

PRESS RELEASE

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"Supporting the future of Syria and the region" conference: new financial tracking report highlights that international donors have already over fulfilled their 2020 pledges

Today, the European Commission released a new Financial Tracking Report which tracks the progress of donor funds against their pledges made at the 4th Brussels Conference on 'Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region' on 30 June 2020. This year's Conference, hosted by the EU and co-chaired with the UN, generated pledges totalling USD 13.8 billion (EUR 12.4 billion) in grants and loans, demonstrating the continued commitment of international donors to address the consequences of the Syrian crisis. This newly released report is the 10th Financial Tracking Report in total produced to track the financial pledges made at the Brussels Syria crisis conferences since 2016.

It details that as of 31 August 2020, international donors had contributed USD 5 billion (EUR 4.5 billion) in grants to Syria and the region in 2020, which already exceeds of the total grant pledge for 2020. In addition, donors had already contributed USD 1.7 billion (EUR 1.5 billion or 85%) of their pledged grants for 2021 and in terms of new loan funding pledged, USD 0.9 billion (EUR 0.8 billion or 14%) had already been committed.

This support is being provided inside Syria and to five neighbouring countries hosting refugees (Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt). Of the total 2020 grant contribution of USD 5 billion (EUR 4.5 billion), 34% has been allocated to Syria, 19% to Lebanon, 16% to Turkey, 13% to Jordan, 8% to Iraq, and 1% to Egypt, with the remaining 9% going to multi-country and regional initiatives. The largest grant contributions in 2020 have so far been in food, health, education, economic recovery and infrastructure. Compared to 2019, the most notable change has been the increased allocation to the food sector (from 6.1% to 18%), in line with the massive increase in food insecurity inside Syria affecting 9.3 million people.

Nevertheless, funding continues to fall short of needs in all sectors to support the over 11 million people in need in Syria and the 5.6 million refugees in the region, also considering the additional burden caused by COVID-19 and the Beirut port explosion. Despite donor generosity, the Syria Humanitarian Response Plan and the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan are only funded at 43% and 28% respectively.

In **Syria**, the limited funding to the Humanitarian Response Plan affects humanitarian activities, and curtails investments in more sustainable and dignified approaches to addressing needs. This may increase existing vulnerability levels and the risk of some population groups developing more severe needs. Investments in all sectors are highly inter-dependent.

Donors have continued to help **Jordan** in the field of education, where access to primary education exceeds targets. Concerns on the retention of Syrian children in secondary education persist. Donors have sought to strengthen the self-reliance of refugees and host communities through the creation of decent job opportunities alongside working towards an inclusive national social protection system. Overall, further efforts are needed to ensure that an inclusive approach is pursued.

The report notes that donor funding in **Lebanon** has remained stable, although the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan is only 26% funded. There has been some progress in protection, with an increase in the registration of births, but obtaining legal residency remains very difficult, with a negative effect on refugees' access to civil documents, freedom of movement, and access to basic services, including health care, social services and education. A high dropout rate is observed in secondary education and further efforts are needed to promote quality education. Donors have continued to support the National Poverty Targeting Programme, but a comprehensive social protection system needs to be developed to address growing vulnerabilities among the Lebanese population. The port explosion has brought further challenges, and there is a sharply rising number of COVID-19 infections. The international community continues to respond massively. Further efforts are required to achieve Universal Health Coverage and affordability of health care.

Donor support to the 3RP in **Turkey, Iraq** and **Egypt** has enabled a scaling-up of critical programmes to support host communities and refugees in dealing with the impact of COVID-19, including the expansion of vital protection services, such as psychosocial support, multi-purpose cash assistance, or health and education interventions. The impact of COVID-19 implies a

need for more support to communities and national systems as refugee and resilience response plans in these countries are only funded by a quarter on average.

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