



## **Cover Note**

**UNHCR Lebanon 2024-2027 Call for Expression of Interest**

**EOI Reference #: EOI.2024.1**

**30 January 2024**

The UNHCR [Administrative Instruction on the Selection and Retention of Partners for Partnership Agreements \(UNHCR/AI/2021/11\)](#) is in place to ensure that UNHCR partners with the most suitable organizations in any given operation for the implementation of projects, to provide quality protection and assistance to refugees and other persons of concern.

UNHCR Offices are required to broaden opportunities for all interested organizations by inviting existing and new partners to express their interest in implementing a specific Project. UNHCR solicits interest from partners that have complementary attributes to UNHCR's capacities and resources for undertaking a specific Project through issuing a [Call for Expression of Interest \(EOI\)](#).

The EOI informs interested partners about project scope and specifications; criteria for selection; deadlines and document requirements for submission of concept notes; date of selection decision; and other particularities of the operation and/or Project. The same information is provided to all existing and potential partners at the same time to ensure fairness and objectivity of the process.

The EOI is open to all existing and/or new prospective partners that wish to participate in UNHCR's operations in 2024-2027 and contribute complementary resources (human resources, knowledge, funds, in-kind contributions, supplies and/or equipment) to achieving common goals and objectives as agreed in a Project Partnership Agreement.

### **Submission of Proposals**

UNHCR Lebanon is advertising a call for Expression of Interest for the central office in Beirut to cover 2024-2025 in line with the ongoing UNHCR multi-year strategy 2023-2025. The project implementation may be extended to 2026-2027 based on the strategic direction of the operation and funds availability.

Applicants are [required to submit a Concept Note for the project subject of this call](#) reflecting their interest to implement in partnership with UNHCR. The Concept Note is primarily for an agency to express its unique advantage and added value for the Project objectives. The Concept Note is intended to allow the agency to:

- Describe how the proposed project will achieve its expected outcome;
- Demonstrate the unique advantage, distinctive technical capacity, strengths, and past experiences it would bring to the partnership for realizing the desired outcome of the Project;
- Describe the activities, methodology and implementation approach for realizing the desired outcome of the Project;
- Estimate the total cost of the project, including total funding to be requested from UNHCR, the organization's contribution (financial and/or in-kind) as well as any contributions by other donors, and
- Demonstrate its complementariness to UNHCR's capacities and resources for the Project.

The Concept Note should not be a fully developed project document and should be concise, contain clear information and not exceed three pages. Once the best-fit partner is selected, negotiations and discussions on the project design and plan will be initiated and the Concept Note will be further developed into a

detailed Project Partnership Agreement. Organizations who are not selected for implementation of a given project, but managed to prove capacity for implementation may be pre-selected for a roster for prospective partnership and may be called for partnership in the duration of the multi-year strategy in case of change or expansion of activities.

Applicants are also required to complete and submit one copy of the **Organizational Capacity Review**. The Organizational Capacity Review provides UNHCR with an overview of the applicants internal financial, management, procurement and PSEA capacity systems. Applicants are responsible to ensure that information provided through the Organizational Capacity Review is accurate. Applicants must also agree that all data provided in the Organizational Capacity Review can be verified and validated by UNHCR prior to or after selection for partnership.

All submissions and annexes should be submitted through the UN Partner Portal: <https://www.unpartnerportal.org/>. The UN Partner Portal allows an upload of only one file. Therefore, for submissions with several documents, place all documents in a folder, zip the folder and upload the zipped file. Applicants facing technical issues in submitting Concept Notes on the portal are required to address queries to: [lebbeoi@unhcr.org](mailto:lebbeoi@unhcr.org).

**Attention:** Registration with the Government of Lebanon is a pre-condition for selection of partners. Legal registration with Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Finance in Lebanon is mandatory. Receiving an account number from the Ministry of Interior is not sufficient to be eligible to apply to the Call for Expression of Interest. All applicants must submit a copy of registration documents along with every EOI submission.

<b>Project Period estimated start and end dates of project:</b>	
1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2025, with the possibility of extension to 2026-2027 subject to funds availability.	
<b>Submission deadline:</b>	<b>Decision on selection by:</b>
<b>19 February 2024</b>	<b>4 March 2024</b>

**Operational Context:**

Lebanon currently hosts 1.5 million refugees who live across over 1,700 localities in urban areas. More than 50% of the refugee population is children and 18% is between 13-17 years old. Most refugees living in Lebanon are originally from Syria, with significantly smaller populations from Iraq and Sudan. They face many challenges such as curfews, restricted movement, lack of legal residency, fear of detention and deportations, social tensions, isolation, and inability to earn a decent living. Over 90% of refugees live under extreme poverty resulting in protection issues such as child labor, child marriage, evictions from homes due to limited means to pay rent, and an inability to meet basic needs such as food and health care, as well as risks of exploitation and fraud.

Refugee children are among the most affected by weakened protective legal frameworks and the deteriorating socio-economic situation of their families. Around **50% of refugee children are out of school and/or are working** which exposes them to several risks that affect their well-being and development. During the 2022-2023 UNHCR-led Participatory Assessment (PA) - *structured dialogue sessions intended to inform programmes and activities* – working boys and girls (13-17 years old) and their families reported that children in the workplace faced harm such as **mistreatment, physical abuse, long working hours, exploitation, sexual harassment, low pay, hazards, bullying and fatigue**. Parents expressed concern about the impact of this on children’s mental and physical health such as **depression, low self-esteem, isolation, and psychological distress**.

According to the 2022-2023 PA, children staying at home also face issues that affect their development. Some girls out of school spent their day **supporting their mothers in household chores such as cooking, cleaning the house and/or working in the fields**. Parents were concerned that their children spent most of their time at home on the phone **watching inappropriate content**. Some parents reported **violence against children in the home** due to parental frustration of their inability to meet their families’ basic needs, as well as **child marriage**.

In the 2021-2022 PA, refugee children (13-17 years old) attending schools also reported facing issues that impacted their well-being, including **discrimination and bullying at schools, and school closures, as well as low quality of education and safety issues** associated with walking to and from afternoon school shifts.

In addition, Lebanon has been going through ongoing and compounding crises since 2019 that have resulted in increased mental health needs for both Lebanese and refugee communities.

Despite efforts to expand access to mental health and psychosocial support services (MHPSS), **several barriers** exist that prevent refugees from accessing them. During PAs, refugee parents, children and youth, reported barriers such as the **inability to cover the costs of transportation to reach the services, stigma, and lack of knowledge of available services**. Refugee boys and girls were among the highest group in the PAs to report **coping mechanisms** such as living in isolation to avoid conflict and, more constructively, engaging in learning activities at community centers, exercising, engaging with friends, connecting with long-distance friends and families through social media and reading books. Such constructive coping mechanisms can be further capitalized and expanded on such as through the creation of community-based peer support networks and structures that can reach wider groups of adolescents in Lebanon.

**Vision and strategic orientation**

To address the growing mental health needs and challenges in accessing support, UNHCR began further strengthening the capacity of community structures to deliver evidence-based structured non-specialized psychosocial support (PSS) at community level to persons living in adverse situations. This comes as part of UNHCR's community-based protection efforts to promote meaningful engagement of refugees as implementers of more effective and sustainable protection. It is also in line with UNHCR Lebanon's overall goal to improve the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of refugee adolescents and adults, including through strengthening and integrating MHPSS in its community-based protection programming. In the development and implementation of its community-based PSS interventions, UNHCR works in close coordination with the National Mental Health Programme of the Ministry of Public Health, UNICEF and WHO, among others.

In line with this, UNHCR and Save the Children partnered from 2021-2023 on a pilot project that strengthened the capacity of refugee Outreach Volunteers (OVs) to deliver psychological first-aid, group Problem Management Plus (PM+), Peer Support sessions and the capacity of Community Development Centers (CDCs) to deliver life-skill sessions to youth.

Through this Call of Expression of Interest (2024-2027), **UNHCR is now seeking to empower OVs to build the capacity of older children and adolescents to act as peer supporters to other older children and adolescents.** It is expected that this form of community-based PSS delivery will widen access of older children and adolescents to the much-needed psychosocial support, thus reducing their exposure to risks. In the proposal, the Partner can also suggest **other evidence-based and community-based psychosocial support activities targeting both children and adults**, and that are inclusive of diversity.

#### Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Capacity Assessment

The prospective Partner shall comply with the UN Protocol on Allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) involving Implementing Partners (2018), which outlines requirements for the UN and its implementing partners to ensure adequate safeguards and appropriate actions related to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). Adequate capacity to prevent, manage the risk of and response to allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse is one of the eligibility criteria for the selection of partners and a mandatory part of the due diligence process. Prospective partners should complete and upload the **PSEA self-assessment with supporting documents** considered as proof of evidence of meeting the required standards to the UN Partner Portal (<https://www.unpartnerportal.org>) as part of submission for this Call for Expression of Interest.

Following the evaluation of concept notes, UNHCR will undertake a vetting of the self-assessments and make a preliminary determination of the PSEA capacity of the potential partners who have been shortlisted. The preliminary decision for the selected Partner will be uploaded on the UN Partner Portal.

#### UN Partner Portal

All potential partners are requested to register on the **UN Partner Portal** (<https://www.unpartnerportal.org>) and complete a self-declaration of eligibility for establishing a partnership with the UN. This self-declaration must state that the Organization's values and conduct are compatible with those of UNHCR/UN (humanitarian, non-discriminatory, safeguarding refugees and human rights), confirming that the organization has not been barred or sanctioned by the United Nations Security Council, and abides with the Principles of Partnership. Dedicated UN agency users from any participating UN agency, including UNHCR, can verify the information provided by potential partners in their profiles during the specific selection process. Users with a verification role should go through the 'Profile Details' section to ensure that the partner's profile is complete and presents itself as a credible civil society organization for a partnership with the UN. If the profile is not complete, the verification cannot be performed. Verification is not a pre-requisite for applying for a Call for Expression of Interest.

You may watch this video for additional information: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wDQdDikrtMk&feature=youtu.be>

All submissions and annexes **must** be submitted in English through the UN Partner Portal: <https://www.unpartnerportal.org>. If applicants are not able to complete the Portal registration process by the submission deadline, submissions via email will not be accepted. Therefore, all applicants are urged to initiate and finalize the portal registration requirements at the earliest possible to avoid any issues. Exceptionally, cases where applicants face technical challenges in registering on the Partner Portal, and able to present evidence of such, applications may be received via email. Partners not registered on the Portal before the selection for a funded partnership, the partner must complete the registration, and UNHCR the verification, on the Portal within 90 days from the date of signature of the Partnership Agreement.

**Attention:** The UN Partner Portal allows an upload of only one file. Therefore, for submissions with several documents, place all documents in a folder, zip the folder and upload the zipped file. If there are technical issues in submitting on the portal, please address your questions to: [lebbeoi@unhcr.org](mailto:lebbeoi@unhcr.org).

#### Additional Reference Material

For additional guidance and reference documents click the below link:

**UNHCR/AI/2023/05 Administrative Instruction on Procedures on Partnership Management**

#### Attachments

1. Call for Expression of Interest
- 2.a. Concept Note Template
- 2.b. Organizational Capacity Review
  - Annex I: Organizational Data and Internal Controls
  - Annex II: PSEA Self-assessment Checklist

Annex III: Partner Procurement Capacity Assessment

3. Concept Note Evaluation Criteria

4. Frequently Asked Questions