



Basterna, from Raqqa in Syria, washes clothes by hand at an informal settlement for Syrian refugees near the town of Baalbek in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley. Photo: Sam Tarling/Oxfam

A CLEAN AND DECENT LIFE WITHOUT WASH?

The impacts and risks of reduced WASH funding for
Syrian refugees in Bekaa, Lebanon

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Lebanon hosts approximately 1.5 million Syrians who have fled the war in their country since 2011. Funding for assistance for refugees and refugee-affected populations in Lebanon is declining sharply across all sectors. As of January 2018, only 9% of the year's WASH sector appeal had been secured. Unless more funding is secured there will be substantial reductions in WASH services for refugee communities. This report is an analysis of impacts and risks of reduced and limited WASH funding on Syrian refugees in informal tented settlements in Bekaa, Lebanon

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ACRONYMS

ACH	Acción contra el Hambre
AJEM	Association Justice et Miséricorde
CHV	Community Hygiene Volunteer
CISP	Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli
CTV	Community Technical Volunteer
ECHO	European Civil protection and Humanitarian aid Operations
FSL	Food security and livelihoods
GAC	Global Affairs Canada
IAMP	Inter-Agency Mapping Platform
IMC	International Medical Corps
ITS	Informal tented settlement
MEAL	Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
Sawa	Sawa for Development and Aid
UNHCR	United Nations Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VASyR 2017	Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon 2017
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WVI	World Vision International
WFP	World Food Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Lebanon hosts approximately 1.5 million Syrians who have fled the war in their country since 2011. Funding for assistance for refugees and refugee-affected populations in Lebanon is declining sharply across all sectors. In 2017, the WASH sector, which is the focus of this study, received just US\$60m of a total appeal for \$280m, to serve refugees and Lebanese people in need, compared with \$90m received against an appeal for \$391m in 2016. As of January 2018, only 9% of the year's WASH sector appeal had been secured. Unless more funding is secured there will be substantial reductions in WASH services for refugee communities.

Approximately one-third of Syrian refugees in Lebanon live in informal tented settlements (ITS) in the Bekaa region. Humanitarian WASH services to ITS are based largely on unsustainable solutions, particularly water trucking and latrine desludging, as it has not been possible for various reasons to put more sustainable solutions in place. The continuity of these services is therefore highly dependent on external funding.

This study was commissioned by Oxfam in Lebanon to identify the likely implications of loss or lack of WASH service provision to people living in ITS due to reduced funding in the WASH sector, so as to establish and share knowledge about what can be expected as a consequence of reduced funding, and contribute to discussions about preventive and mitigating measures.

This study addressed the following problem statement: substantial cuts in funding for WASH services for Syrian refugees living in ITS in the Bekaa are likely to produce a range of negative impacts in the areas of public health, livelihoods, protection and social stability. These negative impacts will affect not only Syrian refugees but also Lebanese communities. The impacts related to WASH will create an additional burden for other sectors of assistance that are also weakened by funding constraints and less able to respond effectively. The findings of the study substantially confirm this statement.

The research was carried out in Lebanon from 22 January to 7 February 2018.

METHODOLOGY

The specific research questions addressed in this study were:

- What coping mechanisms could be adopted by ITS refugee households and communities as a result of a lack of WASH services or of funding reduction for WASH services?
- What public health and socio-economic impacts on ITS refugee households and communities can be expected as a result of a lack of WASH services or of funding reduction for WASH services?

The study focused on ITS in three municipalities of Baalbek-Hermel Governorate: Bouday, Deir el Ahmar and Younine. The ITS in Bouday and Deir el Ahmar are served by Oxfam's WASH and protection programme. At the time of the study, the ITS in Younine had not been served for at least six months due to absence of funding. These settlements provided a comparative situation to demonstrate the consequences of loss of service, including the coping strategies used by ITS households and communities.

A mix of qualitative research methods were used for this study: literature review; interviews with key informants in humanitarian agencies and local authorities; in-depth interviews and informal group discussions with Syrian refugees in the ITS; structured observation in the ITS environment.

The fieldwork in the ITS was conducted by a primary researcher with a WASH and social science background, working with a translator from Oxfam's team in Zahlé.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Syrian refugees in ITS live in a physical, social, political and economic environment that imposes severe constraints and limits their basic rights to protection, assistance and representation. Their living conditions are poor, their livelihoods are precarious and they are exposed to risks of abuse and exploitation, without access to legal redress. Conditions for refugees are worsening, with increasing poverty and cut-backs to other essential services.

ITS households and communities place an extremely high priority on access to safe water, decent sanitation and the ability to maintain standards of personal and domestic hygiene. WASH services are highly regarded by refugees as an essential aspect of humanitarian assistance and have made an essential contribution to their ability to live in health, dignity and safety, in spite of their harsh living conditions.

However, WASH services to ITS are based largely on unsustainable solutions, particularly water trucking and latrine desludging, and their continuity is therefore highly dependent on external funding. When funding is not available, service delivery stops and refugees are forced to find local solutions with whatever means they have. ITS residents have shown themselves, individually and collectively, to be resourceful and purposeful people with ability to solve problems and negotiate assistance in order to live a decent life in spite of the constraints within which they live. ITS households and communities faced with a reduction in WASH services will react through a range of strategies to attempt to maintain a basic level of water supply, sanitation and hygiene.

Despite these efforts, a substantial reduction in WASH services is likely to produce a myriad of negative consequences, including:

- An increase in WASH-related disease for ITS residents and nearby Lebanese communities through the consumption of contaminated water, insufficient access to latrines, unsafe management of faecal sludge and solid waste;
- Increased levels of stress, anxiety, fear, shame and sense of rejection, leading to an increase in mental-health disorders and an increase in conflict and potential violence within ITS communities and households, including domestic violence;
- Tensions between households over access to scarce services and stigmatization of individuals and households within the ITS if they cannot maintain standards of personal and domestic hygiene;
- Significant increased spending on WASH services at household level in an attempt to keep a minimum level of access to safe drinking-water, preserve basic access to sanitation and maintain an acceptable level of personal and domestic hygiene;
- Reduced spending on other essentials such as healthcare, education, food or heating fuel, thereby creating knock-on impacts on health and wellbeing, in particular for children;
- Recourse to income-generating strategies that pose protection-related threats, such as child labour, illegal or dangerous work and early marriage;

- Protection-related threats associated with strategies to manage WASH, such as tapping into a water-supply network, travelling to seek water from a spring or taking solid waste to village bins;
- Tensions with local Lebanese communities created by inadequate management of solid waste or competition for limited water supplies, leading to potential conflict and increased risk of violent incidents;
- Worsening of environmental sanitation in the ITS, leading to stigmatization of the ITS communities and increased risk of evictions;
- Stigmatization of ITS households and communities because of degradation of personal and domestic hygiene.

These consequences affect all sections of the refugee population living in the ITS, but children are particularly at risk. The likely impacts of reduced WASH services that hit them in particular include an increase in communicable disease, greater psychosocial stress, increased risk of undernutrition, greater use of child labour and drop-out from school.

Providing cash assistance to ITS households may be an attractive option to substitute for WASH service delivery, as it shifts the management overheads to community level, and complements refugees' ability to find local solutions. However, leaving communities to fend for themselves, even with financial support, will not guarantee sufficient access to the supplies and services they need. Some form of regulation is required to help ensure that ITS households get access to good quality services at an appropriate price.

The Government of Lebanon has obligations under Sustainable Development Goal 6 and the Human Right to Water and Sanitation by ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. This obligation cannot be met without the necessary funds for short-term maintenance of essential WASH services to Syrian refugees, and for longer term investment in services that meet the needs of refugees and the Lebanese communities that host them.

At local-government level, the municipalities have an essential role in providing or facilitating WASH services for ITS households and communities, and are directly affected in terms of financial burden, environmental health concerns and social instability when funding for those services is insufficient. Their capacity to serve the needs of the local population and Syrian refugees has not been substantially improved over the past seven years, despite the large sums of money spent in their localities on support to refugees.

The humanitarian response has tended to focus too much on the needs of individual ITS and the narrow objectives of each agency's programme, and not enough on the contexts in which those ITS are located, and the needs and functioning of the municipalities that administer those territories. Assistance has been rather piecemeal and lacking in strategy and coordination. There are potentially significant gains to be made by closer local collaboration between the WASH and other sectors, including health; shelter, livelihoods and social stability (for example, to build on the latter's solid-waste management initiative).

There is no short-term prospect of a safe, voluntary and informed return to Syria for the vast majority of refugees and it is therefore likely that refugees will remain for an extended period in informal settlements in Bekaa. The Government of Lebanon, aid donors and humanitarian actors have a responsibility to ensure that refugees can remain in conditions that guarantee their rights to protection and wellbeing until they can return in safety. Life for ITS households and communities is already fraught with difficulties. Withdrawing essential WASH services to ITS will worsen their living conditions and will increase push factors for involuntary return if refugees consider going back to Syria prematurely to escape increasingly harsh conditions in Lebanon.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To Lebanese authorities

1. Fulfil obligations under Sustainable Development Goal 6 and the Human Right to Water and Sanitation by ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, especially conflict-affected communities.
2. Facilitate integration of ITS communities into public-service systems, including water supply and solid-waste management, and include the refugee population in planning and funding scenarios.
3. Foster a positive protection environment for ITS communities to enable refugees to support their livelihoods, access essential services and maintain a safe and dignified life in Lebanon until conditions in Syria allow them to return.

To aid donors

4. Sustain funding for essential WASH services to allow ITS communities continued access to water, sanitation and hygiene to technical guidance agreed in the Lebanon Water Sector
5. In parallel, fund the development of more sustainable services for all refugees and deprived Lebanese citizens residing in refugee-affected municipalities nationwide
6. Ensure that a specific and restricted provision for WASH services is included in cash-based response mechanisms, to enable refugees to access services and to provide revenue for public service providers, particularly municipalities and Water Establishments.

To humanitarian actors

7. Try to maintain a minimum package of support to ITS, even if desludging and water trucking are discontinued. This should include health referrals, responding to urgent and important WASH needs that arise in ITS such as arrival of additional households or disease outbreaks, and strong integration with protection and livelihoods activities at ITS level.
8. Maintain a regulatory/monitoring role, to ensure water quality is maintained and that prices for water supply and desludging are controlled.
9. If multipurpose cash-based assistance is developed further as a mode of assistance to ITS households, then ensure that core WASH components are restricted and/or paid directly to municipal or other relevant authorities, particularly fees for water supply, solid-waste management and sludge disposal.
10. Pursue activities that encourage and facilitate positive interactions between ITS communities and local Lebanese communities, for example joint activities on world WASH days and hygiene promotion in schools.
11. Pursue WASH programming for ITS by an integrated approach at the municipality level, taking account of WASH needs, capacities and resources across the whole of the population, not just focusing on the ITS. This includes more consistent and more strategic relations with municipal authorities and other actors, stronger coordination between humanitarian and development actors working at municipality level.
12. Pursue an integrated approach to water-resource management, in line with recommendations from Oxfam's feasibility assessment for water services to ITS, and also to solid-waste management and faecal sludge management.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

As of October 2017, the Government of Lebanon estimates that the country hosts 1.5 million Syrians who have fled the conflict in Syria, including 997,905 million registered as refugees with UNHCR.¹ Approximately one-third of the refugees in Lebanon are settled in the in the Bekaa region (including Bekaa and Baalbek-Hermel Governorates) where this study was conducted.²

Seven years into a massive programme of support to refugees in Lebanon, funding for assistance is declining sharply across all sectors. In 2017, the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector, which is the focus of this study, received just \$60m of a total appeal for \$280m, to serve refugees and Lebanese people in need, compared with \$90m received against an appeal for \$391m in 2016. The requirements estimated for 2018 are \$250m. As of January 2018, only 9% of the WASH sector appeal had been secured.³ A number of NGOs delivering WASH services in the Bekaa region have had to cut back substantially on their programmes or are likely to do so in the coming months, unless more funding is secured.

This study was commissioned to identify the likely implications of loss or lack of WASH service provision due to reduced funding in the WASH sector so as to establish and share knowledge about what can be expected as a consequence of reduced funding, and contribute to discussions about preventive and mitigating measures.

The research was carried out in Lebanon from 22 January to 7 February 2018.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Syrian refugees have been living in the Bekaa valley since 2011. They are principally housed in informal tented settlements (ITS) that are not connected to public water supply or sanitation networks. A significant proportion of the refugee population relies on a package of WASH services provided by humanitarian organizations. These services, including water trucking and latrine-pit desludging, are largely unsustainable and highly dependent on external funding. Routine operations such as water-trucking and latrine-pit desludging will stop from one day to the next if funding is cut.

ITS households and communities faced with a reduction in WASH services are likely to react through a range of strategies to maintain a basic level of water supply, sanitation hygiene, for health and dignity. These strategies will have immediate consequences in terms of increased costs and environmental-health risks. These direct consequences are likely to produce a range of secondary impacts in the areas of health, psychosocial conditions, livelihoods, protection and social stability. These impacts are likely to affect Lebanese communities as well as the refugee communities.

Other sectors of humanitarian assistance, including basic assistance, health, livelihoods, and protection are also seriously underfunded. This risks creating a vicious circle in which the negative impacts of WASH-service reduction are likely to be more severe (for example, if basic needs and livelihoods are not well supported, refugees will find it more difficult to bear the burden of paying for WASH services that were hitherto provided free) and will, in turn, create additional needs that these under-resourced sectors are less able to meet.

Given the above, this study addresses the following problem statement: substantial cuts in funding for WASH services for Syrian refugees living in ITS in the Bekaa are likely to produce a range of negative impacts in the areas of public health, livelihoods, protection and social stability. These negative impacts will affect not only Syrian refugees but also Lebanese communities. The impacts related to WASH will create an additional burden for other sectors of assistance that are also weakened by funding constraints and less able to respond effectively.

1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Aim

In the context of reduced funding for WASH interventions for Syrian refugees, this study aims to identify the likely implications of loss or lack of WASH service provision due to reduced funding in the WASH sector. It explores coping strategies adopted by refugees and potential links to public-health, financial and protection risks.

Objectives

1. To improve the understanding of what coping mechanisms could be adopted by ITS refugee households and communities as a result of a lack of WASH services or of funding reduction for WASH service.

The analysis will assess the various coping strategies adopted by refugees in ITS that have been provided with WASH services through Oxfam – and potentially other humanitarian actors – in comparison with ITS where no WASH actor has provided assistance or services for an extended period of no less than six months. The analysis will further explore the preparedness of refugees to adopt negative coping strategies, including the ones that can result in protection risks.

2. To improve the understanding of what public health and socio-economic impacts on ITS refugee households and communities can be expected as a result of a lack of WASH service or of funding reduction for WASH services.

The analysis will compare ITS where WASH assistance and services are provided by Oxfam with ITS where no WASH actor has provided assistance or services for an extended period of no less than six months. The impact assessment will explore the relationship between the provision of WASH assistance and services with reduced public health incidents in ITS, and the most prevalent health incidents that have been experienced by households. It will further investigate what WASH services are priorities, and the financial and other implications of these decisions on the households.

1.4 DESCRIPTION OF WASH SERVICES TO ITS

The following outline of Oxfam's WASH programme describes the different aspects of what are referred to in this report as 'WASH services to ITS'. The components of the service provided by other humanitarian organizations in Bekaa will differ from this in some details.

Oxfam implements a WASH programme for approximately 10,000 Syrian refugees in more than 200 ITS in the following nine municipalities in Baalbek-Hermel Governorate in the Bekaa: Bouday, Btedaai, Chilfa, Deir el Ahmar, Haouche Barada, Haouch Tall Safiye, Haour Taala, Jabaa and Saaide. The programme delivers the following services:

- WASH services: water trucking and desludging of latrine pits using a voucher modality;
- WASH facilities: construction and rehabilitation of latrines, handwashing facilities and water tanks, provision of solid-waste bins;
- Distributions: latrine cleaning kits for newly constructed latrines;
- Public health and hygiene promotion: sessions, trainings, events and a hygiene campaign;
- Community engagement: integrated WASH and protection programming, working with Community Hygiene Volunteers (CHVs), Community Technical Volunteers (CTVs) and protection focal points to identify and address protection and public health risks;
- Community-based operations and maintenance: using a market-based approach for ensuring WASH facilities are functional and usable with the help of CTVs.

1.5 PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY REPORT

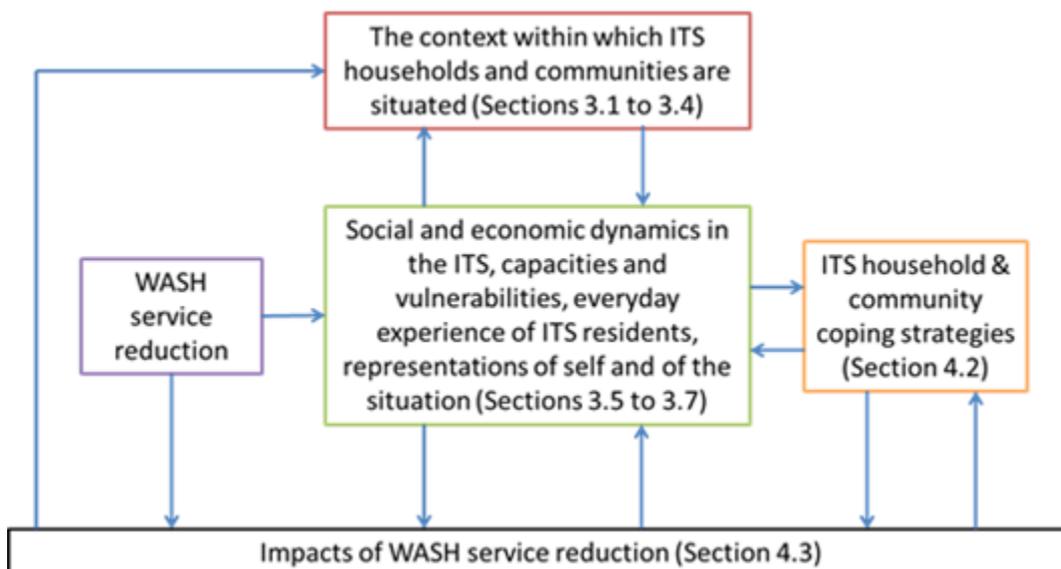
Following this introductory section, the study methodology is presented in some detail in Section 2. The reason for the detail is that the methodology differed somewhat from the pre-prepared and structured research methodologies commonly used in the humanitarian sector, in that it was highly exploratory, open and flexible. This is significant not only in terms of the methods used to produce data, but also the shift in research focus that it created. The study objectives presented in Section 1.3 were addressed, and some additional questions were considered concerning subjects such as the potential psychosocial impacts of reduced WASH services, and the risks for social stability.

Section 3 presents some of the political, legal and social dimensions of the context in which ITS households and communities find themselves in Lebanon, and in the Bekaa in particular, based on data produced during interviews and informal group discussions in nine ITS in Bouday, Younine and Deir el Ahmar municipalities. These are some of the dimensions that seem to be important to consider in order to understand the potential impacts of WASH service reduction to ITS households and communities. The context includes the broader historical and political sphere, the social and political environment surrounding the ITS and the dynamics within the ITS that have an influence on household and community capacities and vulnerabilities.

In Section 4, the potential impacts of WASH service reduction are presented, based on an analysis at two levels. The first is a review of the strategies that ITS households and communities may adopt in response to loss of services, based principally on information about how refugees have managed in ITS or sections of ITS that are not served. The second level of analysis is a review of the potential impacts of these coping strategies in a range of areas, including public health, psychosocial conditions, livelihoods, protection and social stability.

The broad analytical framework used to develop Sections 3 and 4 is shown below (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Analytical model for potential impacts of reduction in WASH services



In Section 5, the findings and analysis presented thus are drawn together, and implications for programming are presented.

Section 6 lists the recommendations for programming and policy coming out of this study.

NB The words spoken by people during interviews and group discussions in the ITS are frequently quoted in the report. Several people asked not to be identified in the study report. So, only first names are given, and the ITS included in the study are not identified by their assigned number, but by the name of the municipality in which they are located and a letter which indicates the order in which they were visited in each municipality.

The gender of the person speaking is identified by (♂) for men or (♀) for women after the name. No children were interviewed during the study.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 RESEARCH FOCUS

The terms of reference for the study specified an **exploratory qualitative analysis** to address two research questions:

- What coping mechanisms could be adopted by ITS refugee households and communities as a result of a lack of WASH services or of funding reduction for WASH services?
- What public-health and socio-economic impacts on ITS refugee households and communities can be expected as a result of a lack of WASH services or of funding reduction for WASH services?

As the research proceeded, it became apparent that the second question required particular attention, as the potential socio-economic impacts of WASH-service reduction were numerous and complex, and could only be understood in the light of a broader understanding of the lives of the Syrian refugees in the Bekaa. In addition, taking an anthropological approach encouraged exploration of the research questions from the perspective of the different actors encountered, as lived experiences with material and symbolic significance. This perspective had a strong influence on the direction of the research and on the focus of this report.

2.2 RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODS

The following **research approach** was adopted:

- A focus on fairly small geographic areas in which local actors engage with each other around questions related to WASH, health, livelihoods and protection;
- Engaging with a range of these actors through open-ended interviews (primarily with individuals, but with some groups also) that allow them to present different perspectives and experiences;
- Use of observation and naturally occurring talk to complement and triangulate interview data;
- Comparing conditions and refugees' strategies in ITS receiving full WASH services with those in ITS where no WASH services had been supplied for at least six months;
- Referring to published data before, during and after fieldwork, to help contextualize, complement, challenge and interpret field data.

The four principal **research methods** used were:

- Literature review, including studies among the refugee population, health data, journal articles and media content;
- Key-informant interviews with staff from Oxfam and other humanitarian organizations in Beirut and the Bekaa, and with local Lebanese actors;
- Open-ended interviews with individuals and informal groups in ITS;
- Observation of interactions, daily life and visual inspection of WASH facilities in nine ITS in three different municipalities of Bekaa-Hermel Governorate. In seven of the ITS, from three to five hours at a time were spent carrying out interviews and doing site visits. In the other two, rapid visits were made, to accompany Oxfam staff carrying out programme activities.

2.3 SAMPLING

The fieldwork sampling approach was three-stage.

The first sampling stage: was to identify municipalities hosting a set of ITS where WASH services had been consistently maintained and a second municipality where WASH services had not been provided for a period of six months or more.

Bouday municipality was chosen for the first category, as the ITS hosted are included in the Oxfam programme and activities are funded until the end of 2019. Deir el Ahmar municipality, where WASH services have also been maintained, was chosen for the last day of fieldwork, to enable observation of community meetings scheduled as part of Oxfam's WASH programme.

For a set of ITS where services had not been provided for at least six months, Younine municipality was identified, using the Inter-Agency Mapping Platform (IAMP) database, with advice from the UNICEF WASH Sector Coordinator – Bekaa.

The second sampling stage: was to identify specific ITS in which to research within each municipality.

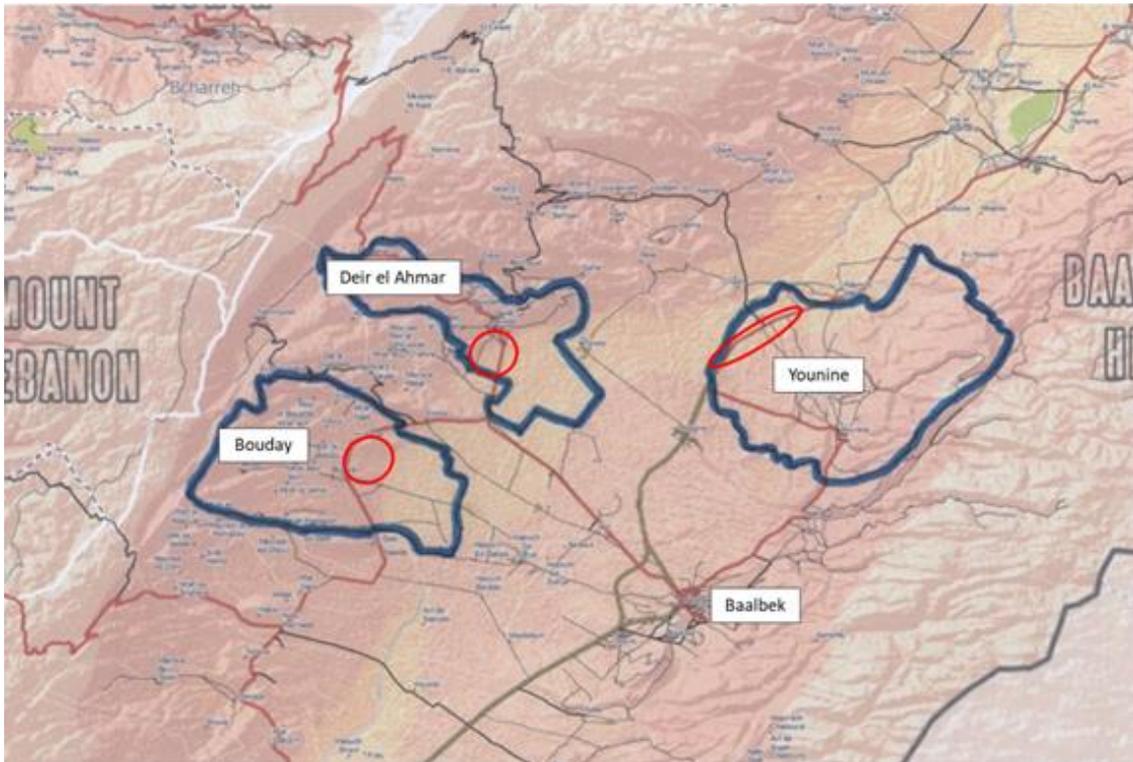
In Bouday municipality, three ITS were identified where there were particularly active Community Hygiene Volunteers (CHVs), Community Technical Volunteers (CTVs) and Protection focal points, and where Oxfam's data showed a good level of WASH service.

In Deir el Ahmar municipality, three ITS were selected. The choice was principally oriented by the schedule of WASH meetings.

In Younine, three ITS were chosen, principally according to their location and their surrounding environment. The first was the one that is furthest from the main road (the Baalbek-Qaa highway), and two others, the furthest apart from each other, on the highway.

See Figure 2 for a map showing the boundaries of the three municipalities (in blue) and the areas within which the ITS sampled are located (in red). See Table 1 for a summary of the nine ITS included in the research sample.

Figure 2: Boundaries of the three municipalities (in blue) and areas where ITS researched are located (in red)



In order to guarantee the anonymity of informants, the P-code names of the ITS selected is not used in this report. Each ITS is referred to by the municipality name followed by a letter, which corresponds to the order in which the ITS was visited.

The third sampling stage: was to select individuals and groups to interview inside each ITS.

This was a purposive method to some extent, to ensure that interviews were held with a variety of people, but also included referral, when a person was suggested as an interesting informant by another individual, or when a person presented themselves spontaneously. This happened on several occasions. Each of the ITS visits started with a meeting at the tent of the *shawish*⁴, for introductions, presentation of the purpose of the visit and discussion of matters relating to the ITS as a whole. These introductory meetings developed into interviews in some cases. Then, a request was made to meet an ITS resident who would be willing to do an interview with us in their tent. The process produced a sample of people with a range of profiles and in a range of conditions, including the following: single household heads; newly-arrived refugees; well-established refugees who knew the area from before 2011; people who had fled their homes in Syria rapidly leaving everything behind; people who had taken the time to prepare their departure; men and women, from the ages of 20 to 60.⁵ A total of 9 group discussions and 17 in-depth interviews were conducted in the ITS (10 of these with men and 7 with women).

In addition to individual interviews and group discussions, exploratory walks were carried out in the majority of ITS visited. These walks allowed observation of the ITS environment and inspection of WASH facilities, as well as providing additional opportunities for informal discussion with people met.

Table 1 provides a summary of the fieldwork activities in the ITS visited between 30 January and 5 February 2018.

Table 1: Summary of fieldwork activities

ITS	N° of tents	N° of individuals	Date of the field visit	N° of group discussions	N° of individual interviews	Exploratory walk
<i>ITS with full WASH services</i>						
Bouday A	21	115	29/01/18	2	3	Yes
Bouday B	32	78	30/01/18	1	4	Yes
Bouday C	25	102	31/01/18	1	2	Yes
Deir el Ahmar A	13	66	05/02/18	2	0	Yes
Deir el Ahmar B	13	70	05/02/18	1	0	No
Deir el Ahmar C	20	112	05/02/18	1	0	No
<i>ITS without WASH services for at least 6 months</i>						
Younine A	21	168	01/02/18	1	1	Yes
Younine B	25	128	02/02/18	1	4	Yes
Younine C	32	202	03/03/18	1	3	Yes

In addition to interviews and observations at ITS level, key informant interviews and group discussions were held with humanitarian agency staff in Beirut and Zahlé. See Annex 2 for a list of key informants for this study.

2.4 CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

The following challenges were met during the research. These challenges were somewhat overcome, but there remain some limitations that need to be considered when interpreting the research data.

1. The primary researcher's limited knowledge of the context of Lebanon and the Syrian refugee population. Every effort was made to compensate for this by doing background reading, seeking information from Oxfam colleagues and including questions on context in the interviews with ITS residents. The researcher was accompanied and assisted by Oxfam staff with extensive knowledge of the context.
2. The limited time available to immerse in daily life in the ITS, coupled with security constraints, which meant that the field research could only be conducted between the hours of 09:30 and 16:00. This is particularly important for a research process with an ethnographic approach.
3. The primary researcher's inability to speak or understand Arabic. This was overcome to a great extent by the dedicated interpretation provided by a MEAL officer from Oxfam's Zahlé office. An effective collaborative method was established, which included reformulating questions and answers during interviews, and going over interview notes daily to fill gaps in content that may have been missed, and to check the meaning of specific phrases spoken.
4. The Syrian refugee population in Bekaa has been extensively surveyed over the past five years, for occasional studies and for programme monitoring. This is a population that is accustomed to answering questions and probably orienting answers in the light of their priorities and their interpretation of the research context. The strategy used to overcome this

challenge was to conduct interviews in a very open and informal way, seeking to connect with them on a personal level.

5. The final noteworthy challenge was the intercultural situation in which the interviews were conducted in the ITS. Words and meaning were created and communicated across three quite different cultures (the primary researcher's, the interpreter's and the people interviewed), and this inevitably created some misunderstanding and loss of subtle content. On the other hand, some of the questions most important for this research were expressed with strong words and emotions that translated clearly across out cultural divides.

3 THE SITUATION OF ITS HOUSEHOLDS AND COMMUNITIES AS IT RELATES TO WASH SERVICE REDUCTION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section presents some of the key aspects of the situation in which Syrian refugees live in the ITS in the Bekaa and the way in which this situation is experienced. It describes a complex situation in with the following important features for ITS households and communities:

- little prospect of return to Syria or resettlement in a third county, and no possibility of local integration in Lebanon;
- lack of legal stay and limited access to legal redress;
- an ambivalent social environment at local and national levels – both welcoming and hostile to varying degrees;⁶
- a necessary recourse to low-paid, labour-intensive, informal work in the agriculture, building and janitorial sectors, as these are the only ones legally open to Syrian refugees;⁷
- reliance on negotiated informal mechanisms to meet basic needs, for example, agreement on rental costs and conditions with landlords;
- a precarious living environment, in substandard housing, with no security of tenure and no recourse in case of eviction;
- access to basic services on the basis of temporary unsustainable solutions, such as water trucking, that are highly sensitive to changes in external funding support.

This very particular situation in which the Syrian refugees find themselves has great influence on their daily lives, their ability to cope with cut-backs in WASH services and the indirect consequences those cut-backs may have.

3.2 GEOGRAPHY OF THE BEKAA VALLEY

The Bekaa valley lies about 30km east of the Mediterranean coast, between Mount Lebanon to the west and the Anti-Lebanon mountains to the east, at an altitude of 850 to 1200m above sea level. The valley is 120 kilometres from north to south and 16 kilometres on average from west to east.

The climate of the valley is Mediterranean, with wet winters, often with snow, and dry hot summers. The northern part of the valley has a dry climate, with around 250mm of precipitation per year, compared with 600mm per year and more in the central and southern parts.

The Orontes and Litani rivers originate in the Bekaa valley, the first flowing north into Syria and then Turkey, and the second flowing south through Lebanon and into the Mediterranean. A number of large springs also bring water into the valley. Surface water sources are generally polluted, and public water supplies rely principally on groundwater.

Agriculture and allied industries are an important part of the economy of the Bekaa, as the valley is covered with rich alluvial soils and has easy access to domestic and international markets.

Two major routes traverse the Bekaa valley: the Beirut–Damascus highway running west to east and the Baalbek–Qaa highway running south to north.

A large proportion of the population of the Bekaa valley inhabits the major towns such as Zahlé, Baalnek and Hermel. A smaller proportion is scattered along the valley in villages or along the main highways.

3.3 LIVING CONDITIONS FOR ITS RESIDENTS

3.3.1 Sites and shelter

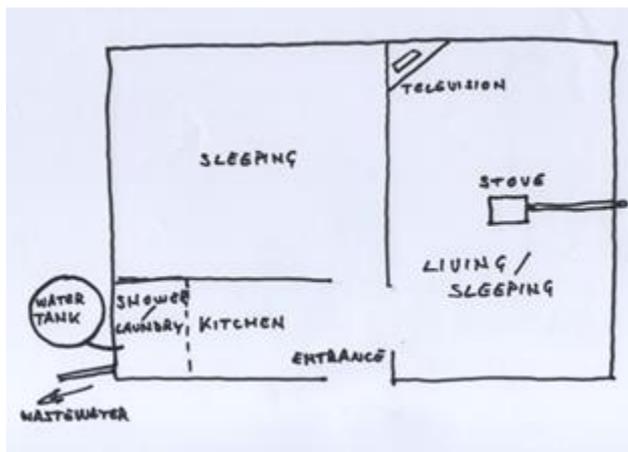
Sites

The vast majority of the refugees in the Bekaa live in ITS on private land, in groups ranging from one to several tens of households. The location of the ITS in relation to work opportunities, and to other resources and potential threats in the local environment, is an important contributor to livelihoods and protection.

The ITS visited during fieldwork illustrated two typical situations. Those in Bouday and Deir el Ahmar were located some distance from main roads, on farmland, surrounded by arable land, with no adjacent housing. They have space, but the sites are usually muddy in winter and dusty in summer.

The ITS visited in Younine were rather different, being squeezed in between existing buildings, adjacent, or close, to the Baalbek–Qaa highway, with higher density housing and little unpaved or unbuilt space, and virtually no possibility of extension.

Figure 3: Typical layout of a tent in an ITS



Shelter

All of the ITS visited were comprised of the same kind of housing, that is, the typical tent seen in ITS across the Bekaa. They are most often built on a cement base with blockwork footings and a raised threshold to keep out surface run-off, with walls and roof made of plastic sheeting fixed over a light timber framework, commonly lined inside with a second layer of plastic or foam, and/or decorative textile. The layout of a typical tent is shown in Figure 3.

Some of the tents visited were very comfortably furnished, others extremely bare, reflecting the different levels of wealth/poverty of their occupants, and the length of time they had been in the ITS.

Approximately half of the households in the Bekaa live in shelters that are overcrowded (less than 4.5m² per person), and nationally, one-third of ITS shelters are well below standard in terms of criteria such as weatherproofing, heating, ventilation and fire risk.⁸ This has important consequences for health and wellbeing.

3.3.2 Water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure and services

This section presents the WASH infrastructure and services typical in ITS served by Oxfam and other NGOs.

Water supply⁹

In the Bouday ITS visited, as in most of the ITS in Oxfam's programme area where a safe water source is not available in or adjacent to the ITS, chlorinated water is supplied by tankers directly to individual household tanks supplied by Oxfam. This is usually paid for using vouchers provided by Oxfam, to the value of 1m³ of water per person per month, or 33 litres per person per day. Where a source of non-potable water is available to the ITS residents, Oxfam supplies 10 litres per person per day of potable water. Oxfam monitors the quality and the reliability of the available water sources and trucked water service.

Water scarcity is a problem both in served and unserved areas in summer. This is partly due to increased demand when there is increased need for bathing and laundry, particularly for people who do agricultural labouring. Water scarcity is also due to reduced supply, particularly in those ITS whose immediate supply is from local sources that are dedicated to irrigation in the spring and summer months.

People interviewed all spoke clearly about the importance of water quality. A number of people said they found the quality of water they had access to was not good, in all three areas (Bouday, Younine and Deir el Ahmar). For some, the problem was the chlorine in the water, which changes the taste and aspect of tea. For others, it was knowledge about the water's provenance, for example, water from irrigation channels. Faida (♀) in Bouday A explained: *'In the winter, we get water from a Lebanese neighbour, a farmer... It's not drinkable, it's for irrigation.'* For yet others, the simple fact of not knowing exactly where the water came from and how it was transported created doubts about its quality.

Figure 4: Oxfam latrine in Bouday B



Latrines

In all the ITS visited, latrines were pour-flush models, with offset pits. See Figure 4 for an example of a recently installed Oxfam latrine.

In Oxfam's WASH programme area, ITS households are able to have their latrine pits desludged for free, using vouchers from Oxfam, whether their latrine was supplied by Oxfam or not. People interviewed in the Bouday ITS expressed satisfaction with the service, particularly the flexibility that allows them to call for desludging if the pit is full before the standard 2-monthly service. This is in line with findings of the post-distribution monitoring surveys carried out in November 2017.¹⁰

Wastewater

Grey water from the bathing /laundry/dishwashing corner of each tent is drained outside, either in open channels or pipe. Most commonly a small, open soakaway pit within a short distance of each tent is dug to collect the wastewater. These are commonly not of a size to allow infiltration of all the wastewater, so they have to be emptied manually and the contents thrown into the nearest drainage channel or onto open ground. In summer, the smell from the soakaway pit is unpleasant, so people make the effort to empty them regularly. See Figure 5 for an example of a grey water soakaway pit.

Figure 5: Grey water soakaway pit and bucket for emptying, Bouday A



Solid waste

Consumption patterns of ITS households mean that they produce significant quantities of domestic refuse, particularly waste packaging and soiled diapers. Within the ITS, the space around the tents is generally clean and there is very little waste to be seen. In some ITS, such as Bouday B, ITS residents have access to nearby municipality waste bins where they can place their waste, and the bins are emptied regularly.

In other ITS, refuse collection may not be provided, either because the municipality does not provide the bins and the collection service, or because they require the ITS households to pay for this service, which they do not always do. In this case, solid waste is dumped or burned by refugees outside the ITS.

Personal and domestic hygiene

Personal and domestic hygiene was mentioned by a number of women during interviews as one of their major occupations, and a matter of importance for a feeling of wellbeing and maintaining standards of respectability. Considerable time and effort is spent on maintaining standards of hygiene and physical appearance, as manifested by the cleanliness and tidiness of the tents visited, the cleanliness of latrines, the neatness of dressing (particularly for women) and the style and freshness of men's and boys' haircuts.

Achieving this standard of personal and domestic hygiene requires resources in addition to time and effort, particularly hot and cold water and soap, detergent and other hygiene products. Hot water is essential, particularly in the winter. Some people are able to heat water on a gas stove or with an electric water heater. Others heat water outside, on fires fuelled by wood scraps, vine and fruit-tree prunings and waste plastic.

The subject of mud came up as a frequent subject for complaint in interviews. Mud makes it difficult to move around inside the ITS, it dirties shoes, clothes, floors and latrines, and when people leave the ITS they carry the mud with them as a visible sign of where they come from.

For menstrual hygiene management, sanitary pads are not always used because they are expensive, although they are generally preferred. Washable cloths are used as a cheaper alternative. The conditions in the ITS make thorough cleaning and drying of cloths difficult, which exposes women and girls to infections.

3.3.3 Public health

A combination of interrelated factors, including poor shelter conditions, limited access to water, sanitation and hygiene, food insecurity and harsh working conditions, create particular public health problems for ITS communities. Communicable diseases, particularly acute respiratory infections and diarrhoeal disease, directly linked to poor living conditions, add to a burden of chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension.¹¹ Stressful living conditions, anxiety and fear all damage psychosocial health.¹² Men, women and children are commonly at risk of accidents at work. Access to healthcare is constrained by a range of factors, including cost and the reluctance of individuals without legal stay to travel for treatment.¹³

3.4 THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES IN THE BEKAA

3.4.1 Introduction

Government policies concerning hosting Syrian refugees reflect an overarching desire to ensure that their stay in Lebanon is temporary. There is no provision for local integration, and refugees from Syria are often referred to as displaced rather than asylum seekers. This has implications for every aspect of refugees' lives. It affects their legal status, their protection and their livelihoods, and it discourages sustainable approaches to the provision of services, including WASH.

Although their refugee status is not recognized, ITS households and communities have a right to WASH services as long as they remain in the country, as the Government of Lebanon is signatory to a number of international commitments in this regard. These commitments include the Human Right to Water and Sanitation.¹⁴ This right extends to all communities in the country, including deprived Lebanese and refugees¹⁵ and is essential for realizing the basic human right to life with dignity. The Government of Lebanon is also committed to meeting its obligations under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG 6 (*ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all*) is of direct relevance to WASH service provision. In addition, as this study highlights, access to adequate WASH services is also a prerequisite for *ending hunger, achieving food security and ending malnutrition* (SDG2) and *ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages* (SDG3). Sustained WASH services for ITS communities are essential for enabling these commitments to be fulfilled.

The experience of Syrian refugees, the conditions in which they live and their interactions with local Lebanese communities are influenced by a number of historical precedents. One of these is the experience of Syrian migrant workers before 2011, which influences the way they and other refugees live today, and the social and economic dynamics established with local

Lebanese society and authorities. Labour migrants commonly accepted lives of sacrifice, self-denial, economic weakness, cultural stigma and political disenfranchisement in return for the prospect of returning to Syria with the means to advance their families' economic and social status.¹⁶ The experience of Syrian refugees in Lebanon since 2011 echoes that of migrant workers in many ways, though the scale of their presence, the poverty they endure and the lack of clear prospects for the future make their lives substantially more difficult.

The presence of the Syrian Army in Lebanon in the post-war period and the hardships and economic and political compromises that Lebanese people were obliged to accept during this time left lasting memories. These memories, together with the experience of hosting Palestinian refugees since 1948, influence popular attitudes toward Syrian refugees and the political response to their presence, including the constraints on protection and assistance that determine refugees' legal status and the unsustainability of the humanitarian response. These factors, in turn, determine the way that Syrian refugees in Lebanon experience everyday life and influence the strategies they develop to adapt to their situation.

3.4.2 The legal status of Syrian refugees and its consequences

It is estimated that 74% of refugees in Lebanon of 15 years old and above do not have legal stay in Lebanon.¹⁷ This problem of legal stay touches on all aspects of life for Syrian refugees in the Bekaa, including access to basic services such as healthcare,¹⁸ freedom to move, freedom to practice their religion (because of the difficulty of reaching a mosque of their religious community) and access to legal redress. Faced with no choice but to work, many refugees have to accept work that is often hard, low-paid, dangerous and sometimes illegal (for example, drugs production and smuggling).¹⁹

Men, in particular, are at risk of arrest at checkpoints. Several men stated how they paid extra for buses to take backroads to and from areas of work. Women and children are reported to be less at risk of arrest at checkpoints, but anyone without proof of legal stay avoids checkpoints nevertheless. Hamad (♂) in Younine told us *'Most of us don't have papers. If we need to go to UNHCR [in Zahlé] we call a van driver and they take us in the night for 25–30,000 pounds. We wait in Zahlé for UNHCR to open in the morning. Then when our business is done, either we call the driver again and he takes us back, or if we don't have the money we take the bus. It's a risk.'*

Not having legal stay or access to redress also means that refugees simply have to accept mistreatment and abuse in the workplace or on the street. To complain is to run the risk of further abuse, or being reported to the Lebanese authorities and risking arrest. For example, several people stated not being paid for days worked, but as Ayed (♂) in Bouday A told us, this may be something more common now, but it's not new: *'I used to work in Lebanon before the war, as a plasterer. Once I was not paid. But my boss was covered by [a political entity], so what could I do?'* Others, men in particular, told of having to put up with harassment and violence at work. This has a huge impact on self-esteem and potentially on mental health and domestic violence (see Section 4.3.3).

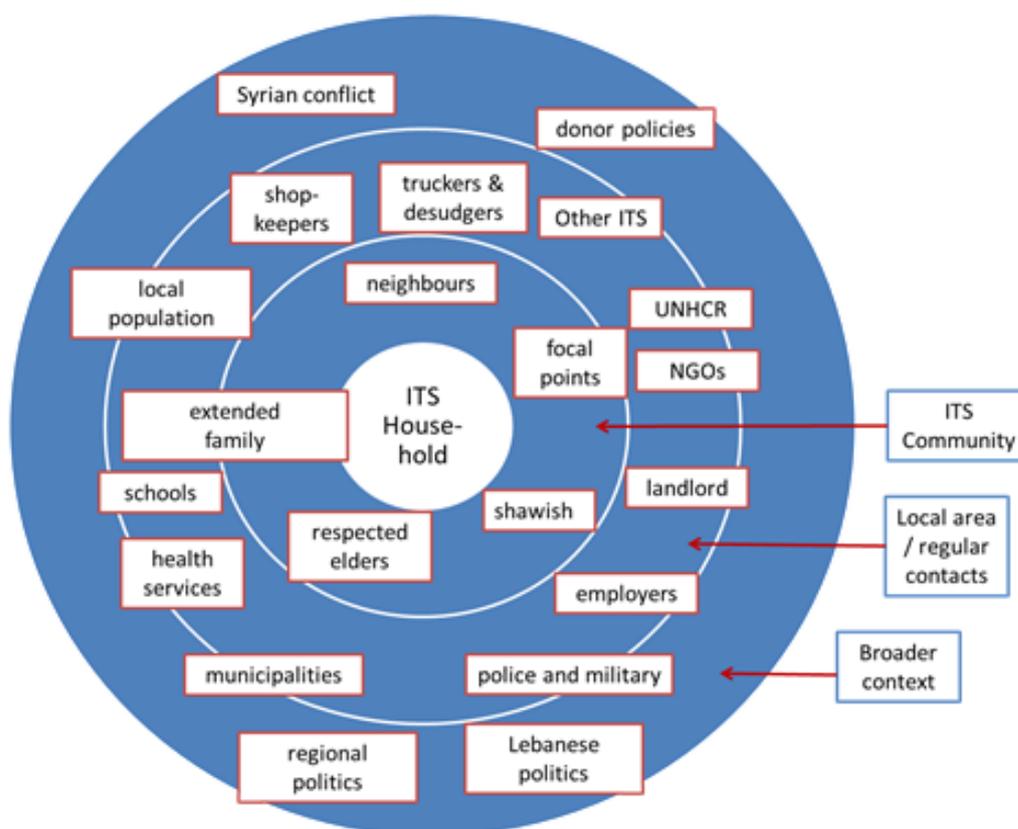
Not only does refugees' lack of legal stay and access to redress affect their experience and ability to act, it also affects the attitudes and practices of local actors with whom refugees have everyday dealings for meeting their needs, including for WASH – landlords, employers, shopkeepers, service-providers, local authorities. It skews the balance of power and capacity to negotiate in the favour of local actors and keeps refugees in a position of social, political and economic weakness.

3.4.3 Interactions with Lebanese society

Introduction

This section contains findings on the principal interactions that people interviewed mentioned with local actors outside the ITS. It is not a comprehensive review, as it is based on a small number of interviews in a limited number of locations. For a more complete and detailed review of institutional actors; see the UNDP Conflict Analysis Report – March 2017.²⁰ Figure 6 presents a generalized mapping of actors and influences around the ITS household.

Figure 6: Principal actors and influences around the ITS household



Everyday interactions

Syrian refugees in the Bekaa have frequent and important interactions with local Lebanese society in all domains of life. Their ability to cope with reduced WASH services and the likely consequences of service reduction are mediated by these interactions.

During interviews and group discussions, refugees mentioned positive interactions with local Lebanese people that illustrated solidarity and charity, affinity between neighbours and common interests. When asked about receiving help from Lebanese neighbours, Jaash (♂) in Bouday A said ‘sometimes Lebanese women come by and hand out food. Randomly. We feel happy about that.’ A number of people mentioned social calls with Lebanese neighbours and acquaintances. Malak (♀) in Bouday C said: ‘I have Lebanese friends, women friends I made when we worked together in the potatoes. I got to know them well and we are like family.’ This level of affinity was particularly the case for people who were established early in the ITS or who knew local Lebanese people from before 2011.

ITS residents have regular contacts with local commercial actors, such as water truckers, shop keepers and pharmacists, and these are at times very positive. They include water-truckers

providing extra water without charge if there is a wedding or a funeral in an ITS. Shopkeepers, pharmacists and garage owners allow refugees to run up substantial accounts with their businesses, of hundreds of thousands of Lebanese pounds (hundreds of US dollars) per household. These businesses have no formal guarantee for the credit they extend to their clients. This is not just a humanitarian gesture, and the money is expected to be repaid as it would be in the case of any client, but it suggests a high level of trust and indicates that the refugee clients are considered to be worthy of that trust.

On the other hand, in some areas relations between Syrian refugees and local people are tense, and this can threaten the security of ITS residents and lead to conflict.²¹ This type of situation may be linked to specific local interactions, but is often influenced by broader or more distant events, for example, events that occurred during the Syrian military presence in Lebanon, or spillover from the war in Syria.

Tensions can emerge as stigmatizing attitudes towards Syrian refugees. Malak (♀) in Bouday C said: *'Some Lebanese love us [Syrian refugees]. Others treat us as *abid*'*. This is a highly stigmatizing term, in whichever way it is interpreted.²² Another woman told of having been called *'nawar'* or *'gypsy'* in the street. This is a term of insult, associated with immorality, uncleanness and being outside *'normal'* society.

Hadija (♀) from Younine B mentioned being insulted by Lebanese women and told to go home to Syria when she was buying cheap vegetables at the market. She linked this to what she perceived as a growing climate of hostility towards Syrian refugees in Lebanon. She attributed this partly to statements by politicians that she'd seen on the television, and partly to the reputation of all Syrians being tarnished by the alleged violent act of one Syrian last year.²³

Imad (♂), also in Bouday C, described relations with Lebanese in more neutral terms: *'I know the Lebanese very well. We get on OK, but it's not for friendship. It's self-interest on both sides.'* This perception of relations with the Lebanese as being essentially based on self-interest was shared by a woman participant in a group discussion: *'If you see a Lebanese they just ignore you. If you work for them they say "hello". And then the next day they ignore you again. Everyone's like that. Bonds have been broken.'*

Given the tensions that exist and the disempowerment of Syrian refugees through their legal and social status, maintaining good relations with external actors around the ITS is very important for their wellbeing and security. This requires refugees to be good neighbours, beyond complaint, taking care not to offend. Self-policing of behaviour in the ITS was mentioned in interviews as one way of achieving that.

Relations with landlords

Landlords are extremely important actors whose attitudes and practices towards refugees has critical implications for their security and wellbeing, and who are directly concerned by the question of WASH services in the ITS. In some cases, the landlord was described as a kind and understanding person who did his best to help the Syrian refugees staying on their land. For example, in Younine A, the landlord was described by the *shawish*, as *'a good man'*. He went on to explain that the landlord does not charge rent, and provides free water from one of his boreholes, and that he comes by every week or so to check how things are going.

In Deir el Ahmar A relations are apparently not as good. Four of the seven Lebanese tenants who sublet land for tent plots in the ITS were described by refugees as *'not good. Sometimes they threaten us. Sometimes they put guns in our faces'*. It later transpired that there was a dispute over unpaid rent.

In summary, landlords can be important sources of moral and material support for Syrian refugees, facilitating access to protection and resources. They can also, in some cases, be exploitative and hostile, adding to their tenants' insecurity. In yet other cases, they maintain business relations with their tenants, exchanging access to land and often services for rent in an

unregulated but negotiated arrangement. Khalil (ⲉ) in Younine B described it this way: *'It's a normal relationship between a landlord and a tenant. You pay the rent and you are free to do as you like, as long as you leave the place as you found it when you go.'*

Attitudes and practices of municipalities

The situation of Syrian refugee households and communities is heavily influenced by the policies and practices of the local municipality towards Syrian refugees, which are themselves a reflection of confessional politics at local and national levels. The following description of municipalities in Central and West Bekaa is also relevant to those in North Bekaa:

The region's municipalities vary from one village to the other, in terms of capacities, sectarian composition, dynamics, and political affiliations, as witnessed during the latest elections. Thus, they have a different impact on conflicts and tension with Syrian refugees. Their role has become increasingly important, as they control different facets of refugees' livelihoods, security, mobility, shelter and economic activity and are aid recipients. At the same time, they are facing a significant burden in most villages due to density of population and overstretched capacity. Despite external donors' funding for development projects, they are struggling to manage public services such as waste management, electricity and sewage... Occasionally, they serve as mediators or channels of conflict management... However, they are also seen by some as a conflict party and as contributing to a patronage system.²⁴

Municipalities may enact circulars issued by higher authorities such as the Governor of the Bekaa, or may take local initiatives guided by political and practical imperatives.²⁵ They are increasingly implementing restrictive practices towards refugees, including, but not limited to, issuance of identification documents, imposition of curfews, and carrying out expulsions, although they have no legal authority with regards to curfews and evictions. Evictions are a common experience and one which has severe consequences for the people concerned.²⁶

The importance of negotiation and brokerage for Syrian refugees

ITS households and communities lack legal stay and access to redress, and they lack formal representation vis-à-vis the Lebanese state and the humanitarian aid system (for example, in the form of recognized representative bodies at national, governorate or municipality levels). They are settled in situations where informal processes and arrangements often supersede formal regulations and the rule of law. In short, they are not in a position to demand anything, so they rely heavily on negotiation for getting by. They negotiate for credit at a local shop, for access to work, for a plot on which to build a tent, to get through a checkpoint without hassle, to share a latrine with several other families, to delay paying rent etc.

The *shawish* are key resources for ITS households' and communities' ability to negotiate successfully for security, services and economic opportunities, in their role as brokers for aid agencies, landlords, employers etc. They help connect refugees to local patronage systems in Lebanese society. Communities without a strong and well-connected *shawish* are at a disadvantage, as are those households who don't have strong and positive relationships with the *shawish* of their ITS.

Box 1: The figure of the *shawish*

A key figure in the organization of migrant labour, which has been adopted by local employers, refugee communities and humanitarian agencies alike, is the *shawish*. The original function of the *shawish* was that of a gangmaster, organizing gangs of labourers and negotiating with employers on their behalf. This role persists in many ITS where a core of families is those of men who came to that location to work before 2011, under the organization of the *shawish*, who has maintained established relations with local employers and other important local actors. For refugee families in ITS, the role of the *shawish* goes beyond the sphere of work, as they are able to represent (more or less faithfully) the interests of the ITS community to other actors, particularly humanitarian agencies, and have a role in regulating the internal affairs of the ITS. During visits to ITS for the research, the first point of contact was the *shawish*, who most times advocated vigorously on behalf of the residents and explained their needs and priorities. For humanitarian actors, the *shawish* offers a point of entry to the ITS community and a source of information. In a number of ITS visited there was no *shawish* in the conventional sense of a gangmaster. In that case, the role of camp leader was filled by an individual chosen by the ITS community on request of UNHCR or an NGO. They are also referred to as *shawish*.

3.5 SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND DYNAMICS IN THE ITS

3.5.1 Introduction

ITS households' and communities' strategies to deal with WASH service reduction, and the impact of service reduction, will depend to a large extent on the way in which each ITS functions as a community.²⁷ What people recounted about life in the different ITS visited suggested that these are complex communities where social cohesion and solidarity are strong, but where power dynamics, inequalities, conflict and social tensions are also present.

3.5.2 Social cohesion and solidarity

Practical popular solidarity mechanisms were commonly referred to during interviews, illustrated by concrete examples. Kinship links are a foundation of social cohesion in the refugee population. In several ITS visited, there were extended families including grandparents, brothers and sisters and their spouses, grandchildren and cousins. Family was frequently referred to in interviews as a practical support and a defence against adversity. Kinship solidarity provides a stable and resilient means to share burdens and resources, protect the weakest and advance the interests of the group.

Family ties also make sharing scarce resources easier. For example, latrines are commonly shared by different households belonging to the same extended family, and this is considered to be more acceptable than sharing latrines between households who are not related by blood or marriage.

There were frequent accounts of acts of solidarity beyond kinship within ITS, to help newcomers or people who had faced particular difficulties. For example, in one ITS in Bouday, the *shawish* asked each family to contribute to a fund to help a woman settle in when she arrived from Tyr with her children and sick husband, on the understanding that the money would be paid back when the family were registered with UNHCR in Zahlé and started to receive assistance.

This social support is based on a broad notion of solidarity between neighbours, or among a community of people in a shared situation. It suggests an inclusive form of social organization in which mutual rights and obligations bind people and create associative strength. This is probably accentuated by the physical situation of the ITS, which are generally small, made up of

isolated groups of people surrounded by a local environment that can seem threatening and in which the ITS residents are not at home.

A number of times during interviews, people talked about relations between neighbours in family terms. For example, Imad (♂) in Bouday C said: *'we get on well in this place. We solve things in a neighbourly way, like family'*. Khalil (♂) in Younine B told us: *'Here we have a tribe mentality. We are hospitable, we look after one another. If someone arrives and needs help to settle in, we club together to help, within limits. My wife's sister's husband arrived recently. Everyone helped him and his family.'*

When asked how 'tribe mentality' worked when there were tensions in the ITS, he said *'We like to keep things quiet. We try to solve problems ourselves and keep the police out.'* In a similar vein, Rachid (♂) in Bouday B put it this way: *'We ran away from violence and just want peace. So we try to solve tensions quickly.'*

Solidarity mechanisms may also be driven by specific definers of affinity. During fieldwork in Younine B, the *shawish* was found in her tent, where she and five other women were sitting around the stove. The *shawish* explained that she and the other five women are all single heads of household because of death or separation due to the war in Syria. They frequently spend time in her tent to save heating fuel. Their families (twenty people in total) also share the same latrine.

Two of the group, Fatima and Hadija are sisters, both widows. Only Hadija has a WFP (World Food Programme) card²⁸ and this covers two people, her and her son. She shares resources with Fatima and her four children. Hadija said her sister cannot work because of what she endured when she was trapped for two years in Raqqa during a visit home.

One of the women, Halima, arrived from Syria over the mountain three months previously, and was eight months pregnant at the time. She said *'I arrived with just my clothes. No telephone. When the bus stopped, I got out and asked around for people from my place. I met Aida. She told me to come here with her and I shared her blanket.'* Surya, the sixth member of the group told us that when Halima gave birth she collected money from other ITS residents to help pay the fees.

Social cohesion is reinforced in some ITS by efforts to maintain social events. For example, Jaash (♂) in Bouday A said: *'When it's a kid's birthday we have music and games. It helps let go of our bad situation for a while. Two couples got married here. We had short gatherings. It was very modest. At Eid el Kabir we buy a sheep and slaughter it for the whole ITS. Everybody gets a share.'* Nazla (♀) in Bouday B said: *'We visit each other during Ramadan and to celebrate Eid. If someone's sick, the neighbours go and visit them.'* These events are important not only because they afford respite from the drudge of daily life as a refugee but also because they mark a common social and cultural heritage, and provide a semblance of normality and respectability. They are particularly important for people for whom some fundamental cultural expressions, such as going to pray in the mosque, have been rendered hazardous or impossible by their situation and their status.

3.5.3 Social tensions and conflict

ITS are living environments in which people from quite different backgrounds may be thrown together and have to live alongside each other at close quarters, whether they like it or not. Malak (♀) in Bouday C talked about a particular group of families living in the ITS, saying *'we don't interact much or help each other. We wouldn't marry their people.'* Social prejudice, class tensions and tribal divisions were not left behind in Syria, and in the ITS they may emerge more strongly as people find themselves in positions of subordination, needing to maintain a sense of social identity.

In Malak's case, a sense of social superiority or apartness seemed also to be expressed by the fact that her family's tent was located on the periphery of the ITS and she spoke highly of her Lebanese women friends with whom she occasionally took tea. She and her husband paid to have their own latrine built, not wanting to share with neighbours. In Bouday A, Faida (♀) also lives on the periphery of the ITS, on a plot separated from the other tents by a small ditch. She explained *'my husband doesn't like the noise in the ITS. Sometimes women shout and fight over water and he doesn't like that.'*

The ITS are complex social contexts where both solidarity and conflict exist. These phenomena are strong determinants of how ITS households and communities are able to cope with changes such as a reduction in WASH services.

3.6 REFUGEES' PERCEPTIONS AND FEELINGS ABOUT THEIR SITUATION

3.6.1 Introduction

In this section, the perceptions and feelings of people met in the ITS concerning their past in Syria, their present in Lebanon and their possible future are presented and discussed. They are consistent with other, more extensive studies.²⁹ These feelings and perceptions influence the importance of access to WASH services. They will be affected in one way or another by a reduction in WASH services, and will affect how individuals, households and communities react to the situation of reduced services.

Emotions often came to the surface during interviews. Expressions of grief, anxiety, anger, frustration and despair were encountered every day during field work, provoked by specific questions, or coming through free talk. Lighter moments of laughter and the pleasure of friendly exchange were also shared.

3.6.2 Representations of the past in Syria

During interviews in the ITS people talked about their lives in Syria – where they were from and how they lived.³⁰ In response to these questions, people commonly spoke about what they had lost – their peaceful, normal lives, their homes, their land, their jobs and their family members killed, imprisoned or left behind in difficult circumstances. They also mentioned the economic situation and the quality of public services, so much better than what they experience as refugees in Lebanon.

This sense of loss and having come down in the world was expressed in these terms by Ayed (♂) in Bouday A: *'In Syria we didn't envy anyone, not even the president. Now look at us. We pay two hundred dollars a year for this place, I've got two million [Lebanese pounds] in debt and two kids on powdered milk. Without humanitarian aid we'd be zero.'* Hadija (♀) in Younine B said: *'In Syria we were poor but life was OK. We had a washing machine and our own toilet. This is not a normal life. It's all hard. Oh well.'*

When referring to life in Syria, people interviewed frequently mentioned the good quality of their drinking water there compared with their water supplies in the ITS. People from Raqqa talked about the water from the Euphrates with particular pride. One young man went so far as to say that even after seven years of war, the electricity supply in Syria was better than in Lebanon.

The past in Syria may be idealized to some extent, and in discussions with outsiders, refugees may be inclined to present the past in a particularly favourable light. But however much influenced by nostalgia, representations of the past in Syria throw the present in Lebanon into stark contrast.³¹ They contribute to a sense of loss, not only of material wellbeing but of a whole set of rights and freedoms that supported a sense of self-worth and recognition.

3.6.3 Representations of the present

Life in the ITS, as recounted in testimonies, as evidenced by the many gentle and affectionate interactions witnessed during the study, and as lived through celebration of social events (see Section 3.5.2), is not only experienced as hardship and loss. People have found ways to maintain the moral, social and affective fabric necessary to sustain themselves materially and emotionally. Nevertheless, there is a strong undercurrent of negative representations and difficult emotions, and this became quickly apparent in almost all the encounters with ITS residents during the study.³²

Jaash (♂) in Bouday A responded very plainly to the question *'how do you feel about your situation here?'* by saying: *'Sometimes I'd like to die.'* He explained that his eldest daughter, from his first marriage, had a back injury and is paralysed. She needs diapers and physiotherapy, which he struggles to pay for. Jaash said he is in constant fear of his 22-year old son being arrested. To add to this, he and the nine other members of the household share a latrine with five other families. This type of situation, with its attendant anxiety was encountered on several occasions during the study.

Added to the problems of poverty and poor living conditions are the difficulties associated with exile, alienation and lack of prospects. Ahmed (♂) in Younine C expressed his feelings in this way: *'This is not living. I'm in a foreign country. I'm not with my people. I'm not happy.'* Ahmed also expressed anger and frustration about his life being wasted, his impression of losing his potential, of being in a state of limbo.

When asked about life in Syria before the war, one man in a group discussion in Bouday A talked about being a small farmer near Hama, and being chased off his land by 'terrorists' who destroyed his house and cut down the family's olive trees to sell the wood. He went on to say *'we forget about that life now. We just want to live decently here.'* This sentiment echoes the opinion of a senior Oxfam staff member in Zahlé, which is that *'refugees just want a clean and respectful life here while they wait to go back to Syria.'*

In response to the question *'can you tell us about happy occasions in the ITS?'* Malak in Bouday C replied, with tears. *'Life is hard here. We don't have happy occasions. Every family has someone who passed away in the war. So you can't feel happy. My brother was arrested three years ago. I don't have any news. Malesh³³.'*

A number of people interviewed mentioned fear and anxiety about their life in Lebanon. Much of the anxiety was related to lack of legal stay and the risks that creates, both directly through exposure to risk of arrest and detention, or indirectly because of the vulnerable situation it puts them into and their practical absence of redress.

Fear of arrest and detention outside the ITS is based on real experience (see Section 3.4.2), and it concerns not only those people, mostly men, who are most likely to be arrested, but also their family. Jaash (♂) in Bouday A said he keeps his 22-year old son close for fear of what may happen to him if he goes far from the ITS. *'We always go to work together, that way I know he'll not get into any trouble.'* Faida (♀), also in Bouday A, said: *'I'm scared here. My husband's papers are nearly expired. I'm scared he may get arrested.'* The consequences of the son or husband being arrested are quite different, but both represent a small disaster and are a real cause of anxiety and fear.

Staying inside the ITS is no protection from fear though. Ahmad (♂) in Bouday B said: *'I'm not scared about local people. But I'm scared the military will come into my tent and take me to prison. It already happened to me but luckily I was released after 24 hours because I had my UNHCR card.'* Participants in a group discussion in Deir el Ahmar mentioned shots being fired into a tent the day before meeting with them.

Many of the Syrian refugees suffered massive loss, injustice and humiliation in Syria and during their flight to Lebanon. During their stay in Lebanon, many suffer frequent attacks on their self-esteem as part of their experience of being refugees in a state of limbo in Lebanon: no longer welcome, but without prospect of return, without legal stay or access to redress, forced to accept their state and conscious of everything they left behind. Ahmed (♂) in Younine C described this in very strong terms based on his personal experience. *'I was picked up by ISIS on the day of my wedding. I gave everything to get out. Now I sometimes wish I'd died in Syria rather than dying here every day. My young life is being wasted. It feels like I want to talk but I'm choking on it. I get insults and beatings on the building site, even threats to come and burn my tent. But I can't defend myself or someone will say I'm with ISIS and then I'll disappear. People think I'm a nobody. My ancestors are descended from the Prophet. I'm not a nobody. But it's getting racist here. Politicians are saying we must go home but it's too dangerous. My house is full of mines.'*

Ayed (♂) in Bouday A recounted the humiliation he is exposed to every time he leaves the ITS to visit his second wife and children in Baalbek: *'I can bear starving but I can't stand being made to feel small by a soldier at a checkpoint who's young enough to be my son.'*

Loss of self-esteem may also be linked to loss of social status and traditional roles, particularly for men. Rachid (♂), in Bouday B said: *'I had an office job in Syria. A house, a car. It's changed one hundred and eighty degrees. I can't work because I have back problems. So my wife works and I'm a nanny, changing diapers. That's a knock to my pride. Not to compare, but others are more used to this way of life. I had to take my daughter out of school. It's heartbreaking to be supported by my wife and daughter.'*

3.6.4 Representations of the future

Whenever the question of the future was raised in discussions and interviews, either directly, or in connection with another subject, the future was represented as uncertain, beyond control and without much hope. Return to Syria was not considered to be an option. Several people used words similar to Hadija's (♀) in Younine B *'How can we go back? There's nothing left for us there.'* This was echoed in many other discussions and interviews.

In research by Oxfam in February 2018, 88% of respondents did not believe Syria is currently safe for them to return and 80% were afraid of being forced to return before it is safe. Half of the respondents said that conditions in Lebanon made them consider returning to Syria before it is safe to do so, with the struggle to meet the high cost of living and the difficulty to find security and dignity being major reasons to consider premature return.³⁴

The impression of having no prospect of return to Syria, or of fearing return, and having no hope of integration in Lebanon makes the difficulties of life for ITS households and communities all the more difficult to bear, and underlines the importance of WASH services in providing the means for people to live a clean and decent life while waiting for prospects to change.

3.7 REFUGEES' LIVELIHOODS STRATEGIES

The refugee households in the ITS visited have a limited range of income sources. They are primarily income from casual employment in the agriculture and building industries, other occasional jobs such as cleaning in local houses, and humanitarian assistance, principally the WFP common cash card. Access to health and education is subsidized and, in the ITS covered by Oxfam's WASH programme, households receive vouchers for latrine-pit emptying and water deliveries.

Finding the means to cover essentials, including food, rent, electricity, heating fuel and health-care was cited as a major concern by a number of people interviewed. The worsening economic situation was mentioned frequently in interviews for this study.

Individuals and households without access to WFP assistance faced particular difficulties, compounded by the fact that they were often recently arrived from Syria and were not completely inserted into the livelihoods and social-support networks that are essential for living decently as a refugee in Lebanon.

Syrian refugees' livelihoods and coping strategies have been extensively surveyed since 2011, for example by *The Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon*, conducted annually since 2013. The 2017 survey (VASyR 2017) provides global figures that are not specific enough to understand livelihoods conditions and strategies at the ITS or household levels, but which give some indication of general patterns and trends that are relevant to this study.³⁵ The statement in Box 2 presents the broad picture on livelihoods outcomes:

Box 2: Poverty persists

*Syrian refugees in Lebanon are spending less every year, reporting per capita monthly expenditures of US\$98, a drop of US\$6 compared to 2016 and US\$9 since 2015. This is a sign that households have fewer resources. Three quarters of Syrian refugee households had expenditures below the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB), unable to meet basic needs of food, health, shelter and education. Even more worrying, 58% of households had a per capita expenditure below the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB), meaning they were living in extreme poverty, unable to meet survival needs—an increase of five percentage points over 2016. Similarly, the proportion of households living below the poverty line has continued to increase, reaching 76% of refugee households in 2017.*³⁶

The situation in Bekaa is significantly worse than the national average. In Bekaa Governorate, average per capita monthly expenditure was US\$66, and three out of four Syrian refugee households have a per capita expenditure below the Survival Expenditure Basket.³⁷

The findings of the VASyR 2017 suggest that it is increasingly difficult for Syrian refugees in Lebanon to meet their basic needs and that there is greater recourse to a wide range of coping strategies, including emergency and crisis strategies that may reduce households' livelihoods capacity (for example, selling productive assets) or put individuals at risk (for example, accepting high-risk jobs).

Buying on credit from local shops and fuel stations was reported in all cases when the subject was raised. People reported debts of up to 2 million Lebanese pounds. Jaash (♂) in Bouday A explained a common pattern of credit management: *'In the winter, there's not much work and the assistance is not enough to cover everything. Anyway, some people don't get any assistance. So we buy on credit. In the summer, when there's work, we spend half of our wages on living and the other half on repaying the debt. Then we start again at zero.'* The cycle of debt and repayment is an essential mechanism for balancing income and expenditure over the yearly cycle of peaks and troughs in income, and it provides a vital security net.

Popular social safety nets, through kinship and neighbourhood, help to keep poorer households out of destitution and help all households manage the economic ups and downs created by variations in income and expenditure.

ITS households and communities are in a state of severe economic vulnerability as a result of a worsening economic situation, compounded by a reduction in funding for humanitarian assistance in key sectors such as food security, health and WASH. They are likely to be severely affected by any further reduction in services.

4 CONSEQUENCES OF WASH SERVICE REDUCTION TO ITS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section describes the likely coping strategies the refugees may put in place, based on what was discussed and observed during visits to ITS and during meetings with Oxfam staff and other humanitarian actors. The direct and indirect consequences of these coping strategies are then discussed in detail, taking account of the socio-cultural, economic and political contexts. The coping strategies and their potential direct and indirect consequences are presented in Annex 1.

The four aspects of WASH services considered here are water supply, latrines, solid-waste management and hygiene products.

The coping strategies adopted by ITS households and communities faced with a reduction in WASH services, and the impacts of reduced support are likely to be extremely varied from one ITS to another and from one household to another, depending on the capacities, vulnerabilities and situation of each ITS household or community. At community level, key determinants of impact are likely to include:

- the strength and effectiveness of leadership for internal organization and external representation/brokerage;
- the level of human resources and social cohesion within the ITS;
- attitudes of local actors, particularly landlords, neighbours, employers and municipalities;
- access to work opportunities near the ITS;
- the availability of local water supplies, particularly in summer.

Within the ITS, the impact on individual households is likely to be highly influenced by:

- the length of time the household has been settled, its degree of integration into the ITS and into local networks outside the ITS (particularly for credit and work);
- the level of human, economic and material capital within the household;
- access to income from employment and humanitarian assistance, particularly.

In short, the ITS households most likely to be affected by a reduction in WASH services are those that arrived recently; that do not have strong kinship support; that have low income-earning capacity and that are settled in ITS with a low level of social cohesion and lacking in effective leadership, in areas where the municipality does not have a supportive approach to ITS and where there is strong competition for water resources.

The overall impact is also likely to be mitigated or aggravated by more general trends and events, including the Lebanese parliamentary elections in May 2018, the evolution of the situation in Syria and possible water shortage due to two years of dry winters.

4.2 COPING STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING REDUCED WASH SERVICES AND THEIR DIRECT CONSEQUENCES

4.2.1 Introduction

Meeting with ITS residents and seeing how they manage all areas of their lives, including water, sanitation and hygiene, provided plenty of examples that demonstrate their ability to analyse, decide and act in their own interests, both individual and collective. People interviewed in the ITS described many ways in which they interact with external actors, including local Lebanese and humanitarian agencies, in order to pursue strategies for livelihoods, security and wellbeing. The coping strategies described below are an expression of refugees' capacity to act and to influence other actors.

Below are described the various coping strategies adopted by ITS residents when WASH services are absent or insufficient, along with the most important direct, negative consequences those strategies can produce. Reference is also made to the indirect negative consequences described in Section 4.3, including increased expenditure on WASH services.

4.2.2 Water supply

The contents of this section reflect and are supported by the findings of the study undertaken for Oxfam's feasibility assessment for water service provision to ITS in Lebanon, which compares the situation before and after introduction of the voucher system.³⁸

One way to deal with a reduced water supply service is to cut back on water use by washing or showering less frequently, washing clothes less frequently and cleaning the tent (floors and carpets) less often. This is a deeply unpopular strategy, as it affects people's sense of well-being and self-esteem, as well as increasing the risk of disease, and anxiety about disease. It also risks increasing stigmatization of ITS residents because of the increased risk of scabies and lice, which are considered to be socially shameful diseases.

Another way to save water, and also to reduce the amount of wastewater to manage in the latrine pit, is to reduce the amount used for flushing the toilet, using less each time and/or flushing less often. This leads to blocked waste pipes, social embarrassment and tensions over who is responsible for the blockage and who should clear it.

Refugees without access to water from a safe supply that is regularly monitored have recourse to supplies that may come from an unsafe source and that are not monitored. Those households unable to afford to buy safe drinking water, or those who are not aware that the water supply is not potable, may consume contaminated water with a risk to their health and that of others.

Tapping into public water supply/irrigation network is an existing strategy for some ITS, and with the loss of a trucking service, this is likely to increase. Where the connection is made without adequate skills and materials, this is likely to increase technical water losses through leaks. And whether the ITS supply is tapped directly into the network or comes from a Lebanese householder's supply, this represents a loss to the network, as no additional revenue is paid.

In Younine A ITS, where WASH services have not been provided by a WASH agency in more than six months, residents reported that the landlord provides water for free from his borehole and also that he does not charge rent. The notion of a free service needs to be interpreted in relation to the fact that many people from the ITS in question work for the landlord and his two brothers and therefore engage in a relation of obligation to their landlord/employers.

In Younine C, the landlord provides water from his borehole directly into household tanks, for 150,000 LBP per tent per year. Some ITS households bought new water tanks to replace the

ones that were destroyed when the ITS was burned after events in Aarsal in August 2014. In Younine B, the landlord also reportedly supplies water from his borehole, as well as electricity, at a cost of 50,000 LBP per month. The *shawish* told us *'the water's not always enough and sometimes it's cut for days at a time, and very often in the summer. So we pay for water to be delivered. It's thirty thousand pounds for five thousand litres.'* These examples show how refugees found a way to manage without external assistance, through arrangements with landlords and employers, but at significant cost.

The borehole supplying water to Younine B is inside the ITS, within just 15m of three latrines, which creates a significant risk of cross-contamination. This shows how local solutions without expert supervision risk causing negative impacts on public health.

Figure 7: Leaky water-distribution pipe in Bouday B



Another example of sanitary risk from local solution is provided by the mini distribution systems that residents create within the ITS, using plastic pipes laid on the ground. There is a risk of contamination as the pipes are not under constant pressure, they are likely to be punctured and they are often lying in contaminated stagnant water. See Figure 7 for an example.

Collecting water from springs is another option that was mentioned in interviews. In the Oxfam feasibility assessment in North Bekaa, ITS households not benefitting from the water voucher system acquired 44% of their water, on average, from springs. This adds a burden of time and effort, and exposes refugees to the risk of consuming unsafe water.³⁹

Tapping into public networks and collecting water from springs also increases the risk of tensions and causes of conflict with local residents, and this is likely to increase if water supplies become more scarce in the summer.

4.2.3 Latrines

All of the people met with could identify the latrine that they and their family used. Even in the ITS without support from humanitarian agencies, everyone claimed to use a latrine. Having access to a toilet is a priority. Hamed (♂) in Younine C said: *'The most important thing is the toilet, for women especially. It's not proper otherwise. The first thing [when you arrive in an ITS] is to build a toilet. Then the tent.'* In Younine A a number of what are referred to as 'handmade' toilets (as distinct from toilets built by NGOs), have been built by refugees, or by local artisans and paid for by refugees. This is the option likely to be taken without external support if new toilets are needed, either to replace old ones that are no longer useable, or for newcomers.

Figure 8: Handmade latrine in Younine A



The handmade latrines seen in Younine and Bouday ITS had unlined pits covered with timbers and plastic sheeting or other lightweight material. The contents of the pit were visible through holes in the plastic covering, so flies and smells were not controlled. Any person walking on the pit cover (for example at night) would likely fall into the pit. The pits themselves were not lined, and risk collapsing after some time. The cabins had no roof and the squatting plates were made of formed concrete with a rough finish, difficult to clean. In short, handmade latrines are commonly unsanitary, unsafe to use and commonly do not provide sufficient privacy and security for users, particularly women and girls. See Figure 8 for an example.

The siting of latrine pits without expert supervision is also a sanitary risk. The example was given above in Younine B where residents had taken the initiative to build three latrines, but they were all within 15m of the borehole that supplies the ITS. This risk of cross-contamination can also occur when people choose to build new pits rather than pay the cost of desludging.

Another way to reduce the cost of desludging is to install a pipe or dig a channel to allow liquid effluent to discharge from the latrine pit, either into a soakaway pit, covered or not, or into a natural drainage channel. This creates surface-water contamination and smells, and attracts flies and other disease vectors.

The *shawish* in Younine B had found a way to deal with the liquid effluent in the latrine pit by having dug a very deep pit (3.5 m deep), which allowed a large infiltration surface and reduced desludging frequency to every five months. This is a good technical solution, but it came at a high cost (US\$100 is the figure given).

Another cost is that of desludging, and this falls on ITS households where there is no external WASH support. The same informant explained: *'Sawa built latrines some years ago, and NRC used to give us desludging vouchers. That stopped about six months ago. I paid 65 thousand pounds for a local contractor to desludge my pit and the other families using it paid their share'*. It had taken approximately five months for the pit to fill. In Younine; refugees in all three ITS visited reported paying for desludging.

In cases where there is no means or no decision in the ITS to build new latrines, sharing between more people is one of the few options left. There were more than twenty people reported to use the latrine described in the previous paragraph in Younine B. The *shawish* said there were frequently queues in the morning to use the latrine, and this was particularly disagreeable as the latrine was close to the road, and visible to all passers-by.

As well as causing longer queues to use the toilet, more sharing means more difficulty to keep the toilet clean. This is particularly problematic where toilets are shared between households who don't have kinship ties and where tensions over who dirtied the latrine and who should clean it may cause conflict between families.

Increasing the number of people sharing the same latrine also increases perceived and real insecurity. In the post-distribution monitoring surveys carried out in November 2017, over half of the survey respondents who did not feel safe accessing their latrines attributed this feeling to latrine sharing.⁴⁰ When several households have to share the same latrine it also means that some tents are quite far from the latrine, and this also increases insecurity, especially at night. This is a particular concern for women and girls.

Where pressure on latrines is especially intense, open defecation is likely to happen, particularly by children. Open defecation by adults was not mentioned by refugees in this study, but it occurs in some ITS according to programme staff. The consequences of this include shame, discomfort and inconvenience for the people practising it, and, possibly, stigmatization by other ITS residents, as well as faecal contamination of the ITS environment. Open defecation on the outside of the ITS that attracted the attention of neighbours of the ITS would risk stigmatizing the whole ITS population and create cause for complaint and increased social tension.

4.2.4 Solid-waste management

Solid-waste collection and disposal is not part of Oxfam's package of WASH services. This service, where it exists, is provided by the municipalities. Oxfam's role is limited to the provision of waste bins and raising awareness about why and how to manage solid waste more effectively. However, the subject is addressed here, as it is of huge importance for the acceptance of Syrian refugees in the localities where the ITS are sited, and it should be considered in the overall analysis of funding required for service provision.

Municipalities in the rural areas of the Bekaa generally use small trucks or tractors with attached implements to collect the waste. This provides a very low waste collection capacity, and incurs significant costs in labour and fuel. Municipalities generally prioritize the collection of waste from neighbourhoods in the villages where Lebanese live and ITS close to Lebanese neighbourhoods. Municipalities collect a fee from Lebanese households for this service, and some have requested the same from refugees living in ITS. Municipalities are typically unable to provide a collection frequency to meet the Lebanon technical standard without some significant support.

Households with no regular waste collection service may resort to dumping their waste outside the ITS. This creates a nuisance for Lebanese neighbours, and may give rise to complaints and tensions. During a meeting with refugees in one ITS, the landlord came to complain to the Oxfam driver about rubbish that was causing a nuisance to tenants in flats he owned next to the site. He asked for the refugees to be threatened. The *shawish* and his wife assured us that the rubbish did not come from the ITS, and later showed us their system for storing waste and then disposing of it weekly in the municipality truck. Whatever the truth of the situation with regards to the waste, it was visibly tense at the time of the visit.

Dumping the waste outside the ITS also creates a risk of faecal contamination, as a significant fraction of the waste is soiled diapers. This practice is also a nuisance for local residents, and yet another cause for complaint. It adds to the argument that the ITS communities are unclean and a source of pollution, both physical and social.

Burning the waste outside the ITS again causes a nuisance for Lebanese neighbours as well as ITS residents, and is a fire risk.

In Deir el Ahmar B and C, where there are no municipal solid-waste collection bins, residents said that they burned paper and plastics outside the ITS (refugees in Deir el Ahmar told us they burned the refuse at night, so the municipality police wouldn't see the smoke), but that they could not burn soiled diapers. Instead, they took them to the bin provided by Oxfam at Deir el Ahmar B. See Figure 9. The waste problem is a big issue for ITS residents. A participant in a meeting in Deir el Ahmar B said: *'The waste is building up. It's giving us skin infections, asthma, insect bites. There are dogs and cats pulling it about'*.

Figure 9: Accumulation of solid waste from two ITS at Deir el Ahmar B



Despite the nuisance and inconvenience, in the three ITS visited in Deir el Ahmar, people said they could not afford the 4,000 or 5,000 LBP per month per household to pay for the municipality to collect and dispose of their waste.

A final option, as reported in Younine B, is to bag the waste and carry it to municipality bins a distance from the ITS. This has the advantage of containing the waste and getting it into the collection and disposal system. However, it risks causing tension with local Lebanese users if the bins are filled more quickly and overflow, and exposes refugees to harassment if they carry their waste into residential areas.

Management of solid waste creates tensions between households within the same ITS, between different ITS and between ITS and their Lebanese neighbours. It is a problem that damages the reputation of ITS communities and adds to the stigma of refugees. For hosting municipalities, it's a significant cost, both in monetary terms and in terms of nuisance and social tension.

4.2.5 Hygiene supplies

One option for coping with reduced access to hygiene supplies, or money to buy them, is to use less, for example, by using less detergent for laundry, or doing the laundry less often, particularly if water use is restricted too. This may result in less effective laundry and handwashing, which increases the risk of transmitting diseases including diarrhoeal diseases, Hepatitis and scabies.

In addition, not having access to appropriate hygiene supplies can result in people looking and feeling less clean, which is a source of shame and stigma. Refugees interviewed during this study said they valued the hygiene vouchers they previously received, and placed high value on being able to maintain standards of personal and domestic hygiene. They are used to cleaning their homes, and they value living in a clean environment in Lebanon, as they were used to in Syria.

Women and girls without access to disposable sanitary pads have to use washable cloths, without the means to wash them thoroughly and dry them completely in the constrained environment of the ITS habitat, particularly in winter. This can lead to a risk of irritation and infections. For women and girls accustomed to using disposable pads, changing to washable cloths is likely to be a blow to their self-esteem and confidence, in addition to the social embarrassment that can be caused by washing and drying the cloth pads in close quarters with other family members.

4.3 IMPACTS OF REDUCTION OF WASH SERVICES

4.3.1 Introduction

In this section, the consequences of the various coping strategies adopted by ITS households and communities to deal with cuts to WASH services are presented, as well as other impacts, notably those affecting humanitarian agencies' ability to deliver other services, the impact of the implicit message sent by the act of withdrawing services, and the reduced ability of service providers to engage with local actors, particularly the municipalities, in support of refugees and the surrounding Lebanese communities.

4.3.2 Communicable-diseases

Increased level of WASH-related disease in the ITS

No data was available for this study to demonstrate the direct impact of WASH service reduction on water and sanitation-related disease. However, comparable data from two sources gives an indication of the level of impact likely.

In regular monitoring at household level since 2016 in ITS with WASH services funded by UNICEF, 16% of respondents reported one or more cases of diarrhoea during the three weeks preceding the monitoring exercise. This indicates the level of diarrhoeal disease in ITS with a relatively good level of WASH service.⁴¹

In comparison, in a survey among Syrian refugees in Akkar Governorate in 2014, households in ITS with substandard WASH services had higher reported rates of diarrhoea. Of ITS households with one or more child under five, 44% reported at least one child who had experienced diarrhoea within the two-week period prior to assessment. This compared with 35% among households living in houses and apartments. In the ITS surveyed, 60% had more than 20 users per latrine, 37% had unsafe water-storage facilities and 79% of water was sourced from dug wells.⁴²

These studies add to an already massive body of evidence that inadequate WASH services and hygiene result in high levels of water- and sanitation-related disease.⁴³

Increase in other diseases

When asked about the most common illnesses in the ITS, people interviewed consistently mentioned flu and colds as the most important; which is not surprising, given that the question was asked during the winter. Other illnesses mentioned included skin diseases (seen as connected to poor water quality or to the presence of solid waste near the ITS), mumps and chicken pox. This confirms data from the multi-morbidity study cited in Section 3.3.3.⁴⁴ Reduced WASH services will contribute to an increase in these diseases through direct and indirect pathways. To take just one example, reduced handwashing because of shortage of water and/or soap increases the risk of respiratory disease transmission, as does overcrowding in tents to save heating fuel because of increased expenditure on WASH services.

Children's health and development is particularly at risk. Insufficient access to WASH is a key determinant of communicable disease and under-nutrition, strongly influencing the sanitary and care environment for young children, and thereby their exposure to communicable disease and risk of under-nutrition. This in turn has consequences for their physical and intellectual development in the long term.⁴⁵

Public health risk for Lebanese neighbours

The ITS and local Lebanese populations are not separate, however distinct their social and legal separations are. Any communicable-disease event in an ITS has a chance of affecting neighbours. There have been cases of lice among Lebanese school children being attributed to them sharing school classes with children from the ITS, and several schools have requested the health agency to supply delousing treatment.⁴⁶ An outbreak of dysentery or Hepatitis A in an ITS could easily spread to local Lebanese communities.

4.3.3 Psychosocial impacts

Increased feelings of fear and anxiety

As described in Section 3.6.3, there is a high level of anxiety and often fear in ITS households and communities relating to refugee status, uncertainty and worries over economic and material conditions. Withdrawing WASH services is likely to increase feelings of fear and anxiety about:

- the quality of water available and the potential for disease;
- the financial burden of paying more for WASH services and supplies, and for increased healthcare;
- the increased potential for evictions if sludge and solid-waste disposal become more difficult to manage and this becomes a problem for the landlord;
- attracting negative attention of the surrounding Lebanese population and the municipality;
- risks associated with sharing latrines between more people.

Loss of self-esteem

Maintaining self-esteem, living a decent life and being considered as respectable are desires that a number of people expressed in interviews, and demonstrated by their attention to appearance and maintenance of standards of hygiene and housekeeping. Malak (♀) in Bouday C told us; *‘the mud is the worst thing at this time of year. The kids are dirty, the house is dirty. I get comments. Even if we are refugees, we have to maintain standards. My kids are washed every night before they go to bed.’* Self-esteem and dignity are fundamental qualities of being that are at risk through loss of WASH services in many ways, including:

- living in an environment that is polluted by solid waste and wastewater and that smells of pollution;
- adopting lower standards of personal and domestic hygiene because of lack of water or lack of hygiene supplies;
- sending children to school in dirty clothes;
- having to use toilets that are dirtied by previous users, particularly if they are not of the same family;
- standing in line to use the toilet, in a public space, in full view of neighbours and passers-by, which was identified as a particular problem for women and girls;
- consuming water that is considered not up to standard, not what decent people should expect.

Loss of sense of wellbeing

Wellbeing is very closely linked to a feeling of self-esteem and freedom from fear and anxiety. It is about a sense of ease, of comfort, of self-confidence. Rachid (♂) in Bouday B said: *‘I’m happy about the [WASH] assistance. There’s better hygiene and less disease. It makes you feel comfortable with yourself and for Islam.’* All of the potential impacts on fear and anxiety and self-esteem affect the sense of wellbeing too, for people whose wellbeing is already affected by multiple nuisances and hardships. The nuisance caused by having to join a queue to use the

toilet or living with the smell of a nearby latrine pit that is overflowing adds to the general drudgery of life in the ITS, particularly during the winter when ITS residents have to cope with cold, mud and snow. In addition, for people who can find employment, work is hard and often dirty, and they need to be able to wash and put on clean clothes at the end of the day.

Oxfam is seen as a trustworthy organization by people interviewed in the ITS. One of the important services that Oxfam and other NGOs provide to ITS residents is the treatment and monitoring of water supplied by truckers. This is essential for public health, but also for the confidence it gives to the people consuming the water. Withdrawing this service places consumers in a situation where they rely on water of unsure provenance, delivered by people they do not necessarily trust, and this can raise anxiety.

Stigmatization of individuals in the ITS

Within the ITS context there is a high level of social control and pressure to conform to moral standards. Loss of WASH services is likely to cause stigmatization of some individuals and households within the ITS communities if they are considered not to be upholding standards of cleanliness and neighbourly good conduct. Dirt and disease are signs of moral failure and the weight of moral judgment falls heavily on women in the Syrian refugee population. Malak in Bouday C continued her comments above by saying: *'Some kids in this ITS have lice. I won't let my kids play with them...Nothing happens by accident. If a child has lice, the mother is to blame.'* Men may also have to bear the stigma of not being considered to perform their duties if they cannot provide the means for their families to maintain standards of hygiene and cleanliness.

Tensions between and within households and strain on popular solidarity

Rachid, who is a CHV in Bouday B said: *'If water delivery was less frequent there'd be fighting over water.'* Malak described the tensions that already occur even in ITS still receiving WASH services when water is in short supply: *'People here can fight over who gets to fill their tank first. People aren't calm emotionally; they can argue over lots of things, over each other's kids' behaviour. Definitely if there were less services then conflicts would increase. Women would argue more than men. They are more worried about these things.'* This is another illustration of the particular mental and emotional burden that commonly falls particularly on women because of their role in managing family and domestic hygiene. When asked if men intervened when women argued over water, Malak said that they stayed out of it, because if they intervened it would become an issue between the families involved, and conflict could escalate.

Section 3.5.2 presents some examples of how ITS residents have collectively addressed the problem of scarce resources, such as lending money and sharing latrines. Keeping social tensions and conflict under control is essential for ITS residents to maintain their ability to function effectively as a community and support more vulnerable households and individuals. Solidarity mechanisms have their limits though and can break down when they are put under too much strain, for example, when there are just too many people having to share the same latrine or when people become increasingly bothered by their neighbour burning their rubbish at the edge of the ITS. One man in Bouday A illustrated this in a group discussion *'We forget about that life [our life in Syria]. We just want to live decently here. Toilets are a real problem. More important than food. Those with toilets don't let others use them.'*

Increased mental health problems

In a study by International Medical Core, analysis of mental health clinical data in 2014 identified that 58% of cases were suffering from severe emotional disorders, including anxiety and depression.⁴⁷ The study identified three groups of stressors that provoke or exacerbate these conditions among Syrian refugees: security and protection risks; access and availability of basic services and resources; family, community, and sectarian tensions. This reflects the experience of clinical staff working with Syrian refugee patients suffering mental health

problems in Bekaa.⁴⁸ Reduction in WASH services will exacerbate all three of these stressors and thereby contribute to an increase in mental health problems.

4.3.4 Impacts on livelihoods

As described in Section 3.7, Syrian refugees in Lebanon, and particularly in Bekaa suffer from a high level of poverty, with approximately three-quarters of the refugee population spending less than the minimum required for Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket, an average per capita expenditure of US\$66 per month. This amounts to approximately US\$350 per household per month, on the basis of an average family size of 5.3 in the Governorate, or roughly 6 million LBP per household per year.

Increased expenditure on WASH

A supply of clean water, decent toilets and the means to practice decent personal and domestic hygiene are high priorities for ITS households and communities, essential to their life and dignity. A number of people interviewed said that water, in particular, was such a high priority that they would choose to buy it rather than do without, or rather than consuming water they did not consider to be safe. For example, Faïda (F) in Bouday A told us: *'We don't get water vouchers. In the winter, some Lebanese neighbours give us water, but in the summer they can't because they need it to irrigate tobacco and hashish. It's not drinkable, so we buy [bottled] drinking water, it costs a dollar for 5 litres, every two days. In the summer we pay the water trucker.'* In the three ITS visited in Younine, residents also reported buying water.

The study carried out for Oxfam's feasibility assessment for water service provision to ITS compared expenditure on water for households in North Bekaa served by Oxfam's water voucher system and those not served. Those households not benefitting from vouchers spend on average twice as much on water as those who receive vouchers (6.45% of their total expenditures, compared with 3%).⁴⁹ In other words, if the voucher provision is stopped, then households benefitting from it currently will probably have to increase their spending on water by about 3% of their total expenditure, or about 215,000 LBP per year.

There are no equivalent figures available for estimating the additional expenditure required if the desludging voucher system is stopped. As for water supply, managing sludge is a relatively complex issue, as there are various options available to ITS households, some of which don't cost any money. Examples from Younine A and Younine B give some indicative examples. In Younine A, it was reported that individual household latrines were desludged every three to four months, at a cost of 25,000 LBP per pit, which equates to a minimum of 75,000 LBP per household per year. In Younine B, five families are using one latrine, which took five months to fill, and which cost 65,000 LBP to desludge. This equates to about 30,000 LBP per household per year, or 0.5% of a total yearly household expenditure.

These figures suggest that the additional expenditure for households losing their water trucking and desludging voucher services is likely to be in the order of 250,000 to 280,000 LBP per household per year, or 4–5% of annual expenditure.

There are other spending increases that would be created by the termination of WASH services to ITS, notably the construction of new latrines. It is very hard to estimate the cost burden to ITS households. As an indication, the latrine built by a contractor in Younine C, with a 3.5 m-deep pit, reusing an existing superstructure and slab, was reported to have cost 150,000 LBP.

When all these different costs are added together, it suggests that households losing the basic package of water vouchers, latrine desludging vouchers and latrine construction may need to spend an extra 5–6% of total existing expenditure on WASH (on top of an existing expenditure of approximately 6%).⁵⁰ This represents a very significant extra cost for households that have difficulty meeting their basic physical, social and cultural needs, and is an average estimate that hides a great diversity of household incomes and spending priorities. Some households are

likely to manage without too much difficulty, but the majority will be obliged to choose either to cut back on other essential expenses, such as heating fuel, food or electricity by consuming less or finding cheaper alternatives, or increase income. These options are discussed in the next section.

Coping strategies to pay for additional WASH costs

The VASyR 2017 identified a list of coping strategies reported by Syrian refugees in Lebanon (See Box 3 below). These will be referred to in this section.

Box 3: Coping strategies with protection risks identified in the VASyR 2017

- Sell assets: household goods, land or productive assets
- Accept high-risk or illegal jobs
- Accept low-paid, hard and dirty jobs
- Beg
- Early marriage
- Put children into work
- Send household members to work elsewhere
- Reduce essential non-food expenditure
- **Buy less**
- **Buy cheaper products**
- Buy on credit (food, heating fuel, hygiene items, medicines etc.)
- Spend savings
- Reduce health expenditure
- Reduce education expenditure
- Move to cheaper accommodation
- Reduce food expenditure
- **Buy cheaper, less preferred food**
- **Reduce the number of meals per day**
- **Reduce portion sizes**
- **Borrow food from friends and relatives**
- **Send children to eat with neighbours**
- **Restrict adults' consumption**
- **Day-long fasting**

Increased expenditure on healthcare

Healthcare costs account for a significant proportion of household expenditure for Syrian refugees in Lebanon, estimated at 11% of total expenditure in Baalbek District (which is the countrywide average), 14% in Zahlé, and 15% in Hermel.⁵¹ There is no data that demonstrates directly that healthcare costs are higher in ITS that have no external support for WASH services or that have had those services reduced. However, if it is likely that disease incidence will increase due to a reduction in WASH services then it is also likely that healthcare expenditure will rise for some households. The WASH assessment in Akkar Governorate cited in Section 4.3.2 found that the most common reaction of caregivers in cases where a child was affected by diarrhoea was to take the child to a doctor (in 75% of cases). A 'doctor' may also include a pharmacist (this was not mentioned in the Akkar survey), as they may often be cheaper and more accessible than doctors at primary care level, particularly given the problem of crossing checkpoints. Getting sick, for an adult, may also cost money because it means days off work.

Reduced expenditure on other essentials

Increased expenditure on WASH will mean some ITS households having to reduce spending on other things. Some may be able to cut back on items they may not consider to be so essential, or may be able to get support from extended family or neighbours. However, the more economically and socially vulnerable households may have to cut back on other areas of spending that they themselves may consider to be essential, or that are considered to be essential by humanitarian practitioners. The two are not necessarily the same. For example, sugar and tea may be considered essential by one group but not the other. Both points of view need to be considered.

Taking children out of school is one way to reduce spending. In the 2017 vulnerability assessment of Syrian refugees, 31% of respondents reported having reduced expenditure on schooling (i.e. taking their children out of school) as a livelihood coping strategy.⁵²

Reduced spending on healthcare as a coping strategy was reported by 49% of respondents in the VASyR 2017.⁵³ Reduced WASH services are likely to produce a double bind for some households as their healthcare needs increase as a result of increased WASH-related disease, but their access to healthcare is reduced by diverting some expenditure to WASH. Reduced healthcare spending may mean greater use of pharmacists for diagnosis and prescription, rather than medical doctors.

Other ways to reduce expenditure mentioned during interviews included cutting spending on heating fuel by changing to a solid-fuel stove and burning scrap wood and plastic waste, spending time with neighbours who heat their tents and, in large families, all sleeping in the same room to save heating. This increases the risk of transmitting communicable diseases such as respiratory infections, and adds to stress and tensions within the household.

Need to increase revenue

Maintaining standards of cleanliness and decency, avoiding disease and achieving a sense of wellbeing are important for ITS households. Water, sanitation and hygiene are critical and if services are reduced and other areas of spending cannot be cut back then households will need to increase their revenue.

There are limited options for increasing revenue for ITS households, as job opportunities are limited and there is downward pressure on wages, and humanitarian assistance. Regular assistance, for instance through the WFP card, is limited and, for new applicants, getting a card can take many months. Occasional assistance such as the winterization package, or an allowance for clothes for children from UNICEF, were reported to have been drastically reduced or stopped.

Less favourable options for increasing revenue include accepting high-risk or illegal jobs, accepting low-paid, hard and dirty jobs, begging, prostitution, early marriage and putting children to work. All of these, except for begging and prostitution, were mentioned during interviews and group discussions, either as something practiced in the household or the ITS, or elsewhere (see Section 4.3.5 for more on protection-related risks associated with these coping strategies and attitudes expressed concerning them).

Increasing debt

In the short term, if revenue cannot be increased, and other costs cannot be reduced to compensate for increased spending on WASH as a result of service reduction, two strategies that may be employed by ITS households are spending on credit at a local store, or borrowing money from relatives or neighbours. Both involve forms of debt that have to be paid later, and that use up valuable credit that could otherwise be kept for emergencies. As described in Section 3.7, ITS households have established seasonal patterns of debt accumulation and repayment over the past years based on trust and some level of assurance that income will be

forthcoming. The system has its limits though, and deepening debt risks putting refugees into compromising positions of obligation, as well as incurring the risk of default, which would be a potential source of tension and conflict.

4.3.5 Protection risks

Potential protection risks associated with coping strategies to increase revenue

The following coping strategies listed in the VASyR report are particularly of concern in terms of risks to protection:

- accept high-risk or illegal jobs;
- accept low-paid, hard and dirty jobs;
- beg;
- early marriage;
- put children into work;
- send household members to work elsewhere;
- reduce education expenditure.

Two additional risks, not listed in the report, are worth mentioning. The first is the risk for anyone, but particularly any man, who goes far from the ITS to work, as they run the risk of being arrested at a checkpoint for not being in possession of residency papers. The second is the risk associated with negative coping mechanisms that are considered unlawful in Lebanon and expose people to heightened risk of arrest.

During this research it was not possible to identify a strong link between the absence of WASH and an increase in protection risks associated with coping strategies. This is partly because fully exploring this subject, particularly where children's safety was at stake, was not possible. It is likely that such strategies are under-reported in this study, as in other research such as the VASyR, because of the difficulty of admitting in front of strangers to practices that people find morally wrong or otherwise not acceptable. When the issue of sending children to work in a group discussion in Younine C was raised, the *shawish* simply said: *'We don't want to hear about those things here. It's not right to send children to work.'* However, other informants were more forthcoming.

In nearby Younine B, Khalil (♂), who worked previously as a volunteer on a back-to-school programme said he saw many instances of people sending children as young as ten-years-old to work, *'for need or for greed, even though they know it's wrong. If I tell them to put their kids back into school, they say they need to eat bread.'* The *shawish* of Younine A declared: *'yes, there are 12-year-olds from this ITS who work. If an employer took ten-year-olds we wouldn't mind. We'll do anything for money, things are expensive here'*.

Rachid (♂) in Bouday B described with great distress how he had taken his 12-year-old daughter out of school and send her to work alongside her mother. His daughter will have to miss a year at school, and in addition to this, she lost a finger in an accident at work. The psychological, physical and social cost to both the child and her parents is huge.

Concerning early marriage, Khalil in Younine B said: *'Sure it happens sometimes for the money. Maybe the girl's family gets two million [LBP].'* This does not mean that all early marriages are arranged for financial reasons.

There is a likely causal chain, in a general sense, between loss of WASH services, increased need for revenue, and recourse to income-generating strategies that put people at risk because the options for safe means of increasing revenue are very limited. As for other potential impacts of reduced WASH services, the risks are likely to be particularly high for ITS households and

communities facing a complex of economic, social and personal vulnerabilities. In other words, a reduction in services may not produce a massive increase in protection risks, but is likely to affect the people who are already the most at risk.

The impact of reduced WASH services on protection risks due to coping strategies is likely to be greatest on the most vulnerable households and individuals in the ITS communities. Children in poorer households are particularly exposed.

Protection risks associated with cutting back on spending to pay for increased cost of WASH services

A number of cost-saving strategies adopted as a reaction to increased costs for WASH services and supplies could also pose protection risks; again, particularly for the people who are already most vulnerable.

For example, in ITS households that heat their tents with waste wood and plastic, women and children travel out from the ITS to forage for these materials, exposing themselves to risk of aggression and assault. Families who default on rent payments risk being evicted. See the content on evictions and their consequences in Section 4.3.6 below. Taking children out of school to save money increases the chances that they will be sent to work.

Increased risk of violence, including domestic violence and SGBV, within the ITS

People living in ITS often have a high level of stress and anxiety because of the trials of daily life as a Syrian refugee in Lebanon. There is widespread damage to people's self-esteem and a strong sense of the loss of quality of life. Many people have also suffered highly disturbing experiences in Syria. These, and other factors already mentioned, such as fear and anxiety, or loss of traditional gender roles for men, create a situation where violent reactions may be triggered by a multitude of more or less serious events. The risk of physical and psychological violence within the ITS, including domestic violence and sexual and gender-based violence⁵⁴ may be increased as a result of reduction in WASH services, because of:

- disputes between households over access to water and latrines;
- disputes between households about cleaning shared latrines;
- disputes between households about solid-waste management and management of latrine sludge;
- disputes within households – for example, where men's expectations in terms of the standard of housekeeping and laundry are not met because water and soap are scarce, or where men and women have competing priorities for spending scarce resources, for example on hygiene items;
- disputes within households about how one or the other household member defends the household in competition with other households;
- disputes over all nature of things that are made more likely by the additional burden of stress caused by more difficult access to WASH services and supplies.

4.3.6 Impacts on social stability

Withdrawing WASH services from ITS will oblige ITS households and communities to find solutions that may aggravate existing tensions with the local Lebanese community, deepen the stigmatization of refugees, encourage more repressive policies on the part of municipalities, and increase the probability of evictions and violent incidents between ITS residents and local people.

Stigmatization of Syrian refugees

Syrian refugees are an increasingly stigmatized group in Lebanon, and are obvious scapegoats for a wide range of real and perceived problems facing Lebanese people, including the state of the economy, lack of public services, crime and insecurity. WASH service reduction is likely to add to the stigmatization of ITS households and communities by their Lebanese neighbours by making it more difficult for the Syrians to live a clean and decent life (according to the standards of both communities) and standing out as being somehow inferior and a menace to social order.

One of the causes of additional stigma is the difficulty of managing solid waste and faecal sludge, which make the ITS surroundings more polluted and give the impression from the outside that the inhabitants are dirty and untidy. Another contributor to stigma is that ITS residents may be more prone to diseases and infestations such as scabies and lice that carry social stigma as a result of reduced WASH services, and so become people to be avoided, for fear of contamination. This, added to the risk that ITS residents find it more difficult to maintain standards of appearance when in social contact with Lebanese people, can contribute to a popular perception of Syrian refugees as being somehow abject, that is being in a kind of misery that evokes rejection rather than compassion. This is a particular risk given the length of time that Syrian refugees have been settled in the Bekaa and the current political and media climate in Lebanon.

Strain on local services

Public WASH services were not generally strong in the Bekaa before the arrival of the Syrian refugees, and they have been stretched by additional demand for water supplies and solid-waste management. The humanitarian response has taken up some of the burden of service provision and this has, to some extent, helped reduce the impact on local residents and lightened the load of the municipalities. If WASH services to ITS are reduced, then, in the words of a municipal employee in Bouday: *'The burden will fall on the refugees, and then it'll fall on the municipality.'*

The increased burden on municipalities and the reduction of the quality of services to local residents that may ensue, particularly if services are ceased or reduced without sufficient prior warning and planning, could be causes of tension and an additional mark against refugees in those municipalities where they already have an unfavourable image for local people.

Health services could also come under greater strain if disease incidence among refugee and host populations rises as a result of WASH service reduction.

Increased risk of evictions and forced relocation

Among the respondents in the VASyR 2017, 12% of Syrian refugee respondents said they had moved accommodation in the previous six months, and 10% said they were considering moving in the following six months. Of the people who had moved, 32% said they had been evicted by the landlord and 6% by the municipality. In addition, 3% said their movement was due to tensions with the landlord, 3% due to tensions with local community, 20% because the rent was too expensive and 9% because shelter and WASH conditions were not acceptable. Similar figures were recorded in answer to the question about the reasons for considering moving in the coming months.

The process and consequences of eviction create severe material, physical and emotional suffering for the people evicted⁵⁵ and increase the risk of physical violence if ITS residents resist eviction. Forced movement because of tensions with the landlord or local communities for example, also create high material and social costs, such as payment for removal costs, losing work, having to build new social networks etc.

Reduced WASH services lead to an increased risk of evictions and other forms of forced mobility due to increased tensions with Lebanese neighbours and less favourable attitudes of

municipalities because of poor environmental sanitation in the ITS, defaulting on rental payments, and problems with landlords arising from ITS households and communities' initiatives to manage WASH services without external support.

For example, Rachid (♂) from Bouday B explained that if the desludging service were to be stopped, *'we'd enlarge the pits or dig new pits, as we did before. But from the landlord's perspective this wouldn't be good, and if there's less desludging there'll be more smells and complaints from neighbours. Maybe the landlord would want to kick us out.'*

A serious problem with solid-waste management in Deir el Ahmar was described in Section 4.2.4. If unresolved, this could lead to conflict with the local community and pressure from the municipality on the ITS households to move out, unless they pay the monthly refuse collection fee. Although municipalities are not legally empowered to carry out evictions, they can and do this.

Households having to pay more for WASH services and supplies may no longer be able to afford the rent and so may be forced to move to cheaper accommodation. And if they cannot afford to pay for WASH services, they may also choose to move to an ITS where such services are available or more affordable.

Drivers of conflict between refugees and Lebanese communities

A number of coping strategies adopted by ITS households and communities to deal with lack of WASH service may cause tension with the local Lebanese community. Examples include discharging latrine effluent into water courses, burning or dumping refuse and competing for scarce local water supplies. These nuisances for local people can aggravate existing tensions created by competition for employment for poorer Lebanese and, in some localities, concerns about insecurity and demographic imbalance. They can add to other destabilizing factors such as stigmatization of Syrian refugees, strain on local services and increased risk of evictions and other forms of forced relocation described above, which may result from a reduction in WASH services to ITS communities.

This complex set of drivers of conflict increases the risk of violent incidents between ITS residents and local people, and their potential to escalate.

4.3.7 Other potential impacts of WASH service reduction

Implicit messages

Syrian refugees in Lebanon generally have a high level of access to information on regional and national events, and know the humanitarian system well. Most households have a television set and access to a smartphone. Information and opinions are exchanged on social media, and the activities of the humanitarian actors are monitored and commented. The people interviewed during this study were well aware that funding for assistance programmes is being cut, and that further reductions in services are likely in 2018. They also get a clear message from Lebanese politicians and the media that they have overstayed their welcome and should now return to Syria.

In this context, withdrawing from WASH service provision is likely to send an implicit message to ITS residents that reinforces these calls for them to go home. It will be understood not as an isolated event, but as part of a pattern.

Withdrawing the services also further isolates ITS households and communities. During interviews in Younine, it was frequently said that no NGO had come to provide any assistance since regular programmes stopped some months previously. There had been visits, and promises made, but no assistance forthcoming. The provision of assistance is not only of material value, it is also a visible demonstration of solidarity and recognition of refugees'

priorities. Being without assistance and the regular contact that comes with it increases ITS residents' feeling of isolation and their sense of having to manage on their own.

Impact on ability to engage with other local actors including municipalities

With or without a reduction in WASH services, the presence of ITS will remain a major concern for the municipalities as in practice they are responsible for WASH services in their locality as well as having great influence on the protection context for refugees.

Oxfam has an ambitious vision for water supply in North Bekaa involving municipalities, landlords, Lebanese householders and ITS communities.⁵⁶ The organization engages with municipalities on the question of managing solid waste, as well as on protection issues. Providing WASH services to ITS communities is important for Oxfam's ability to pursue these priorities with local partners, as it is for other humanitarian WASH actors. It demonstrates the organizations' commitment and ability to address problems that affect all the actors in a locality and helps lighten the load of hosting refugees. Without these services, WASH agencies' legitimacy to engage with local actors and negotiate effectively to pursue their goals for refugee and host communities would be reduced.

Impact on the delivery of other programmes

A reduction in WASH services to ITS households and communities contributes to increased needs in other programme areas such as protection, livelihoods, psychosocial support or health promotion, as described in the previous sections.

At the same time, delivering these essential but primarily non-material humanitarian services would be made more difficult by the withdrawal of WASH services. This is substantially because ITS residents are more prepared to engage on these issues when there is also an effort to address basic needs, such as water supply and access to latrines. Participants in this study were very clear about the priority they place on basic needs and the difficulty of addressing other issues when those needs are not satisfied. Humanitarian agencies' legitimacy with refugee population they serve is at stake if they cannot respond to the priorities they express.

5 CONCLUSIONS

This study addressed the following problem statement: substantial cuts in funding for WASH services for Syrian refugees living in ITS in the Bekaa are likely to produce a range of negative impacts in the areas of public health, livelihoods, protection and social stability. These negative impacts will affect not only Syrian refugees but also Lebanese communities. The impacts related to WASH will create an additional burden for other sectors of assistance that are also weakened by funding constraints and are less able to respond effectively. The findings of the study substantially confirm this statement.

Syrian refugees in ITS live in a physical, social, political and economic environment that imposes severe constraints, and limits their basic rights to protection, assistance and representation. Their living conditions are poor, their livelihoods are precarious and they are exposed to risks of abuse and exploitation, without access to legal redress. Conditions for refugees are worsening, with increasing poverty and cut-backs to other essential services.

ITS households and communities place an extremely high priority on access to safe water, decent sanitation and the ability to maintain standards of personal and domestic hygiene. WASH services are highly regarded by refugees as an essential aspect of humanitarian assistance and have made an essential contribution to their ability to live in health, dignity and safety in Lebanon.

However, WASH services to ITS are based largely on unsustainable solutions, particularly water trucking and latrine desludging and their continuity is therefore highly dependent on external funding. When funding is not available, service delivery stops and refugees are forced to find local solutions with whatever means they have.

ITS residents have shown themselves, individually and collectively, to be resourceful and purposeful people with ability to solve problems and negotiate assistance in order to live a decent life in spite of the constraints within which they live. ITS households and communities faced with a reduction in WASH services will react through a range of strategies to attempt to maintain a basic level of water supply, sanitation and hygiene.

Despite these efforts, a substantial reduction in WASH services is likely to produce a myriad of negative consequences in the following areas:

- An increase in WASH-related disease for ITS residents and nearby Lebanese communities through the consumption of contaminated water, insufficient access to latrines, unsafe management of faecal sludge and solid waste;
- Increased levels of stress, anxiety, fear, shame and a sense of rejection, leading to an increase in mental health disorders and an increase in conflict and potential violence within ITS communities and households, including domestic violence;
- Tensions between households over access to scarce services and stigmatization of individuals and households within the ITS if they cannot maintain standards of personal and domestic hygiene;
- Significant increased spending on WASH services at household level in an attempt to keep a minimum level of access to safe drinking water, preserve basic access to sanitation and maintain an acceptable level of personal and domestic hygiene;
- Reduced spending on other essentials such as healthcare, education, food or heating fuel, thereby creating knock-on impacts on health and wellbeing, in particular for children;
- Recourse to income-generating strategies that pose protection-related threats, such as child labour, illegal or dangerous work and early marriage;

- Protection-related threats associated with strategies to manage WASH, such as tapping into a water supply network, travelling to seek water from a spring or taking solid waste to village bins;
- Tensions with local Lebanese communities created by inadequate management of solid waste or competition for limited water supplies, leading to potential conflict and increased risk of violent incidents;
- Worsening of environmental sanitation in the ITS, leading to stigmatization of the ITS communities and increased risk of evictions;
- Stigmatization of ITS households and communities because of degradation of personal and domestic hygiene.

These consequences affect all sections of the refugee population living in the ITS, but children are particularly at risk. The likely impacts of reduced WASH services that hit them in particular include an increase in communicable disease, greater psychosocial stress increased risk of undernutrition, greater use of child labour and drop-out from school.

Providing cash assistance to ITS households may be an attractive option to substitute for WASH service delivery, as it shifts the management overheads to community level, and complements refugees' ability to find local solutions. However, leaving communities to fend for themselves, even with financial support, will not guarantee sufficient access to the supplies and services they need. Some form of regulation is required to help ensure that ITS households get access to good quality services at an appropriate price.

The Government of Lebanon has obligations under Sustainable Development Goal 6 and the Human Right to Water and Sanitation by ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. This obligation cannot be met without the necessary funds for short-term maintenance of essential WASH services to Syrian refugees, and for longer term investment in services that meet the needs of refugees and the Lebanese communities that host them.

At local-government level, the municipalities have an essential role in providing or facilitating WASH services for ITS households and communities, and are directly affected in terms of financial burden, environmental health concerns and social instability when funding for those services is insufficient. Their capacity to serve the needs of the local population and Syrian refugees has not been substantially improved over the past six years, despite the large sums of money spent in their localities on support to refugees.

The humanitarian response has tended to focus too much on the needs of individual ITS and the narrow objectives of each agency's programme, and not enough on the contexts in which those ITS are located, and the needs and functioning of the municipalities that administer those territories. Assistance has been rather piecemeal and lacking in strategy and coordination. There are potentially significant gains to be made by closer local collaboration between the WASH and other sectors, including health; shelter, livelihoods and social stability (for example, to build on the latter's solid-waste management initiative).

There is no short-term prospect of a safe, voluntary and informed return to Syria for the vast majority of refugees, and it is therefore likely that refugees will remain for an extended period in informal settlements in Bekaa. The Government of Lebanon, aid donors and humanitarian actors have a responsibility to ensure that refugees can remain in conditions that guarantee their rights to protection and wellbeing until they can return in safety. Life for ITS households and communities is already fraught with difficulties. Withdrawing essential WASH services to ITS will worsen their living conditions and will increase push factors for involuntary return if refugees consider going back to Syria prematurely to escape increasingly harsh conditions in Lebanon.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

To Lebanese authorities

1. Fulfil obligations under Sustainable Development Goal 6 and the Human Right to Water and Sanitation by ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, especially conflict-affected communities.
2. Facilitate integration of ITS communities into public-service systems, including water supply and solid-waste management, and include the refugee population in planning and funding scenarios.
3. Foster a positive protection environment for ITS communities to enable refugees to support their livelihoods, access essential services and maintain a safe and dignified life in Lebanon until conditions in Syria allow them to return.

To aid donors

4. Sustain funding for essential WASH services to allow ITS communities continued access to water, sanitation and hygiene to technical guidance agreed in the Lebanon Water Sector.
5. In parallel, fund the development of more sustainable services for all refugees and deprived Lebanese citizens residing in refugee/migrant-affected municipalities nationwide.
6. Ensure that a specific and restricted provision for WASH services is included in cash-based response mechanisms, to enable refugees to access services and to provide revenue for public service providers, particularly municipalities and Water Establishments.

To humanitarian actors

7. Try to maintain a minimum package of support to ITS, even if desludging and water trucking are discontinued. This should include health referrals, responding to urgent and important WASH needs that arise in ITS such as arrival of additional households or disease outbreaks and strong integration with protection and livelihoods activities at ITS level.
8. Maintain a regulatory/monitoring role, to ensure water quality is maintained and that prices for water supply and desludging are controlled.
9. If multipurpose cash-based assistance is developed further as a mode of assistance to ITS households, ensure that core WASH components are restricted and/or paid directly to municipal or other relevant authorities, particularly fees for water supply, solid-waste management and sludge disposal.
10. Pursue activities that encourage and facilitate positive interactions between ITS communities and local Lebanese communities; for example, joint activities on world WASH days and hygiene-promotion in schools.
11. Pursue WASH programming for ITS by an integrated approach at the municipality level, taking account of WASH needs, capacities and resources across the whole of the population, not just focusing on the ITS. This includes more consistent and more strategic relations with municipal authorities and other actors, stronger coordination between humanitarian and development actors working at municipality level.
12. Pursue an integrated approach to water-resource management, in line with recommendations from Oxfam's Feasibility assessment for water services to ITS, and also to solid-waste management and faecal sludge management.

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ANNEX 1. SUMMARY OF STRATEGIES TO COPE WITH REDUCED WASH SERVICES, AND THEIR POTENTIAL DIRECT AND INDIRECT CONSEQUENCES

Sub-sector of service	Strategies	Potential direct consequences	Potential indirect consequences
Water supply	Wash/ shower less frequently	Reduced level of personal and domestic hygiene People wear clothes that look and feel more dirty	<p>Public health:</p> <p>Increased level of disease in the ITS</p> <p>Public health risk for Lebanese neighbours</p> <p>Increased mental-health problems</p> <p>Social:</p> <p>Increased feelings of shame, anxiety and rejection</p> <p>Nuisance for ITS residence and loss of well-being</p> <p>Stigmatisation of individuals in the ITS</p> <p>Tensions between households</p> <p>Increased risk of violence, including domestic violence, within the ITS</p> <p>Livelihoods:</p> <p>Increased expenditure on healthcare</p> <p>Reduced expenditure on other essentials (food, heating fuel etc.)</p> <p>Need to increase revenue</p> <p>Protection and social stability:</p> <p>Protection risks associated with coping strategies to increase revenue</p> <p>Nuisance for Lebanese neighbours</p> <p>Tensions between refugees and Lebanese neighbours</p> <p>Stigmatisation of Syrian refugees by the local population</p> <p>Strain on local services for the Lebanese population</p> <p>Increased risk of evictions</p> <p>Increased risk of violent incidents between ITS residents and local people</p>
	Wash clothes and bedding less frequently		
	Clean tents less frequently / less well		
	Flush toilets less often	Blocked waste pipes	
	Use an uncontrolled water supply (surface water, delivery from an unprotected source, unhygienic trucking)	Consumption of contaminated drinking-water	
	Tap into a public water-supply network	Damage to network and loss of revenue	
Toilets	Build / replace / rehabilitate toilets	Design and build of toilets is not up to sanitary standard (minimum safe distance from water source, cover of pit etc.) Design and build of toilets is not up to safety standard (use of fabric and plastic sheeting, risk of pit collapse etc.) Contamination of water supply	
	Share latrines between more households	Longer queues to use the toilet Keeping toilets clean is more difficult Increased sense of lack of safety Increased need for emergency open defecation	
	Open defecation	Shame and disgust Discomfort and inconvenience Surface faecal contamination	
	Dig a new pit when the current pit is full	New pit design and build is not up to sanitary standard (minimum safe distance from water source, unsafe cover of pit etc.)	
	Discharge pit effluent into soakaway pit or surface drain	Surface faecal contamination inside the ITS	
Solid-waste management	Burn the waste next to the ITS	Nuisance for ITS residents Nuisance for neighbours Fire risk	
	Dump the waste elsewhere outside the ITS	Faecal contamination Nuisance for local residents	
	Take the waste to municipality bins away from the ITS	Unplanned increase in solid-waste stream for municipalities Conflict with Lebanese users	
	Use less, use less frequently	Less effective handwashing and laundry	

Hygiene items		Looking and feeling less clean	
	Buy one cheap detergent for all purposes (bathing, handwashing, laundry, dishwashing)	Feeling less clean Feeling and smelling more poor	
	Buy cheaper hygiene products	Use of home-made washable sanitary pads without the means to disinfect and dry them properly	
All aspects of WaSH	Bear increased costs for WaSH services and goods		

ANNEX 2: LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS

Organization	Position	Location
ACH	Incoming Field Coordinator	Bekaa
	Outgoing Field Coordinator	Bekaa
	WASH Project Manager	Bekaa
	FSL Programme Manager	Bekaa
	WASH Programme Coordinator	Beirut
AJEM	Social Worker	Bekaa
CISP	WASH Programme Coordinator	Bekaa
IMC	Senior Mental Health Officer	Bekaa
Medair	Health Project Manager	Bekaa
	Health Programme Manager	Bekaa
Oxfam	WASH Coordinator	Beirut
	MEAL Coordinator	Beirut
	Country Director	Beirut
	Head of Programmes	Beirut
	Policy Lead	Beirut
	Protection Policy Research Advisor	Beirut
	Protection Advisor	Beirut/Bekaa
	Protection Coordinator	Beirut
	Funding Coordinator	Beirut
	Area Manager	Bekaa
	Senior MEAL Officer	Bekaa
	Information Management Officer	Bekaa
	Senior PHE Officer	Bekaa
	Senior PHP Officer	Bekaa
	Senior Protection Officer	Bekaa
	Senior Protection Officer	Bekaa
	Project Manager	Bekaa
Business Development Lead Officer	Bekaa	
PHE Assistant	Bekaa	
PHP Assistant	Bekaa	

	Senior PHE Officer	Bekaa
Solidarités	WASH Programme Coordinator	Beirut
UNHCR	Head of Sub-Office	Bekaa
	Protection Officer	Bekaa
	WASH and Shelter Officer	Bekaa
	Associate WASH Officer	Beirut
UNICEF	Water Sector Field Coordinator	Bekaa
	WASH Sector Co-Lead	Beirut
WVI Lebanon	Technical WASH Coordinator	Beirut

NOTES

- 1 Source: The Government of Lebanon and the United Nations (2017). Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017–2020.
- 2 As of 31 January 2017, the number of Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR in Lebanon was 995,512, of whom 357,395 were in the Bekaa region.
<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122> accessed 06/03/18.
- 3 Inter-Agency Coordination Lebanon (2017). Funding of WASH activities in informal settlements. Presentation to donors, Beirut 20 October 2017.
- 4 *Shawish*: widely used term to describe the leader in each ITS, whose role may include a variety of aspects, including organizing labour and access to work, relations with the ITS landlord, being the general point of contact for other external actors, including municipal authorities and NGOs, and organizing activities within the ITS.
- 5 It did not seem appropriate to ask interviewees' age systematically. The question was asked, or the information offered, when it was relevant to the subject being discussed at the time.
- 6 For example, 50% of Syrian refugees surveyed during a study in 2016 reported having been victim of abuse while in Lebanon, and 34% of respondents in Bekaa reported feeling unsafe. Al Sharabati, Carole and Jihad Nammour (2016). Survey on Perceptions of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon: Between Resilience and Vulnerability. USJ, Political Science Institute.
- 7 UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP (2017). Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR-2017). p65
- 8 UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP (2017). Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR-2017) p24
- 9 For a comprehensive review of water supply to ITS in North Bekaa, see Oxfam (2017). Feasibility Assessment for Water Service Provision to Informal Tented Settlements (ITS) in Lebanon: A case study of North Bekaa.
- 10 Oxfam (2017). Post Distribution Monitoring WASH – GAC December 2017 and Oxfam (2017). Post Distribution Monitoring WASH – ECHO December 2017.
- 11 R. Rima, R.R. Habib, D. Mikati, S. Hojeij, K. El Asmar, R. Zurayk (2016). Associations Between Poor Living Conditions and Multi-Morbidity Among Syrian Migrant Agricultural Workers in Lebanon. *The European Journal of Public Health*. 1–6. July 2016.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305269574_Associations_between_poor_living_conditions_and_multi-morbidity_among_Syrian_migrant_agricultural_workers_in_Lebanon accessed 07/03/18
- 12 Interview with IMC's Senior Mental Health Officer, Bekaa, 12/02/18.
- 13 Oxfam (2016). Healthcare: Safe and dignified access. Thematic protection monitoring report July–October 2016.
- 14 The Government of Lebanon is signatory to UN General Assembly resolution 64/292 (July 2010), which recognizes the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights.
www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/64/292
- 15 Article 2 (2) of The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights identifies the following non-exhaustive grounds of non-discrimination: race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.
www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b36c0.html last accessed 07/03/18
- 16 J. Chalcraft (2006). Subalternity, Material Practices and Popular Aspirations: Syrian migrant workers in Lebanon. *The Arab Studies Journal*. Vol. 14 N°2 (Fall 2006), 9–38.
- 17 UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP (2017). Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR-2017) p1.
- 18 See Oxfam (2016). Healthcare: Safe and dignified access. Thematic protection monitoring report July–October 2016.
- 19 For more on this subject, see Lebanon Support (2016). Formal Informality, Brokering Mechanisms, and Illegality: The Impact of the Lebanese State's Policies on Syrian Refugees' Daily Lives.
- 20 UNDP (2017). The Burden of Scarce Opportunities: The Social Stability Context in Central and West Bekaa. The institutional landscape is essentially the same in North Bekaa.
- 21 For examples of conflict between Syrian refugees and local actors in Baalbek-Hermel, see UNDP/Lebanon Support (2015). Between Local Patronage Relationships and Securitization: The Conflict Context in the Bekaa Region. Conflict Analysis Report. January 2015. pp26–28.
- 22 Plural of 'abīd', which can mean 'slave' in popular Arabic in spite of a more formal meaning which is 'servant of God'.

- 23 Probable reference to the case of the alleged rape and murder of a Lebanese woman by the family's Syrian caretaker in September 2017.
- 24 UNDP (2017). The Burden of Scarce Opportunities: The Social Stability Context in Central and West Bekaa. Conflict Analysis Report – March 2017. pp8–9.
- 25 For specific examples of municipalities' policing practices, see Oxfam (2017). Protection Analysis Report Jan to Jun 2017.
- 26 Oxfam (2018). Imagine You Were Evicted.
- 27 The word 'community' is used here to mean a collection of people – individuals, groups, or families that have shared interests; regular interactions for satisfying those interests, through formal and informal means; and a shared identity as belonging to the community.
- 28 A common cash card providing US\$27 per person per month that can be spent in shops contracted by the World Food Programme.
- 29 Oxfam (2017). Still Looking for Safety: Voices of refugees from Syria on solutions for the present and future. C. Al Sharabati and J. Nammour (2016). Survey on Perceptions of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon: Between Resilience and Vulnerability. USJ, Political Science Institute. Presentation of Results, February 2017. UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP (2017). Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR-2017).
- 30 Refugees were not asked about the circumstances of their flight from Syria during interviews and discussions.
- 31 These observations are supported by those made in Oxfam's study (2017). We're Not There Yet: Voices of refugees from Syria in Lebanon. p17.
- 32 Again, the observations in this section are consistent with those made in the Oxfam study above, pp 21–22.
- 33 '*Malesh*' means 'it's ok' in popular Arabic.
- 34 Oxfam (forthcoming 2018). Pushing Back on Push Factors: Conditions in Lebanon must enable refugees to make truly free and voluntary choices about eventual return to Syria.
- 35 The survey only includes refugee households with members registered with UNHCR (representing approximately two-thirds of the estimated total of 1.5 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon). Households in the Bekaa not registered with UNHCR are likely to face more difficult livelihoods conditions as they are not eligible for the WFP common cash card.
- 36 UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP (2017). Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR-2017). p2.
- 37 UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP (2017). Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR-2017). p59 & 117.
- 38 Oxfam (2017). Feasibility Assessment for Water Service Provision to Informal Tented Settlements (ITS) in Lebanon: A case study of north Bekaa.
- 39 The ITS served by Oxfam receive trucked water unless there is an alternative safe source. In this case, the quality of the water is monitored every three months and the results communicated to the ITS residents. If the water is only safe for cleaning and laundry, then Oxfam provides 10 litres of potable water per person per day.
- 40 Oxfam (2017). Post Distribution Monitoring WASH – GAC December 2017 and Oxfam (2017). Post Distribution Monitoring WASH – ECHO December 2017.
- 41 UNICEF Healthy Camp Monitoring Tool. The tool measures the extent to which WASH and environmental health results have been achieved in hundreds of informal Syrian refugee settlements, and inform on priority remediation actions by the communities and partners. It uses tablets with KoBo data collection system and online analysis dashboard. Data provided by UNICEF, 14/03/18.
- 42 UNHCR, REACH (2014). WASH assessment of Syrian refugee households in Akkar governorate: Lebanon: Assessment report. December 2014.
- 43 For example, L. Fewtrell and J. Colford (2004). Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Interventions and Diarrhoea: A systematic review and meta-analysis. Health, Nutrition and Population (HNP) Discussion Paper. World Bank.
- 44 R. Rima, R.R. Habib, D. Mikati, S. Hojeij, K. El Asmar, R. Zurayk (2016).

- 45 See the UNICEF Conceptual Framework of Nutritional Status and Child Development. <https://www.unicef.org/nutrition/training/2.5/4.html>
- 46 Interview with Medair Health Programme and Health Project Managers, 01/02/18.
- 47 International Medical Corps (2015). Addressing Regional Mental Health Needs and Gaps in the Context of the Syria Crisis.
- 48 Interview with IMC's Senior Mental Health Officer, Bekaa, 12/02/18.
- 49 Average annual household income was estimated at approximately 7 million LBP in the Oxfam feasibility study. This compares with an estimation of around 6 million LBP for Baalbek District in the VASyR 2017.
- 50 UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP (2017). Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR-2017) p117.
- 51 UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP (2017). Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR-2017). pp55–56.
- 52 UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP (2017). Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR-2017). pp80–81.
- 53 UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP (2017). Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR-2017). p117.
- 54 The protracted displacement and the increasing vulnerabilities related to legal status, economic insecurity and severe living conditions in crowded settlements, further exacerbate the risk of incidences of sexual and gender-based violence. Source: ABAAD, UNHCR (2017). SGBV Trends, Risk Factors and Coping Mechanisms among Syrian Refugee Communities in the Bekaa. SGBV Baseline Assessment, November 2017, p5.
- 55 See Oxfam (2018). Imagine You Were Evicted, for testimonies of Syrian refugees who have experienced eviction.
- 56 Oxfam (2017). Feasibility Assessment for Water Service Provision to Informal Tented Settlements (ITS) in Lebanon: A case study of north Bekaa.

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