demand for services.

Lebanon has not been ranked as a fragile state, but governance and economic indicators are worrying, with hyperinflation rates and the devaluation of the Lebanese pound having direct impact on the education and health sectors. Lebanon’s real GDP is estimated to have declined by 20.3% in 2020. Monetary and financial turmoil continue to drive crisis conditions, with interactions between the exchange rate, narrow money and inflation a key dynamic. The percentage of poor Lebanese in the crisis-hit country jumped from 28% in 2019 to a whopping 55% in 2020, while that of people categorized as extremely poor rose from 8% to 23% in the same period, according to the study. Recent months have seen an increase in violent crime, with subsidy cuts resulting in tensions amongst people over goods at supermarkets and food distribution points. 706 peaceful and 360 violent protests took place in the first three months of 2021. The socio-economic impact, which is already dire could become catastrophic according to the World Bank (WB).

According to the results of the Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees (VASyr) in Lebanon conducted in 2020, 88% of the Syrian refugees live in extreme poverty and are not capable of covering expenses through employment; and over half of the total Syrian refugee population is now food insecure (55%), up from 29% in 2019. A socio-economic survey of Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) conducted by UNRWA in March 2020 indicated that 87% of PRS are living in poverty.

Hence, as the large-scale refugee situation is expected to become increasingly protracted, in a context of the deep economic and financial crisis and political instability, extreme poverty levels, and protection risks are likely to further rise and erode resilience and human capital, unless mitigated through mutually reinforcing humanitarian and development and resilience-oriented interventions.

In addition, the COVID-19 situation is evolving rapidly and the country has experienced a dramatic period with high rates of infected population compounded with health system saturation. The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), through its COVID-19 National Coordinating Committee, is overseeing COVID-19 vaccine distribution in Lebanon, and in partnership with the World Bank (WB), World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, UNHCR and UNRWA, developed the Lebanon National Deployment and Vaccination Plan for COVID-19 vaccines. However, the vaccines would need to be administered at a much faster pace in order to reach relevant levels of immunity before the end of the year. Vaccine hesitancy is a growing

concern as a steady stream of COVID-19 misinformation reaches Lebanese and non-Lebanese populations increasingly distrustful of the national vaccine rollout. Similarly, non-Lebanese communities are especially hesitant to register for the vaccine through the government portal, fearing arrest, deportation, or unaffordable payments. Despite severe economic constraints, Lebanon has signed agreements to secure 7.4 million COVID-19 vaccine doses (sufficient to fully vaccinate 54% of the total population), largely due to unprecedented support from the international community. Still, Lebanon's confirmed procurement deals will not be enough to vaccinate 35 percent of the country's 6.8 million people in 2021, the target set forth in the national vaccination plan.

2.2. Problem Analysis

As described in chapter 2.1, Lebanon continues to host a large number of refugees, with considerable unmet needs among Syrian refugees, Palestinian refugees and other vulnerable populations. The ongoing economic and political crisis has led to large parts of the population being unable to access finances, afford healthcare or cover some of their basic needs. The COVID-19 pandemic has further strained the health system and increased the demand for health services. Moreover, the damages caused by the Beirut Port Explosion have disrupted health service delivery in Beirut and reduced access to care, especially for the vulnerable. While the population as a whole is deeply affected by the multitude of crises country-wide, it is the most vulnerable populations, such as refugees and vulnerable Lebanese, that are most affected.

Access to primary health care (PHC) services is a major issue in Lebanon especially for vulnerable Lebanese and refugee populations that have limited knowledge and possibility to travel for access to these basic services. MoPH in Lebanon has set up a national network for PHC since 1996, which to date comprises 246 PHC centers (PHCCs) all over Lebanon's territory. Such PHCC have been vetted by MoPH and meet basic standards of service delivery. As a result, they receive medication for acute and chronic diseases from MoPH's general stock. However, each centre also needs specific additional support with equipment, training, IT and other resources in order to run more efficiently and improve the quality of care it can provide. The extra support that the PHCCs need ensures that the centres are able to provide additional services such as mental health and GBV case management that go beyond the basic activities of the centres. In order to be able to provide this additional support and level of care, the majority of PHCC within the MoPH network are supported by NGOs which are funded by the international community.

In addition, access to vaccinations and immunisation is another key issue in Lebanon that MoPH seeks to maintain. The overall coordination for immunisation is undertaken by MoPH but Government resources are scarce for the purchase and procurement of vaccines for all including Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian children. Ensuring access for vaccinations for all enables the promotion of public health in order to curtail the negative effects of the spread of disease on Lebanese territory and protect the population living in Lebanon. Importantly, the Lebanese health infrastructure would not be able to support disease outbreaks for preventable diseases. MoPH is dedicated to ensuring maximum vaccination of children residing in Lebanon. Further, with the COVID-19 pandemic and the limitation of movements which also affected access to PHCCs for vaccination purposes especially for children, the rate of regular immunisation and vaccination in Lebanon has decreased in 2020. Important efforts need to be supported in order to reach all population across Lebanese territory and maximise the vaccination rates for routine immunisation as well as COVID-19 vaccinations in the context of the ongoing pandemic.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action.

Lebanon has a high number of critical stakeholders in the health sector. Since the civil war, local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and later on some critical international NGOs have been playing a major role in health service provision. The MoPH relies today on a public-private partnership with a network of NGOs in order to provide primary care services to the most vulnerable population. The main stakeholders for the health sector described above include the following:

- Key Ministries, such as the MoPH, and the PHCCs, hospitals and their supporting NGOs and municipalities;

- o These stakeholders will be expected to continue support to the network of Primary Health Care Centres and will remain committed to continuing to support and expansion of the LPSP model. In addition, MoPH will remain committed to continue to coordinate and lead on the National Deployment and Vaccination Plan (NDVP) in an effort to reach immunisation levels able to protect the population against infection of COVID19.
- EU Member States and other critical donors, as well as the WB and UN agencies;
- Academic institutions may play an indirect role through the Long Term PHCC Subsidization Protocol (LPSP) model to be applied to the PHC system;
- Lebanese and international civil society organisations, many of which are delivering primary health care services;
- Health personnel (doctors, nurses) as important actors for implementation and respect of the existing health regulation and legislation ,working in difficult times as salaries are devalued and worth 10% of what they were pre-crisis;
- Population in general, including youth and women, people in vulnerable situations such as Syrian refugees, Lebanese vulnerable communities and persons with disabilities who are the ultimate beneficiaries targeted by this action.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1. Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective (Impact) of this action is to contribute to ensuring health lives and promote the well-being of vulnerable population in Lebanon.

The Specific(s) Objective(s) (Outcomes) of this action are

1. Improved equitable access to quality primary health care, community health, mental health with a specific focus on specialised services
2. Strengthened access to routine and COVID-19 immunisation services

The Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives (Outcomes) are

Outputs contributing to Outcome 1 (or Specific Objective 1)

- 1.1 Increased access to quality primary health care services
- 1.2 Increased health awareness/information at community level
- 1.3 Increased access to mental health and psychosocial support services (MHPSS)
- 1.4 Increased awareness sessions and capacity building of front-line staff
- 1.5 Strengthened the capacity of Primary Health Care Centers (PHCCs) staff and Health Outreach Volunteers (HOVs) in safe identification and referrals of GBV survivors

Outputs contributing to Outcome 2 (or Specific Objective 2)

- 2.1 Strengthened routine child immunisation supply chain and quality systems at national, regional and local levels.
- 2.2 Increased access to COVID-19 vaccines to Syrian refugees, Palestinians and vulnerable Lebanese

3.2. Indicative Activities

Activities might include the following but will be further detailed at contracting stage:

Activities related to Output 1.1:

- Support PHCCs providing comprehensive primary health care, including reproductive health and specialist health services for Persons with Disabilities
- Support to diagnostic testing
- Capacity building in coordination with MoPH staff

- Strengthen Health Information System (HIS) at PHCC level

Activities related to Output 1.2:

- Strengthen the technical skills and capacities of outreach Health Outreach Volunteers (HOVs)
- Provide health education through community health clubs and health campaigns
- Provide health referrals and community screenings and identification of the most vulnerable including persons with disabilities (PwDs) and ensuring inclusion in PHCC services
- Distribute Non-Food Items (NFIs)

Activities related to Output 1.3:

- Provision of MHPSS services by mental health professionals through case management teams and referrals schemes
- Capacity building on mental health capacity of front-line staff and PHC providers
- Provision of psychotropic medications
- Provision of mental health awareness raising sessions

Activities related to Output 1.4:

- Organise Clinical Management of Rape (CMR) trainings and coaching to the prioritised CMR facilities
- Organise GBV safe identification and referral trainings to PHCC staff

Activities related to Output 1.5:

- Capacity building and training sessions to PHCC staff and HOVs in safe identification of referrals of GBV survivors

Activities related to Output 2.1

- Procure, distribute and manage the waste of Expanded Program of Immunisation (EPI) vaccines and vaccination commodities for children under 5
- Strengthen immunisation supply chain system

Activities related to Output 2.2

- Procure, distribute and waste management of COVID-19 vaccines, vaccine commodities and PPEs
- Ensure Risk Communication and Community Engagement to foster community vaccine uptake and promote COVID-19 healthy behaviours, especially among Syrian and Palestinian refugees
- Support strengthen immunisation programme, management for equity with integration of COVID 19 vaccination.

3.3. Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection, Climate Change and Biodiversity

The action will consider the environmental impact related to the increased generation of healthcare wastes.

Based on the **Environment Impact Assessment (EIA)** carried out during design phase, the action was classified as Category B (not requiring an EIA, but for which environment aspects will be addressed during design).

No **Climate Risk Assessment (CRA)** was carried out.

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that activities under the programme will aim at increasing the participation of women in view of improving gender equality.

The disruptive situation in Lebanon has increased the existing gender inequalities and exacerbated the risks of gender-based violence (GBV) faced by women and girls from the host, refugee and migrant populations. The prevalence of gender-based violence in Lebanon has been worsened during these unprecedented times. Since the lockdown measures under COVID-19, the gender-based violence information management system GBVIMS has observed disproportionate violence against women and girls (99% female survivors), 3% increase of violence perpetrated by an intimate partner or family member since the lockdown (69%), 5% increase of physical assault incidents, 9% increase of incidents that occurred in the survivors' home (65%).

Moreover, the support to family planning, antenatal care and post-natal care and child care will be a major concern, paying particular attention to reach women, girls and boys through health education programming. In principle,

women will constitute the predominant group of community health workers (CHWs) and they will be responsible for facilitating safe and confidential referrals to services, informing the community on availability of services and basic practices in disease prevention and well-being. In addition, trainings for health professionals will include clinical management of rape survivors and guiding principles of responding to gender based violence (GBV) in humanitarian and protracted emergencies.

Human Rights

As indicated above, the programme will adopt a human rights based approach (RBA), ensuring that no one is left behind, especially the most vulnerable people such as refugees and hosting communities. The RBA for health will pay a special focus on capacity development, both of duty bearers to meet their obligations and of individuals to claim their rights. Health status is not only the result of health care services that are available, accessible (including affordable), culturally acceptable, and of high quality but also the result of other determinants not necessarily covered by the activities included in this action (like education, clean air, water and sanitation, and income). Therefore, this action will ensure a proper coordination is made with these other areas of work which are sometimes equally important and fully in line with EU fundamental values. Transparent, evidence-based policies and programs resulting from more inclusive processes and greater citizen participation will be at the core of this action, which will ultimately improve social cohesion in the country.

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D2. This implies that the programme will aim at increasing the participation and inclusion of disability and specifically persons with disability (PwDs) in light of increasing disability inclusion. Specific activities and outputs within the programme are targeting this.

PwDs face widespread barriers in accessing services, such as those for health care (including medical care, therapy, and assistive technologies), education, employment, and social services, including housing and transport. These barriers are a product of inadequate legislation policies and strategies on country level, a lack of awareness and understanding about disability, accessibility, and service provision, and a lack of funding for services. According to the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan, there remains a significant data gap on PwDs with many of the services being offered not inclusive of their needs of PwDs. The specific needs of refugees with disabilities remained largely unaddressed, and children with disabilities are among the most marginalised groups in Lebanon.

Democracy

By working within the primary health care network of the Ministry of Public Health in Lebanon, this programme will contribute to the overall strengthening of the public health system in Lebanon which is conducive to accountability, good governance and democracy. The programme will aim at improving access in a fair and democratic way to primary health care services and vaccinations in Lebanon.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

Social cohesion activities will be implemented in a participatory and transparent approach involving refugees residing in Lebanon and Lebanese with different societal, economic, political and religious background. Social cohesion will be mainstreamed in the action and operational tools will be put in place to monitor progress in this area. The action will ensure coordination with other actions providing response to the Syrian crisis in Lebanon, to ensure that conflict analysis and transformation is integrated into the implementation.

In the midst of a severe economic crisis in Lebanon, the calls for Syrians to return to their country have become a deeply divisive politicised issue over the decade-long civil war in Syria. These calls have recently been exacerbated by the election which took place in June this year in Syria. The implementing partners will be requested to include social tensions monitoring and prevention in the regular reporting. By supporting health access to everyone (Lebanese and Syrians) we reduce this inter-tension between Syrian refugees and host community, while increasing the trust of the Lebanese citizens in the delivery of public health services.

3.4. Risks and Lessons Learned

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/Medium/Low)	Impact (High/Medium/Low)	Mitigating measures
External Environment	Economic situation continues to deteriorate resulting in negative perception against the presence of Syrian refugees in Lebanon.	H	H	In case of a severe deterioration of the security situation in certain areas of Lebanon either due to a further spill-over of the Syrian conflict into Lebanon or violent tensions between refugees and hosts, the activities of the intervention would be moved to areas deemed safe. In case of a severe deterioration of the security situation in the entire Lebanese territory, the intervention might have to be halted until the situation improves.
	Other outbreak: cholera in informal settlement linked to insufficient water and sanitation	M	M	Support cholera preparedness including environmental health and supply stockpiling.
	Lack of Government commitment to parallel assistance for Syrian refugees.	M	M	Constant policy dialogue with MoPH at both political as well as technical level to support/ adapt the Action.
Planning, process and systems	Shortage of COVAX vaccines	L	L	Alternative supplies need to be identified from supportive countries
	USD/LBP exchange rate used by implementing partners is below the open-market exchange rate, negatively impacting the overall efficiency of interventions.	H	H	Continue multi donor negotiations with Lebanese Government to obtain an exchange rate mechanism which corresponds to the open-market rate as well as facilitation to use USD as main currency for disbursement. At contracting stage, privilege USD for disbursement, where possible, while agreement on satisfactory exchange rate for assistance is pending.
	Mobilisation of domestic resources	H	H	Continuous policy dialogue with the MoPH, Ministry of Finance and PMO, especially through the Technical Working Group of Health as part of the

			3RF where discussions on the future of the sector should initiate.
Insufficient involvement of concerned Ministries and Departments.	M	H	Increased strategic and operational coordination among MoPH/MoSA/implementing partners and other relevant donors/stakeholders
Increased demand for public services and lack of financing leads to a collapse of certain public health services.	M/L	H	Majority PHC services are private with a small contribution of patients. In case of lack of financing the risk is that patients no longer seek care. Need of continuing advocacy for UHC with MoPH/GoL and with other potential donors to invest in the health sector.
Fuel, electricity and water shortages hamper the ability of health facilities to function effectively damaging cold chain for vaccination storage and conditions in PHCC	M	H	Coordination with HC/RC and MoPH to ensure the prioritisation of fuel and resources for the health sector as well as constant follow up with IPs and PHCCs to ensure access to fuel for generators and the installation of solar panels on installations where possible in order to reduce dependence on fuel.

Lessons Learned:

The proposed action builds on past and ongoing experiences funded via the EU Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis, knowledge gained and lessons learned provided by multiple EU-funded health interventions. It will complement existing efforts by other humanitarian actors, and is based upon priority needs that have presented themselves throughout various stages of implementation by critical interventions such as the REBAHS projects (Reducing Economic Barriers to Accessing Health Services). In addition, it is informed and builds on critical interventions and frameworks such as the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan, the Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon, 3RP Regional Strategic Overview 2021-2022, Beirut Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment, Lebanon Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF) and other recent assessments. The proposed interventions also consider the 2019 EUTF health sector review evaluation which was conducted and which highlighted the relevance and importance of continuing to support PHC and immunisation efforts in Lebanon.

The proposed action will work towards bridging the humanitarian-development nexus and will play an important role towards achieving universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health care services, and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all. Similarly to previous REBAHS interventions, provision of improved health outcomes under this new action will be paid, although with a much longer term approach, and especially for patients with chronic disease and multiple co-morbidities. In this sense, more efforts in capacity building to guarantee sustainability of some of the results described above will be allocated.

Based on recent Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) reports and evaluations, REBAHS interventions were found to be highly relevant to the needs of Syrian and vulnerable Lebanese residents and respond to the gaps in the Lebanese healthcare system. Therefore, working on reducing the economic barriers to healthcare access as the major objective of the REBAHS program indeed tackles the problem directly. The introduction of mental health into the primary healthcare system is an achievement that needs to be modelled and adopted by more PHCs in the country, something that this action will certainly look at.

As per lessons learned at project level concerning COVID-19, there is a need to continue providing personal protective equipment (PPEs) and Infection Prevention Control (IPC) materials for frontline staffs during and after lockdown periods. Supporting the implementation of appointment systems in PHCCs and continue organising safe patient flow and preventing crowds from forming was evidenced. Community activities still have to be run remotely via phone. Finally, a continuity of health promotions activity through remote sessions should be ensured. Follow up services and support via phone was also recommended.

More importantly, based on worrisome hesitancy rates for getting COVID-19 vaccines by the population, a strong Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) policy should be strengthened in order to support the raising awareness about COVID-19 prevention and vaccination. This action should continue helping the MoPH with the implementation of the National Deployment Vaccination Plan (NDVP) for COVID-19 vaccines. In terms of access to essential medical commodities for most vulnerable population in Lebanon and given the ongoing financial crisis, additional procurement of acute medication and vaccinations should be conducted for the coming years with EU financing, an element this action will also contribute with. This is important in order to ensure predictable and medication supply chain free of charge to vulnerable patients, especially at PHCCs level.

3.5. Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is focusing on a comprehensive and sustainable approach to health system strengthening by providing access to PHC services for affordability and predictability of the healthcare as well as vaccinations.

If, as a general assumption, MoPH continues to support its PHCC network and promote primary health care as an entry point in to the Lebanese health care system for vulnerable populations and the EU can continue to anchor its support within this network;

If, access to the national PHC network continues to be equitable and inclusive of all persons especially women, children, refugees, persons with disabilities;

If, the level of care provided at PHCC continues to improve and expanded to include access to MHPSS services, GBV identification and CMR referrals;

If PHCC staff continues to be supported through capacity building in coordination with MoPH;

Then more vulnerable populations will have access to the PHC services packages including prevention and curative visits, acute and chronic disease medication and diagnostic testing when needed. Persons needing to be referred to more specialised levels of care will be identified early on and directed onto the right level of care and persons will be followed through the Lebanese health care system for proper follow up. Persons needing access to chronic disease medications will be identified and monitored through the system to not only ensure their wellbeing but to allow MoPH to manage the caseload and needs for acute and chronic diseases for the populations residing in Lebanon.

Further, if MoPH continues to support and promote immunisation and vaccinations;

If Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian children attend to PHCC for their regular routine immunisation;

If all persons residing on Lebanese territory eligible for COVID-19 vaccinations have access to the vaccinations:

Then, public health will be promoted and the disease burden for individuals as well as the Lebanese health care system will be minimised as the chances of disease breakout will be reduced. The same applies to COVID19 as access to vaccines for all will ensure that the effects of the pandemic will be reduced.

If MoPH continues to monitor and evaluate the progress of its work then it will have better capacity to plan, monitor and report on the health sector in Lebanon in an effort to better identify the most urgent needs and gaps.

3.6. Indicative Logical Framework Matrix

Results	Results chain: Main expected results [maximum 10]	Indicators [it least one indicator per expected result]	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	Contribute to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being of vulnerable populations in Lebanon	<p>1 Universal Health Coverage index (SDG 3.8.1)**</p> <p>2 Immunisation coverage rate, by type of vaccine (COVID-19 vaccine included)</p> <p>3 Under-5 mortality rate (SDG 3.2.1)**</p> <p>4 Status of institutional progress towards universal health care (PHCC applying flat fee model in Lebanon)</p> <p>5 Status of policy reforms towards more affordable health care</p>	<p>1 UHC index of service coverage, 77 (2017)</p> <p>2 60% (MoPH, 2021)</p> <p>3 7.2 deaths for 1000 (2019)</p> <p>4 70 PHCC supported by EU apply the model</p> <p>5 No policy reforms</p>	<p>1 Progress against the baseline</p> <p>2 5% increase annually</p> <p>3 Progress against baseline</p> <p>4 Same number or increase number</p> <p>5 Policy reform discussions begun</p>	<p>MoPH - official statistics (WHO data)</p> <p>Interviews/testimonies from the stakeholders involved; Final narrative and financial reports, Evaluations</p> <p>Results of MoPH/partners assessments/evaluations/studies including the ones of the EUTF Third Party Monitoring</p>	
Outcome 1	1. Improved equitable access to quality primary health care, community health, mental health with a specific focus on specialised services	<p>1.1 Number of women/children benefitting from the basic health services package disaggregated by sex, community of origin.</p> <p>1.2 Number of people with disabilities with access to health services disaggregated by sex and community of origin</p>	<p>1.1 30,000 monthly (2021)</p> <p>1.2 150 monthly (2021)</p> <p>1.3 65 clinics (2021)</p> <p>1.4 Process not started</p>	<p>1.1 33,000 monthly</p> <p>1.2 165 monthly</p> <p>1.3 Increased number of clinics</p>	<p>1.1 Project reporting, Interim Report, Final and Progress Reports, ROM, Project evaluations</p> <p>1.2 Project reporting, Interim Report, Final and Progress Reports, ROM, Project evaluations</p>	MoPH PHCC network and LPSP model continues to be implemented and supported MoPH continued to coordinate immunisation efforts against disease including COVID through the NDVP

		<p>1.3 Number of PHCCs applying the MoPH's LPSP protocol</p> <p>1.4 Status of data monitoring at PHHC level</p> <p>1.5 Number of referrals of GBV survivors</p> <p>In line with Outcome 1, I would also include mental health-related indicators.</p>	<p>1.5 Process not started</p> <p>1.6 n/a</p> <p>1.7 No data</p>	<p>1.4 Improved data monitoring</p> <p>1.5 Available data and improved referrals</p>	<p>1.3 Project reporting, Interim Report, Final and Progress Reports, ROM, Project evaluations, MoPH data, Health Working Group</p> <p>1.4 PHCC monitoring data from project reporting and partners</p> <p>1.5 Health WG, SGBV Working groups, QINs, Project reporting</p>	
Outcome 2	2. Strengthened access to routine and COVID-19 immunisation services	<p>2.1 % of routine immunisation among the child population in Lebanon</p> <p>2.2 Rate of COVID-19 vaccination among Syrian refugees, Palestinians and vulnerable Lebanese</p>	<p>2.1 n/a</p> <p>2.2 22.5% of registered Syrians and 38.2% of registered Palestinians are vaccinated with at least one dose</p>	<p>2.1 30% increase in children below 5 vaccinated</p> <p>2.2 166,652 Syrians, 38,462 Palestinians newly vaccinated with COVID-19</p>	<p>2.1 UNICEF EPI programme</p> <p>2.2 GoL IMPACT platform and NDVP</p>	
Output 1 related to Outcome 1	1.1 Increased access to quality primary health care services	1.1.1 Number of primary health care consultations conducted, disaggregated by sex, community of origin	1.1.1 625,000 (annual)	1.1.1 680,000 (annual)	1.1.1 Project reporting, health sector, MoPH	

Output 2 related to Outcome 1	1.2 Increased health awareness/information at community level	1.2.1 Number people benefitting from health information services	1.2.1 To be determined (2021)	1.2.1 Data available and determined	1.2.1 Project reporting, UNICEF data	
Output 3 related to Outcome 1	1.3 Increased access to mental health and psychosocial support services (MHPSS)	1.3.1 Number of cases referred for specialised services, disaggregated by sex and community of origin	1.3.1 To be determined (2021)	1.3.1 Available data	1.3.1 MoPH, Mental Health working group, project reporting	
Output 4 related to Outcome 1	1.4 Increased awareness sessions and capacity building of front-line staff.	1.4.1 Number of people reached through health education activities	1.4.1 To be determined (2021)	1.4.1 Available data	1.4.1 Project reporting, health sector	
Output 5 related to Outcome 1	1.5 Strengthened the capacity of Primary Health Care Centers (PHCCs) staff and Health Outreach Volunteers (HOVs) in safe identification and referrals of GBV survivors	1.5.1 Number of PHCCs staff and HOVs trained in safe identification and referrals of GBV survivors	To be determined (2021)	1.5.1 Increased number of PHCC staff trained	1.5.1 Primary health care department at MoPH, project reporting and evaluations, health sector	
Outcome 1 related to Outcome 2	2.1 Strengthened routine child immunisation supply chain and quality systems at National, Regional and local levels.	2.1.1 Number of children vaccinated	2.1.1 680,000 (2021)	2.1.1 956,828	2.1.1 UNICEF EPI programme	

Outcome 2 related to Outcome 2	2.2 Increased access to COVID-19 vaccines to Syrian refugees, Palestinians and vulnerable Lebanese	2.2.1 Number individuals COVID-19 vaccinated, disaggregated by sex, community of origin.	2.2.1 14% of population	2.2.1 80% of population (national target)	2.2.1 GoL IMPACT platform	
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4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1. Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country.

4.2. Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 60 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3. Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures³.

4.3.1. Direct Management (Grants)

a) Purpose of the grant(s)

The grant shall contribute to achieving results in relation to Specific Objective 1 (S.O.1)

b) Type of applicants targeted

International Non-Governmental Organisations specialised in the health sector with sound experience in Lebanon.

c) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to an International Non-Governmental Organisation, selected using the following criteria:

- Specialised in the Health sector, especially in primary health care services delivery including MHPSS services;
- Experience in implementing projects in support of Syrian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese populations in Lebanon working through the national MoPH network of PHCCs;
- Capacity to cover a wide geographical area in Lebanon with the possibility of creating partnerships and consortia with other organisations to maximise the geographical scope and reach of the intervention;
- Demonstrated adequate financial capacity to implement large scale projects of EUR 20 million plus;
- Experience working in procurement and distribution of medication in Lebanon;
Experience implementing the MoPH long-term primary health care subsidisation programme (LPSP) model for service delivery in PHCCs.

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified given the crisis situation in Lebanon (Article 195 (a) FR).

³ www.sanctionsmap.eu Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

4.3.2. Indirect Management with an international organisation

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- Active in the health sector in Lebanon;
- Sound track record in implementing large scale vaccination and immunisation programmes in Lebanon;
- Capacity to build synergies between relevant EU projects and guarantee full co-ordination with other EU bilateral and regional actions in this sector;
- Experience in supporting MoPH in Lebanon directly with its national immunisation programme;
- Experience in procuring COVID19 vaccines as part of global COVAX initiative;
- Experience working with MoPH in Lebanon in support of its National Deployment Vaccine Programme (NDVP) for COVID19.

The implementation by this entity entails activities described under Specific Objective 2 (S.O.2) consisting in ensuring continuity of supplies of vaccines - including for COVID-19 - to the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH).

4.3.3. Changes from indirect to direct management (and vice versa) mode due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)

In case of inability to contract under direct management for the delivery of SO1 and to find an alternative implementing entity based on the criteria laid out in section 4.3.1, the Delegation may choose to implement SO1 through indirect management by selecting an EU Member-State agency or an international organisation meeting the criteria detailed above in 4.3.1.

4.4. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provisions.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.5. Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Implementation modalities – cf. section 4.3	
Outputs contributing to Outcome 1 composed of Grants (direct management) total envelope under section 4.3.1	30 000 000
Outputs contributing to Outcome 2 composed of Indirect Management – cf. section 4.3.2	5 000 000
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2 Audit – cf. section 5.3	will be covered by another Decision
Communication and visibility – cf. section 6	N.A.
Totals	35 000 000

4.6. Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

Considering the importance of this action, the EU Delegation will maintain close steering and monitoring of the projects mentioned above, regardless of management modalities building on previous EU interventions in the sector. The EU Delegation to Lebanon will provide oversight on projects implementation through the establishment of Steering Committees for all contracts foreseen under the action and through regular monitoring and evaluation.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action.

5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1. Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring: the implementing entities will be the primary actors responsible for data collection, analysis and monitoring. The EU, evaluators and external monitors may request data against logframe indicators and more specifically within specific project activities throughout the implementation of the project and implementing entities may provide this in a timely manner. MoPH will also play an important role in the coordination of data collection for what concerns the global health indicators such as universal health access and SDG indicators. Coordination for data collection will

also be enhanced through the Health Steering Committees organised bi-annually by MoPH, EU and all implementing partners.

5.2. Evaluation

Having regard to the importance of the action, a final evaluation will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission.

It will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that the EU engagement in this sector might continue.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 2 months in advance of the dates foreseen for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

The financing of the evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.

5.3. Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Communication and visibility is a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions, to advertise the European Union's support for their work to the relevant audiences.

To that end they must comply with the instructions given in the [Communication and Visibility Requirements of 2018](#) (or any successor document), notably with regard to the use of the EU emblem and the elaboration of a dedicated communication and visibility plan, to be completed for every action at the start of implementation.

These obligations apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, the partner country (for instance, concerning the reforms supported through budget support), contractors, grant beneficiaries or entrusted entities. In each case, a reference to the relevant contractual obligations must be included in the respective financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and delegation agreements.

Communication and visibility measures may be funded from the amounts allocated to the action. For the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action, the Commission may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, as part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union. Visibility and communication measures should also promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

Effectiveness of communication activities on awareness about the action and its objectives as well as on EU funding of the action should be measured.

Implementing partners shall keep the Commission and concerned EU Delegation/Office fully informed of the planning and implementation of specific visibility and communication activities before work starts.

Implementing partners will ensure adequate visibility of EU financing and will report on visibility and communication actions as well as the results of the overall action to the relevant monitoring committees.



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THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

ANNEX III

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the special measure in favour of Lebanon for 2021

Action document for the Access to quality education for all vulnerable children in Lebanon in times of crisis - support to a national Education Sector Plan post-2021 for a resilient system

ANNUAL MEASURE

This document constitutes the annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and action plans and measures in the sense of Article 23(4) of NDICI Regulation.

1. SYNOPSIS

1.1. Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS Basic Act	Access to quality education for all vulnerable children in Lebanon in times of crisis - support to a national Education Sector Plan post-2021 for a resilient system Annual measure in favour of Lebanon for 2021 CRIS number: NDICI-GEO-NEAR/2021/043-585 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe).
2. Team Europe Initiative	Yes (to be confirmed last quarter 2021). Support to the Education sector in Lebanon.
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out in Lebanon.
4. Programming document	N.A.
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives/expected results	N.A.
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	N.A.
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG: 4 Education Other significant SDGs: SDG 5 achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

	SDG 16 promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.			
8 a) DAC code(s)	11110 Education policy and administrative arrangements – 20% 11120 Education facilities and training – 5% 11220 Primary Education – 60% 11240 Early childhood education – 15%			
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	40 000 Multilateral Organisations 60 000 Private Sector Institution			
9. Targets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development ¹ <input type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
10. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

¹ For the Neighbourhood, activities related to education shall be marked as part of the “Social Inclusion and Human Development” target, in line with the NDICI-GE programming guidelines.

11. Internal markers	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Digitalisation Tags: digital connectivity digital governance digital entrepreneurship job creation digital skills/literacy digital services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	<u>Connectivity</u> Tags: transport people2people energy digital connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Migration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	COVID-19	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION				
12. Amounts concerned	Budget line: 14.020110 - Southern Neighbourhood. Total estimated cost: EUR 15 000 000. Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 15 000 000.			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
13. Implementation modalities (type of financing and management mode)	Project Modality Direct management through Procurement. Indirect management with the entity(ies) to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.3.2.			

1.2. Summary of the Action

This Action Document proposes to support access to quality education for all vulnerable children in Lebanon in times of crisis for the scholastic years 2021-2023 - support to a national Education Sector Plan post-2021 for a resilient system. It is directly aligned with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 “*Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*”. It also relates to SDG 16 “*Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels*”.

This action falls under the European Commission Priority 5, Governance, Peace and Security, Human development, by contributing to stability in Lebanon and promoting resilience of the most vulnerable communities, and under Priority 4 on Migration Partnerships and forced displacements, through providing assistance to the refugees displaced by the Syrian crisis. It also refers to the policy priority of the EU Commission on “*Alliances for Sustainable Growth and Jobs*” and its specific sub-priority on education and

skills. Taking into account the Council conclusions on Lebanon of the 7 December 2020², this Action will provide support for a people-centred recovery in Lebanon in line with the “Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework”. It moreover implements the pledges made by the EU at the Brussels conferences on “Supporting the future of Syria and the Region” made in 2020 and 2021.

This Action Document proposes a new strategy for engagement to provide access to quality public education (Kindergarten to Grade 9) for all vulnerable children in Lebanon in times of crisis, taking stock of the positive achievements and challenges faced by the international community in its support to the Lebanese national strategy Reaching All Children with Education (RACE), which started in 2013 and is coming to an end by 2021. It proposes to anchor the European Union’s (EU) support to the 5-Year Education Sector Plan 2021-2025 delivered by the Ministry for Education and Higher Education (MEHE). This strategy presents for the first time, after consultations with education donors, a comprehensive policy document to ensure access to quality education for all vulnerable children, whatever their nationality, in a context of deepening social-economic and education crisis. It proposes a shift from a nationality approach (education for refugees at the core) to a vulnerability approach (equitable access to education for all vulnerable children).

This Action Document takes into account the learning crisis in Lebanon both for Syrian refugee children and vulnerable Lebanese children, after 15 months of school closure following the COVID-19 outbreak and difficulties in implementing an efficient distance learning strategy able to reach all children. As thousands of children are out of education or at risk of falling out of education, the priority is to contain and address the learning crisis through mid to long term investments, helping children to catch-up with learning losses and retain in an education system able to offer a place for all vulnerable children and propose quality learning through different pathways. EU’s investment in education proposes to be selective, cost-efficient, coordinated and complementary with other donors, and factor in uncertainties and risks linked to the unfolding national context, requiring flexibility. The EU considers that access to education cannot be separated from quality education and system strengthening, each component having an impact on the other. Building the resilience of the education system in order to absorb the current shocks is a starting point, anchored to MEHE’s 5-year education sector plan.

Therefore, the proposed action is three-fold. First, it aims at ensuring inclusive, equitable and safe access to education for all vulnerable boys and girls through reduction of barriers for enrolment and retention into formal education. Second, it aims at ensuring certified multiple and flexible learning pathways to education for out-of-school children. Third, it proposes to strengthen the capacity of the education system to deliver quality education (for instance training of educational staff, adaptation of the curriculum to distant learning, building key functions in the MEHE on planning, budgeting or reporting).

The education sector might be selected as a priority for a flagship initiative under Team Europe in order to provide better impact, coordination, leverage and visibility of EU and its Member States overall support to the education sector. Discussions with EU Member States in Lebanon to decide about the approach are expected to take place last quarter of 2021, after the official launching of the 5-Year Education Sector Plan and the Distance Learning Plan.

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Context

Lebanon has been hosting the largest number of refugees per capita for more than a decade, with currently over 1.5 million Syrian refugees, a number equivalent to 25% of its population and around 200.000 Palestinian refugees, including those coming from Syria. The situation of the refugees in Lebanon has been deteriorating gradually following the multiple crisis that the country has been facing since the social unrest in October 2019.

² <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/47184/st13730-en20.pdf>

A new government under Prime Minister Mikati has been announced on 10 September 2021 after several months of political deadlock. The international community positioned such formation as a necessary first step for the implementation of the needed reforms to address the multiple crisis. The dramatically deteriorating economy, the steep inflation, the COVID-19 pandemic and finally the Beirut blast have pushed vulnerable communities in Lebanon - including refugees - to the brink, with thousands of families sinking further into poverty. It has exacerbated the multifaceted economic, social, and political crisis and has added a health and humanitarian dimension at a time when the state institutions and policies are unable to deal with its repercussions.

Lebanon has not been ranked as a fragile state³, but governance and economic indicators are worrying, with hyperinflation rates and the devaluation of the Lebanon pound having direct impact on the education and health sectors. Lebanon's real GDP is estimated to have declined by 20.3% in 2020. The percentage of poor Lebanese in the crisis-hit country jumped from 28% in 2019 to a whopping 55% in 2020, while that of people categorised as extremely poor rose from 8% to 23%⁴. As shown by the Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon conducted in 2020^[1], 88% of the Syrian refugees live in extreme poverty and are not capable of covering expenses through employment; and over half of the total Syrian refugee population is now food insecure (55%). With the rising poverty among Lebanese due to the impact of the economic crisis and COVID-19, competition over jobs and resources for survival is increasing. Also, as fewer Lebanese can afford to pay for private schools or medical care, pressure on the already weak national social services is increasing and contributing to a notable rise in intra and intercommunal tensions across the country. Scapegoating of the refugees, for being a cause of the economic, social, and security problems in the country is rising in this fragile and fragmented political and social environment and fuelling calls for return of the refugees to Syria. However, while the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)'s recent return perceptions and intentions survey finds that well over 80% of the Syrian refugees wish to ultimately return to their home country, only some 2.5% are planning to do this within the next 12 months.

Hence, as the large-scale refugee situation is expected to become increasingly protracted, in a context of the deep economic and financial crisis and political instability, extreme poverty levels, and protection risks are likely to further rise and erode resilience and human capital, unless mitigated through mutually reinforcing humanitarian and development and resilience-oriented interventions.

After the explosion at the Port of Beirut 4 August 2020, the EU, UN and World Bank (WB) released on 31 August 2020 a "Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA)" to identify priority reconstruction needs as well as estimation of the damages and the impact of the blast on the population, infrastructure and service delivery. On 4 December 2020, the same institutions launched the "Lebanon Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF)" to operationalise the findings of the RDNA. Education is among the essential public services addressed under the pillar IV "Improving services and infrastructure". 159 schools, of which 92 public and 67 private in addition to 20 vocational schools, sustained minor to significant damages. 85,000 children and 50,000 children were prevented from access to learning. At reform and policy level, the 3RF supports the policy for remote/hybrid learning and localisation of Back-to-Schools plans. At investment/program level, the 3RF focuses on safe reopening and operation of educational facilities. At institutional strengthening level, close consultation with all education stakeholders is planned to address the education reform and the recovery and reconstruction agenda.

Sector context: children and the education sector are strongly impacted by the multiple crisis in Lebanon

³ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/states-of-fragility-fa5a6770-en.htm>

⁴ <https://www.unescwa.org/news/Lebanon>

^[1] <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/VASyR%202020.pdf>

The education is fully hit by the multiple crisis in Lebanon, leading to the need for short to long term support to mitigate the education crisis and recover progressively from the current learning haemorrhage. Learning losses are still under calculation following the closure of all learning facilities during 15 months with the COVID-19 outbreak in February 2020, adding to the severe economic and financial crisis. During the scholastic year 2020-21, children in morning shifts in public schools received 12 to 18 weeks of in-school learning out of 31 to 33 weeks, and the period was even shorter for second shifts. In September 2020, the Ministry for Education and Higher Education announced the start of the scholastic year for all children in October, with learning based on a blended model, combining face-to-face instruction with remote learning support and a curriculum cut by 50%. No official data were shared yet for the participation rate during the scholastic year 2020-21 out of the 147,771 Syrian refugees enrolled in second shift schools. According to March 2021 UNHCR figures collected through its network of education community liaison officers deployed in second shift schools, 54% of second-shift schools were offering distance learning to children at home, and 4.5% were adopting a blended learning approach, while 41% were offering no learning modalities. The vast majority of children (98%) participating in distance learning were using WhatsApp and Telegram to do so. In total, first-shift students received 11 weeks of schooling using a hybrid approach, out of which 5 weeks were in-school. Second-shift children received much less.

The massive transfer of students from the private sector - usually accommodating 70% of the Lebanese children - to the public schools has not happened yet in full but is expected to be more visible for the scholastic year 2021-22. Additionally, less priority might be put on education at several levels, be it political or through households' choices in a context of aggravated poverty and difficulty to afford basic services. Moreover, confinement at home in extreme poverty has led to depression, aggressive attitudes and violence towards children, in addition to a rise in negative coping mechanisms such as child labour and child marriage.

At the policy and strategic level, the national strategy Reaching All Children with Education (RACE) phase II - under which the EU Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis (EUTF) support has been anchored since 2014 - is going through its last year of implementation. The international community has been advocating over the last months for a comprehensive approach to the education sector to ensure quality education for all vulnerable children, rather than maintaining a parallel system, shifting from a fee-based system to a cost-based model, building on the successes and weaknesses of the RACE approach⁵. The Ministry for Education and Higher Education finally released in March 2021 the first draft of its 5-Year Education Sector Plan "*Building Lebanon's Human Capital through Resilient High Quality Public Education*". It details its vision for quality public education for all children articulated around six core areas for investment. Pending improvements and agreement on a vehicle for implementation, the EU proposes to consider this Education Sector Plan as the anchor of its support under this action document. It presents the breakthrough awaited to understand the Ministry's education priorities for a resilient system able to cater the need for quality education for all children under a multiple crisis context.

2.2. Problem Analysis

Short problem analysis:

Based on various sources⁶, several core challenges need to be addressed in the design, management and implementation of a post-RACE strategy to support the access to quality education for all vulnerable children.

First, at access to education, quality and systemic education level, the current percentage of Syrian children out-of-education is still very high, estimated at 50 %, despite high international investment in RACE. The risk of new children dropping out of education or falling out of learning is also high in a context of multiple and aggravated crisis, with a lower value being put into education by caregivers and competing choices to be made

⁵ See details in part 2.4 Relevance and credibility of Partner Country's/Regional Policies and Strategies.

⁶ Notably the Mid-Term Review of the national strategy Reaching All Children with Education (RACE) conducted in 2020, and the Rapid Diagnosis of the Education Sector released by the European Training Foundation under EU support in June 2021.

at household level for access to basic services. Moreover, the official Non-Formal Education pathways to reach out to out-of-school children does not allow a tangible transition to formal education, with age gaps and lack of flexibility given to implementing partners. After 15 months of closure of all educational facilities since the outbreak of the COVID-19 in February 2020, learning losses are still to be calculated but estimated to be equalling several months on the whole compulsory education cycle of a child. Distance learning strategies put in place so far did not allow an equitable access to education for the most vulnerable children, notably for children with special needs. Participation rates were low and high-tech solutions were not adapted for the most vulnerable households, with main barriers being mostly technical and logistical (connectivity, electricity, lack of devices, non-conducive learning environment at home) and cultural (inability of parents to accompany their child or afford a tutor).

Several schools are in a poor physical state, requiring sound school management plans. The transfer of Lebanese students from private to public school system due to increasing economic hardships is expected to put an additional pressure on those schools, with a public education system close to reaching its full absorption capacities. A part of the private sector, including semi-subsidised schools, is at risk of collapsing due to the incapacity of families to afford the tuition fees. At the workforce level, teachers are feeling demotivated due to the economic crisis and low value of the executed hour (1 to 2 USD for contracted teachers), complemented by a difficulty to adapt to distance learning and lack of support, limited career management and performance assessment, lack of an optimised allocation of teachers and limited capacity to offer modern teaching modalities. Transportation to schools for both teachers and students will be a major issue in a context of fuel shortages and increased prices.

Lebanon has a low public spending on education. Total government expenditures in 2013-2015 averaged around USD 3.3 billion (2.1% of GDP and 8.1 % of total government expenditure). The latest budget (2020) already further decreased education allocations by 7%. The sector also suffers from budget fragmentation and inefficiencies in allocations, as well as lack of agile financing. Finally, the overall quality of the public education has deteriorated commensurately. Public schools exhibit lower academic outcomes in both international and national assessment (TIMSS and PISA). The curriculum has not been revised since years. At governance and process level, a unified data system to inform decision making is not yet in place. Administrative and operational processes need to be streamlined and digitalised. A sound strategy for assessing learning outcomes and a clear monitoring and evaluation framework is not in place. A more decentralised model would allow giving more responsibilities at school level, with school principals able to set a vision for their school and defining their priorities through school improvement plans.

Second, at program modality level, the current RACE system finishing with the scholastic year 2020-21 constructed a highly transactional and process centred grants management system, focusing on access to education rather than on results and quality. Notably, the double shift approach (morning and afternoon classes) consumed a large amount of funds with a reduced curriculum and weakened learning conditions in second shift for refugees compared to the first shift. The RACE unit cost system has never been revised against the evolving socio-economic conditions nor allowed an understanding of the global cost of education for all vulnerable children on the overall public education budget. Moreover, RACE Data Evidence and Knowledge Management System has not met the standards needed for data collection and measuring progress. Cross-checking mechanisms on data, third-party monitoring or stronger milestones for disbursement are lacking. The governance system has shown deficiencies with Executive Committee irregular and engaged in few decision-making processes.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action

The primary stakeholders and direct beneficiaries of this proposed action are vulnerable children (right-holders) of all nationalities in Lebanon in need of support for access and retention in education. As for the national Strategy Reaching All Children with Education 2014-2021, all children attending primary public

education are considered as vulnerable. A specific emphasis will be put on children at risk of dropping out of education and falling out of learning due to the multiple crises, lost months of education and pressure at household level to access basic services. Educational personnel at central, regional and school level of the Ministry for Education and Higher Education will also be among direct beneficiaries. Parents and other caregivers of students are indirect beneficiaries of this action through support to subsidised education for their children, releasing a financial pressure at household level in a context of worsening economic crisis.

At institutional level, the direct beneficiary will be the Ministry for Education and Higher Education (MEHE) as duty-bearer, and notably the Directorate General for Education and the Centre for Educational Research and Development (CERD). This Action Document encompasses a technical assistance component to the MEHE. The other stakeholders are United Nations agencies with a specific mandate on education, notably UNICEF, and UNESCO and UNHCR. Coordination will be ensured with other education stakeholders, notably Germany under the possibility of a support to the same education programme and priorities, and other EU Members States. Local and international NGOs intervening in the education sector will also benefit from the action through sub-implementation of activities.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1. Objectives and Expected Outputs

This Action Document aligns with the 5-Year Education Sector Plan of the Ministry for Education and Higher Education (2022-2027) and its Distance Learning Strategy, both considered as relevant policies, provided adequate governance structure, coordination between all education stakeholders and gradual implementation strategies are in place. It will take into account the results of the costing analysis and funding modality proposals from the Strategic Finance Advisor working with the MEHE. This Action Document also complements and aligns with EU support for the access to certified education for vulnerable children under the scholastic years 2020-2022 through UNICEF.

The Overall Objective (Impact) of this action is to ensure the resilience of the Lebanese education system to provide access to quality education for all vulnerable children in times of crisis.

Specific(s) Objective(s) (Outcomes) of this action:

1. Inclusive, equitable and safe access to public education for all vulnerable boys and girls provided through reduction of barriers for enrolment and retention into formal education (Kindergarten to Grade 9).⁷
2. Enlarged access to education for out-of-school children through certified multiple and flexible learning pathways.
3. Education system (Ministry for Education and Higher Education) better equipped to deliver quality education.

The Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives (Outcomes) are:

- 1.1 Facilitated access and enrolment of vulnerable children in public primary education.
- 2.1 Facilitated access and enrolment of out-of-school students in quality education through multiple and flexible learning pathways, including a pilot school-based bridging program.
- 3.1 Management and Educational staff of the Ministry for Education and Higher Education trained on leadership, modern pedagogies and 21st century skill development.

⁷ For the scholastic year 2021-2022, with possible extension to the scholastic year 2022-2023, depending on complementarity in support to enrolment fees with other donors.

3.2 National curriculum fully digitised⁸ and customised to enable hybrid teaching and learning as a resilience strategy.

3.3 Increased capacities of the Ministry for Education and Higher Education to plan, budget, implement, monitor, evaluate and report on the education sector.

Outputs are covering the scholastic years 2021-2023.

3.2. Indicative Activities

Activities related to:

- Output 1.1: coverage of enrolment fees for vulnerable children in formal education; support for educational-related supplies and other education-related costs, including transportation, for enrolled vulnerable children in formal education.
- Output 2.1: design and implementation of new certified multiple and flexible learning pathways⁹, including a pilot school-based bridging program for out-of-school children.
- Output 3.1: development of teacher training modules and learning models, as well as school management and instructional leadership training modules.
- Output 3.2: support to MEHE and CERD for a digitised learning (inter alia national curriculum, digital learning solutions and trainings on digital learning and pedagogies).¹⁰
- Output 3.3: establishment of key functions, strengthened capacities and improved working processes in MEHE in monitoring and evaluation, reporting and information management, strategic and operational planning, public financial management and accountability, and other on-demand.

This Action Document is complementary to other EU ongoing and planned support to the education sector in Lebanon through the EU Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian crisis, giving a comprehensive overview of EU overall intervention to address the increased needs. Those programmes are contributing to access to quality education for all vulnerable children through support to registration fees and school-related expenditures, catch-up programmes, non-formal education programmes, rehabilitation of schools including solar panels, connectivity and devices for distant learning, inclusive education in formal and non-formal education, child-friendly schools, and building of MEHE's information management system. EU interventions are also complementary to other donors support, and notably Germany and the World Bank for access to quality education and education system strengthening.

3.3. Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection, Climate Change and Biodiversity

Outcomes of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project).

The EIA screening classified the action as Category B (not requiring an EIA, but for which environment aspects will be addressed during design)]

Outcome of the Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project).

The CRA screening concluded that this action is no or low risk (no need for further assessment).

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

⁸ It is expected to exchange expertise with digital education programs implemented by UNRWA for Palestinian refugees.

⁹ A Non-Formal Education Assessment is under finalisation and will guide the definition of such new pathways for out of learning children. The MEHE has set a Non-Formal education working group, which is not yet effective.

¹⁰ This activity will be adapted to the learning scenarios taking place in Lebanon for the scholastic years 2021.23.

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that a specific attention will be put on the child protection needs of boys and girls out-of-education (child marriage, child labour, other acts of violence that increased under COVID-19 outbreak) or at risk of dropping-out due to the multiple crisis in Lebanon.

Human Rights

The Action Document is aligned with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and SDG 4 on ensuring the right to access quality education. A specific focus will be put on equity and vulnerability. It adopts a rights-based approach, distinguishing the role of duty-bearers (Ministry for Education and Higher Education - MEHE) and the rights-holders (children).

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D0. This implies that children with disabilities and learning difficulties are not directly targeted by this action document, given that another action document adopted by the EU directly targets inclusive education, covering the same scholastic years 2021-2023.

Democracy

This action document intends to support the 5-Year Education Sector Plan of the MEHE. It includes a specific component dedicated to strengthen the public education system and capacities in the MEHE for efficient management and operational processes to deliver on the plan. It participates to democratic governance through improving the efficiency of a public entity delivering a social service for citizens.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

Both refugee and Lebanese children will be targeted under a vulnerability approach. Specific activities will be implemented to avoid social tensions at local levels and through communication.

3.4. Risks and Lessons Learned

Category	Risks	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating measures
External environment (political, economic, COVID-19)				
Increasing social tensions and political opposition to the presence of Syrian refugees in Lebanon in a context of deepening socio-economic crisis and competition over resources and access to public services.	Risk 1	High	Medium	Change in the narrative of international partners to focus on conversations towards a greater recognition of Lebanese concerns, resilience, burden sharing and the temporary nature of Syrian displacement, as well as emphasising solidarity with the refugee situation and highlighting support given to vulnerable Lebanese population.
Socio-economic and protection situation of refugees deteriorates.	Risk 2	High	Medium	EU Delegation will continue to advocate for Lebanon to adhere to obligations for refugee protection, as per international law. Continuous dialogue will take place with GoL during programme implementation, to ensure that a clear framework is established to safeguard refugee protection and livelihoods.
The Lebanese pound is devalued, resulting in high levels of inflation and increased levels of	Risk 3	High	High	Mitigating measures will need to be seen from a systemic perspective, notably through the

poverty among populations in Lebanon.				introduction of macroeconomic stability measures. From an operational point of view, the implementing agency is already exploring avenues for overcoming the loss of purchase power due to the loss of currency value in the informal market.
USD/LBP exchange rate used by implementing partners differs from the open-market exchange rate, negatively impacting the overall efficiency of interventions.	Risk 4	High	High	Continued multi donor negotiations with Lebanese Government to obtain an exchange rate mechanism which corresponds to the open-market rate as well as facilitation to use USD as main currency for disbursement. At contracting stage, privilege USD for disbursement, where possible, while agreement on satisfactory exchange rate for assistance is pending.
Prolongation of the closing of learning centres because of the COVID-19 outbreak and difficulties for a safe reopening of educational facilities.	Risk 5	High	Low	Blended learning is already in place through hybrid solutions that are expected to be better tested, efficient and supported by the international community, in line with the national Distance Learning Plan under finalisation.
Planning, processes and systems (Ministry for Education and Higher Education)				
Bureaucratic impediments and lack of effective work with the Ministry for Education and Higher Education. Lack of coordination and cooperation between the departments of MEHE and the Centre for Educational Research and Development.	Risk 6	Medium	Medium	Reinforced coordination, accountability and governance mechanisms will be put in place by implementing partners to ensure smooth coordination and decision-making between the different stakeholders involved in the action. Implementing partner will be selected based on close and lengthy partnership with relevant public authorities.
Restricted financial transparency of MEHE expenditure and/or procurement	Risk 7	Medium	Medium	Implementing partner are working on strengthening financial assurances, including through innovative approaches providing a closer control on allocation and use of funds.
Deterioration of the public services due to the deepening economic crisis, decrease of the national budget allocated to education, and lack of motivation of teachers, leading to a collapse of the education sector	Risk 8	Medium	Medium	Access to quality education remains a priority for the government despite decreased resources available. The international community will continue advocating for a cost-efficient education model, identifying costed models and new financial scenarios of the education system adapted to a crisis period while gradually strengthening the capacities of MEHE. Solutions are explored to support teachers, students and schools to guarantee access to education despite the crisis. Coordination between donors will be enhanced on advocacy and support modalities post-RACE (national strategy Reaching All Children with Education 2014-2021). Interventions will focus on multiple and flexible learning pathways for children in case of collapse of the public education system.

Lessons Learned:

The Action is building on the positive achievements and weaknesses of eight years of implementation of the national strategy Reaching All Children with Education (RACE 2014-2021). The Mid-Term Review (MTR) of RACE II delivered critical recommendations that have been taken into account in this action document, notably the need for a sound data collection system and monitoring and evaluation framework with clear reporting responsibilities. It is also recommended to improve the governance, coordination and leadership to ensure improved effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery modalities, as well as streamlining the decision-making and coordination structure. Learning outcomes have not improved over the last years and disparities remain, with regional issues and language of instruction as key drivers of low learning. The MTR evaluation team also observed differences in quality and supply between morning and afternoon shifts, which need to be addressed, as well as the still important number of children out-of-education. The costing model of RACE based on a unit cost (fee-based) has been used for seven years without modification although several factors that shaped its calculation have changed. Additionally, it did not allow an understanding of the total cost on the education system. Finally, the Non-Formal Education framework presents inefficiencies and confusion in the implementation and needs to be reviewed.

As a result of 15 months of distance learning, education stakeholders recommend to implement different learning solutions from no tech to low tech and high tech, depending on ages of children, households' situations, parents' support and access to information technology. An equity approach is needed, with overall figures indicating that in average nearly one child out of two was unable to participate to any of the learning pathways. Therefore, investment is required for a better access to devices and ensuring connectivity (internet), as well as strong monitoring tools to measure the attendance and learning outcomes of children during hybrid or distance learning. Cultural change is also required for a better engagement of teachers and parents under distance or hybrid learning.

The Results Oriented Monitoring report dated July 2021 on EU-supported UNICEF project T04.143 *Supporting access to formal education for Syrian Refugee and Lebanese girls and boys in Lebanon's public school* issued important recommendations. Sound risk management framework and appropriate risk management tools should be developed to adapt to the crisis context in Lebanon. Work should also be done on strengthening connectivity for teachers and students. Cost efficiency analysis in the support to the education sector is recommended, as well as understanding the dynamics of spending in a context of devaluation of the pound. Learning losses should also be addressed through catch-up programmes¹¹.

Finally, the support document on the rapid education diagnosis assessment of the education sector in Lebanon, released 30 June 2021 by the European Training Foundation under the European Union's support, pre-identified specific issues in each segment of the education sector, as well as informed about priorities for a policy dialogue between Lebanon and the European Union. It highlighted the importance of addressing inequalities in the access to the education system and learning outcome. It underlined the need to work on better budget planning, budget clarity on all costs, allocation and management on the overall sector, linking it with execution and addressing fragmentation issues. It noted the good progress but unachieved yet on quality data collection to inform evidence based programming and policies. Reforms are also needed to improve teacher management, allocation, training and deployment. The report recommends a better push for decentralisation and more decision to be taken at regional and school level, along with school improvement plan. Finally, it calls for improving the resilience and governance of the sector. Based on those findings, the report proposes for the EU to invest in 2-tracks. First, at micro level, short-term support could go at school level to address inequalities through identifying priority schools, supporting mainly the public provision of education as well as, if funds allow, the free private education. Second, at macro level, investment could target the teacher's management framework and the monitoring and evaluation framework. As a mid to long-term perspective, ETF recommends to open a national policy dialogue on decentralisation, policy and budget

¹¹ Already planned by the EU under another program.

planning, revision and modernisation of the pedagogical framework, and adequate regulations of the private education sector.

3.5. Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is that investing both in access to education for all vulnerable children, as well as quality certified education and strengthening of the Lebanese education system along the priorities identified by the MEHE 5-year Education Sector Plan will lead to a better resilience of the education system in order to absorb the multiple crisis and shocks faced by the country.

If, as a general assumption for all the intervention, MEHE delivers a quality 5-Year Education Sector Plan under which the EU can anchor its support, and if, as a transversal approach, gender-sensitive, equitable and pro-vulnerable policies and practices are in place,

If vulnerable children (Lebanese and non-Lebanese) have their enrolment fees for public primary education covered,

If vulnerable children (Lebanese and non-Lebanese) have access to educational-related supplies and their education-related costs are covered,

If new multiple and flexible learning pathways are put in place to bring back to education an increased number of out-of-school children, including through a pilot school-based bridging program, offering more adapted, quality and cost-efficient learning approaches,

Then vulnerable children will benefit from an enlarged access to public primary education.

Moreover, if teachers training modules and learning models are developed,

If schools management and instructional leadership training modules are in places,

If a technical support is provided to MEHE and the Centre for Educational Research and Development to develop a digitised national curriculum, digital learning solutions and trainings on digital learning and pedagogies,

Then students and schools will benefit from an increased availability of qualified teachers and other education staffs with better capacities for leadership, modern pedagogies and 21st century skill development.

It will lead on short to mid-term to improved use of appropriate teaching and learning resources, improved retention in education, improved completion rates and learning outcomes, and on long-term to improved literacy, numeracy and qualifications of the population.

Eventually, if monitoring and evaluation functions are established in MEHE, as well as a planning and reporting functions, and capacity building measures in public financial management,

Then the MEHE will have better capacities to plan, budget, implement, monitor, evaluate and report on the education sector.

It will lead from short to mid-term to improved education administrative system, governance and management, and ultimately to a strengthened and resilient education system able to deliver quality education for children.

3.6. Indicative Logical Framework Matrix

Results	Results chain (): Main expected results	Indicators (): (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	To enhance the resilience of the Lebanese education system through supporting access to quality education for all vulnerable children	1 % of children dropping-out of school in primary public education. 2 % of children graduating at Grade 6 and Grade 9 (exam grades). 2 % of children (3-14) out-of- learning.	1. For scholastic year 2018-19: Drop-out rate of 3.13% for first shift schools G1-G6 (average), 13% for first shift schools G7-G9 (average). Survival rate (average): 96.9% for first shift schools G1-G6, 87% for first shift schools G7-G9. 2. Scholastic year 2019-20 graduation rate: 94.2% at G6 and 92.8% at G9 for all first shift schools. Graduation grades for second shift schools scholastic year 2018-19: 68.1% G6, 50.1% for G9 3. Scholastic year 2019-2020: 47 % of primary school aged refugee children (age 6-14) out of school and 57% out of any learning (age 3-18).	No target but yearly data will show trend, especially given COVID-19 outbreak and hybrid-learning.	1 CERD annual report, School Information Management System, MEHE reports on the 5-year education sector plan 2 MEHE reports, School Information Management Study	<i>Not applicable</i>
Outcome 1	Inclusive, equitable and safe access to public education provided for vulnerable boys and girls into formal education (Kindergarten to Grade 9)	1.1 % of students registered in Lebanese public schools who are absent for less than 10 consecutive days during the 2020/21 scholastic year (disaggregated by nationality, shift, grade and gender) 1.2 % of students enrolled in Lebanese public schools who transition to a higher level (disaggregated by nationality, shift, grade and gender)	1.1 Not available for the last scholastic years under distance learning. 1.2 Not relevant for the last scholastic year under COVID-19 and distance learning as automatic promotion was granted by MEHE.	1.1 TBD. Access data policy with MEHE under negotiation. 1.2 TBD. Access data policy with MEHE under negotiation.	CERD annual report, School Information Management System, MEHE reports on the 5-year education sector plan, education implementation agency report.	For all: The 5-year education sector plan of the Ministry for Education and Higher Education is officialised. Donors have agreed on an
Outcome 2	Enlarged access to education for out of school children through certified multiple and flexible learning pathways.	2.1 Attendance rate of school children enrolled in quality flexible learning pathways.	2.1 No baseline as pilot is under definition.	2.1 To be defined with the pilot approach.	Education implementation agency report.	
Outcome 3	Education System (Ministry for Education and Higher Education)	3.1 Extent to which MEHE annual progress reports on the implementation of the 5-Year Education Sector Plan are used for planning.	3.1 Baseline 0 3.2 Baseline tbc.	3.1 Target: 1 per year. 3.2 Tbc	Reports for the technical assistance team	

	better equipped and able to deliver quality basic education.	Extent to which evaluations and monitoring reports serve as a basis for planning and programming of MEHE activities 3.2 Percentage of MEHE staff reporting improvements in their working tools and methods (disaggregated by sector: planning and evaluation, reporting and information management, strategic and operational planning, public financial management and accountability).				implementation support vehicle to the 5-Year Education Sector Plan (basket fund).
Output 1 related to Outcome 1	Facilitated access and enrolment of vulnerable children in public primary education.	1.1.1 Number of children enrolled in primary education with EU support (disaggregated by: gender, community of origin) 1.1.2 Number of vulnerable children enrolled in formal education receiving support for educational-related supplies and other education-related costs.	1.1.1 Not significant data as this action document proposes to shift from the unit cost under RACE strategy for a more cost-efficient model. 1.1.2 TBD (same as above)	1.1.1.TBD (costing exercise ongoing for the new strategy post RACE). 1.1.2TBD (same as above).	UN reports, MEHE reports on the 5-year education sector plan.	
Output 1 related to Outcome 2	Facilitated access and enrolment of out-of-school children in quality education through multiple and flexible learning pathways,	2.1.1 Status of the new learning pathways framework. 2.1.2 Status of the pilot school-based bridging program.	2.1.1 0 2.1.2 0	2.1.1: 1 2.1.2 1.	Education implementation agency reports.	
Output 1 related to Outcome 3	Management and Educational staff from the Ministry for Education and Higher Education trained on leadership, modern pedagogies and 21 st	3.1.1 Status of the 21 st century Learning Model for basic education. 3.1.2 Status of the 21 st century Teacher Training Model. 3.1.3 Status of the school management and instructional leadership training module.	3.1.1 Baseline 0. 3.1.2 Baseline 0. 3.1.3 Baseline 0.	3.1.1 target 1 3.1.2 target 1 3.1.3 target 1 All by scholastic year 2022-2023.	MEHE report on the 5-Year Education Sector Plan, education implementation agency reports, CERD report.	

	century skill development.				
Output 2 related to Outcome 3	National curriculum digitised and customised. fully and	<p>3.2.1 Number of elements of the national curriculum digitised through EU support to MEHE and CERD.</p> <p>3.2.2 Status of development of digital learning solutions.</p> <p>3.2.3 Number of educational personnel trained on digital learning and pedagogies.</p>	<p>3.2.1 Baseline 0 (incomplete).</p> <p>3.2.2 Baseline 0 (incomplete).</p> <p>3.2.3 Baseline 0.</p>	<p>3.2.1: 1 national curriculum.</p> <p>3.2.2: 1 package of digital learning solution.</p> <p>3.2.3 N. of trainings TBD.</p>	<p>MEHE report on the 5-Year Education Sector Plan, implementation agency reports, technical assistance company reports.</p>
Output 3 related to Outcome 3	Increased capacity of the Ministry for Education and Higher Education to plan, budget, implement, monitor, evaluate and report on the education sector.	<p>3.3.1 Number of MEHE staff trained on monitoring, evaluation and information management and reporting applying the acquired knowledge.</p> <p>3.3.2 Number of MEHE staff trained on strategic and operational planning and reporting applying the acquired knowledge.</p> <p>3.3.3 Number of MEHE staff trained on public financial management and accountability and reporting applying the acquired knowledge.</p>	<p>3.3.1 Baseline 0 (incomplete capacity)</p> <p>3.3.2 Baseline 0 (incomplete capacity)</p> <p>3.3.3 Baseline 0 (incomplete capacity)</p>	<p>3.3.1 : 1 (full capacity)</p> <p>3.3.2: 1 (full capacity)</p> <p>3.3.3: 1 (full capacity)</p> <p>All for the scholastic year 2022-23</p>	<p>MEHE report on the 5-Year Education Sector Plan, implementation agency /technical assistance reports</p>

4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1. Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country.

4.2. Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 60 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this financing Decision. Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3. Implementation Modalities applicable for Project modality

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures¹².

4.3.1. Direct Management (Procurement)

The procurement will contribute to achieving a part of activities under outcome 3 (Strengthened capacities of the education system to deliver quality education).

4.3.2. Indirect Management with an international organisation

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria: i) necessary capacity to address political, technical, logistical and institutional challenges of the education sector; ii) sound track record and/or capacity in implementing projects in Lebanon on education for vulnerable children; iii) proven capacity to develop actions not limited to access to education but also covering quality education and system strengthening under fragile or crisis contexts; iv) capacity to put in place a sound monitoring and reporting mechanism adapting to different learning scenarios (full remote, hybrid, face-to-face), including through innovative solutions, in order to ensure regular reporting and monitoring of results with data cross-checking mechanisms and/or third party monitoring ; v) capacity to engage with the Ministry for Education and Higher Education on a sound and regular dialogue on strategies, policies and technical orientation and assistance; vi) capacity to manage large-size education programmes at national and local level, with a presence at the level of regions or capacity to cover district and school levels; vii) knowledge and capacity to work with a network of international and local education organisations able to implement activities at community and school-based levels; viii) proved agility and capacity to adapt to changing contexts and multiple crisis, evolving in uncertain environment; ix) ability to coordinate and act in complementarity with other agencies in support to the education sector, and in particular to the national 5-Year education Sector Plan through its coordination structure (not defined yet).

The implementation by this entity entails all components of the programme, to the exception of a part of activities under outcome 3.

The Commission authorises that the costs incurred may be recognised eligible as of 1 September 2021 in order to cover the costs related to the start of the scholastic year 2021-2022.

¹² www.sanctionsmap.eu Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails

4.3.3. Changes from indirect to direct management (and vice versa) mode due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)

Under exceptional circumstances duly justified, the implementation modalities above described under section 4.3.1 could be modified. In case of inability to implement procurement under direct management for the delivery of SO3, the alternative implementation modality would be indirect management with an international organisation or an EU Member-State agency matching the criteria mentioned in 4.3.2 above.

4.4. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provisions.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.5. Indicative Budget

3 Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Implementation modalities – cf. section 4.3	
Objective/Outputs 1 – <i>Inclusive, equitable and safe access to public education for all vulnerable boys and girls provided through reduction of barriers for enrolment and retention into formal education (Kindergarten to Grade 9).</i> Objective/Outputs 2 - <i>Enlarged access to education for out-of-school children through certified multiple and flexible learning pathways.</i> Part of Objective/Outputs 3 - <i>Education system (Ministry for Education and Higher Education) better equipped to deliver quality education.</i> composed of: Indirect management with an international organisation (contribution agreement) – total envelope under section 4.3.2	11 000 000.00
Part of Objective/Outputs 3 - <i>Education system (Ministry for Education and Higher Education) better equipped to deliver quality education</i> composed of: Procurement – total envelope under section 4.3.1	4 000 000.00
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2 Audit – cf. section 5.3	will be covered by another decision
Communication and visibility – cf. section 6	N.A.
Total	15 000 000.00

4.6. Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The implementing partner(s) will, be responsible for the management of the whole programme, including sub-contracting for activities, services, works and supplies in all of the components. A project committee gathering

the EC, the implementing partners and the Ministry for Education and Higher Education shall be set-up to monitor, depending on final implementation modalities:

- EC contribution to the action;
- EC and other donors' contribution to the same priority pillars of the Ministry's 5-Year Plan;
- EC and other donors' contribution to the various pillars of the Ministry's 5-Year Plan,

The project committee shall take stock of the progress of the action and facilitate its smooth implementation. It should provide guidance for the programme's activities, review programme achievements, discuss strategic issues, decide of corrective actions where needed or call for extra information and gathering of specific sub-committees attached to specific thematic issues. It should gather at a technical level on a regular basis at a fixed and recurrent date. It can be complemented by high-level political steering committee. The EU shall play an active role in the committees and sub-groups. Each member of the steering committee shall feel empowered with decision and guidance authority.

The EU will maintain a constant policy dialogue with national stakeholders to ensure the highest possible support and political commitment needed for successful implementation.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action.

5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1. Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring are the responsibility of the implementing partner(s) which will be selected on the basis on proven sound monitoring capacities. Third party monitoring through local organisations and/or a network of local agents, or specific mechanism to cross-check data provided by the Ministry for Education or Higher Education can be required to the implementing agent. It is also expected from the later to collect a specific set of indicators on access to education to measure attendance, participation, absence, dropping out rates and other education data from the logframe under any learning scenario (face-to-face, hybrid, full remote learning). Reports on such data are expected to be provided on a regular basis. As a lessons learned, the Ministry is progressing well towards the set-up of a unified data system, with the School Information and Management System as its core, but transparency in access to education data is not yet ensured through regular external publication nor information flows to education donors, more especially since the outbreak of the COVID-19. Therefore, an external mechanism under the control of the implementing partner is crucial to ensure access to data and monitoring of the action.

A part of technical assistance provided to the MEHE is dedicated to strengthening the Ministry's capacity for monitoring and reporting, linking with the monitoring mechanism that will be put in place under the implementation and operationalisation modalities of the 5-year national Education Sector Plan.

5.2. Evaluation

Having regard to the importance of the action, a final evaluation will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the implementing partner.

It will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that a new approach for the support to the education sector is implemented post 2021, anchored to the 5-Year Education Sector Plan 2021-2025 of the Ministry for Education and Higher Education, as the national Strategy Reaching All Children with Education (RACE) comes to an end by December 2021.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 2 months in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

The financing of the evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a financing Decision.

5.3. Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Communication and visibility is a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to advertise the European Union's support for their work to the relevant audiences.

To that end they must comply with the instructions given in the [Communication and Visibility Requirements of 2018](#) (or any successor document), notably with regard to the use of the EU emblem and the elaboration of a dedicated communication and visibility plan, to be completed for every action at the start of implementation.

These obligations apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, the partner country (for instance, concerning the reforms supported through budget support), contractors, grant beneficiaries or entrusted entities. In each case, a reference to the relevant contractual obligations must be included in the respective financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and delegation agreements.

Communication and visibility measures may be funded from the amounts allocated to the action. For the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action, the Commission may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, as part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union. Visibility and communication measures should also promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

Effectiveness of communication activities on awareness about the action and its objectives as well as on EU funding of the action should be measured.

Implementing partners shall keep the Commission and concerned EU Delegation/Office fully informed of the planning and implementation of specific visibility and communication activities before work starts.

Implementing partners will ensure adequate visibility of EU financing and will report on visibility and communication actions as well as the results of the overall action to the relevant monitoring committees. For communicating on Team Europe Initiatives, the EU and its Member States can rely on the specific guidance on the Team Europe visual identity.