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**DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL**

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) is a humanitarian, non-governmental, non-profit organization founded in 1956 that works in 39 countries throughout the world. DRC fulfils its mandate by providing direct assistance to conflict-affected populations, refugees, internally displaced people (IDPs) and host communities in the conflict areas of the world and by advocating on their behalf internationally and in Denmark.

DRC’s vision for the regional program in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) reflects the global vision to work towards the protection and promotion of durable solutions to refugee and displacement problems, on the basis of humanitarian principles and human rights. The overall goal of DRC’s strategy for MENA is: to support and strengthen a regional protection framework for displacement-affected communities throughout the Middle East and North Africa.

**DANISH DEMINING GROUP**

Danish Demining Group (DDG) is a Humanitarian Mine Action Unit within the DRC. The DDG’s mission is to create a safe environment where people can live free from armed violence and remnants of conflict.

DDG operates in some of the most fragile and conflict-affected places in the world. DDG’s vision for the regional program in MENA reflects its global focus of addressing the needs of those countries most affected by landmines and other explosive remnants of war as well as widespread proliferation of small arms and light weapons. DDG has a special focus on addressing the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

DDG seeks to utilise regional and cross-border synergies where possible, and prefers to operate in countries where the DRC already has a presence in order to strengthen the link between DDG’s Mine Action and Armed Violence Reduction work and DRC’s emergency interventions and longer-term development programmes.
ACRONYMS

BPRM – Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
CBO – Community Based Organization
CCCM – Camp Coordination and Camp Management
CDRD – Community Driven Recovery and Development
CFS – Child Friendly Space
CP – Child Protection
CSOs – Civil Society Organizations
CSP – Community Support Projects
DANIDA – Danish International Development Agency
DDG – Danish Demining Group
DFID – UK Department for International Development
DRC – Danish Refugee Council
DSP – District Safety Plan
EOD – Explosive Ordnance Disposal
ERW – Explosive Remnants of War
FSE – Fire Arms Safety Education
GBV – Gender Based Violence
IDPs – Internally Displaced Persons
IED – Improvised Explosive Devices
IKMAA – Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency
KRI – Kurdistan Region of Iraq
IMPR – International Middle East Peace Research Center
ISIL – Islamic State Iraq and Levant
MENA – Middle East and North Africa
MRE – Mine Risk Education
NFI – Non-Food Items
OCHA – Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PSS – Psychosocial Support Services
RMMS – Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat
SALW – Small Arms and Light Weapons
SARC – Syrian Arab Red Crescent
SIRF – Syria INGO Regional Forum
SPD – Strategic Program Document
SGBV – Sexual and Gender Based Violence
UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNMAS – United Nations Mine Action Service
VST – Vocational skills training
UXO – Unexploded Ordnance
WASH – Water Sanitation and Hygiene
FOREWORD

We are pleased to present you with the Danish Refugee Council’s (DRC) and the Danish Demining Group’s (DDG) 2015 Annual Report for the Middle East and North Africa.

The past year will forever be remembered for the significant increase in refugees and migrants seeking refuge in Europe, either from the MENA region or transiting from it. This mass migration has undermined Europe’s asylum systems, challenged the limits of Europe’s political cohesion and shaken political systems in many European countries.

The reason for this migration is foremost people escaping from continuous crisis in Syria, but also on-going conflict in Iraq and the deterioration in the quality of asylum for refugees in the MENA region. In November, DRC co-authored a research report entitled ‘Right to a Future’ about the quality of asylum in hosting countries neighboring Syria. This report demonstrated a concerning eroding in the quality of life displaced persons were experiencing, and called for a new approach by the international community, including Syria’s neighbors: one which offered hope, safety and dignity to the millions of refugees, and provided a chance for refugees to contribute to the societies and economies of their hosts. At the core of on-going instability in Syria is the absence of a political solution to the conflict. By the close of 2015 we saw renewed efforts at this, and 2016 will be a crucial year for the future of Syria and its people.

While much attention has been on Syria, the situation in Iraq and Libya is equally volatile for its people and humanitarian access. A cessation to conflict and stability for people will require a concerted and dedicated engagement from the international community and key regional actors. While this is challenging, as 2015 demonstrated, the stakes are too high first and foremost for the civilian populations who continue to suffer, but also for the stability of the MENA region and beyond, for complacency.

DRC’s programmes in the region continued to develop along two parallel but complimentary tracks. Our work throughout 2015 was channeled between maintaining comprehensive emergency response capacities – particularly in Iraq and Syria - and expanding our programmes to address the increasingly protracted nature of displacement crisis through engagement in livelihood support, protection, armed violence reduction (AVR) and mine risk awareness and enhancing support to host communities and municipalities affected by on-going displacement.

At the same time, we have invested significant efforts into strengthening response collaboration within MENA, leading the formation of a consortium of key partners surrounding livelihood and resilience programming in Syria, and taking the lead on a livelihood consortium with partners in Lebanon and Jordan. By the close of 2015, similar efforts were formalized in Libya and Turkey. With the advent of new funding opportunities for MENA such as German government-owned development bank (KfW), DRC seeks to move towards becoming a lead actor in livelihood support and protection programming, including mine risk awareness throughout the region.

The year 2015 brought formalization of a new type of collaboration for DRC with the Canadian government, supporting Canada on its resettlement program by assisting application processing. This is a new programme area for DRC and in 2016 efforts will focus on establishment of similar collaborations with other resettlement countries.

In 2015, DRC also launched an online solidarity and advocacy campaign, Everyday Heroes of Syria. This global campaign advocated a humanitarian spirit by paying tribute to the many everyday people in the region assisting people affected by the Syrian crisis. Over 3.5 million people engaged in the campaign and it was a pleasure to follow the online engagement from people all over the region and the world.

At a personal level, we would like to extend our pride and gratitude to the more than 936 committed and professional staff members working from more than 22 operational bases in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Syria, Turkey and Tunisia. On behalf of DRC and DDG MENA, I would like to thank all partners and donors for their collaboration and support.

Peter Klansoe  
Regional Director, DRC Middle East and North Africa

Lene Rasmussen  
Regional Manager, DDG Middle East and North Africa
The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and Danish Demining Group (DDG) coordinate activities across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) from its regional office in Amman, Jordan. The regional office also hosts the Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS) Middle East office.

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**Staff in Middle East & North Africa**

- **Offices**: 20
- **Local Staff**: 935
- **International Staff**: 91
In 2015, DRC/DDG MENA has had to carefully strategize its responses in a region that stands at the epicentre of the world’s current global displacement crisis. This response has come at a time that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has called an “age of unprecedented mass displacement.” At the beginning of 2015, Syria was the world’s biggest producer of both internally displaced people (7.6 million) and refugees (3.88 million). Over 4.1 million people were also displaced from Iraq, and some 309,000 newly displaced within Libya. While neighboring countries in the region have responded admirably, throughout 2015 DRC/DDG MENA worked to support their efforts with protection-based responses that assisted both host communities and displaced persons.

Throughout 2015, the use of explosive weapons in civilian areas continued to be a major protection concern in Syria, Iraq and Libya. This was compounded by Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) and landmines from previous and ongoing conflicts that have impeded the civilian population’s access to safe housing, land and livelihoods, and pose ongoing threats to DRC/DDG’s ability to access affected areas and deliver humanitarian support. DRC/DDG has had to tackle difficult strategic decisions as well as orient advocacy messages in response to the volatile and fragile situation within the region.

HOST GOVERNMENTS UNDER STRAIN

Countries neighboring Syria face particular challenges which long predate the current Syrian crisis - from water scarcity, youth unemployment, access to quality education, and affordable housing to fragile political systems and, in the case of Syria, Iraq and Libya, active conflict and huge internal displacement.

Combined with a lack of access to legal livelihood opportunities in hosting countries and the shrinking protective space for refugees (specifically border closures in Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan during 2014) humanitarian needs and protection concerns for displacement-affected populations within the MENA region were exacerbated throughout 2015. This contributed to widespread secondary movements from the region, and unsafe premature returns with the associated risk of returnees becoming IDPs.

Against such need, in 2015 DRC/DDG MENA focussed its programming on three key themes:

- Emergency response: saving lives and safeguarding humanitarian access for conflict-affected populations
- Transitional and durable solutions: increasing the quality of life for people in protracted displacement settings
- Promoting long term stability and resilience: reducing patterns of recurrent, conflict-induced displacement through long term community focused recovery and development programming, local institutional support.

Against the backdrop of these three themes, DRC MENA developed a regional profile in protection, shelter and Non Food Items (NFIs), Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), livelihoods, food, income generation, mine action and armed violence reduction. Using a human-rights based approach refugees, IDPs and other affected groups were provided with assistance according to their vulnerability status. It seeks to analyze inequalities which lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress.

Alongside these program efforts, capacity building and co-operation between local and national authorities and other relevant organizations was fostered via working groups and trainings. Some key working groups included Syria INGO Regional...
Forum (SIRF) Advocacy Work Group, Humanitarian Country Teams (Iraq, Syria and Lebanon), INGO Forums (Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon), Whole of Syria, and UNHCR protection, emergency shelter and camp coordination cluster groups.

SYRIA – A REGIONAL CRISIS

To date, due to ongoing conflict in Libya and Iraq, there are over 11.7 million IDP’s in the region. Additionally, there are over 4.2 million Syrian refugees and over 309,000 Iraqi refugees currently being hosted in neighboring countries. Turkey has been the largest recipient of Syrian refugees so far with over 2.7 million arriving since 2011. In Lebanon, one in four of its population are now refugees of which 1.5 million are Syrian, while in Jordan figures stand at 1.4 million and 250,000 in Iraq.

As the Syrian conflict moved into its fifth year in 2015, it was increasingly clear that those women, men, boys and girls affected by it were running out of options. While 2015 saw a drop in the number of refugees being registered by UNHCR as neighboring countries increasingly restricted or closed their borders to people fleeing, millions of refugees are expected to remain in neighboring countries for years to come. Cuts in humanitarian assistance ill-designed for a protracted crisis, increased demands on already stretched host communities and authorities, and little opportunity for refugees to legitimately make a living, meant vulnerable displaced people were increasingly resorting to negative coping strategies.

In all countries, DRC has worked hard to respond rapidly. In 2015 the DRC provided support to over 1.5 million displacement-affected populations across the MENA region. With the protracted nature of both Syrian and Iraqi displacement, the emphasis in 2016 will shift to stronger advocacy for more durable solutions and self-reliance initiatives.

QUALITY OF ASYLUM

The quality of asylum for refugees and displaced persons across the MENA region continued to deteriorate throughout 2015. Few countries in the region with the exception of Turkey, have signed the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention. Access to UNHCR refugee status determination is uneven, and many asylum seekers and refugees face obstacles obtaining documentation and registration papers. New regulations applied by some host countries have made it increasingly difficult for refugees to renew their residency. As a result, refugees have been experiencing limited freedom of movement and shrinking access to assistance and livelihoods opportunities.

At the end of 2015, an estimated 70 per cent of Syrian refugees in Lebanon did not have valid legal status in the country. The effect of this on the lives of refugees has been limited movement, also impacting on their access to basic services such as health care and education. Without full access to rights, it is estimated that two thirds of Syrian refugees are living under the poverty line. After having expended personal savings and without adequate legal rights to work, many are left without livelihoods opportunities.

The DRC has highlighted that a deteriorating quality of asylum is a major driver for people who are considering moving to Europe in search of permanent protection and durable solutions to their situation. In Jordan an estimated 99 per cent of refugees work in informal sectors such as agriculture, construction and food service. Forced into irregular work, refugees are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. This has particularly impacted on the many children who are working to support their families.

Being committed to the humanitarian imperative, the DRC co-authored a research report together with CARE, the International Red Cross, Norwegian Refugee Council and Oxfam, entitled ‘Right to a Future’. The report contextualizes the impacts of limited livelihoods opportunities and legal status for refugees. It outlines a way forward that promotes a ‘resilience agenda’ that supports refugees to be self-reliant and gives adequate support to host countries. The report was presented in November 2015 at the UNDP-led ‘Resilience Development Forum’ held in Jordan.

LARGE SCALE MIGRATION

In 2015 the largest movement in modern history of refugees and migrants from the Middle East into Europe took place. The UN estimated that in 2015 more than 1,011,700 refugees and migrants arrived by sea to Europe. Namely they transited from Libya and Turkey into Italy and Greece, with the largest populations being from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.

The DRC has responded by supporting refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in transit locations such as Libya and Turkey. This has been done mainly through the provision of basic services,
protection monitoring and delivering training to civil society organizations (CSO) on alternatives to detention in partnership with the International Detention Coalition. During the course of 2015, DRC developed a monthly trends report on migration in and out of the MENA region that provides a regular snapshot of protection risks and the main routes being taken by those fleeing.

The DRC initiated a rapid assessment on the perspectives of Syrian refugees travelling to Europe. This was followed with the publishing of feature articles by the 'Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat' on emerging issues such as the prevalence of smuggling and the situation in Turkey as the preeminent transit point to Europe. Following this, DRC MENA staff contributed to a global workshop on the strategic priority of mixed migration. The workshop paved the way for future engagement on mixed migration in the MENA region by way of protection work, trend monitoring and regional level analysis.

SUPPORT TO HOST COMMUNITIES

In 2015, DRC managed 20 Community Centers, 9 Women Centers and 11 Child Friendly Spaces across Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq, reaching over 40,000 beneficiaries. In situations of protracted displacement, promoting transitional and durable solutions requires the implementation of assistance programs that benefit both the displaced and host communities. For the DRC MENA, strategically placed Community Centers in vulnerable areas of displacement-affected populations have been used as essential social rehabilitation tools.

The Centers are used as a unique entry point to these communities while offering a safe, protective environment for the provision of vital services. The Community Centers have been instrumental in facilitating resilience and social cohesion objectives. When access to affected populations is challenged, DRC’s Community Centers are used as the base from which outreach interventions are organized. The Centers operate on the DRC’s community-based approach, with each Center led by a board of representative community members, of equal male and female ratio who agree on the Center’s activities.

DANISH DEMINING GROUP

The year 2015 has been an important year for DDG in MENA, expanding both its programming and funding base. The region carries a painful heritage of long-term conflicts and subsequent contamination of mines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). These continue to affect civilians during and after a conflict, posing a serious threat to people's safety, access to livelihoods and development.

In response to the escalating crisis in Syria, Iraq and Libya, DDG expanded its ERW Risk Education to affected populations, reaching out to over 361,900 individuals in 2015. In Syria, DDG targeted teachers with its ERW Risk Education sessions, who subsequently educated their students about the threat ERW posed to their safety. In Turkey, harm minimization ERW sessions were provided to over 12,000 beneficiaries, including Syrian refugees and humanitarian workers. To better support Syrian refugees, and Iraqi IDP’s, DDG started to operate in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) and reopened its office in Basra in the South. These offices have given support to the National Mine Action Center to scale-up its Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) clearance activities and ERW Risk Education.

DDG MENA maintained a strong focus on community-driven interventions throughout 2015. This was achieved through strengthening national capacities to promote community recovery, stabilization and resilience. In Libya, DDG partnered with the Free Field Foundation (3F) a national organization that is now the first accredited Libyan Mine Action organization. In Tunisia, DDG collaborated with youth organizations to support their empowerment and to reduce radicalization and political violence. Furthermore, as part of a larger border security management project, DDG MENA developed a pilot project to enhance trust between security providers and communities in border areas between Tunisia and Libya.

STREAMLINING FINANCE

In 2015 the DRC’s human resource capacity increased to 190 operational staff (10 regional staff, 180 field staff). With this, a key priority in 2015 was to improve compliance and risk management in accordance with the regulations of its 17 donors and the legislations of the seven governments it operates within. Logistics and procurement services were streamlined to effectively and efficiently deliver services and support to displacement-affected populations.

The completion of two internal compliance self-checks saw overall
compliance of the 20 DRC MENA offices increase from 77 percent in January 2015, to 80 percent in July 2015. Successful external audits were conducted in 2015 by the UNHCR, the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), the U.S. Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (BPRM), the European Commission Directorate-General of Development and Cooperation (DG Devco), and the European Court of Auditors.

CANADA RESETTLEMENT PROJECT

In 2015, DRC MENA collaborated with the Government of Canada to administer its resettlement program assisting process 10,604 Syrian refugee applications from Jordan and Lebanon. Eligibility for resettlement was assessed by UNHCR according to their vulnerability criterion which included: survivors of violence and/or torture, women and girls at risk, children and adolescents at risk, medical needs, legal and/or physical protection needs, family reunification, and lack of foreseeable alternative durable solutions.

ENTERING ALGERIA

During 2015, DRC MENA worked systematically to establish operations in Algeria recognizing that the Western Saharawi refugee population residing there represents a significant concern. DRC plans to assist the government with livelihood and protection support.
In 2015, Iraq’s displacement context was largely affected by the continuation of domestic and regional conflicts and widespread political instability. These events contributed significantly to insecurity for both the Iraqi and refugee population. Despite renewed efforts by Iraqi Security Forces to expel the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), its growing support base allowed it to operate freely in Iraq, with the group forming strongholds in Anbar, Diyala, Salah al-Din, Ninewa and Mosul. This had the result of triggering massive displacement from these centers. Within these areas ISIL continued to commit systematic and widespread violence against Iraqi civilians throughout 2015, while also targeting members of different ethnic and religious communities. The indiscriminate acts of violence committed by ISIL have inflamed sectarian conflict and heightened tension and distrust between different populations. Despite this, Iraq continues to host over 245,000 refugees from Syria, primarily in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI).

As of December 2015, the total number of Iraqi IDPs living in camps and with host communities stood at 3.3 million. This situation is putting a further strain on already weakened local resources and services. Despite the strong and ongoing response from the international humanitarian community, it is estimated that 10 million people in Iraq will require some form of humanitarian assistance in 2016.

In 2003, following the advent of military operations in Iraq, DRC became one of the first organizations to provide humanitarian assistance, opening an office in Diyala and soon after in Basra. As of 2015, DRC Iraq is operating in eight governorates across the country with offices in Erbil, Duhok, Baghdad, Kirkuk, Karbala and Najaf. DRC Iraq adopted an integrated community-based methodology that focuses on balancing the protection needs of the most vulnerable with support for basic communal services.

STRATEGIC APPROACH AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

DRC Iraq’s approach in 2015 included a transition into an integrated humanitarian response agency to tailor its responses more specifically to the needs of vulnerable populations. This led to a focus on delivering services using complementary, multi-sector response coordination at the governorate and national levels.

DRC Iraq programming centered on Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM). The focus of this initiative was on improving shelter conditions; WASH; emergency distribution of food and non-food core relief items (CRI); and provision of emergency livelihood programming to displacement-affected populations in formal camps and non-camp settings in Baghdad, Diyala, Karbala, Najaf and Babil.

In the KRI, DRC Iraq implemented a multi-sectoral emergency response to support Syrian refugees and IDPs living in camp and non-camp settings in Erbil and Dohuk governorates. The DRC Iraq office in Dohuk served as a base for providing rapid emergency assistance to newly displaced and often neglected communities affected by the conflict in Northern Ninewa namely through the UN-led Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM). DRC Iraq also enhanced its emergency programming and support functions in South-Central Iraq by expanding project activities from its sub-offices in Karbala and Diyala. These new offices were able to support core emergency activities and were part of contingency plans to better address humanitarian needs.

i. CAMP COORDINATION AND CAMP MANAGEMENT

In 2015, as a global implementation partner of UNHCR, DRC Iraq continued to take the lead in overseeing CCCM activities in the four main refugee camps in Erbil Governorate: Basirma, Qushtapa, Darashakran and
Kawergosk. Collectively, these camps serve over 27,000 displacement-affected individuals. To better strengthen the resilience and self-reliance of refugees living in these camps, DRC Iraq worked with UNHCR and the Erbil Refugee Council (ERC) to establish 100 refugee representative committees to ensure management of the camps inclusively of the community, enhance social cohesion and facilitate dispute resolution. Notably, these important community-led committees enabled 550 women to participate in decision-making and peacebuilding mechanisms. Through its CCCM programming, DRC Iraq was able to distribute NFIs that included vital household items and winterization and summer supplies such as blankets, mattresses, shelter kits and fans to more than 27,000 camp beneficiaries.

In South-Central Iraq, DRC Iraq’s CCCM teams worked with the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoDM) to provide on-the-job training to Ministerial staff in camp management and coordination capacities such as establishing camp committees. These efforts have benefited 1,200 households in formal camps - mainly the Karbala IDP camp. DRC Iraq facilitated three site visits by Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and other cluster leads to informal camps and settlements to highlight the humanitarian protection needs and challenges. As a result of these visits there was an increase in much-needed service delivery.

Furthermore, in line with the DRC’s objective of advancing the inclusivity of camp management and efficacy, DRC Iraq worked closely with IDP site representatives throughout 2015. This was largely manifested through regular focus group discussions held with IDPs living in eight informal settlements to identify their safety and camp maintenance needs.

ii. INTEGRATED EMERGENCY RESPONSE

DRC Iraq implemented multi-sectoral emergency and life-saving programming activities throughout 2015. It targeted displaced populations and provided them with WASH facilities, distribution of NFIs, shelter and protection programming.

In the KRI, in Basirma, Qushtapa, Kawergosk and Darashkran refugee camps, 401 permanent houses were constructed, benefitting over 1,200 vulnerable individuals. DRC Iraq scaled up its WASH programming in camps and delivered WASH services to 8,297 refugee households, providing hygiene kits, cleaning items, distributing hygiene promotion and awareness-raising material on cholera prevention and education on accessing safe drinking water. WASH education extended to primary schools, where over 2,000 children were reached with important hygiene messages necessary for maintaining good health while living in the cramped living conditions typical of camps. DRC Iraq also improved the sanitation facilities in its camp schools and other key public service facilities.

To ensure the sustainability and ownership of these interventions, DRC established 20 WASH committees made up of community representatives, who were then trained in water quality monitoring by DRC Iraq staff. With the support of the Zummar town municipal government in Ninewa governorate, DRC reached 73,000 households to improve their solid waste systems. WASH activities also extended to the Kirkuk governorate, where DRC Iraq improved access to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities and raised awareness of good hygiene practices among 7,200 beneficiaries. In South-Central Iraq, the DRC was able to deliver services to 14,900 IDP and host community households across Baghdad, Karbala and Diyala in the form of emergency WASH support.

In October 2015 a cholera outbreak spread primarily in the southern and central governorates of Iraq. DRC Iraq responded with intensified hygiene promotion efforts and providing access to safe drinking water and suitable sanitation, thereby reducing the high risk of disease caused by weakened or destroyed WASH infrastructure. DRC Iraq was able to increase the water supply for 10,000 IDP households and distribute emergency hygiene kits to a further 1,600 households in Baghdad, Karbala, Najaf and Diyala.

In the past year, hundreds of thousands of people were displaced by conflict from Central Iraq into neighboring governorates. To provide life-saving assistance to newly displaced Iraqi families within the first 72 hours of displacement, DRC Iraq worked as part of the UN-led RRM to deliver three-day food rations and hygiene kits to IDPs, newly-displaced households...
and other vulnerable communities in Baghdad, Diyala, Karbala, Salah al-Din, Anbar and Najaf. Over 21,000 households were supported with this assistance in 2015. In Northern Iraq, emergency interventions included the delivery of CRIs to 1,500 households across the four Syrian refugee camps in Erbil. DRC Iraq also provided 6,700 households with three-day food rations, 1,300 households with one-month food rations and distributed 10,000 emergency hygiene kits.

iii. PROTECTION

DRC Iraq implemented protection activities for 15,110 beneficiaries in Northern Iraq and 27,214 beneficiaries in South-Central Iraq (Baghdad, Karbala, Diyala and Najaf). This was achieved through the provision of psychosocial support, livelihood and legal support targeting women, children and vulnerable communities in hard-to-reach, underserved areas. To complement protection services, DRC Iraq’s protection teams established static and mobile Community Centers to operate as safe spaces for vulnerable women to access psychosocial, legal and livelihood support. In the KRI, three newly-established Community Centers provided protection services to 11,671 beneficiaries, and facilitated outreach and monitoring in hard-to-reach and underserved areas. In this model, an integrated business start-up and prevention training sensitized 179 beneficiaries (89 men and 90 women) to gender-based violence (GBV) issues.

The DRC was able to provide assistance and awareness-raising to 1,800 beneficiaries on early marriage, documentation, birth registration, and legal and refugee rights and provided life-skills training, recreational activities and psychosocial counseling sessions. DRC Iraq mobile protection teams completed 1,100 monitoring activities, and referred 400 highly vulnerable cases for specialized assistance.

DRC Iraq also provided appropriate child protection support and monitoring across its regions of operation. Of these, some key achievements included:

- 5,041 violation cases monitored and documented surrounding children and caregivers in Baghdad, Karbala, Najaf and Diyala;
- 6,783 displacement-affected children provided with psychological support and recreational activities via DRC Iraq’s three static Child Friendly Spaces (CFS);
- 801 children and 1,205 adults referred by DRC Iraq staff for medical assistance.

Additionally, DRC Iraq’s protection team’s community mobilization activities, media campaigns and capacity building programming fostered greater protection awareness among 13,384 individuals in Baghdad, Karbala, Najaf and Diyala.

In February 2015, in recognition of the lead protection role taken by DRC Iraq, DRC was officially appointed the Protection Cluster Co-Chair alongside UNHCR.

iv. LIVELIHOODS/SOCIAL COHESION

DRC Iraq provided soft-skill business training and professional development to 730 Syrian refugees in Domiz, Akre and Gawilan camps. Of these, 542 received business start-up and/or
scale-up grants. In the Syrian refugee camps in Erbil, 369 beneficiaries received business training which then led to the establishment of 30 new businesses supported by small grants. The training topics were determined based on labor market demand in the areas in which the project was rolled out and the specific needs and interests of participants.

In partnership with UNHCR, DRC conducted a joint Syrian Refugee Camp Livelihood Assessment to assess available employment opportunities for Syrian refugees. As a result, the DRC established a full-service Job Seeker Support Center in the Kas Nazan district of Erbil Governorate, that provided business skills training to 100 beneficiaries, facilitated job placements for 80 beneficiaries, and supported the establishment of 16 businesses in 2015.

Throughout 2015, DRC Iraq identified eight schools and two parks in Kirkuk city for rehabilitation through a Cash for Work program. The program provided access to income for 1,900 IDP and host community beneficiaries. Participants engaged in activities to benefit the entire community, including cleaning, painting, planting trees and repairing school infrastructure. Each working group was comprised of beneficiaries from different backgrounds in order to promote social cohesion.

In 2015, DRC Iraq assumed responsibility for the Community Technology Access Centers in Domiz and Akre camps which provided computer access to 500 refugees. These Centers provided facilities for refugees to prepare employment paperwork, research employment opportunities and participate in self-initiated computer skills learning.

Finally, DRC Iraq provided 5,025 households in Baghdad, Karbala, Diyala and Ninewa with emergency cash transfers to meet critical basic needs. It continued to advocate for the inclusion of a Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) scheme within the Iraq humanitarian response strategy. This scheme would provide unconditional cash assistance to newly-displaced households, vulnerable older IDP caseloads and host community households, allowing them to make financial decisions based on their immediate needs.

2016 STRATEGIC FOCUS

It is anticipated that Iraq will face new, large-scale humanitarian emergencies in Iraq in 2016 that are expected to trigger further massive population displacements. This is due mainly to the retaking of Mosul by the Iraqi government and Kurdish forces, and the possibility of the Mosul dam collapsing.

In light of this, DRC Iraq will continue positioning itself as a lead agency in emergency response. It will expand its child protection, WASH, shelter and livelihoods programming in new or underserved locations and continue its existing programming in Baghdad, Diyala, Karbala, Najaf, Anbar, Ninewa, and Kirkuk centers. In addition, DRC Iraq will continue to integrate its programs through developing local partnerships with both civil society and local government authorities in order to increase its program outreach to those most in need. Through operating collaboratively with local authorities, DRC Iraq believes this increases the operational capabilities to support vulnerable populations while simultaneously increasing accountability of those who are responsible for the humanitarian protection needs of these communities.
SUPPORTING WOMEN IN THE WORK FORCE, ZAKHO, IRAQ

The violence in Syria caused millions to flee their homes, leaving many if not all of their belongings behind. Many displaced Syrians have then struggled to find livelihood opportunities to meet their basic needs, with vulnerable women and children being disproportionately affected. To support refugee women in Zakho and Domiz, the DRC Iraq protection team opened two Community Centers that offer, among other services, start-up support for small businesses. Fatima* was one of 100 ambitious Syrian refugee women involved in the pilot project who received this assistance.

IRAQ CASE STUDY

Fatima 37, a hairdresser and mother of four, owned a hair salon in Syria before conflict ignited in 2011. Her husband had a government job, and together their combined income was enough to ensure their children’s educational dreams would be met. However, when Syria became engulfed in conflict, Fatima and her family were forced to flee their home for the relative security of the KRI. When they crossed the border into Kurdistan, there were no available tents in Domiz Camp, forcing them to rent an apartment in Zakho.

“At that point we began to struggle, because we had to pay rent, electricity, water bills and other daily expenses, so we started looking for jobs,” said Fatima. Although her husband managed to find a job, his salary was not enough to cover the family’s expenses. Rent was scarcely being covered and their children had to be pulled out of school.

Then Fatima received a phone call from DRC Iraq, explaining their services for refugees. “That phone call helped make my dreams come true: to have a job and look after my children at the same time,” Fatima recalled.

One month after her family was assessed Fatima was nominated to attend a two-day DRC Iraq small business start-up training. Here, armed with her new business skills, the young mother put together a proposal to open her own hairdressing salon and was awarded a grant of US$1,250 to start her small business. Today, Fatima stands proudly in the small hairdressing salon that is now attached to her apartment.

“In the community of Zakho, and in general, women can’t work outside the home for many reasons, such as cultural restrictions and the expense of childcare. But now with DRC’s support, many women have started businesses inside their homes and are able to support their families thanks to the creation of this project,” Fatima said.

“We are happy because now our family has the chance for a better future. We will support each other to create better lives for ourselves and our children,” said Fatima’s husband.

* Name changed to protect her identity.
Due to decades of external and internal conflicts, Iraq is one of the countries in the world most heavily contaminated with landmines and ERW. Basra, in the south of Iraq, is one of the four most heavily ERW contaminated governorates. The KRI is as badly affected with more than one million displaced people currently seeking refuge from the on-going conflicts in Iraq and Syria being exposed to contaminated areas. IDPs and refugees face further risks as their former homes may have been deliberately mined or booby-trapped by ISIL to prevent their safe return and/or contaminated with UXO from the conflict.

DDG STRATEGIC APPROACH AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2015

In 2015, based on a needs assessment conducted in late 2014, DDG made a strategic decision to establish a humanitarian mine action program in KRI. The program executed Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and MRE to Iraqi IDPs and Syrian refugees. As further funding was secured, DDG re-opened its Basra field operations in October 2015, having previously exited southern Iraq the year before.

In December 2015, DDG received accreditation from the Iraqi Kurdish Mine Action Agency (IKMAA), to implement MRE in Kurdistan. DDG immediately deployed eight trained MRE teams to the region. The teams were deployed to refugee and IDP camps in Duhok and Erbil governorates to sensitize people to the inherent threat from ERW, legacy mine fields and IED.

In December 2015 alone, the DDG MRE teams reached a total of 14,662 beneficiaries and hosted 398 MRE sessions. DDG concentrated its MRE efforts on schools situated within various IDP and refugee camps in Erbil and Duhok governorates.

2016 STRATEGIC FOCUS

DDG will continue its MRE operations in KRI and establish an emergency EOD call-out capability once EOD accreditation is achieved from the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency (IKMAA). DDG will also commence Area Clearance activities in Basra, southern Iraq, where approval and accreditation has already been received. DDG will be tasked to conduct landmines and ERW clearance in southern Iraq and conduct MRE with affected populations as well as supporting the Iraqi Regional Mine Action Center – South (RMAC-S) by offering Quality Assurance and Quality Control operations.
In 2007, DRC was authorized by the Syrian authorities to operate within the country to provide assistance to Iraqi refugees fleeing the aftermath of the 2003 US-led war in Iraq and the subsequent sectarian violence in 2006. DRC Syria soon extended its activities to non-Iraqi refugees and vulnerable Syrian people within the sectors of protection, social rehabilitation, education and livelihood support. At the outbreak of the Syrian crisis in 2011, DRC Syria was well positioned to respond to the needs of the conflict-affected population, including refugees, IDP’s and People in Need (PIN). In May 2012, DRC Syria, along with six other INGOs, was authorized by the Government of Syria to respond to the needs of the conflict-affected population, including refugees, IDP’s and People in Need (PIN). In May 2012, DRC Syria, along with six other INGOs, was authorized by the Government of Syria to respond to the needs of the conflict-affected population. Since then, focus areas have been to assist authorities with the distribution of NFIs, shelter, rehabilitation of schools and the opening of six Community Centers providing psychosocial, education and livelihood activities.

DRC SYRIA

In the fifth year of the Syrian Crisis, an estimated 13.5 million people within Syria were in need of humanitarian assistance—6.5 million of whom were IDP’s. A number of drivers have contributed towards the exacerbation of the Syrian people’s humanitarian needs; sustained conflict, economic and financial sanctions, a deepening economic decline and the reduced availability of basic services. A retracted economy has caused job losses, with reduced incomes significantly lowering household purchasing power and a family’s ability to access basic household items. Continued displacement and conflict has also resulted in an ongoing need for safe shelter options.

Throughout 2015, the capacity of local families hosting the majority of IDPs deteriorated as their resources declined. A major concern throughout the year was the shortage of NFIs, especially those to protect against the impacts of winter as many IDPs had left behind assets during displacement, or sold them to survive. During the reporting period, restricted humanitarian access remained one of the biggest challenges that the DRC faced in order to meet the needs of the conflict-affected population.
STRATEGIC APPROACH AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2015

DRC Syria’s strategic approach in 2015 had five areas of focus: protection and community services, shelter, NFIs, education, and livelihoods. Activities were implemented both directly by DRC Syria and through a number of downstream partners; the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, the Syrian Ministry of Local Authorities (MoLA), Ministry of Education (MoE), and Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA). Over 518,000 people benefitted from DRC Syria’s programming in 2015.

i. PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

The organization maintained operations in six Community Centers in Damascus, rural Damascus, Homs, and Deraa through which almost 10,000 vulnerable persons accessed a wide range of legal and social services. Through the Centers, affected populations were referred to external partners for relevant health, medical and legal support. These Centers have become vital safe spaces for the local population. In implementing protection activities through the Centers, with consistent exposure to large numbers of beneficiaries on a daily basis, DRC Syria maintained a critical monitoring and evaluation presence necessary to ensure programming reflected the changing needs and priorities of the conflict-affected populations accessing the Center.

ii. INTEGRATED EMERGENCY RESPONSE

DRC Syria implemented multi-sectoral emergency programming activities throughout 2015. Conflict and displacement-affected populations were targeted to deliver shelter support, distribution of NFIs and protection programming.

In partnership with the MoLA, DRC Syria undertook extensive shelter and WASH rehabilitations of over 2,400 rooms in official collective shelters and private unfinished buildings in Homs, Daraa, Aleppo, Damascus, and Rural Damascus. As a result, a total 10,622 people were provided with safe shelter and adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities.

In the past year, sustained conflict resulted in mass displacement throughout Syria. With conflict causing many to flee homes quickly without time to move assets or limited by mobility needs, large Syrian populations are without basic items to survive. Focusing on hard to reach areas, DRC Syria in partnership with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), conducted extensive distributions of NFIs (including blankets, hygiene kits, and baby kits) to vulnerable populations. In total, 477,005 vulnerable individuals benefited from DRC’s NFI distributions in Damascus, rural Damascus, Aleppo, Homs, Hama, Idleb, Daraa, Lattakia, and Tartous.
iii. EDUCATION

An impact of the sustained conflict has been the destruction of education facilities. This has limited opportunities for Syrian youth to maintain and access educational opportunities. In 2015, DRC Syria identified the need to facilitate increased access to both formal and non-formal education opportunities for conflict-affected children and youth. In partnership with the MoE, the organization implemented education support activities in 46 schools across the five governorates of Damascus, Rural Damascus, Al Quinetra, Homs, and Hama. Education interventions included remedial education that focuses on basic skills and learning, extracurricular activities, Psychosocial Support Services (PSS), and teacher capacity training. In total, 19,029 Syrian children and youth and 289 teachers benefited from DRC’s education interventions in 2015.

iv. FOCUS ON LIVELIHOODS

To support the self-reliance efforts of conflict-affected populations, DRC Syria built on its successful partnership with the MoE and private vocational training centers to refer 1,372 female-headed households, youth, and other vulnerable individuals to holistic vocational training in market-demand skills. In 2015, training was delivered through the MoE vocational training centers, DRC workshop complexes, Community Centers, and private institutions.

In addition to training, DRC provided 126 beneficiaries with tailored asset replacement and micro-grants to assist their ability to reenter the workforce. Skills development and livelihoods activities were conducted in four governorates; Damascus, Rural Damascus, Homs, and Daraa.

2016 STRATEGIC FOCUS

The fragile situation in Syria is anticipated to continue in 2016. The deterioration of humanitarian conditions and an inability to sustain livelihoods will continue to greatly affect the Syrian people. In light of this, DRC Syria will continue positioning itself as a lead agency in the delivery of protection and community service programming, emergency response through shelter, NFI, education, and support to livelihoods. In addition, DRC Syria will pilot, and continue advocating for, the adoption of cash-based assistance.
HELPING PEOPLE GET BACK TO WORK

The introduction of vocational training programs by DRC Syria in collaboration with the MoE, has enabled 1,400 vulnerable people to access a variety of holistic training specifically catered to meet shortages in the local labor market. The vocational training extended to micro-grants and asset replacements for small business initiatives designed to facilitate reentry into the workforce. Job opportunities are scarce in the conflict-ridden country. Unemployment levels rose from 14.9 per cent in 2011 to 57.7 per cent by the end of 2014 and UNHCR reports revealed 3.72 million unemployed persons.

SYRIA CASE STUDY

When he considers the threat of attack when walking to attend vocational training in Daraa, Southern Syria, Ahmad Sari does not hesitate to say that he knew the risk of injury was high. Moving anywhere in hostile territory is fraught with danger. But, the proud 25 year-old made it his mission to exploit every opportunity he could to support his young family and keep his dream of job success alive. Taking part in DRC Syria’s maintenance vocational training was the break he said he needed. One of the many to apply for the training, DRC Syria field staff said Ahmad’s determination was immediate from the outset.

“Whenever DRC vocational training applicants are interviewed they are always asked the question: what is your motivation for registering for this course? Often applicants respond generally stating they would like to learn how to get a job. Ahmad’s was different. He said he not only wanted to find a job, but to also achieve job success,” noted one DRC Syria staff member.

Inspired by the business skills learned during the course, Ahmad was able to rent a small kiosk and enter into a partnership with a fellow course participant, Amjad.

With funding support from Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), DRC Syria ran two advanced vocational training courses for displaced Syrians focusing on computer and mobile maintenance two of the few current in demand vocations that are providing opportunities for young Syrians to earn a living out of its Community Center in Daraa. But it is not just Daraa where the DRC is managing to make an impact. Further North, in Homs, father of three Hisham Birekdar’s new auto paint business is now making enough money to send his children to school again.

“Before I could not meet even up to 30 per cent of my family’s needs and I had to borrow money and ask for charity,” noted 42 year old Hisham Birekdar. “This project gave me the chance to reconnect with my old customers. Thanks to DRC I can now afford to move my shop outside the complex to the industrial area with my tools and clients.”

Launched in March 2014, Hisham’s job training course sought to enable beneficiaries to restore their livelihoods through the provision of materials and equipment needed to kick-start businesses. Some 30 workers have subsequently been employed in these new businesses.

Photo: Hisham Birekdar/Syria
In Syria, extensive use of air and land-delivered munitions has resulted in a massive contamination of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) including cluster munitions. The border areas are known to be mined, and there has been an increase in the number, size and complexity of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) used in the Syrian conflict. In over 50 per cent of governorates, Syrian communities identified the presence of ERW as among the greatest personal risks. Throughout the year, risk-taking behavior such as self-clearance, reuse of UXOs and scrap metal collection as well as ERW-related accidents were increasingly being reported. This high threat environment poses substantial risks to the safety and security of the Syrian civilian population and poses a threat to humanitarian organizations and their ability to safely access affected areas to deliver support.

**DDG STRATEGIC APPROACH AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2015**

**CAPACITY BUILDING OF COMMUNITIES**

Despite ongoing insecurity and limited access for humanitarian actors, DDG has found innovative ways of disseminating educational messages on explosive remnants of war to affected populations. This was achieved primarily by strengthening collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoE), partnering with UNICEF and training a total of 1,029 teachers and MoE staff on ERW Risk Education. In turn, each of these teachers provided ERW awareness sessions to 300 children, reaching over 308,700 children residing in Damascus, Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Daraa and Rural Damascus governorates.

**2016 STRATEGIC FOCUS**

In 2016, DDG will continue collaborating with the MoE providing ERW Risk Education to school teachers. Pending approval from the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoS), DDG will also commence direct implementation in DRC’s Community Centers, targeting youth and families, thereby also reaching out-of-school children.

In order to reach a higher number of beneficiaries, especially in areas where implementation is limited due to security restrictions, DRC/DDG will collaborate with the MoE to produce awareness-raising messages for dissemination through far-reaching media outlets, namely television and radio. DDG will also continue to advocate for strengthening response in terms of non-technical survey (NTS) making and ERW and UXO information gathering.
LEBANON

Lebanon continues to host the largest number of refugees in the world per capita with one in four of its population reported as a refugee. As of December 2015, the total number of registered Syrian refugees in Lebanon stood at 1.2 million, with Bekaa Valley hosting 371,809, Beirut 311,098, north Lebanon 260,932 and South Lebanon 125,272. As the Syrian refugee crisis moves into its fifth year, transitioning from an emergency situation to a protracted one, DRC Lebanon continues to refocus programming towards transitional and durable solutions.

Since 2004, the DRC has been one of the largest international humanitarian NGOs operating in Lebanon. In 2015, DRC Lebanon’s focus was the provision of emergency assistance to displaced Syrians and supporting the capacities of hosting communities across the country. Activities were influenced by domestic developments in Lebanon when in January 2015, the government revoked UNHCR’s refugee registration rights. Registering as a refugee has become increasingly difficult owing to the role now being held instead by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA).

Following four years of allowing in people displaced by the Syrian crisis, the people and government of Lebanon have come under considerable strain. With the influx of 1.2 million Syrians, Lebanon’s population has increased by 30 per cent since 2011. The total number of people living below the poverty line has also increased by almost two thirds during this period to around 2.1 million, mainly accounted for by the arrival of poor refugees from Syria and the doubling of unemployment. Nearly half of those most affected are children and adolescents.

For most of the poorest displacement-affected people in Lebanon, daily life is increasingly dominated by poverty, debt and fewer nutritious meals. This is compounded by a struggle for legal documentation and heightened competition for work as legal working rights have not been extended to Syrian refugees. In January 2015, the Lebanese government introduced additional regulations for refugees wanting to attain their residency permit. This came at an often prohibitive cost of USD$200 per person and the need for annual renewal. The impact of this expense has meant a typical family of six individuals now struggles to bear the cost of their residency.

Many refugees, particularly men, are unable to afford the permit and increasingly remain hidden in shelters or informal settlements for fear of being caught without legal documentation. The new permit regulations created additional obstacles for refugees’ mobility and movement within the country, impeding travel for medical
The year 2015 also witnessed an exodus of Syrians migrating from countries in the Levant towards Europe, with Lebanon playing a significant transitional role in this process. Refugees with means residing in Lebanon were travelling by plane to Turkey and onwards to Europe. Others in search of passage to Europe arrived on 24-hour transit visas to Lebanon, before heading by sea to Turkey via Tripoli’s port. This migration included many Lebanese, particularly from north Lebanon where economic vulnerabilities are high. By the end of 2015, Turkey had introduced a visa system for Syrians limiting this migration trend from Lebanon.

STRATEGIC APPROACH AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2015

DRC Lebanon’s approach for 2015 centered on: protection, community empowerment, creating livelihood opportunities and collective site management and coordination. Throughout 2015, DRC Lebanon maintained a sufficient emergency response capacity to meet the basic needs and rights of vulnerable populations. At the same time, DRC Lebanon invested in strengthening local capacities to facilitate community-driven development and supported the recovery and resilience of duty bearers to stabilize efforts in reducing tension between hosting and displaced communities.

Additionally, DRC Lebanon reinforced its protection capacity through conducting regular needs analysis and committing to evidence-based programming. In 2015 DRC Lebanon focused activity in areas heavily populated with refugees, namely Bekaa Valley, North Lebanon (Tripoli-T5, Akkar) and South Lebanon (Tyr and Saida Governorates).

i. PROTECTION

DRC Lebanon implemented protection activities for 14,596 beneficiaries (2,919 males and 11,677 females) through sharing GBV prevention and response information at community events targeting refugee youth, children, leaders, men and women in the Bekaa Valley, and the north and south of Lebanon. Across Lebanon, 10 community driven protection projects were implemented covering infrastructure, social cohesion, business grants, environmental care, and the rehabilitation of schools and existing facilities. Overall, these projects benefited more than 30,000 individuals residing in towns across Bekaa Valley and North Lebanon.

With support from the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), DRC Lebanon’s psychosocial outreach program reached 3,666 caregivers, 7,966 children and 2,959 women through its women’s empowerment programming covering Bekaa Valley, North and South Lebanon. This support was delivered using DRC Lebanon’s Community Centers and Child Friendly Spaces (CFS). Psychosocial support was delivered in the form of stress management techniques, outdoor activities, crafts and skills development, in addition to case management and referrals of GBV and Child Protection (CP) cases.

DRC Lebanon’s CP and GBV programs targeted individuals, families and the community by pairing prevention related activities such as community mobilization and awareness raising to response related activities such as case management and providing psychosocial support to vulnerable/affected children, women and men.

ii. CAPACITY BUILDING APPROACH

As part of DRC Lebanon’s mandate to strengthen the capacity of local partners in GBV and CP prevention and response, DRC Lebanon maintained a participatory approach in the inception and delivery of its programming through a two-way learning system.
This participatory approach ensured that service delivery was suited to the particular social and cultural makeup of the groups being served. DRC Lebanon worked side by side with 5 MoSA Social Development Centers and local organizations in the Bekaa Valley and North and South Lebanon.

iii. SHELTER AND COLLECTIVE SITE MANAGEMENT

As resource scarcity became more pronounced in 2015 for Lebanon’s displacement-affected populations, many Syrian families were forced to continue their cycle of forced movement; moving from shared rented apartments, to informal settlements or improvised shelter. To counter this desperate movement, and with support from UNHCR, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (BPRM), DRC Lebanon refurnished 59 multi-story buildings - titled Collection Centers – across heavily populated refugee areas in the Bekaa Valley and Tripoli. These Centers provided rent-free homes for some 960 of the most vulnerable refugee families. Additionally, 673 Small Shelter Units were constructed in the same areas of operations which provided 8,434 beneficiaries with a rent-free and safe home. DRC also undertook 22 project upgrading to public roads and walkways in informal settlements throughout Bekaa Valley, North and South Lebanon in order to improve access for all community members and the health conditions of these camps.

To ensure the most vulnerable displacement-affected families and individuals are identified and relocated to either individual shelter options or to Collective Centers, DRC Lebanon operated 110 Collective Site Management and Coordination teams across Lebanon with membership drawn from the local community. While also providing livelihood opportunities for members, these teams live among the community and thus have a network by which to successfully identify those who are most in need of assistance. Made up of men and women, these teams are given dispute resolution and management training by DRC Lebanon. These teams were helped to maintain social cohesion and meet the needs of beneficiaries within sometimes cramped and challenging communal living settings.

During the harsh winter of 2014-2015, DRC Lebanon distributed 8,040 shelter kits that assisted weatherproof refugee settlements in Akkar, Tripoli and Bekaa. These kits provided life-saving respite from extreme weather conditions.

iv. COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROJECTS/EMPOWERMENT/ LIVELIHOOD

DRC Lebanon continued to take the lead in implementing livelihood strategies for displacement-affected people in Bekaa Valley and the North and South of Lebanon. The aim was to enhance self-reliance and create livelihood opportunities for this population. This was achieved through Community Support Projects (CSP) which carried out the rehabilitation of public roads, public schools, and water source and sewage treatment in Mashta Hammoud and Halba in north Lebanon, Bar Elias and Majdal Anjar in Bekaa Valley. Such projects achieve the dual purpose of fostering a sense of community while simultaneously creating work opportunities.

Furthermore, with support from DFID and DANIDA, DRC Lebanon managed 5 Community Centers where daily outreach activities and livelihood services extended to over 3,200 beneficiaries. Involving both host and refugee populations, activities at DRC Lebanon’s Community Centers in Bekaa Valley and North and South Lebanon, centered on social cohesion, adopting skills and access to legal and psychosocial support. Additionally, DRC Lebanon’s Cash for Rent and Cash for Work programming was able to support 1,641 refugees.
v. CANADA RESETTLEMENT PROJECT

In 2015, DRC MENA collaborated with the Government of Canada to administer its resettlement program. Specifically, DRC Lebanon was involved in the administration of resettlement applications of 5,393 Syrian refugees living in Lebanon in 2015. Eligibility for resettlement was assessed using UNHCR’s vulnerability criteria which includes; survivors of violence and torture, women at risk, refugees with serious medical conditions, refugees seeking protection and unaccompanied minors.

2016 STRATEGIC FOCUS

In 2016, the complexities of supporting a high number of Syrian refugees within an unstable system is anticipated to continue to take center stage in Lebanon. DRC Lebanon anticipates that meeting the basic needs of this refugee population will continue to be a challenge. Towards this end, DRC Lebanon will remain flexible in its programming to accommodate the changing needs of people affected by displacement. Its core strategic axes will include; integrated emergency response, long-term solutions to displacement and supporting resilience and stability.

To integrate emergency responses in this context, DRC Lebanon will partner with the Lebanese Red Cross to increase the capacity of local authorities and actors in emergency preparedness and response, the provision of basic assistance, and supporting protection in acute emergency scenarios.

Working towards offering solutions to displacement, DRC Lebanon will position itself within the sectors of protection, livelihood and governance, and expand into a much needed area of providing legal services while maintaining its existing child protection and GBV services. Furthermore, DRC Lebanon will introduce a new Protection Monitoring project focussing on refugee communities and vulnerable host communities in North Lebanon (Akkar and Tripoli) and the Bekaa Valley. Through this project DRC will continuously monitor community protection concerns to ensure that the DRC’s activities are responsive to these communities’ evolving needs.

Access to livelihood opportunities will be explored in view of strengthening the economic self-reliance of refugees and in preparation for durable solutions. This will be coupled with an increasing focus on social self-reliance in the form of self-governance at the community level.

Resilience and stability programming aims to look at ways to support communities during times of displacement where economic opportunities are limited. DRC Lebanon will scale-up its community interventions to adopt a complete community-based recovery and development approach embracing local economic initiatives and community based projects such as Business Incubation Association in Tripoli (BIAT) and Cash for Work schemes.
In 2015 Turkey remained host to the largest number of refugees in the world. In the last quarter of 2014, border restrictions imposed on the entry of Syrians was initiated by neighboring countries, with Turkey taking on the full impact of these decisions. As of December 2015, 2,072,290 Syrian refugees were registered in Turkey, out of which more than half were children.

As a leading humanitarian actor, DRC Turkey has played an important role in responding to the acute needs of displacement-affected refugee and host populations. It has focused programming on emergency assistance, protection, restoring livelihoods and supporting durable solutions for displaced people. DRC Turkey works with Syrian refugees and displacement-affected host communities in the densely refugee populated southern provinces of Hatay (190,000 refugees), Kilis (80,000 refugees) and Sanliurfa, (180,000 refugees).

Syrian refugees in Turkey are registered by national authorities rather than by UNHCR. Those who are successfully registered are granted temporary protection if they present themselves to the authorities within a ‘reasonable’ timeframe after entering the country. This allows them, in principle, access to public services (health, education and social assistance) in the province in which they are formally registered. It is estimated that at least 600,000 refugees from Syria within Turkey are unregistered and therefore cannot officially access public services, including schools and temporary education centers in Turkey.

The vulnerability of Turkey’s displacement-affected population is exacerbated by Turkey’s own domestic vulnerability and strained resources which have in turn fueled tension between host and refugee populations. In several southern Turkish communities shouldering the Syrian border, communities have expanded by over 50 per cent with the refugee migration. Enhancing social cohesion between these two groups is the backbone of DRC Turkey’s Community Center programming.

In 2015 economic vulnerability continued to be one of the key factors precipitating protection issues among Turkey’s large refugee population. A significant proportion of the country’s Syrian refugee communities face dire humanitarian needs having depleted their savings and facing spiraling debts. Economic vulnerability is exacerbated with the inability to legally access livelihood opportunities. Many Syrian refugee families in Turkey have difficulty putting food on the table, paying rent and household expenses. This economic vulnerability has triggered other protection issues as families and communities are forced to increasingly resort to negative coping mechanisms to find a means to sustain themselves.

In 2015 DRC Turkey’s research gave valuable insight into the perspectives and consequences of economic vulnerability as experienced by Syrian refugees in Turkey. Research findings showed some 13 per cent of Syrian refugee households had working school-aged children - predominantly in agriculture and manufacturing, 10 per cent considered returning to Syria in 2016 in an attempt to find a means to make an income with just four per cent citing a preference for living in refugee camps in Turkey.

In another labor survey, DRC Turkey found over 70 per cent had no access to job opportunities in Turkey, while 15 per cent had access to irregular job opportunities and a similar number to permanent employment. For those who are working, reports have indicated that wages and fees have dropped to one-fifth of their previous levels across Turkey, causing both working conditions and remuneration to the most vulnerable groups among both refugee and host communities to deteriorate.
DRC Turkey has been active in advocating for legal working permits for Syrian refugees. It supports the Turkish government’s intention in 2016 to implement a new legislative framework and the adoption of a Temporary Protection (TP) regulation which allows access to the labor market. These provisions will introduce the possibility for registered Syrian refugees to apply for work permits in various sectors, professions and geographical areas.

STRATEGIC APPROACH AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2015

The strategic approach of DRC Turkey in 2015 continued to be driven by the needs of Turkey’s highly vulnerable, non-camp displacement-affected population. The strategy was built on four focus areas: integrated emergency response, integrated protection and empowerment, community services and livelihood support. Throughout 2015, DRC Turkey assisted 157,470 vulnerable displacement-affected people.

i. INTEGRATED EMERGENCY RESPONSE

DRC Turkey implemented multi-sectoral emergency and lifesaving programming activities in 2015, targeting displaced populations in acute crisis. This was achieved through direct assistance in the form of cash assistance for food, rent, education and medical needs, and the distribution of NFIs including; hygiene items, kitchen kits and baby kits. In 2015, a total of 110,243 Syrian refugees were reached with direct assistance; a significant proportion provided with NFIs and a number of e-cards made available to vulnerable newcomer households. Since the start of 2015, DRC Turkey began moving away from traditional NFI assistance, to more condition-based cash assistance in the form of e-vouchers for the most vulnerable families. This enables beneficiaries to control purchase and prioritization of needed goods.

An influx of Syrian refugees in June 2015 fleeing the up-shot of violence in Tell Abyad in Syria, saw DRC Turkey assist more than 12,000 persons crossing into Turkey. Due to the growing economic vulnerability of refugees in Hatay and Sanliurfa provinces, DRC implemented monthly basic needs assistance through e-cards in 2015. To enhance efficacy and reach, DRC Turkey partnered with the International Middle East Peace and Research Center (IMPR), specifically in Sanliurfa province, to together identify vulnerable people in need of assistance.

ii. FOCUS ON LIVELIHOODS

In 2015, improving livelihoods was a key focus of DRC Turkey. In mid-2015, DRC Turkey with support from DFID, opened Livelihood Centers in Hatay, Kilis, and Sanliurfa provinces. These centers provided over 2,000 Syrian refugees access to livelihood counseling, skills training, and entrepreneurial capacity building workshops. In anticipation of the Turkish Government’s introduction of a regulation granting Syrian refugees the right to work in Turkey in January 2016, DRC Turkey laid the foundations in 2015 for a livelihood program that formally linked unemployed displacement-affected populations with the formal Turkish job market. This program includes the provision of small business grants, specific vocational and on the job training, job placements, and legal advice to facilitate work permit applications. DRC Turkey also worked to establish livelihood partnerships and agreements with the Turkish government, education institutions, as well as local private training institutes to provide life-skills, vocational and technical skills training to refugees from Syria.

iii. INTEGRATED PROTECTION AND EMPOWERMENT

Throughout 2015, DRC Turkey remained the only humanitarian actor providing protection services to Syrian refugees using a community-based protection modality. This model involved community focal points and programming in its four Community Centers in Antakya, Altnozu, Kilis and Sanliurfa. DRC’s protection focal points were comprised of nominated community-based refugees from Syria who played an important role in linking DRC Turkey to people in need.

As the needs of urban refugees escalated in line with the protracted nature of their displacement, DRC...
Turkey worked to ensure awareness of, access to, and the availability of basic protection services. This included information on legal and medical services and referrals and individualized assistance with a focus on vulnerabilities. Protection issues were addressed by improving education and access to support for issues such as child labor, child marriage and GBV. These programs were rolled out to both refugee and host communities and involved many of DRC Turkey’s stakeholders - including local authorities.

In 2015, this protection programming reached a total of 10,177 individuals. Additionally, DRC Turkey provided 1,000 individuals with emergency assistance through its Special Needs Fund; a fund that provides one-off individualized medical or legal support to vulnerable cases coupled with one-on-one case management follow up.

iii. COMMUNITY-LED SUPPORT

Since 2014, DRC Turkey has established four Community Centers in South/South-East Turkey and is now considered a significant actor contributing community services in the country. DRC Turkey views its Community Centers as significant hubs for the delivery of needed humanitarian support to both Syrian refugee and Turkish communities, achieving an almost 50:50 host:refugee, usage rate.

In 2015, through DRC Turkey’s Community Center programming, 46,940 individuals were reached with psychosocial support, non-formal education, legal and information counseling, protection awareness, livelihood counseling as well as granting a safe space to reduce stress, interact and reengage with other community members. The Community Centers encourage and welcome members of the host communities to encourage inter-communal dialogue and understanding and contributed to much-needed social cohesion between both communities.

2016 STRATEGIC FOCUS

In 2016, the expected implementation of the new legislative framework surrounding Temporary Protection (TP) regulations and labor market access for refugees is expected to take place. This important development requires DRC Turkey to actively anticipate this policy change and continue to prepare to advocate the need to anchor the concept of durable solutions in any new policy framework.

While the spotlight in 2015 shone on inconsistent interpretations and practices on rights and service provision for refugees in Turkey, DRC Turkey will also focus on better supporting local implementing partners with capacity building initiatives and continue to work towards more integrated humanitarian strategies. DRC Turkey will continue to position itself as a lead agency in emergency response, protection, livelihoods and resilience programming in Turkey.
In 2015 DRC’s humanitarian mine action unit, the Danish Demining Group (DDG), delivered risk education aimed at preventing casualties caused by mines and ERW to Syrian refugees and humanitarian workers in Turkey. As a consequence of the Syrian crisis, Syria is increasingly contaminated with UXOs and IEDs. The border between Turkey and Syria are mined on both sides, putting the large number of civilians who cross the border increasingly at risk of death or serious injury and hampering humanitarian access and safe return.

The DDG began its operation in Turkey in 2013, remaining the only international mine action organization operating in Turkey, with activities in Hatay, Sanliurfa and Kilis provinces. By focusing on the implementation of community-based ERW Risk Education to displaced Syrian populations, DDG Turkey aimed to reduce ERW induced injury for people travelling across the heavily mined border between Turkey and Syria. In 2015, a survey with 1,789 Syrian refugees in Hatay and Sanliurfa provinces revealed that 45 per cent of respondents had seen ERW in Syria, and 25 per cent had returned to Syria at least once since arriving in Turkey, thus supporting the need for information and awareness of the risks and how to avoid them.

DDG Turkey worked closely with a number of humanitarian organizations to ensure an efficient response, and, in addition, provide ERW safety workshops to their staff and volunteers. ERW Risk Education was also provided to children and teachers in schools and Temporary Educational Centers (TEC), in collaboration with national and local authorities.

In total, DDG reached 9,892 individuals with ERW Risk Education – 451 men, 616 women, 4,369 boys and 4,456 girls. The program was implemented with support from UNICEF, Swedish Postcode Lottery and DANIDA.

Throughout the year, DDG and DRC collaborated closely, with DDG Risk Educations teams identifying in-need referral cases to DRC Protection staff and provide a bridge to access DRC Community Centers for assistance. ERW Risk Education is conducted in all Turkey’s Community Centers.

DDC/DDG Turkey is a member of the Mine Action sub-cluster lead by United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and coordinates with the Mine Action actors present in the area.
DRC and DDG have been present in Libya since 2011. Collectively efforts have focused on protection, humanitarian assistance for IDPs, migrants and refugees and capacity building of local NGOs, community based organizations (CBOs) and authorities, humanitarian mine action and community safety programming.

Since political instability necessitated the evacuation of the international community in Libya in July 2014, DRC/DDG Libya has operated under a remote management system through its Tunisian offices in Tunis and Zarzis. Project implementation occurs through national staff, local partners and established offices in Tripoli and Sabha, Southern Libya. The integrated two-country presence has been instrumental in establishing cross-country analysis and coordination that supports the continuation of DRC/DDG operations in times of heightened security and subsequent evacuations.

Five years since the uprising against the regime of Muammar Gaddafi in Libya, violence, conflict and instability continues to impact most parts of the resource-rich North African nation. It has left more than 2.4 million people in need of assistance and displaced over 435,000 people. Conflict between the two rival governments in the east and west of the country persists. The international community has been involved in mediation efforts pushing for the establishment of a unity government to bring much needed stability to the country and its people. Recent developments towards this aim have been a Libyan political agreement signed on 17 December, 2015.

This development enabled the formation of a Presidential Council. Despite this, the security and political situation remains uncertain for people. Concern also lies with the impact of the potential international military intervention against ISIL elements in Libya. There are fears that repercussions from these activities could further derail ongoing gains from political talks.

Libya’s operating environment remains insecure and hostile for humanitarian actors. As highlighted in the Humanitarian Response Plan for Libya launched in November 2015, a lack of financial resources continues to inhibit delivery of effective response to meet the growing needs of displacement.
affected populations. This review of humanitarian-needs for Libya painted a deeply concerning picture of a people in the grip of armed conflict and political instability, sighting at the time of print, that 435,000 IDPs were subject to multiple displacement, escalating protection needs, collapsing health system and deteriorating access to basic services, throughout the country. The impact from these changes has been most pronounced for Libyan women and children.

Libya currently hosts around 250,000 refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, who have fled violence, weak economies and political turmoil in North and Sub-Saharan Africa and Middle East. Their existence in Libya remains marred by continual discrimination and marginalization, limited access to food and medical care and harsh shelter conditions.

Continuous armed fighting amongst rival militias and proliferation of arms across Libya has also resulted in substantial humanitarian risks to civilians caused by the spread of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO). This adds to Libya’s long heritage of contamination of mines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) from the Second World War and other conflicts with neighbouring countries.

The uncertainty in Libya has also spilled over into neighboring Tunisia, weakening its own economy and political situation. Since June 2015, Tunisia has experienced a state of emergency following terrorist attacks on tourist sites, presidential guards with a significant number of Tunisians allegedly joining fundamental groups such as ISIL. As a consequence Tunisia’s valuable tourism and private investment sectors have been eroded, producing increased levels of unemployment especially affecting Tunisian youth from remote areas of the country.

**STRATEGIC APPROACH AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2015**

In 2015, DRC/DDG Libya’s strategic approach concentrated on meeting the identified humanitarian needs of Libya’s displaced and mixed migrant populations. These populations were residing either in detention centers or urban communities and DRC/DDG Libya sustained efforts to enhance its remote management efficacy to better service their needs.

Throughout the year, DRC/DDG Libya conducted three security assessment missions to Libya to strengthen its relations with national staff, civil society counterparts and Libyan authorities with the aim of streamlining operations. It increased its presence within UN humanitarian coordination mechanisms established in Tunis and participated in relevant technical humanitarian relief working groups.

**I. INTEGRATED EMERGENCY RESPONSE WITH KEY PROTECTION FOCUS**

DRC Libya with support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and Danish Government funds (Faroe Islands) implemented multi-sectoral emergency and life-saving programming activities throughout 2015. These activities targeted mixed migrants living in acute crisis and consisted of distribution of
NFIs, protection programming that included referrals of vulnerable cases towards relevant service providers, family reunification support, resource support to mixed migrant schools in Tripolitania (North West) and capacity building of local civil society, authorities and detention center guards.

In 2015, under its mixed migration programming DRC distributed 1985 hygiene kits, 1676 blankets and mattresses and 190 heaters to vulnerable refugees and migrants residing either in detention centers or urban mixed migrant communities. Over 300 telephone calls enabling family reunification were facilitated, and some 722 people benefitted from a range of interventions including legal advice and referrals to relevant service providers such as IOM, UNHCR and health organizations. Furthermore, 400 vulnerable children - including refugees from Syria, attending four mixed migrant schools, were given school supplies which supported their access to educational opportunities.

With support from ECHO and in collaboration with our Libyan partner organization, Shaikh Tahir Azzawi Charity Organization (STACO), meeting humanitarian needs of vulnerable displaced populations in Fezzan, Southern Libya, was also a key priority for the organization. In September 2015, DRC Libya finalized procurement of hygiene kits and winterization items for 1500 vulnerable IDP households in this region and with STACO conducted distribution of vital NFIs in Sabha and Obari benefitting over 1000 IDP families. Furthermore, under its protection program, 23 people in need of medical support from South Libya were assisted with referral for free care at private clinics and three beneficiaries received wheelchairs upon DRC referral.

ii. CAPACITY BUILDING

Repeated crises linked to political, economic and social factors have eroded the institutional bases of Libyan civil society and rendered them increasingly vulnerable to recurrent shocks. The result of this has been reduced ability to effectively meet societal needs. In response to this fragile situation, limited training opportunities, and a vital need for a strong and functioning local civil society, DRC Libya with support from ECHO and in partnership with UNHCR, trained 49 leading civil society members from Libyan Crisis committees in the basic principles, standards and guidelines for IDP related humanitarian response. This was supplemented by additional skills training in identifying and using relevant data collection tools, setting minimum vulnerability criteria and conducting participatory needs assessments. DRC Libya also trained 70 Libyan detention centre guards on different operational topics covering comparative approaches in Islamic theology and Asylum, practical steps for working in detention centers and developing efficient monitoring-referral mechanisms for migrants and refugees. In November 2015, 11 staff from STACO were trained on basic life support and protection monitoring and minimum standards for IDP response.

2016 STRATEGIC FOCUS

The fragile situation in Libya is anticipated to continue in 2016 owing to the continued deterioration of humanitarian conditions, planned offenses against ISIL, increasing
‘push’ factors from Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East countries where asylum seekers are fleeing to Libya from, and limitations with humanitarian access and funding. In light of this, DRC will continue to support urgent humanitarian needs, through combination of cash assistance, WASH, NFI distributions, protection activities and further explore opportunities for resilience programming, based on ongoing multi-sector needs assessments conducted in partnership with the international community, Libya civil society and local authorities. DRC will explore supporting potential IDP return opportunities and community-based alternatives for longer term solutions to detention for refugees and migrants. Capacity building of local partners and local authorities will remain as key priorities for the organization.

DRC will also continue to assess potential entry points for joint Maghreb programming (Libya/ Tunisia/ Algeria) following operational assessments in Sahrawi camps in Southern Algeria late 2015 that explored opportunities for youth-oriented livelihood programming.

**DDG STRATEGIC APPROACH AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2015**

DDG has operated in Libya since 2011, clearing landmines and other explosive remnants of war and providing MRE. With support from the European Commission, DANIDA, the UK government and UNMAS, DDG has expanded its program activities in the areas of Community Safety and Non-Technical Surveys (NTS).

### i. MINE ACTION AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

In 2015, the key strategic focus for DDG was the improvement of safety conditions and social cohesion of civilian populations living in Tripoli, Sabha and surrounding areas. This was achieved through a combination of capacity building for local partner Free Fields Foundation (3F) and Libyan authorities, MRE, NTS and community safety activities focusing on youth. Throughout the year DDG Libya established an institutional partnership with 3F, building technical as well as institutional capacities in order to assist them work independently from international NGOs.

In 2015, DDG acquired operational accreditation to conduct Mine Risk Education and Non-Technical Survey (NTS). Following this the organization awarded Task Orders in Brak Shati, Obari, Sebha, Jufra, and Ghat in Southern Libya.

Another key approach adopted by DDG throughout areas of operation in Southern Libya was capacity building of communities on MRE and the prevention and management of conflict. In Libya there is a heavy presence of ERW due to past and ongoing conflicts which continues to pose a risk for many communities. Despite the ongoing insecurity and limited access for humanitarian actors, DDG has found innovative ways of disseminating educational messages on ERW, largely through supporting community driven initiatives and training of community volunteers and partner organizations.

In 2015, DDG provided 968 Mine and ERW Risk Education sessions, primarily in Southern Libya, reaching 16,061 beneficiaries. Furthermore, trainings in areas pertaining to humanitarian mine action and institutional capacities were provided to a total of 144 individuals, including 20 women. In its Community
Safety activities, DDG Libya facilitated five safety planning workshops with four NGOs, and three High School Student groups in the Southern city of Sabha reaching 263 participants - of whom 124 were women and girls. The beneficiaries were then supported to implement their plans ranging from a radio show about ethics, to a media campaign focusing on Libyan unity and the dangers of drugs and violence, and the creation of family friendly, gun free spaces. DDG also supported the Southern Football Union and Libyan Boy Scouts to conduct a number of events focusing on building social ties between communities through sport, advocating the positive role youth can have in spreading peace.

ii. **DDG TUNISIA**

Heightened volatility in Tunisia and a rapid rise in violent extremism among Tunisian youth prompted DDG to return to Tunisia in 2014. With support from the UK Government, DDG engaged with local communities and security providers to promote and strengthen community safety and social cohesion. Based on the Armed Violence Reduction (AVR) framework, this approach sought to promote communication between local communities, authorities, and security providers by providing Conflict Management Education (CME) and initiating Community Police Dialogue and Cooperation (CPDC). It focused programming in Ben Guerdane and Dehiba along the Libyan Border, which have seen repeated episodes of violence between the local communities, who are reliant of informal cross border trader, and security providers. In 2015, DDG conducted CME to 112 beneficiaries and Basic Life Support training to 55 humanitarian actors working with the Tunisian Red Crescent and Youth Centers in South Tunisia.

**DDG STRATEGIC FOCUS 2016**

DDG will continue to focus on improved safety and access to livelihoods for affected communities in Libya through Battle Area Clearance (BAC), NTS, and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) spot tasks. It will also continue to focus on promotion of safe behavior by expanding its ERW Risk Education activities to additional locations, according to tasking by the Libyan Mine Action Center and priority areas as jointly determined with local authorities.

In Tunisia, DDG will continue to develop and implement programs focusing on community safety and conflict management in southern border areas, expanding into youth-oriented livelihood programming in a bid to stem radicalization and individual engagement in violent crime and political violence. Once the situation allows, DRC/DDG ongoing presence in Southern Tunisia represents a potential entry point for future linkages of existing activities with activities on the Libyan side of the border. This strategic position includes the potential for mixed migration and humanitarian assistance programming in the event of influxes in and over the Libyan border.
NON-TECHNICAL SURVEY PAVES THE WAY FOR SAVING LIVES IN LIBYA

Conflict and instability in Libya has left more than 2.8 million people in need of assistance. This number includes over 450,000 IDP’s, many of whom are affected by the presence of ERW. It is estimated that over 85 percent of ERW related casualties affect civilians [1]. Since 2011, thousands of Libyan IDPs have been unable to return safely to their abandoned hometowns as they remain littered with life-threatening UXOs. Intensification of the conflict in July 2014 has further worsened contamination, and resulted in the destruction to tens of thousands of homes and public infrastructure and the interruption of businesses, livelihoods and public services.

Since 2015, DDG has been the only international NGO to receive operational accreditation for its NTS teams in Libya in accordance with the new national accreditation requirements set by the mandated authority—the Libyan Mine Action Centre (LibMAC). In January 2016, Libyan Mine Action Center (LibMAC) tasked DDG to begin NTS in the city of Tawargha, a city whose entire population has been displaced by civil war. Simultaneously, DDG conducted NTS in Sabha and Brak al’Shati in the South of Libya to assess mine/ERW contamination of conflict-affected communities.

DDG organized two NTS trainings in October and December for 19 participants including local NTS teams from DDG and its local implementing partner. In light of their interagency collaboration, six participants from the international organization DanChurch Aid (DCA) also participated in the training. A joint accreditation committee by LibMAC and UNMAS provided quality assurance and subsequent accreditation to DDG and implementing partners' teams.

Chief Operations Colonel, Adel El Atwi of LibMAC, emphasized the importance of NTS for the safe return of populations displaced by conflict in Libya. “NTS is the cornerstone for any successful humanitarian mine action activities. Through NTS, we are able to collect information on the hazardous areas and the associated risks on civilians and to liaise the findings to complementary activities such as Mine Risk Education”.

With the current mass contamination in Libya from both historical mine fields as well as ERW from the recent conflict, Libyan authorities and the international community face tremendous challenges in defining the scope of mine/ERW contamination. NTS serves as the starting point for data collection and analysis to identify the presence of mine/ERW and set evidence-based priorities for land release and clearance.

“We were in urgent need to receive professional training, as some of us have previously volunteered in similar work after the revolution with very little knowledge and supervision”, said a Libyan trainee.

Khalifa Bargalel, a local partner NTS trainee says: “Previously I used to do (that)- engage in clearance activities based on the little experience I had from helping a friend of mine because I believe that people are in need. Now that I have gained solid knowledge and appropriate accreditation I feel confident.”

DDG began its work in Libya in 2011 following the revolution. Its purpose was to help recreate a safe and secure environment where people could live free from the threat of mines, ERW and SALW.

DDG continues to work through local networks and mobilisers, including 3F, while paying special attention to enhancing the capacities of its Libyan staff on the ground. In supporting our local staff with skills and training, DDG is able to provide quality interventions to raise awareness among conflict-affected communities on safe behavior and the risks associated with ERW and SALW. These activities pave the way for implementing live-saving humanitarian mine action interventions including NTS and subsequent clearance in the future.

JORDAN

DRC operations in Jordan are aimed at supporting vulnerable host and refugee populations by responding to acute crisis needs by way of its protection-based programming, the restoration of livelihoods, enhancing social cohesion and supporting the attainment of durable solutions for Jordan’s displacement-affected populations. DRC began its operations in 2003 in initial response to the Iraqi refugee crisis.

Jordan is the second-largest refugee hosting country in the world per capita. By the end of 2015, Jordan was hosting over 2,700,000 registered refugees, representing around 8 per cent of the Jordanian population. Among them, 630,000 were Syrian refugees, 52,000 were Iraqi refugees registered with UNHCR and more than 2 million were Palestinian refugees registered with UNRWA. UNHCR estimates there are an additional 5,000 refugees and asylum-seekers from other nationalities (mainly Somali and Sudanese) and an unknown number of unregistered refugees who reside in Jordan.

Since mid-2014, Jordan has virtually closed its borders with Syria, allowing only 30-40 emergency cases of Syrian refugees to enter each day. The UN estimates that there are over 16,000 Syrian refugees currently stranded at the northern border of Jordan. These people have been prevented by border guards from moving further into the Kingdom, in what has turned into a ‘de facto’ camp that only a limited number of aid agencies can access.

For the majority of Syrian refugees living in Jordan, 2015 was marked by a significant deterioration in living conditions. This was most pronounced...
in the lives of the 85 per cent living in non-camp settings, who due to the inability to legally work and depleted personal savings, have been forced to adopt negative coping strategies to meet their daily needs. These strategies have created additional protection concerns such as engaging in informal employment, child labor, early marriages of young girls and unsafe migration to Europe.

Already overstretched public infrastructure, services and resources have put additional pressure on the Kingdom, which is increasingly failing to keep pace with resource demand. Compounding this context for displaced populations were cuts to humanitarian assistance in late 2014 and the requirement by the Jordanian Ministry of the Interior (MoI) to possess a valid MoI card in order to access any type of assistance. These developments have considerably reduced refugees’ ability to access health, food, shelter, education, and legal documentation in Jordan.

Other compounding issues have been the reduced value of the World Food Program (WFP) food vouchers negatively impacting already vulnerable people’s food insecurity. The WFP estimated that the number of families in Jordan with poor or borderline food consumption has more than tripled since the September 2015 cuts. As a consequence, two thirds of Syrian refugees are now living below the national poverty line ($96 per person per month), and one in six Syrian refugee households is in extreme poverty, living off just $1 per person per day to make ends meet.1

**STRATEGIC APPROACH AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2015**

Throughout 2015, DRC Jordan continued to provide aid to the most vulnerable, in a humanitarian space regulated by restrictive government policies and decreasing levels of assistance. Some 65,000 vulnerable refugees and Jordanians were supported with DRC Jordan’s assistance in 2015. DRC Jordan received financial support from UK-Aid, ECHO, EuropeAid, BPRM, Global Affairs Canada, Citizen and Immigration Canada, Ole Kirk’s Foundation and DRC’s own funds.

DRC opened three Community Centers across Jordan (East Amman, Karak and Ma’an), providing holistic forms of protection assistance to displacement-affected individuals. The Community Centers received on average 1,000 visitors per month; 70 per cent were displaced individuals (65 per cent Syrian, and the remaining a mix of Palestinian, Iraqi and Egyptian) and 30 per cent Jordanian. The Community Centers have fast become recognized as key service facilities and an essential hub for services in one of the poorest areas of the capital city and the underserved areas of south Jordan.

The Community Centers partner with a large number of humanitarian actors that include UNHCR, WFP, Save the Children, CARE, and Handicap

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1 UNHCR, Living in the shadow, January 2015
International, who contribute to the range of services that center users are able to access. This includes access to information, livelihood programs, education, psychosocial support activities and networking opportunities. With over 60 per cent of people attending the Community Centers being female, these facilities have proved to be a unique place where women and girls felt safe to socialize or build their skills outside the confines of their homes. With a now established and mixed group of users, the Community Centers have succeeded in gaining local acceptance and avoiding the detrimental stigma of a “for refugee only” place. This has had the result of enhancing social cohesion between fractured communities.

i. A COMMUNITY APPROACH

In 2015 the DRC Community Centers in Jordan had the following impact:

> More than 3,000 individuals were referred to one of DRC’s 40+ partner organizations to address their specific needs across shelter, health, education, legal assistance, child protection, and food assistance;

> 4,600 individuals accessed psychosocial support and counseling;

> 1,300 individuals participated in life-skills trainings;

> 1,500 Syrians, Jordanians, Iraqis, Egyptians and Palestinians participated in community events aimed at bringing displacement affected populations together;

INTEGRATED DURABLE SOLUTIONS

In light of the livelihood restrictions faced by Syrian refugees, DRC Jordan provided cash assistance (emergency and winterization) and increasingly looked at innovative, longer-term assistance - notably through livelihood support in the north of Jordan. Overall, 6,800 vulnerable families representing approximately 34,000 individuals received cash to support them in meeting their urgent needs (including emergency surgery, shelter needs, legal representation, etc.) and 1,700 families received winterization assistance to support the desperate needs associated with the harsh weather.

DRC Jordan continued to provide key protection information about refugees’ rights, registration processes and services, reaching out to 7,000 heads of households in their homes or through its Community Centers. Following its human rights-based approach, DRC also supported Syrian refugees without full documentation to help them regularize their situation. Without this vital support, these refugees would otherwise be left without access to any type of assistance.

A well-recognized protection actor, DRC Jordan was elected to co-chair the Protection Working Group with UNHCR in Amman, and the South interagency meeting which gathered
humanitarian actors and local authorities operating in southern Jordan to enhance coordination efforts.

ii. FOCUS ON INTEGRATION

DRC Jordan places an emphasis in working with local partners as a way to support Jordanian civil society and ensure the sustainability and ownership of project outputs. To this end, during 2015 DRC Jordan reinforced its existing partnerships and entered new partnerships with other Jordanian NGOs. DRC Jordan put specific emphasis on working with relevant local government stakeholders, and key local and international humanitarian actors. Under this integrated approach DRC Jordan is better able to mobilise life-skills training and psychological activities.

Due to DRC’s strategic position as the only INGO with an established presence in the south of Jordan, DRC has developed positive and productive relationships with local authorities by ensuring their involvement in project activities and coordination meetings. DRC maintains regular communication with all relevant ministries (Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, and Ministry of Labor) to ensure project activities are in line with national priorities and to coordinate efforts in response to humanitarian needs.

2016 STRATEGIC FOCUS

As the Syrian crisis approaches its fifth year and with no end in sight to the conflict, Syrian refugees residing in Jordan will continue to face significant challenges in their daily lives, linked to reduced levels of assistance, tighter controls of their movement and depleted resources. As a consequence, it is anticipated that the most vulnerable refugees who are unable to cope with increasing living costs in the host communities will return to Azraq refugee camp. There they will be exposed to harsh desert weather conditions, and a lack of services and livelihoods opportunities.

Although DRC Jordan foresees certain job categories being opened to Syrian refugees in the near future, this will not address all protection concerns and could exacerbate other risks such as increasing tensions between refugees and host community as well as tighter controls on illegal labor. As such, there is an important need to continue supporting the resilience of Jordanian host communities.

In light of this, in 2016 DRC Jordan will continue positioning itself as a key player in providing livelihood support and community empowerment programming, emergency response, durable solutions, amid resilience-focused programming in Central Jordan (Amman and Azraq), southern Jordan (Karak, Ma’an and Tafilah) and the north (Irbid). Specific areas of focus will include extending its portfolio to having a presence in Azraq camp which currently hosts between 14,000 and 25,000 refugees with a capacity of up to 130,000. It has been identified that protection concerns in Azraq camp are high.

DRC Jordan will also support local institutions and leaders to play an active role in planning and coordinating initiatives that support local development and establish advocacy strategies which promote the positive potential of refugees in the community in order to reduce tension with host communities.
Objective 1: To save lives and safeguard humanitarian access for conflict-affected populations, migrants and other vulnerable groups through integrated and principled assistance as well as improved outreach services. DRC will aim to provide emergency gap-filling assistance to the most vulnerable, in line with its protection mandate, notably outside of the Community Centers, in Azraq refugee camp and to refugees with limited legal documentation.

Objective 2: To empower refugees to cope with displacement, build their self-reliance capacity and engage productively and cohesively in their host environment in preparation for durable solutions. DRC Jordan will ensure its Community Centers in Jordan are hubs for refugee and host community innovation and cooperation, offering relevant user-driven services and facilitating diverse opportunities to members. In 2016, DRC intends to open a new Community Center either in Amman or Irbid (north of Jordan).

Objective 3: To improve the capacity and willingness of Jordanian communities and institutions to host refugees. DRC Jordan will support Jordanian institutions in expanding livelihood support services and opportunities in host communities, notably through engaging municipalities and sub-national institutions in economic development planning and coordination and piloting livelihood counseling services.
BUILDING BROKEN COMMUNITIES: THE MAHATTA STORY, JORDAN

Since April 2015, the vulnerable communities of Amman have had a place to gain vital support, socialize, and build life skills. The Tarabot (“together”) Community Center was established by DRC and its local implementing partner, the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organization, with the financial support of DFID, in Mahatta, one of the most impoverished and underserved areas of Amman. The Community Center’s name, Tarabot, embodies the objective of bringing people together in a strong and positive bond. The Tarabot Community Center seeks to provide a neutral and healthy environment for learning, dialogue and to enhance community cohesion between the fragmented refugee and local population in Amman. Over 65 per cent of the 6,000 Community Center users in 2015 were Syrian refugees, the remaining a mix of Jordanians, Palestinians, Iraqis and Egyptians.

Tarabot Community Center is a crucial element of DRC’s response to the Syrian crisis in Jordan and the region. It is part of a network of 31 Community Centers in five countries that provide essential, gap filling services and resilience building support to those in need. Well connected to over 50 local and national actors, the Tarabot Community Center has become a hub offering multi-functional services that respond to the needs of displacement-affected populations, through life-skills trainings (such as English, communication skills, small business management, hygiene), referral assistance to actors covering a wide range of needs (health, education, child protection, sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), legal assistance, shelter, etc.), children’s activities, community events and psychological support.

With growing acceptance among the vulnerable community that the Community Center is a safe space for receiving help, in under 12 months the Tarabot Community Center has become an essential space for many vulnerable people living in Mahatta.

“Before the Center opened, we were playing in the streets”, said Louy, a 13-year old Jordanian teenager. Nowadays, when he and his friends finish school, they come to the Community Center to study English, learn computer skills and play. They also enjoyed coming to the events organized for Iftars and Eid (celebrations around the month of Ramadan).

For Salama, a 31-year old Jordanian mother of three, coming to the Community Center has changed her life. Previously spending her time confined to her home, Salama’s introduction the Community Center opened a new world of learning that she never thought possible. She now attends activities four times a week, teaching her children how to knit and take English and small business classes. She also brings her three children with her who play in the CFS where they have an important chance to interact with other children. Here, they have had the opportunity to receive psychological support specifically designed to help children, youth and adults overcome war-born trauma. In particular, Salama’s young son with autism has benefited from the Community Center programming, learning for the first time to freely interact with other children.

Sustainability is a cornerstone of the Community Center’s approach. This is reflected in the income generating activities of the communal kitchen and handicrafts, which employ Syrian and Jordanian volunteers to work together.

Noor, a 47 year-old Syrian refugee mother of five girls, is one of the eight Syrian and Jordanian women who work in the communal kitchen. Working in the kitchen has provided Noor with the opportunity to retreat from the pressures of her daily life and socialize with other colleagues in a healthy and positive environment. In a context where Syrian refugees are not allowed to work, volunteer positions have provided them with meaningful opportunities to continue building their skills and contribute to their community in a dignifying manner.
2016 STRATEGIC FOCUS, PRIORITIES AND PLANS

DRC looks forward to tackling 2016, during which the DRC MENA Regional Strategic Program for 2016-2018 will be rolled out. This strategy emphasizes three major ‘clusters’ of programme themes to best respond to the complex and unprecedented displacement affecting the region.

> Rapid and integrated Emergency Responses
> Promotion of Transitional and Durable Solutions
> Promotion of long-term stability and resilience

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

DRC/DDG anticipates a continued fragile humanitarian landscape in most countries within MENA, prefacing the maintenance of strong emergency capacity throughout the region. Despite attempts at political negotiations in Syria and Iraq to absolve continued crises and its regional implications, DRC/DDG predicts ongoing instability. Therefore continuing to meet civilian needs for direct emergency assistance will remain a pivotal feature of DRC/DDG’s humanitarian programming. This will be most prominent in DRC/DDG’s Syria and Iraq programming, but relevant in other countries. With due concern to the humanitarian imperative, specific focus will stand with strengthening the efficacy of regional emergency preparedness capacity with systematic upgrading and support of Emergency Preparedness Response Plans, integration of assessment capacity, supply chain management, improved staff capacity and intensification of skilled staff for interregional deployment roles.

DRC/DDG emergency response will emphasize integration and coordination of responses that emphasize protection, distribution of core relief items and cash assistance, shelter and camp management including provision of winterization assistance to most vulnerable households.

In response to growing irregular migration from and within the region, a distinct feature of DRC’s emergency strategy will be strengthening its response to vulnerable irregular migrants, particularly in Libya and Turkey, with targeted emergency and protection assistance.

**TRANSITIONAL AND DURABLE SOLUTIONS**

A crucial focus for DRC/DDG in 2016 will be the expansion of programs supporting both a more dignified quality of asylum for refugees and other displaced populations throughout the region, and the reduction of growing tension between host and displaced populations. Primarily, operational responses will focus on increasing access to mechanisms for registration, acquisition of identity documents and humanitarian service providers for refugees, IDPs and migrants. This will be achieved with reinforced protection monitoring and analysis, direct legal aid support, awareness raising and general advocacy. DRC will increase programs that promote access to sustainable formal and informal employment for displaced populations and Cash-for-Work programs, livelihood skill training, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises initiatives, private sector engagement.

Extending advocacy and analysis surrounding legal access for refugees into local labor markets will remain a key priority for DRC during 2016.

DRC will also continue integrated municipal support programmes for municipalities hosting high numbers of refugees and IDPs within the MENA region, as well as provide programming that supports objective of marshaling social cohesion amongst host and refugee population through; social mobilization work, community driven small scale projects and conflict mitigation and institutional support.
Furthermore, DRC will expand the outreach, quality, sustainability and regional coordination of and between its 31 Community Centers ensuring these centers remain unique safe spaces for engagement, service provision, protection and mobilization for displaced populations and their hosts.

DRC will also be dedicated to promotion of durable solutions for Syrian refugees in all programming activities. A key issue of concern is that while return is not viable until peace is restored, past lessons necessitate the need for long-term vision and preparedness surrounding safe future for the displaced. As a result of this, in collaboration with partners, DRC will seek to lead the establishment of a Durable Solution Platform in MENA. The Platform’s objective will be to generate knowledge and promote dialogue and strategic programme approaches to the long term future of Syrian Refugees and IDPs based on international best practice and principles for preparing and supporting durable solutions for people in displacement.

Understanding and better responding to irregular migration will remain a key priority for DRC during 2016. DRC sees great potential in building on from experience earned in Libya and Tunisia surrounding mapping of mixed migration trends to extend the mapping program across MENA and will remain an active member of MHub (North Africa Mixed Migration taskforce) network and look to create a Mix Migration secretariat covering the Mediterranean migration routes. Operationally DRC will expand its North African portfolio to Algeria with a view to have a solid operational and strategic foothold in the wider Maghreb region.

**PROMOTING LONG TERM STABILITY AND RESILIENCE**

Addressing locally rooted fragility will remain a strong component of DRC/DDG’s work in the MENA region. DRC/DDG aims to reduce recurrent patterns of conflict and displacement and prevent relapse of negative coping mechanisms surfacing from lack of livelihood and self-protection for communities affected by conflict. This requires consistent work on local community-based governance, including community safety, armed violence reduction and conflict mitigation/prevention. DRC/DDG will continuously pursue these goals in collaboration with key partners, Syria Consortium and donors; with specific focus on these goals in Syria, Iraq and Libya.

A particular effort will be promotion of safe areas by provision of qualified Humanitarian Mine Action interventions and small arms light weapons awareness and management to reinstate access for displaced people to needed infrastructure and livelihood. For 2016, particular focus will be on Iraq and Libya.

DRC/DDG will continue to render its engagement with national and regional humanitarian coordination structures such as Humanitarian Country Teams, clusters and 3RP structures with the objective of unified collaboration and ending displacement collectively. Accountability will remain a key principle for DRC during 2016, and the organization will work on mainstreaming the Core Humanitarian Standards as the newly internationally broad-backed accountability and quality measures that at all times govern and steer our work with beneficiaries, governments, partners and donors.
## Funding and Facts

### DRC Middle East & North Africa Annual Budget per Donor (USD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Set.</th>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Amount (USD)</th>
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<tr>
<td>MENA</td>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>20,693,968</td>
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<td>EU HUM. AID (DG ECHO)</td>
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<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
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DRC MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA BUDGET ALLOCATION BY SECTOR - IRAQ

DRC MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA BUDGET ALLOCATION BY SECTOR - TURKEY
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GLOBAL</th>
<th>FORUM</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
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</thead>
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| DRC MENA REGIONAL | • SIRF  
• SIRF Advocacy Working Group  
• 3RP  
• Strategic Steering Committee (SSG) for Whole of Syria (WOS) | • BOARD MEMBER  
• MEMBER  
• MEMBER REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE  
• MEMBER |
| IRAQ            | • Humanitarian Country Team  
• Protection Cluster (UNHCR)  
• Sanitation, Water and Hygiene Cluster (UNICEF)  
• Emergency Shelter (UNHCR & IFRC) | • MEMBER  
• CO-CHAIR  
• MEMBER |
| LEBANON         | • Humanitarian Country Team  
• Protection Cluster (UNHCR)  
• Social Cohesion/Livelihood  
• CCCM  
• Food Security Cluster (WFP & FAO)  
• Emergency Shelter (UNHCR & IFRC) | • MEMBER  
• CO-LEAD  
• CO-LEAD  
• MEMBER  
• MEMBER |
| SYRIA           | • Humanitarian Country Team  
• Protection Cluster (UNHCR)  
• Early Recovery Cluster (UNDP)  
• Education Cluster (UNICEF & Safe the Children)  
• Sanitation, Water and Hygiene Cluster (UNICEF)  
• Logistics (WFP)  
• Emergency Shelter (UNHCR & IFRC)  
• Whole of Syria NFI-Shelter (WOS)  
• Steering Committee (WOS) | • MEMBER  
• MEMBER  
• MEMBER  
• MEMBER  
• MEMBER |
| TURKEY          | • Protection Cluster (UNHCR)  
• Food Security Cluster (WFP & FAO)  
• Sanitation, Water and Hygiene Cluster (UNICEF) | • MEMBER  
• MEMBER  
• MEMBER |
| JORDAN          | • Protection cluster (UNHCR)  
• Livelihoods cluster (UNHCR)  
• South Interagency working group (UNHCR)  
• Amman referral coordination meetings (UNHCR)  
• Vulnerability Assessment Framework Steering Committee (UNHCR)  
• Basic needs cluster (UNHCR) | • CO-CHAIR  
• CO-CHAIR  
• CO-CHAIR |
| LIBYA/TUNISIA   | • Protection Working Group | • MEMBER |
DRC/DDG – MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA ADDRESSES

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ALNESREEN ROAD • CLOSE TO BEN NABY MOSQUE, ALMANSOURA AREA • TRIPOLI, LIBYA,

CURRENT DRC/DDG MENA DONORS

BACK COVER PHOTO: LEILA ALADUI/DRC