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For action

Short-duration country programme document

Lebanon

Summary

The short-duration country programme document for Lebanon is presented to the Executive Board for discussion and approval. The Board is requested to approve the aggregate indicative budget of \$600,000.00 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and \$2,000,000.00 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for 2009.

* E/ICEF/2008/16.

<i>Basic data</i> [†] (2006 unless otherwise stated)	
Child population (millions, under 18 years)	1.4
U5MR (per 1,000 live births)	30
Underweight (% , moderate and severe, 2004)	4
Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births, 2005)	150
Primary school enrolment (% , net male/female, 2005)	93/92
Primary school children reaching grade 5 (% , 2004)	93
Use of improved drinking water sources (% , 2004)	100
Use of adequate sanitation facilities (% , 2004)	98
Adult HIV prevalence rate (% , 2005)	0.1
Child labour (% , children 5 to 14 years old, 2000)	7
GNI per capita (US\$)	5490
One year olds immunized with DPT3 (%)	92
One year olds immunized with measles vaccines (%)	96

[†] More comprehensive country data on children and women are available at <http://www.unicef.org>.

The situation of children and women

1. The availability of reliable and updated statistical data on the situation of children and women in Lebanon has been of concern for some time. Ongoing initiatives of the United Nations agencies and the World Bank seek to strengthen the capacity of the Lebanese Central Administration for Statistics in data collection and to close current information gaps, especially in areas where data is outdated or incomplete.
2. While some socioeconomic indicators have improved at the aggregate national level, subnational disparities needs to be addressed in the North (Tripoli and Akkar/Minnieh-Dennieh), the South (Jezzine/Saida) and the Beqaa Valley region (Hermel/Baalbeck), where some two thirds of those living below the poverty line in Lebanon are concentrated.¹
3. Recent data on child and neonatal health show that, while child deaths have decreased, from 37 per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 30 per 1,000 live births in 2005,² the country is still not on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of reducing the under-five mortality rate by two thirds. The average annual rate of reduction of the under-five mortality rate in Lebanon currently stands at 1.4 per cent, compared to the minimum of 4.4 per cent required to achieve the target by 2015.
4. While school enrolment rates are high, further improvement of education quality and prevention of school drop-out are the main areas of concern for Lebanese educators and UNICEF. Similar concerns exist with regard to access to improved drinking water; recent surveys indicated substantively lower access rates than what is officially reported. While water distribution networks are available in many localities, local communities are reporting that water

¹ The poverty line is defined as \$2.40 per capita per day; see *Poverty, Growth and Inequality in Lebanon*, the United Nations Development Programme and the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs, 2007.

² Adjusted estimate used by the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF and reproduced in the *World Health Report 2006* and *State of the World's Children Report 2007*. According to the Pan Arab Family Health Survey 2004, the IMR and U5MR are 18.6 per 1,000 live births and 19.1 per 1,000 live births, respectively.

is not available through these distribution networks and that they have to resort to other, private sources of water supply.

5. Private entities – both commercial companies and non-profit organizations – play a key role in service provision in Lebanon. For instance, around 90 per cent of primary health care services are provided by non-State entities and more than 30 per cent of drinking water is being procured from private suppliers. The fact that non-State entities are the main service providers has led to wide variations in service quality. This situation requires stronger government regulation and quality control systems where service provision standards are established and enforced by the State.

6. The 2006 conflict between Lebanon and Israel resulted in severe devastation of the basic infrastructure in Lebanon. The total impact cost of the conflict was officially estimated at \$5 billion (or 22 per cent of Lebanon's gross domestic product). Some 40,000 farmers have been affected, according to International Labour Organization (ILO) data,³ with unexploded ordnance continuing to cause casualties and render farming hazardous in many areas in the South. In addition, the livelihoods of 5,000 fishermen and their families have been severely affected through the loss of boats, fishing nets and other property. Within the tourism sector, the ILO report estimates that the conflict has led to the loss of at least 30,000 seasonal jobs and amounted to around \$2 billion in lost income due to a decline in tourism.

7. The conflict was followed by a prolonged stand-off between the Lebanese political parties blocking the formation of a coalition government and the election of a new president. The situation delayed the country's recovery from the impact of the conflict and seriously weakened social cohesion within society. The internal tensions resulted in an armed conflict in early 2008 that reminded the Lebanese of the prolonged civil war of the 1980s. The youth in Lebanon have been polarized by the conflicting political parties. The recent social tensions and armed confrontations in Lebanon threaten the spirit of tolerance, coexistence and peaceful settlement of conflicting viewpoints, especially among the young generation.

Key results and lessons learned from previous cooperation

8. For the last three years, the prevailing insecurity due to the political situation in Lebanon has prevented the United Nations agencies from completing the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and developing a full five-year country programme document (CPD). UNICEF and all United Nations agencies operated on the basis of annual bridging CPDs for 2007 and 2008.

Key results achieved

9. Despite the challenging political environment, the collaboration among UNICEF and its governmental and non-governmental partners has resulted in a number of achievements. Some highlights of the important results achieved in 2007 and the early part of 2008 are as follows:

(a) Enhanced immunization coverage rates. Combined diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus vaccine and measles-containing vaccine immunizations through the public health care system have reached up to 70 per cent in three out of ten underserved districts targeted by the Ministry of Public Health; this was part of the recently adopted 'Reach Every District' approach. UNICEF advocacy with the Ministry of Public Health and its technical backstopping of the

³ 'An ILO Post Conflict Decent Work Programme for Lebanon', report of the ILO Multidisciplinary Mission to Lebanon, September 2006.

national Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) system – with a particular focus on the mapping of public health facilities, EPI-coverage data collection and strategically targeted cold chain supplies – were among the instrumental factors behind the improved EPI coverage in the underserved districts.

(b) Support for infant and young children feeding practices. The maternal and child health care component adopted a comprehensive approach that included the development of a draft National Nutrition Policy, training for more than 300 health care practitioners on infant and young children feeding practices and breast-feeding promotion campaigns in 80 villages (with the estimated coverage of 4,000 mothers).

(c) Expansion of support for juvenile justice. UNICEF helped the Ministry of Justice build mechanisms and networks to secure the operationalization of standards in juvenile justice. As a result, the application of ‘community work’ as an example of possible alternatives to detention increased from barely 1 per cent of cases involving youth in 2002-2005 to about 15 per cent in 2007. UNICEF support for juvenile justice is channelled through two reputable non-governmental organizations (NGOs) formally nominated by the Ministry to go between the courts and the communities where young offenders participate in social rehabilitation. The scheme will be funded largely through the budget of the Ministry of Justice.

(d) Under the child-friendly school initiative, more than 300 teachers were able to upgrade their knowledge and skills on first aid management and health counselling. In addition, a referral system with local health centres was established in 28 schools, and more than 6,000 school children were screened for health problems.

(e) UNICEF continued to work with the Lebanon water and wastewater establishments in Beirut, Mount Lebanon and the South, to ensure provision of safe drinking water for approximately 600,000 people. In the 18 months since the crisis began in 2006, UNICEF has remained the principal actor involved in the rehabilitation of water supply networks in South Lebanon. By the end of 2007, UNICEF and partner NGOs completed the reconstruction of seven major water reservoirs (six with 200 square meters [m³] capacity and one with 1,000 m³) for 300,000 people. Rehabilitation of 22 water storage tanks secured a daily supply of 5.1 million litres to 85,000 people (or 60 litres per person per day). To repair water delivery networks in villages in South Lebanon, about 27 kilometres of pipes have been procured. In light of frequent electricity cuts, the provision of generators producing 3,700 kilovolt-ampere of total energy capacity for six pumping stations in the South and the Beqaa Valley was critical for uninterrupted water supply. The UNICEF strategy of improving water quality through treatment at the source has spurred the decision to procure 22 water chlorination units covering the needs of 30,000 individuals in 22 villages of South Lebanon. In addition, 10 mobile water treatment units have been purchased, mainly as contingency items that can be used in any location in case of an emergency.

(f) Engineering assessment and rehabilitation of up to 90 schools (including water and sanitation facilities) in the South and other areas affected by the hostilities. More than 130 teachers in these conflict-affected schools were trained in class management techniques and basic psychosocial counselling; coaching on remedial classes and literacy programmes specifics was also offered. A combination of international and local donors provided funding for these UNICEF programme activities.

(g) Establishment and maintenance of child-friendly spaces in the areas particularly affected by the recent conflict. Activities included the creation of recreational and psychosocial rehabilitation opportunities; promotion of family and intergenerational communication, post-

trauma counselling and rehabilitation for children, young people and their mothers; promotion of play therapy and other psychosocial recovery techniques. Altogether, 25 child-friendly spaces accommodated 15,000 children, and more than 3,000 animators were trained to organize these activities.

(h) Formation of an innovative model of public-private partnerships, involving the NGO community and the private sector, aimed at upgrading the capacity of public schools to serve as community development centres. The ‘school as a community centre for all’ model, currently being tested in some 20 pilot locations in the most impoverished areas in Hermel, Tripoli, Akkar and the Beqaa Valley, is addressing a range of issues: adult illiteracy; school drop-out; poor hygiene and water management practices in schools and households; neglect of environmental considerations; nonutilisation of local recreational opportunities; and preservation of cultural heritage. These partnerships are being pursued in close coordination with local development initiatives supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

(i) Launch of an innovative television programme, ‘Sawtouna’, produced by young people for young people. The programme has been airing regularly since late 2006 on the country’s main television channel twice a month. The audience coverage, tracked by a media monitoring company, has been stable, with each programme broadcast reaching no fewer than 300,000 viewers in 2007. Based on viewership data, it is estimated that at least 35 per cent of the Lebanese youth are familiar with the programme. It has so far addressed topics such as the impact of Lebanon’s political developments on the youth; the political divides within society; interreligious marriage; the environmental crisis; road safety; cluster bombs; the effects of globalization on urban and rural youth; women’s rights; relations with parents and siblings; lifestyles and depression; HIV/AIDS; dating and relationships; the phenomenon of ‘Facebook’ and other social networking websites; graffiti and self-expression; urbanization patterns; youth migration; traditions and beliefs; and many others.

Lessons learned

10. The public sector in Lebanon has a limited role in the provision of services. The private and NGO sectors are taking the lead in the provision of basic services. Many NGOs deliver social services⁴ and have the capacity to become models of effective community outreach, both under regular circumstances and during times of emergencies. UNICEF has therefore continued to build strong partnerships with NGOs to ensure their ability to provide quality services for Lebanese society.

11. Within the context of a middle-income country vulnerable to crises, advocacy and programme communication play a critical role in the implementation of the country programme. The communication component forms the backbone of the programmes activities in health and nutrition; child protection; education; water, sanitation and hygiene; and mine awareness. Various media – ranging from radio and television to printed media and billboards, as well as various education materials and community-based information – have been used widely, with support from the private sector, offering services to free of charge. Advocacy on a number of issues – such as the need for an increased voice for children and youth in Lebanon; the social protection of marginalized groups (particularly the poor and refugees); and the protection of children and youth against physical abuse and addiction – have been essential strategies of the country programme implementation.

⁴ According to a World Bank assessment of the NGO sector in Lebanon, conducted in 2001, programmes in health, education, social welfare and vocational training absorb up to 80 per cent of the sector’s budget.

Reasons for requesting a one-year bridging country programme

12. The United Nations country team (UNCT) and government partners had planned to complete the Lebanon UNDAF and CPDs for 2009-2013 in 2008. UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA were planning to submit five-year CPDs for Lebanon to their respective Executive Boards for approval during the September 2008 sessions. However, the recent political and security upheavals of May and June 2008 delayed the completion of the UNDAF and the planned five-year CPDs. Following intensive consultations between the UNCT and the government partners, in consultation with the team of regional directors of United Nations agencies, an agreement was reached with the Government of Lebanon to again request one-year bridging CPDs and work towards the completion of a 2010-2014 UNDAF and full five-year CPDs in 2009. It is anticipated that by the end of 2008, Lebanon's governance system will be fully functioning again. This will allow adequate consultation with line ministries to insure national support and ownership of the cooperation programmes. The bridging period of 2009 will then be used to review the UNDAF for 2010-2014.

The country programme, 2009

13. A one-year extension of the current programme until the end of 2009 will allow a smooth transition to a five-year programme based on the UNDAF for 2010-2014. While the proposed bridging CPD does not make major changes to the components of the current country programme of cooperation, it does introduce strategic shifts in programme focus and planned results, as will be explained in the following sections.

14. The main programme components are as follows:

- (a) Child care and development;
- (b) Education;
- (c) Child and adolescent protection and empowerment;
- (d) Research and advocacy;
- (e) Cross-sectoral programme support.

Summary budget table

<i>Programme</i>	<i>(In United States dollars)</i>		
	<i>Regular resources</i>	<i>Other resources</i>	<i>Total</i>
Child care and development	-	400 000	400 000
Education	100 000	650 000	750 000
Child and adolescent protection and empowerment	200 000	400 000	600 000
Research and advocacy	150 000	200 000	350 000
Cross-sectoral support	150 000	350 000	500 000
Total	600 000	2 000 000	2 600 000

Note: In addition to the regular resources and regular funds from other resources (OR) reflected in the table above, emergency OR of about \$400,000 from the European Commission Humanitarian Office will be available in 2009 for water and sanitation reconstruction in Nahr El-Bared camp, administered by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA).

Preparation process

15. The current proposal for the CPD extension has benefited from the findings of the Common Country Assessment conducted in 2006–2007, and is harmonized with the draft UNDAF results agreed upon by the UNCT and key stakeholders. The CPD draws upon a number of sources: the results of internal programme performance reviews of 2007–2008 (including lessons learnt during the emergency in 2006); sectoral discussions with the government and NGO partners in 2007–2008; a peer review meeting with key government counterparts; and United Nations agencies consultations. The concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on Lebanon's periodic reports (reviewed in 2006 and 2008, respectively) provided important guidance in reaching a consensus on the refined country programme priorities.

Goals, key results and strategies

16. The overall goal of the country programme is to further enhance the level of children's well-being in health and strengthen protection and education. The specific objectives and planned results of the programme components are detailed in the following paragraphs.

17. The country programme strategy, based on research and evidence obtained from pilot projects implemented at the subnational and community levels, aims to develop and further enhance national programme strategies and standards of primary health care services, drinking water provision, child-friendly schools and juvenile justice.

18. Given Lebanon's volatile political and social environment, maintaining a degree of flexible emergency preparedness and response capacity is critical. All programmes will have a built-in contingency component aiming to guarantee minimal assistance standards through the immediate mobilization of pre-positioned humanitarian aid resources. Broad strategies to prepare for any sudden deterioration of the situation include stand-by agreements with key field outreach actors (the Lebanese Red Cross and major national NGOs); identification of partners, operational hubs, warehousing and distribution capacities for rapid interventions in high-risk areas; screening of the local market for emergency supplies and materials; completion of administrative preparations for organizational surge-capacity mobilization; and adherence to minimum operating security standards to ensure the security of staff and assets.

Relationship to national priorities and the UNDAF

19. In January 2007, at the international donor conference in Paris, the Lebanese Government presented a reconstruction and rehabilitation programme focusing primarily on growth-enhancing economic and financial reforms. The social component of this programme was reflected in a national Social Action Plan (SAP), 'Toward Strengthening Social Safety Nets and Access to Basic Social Services'. National priorities in the SAP include poverty reduction, increased efficiency in social spending and the elaboration of a comprehensive medium- to long-term social development agenda. The SAP formalizes the commitment of the Government to work on poverty reduction and the improvement of social indicators, with a view of achieving the Millennium Development Goals; this will open the door for more social policy initiatives in the future.

20. The one-year country programme takes into consideration the outcomes of the draft UNDAF formulated in response to a number of national challenges, including regional disparities; social exclusion; weak governance; environmental degradation; and an insufficiently developed human rights culture.

Relationship to international priorities

21. The country programme components are in line with the SAP, as well as the Millennium Development Goals and the Millennium Declaration.

Programme components

22. The **child care and development programme** has two components: (a) health and (b) water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). The health component aims to institutionalize a systematic approach to strengthening primary health care, including immunization initiatives. It aims to increase immunization coverage and improve maternal and neonatal care, with a particular focus on underserved districts. The WASH component will conduct a national water resource assessment as a first step in formulating a national policy on drinking water. As part of the on-going emergency response, it will also continue to reconstruct destroyed water and sanitation facilities in the Nahr El-Bared Palestinian camp in North Lebanon. This emergency reconstruction work is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2009.

23. The **education programme** aims to contribute to the efforts of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Higher Council for Childhood to draft a national strategy on early childhood development and inclusive education. This will foster public-private partnerships based on the 'school as a development centre for all' model. The education programme will have an emergency preparedness component, which will allow UNICEF to respond to emergencies with while seeking to minimize the disruption of education and preserve normalcy in children's lives. Such emergency response activities will include mobilizing teachers and communities, so that schooling is rapidly resumed after having been interrupted due an emergency, and providing emergency school supplies, such as 'school in a box', play items and, if required, school tents.

24. The **child and adolescent protection and empowerment programme** aims to work with the Government and national partners on promoting a protective environment for children at home and at school, as well as in society at large, in conformity with the principles of juvenile justice and family-based care norms. The programme will link up with community-based child protection networks that share the same programme objectives and have established child protection standards, monitoring mechanisms and referral systems.

25. Together with the **research and advocacy programme**, the **child and adolescent protection and empowerment programme** will create channels for the systematic participation of young people in national policy dialogue and peace promotion. The television programme 'Sawtouna', run by young journalists and hosted by Lebanon's major television channel, will continue to serve as one of the major conduits of participation for young people, reaching a television audience of 300,000 to 400,000 viewers on a regular basis.

26. As part of the emergency preparedness of the country programme, UNICEF and its partners will update the mapping of NGOs capable of responding to emergencies through the mobilization of young volunteers who can assist in relief operations, data collection and psychosocial counselling for children and adolescents.

27. The **research and advocacy programme** aims to generate and use evidence in support of children's rights in Lebanon. Evidence will be generated through strategic research on policies, programmes and issues affecting children and young people, and the programme will seek and establish strategic partnerships with national and regional research institutions. The completion of a multiple indicator cluster survey and the establishment of a comprehensive

electronic social indicators database (using DevInfo) are two immediate results the programme aims to achieve in 2009. This database will be used by the United Nations and partners for the monitoring of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and other relevant international treaties to which Lebanon is a State party.

28. The **research and advocacy programme** will provide cross-cutting support to other programmes through data analysis and the design of behaviour-change communication initiatives based on a solid body of evidence. UNICEF programme communication efforts will be streamlined across all sectors, extending beyond the post-conflict phase into the future five-year development period. Particular efforts will be made in advocacy for peace and tolerance education and ensuring an increased voice for youths to become agents for change and to help heal the many social and confessional divisions the country has faced in the last two decades.

29. Finally, the **cross-sectoral programme support** will be used for charging programme expenses of a cross-sectoral nature, such as salaries and operating expenses related to rental of the premises and equipment maintenance. These expenses are essential for effective programme implementation and cost control.

Major partnerships

30. United Nations agencies and the World Bank, as well as major national and international NGOs, will continue to be key partners of the country programme, as will the Lebanese ministries of foreign affairs; justice; social affairs; health; internal affairs and municipalities; water and energy; education; and youth and sports. Partnerships will also be expanded with the Higher Council for Childhood, with academic institutions and the media, as well as the business community.

Monitoring, evaluation and programme management

31. The delivery of country programme results will be monitored closely by the Deputy Representative, heads of sections and the advocacy and research team. Periodic monitoring reports will be shared with the UNICEF country management team, and the security risk management model will serve as the basis for the country programme monitoring. The standard monitoring software DevInfo as well as the Programme Manager System will be instrumental in monitoring programme delivery and use of funds.

32. Each programme component will be directly managed by a head of section, and closely coordinated with respective line ministries and other non-governmental partners. The Deputy Representative will coordinate programme implementation within the office while the Representative will oversee the country programme implementation, closely liaising with Lebanese governmental and non-governmental partners, donors and international development partners, the UNCT, the Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa and UNICEF headquarters.
