



Funded by :



**Regional Development and Protection Programme
for Syrian refugees and host communities in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq**

**Final Report
July 2014 – September 2018**

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The picture of the front page displays a 35 years old IDP at her sewing shop in Chamishku Camp, Zakho District. She was supported to start her own business through the RDPP partnership with Action Contre la Faim International in Iraq.
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1. Programme details

| | | | |
|------------------------|--|------------------------|-------------------|
| Title of the action: | Regional Development and Protection Programme for Syrian refugees and host communities in Lebanon Jordan and Iraq | | |
| Status: | Final Completion Report | | |
| Implementation period: | | | |
| Start date | 01 July 2014 | End date | 30 September 2018 |
| Financial details: | | | |
| Total budget Euro | 41,640,780 | Total expenditure Euro | 38,139,298 |

2. Executive summary

The Regional Development and Protection Programme for Syrian refugees and host communities in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq (RDPP) was initiated in July 2014 and finalised in September 2018. The RDPP was a joint European programme supported by eight donors; the Czech Republic, Denmark, European Commission (DEVCO), Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. The programme was implemented through a partnership approach, supporting host governments, civil society, NGOs, and UN agencies to implement projects within four thematic areas; research, protection, advocacy and livelihoods.

With the formulation of the programme initiated in 2013, the Syrian displacement crisis and the context development in the host countries greatly evolved during the implementation, presenting both challenges and opportunities to the programme outcomes. Despite the challenging context, significant achievements were reached during the programme implementation. Out of the 20 outcome indicators in the results framework, 15 of them were reached with several significantly exceeded the target, and the remaining 5 indicators were partially achieved. Still, as the overall objective aimed at supporting refugees to be able to avail themselves of durable solutions, once the possibilities arise; access basic rights; and engage in socio-economic development in the host countries, it has not been possible to fully achieve the objectives set out for the RDPP in 2014. This is partially also due to protection space being reduced; restrained possibilities for refugees to engage in livelihood opportunities, and durable solutions still remain limited or unavailable. Still, the final evaluation concluded that RDPP has succeeded in establishing an evidence-base on the impact of hosting refugees, of displacement on living conditions and interlinkages between protection and livelihoods. The programme further succeeded in improving the capacity of local actors, and contributed to uphold and protect the rights of vulnerable populations, especially on SGBV and child labour issues. The RDPP has also capacitated refugees and host community members to be better able to enter the labour market through varying methodologies, some more successful than others. Lastly, the advocacy efforts of RDPP partners have contributed to some positive policy changes in the region.

During the implementation, RDPP has engaged in 46 partnerships. One partnership was terminated on request of the partner. Of the remaining 45 partnerships, 14 were directly with local NGOs and almost all had at least one or more local partners. Financially the programme have performed satisfactory with a minor underexpenditure. On a budget of Euro 41,618,000 final expenditure reached Euro 38,139,298 (91.8%). 93% of funds were allocated towards activities and partnerships, 5% for Programme Management Unit and only 2% of the total expenditure was committed towards in-direct costs.

3. Background and context

The Regional Development and Protection Programme for Syrian refugees and host communities in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq (RDPP) was initiated in July 2014 and finalised in September 2018 after 45 months of implementation. With a humanitarian-development nexus approach to programming, the RDPP aimed at supporting civil society, host governments, donors and other stakeholders in understanding and mitigating the impact of protracted forced displacement from Syria. The overall objectives of RDPP were to; 1) support refugees to be able to fully avail themselves of a durable solution once the possibility arises and encourage the ability of refugees to access basic rights; and 2) support socio-economic development in host countries that benefit host populations and refugees and enhance the capacities of refugees to contribute as development actors.

The RDPP was a joint European programme supported by eight donors; the Czech Republic, Denmark, European Commission (DEVCO), Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. The programme was implemented through a partnership approach, supporting host governments, civil society, NGOs, and UN agencies to implement projects within four thematic areas; research, protection, advocacy and livelihoods.

With the initial dialogue on the possibility of joining forces in the RDPP programme starting in 2013, the Syrian displacement crisis and the context development in the host countries has greatly evolved since the formulation of the programme design. The war in Syria has continued with varying peaks in violence and displacement and to date no political settlement has been reached. The flow of refugees into neighbouring countries continued to increase in 2013 and 2014, which led the neighbouring countries to de facto close their borders to refugees. By the end of the implementation of the RDPP, 5.7 million Syrians still reside as refugees in the neighbouring countries, in addition to the 6 million internally displaced in Syria. As a political solution remains elusive, host governments of the neighbouring countries continue to be split on how to deal with the situation, and varying policies and approaches to accommodating the refugees and continuing upholding protection space continue to be implemented by the three focus countries; Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq.

At the end of the programme, there were 949,849 refugees registered with UNHCR in Lebanon, 671,551 in Jordan, and 252,526 in Iraq, where the vast majority are hosted in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). The host countries, whose public services prior to the Syrian displacement were already impacted by lack of investment and previous waves of displacement, continue to struggle to bear the burden of the significant displacement. The war in Syria has further economically impacted the countries through the border closures, challenged their political and security stability, and stretched their basic services and infrastructure. Further, as refugees have tended to settle in border areas with often more marginalised and vulnerable host populations, it has in some places challenged social cohesion and stability in the communities hosting the majority of refugees. The protractedness of the displacement has on one hand exhausted both the financial and human resources of the refugees and on the other hand challenged the ability of the host countries to uphold the protection space, provide access to services and continue to be a refuge for millions of Syrians.

Refugee policy has varied widely across the three countries, none of whom are signatories to the 1951 Refugee Convention. While formal camp options are provided in Jordan and Iraq, the majority of refugees in both countries live out of camp (close to 90% in Jordan and approximately 60% in Iraq). As Lebanon has not allowed for camp settlements, refugees reside in rural and urban areas across the country. Refugees out of camp mostly live in informal tented settlements or in unfinished or substandard buildings.

With the de facto closing of the borders in 2015, the large influx of refugees from Syria ceased. Following this, Government of Lebanon further decided to request UNHCR to cease to register refugees in 2015, which has led to a lack of clarity about the size and composition of the refugee population in Lebanon, as well as limitations for non-registered refugees to access services and pathways to legal stay. While the majority of Syrian refugees in Jordan and Iraq have legal stay, at the end of 2018 73% of Syrians over 15 years of age in Lebanon lack residency thereby being at greater risk of arrest and detention, and leading to movement restrictions which limits access to services or livelihoods. While the borders has largely remained closed since 2015, the refugee population continue to grow each year, with many newborn Syrians starting life as refugees.

The protection situation for refugees has deteriorated since the RDPP was initiated in 2014. The poverty levels of the refugee population has increased, for example 80% of refugees in Jordan outside camps live below the poverty line. The rise in poverty levels has led to increased use of negative coping mechanisms, such as debt (9 out of 10 Syrian refugee households in Lebanon is in debt), child labour and early marriage. Gender-based violence remains prevalent, unregistered births and marriages risk a growing stateless population that will be unable to access a durable solution. Social tensions, perceived competition for jobs and benefits, negative media coverage and politicisation of the refugee issue also contribute to increased social tension and discrimination against the refugee population, particularly in Lebanon. These extremely challenging living conditions and lack of viable options are also seen to increasingly create a push for a deeply vulnerable population to choose between a risky return to Syria and staying in a very challenging host environment.

The framework for livelihood options for refugees has since the initial start of RDPP varied across the three countries and has continued to evolve in different trajectories over time. In KRI, Syrian refugees are offered the right to work in the private sector (but not the public sector). In Jordan, the Government promotes engagement in the labour market by allowing refugees to access work permits (42,000 active work permits in the third quarter 2018) in a range of sectors; for camp-based refugees to work in urban areas; and for refugees to have home-based businesses provided a professional license is obtained. While, in Lebanon, refugees are restricted to work (with a work permit) in three low-income sectors; construction, agriculture and cleaning. Economic growth in the three focus countries has remained low with very high debt, high unemployment, particularly among youth, and a small percentage of women in the workforce. All three economies are also characterised by a high level of informality and in some cases exploitative work conditions, and protests over the economic situation have been witnessed in all three countries. This context has challenged livelihoods projects to make significant impacts, for example is 57% of working age Syrian refugees in Jordan unemployed.

The stability of the region has also been tested over the last four years. Lebanon has experienced two long periods with a caretaker government in charge, Jordan underwent a change of Government following wide spread protests over tax increases in 2018, and Iraq has been challenged by the fight against the Islamic State resulting in 3 million internally displaced and massive reconstructions needs in the aftermath. Further, the political aftermath of the Kurdish Independence Referendum in 2017 and slow government formation after the 2018 elections has resulted in the Government of Iraq focusing on other priorities.

The international community has upheld the focus and commitment to support both inside Syria and the neighbouring countries. While there was a fear of donor fatigue for Syrian refugees in 2015, the increased migration movement along the Eastern Mediterranean route during the summer 2015, prompted new investments in the region and the scale up and creation of larger funding instruments such as the EU Madad Trust Fund and the Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCFF). These developments, interlinked with the global discussion on the need for new approaches to addressing protracted displacement, also resulted in more long-term, multi-year donor responses to the displacement crisis, ensuring that programmes benefit both refugee and host communities, and an increasing number of donors began working in the humanitarian-development nexus alongside RDPP. The continued commitment to supporting Syria and the region was underlined by the continued high-level engagement in the Syria conference in London in 2016 and the subsequent two conferences in Brussels in 2017 and 2018, which kept the international focus on Syria. Funding levels for the annual UN response appeals for Syria and the regional 3RP have overall increased during the years of the RDPP implementation. Sadly, this also reflect the increasing needs among vulnerable Syrians and host communities as reflected above.

The focus on the nexus and on host community inclusion also affected the operational environment for the RDPP, where new large-scale programmes was initiated and new funding avenues for humanitarian and development actors appeared. Many NGOs and UN agencies expanded their operations rapidly during 2016 and 2017. Initially, in 2016, the main focus for many actors was on education and livelihoods, whereas it has diversified further in 2017 and 2018 and thereby creating a less competitive operational environment, where needs are also addressed more holistically. The evolution of the operational environment also meant that a smaller programme such as RDPP had to take some strategic choices to retain relevance among larger funding instruments. How RDPP addressed this will be elaborated further below in the programme achievement section.

As the implementation of the first phase of the RDPP comes to a close, durable solutions remain largely out of reach for the majority of Syrian refugees. While needed for 10% of the total Syrian refugee population, the number of resettlement places provided is not nearly sufficient and continues to decline over time. Local integration is not an option being discussed in any of the three countries at present, meaning that returns remains the most likely future option for most. At the same time, while UNHCRs regional intentions surveys indicate that 75% of Syrian refugees wish to return one day, but out of these 69% do not plan to do so in the next 12 months. Further, though host governments have committed to non-refoulement, some spontaneous refugee returns have occurred, in some cases with the involvement of state actors. Overall, return numbers by refugees still remain insignificant in the larger displacement

picture though and the conditions for voluntary return in safety and dignity according to UN assessment are not yet present in Syria. Still some indicate that 2019 could be the first year where more will return to Syria from neighbouring countries, than the number departing.

While the above outlines a bleak operational environment for the implementation of the RDPP over the past years, this also emphasised the need for the thematic focus of the RDPP as well as presented opportunities to explore potential openings and gaps, when they arise. The Syrian displacement crisis is challenging, also for the host governments in the region, and recognition of the difficulty in and efforts needed to continue to provide refuge for the millions of displaced Syrians and the willingness displayed to address the complexities the protracted displacement places on the communities and host countries also needs to be acknowledged.

In the next section, it will be further elaborated how RDPP have addressed this at a programmatic level and through the partnerships supported.

4. Programme achievement

Despite the challenging context and operational space described above setting the frame for achieving the objectives of the RDPP significant achievements have been reached during the programme implementation. Out of the 20 outcome indicators the programme results framework identified as targets, 15 of them have been reached and the remaining 5 were partially achieved. Several of the indicators were also exceeded significantly. Still, as the overall objective of of the programme aimed supporting the ground work for refugees to be able to avail themselves of durable solutions, once the possibilities arise, access basic rights and engage in socio-economic development in the host countries, it has not been possible to fully achieve the overall objective of the programme, as the protection space in some ways has reduced; possibilities for engaging in livelihood opportunities for refugees remain limited, also challenged by the regional economic stagnation; and durable solutions beyond temporary accommodation in host communities still remain limited or unavailable. Still, the programme has overall contributed to refugees and host communities access basic rights and upholding protection space and supporting the socio-economic development for many targeted beneficiaries. In terms of research and advocacy, the RDPP, especially in the last year of implementation, has contributed to the evidence-based dialogue and policy on durable solutions and the impact on refugees and host communities of protracted displacement and durable solution policy options.

For the thematic area of research, the programme exceeded its targets with RDPP supported research used and referenced in development plans and other documents. For the protection thematic area, the programme achieved 7 of the targets and partially achieved 3. For advocacy, the RDPP partners contributed to collective advocacy and successfully contributing to dialogue and policy change in some instances, beyond the expectations of the initial engagements. In this area, both the targets were met. In the livelihoods thematic area, 4 out of 6 targets were achieved with significant overachievement for vocational trainings, skills development and support to start-ups. This was largely also due to the approval by the Steering Committee by 2015 to allow for a refocusing of the thematic area to reduce the support for short-term cash-for-work and increasingly support more medium- to long-term livelihood options.

Please see the below overview for overall programme achievement towards the Results Framework at outcome indicator level. Further detail on programme progress towards each indicator is elaborated further below under each thematic area and in the annexed General Results Framework.

Over the 45 months, the RDPP contracted 46 partnerships. A partnership with World Vision in Jordan was terminated on request of the partner, due to delays in project approval by authorities and lack of recruitment of staff, which resulted in a shortened timeline for project implementation. With the termination of the partnership and return of funds by World Vision Germany, the implemented partnerships totalled 45 with a final expenditure of project totalling Euro 35,600,401. Of these, 14 partnerships were directly with a local NGO, and almost all of the other partnerships had one or more local partner.¹

The division of partnerships by country and thematic area were as follows:

| | Regional | Lebanon | Jordan | Iraq | Total |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| Research | 4 | | 1 | | 5 |
| Protection | 1 | 12 | 1 | 2 | 16 |
| Advocacy | 2 | 2 | 1 | | 5 |
| Livelihoods | | 9 | 8 | 3 | 20 |
| Total | 7 | 23 | 11 | 5 | 46 |

Following the decision by the Steering Committee on the funding allocations between countries, most partnerships have been in Lebanon, followed by Jordan and less in Iraq. The majority of partnerships have been in the two operational thematic areas; protection and livelihoods. In terms of funding following the budget allocation, livelihoods have received the most significant allocations. This may simply also indicate that protection interventions, while reaching significant number of beneficiaries, are less costly per beneficiary than livelihood projects. Regional programming has mainly been for research and partly for advocacy linked to research and one project for protection, as the context for other thematic areas did not support a regional approach to projects.

¹ For further details about the specific approved projects, please see Annex III (summary table of projects), as well as Annex IV (project fiches), and Annex II for financial details.

Overview of Results Framework Achievement

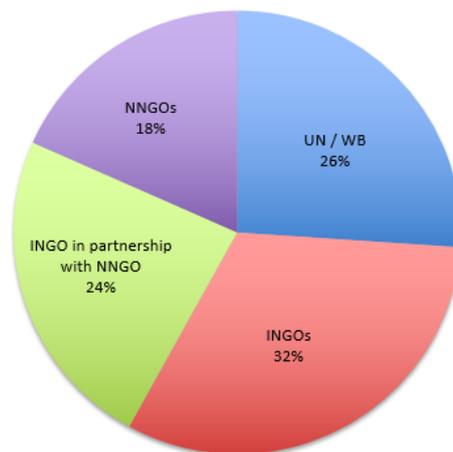
| | Indicator | Target | Status | Achievement |
|-------------|---|------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Research | • # of reports (regional or country-based) published & disseminated by the RDPP that deal with the impact of displacement on host countries and/or refugees | • 3/9 | • 12 | Achieved |
| | • # of workshops, discussion roundtables & dissemination events organized by | • 1/report | • 39 | Achieved |
| Livelihoods | • # of people benefitting from short-term employment schemes | • 3,400 | • 2,930 | Partially Achieved |
| | • # of community-based cash for work programmes supported by programme | • 39 | • 134 | Achieved |
| | • % of women targeted by employment generation schemes | • 35 % | • 25 % | Partially Achieved |
| | • # of enterprises supported by the programme | • 500 | • 585 | Achieved |
| | • # of refugees & non-refugees who accessed labour market through the job-placement services, vocational training initiatives or start-ups | • 2,500 | • 9,760 | Achieved |
| | • # of households that have increased their income | • 3,300 | • 4,914 | Achieved |
| | • # of people targeted through legal assistance, legal counselling or legal awareness-raising | • 5,000 | • 7,029 | Achieved |
| Protection | • % of cases that deal with domestic violence | • 20 % | • 14 % | Partially Achieved |
| | • % of assisted legally that is successful in redressing their situation due to support | • 50 % | • 55 % / 89 % | Achieved |
| | • Changes in approach/policy on refugee protection issues dealing w legal/other civil status | • / | • partial | Partially Achieved |
| | • Change in level of social interaction in refugee-hosting communities | • / | • partial | Partially Achieved |
| | • # of communities w. functioning sustainable conflict mitigation mechanisms & peacebuilding ini. | • 9 | • 9 | Achieved |
| | • # of government agencies, law enforcement & other security actors including guidelines specific to refugees based on HR standards & benefiting from cap. building | • 5 | • 11 | Achieved |
| | • Institutions are able to organize training programmes & cap. building activities | • 50 % | • 100 % | Achieved |
| | • # of institutions that have mainstreamed child labour in their work | • 15 | • 56 | Achieved |
| | • # of working children accessing services according to their needs | • 1,500 | • 5,400 | Achieved |
| | • At least 1 policy in each of the 3 countries is changed by authorities due to the advocacy work | • 3 | • 9 | Achieved |
| Advocacy | • # of workshops, seminars, conferences that include nat. actors in refugee policy option discuss. | • 10 | • 76 | Achieved |

Achieved
Partially Achieved
Not achieved

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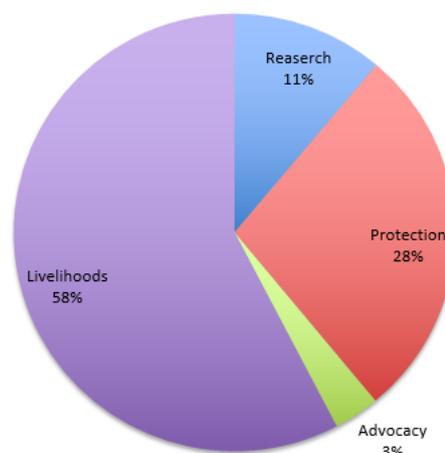
In terms of the types of partners, the majority of partnerships reflect the strategic decision by the Steering Committee in 2016 to focus less on partnerships with the UN agencies and increase focus on the localisation. Overall, 18% of programme expenditure has been direct partnership contracts with national actors, whereas 24% have been international NGOs with national actors as direct partners in the project. Several of the other projects with international NGOs or UN have had national actors involved in implementation or involved in terms of capacity building initiatives, but not as direct co-funding to the national partner.

Expenditures
Programme Activities per Type of Partnership



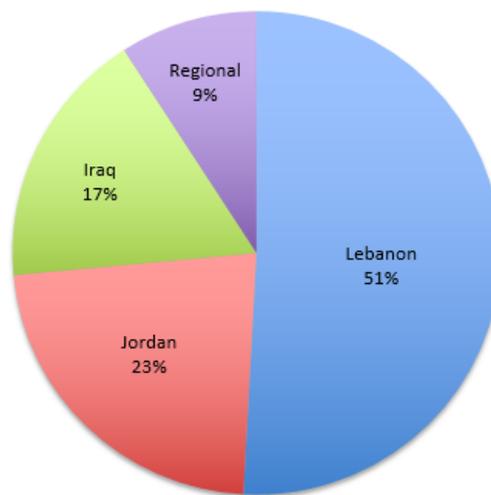
In terms of the thematic areas, the partnerships have been distributed with the majority of funding allocated towards livelihoods, followed by protection as mentioned above. This follows the budget allocations for each thematic area. The thematic area of research was the only thematic area, where the budget line was 9% overspent, as more research opportunities appeared and gaps were identified. Overall, expenditure still remained within the allowed flexibility for thematic areas.

Expenditures
Programme Activities per Thematic Area



With the approval of the budget revision in 2016, the Steering Committee allowed the Programme Management Unit in terms of allocations per country to allow greater flexibility to seize new partnership opportunities. With the final expenditure by the partners, the RDPP have remained within the agreed funding allocations for each of the three countries. In Iraq, only 5 partnerships were identified (2 protection and 3 livelihoods) with a final expenditure of 17% of the budget towards partners, whereas in Jordan 23% were allocated towards partnerships in all four thematic areas, which was also the case for Lebanon with a final expenditure of 51% of the total. 9% of total expenditure were allocated for regional partnerships, mainly for research (4), advocacy (2) and one protection partnership with ILO on child labour in Jordan and Lebanon.

**Expenditures
Programme Activities per Country**



In the following section, further details for programme and partnership achievement towards each thematic area will be highlighted.

5. Programme achievements by thematic areas

a. Research

In order to better understand the impact of Syrian forced displacement on the three host countries, and to support governments and other decision makers in managing the crisis, as well as inform programming, the RDPP entered into five research partnerships. In addition to the research projects under this theme, many partnerships signed under other thematic areas also had an integrated research component to support evidenced based programming or advocacy. Final reporting indicates that RDPP supported research outputs have been widely used and referenced in documents such as the 3RP 2019-2020.

Through the regional partnerships with the World Bank and UNDP sub-regional facility, and the Jordan specific MOPIC/FAFO partnership, an in-depth evidence base was developed to better understand the living situation of Syrian refugees and the impact of the crisis and displacement on host communities. Based on this, policy options and recommendations were developed with a view to inform policy debates. The programme produced 12 research reports and 39 related workshops or roundtables, significantly overachieving both targets.

At the request of the Government of Jordan, to support it in meeting its commitments under the Jordan Compact, through an innovative tripartite partnership with FAFO and the RDPP, the Jordanian Department of Statistics conducted a countrywide 7,632 household survey of Syrian refugees. The resulting data set covered a range of aspects of demographics, living conditions, skills, and experiences of Syrian refugees in Jordan. After a cross line ministry workshop and sign off by the Jordanian cabinet, the report was published in February 2019 and has been widely disseminated and downloaded (for example more than 1,200 times from the Jordan Livelihoods Working Group website) and has already fed into the “Jordan Compact and Brussels meetings independent assessment report” as part of the preparation process for the Brussels Conference 2019. Using the same data set a shorter report further analysing sub-data on early marriage among Syrians has also been produced by FAFO.

With a regional scope, the World Bank project conducted primary data collection in Jordan, Lebanon and KRI to produce a report on the socio-economic impact of the crisis on host communities in the focus countries. The partnership was a joint cooperation between the World Bank, UNHCR and RDPP. The project had a challenging implementation due to delays in establishing agreements on accessing up to date data with host governments in some countries and timely data collection due to political developments such as elections. Initial findings were presented in Lebanon in 2016, however they challenged the prevailing discourse on the impact of the crisis particularly in relation to the economic consequences of the refugee influx. The UNHCR and RDPP engaged in extensive dialogue with the World Bank on the possibilities of publishing the study in full or as shorter policy papers, however as a conclusion the World Bank eventually decided not to publish the report. The data set will be made publically available by the World Bank (awaiting final link). Consequently, this project did not have the anticipated impact in terms of generating discussion and policy solutions to manage the crisis.

The UNDP project developed evidence-based costed policy options for the accommodation of refugees in countries affected by the Syria crisis, with a focus on Lebanon, Jordan and KRI. The project produced analytical country chapters with tailored policy options and an overall regional synthesis report which were refined through country consultations and a regional meeting with host governments. This project was significantly delayed including due to changes in all host governments during the project, and sensitivities around refugee participation in the labour force, with lessons learned about timeframes required for this type of work. The report is planned to be published in 2019.

In addition under the same partnership, UNDP together with ILO and WFP published the “Jobs Make the Difference” report which shows how host governments, international actors, and private sector partners can create new economic opportunities and expand access to existing economic opportunities in the context of Syrian displacement. The report was launched as a high-level side-event at the

Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region Conference in Brussels in April 2017, and has been instrumental in drawing attention on livelihoods policies and refugees.

The Durable Solutions Platform (DSP) – an NGO Consortium led by DRC and established with RDPP support – complemented these partnerships by producing analysis and research on progress and barriers to the three durable solutions. Taking a regional scope the DSP, in addition to a number of policy notes and briefing papers, produced 8 research reports covering return to Syria for both refugees from neighbouring countries and return and durable solutions inside Syria for IDPs, access to resettlement and complementary pathways, and analysis of safe zones. These pieces were used to inform programming and donor advocacy through a number of briefing and discussion events. The DSP has become recognised as a go to source of information and DSP staff have been widely invited to speak at events.

The partnership with the Forced Migration Review (FMR), which is based at the University of Oxford, produced Issue 47 of the FMR: “The Syria crisis, displacement and protection” in 2014. This flagged at an early point in the crisis that it would become protracted in nature and brought together articles from academia and practitioners to highlight protection needs and shape assistance to both the displaced and the hosting communities. The issue was widely disseminated to partners, universities and donors in the region.

In collaboration with the University of St Joseph (USJ) in Beirut, UNHCR developed a master degree curriculum on forced displacement, covering refugee law and all relevant aspects of public international law, human rights and humanitarian law as they relate to refugees. Following the development of this curriculum, UNHCR supported professors to integrate refugee issues into their classes with two week long modules on refugee studies taught in 2016 and 2017. The collaboration between UNHCR and USJ contributed to building momentum and growing academic interest on refugee issues in Lebanon. USJ professors reported an increasing number of students doing their final master thesis or PhDs on forced migration issues, as well as increased synergies with humanitarian actors and academic institutions outside of Lebanon. The collaboration further supported the development of student research papers on forced migration issues in Lebanon and the region. Nine research papers were finalised in November 2017 by university students from USJ in Beirut and the Lebanese University in Tripoli. One of the papers was selected and published in the Forced Migration Review from the Oxford University Refugee Studies Centre.

The other pieces of research were conducted as part of protection or livelihoods partnerships, for example a study on child labour in agriculture in the Bekaa produced by ILO Lebanon, a white paper on the impact of the crisis on the social development centres produced by ACTED Lebanon, and the 2015 “Survey on Perceptions of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon” and its 2017 update conducted by the University of St Joseph under the partnership with UNHCR. These further underpins the importance the RDPP has placed on evidence based programming.

b. Protection

Protection outcomes were delivered through 16 partnerships, which, by raising awareness of rights holders and building capacity of duty bearers, worked to improve the protection situation for refugees

and host communities in the focus countries. Legal awareness sessions supported individuals to know their rights, in particular concerning legal residency for refugees, and those most in need of assistance, including detainees and prisoners, were provided legal counselling and assistance with over a 50% success rate of redressing their cases. Though capacity development of various law enforcement and other government staff, a more protection sensitive approach to community policing was put in place, and GBV prevention and response work standardised and mainstreamed. At the intersection of protection and livelihoods, and increasing during the crisis, child labour needs were responded to though capacity building and service provision.

Legal aid and advocacy

In order to support refugees and other vulnerable individuals in Lebanon and Jordan improve awareness of their rights and access legal assistance to uphold their rights, legal awareness raising was provided to over 15,000 beneficiaries, and over 7000 beneficiaries received legal counselling or assistance. Through 7 partnerships with nearly exclusively national NGOs, legal services were provided in prisons and detention centres, safe shelters for female survivors of GBV, job centres in Lebanon, as well as community settings, and NGO legal clinics and community settings or centres in both Lebanon and Jordan. 55% of beneficiaries supported with legal assistance or counselling were successful in redressing their situation, for example having an appeal accepted, reduction of sentence or release or regaining nationality and/or employment lost due to administrative faults.

As well as responding legal needs of vulnerable populations and raising awareness of their rights, RDPP partners also advocated for positive changes on civil status issues and other human rights issues, as well as reform of the legal system. For example CLDH through a report “Legal Challenges faced by Refugees from Syria in Lebanon” and roundtable discussions with representatives of Government, the judiciary and local and international NGOs, advocated for frameworks that address the legal stay of refugees to take into consideration safety and security concerns. CLDH also advocated on the establishment of the National Human Rights Institute and including a National Preventative Mechanism to the Convention against Torture. AJEM advocated with some success to improve processes in the judicial system to facilitate their work in providing legal assistance. In Jordan, JCLA advocated the right to access to justice in refugees’ Sharia cases with the judicial system through a series of roundtables.

As a result of collective advocacy including RDPP partners, during the programme duration a number of positive policy developments were witnessed for example the residency fee waiver and easing of restrictions on birth and marriage registration for Syrian refugees in Lebanon, and a small increase in the age limit (15 to 16) for exceptions to the minimum age of marriage in Jordan.

Community empowerment and conflict mitigation

This programme component focussed only on Lebanon, where, for historical and political reasons, social tensions concerning the Syrian displacement were strongest and increasing during the duration of the programme.

Through an innovative pilot partnership with Mercy Corps in the Bekaa, which hosts the highest number of refugees in the country, the RDPP supported the establishment and built the capacity of community

conflict mitigation groups. The project yielded positive results and was consequently scaled up through a second partnership to alleviate tensions between host and refugee populations in 9 municipalities. Vulnerability and a history of tensions between different groups were among the reasons for selection of these municipalities. At the end of the second project reporting, the 9 local groups were functioning as a conflict mitigation mechanism, acting as mediators for disputes in the community, and with a plan to institutionalise the groups as volunteer municipal committees, supported by a regional community of practice. Through community identified infrastructure projects, which included a cash for work component, increased interaction between host and refugee communities was enabled, with the project reporting an 11% increase in the level of social interaction within targeted communities at project end. Transparency and communication among communities and the municipality was further enhanced through town hall meetings held for the first time in Lebanon and a community newsletter.

International Alert employed a different model in Bekaa and Akkar training a pool of mediators who could be deployed to resolve disputes in their area. The majority of disputes they were called to assist were family disputes and disputes between neighbours. At project end the trained mediators were linked to relevant coordination structures and actors to ensure sustainability. The project produced a case-study report “Just In-Between: Informal Justice on the Intersection of Mediation, Arbitration, and Referral”. The study focused on the protection mechanisms used by Syrian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese and documented the mediation process from its inception – focusing on why refugees and vulnerable Lebanese resort to the informal justice system, its process, and its outcomes. It included lessons learned as well as recommendations to organisations working on protection and peacebuilding in communities hosting refugees. In addition a policy brief “Tailored for Stability. Adapting livelihood & protection programmes to strengthen social stability in Lebanon” was published with recommendations drawing on case study findings on working conditions in the food and beverage sector and the role of employers in the protection of vulnerable people in relation to job security and social stability. This policy brief aimed to inform future interventions on integrated approaches that address a combination of protection, livelihood and social stability challenges.

These and other community projects, for example protection projects involving training or awareness sessions or cash-for-work projects reported under livelihoods, also contributed to increased social interactions between refugee and host communities. However, against a backdrop of increasing tensions, and negative media coverage and political rhetoric, achieving lasting impact is very challenging.

Capacity built on protection and asylum

A key part of the strategy of RDPP is supporting national institutions to manage the displacement crisis in a protection sensitive manner and improve their resilience in the longer term to support host populations in reflection of the protracted nature of the crisis. Support on preventing and responding specifically to gender-based violence (GBV) was identified as a need in KRI where, despite of a relatively adequate legal framework, majority duty bearers lack expertise on basic GBV principles and technical capacities of their staff. Through 5 partnerships covering Lebanon and KRI, 12 national institutions including many of their sub-departments, have received capacity development support and normative work to improve their protection response for both refugees and host communities. A larger number of UN partners were contracted in this thematic area due to their specialised mandates in working with

national authorities. This approach has facilitated gradual transfer of responsibility by international partners to local service providers.

The frontline of response to the refugee crisis is often the municipalities, police and law enforcement agencies, which were in most cases overstretched before the crisis. In Lebanon 460 members of the Internal Security Forces (ISF), Army (LAF) and Lebanese General Security (GSO) were trained by UNHCR on human rights, protection and upholding international humanitarian law in their interactions with refugees and vulnerable populations. These components were integrated into their national training curriculum. Specialist training on GBV response for the ISF was also provided by ABAAD, and mainstreamed into the curricula of the ISF Academy. As a result of the GBV training and attention brought to the issue by ABAAD, an official memo (#339/204) on trafficking and sexual assault was issued by the ISF in 2017, for the first time. ABAAD further provided technical support to the Ministry of Social Affairs to produce, endorse and train on nationwide GBV Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and a case management training manual for social workers in the government Social Development Centres.

UNDP through the partnership with UNHCR supported the Lebanese Ministry Of Interior and Municipalities (MOIM) to develop for the first time and endorse SOPs and a Code of Conduct for the Municipal Police. This responded to the need for the Municipal Police to address and manage social tension at local levels. The ISF Academy institutionalized the training including its social skills component, ensuring future roll out of trainings. Positive feedback was given by municipal authorities and the Municipal Police personnel on the training and reported that the skills were widely applied. Furthermore, the municipal police project was described in August 2016 by MOIM as an example of best practice for institutional support targeting municipalities on conflict prevention and social stability, and requested expansion of the activities. The initial three police stations targeted to be role models were increased to 9. Through the project MOIM was also supported to implement a successful recruitment programme for female Municipal Police Officers.

In Iraq, partnerships with UNFPA and UNICEF, implemented in coordination with each other, developed the capacity of the law enforcement services as well as line ministries on GBV prevention, mitigation and response including components on children in contact with the law, as well as GBV SOPs, protocols for the clinical management of rape, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), shelter management and hotline operations for the newly created help line for GBV survivors. ABBAD, RDPP partner from Lebanon, supported the trainings on the hotline and shelters. The latter also involved relevant staff from the Federal Government.

UNICEF, in preparation for an increasingly localised response, also further developed the capacity of ten local NGOs to ensure quality GBV case management. A specific coaching and mentoring program was implemented to provide individual and tailored support to staff from local service providers to improve survivors-centred service provision, and correct negative practices (such as mediation between survivors and perpetrators) putting beneficiaries' safety at risk.

The Social Development Centers (SDCs) in Lebanon are also part of the front line response to refugees and vulnerable host communities. In addition to the support of ABAAD to SDC staff on GBV, ACTED also worked with 13 SDCs identified as being in need of support to develop the staff capacity on various aspects of protection social empowerment and mainstreaming protection.

At the end of the programme all trained institutions had a pool of staff trained through TOTs who were able and committed to roll out trainings to their colleagues and some institutions such as ISF in Lebanon and Ministry of Health in KRI had already delivered trainings directly.

Capacity support components are also mainstreamed through other projects reported under different thematic areas, for example FAFO worked closely with the sampling experts at the Jordanian Department of Statistics (DoS) on the survey design, particularly to ensure comparisons with national and international statistics, and introduced DoS to a new data entry programming to improve safety and quality of data and guarantee data completeness. Oxfam developed the capacity of both ALEF, a local human rights organisation in Lebanon and the PASC network members to further institutionalise and more effectively gather, analyse information and advocate for protection issues throughout Lebanon and internationally to ensure local voices are represented fully and sustainably in strategic discussions.

Child labour

In order to support address the multifaceted issue of child labour and work towards sustainable change, through 3 partnerships 56 institutions including Ministries, municipalities, NGOs, unions, universities and businesses were supported to mainstream child labour issues into their work. With a notable attempt to engage the private sector, the ILO in Jordan interacted with 29 big corporations from financial, tourism, food and other sectors to promote the inclusion of child-labour concerns into their corporate social responsibility mandates.

5,400 children (50% girls), who were working or at risk of being engaged in child labour, accessed services provided by RDPP partners, including provision of safety tools, vocational training, livelihoods support to caregivers, literacy and numeracy sessions, recreational activities, awareness-raising sessions and referrals to specialised services.

The ILO project in Lebanon developed a significant evidence-base on child labour in agriculture: it involved an in-depth study, which is the first of its kind in the Arab Region. It also developed the first Guide for Practitioners on attending to different aspects of child labour in agriculture in English and in Arabic. Further as a result of the project, an agreement with the GSO in Lebanon committed to providing work permits to adults who removed their children involved in the worst forms of child labour, resulting in 270 children being withdrawn from their work. The parents of the children that have been removed accessed labour permits through General Security, Farmer's Union and the Ministry of Labour for agricultural work, construction and cleaning.

To draw attention and media coverage to the issue of child labour and provide a forum for children to discuss their concerns with local and national authorities in both Lebanon and Jordan, an ex-child worker

from Lebanon represented his former peers in the World Day Against Child Labour, which was held in Geneva in 2017 and organized by the International Labour Conference (ILC).

c. Advocacy and political dialogue

Advocacy and political dialogue at a local and national level has been a crosscutting theme across most of the RDPP's partner projects. However the greatest impact has been seen when partnering with organisations specialised in advocacy. It must be recognised that advocacy work takes time, particularly when working on very sensitive issues such as GBV, child marriage and refugee rights against a backdrop of hosting fatigue, economic stagnation and politicisation, and long term interventions are needed to have impact. Nonetheless, through combined advocacy efforts of RDPP partners and others, and through advocacy-targeted projects, RDPP has been successful in achieving policy change.

The legal frameworks in RDPP focus countries are often not supportive of gender equality or fail to provide adequate protection to women and girls or survivors of violence. Through the sustained efforts of ABAAD in Lebanon (as well as other actors) the Lebanese Parliament repealed and abolished Law 522 in August 2017 which had allowed rapists to escape conviction if they married their victims. ABAAD had engaged in a sustained national awareness raising campaign and engagement with duty bearers in order to eliminate the law.

The Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) launched a policy brief to put the issue of child marriage on Jordan's policy agenda and challenge the existing regulations. While the legal age of marriage for men and women is 18, exceptions are still allowed. Through the policy brief, JNCW highlighted three proposals for addressing this problem; to cancel all exceptions to the minimum 18 years rule, keep the exceptions but raising the age limit from 15 to 16, or maintain the current legislation, but apply restrictions, such as the difference between the ages of husband and wife must not exceed 15 years. In December 2018, the Jordanian House of Representatives agreed to raise the minimum age for the exceptions from 15 to 16. However, JNCW has highlighted that the legal language used for this change is not sufficient for a full application of the policy and it will continue its advocacy to pursue the cancellation of all the exceptions.

In KRI, female genital mutilation (FGM), while illegal, continues in some geographical locations. UNFPA developed an anti-FGM strategy for Kurdistan to eradicate this practice. The formation of the new parliament after the election in late 2018 meant that it was not possible to obtain Ministerial endorsement of the strategy within the project time frame but implementation will be rolled out in 2019.

In line with the localisation approach of RDPP, ensuring that local voices are represented in national and international advocacy is a priority. Oxfam in Lebanon has been supporting ALEF, a local human rights NGO, as the network facilitator of the Working Group for Persons Affected by the Syrian Crisis (PASC) – a civil society protection advocacy network. Formed in 2016 the network has grown under the RDPP project include 28 national and local CSOs and works to enhance the capacity and space for civil society organizations in Lebanon to influence their government and international actors to adopt policies that more effectively meet the needs of vulnerable displaced persons and host communities and implement them effectively – focussing their 3 priority areas of legal safety, physical safety and material safety.

The network produced advocacy papers that were presented and distributed at the Brussels II conference: a policy review on legal and civil documentation and a position paper on evictions, with both papers including recommendations to the Government of Lebanon and the international community. Furthermore, ALEF was able to present on behalf of the network the advocacy plan in its statement during the conference's first session on 'Protecting Syrians Across the Region'. The network members who participated in the visit also made inputs into the language and inclusion of CSOs in the Lebanon partnership document. WG PASC has over time positioned itself as a reference on protection issues in Lebanon and there is evidence that the authorities see the network as a credible interlocutor with whom to engage on important policy priorities. The PASC network further advocated to EU governments in Brussels and the Hague on refugees' rights to obtain valid legal stay, for donors to provide flexible humanitarian funding and for countries to increase resettlement opportunities through a range of briefing meetings.

The Durable Solutions Platform, based on its research products, held a number of briefings and roundtable discussions as well as closed door advocacy on issues related to resettlement and complementary pathways, return, safe zones, and local integration.

In the area of livelihoods, some partners have an advocacy component integrated into their projects, for example around decent work standards or regulations on home based businesses for refugees. As a result, the ILO Lebanon project, as noted in the child labour section, a policy change was made to enable caregivers of working children to access free work permits.

In addition, through collective advocacy efforts by RDPP partners and other actors some positive changes have been made by host governments concerning residency, birth and marriage registration, and issuance of work permits.

d. Livelihoods

The thematic area of livelihoods comprised the bulk of the partnerships, with 19 implemented. One contract with World Vision signed but funds returned unused after some months due to lack of implementation. A significant part of the partnerships were signed in 2017, which meant that there were limitations on the project durations, which was a challenge for livelihoods programming in terms of longer term engagements, also often also delayed by government approvals.

During the course of the RDPP the space for livelihoods programming evolved. Restrictions to refugee access to the labour market vary between countries with Lebanon the most restrictive, however during the course of the RDPP the space for programming in livelihoods opened, particularly in Jordan after the launch of the Jordan Compact. Later projects moved away from shorter-term and unsustainable cash for work type interventions to supporting beneficiaries with skills development and job placements, starts ups and business development support, to enable them to access the labour market, and to create jobs.

Livelihoods partnerships achieved many positive outputs against a very challenging economic backdrop and increasing hostility from host populations already suffering from high unemployment rates. Impact is difficult to measure so soon after project end dates but partners supported nearly 5,000 households to increase their income, and provided short-term employment opportunities for almost 3,000 vulnerable individuals. Several partners reported beneficiaries reducing negative coping mechanisms and feeling increased confidence in their economic future.

Employment generation schemes

Cash for work projects, while lacking in longer-term sustainability, offered a way particularly earlier in the crisis when other livelihoods pathways were less available, to support the most vulnerable with an injection of cash, and offered a way to work towards increased interaction between communities with a view to increasing social cohesion.

The 23 community projects implemented, for example rehabilitation of school infrastructure, irrigation canals or sidewalks, or reforestation activities were identified in partnership with the municipalities and both communities for a lasting positive benefit to the inhabitants of the area. Such projects routinely requested by municipal leaders, were generally positively received, and often co-funded by the municipality. Aside from community infrastructure type projects, two UNDP projects in Jordan piloted innovative approaches using cash-for-work where by i) vulnerable host community members could generate savings through short-term employment through cash for work and get their entrepreneurial ideas supported through multiplying their savings with start-up grants and follow up after the business establishment, and ii) a skills exchange scheme, where through specific trainings UNDP enhanced the capacity of Syrians to support Jordanians peers to establish and run their businesses.

Engaging women in short term employment schemes (cash for work) has been challenging for partners resulting in slight underachievement at the programme level. Generally, this was due to the types of cash-for-work activities such as construction that are less attractive to women. However some projects had success in this area for example the above-mentioned UNDP projects, where specific targeting resulted in more than 60% female participants in both projects, and the inclusion of non-labour intensive activities have increased women acceptance to join such schemes. However, some agricultural projects such as in the UNDP Lebanon and LWF Jordan projects succeeded through community sensitisation in incorporating women to participate in the projects alongside men in agricultural and reforestation activities.

Vocational training, job placement and start-up

Across the range of other livelihoods activities to support access to the labour market (job placement, vocational training, and starts ups) 60% of beneficiaries were women. Several partners (DRC, Save the Children, ACTED, FCA, Oxfam Jordan) provided childcare for parents attending trainings or other livelihoods support activities, or rehabilitated spaces at the SDCs or vocational training institutes for childcare provision. These activities had mixed success in terms of usage of the childcare services by the beneficiaries.

Almost 10,000 beneficiaries (46% refugees) have been assisted to access the labour market through vocational training, job placement services or start up support. The focus of many of the projects under this component was to work with youth and in underprivileged areas, with high density of refugee populations, meaning that the beneficiaries had a high level of vulnerability. Combining soft skills with the technical subjects in entrepreneurship and employability trainings helped in compensating the lack of previous work experiences or unfamiliarity with work codes which had often led to termination of employment by employers or business failure, and enhanced confidence from vulnerable beneficiaries to engage in economic opportunities.

More than 7,000 beneficiaries received vocational trainings and employability skills training, and almost 2,000 beneficiaries undertook an internship or apprenticeship of ranging from 2-6 months. Where possible the vocational training courses were certified by relevant authority in each country. For example Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) offered through public vocational institutes (VTIs) included the provision of official certification that might enable non-Jordanian beneficiaries to use their diploma outside Jordan. Safadi Foundation in Lebanon, as well as providing certified courses, offered accreditation through the Lebanese Order of Engineers providing its seal on graduates' certificates from the construction programme. In addition, 50 youth received Apave accreditation in construction-related fields. Notable also was the model of Safadi Foundation to provide a practical on the job-training component for each of its training courses. DRC Leaders also adjusted their model to integrate the internship with the vocational training as to benefit from theory and practice hand in hand.

Given the economic situation in the region, it was challenging for partners to find jobs for all training graduates and interns however there were some positive achievements. For example, national partner JRF identified a project of electricity generation in Mafraq as an opportunity to link several solar energy technicians to employment. This contributed to a 60% retention level of jobs matched by this project captured three months after the end of the intervention.

Challenges remained around ensuring decent work for example proper contracts, minimum wage, compliance with labour law in some cases. Due to the stagnant economic situation employers were often unwilling to offer full time contracts to new employees.

More than 1,000 beneficiaries were supported with start up support in the form of small grants, incubation support and mentoring many of which were operating profitably at the end of the projects. A further 585 existing SMEs were supported with business development services to expand, improve efficiency, and create new jobs. For example through the DRC LEADERS project out of 54 enterprises supported 43% reported good performance after the end of the project with 13 new jobs maintained, or IRC Lebanon where 89% of supported MSMEs who received start up or expansion grant reported increased profits 6 months after support.

Mentorship played a critical role in several of the RDPP-supported livelihood projects. Mentors profiles ranged from fresh business graduates, to senior profiles with specific expertise, to recognized figures from the community. Mentorship ensured beneficiaries support to access to information, counselling to make their businesses profitable and sustainable, and linkages to microfinance institutions. Often

mentorship was not meant to establish a “doctor-patient” relation, but rather to create a model that can support the beneficiary to identify solutions to arising problems and obstacles. As also concluded by the final evaluation, longer timeframes would have allowed for more engagement by mentors, which could have ensured further sustainability.

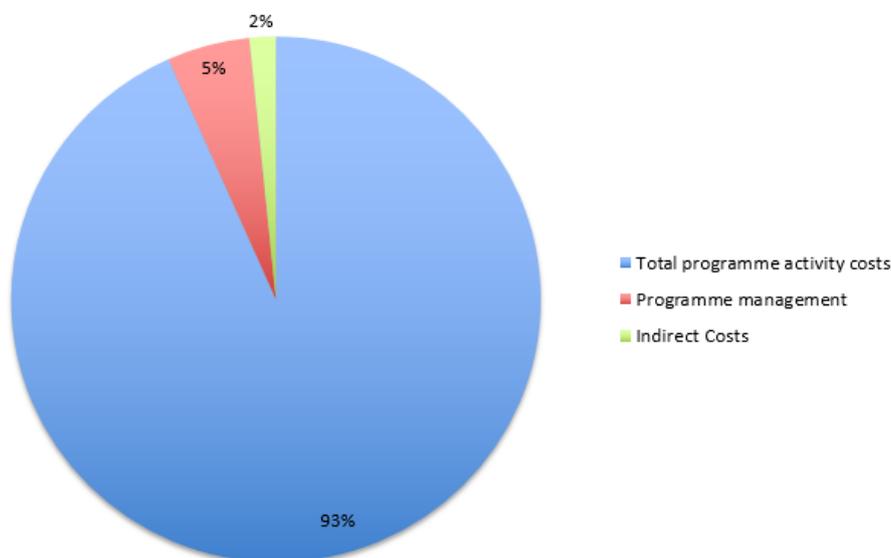
6. Financial achievements

The financial performance of RDPP has been overall satisfactory. The final expenditure is slightly underachieved in relation to the budget framework available with a final eligible cost of Euro 38,139,298 on a budget frame of Euro 41,618,000. Final expenditure is 91.8% of the allocated funding.

The minor underachievement of Euro 3.478.702 is partly due to the partnership with World Vision, which was terminated at request of the partner at a late stage, thereby it was not possible to allocate the funds to a new partnership. The funds returned to RDPP was Euro 1.196.277. Further, the Programme Management Unit has been less expensive than budgeted for due to difficulties in recruiting the qualified staff, resulting in the positions of Project Manager and Liaison (Jordan and Iraq) and Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist being vacant for some time and therefore also less travel to Iraq and high-risk areas in Iraq resulting in less cost for security. Evaluations and audits have also been less costly than budgeted for as well as communication and visibility, as majority of costs for this has been carried by the partnerships. The overall saving on the PMU is 729,320 (27% of total PMU cost). The majority of the remaining underexpenditure results from that besides a few of the partners, most (over 80%) do not fully utilise their budget frame for the projects and thereby smaller funds remain from nearly all the contractual partnerships.

Based on this the funding allocated towards activities and partnerships amounts to 93% of the total cost, where 5% has been spent on the PMU. The indirect costs Denmark has been allocated from non-Danish contributions for managing the delegated cooperation amount to only 2% of the total programme costs as shown in the below figure.

Funding for activities, PMU and in-direct cost



The financial implementation has throughout the programme been effective and well-managed. No major remarks has been received by the National Audit Office of Denmark in the expenditure verification conducted annually of the programme financial implementation. Minor identified procedures to be adjusted were identified in the early years and have been corrected concurrently as programme implementation progressed. The final expenditure verification report for year 4 confirms the final eligible costs as reported in the financial reporting in annex 1.

In addition to the annual audits of the overall financial implementation of RDPP by the National Audit Office, the partners submitted expenditure verification reports of their final project accounts. To support the financial management of the PMU and provide external financial control measures, an external financial controller verified the financial reports and statements submitted by the partners and confirmed the final transfer, prior to closure of the partnership.

Due to delays in reporting or approval of the final expenditure verification reports from the partnerships in addition to settlement of final PMU expenses, the list of pending payments have been listed in the sheet in the final report in accordance with the requirements of the General Conditions. The payments were pending at the time of reporting to the National Audit Office, but majority have been closed in the period between the completion of the expenditure verification report for year 4 and the final narrative report, as also reflected in the overview.

The effective financial management of the programme has also been a result of the Programme Management Unit taking a proactive approach to the dialogue on financial management with partners. In addition to the initial assessment of the financial capacities of partners before entering into the partnership and the continuous monitoring throughout the partnership, the PMU in 2017 contracted the training NGO Mango, who is renowned for their trainings on financial management and compliance. Partners in the three focus countries were invited to attend the three-day workshops, though due to the situation in KRI at the time with the airport closed, only a few of the partners from Iraq attended. The training focused on identification of financial irregularities, anti-corruption, and internal and external financial controls. The PMU used the opportunity to explain the anti-corruption policy and expectations of partners in terms of reporting. This resulted in a positive and open dialogue with partners, where also a few potential cases of irregularity were discussed.

According to the aid transparency and zero tolerance policies of Denmark, the National Audit Office is informed of all cases of reasonable suspicion of irregularities. During the RDPP implementation only three cases were identified as potential cases of financial irregularity, where further investigation were needed to resolve, if there were any concerns. In the partnership with Relief International in Iraq the partner during regular monitoring identified a few cases of grants beneficiaries, who had not used the funds for the agreed purposes and relocated to other countries. The partner followed up in the identified cases and a legal opinion on the options to pursue the case in court was obtained, which confirmed that it would not be possible to pursue the cases cross-border. As the partner had explored all options for

solving the case and regaining the funds, the expense was accepted by the RDPP according to the Danish guidelines. The case amounted to Euro 4.020. A second case was identified by International Rescue Committee in a partnership in Lebanon where concerns regarding preferential treatment was identified. As the partner has a strong internal compliance department, they initiated the investigation into the matter. In the end, the partner resolved the matter without any loss to RDPP funds. The final case identified was with the Lebanese NGO AJEM, where RDPP became aware of possible less internal capacities for financial control. Based on this, it was decided together with AJEM, to conduct an external audit of the two projects implemented under the partnership. An external audit company was engaged for the task. Throughout the exercise, AJEM displayed an open and cooperative attitude. The conclusion of the external audit was that the two projects with RDPP had been implemented satisfactory, funding allocated to the agreed activities, and the required internal and external financial controls were compliant. Based on this the case was closed.

In the below table is an overview of the final income including a calculation of the final budgetary division between the eight donors contributing to the RDPP 2014-2018. With the minor underexpenditure, funds will be reimbursed to the donors, which have transferred the total contribution, as shown in the below table 'to be paid by donor'. Requests for payments or reimbursement of funds will be forwarded together with the final reporting. In addition, a request for transfer of assets will be forwarded with the final reporting (also included in annex 9).

Income and final accounts per contributing donor

| Donor | Received |
|--------------|----------------------|
| EU | 11.066.148,66 |
| DK | 23.462.354,80 |
| IRL | 2.476.163,66 |
| CH | 1.392.686,16 |
| NL | 499.680,90 |
| UK | 499.741,86 |
| NO | 469.317,64 |
| CZ | 544.684,33 |
| Total | 40.410.778,01 |

| Contributions yet not received | Total contributions pr. donor | % of total budget |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1.230.002 | 12.296.150,66 | 29,53% |
| | 23.462.354,80 | 56,34% |
| | 2.476.163,66 | 5,95% |
| | 1.392.686,16 | 3,34% |
| | 499.680,90 | 1,20% |
| | 499.741,86 | 1,20% |
| | 469.317,64 | 1,13% |
| | 544.684,33 | 1,31% |
| Total | 41.640.780,01 | 100,00% |

| Total expenses pr. donor | To be paid by donor |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 11.262.194,41 | 196.045,75 |
| 21.489.457,02 | -1.972.897,78 |
| 2.267.948,51 | -208.215,15 |
| 1.275.578,25 | -117.107,91 |
| 457.663,83 | -42.017,07 |
| 457.719,67 | -42.022,19 |
| 429.853,75 | -39.463,89 |
| 498.883,02 | -45.801,31 |
| 38.139.298,46 | -2.271.479,55 |

Received income in DKK is converted into EUR using InforEuro exchange rates for the following periods

| | DKK/EUR |
|-----------|---------|
| Jul. 2014 | 7,4571 |
| Mar. 2016 | 7,46 |
| Dec. 2017 | 7,4423 |

7. Communication and visibility

The communication efforts and visibility of the RDPP has improved over the implementation. While initially struggling to ensure partner compliance with the communication strategy and broader understanding of the RDPP as a multi-donor programme, mainly caused by limited PMU capacity and presence across the region, the decision of the Steering Committee in 2016 to allow for expansion of the PMU contributed to improve this. With a permanent office and presence in Amman and more frequent engagement in Iraq both in Baghdad and KRI levels, the RDPP has overcome some of the initial challenges. The expansion of the PMU has also allowed for better presence in coordination forums and bilateral engagement with stakeholders.

In addition to the expansion of the PMU, a detailed communication and visibility note for partners was also developed, which supported them to be more compliant in their communication of the funding for their projects and use of the RDPP logo. Further, to support the communication of the PMU and provide better access to information on the projects and publications an RDPP website was launched in 2017 followed in 2018 by a Twitter account.

RDPP has been referenced by partners in their communication with media, in connection with project ceremonies, press releases and events, and in research supported by RDPP. In addition, RDPP has raised visibility of the programming through contributing a case study to the OECD DAC report for 2018 titled 'Joining Forces to Leave No One Behind' and through the high-level side-event in Brussels in 2016 launching the 'Jobs Makes a Difference' report by UNDP with the participation of the Jordanian Minister for Planning and International Cooperation.

The main media coverage and communication results are summarized in annex 4. Additional coverage by partners on social media, local media and other platforms have been reported to the RDPP, but have not been included in the overview.

8. Challenges encountered and mitigation

As highlighted in the description of the context over the years the RDPP has been implemented, the developments in the three focus countries have been fluid and required adjustments to the programming. The Steering Committee (SC) have provided the flexibility and operational space for the PMU to ensure that the RDPP could remain a relevant programming instrument. The main mitigation measures adopted and programme adjustments are highlighted in this section.

After the summer of 2015 with the migration of refugees flows towards Europe and increased focus on support towards the displacement Syrians, Denmark decided to contribute an additional 13.4 million Euro in funding to the RDPP. The additional funding supported the decision of the SC to strategically readjust the focus in support of more partnerships with local actors and less partnerships with UN; commitment to foster innovative partnerships; and to expand the PMU. Based on the additional funding, a budget revision was approved in 2016, which also boosted the funding for the four thematic areas.

As the implementation of the RDPP began to evolve from 2014, it early on became clear that the initial structure of the PMU was too lean for the ambition reflected in the programme design. With the decision

of the SC described above, the PMU was expanded from the original 4 positions (Programme Manager and Finance/Logistic Manager in Beirut, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist in Amman (all regional) and Programme Coordinator in Copenhagen) to an expanded structure of 6 positions. Based on the identified need to have a stronger presence in Jordan and Iraq, the office in Amman was moved from the previously being hosted by the Embassy of Netherlands to a new location close to the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, the main counterpart in Jordan. A Liaison and Project Manager was recruited, who the role to ensure coordination with stakeholders and provide oversight of and develop the partnership portfolios in Jordan and Iraq. In addition, a Project Manager was recruited for the office in Beirut to provide increased capacity for oversight of the partnership portfolio in Lebanon.

In terms of staffing, challenges have also been encountered in recruiting qualified staff for the positions. This has resulted in the position as Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist being vacant for more than a year, despite continuous vacancy announcements and testing of different recruitment strategies to make the position attractive. Further, with the decision of the former Programme Manager to not extend the contract after November 2016, recruitment for the position was initiated in July 2016. In the first round of applicants, a candidate with the right qualifications could not be identified, it was therefore decided to readvertise the position. This led to a gap of a few months, where the position was vacant. For the position of Liaison and Project Manager a strong pool of qualified candidates applied, but due to the length of the recruitment process and ministry requirements for security clearance of international advisors, the position was also vacant for longer than planned.

Further, based the initial delay to starting up the RDPP in the first year, with the additional funding contributed in 2016, and considering the challenging operational context, the SC in 2016 also approved a no-cost-extension (NCE) of the programme. The programme implementation was initially intended to finalise by June 2017, but with the NCE the implementation period was extended to June 2018. Following the recommendation of the evaluation conducted in 2018, the SC approved a further 3-month NCE of the programme extending the implementation period to September 2018. With the approval of the second NCE, it was also approved to utilise the contingency funds for programming, as the funding would have otherwise remained unspent.

9. Reviews and evaluations

In order to support the PMU and the Steering Committee in guiding the strategic direction of the programme implementation, several external reviews have been conducted throughout the implementation of the RDPP.

In 2016, a midterm review (MTR) of the programme was conducted with the support of external consultants to assess programme progress after the first years of implementation. The recommendations on the strategic direction and gaps from the MTR became the basis for the dialogue with the Steering Committee of the focusing of the RDPP going forward with a stronger focus on localisation, innovative partnerships, expansion of the PMU, and flexibility to adapt to the context. The suggested revision of the GRF was not implemented, as it was assessed that it would require substantive revisions of the results frameworks of all the partnerships engaged at the time and that the baseline data, which they should

measure against would not be available. The MTR also recommended that the Steering Committee considered an extension of the RDPP beyond 2018.

Following the midterm review, a Results-Oriented Monitoring Review was conducted by the ROM Unit of the European Commission in 2017, which highlighted the continued relevance of the RDPP and of the strategic decision of the Steering Committee for an increased focus on localisation, while also highlighting the focus on timeframes to ensure sustainability. While recognising the improved role the RDPP could play with the already expanded PMU, a recommendation was to consider further strengthening the management structure. In the final recommendations was also concerns regarding the impact of the research products and the challenges in promoting innovative partnerships.

On the back of the ROM Review, Denmark decided to conduct an evaluation in September/October 2018. Whereas the MTR and the ROM reviews had mainly been focused at the RDPP progress at the partnership level, the evaluation focused on RDPP at the programmatic level. The decision to conduct the evaluation was based in the request of the Steering Committee to explore the opportunity for a second phase of the RDPP. The evaluation would therefore both evaluate the programme progress towards the objectives and provide recommendations on the strategic direction for a new programme phase. The evaluation of the RDPP as a programme was valuable for the PMU and the Steering Committee and the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation have been addressed and integrated, where possible.

To follow up on the above reviews and evaluation and assess the final results of the RDPP, a final synthesis evaluation was conducted in March 2019 at the end of implementation. The main findings and conclusions are highlighted in the section below. The reports of the MTR, the programme evaluation from 2018 and the final synthesis evaluation are publically available on the RDPP website.

In addition to the external reviews and evaluation, continuous monitoring and evaluation of partnerships has been conducted by the PMU. Also, as highlighted above, for the financial control expenditure verification of partners have been applied in addition to the annual review of RDPP accounts by the National Audit Office.

10. Conclusion of final desk evaluation

To follow up on the earlier reviews and evaluation conducted and support the PMU in synthesizing the final results at the end of programme implementation, a synthesis evaluation was conducted reviewing the final reporting and evaluations of the partnerships. Further, the synthesis evaluation reviewed the earlier reviews and evaluation of RDPP and the objectives set out for the programme in order to review the programmatic achievements towards the intended objectives of the programme. The final report of the desk evaluation is included as annex 7.

Overall, the evaluation concluded that the RDPP has succeeded in establishing an evidence-base on the impact of hosting refugees, the impact of displacement on socio-economic and living conditions and interlinkages between protection and livelihoods. The RDPP has further succeeded in improving the capacity of local actors, including CSO and national authorities, to uphold and protect refugees and vulnerable host communities' rights in particular in relation to SGBV and child labour issues. The RDPP

has furthermore capacitated refugees and host community members to be better able to enter the labour market through a variety of different methods, some more successful than others. Lastly with the contribution of advocacy efforts of RDPP partners, some positive policy changes have been achieved in the region.

Less progress against the GRF target was seen in relation to generating short-term employment for men and in particular women due to a strategic shift in focus as endorsed by the Steering Committee. Despite the positive efforts by RDPP partners, the protection space has not been expanded, especially in the context of Lebanon, largely due to the overall development in the protection space for refugees.

Given ongoing instability in Syria hindering return, resettlement options in third countries being inadequate and limited political space for formalised local integration, any interventions ability to contribute to durable solutions thus far is limited. Overall based on the evaluation of the RDPP supported projects, the programme has been able to positively contribute to enhancing the ability of refugees to avail themselves of a durable solution and encouraged the ability of refugees to access basic rights. This in particular holds true when it comes to access to the labour market to support temporary economic inclusion and upholding of the protection space in host countries. The programme has been sensitive to the geographical disparity between the three focus countries in the approach to this and aimed to support options within national frameworks. The disparity in geography is not exclusive to RDPP, as these elements have been largely outside the control of the RDPP. It further does not capture the counterfactual situation i.e. what would be the situation in these countries had the RDPP not been there to try to influence a positive change. Lastly it underscores the need for a continued engagement by the RDPP and other donors to uphold the achievements made and contribute to a more positive trajectory in the region for refugees and host communities.

The key lessons learned going forward are:

- Learn, adapt, act should be a continuous process in the programme to ensure that the RDPP remains relevant and address the core needs. The first phase has shown the positive benefits of adjusting course, enhancing resources when needed and adapt to the changes, which have ended in enhancing the impact and reach of the programme.
- Combining more than one component of a project is relevant to achieve programmatic success. Beneficiaries typically do not only have specific needs in one sector, but often span both protection and livelihoods, while research and advocacy can help address these issues on a more systemic level. Taking a more holistic approach to beneficiaries' needs should be considered, also given the ability of the RDPP to support projects with a longer timeframe, which is a key asset that you could be further utilized.
- With persistence and in-depth contextual understanding, it is possible to remove the barriers of women's participation, in e.g. labour market activities, despite the cultural barriers. It highlights the importance of partners dedicating the efforts and resources to identify, recruit and sustain women's participation, and tailor activities to the needs of women.
- Establishing good relations with the local administration and the private sector to facilitate the implementation in particular in relations to livelihoods. For vocational training specifically, extra career-counselling and a stronger engagement with the private sector have been identified as assets. And for the support to small enterprises, a major lesson is that more long-term mentoring is needed which can be facilitated by engagement with local businesses.

- RDPP has shown great results on advocacy, and have demonstrated that to be efficient, advocacy processes should be designed to be inclusive and participatory and focus on collaboration, coordination and communication to build alignment & common understanding across stakeholders. Such partnership should furthermore focus on actors that have advocacy as their core focus and mandate.
- The RDPP dedicated funding for research is relatively novel, however RDPP should ensure linkages between research and overall programming objectives in order to ensure relevance and impact.

11. List of annexes

- Annex 1: Financial reporting
- Annex 2: General Results Framework
- Annex 3: Partnership list
- Annex 4: Media coverage and visibility
- Annex 5: Project fiches
- Annex 6: Risk matrix
- Annex 7: Evaluation synthesis report
- Annex 8: Expenditure Verification Reports (4 reports)
- Annex 9: Asset list with request to retain (9a)