

BEYOND RELIEF:

Social Cohesion in Action



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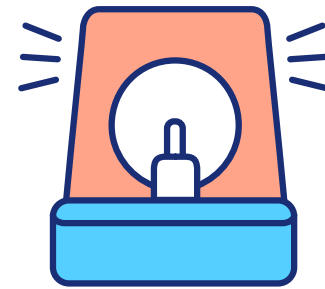


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INTRODUCTION:

Executive Summary

Emergency Drop-In Center for Displaced Communities Due to War



The Emergency Drop-In Center provides vital humanitarian support to displaced families in Bourj Hammoud, Sin El Fil, and surrounding areas. Based at Mouvement Social's community center, the project provides awareness sessions, shower and laundry facilities, and a communal kitchen where displaced individuals participate in meal preparation. What started as an idea became a reality thanks to Christian Aid's belief in our vision and their support from day one—without it, this wouldn't have been possible.

The center also features a dedicated playroom, offering a safe space for children and adults to engage in activities, reducing stress and fostering joy during difficult times. By addressing basic needs and promoting collaboration, the center creates a supportive environment that empowers displaced individuals, helping them rebuild their sense of dignity and resilience.

CONTEXT & Significance



When the war struck Lebanon, the Bourj Hammoud (BH) area became a refuge for displaced families seeking safety, whether by staying at relatives' or friends' homes or renting properties.

Originally a safe refuge for people of diverse nationalities, regions, and backgrounds, including migrant workers, the area became even more overcrowded.

Overcrowded apartments shared by multiple families stripped residents of privacy and dignity. Access to basic necessities such as food, clean water, and hygiene facilities became nearly impossible.

Amidst this chaos, the Drop-In Center emerged as a lifeline—an inclusive space offering immediate relief to those who had lost everything.

Recognizing the urgent need, the Drop-In Center provided more than just services—it became a safe haven. It bridged the gap between despair and hope by fostering a sense of community, rebuilding trust, and offering both practical aid and emotional support during a time of unimaginable hardship.



OBJECTIVES



Provide Essential Services

Ensure access to daily hot meals, playroom, shower facilities, and laundry services, restoring a sense of dignity and improving hygiene and food security.



Psychosocial Support (PSS)

Address trauma through sessions on stress management, grief, loss, and caregiving. Empower families with the tools to rebuild normalcy for themselves and their children.



Strengthen Community Ties

Engage displaced and host community individuals and volunteers in service delivery, fostering collaboration, understanding, solidarity, and social cohesion.



Promote Well-being & Stability

Create an environment where displaced families feel secure, respected, and supported—an essential step in navigating the war.

Why It Matters?

Displacement brings not only physical challenges but also deep emotional scars. Through this initiative, the Drop-In Center didn't just meet immediate needs; it also worked to restore dignity, reduce stress, and build resilience. By weaving together, the efforts of the displaced and host communities, it turned a crisis into an opportunity for connection and healing.

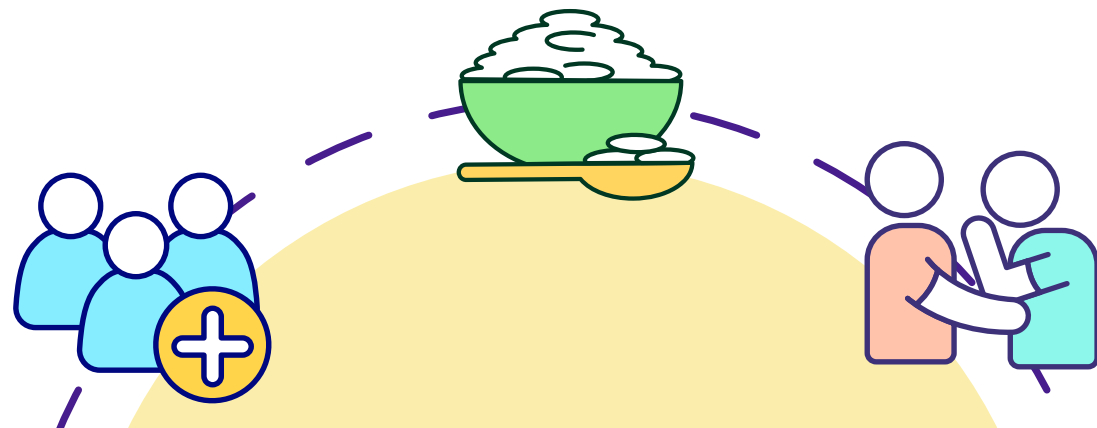


TARGET POPULATION

The target population includes displaced individuals living in the Bourj Hammoud area and nearby, who are residing in extremely overcrowded conditions, often with more than two families sharing a single apartment. These individuals lack access to basic necessities such as food, clean water, and hot water, which exacerbates their vulnerability and impacts their physical and mental well-being.

Location(s): Mouvement Social's Bourj Hammoud Community Center.

Project Duration: 4 months (November 2024 – February 2025).

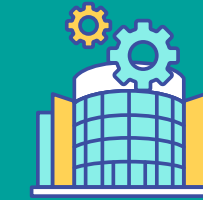


RESOURCES



Staff

Head of Center (HOC), Project Coordinator, Field Officer, PSS Facilitator, Security Guard, Cleaner, in addition to Volunteers (from the displaced community and host community).



Facilities

The facility includes a playroom for children, two shower stations, one laundry facility, one kitchen for meal preparation, a community room for conducting PSS sessions and regular meetings with volunteers, and a beneficiary registration room for registering beneficiaries, collecting data, guiding them to appropriate services, organizing access to different facilities, and distributing hygiene kits. All of these premises are fully accessible to persons with disabilities (PWD).



Supplies

- **For the Shower Service:** Hygiene kits for each beneficiary, water apply, hair dryer, water heater, and a handheld bidet.
- **For the Laundry Service:** Laundry machine, clothes dryer, detergent, baskets for collecting and organizing clothes.
- **For the Hot meal Service:** This includes ingredients and food supplies for meal preparation, gas for cooking, cleaning materials for the kitchen, utensils for food preparation and serving, hygiene supplies (aprons, hair nets, and gloves), and food trays for meal distribution.
- **Administrative Supplies:** Phones to facilitate the constant communication and the outreach phase.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

What to Prepare? Preparation Phase

This phase was critical in setting the foundation for the project. It was all about making sure we were prepared to meet the immediate needs of displaced families. Key points to focus on before launching such project includes:

Kitchen Setup & Accessibility

Ensure that the kitchen or facility is spacious, well-organized, and easily accessible to all individuals involved in meal preparation. The kitchen should be equipped with safety features, such as fire extinguishers, non-slip floors, first-aid kits, and clear exit routes in case of emergencies. Additionally, it should be equipped with the necessary kitchen appliances (stoves, refrigerators, sinks, etc.), as well as utensils and tools that meet the required hygiene standards. Ensure there are enough cooking stations to accommodate large volumes of food, with sufficient counter space for food preparation, storage, and assembly.

Safety & Food Security

The kitchen and food storage areas must be secure, maintaining high standards of hygiene and safety to prevent contamination. This includes ensuring that food storage follows proper guidelines for temperature control and separation (e.g., raw vs. cooked foods) to avoid cross-contamination. Set up a systematic inventory management system to monitor stock levels, track expiration dates, and rotate ingredients using the FIFO (First In, First Out) method. Regularly audit food supplies to ensure proper handling and freshness. Establish protocols for safe food handling and training on food safety practices. Ensure a steady and reliable supply chain for fresh ingredients, including Long-Term Agreements (LTAs) with food suppliers to guarantee a consistent supply of quality ingredients.

Shower & Laundry Facilities

Prepare shower and laundry facilities to be functional, hygienic, and accessible to all displaced individuals. To prevent overcrowding, ensure that the number of showers and laundry machines is sufficient to meet the needs of the displaced population. Similarly, ensure that there are enough laundry machines to accommodate the volume of clothes, with a clear schedule for laundry services to avoid bottlenecks. Moreover, to maintain high hygiene standards, develop and implement a strict cleaning protocol for both shower and laundry areas. These should include regular disinfection of surfaces, such as shower floors, walls, and laundry machines, as well as a deep cleaning schedule at least once a week. Make sure there is proper ventilation to reduce humidity levels, preventing mold and mildew buildup. Additionally, designate clear areas for personal hygiene products (e.g., soap, shampoo, detergent) and clean towels, or provide each person with their own kit that lasts for a certain number of showers. At last, create a user-friendly

system for scheduling and managing access to the facilities, ensuring that individuals or families have privacy and adequate time for use. If possible, allocate certain times for different groups (e.g., women, children, men) to ensure comfort and safety.

Psychosocial Support (PSS)

Ensure that the PSS activity space is safe, accessible, and welcoming. This includes preparing a private and comfortable environment free from distractions and equipping it with the necessary materials (e.g., worksheets, pens, etc.). Recruit and train facilitators who are sensitive to the community's needs, with a focus on trauma-informed care and confidentiality. Set up a clear schedule for sessions, ensuring that the timing accommodates participants' availability, and communicate the purpose and benefits of the sessions effectively to the community. Implement referral systems to address any crisis situations and establish a feedback mechanism for ongoing monitoring and improvement.

Volunteer Coordination & Logistics

Develop clear Terms of Reference (TOR) for each volunteer role, detailing responsibilities and working hours. Train volunteers on safety protocols, including food handling, emergency procedures, and respecting the dignity of displaced families.



Takeaway for Replication

Think about logistics before launching. Ensure kitchens, bathrooms, and volunteer roles are set up for smooth operation. The safety of both the facilities and volunteers is paramount.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

Project Launch

Once everything is in place, the real work begins. Here's what you need to focus on when the project kicks off:



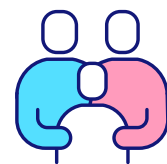
Meal Preparation & Distribution

Organize an efficient system for meal prep, from ingredient allocation to cooking to distribution. Set up designated areas for meal serving that are accessible and safe for both displaced families and volunteers.



Hygiene & Well-being Services

Daily hot meals, shower, and laundry services must be available consistently. Create a clear schedule for each service and communicate it to both beneficiaries and staff to avoid confusion or overcrowding.



Tailored Psychosocial Support (PSS) Intervention

Delivered structured PSS sessions to address key issues such as stress management, grief, and helping children return to normal routines. These sessions were designed to be accessible, comfortable, and safe, creating an environment where participants could open up. To further support caregivers, consider providing childcare during sessions to encourage participation. Additionally, train staff and volunteers to conduct Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) awareness sessions, ensuring that all beneficiaries understand how to report abuse or exploitation and are fully aware of their rights. To ensure more effective engagement, keep the number of participants in each session manageable, fostering better outcomes and meaningful interaction, or conduct individual sessions when necessary.



Managing Overcrowding

In areas with limited space, make sure to manage overcrowding by staggering service times for meals and showers, and ensuring there is enough space between families to maintain privacy and dignity.

Takeaway for Replication

The key during launch is maintaining order and ensuring services are delivered consistently and on time. Don't underestimate the importance of good crowd management.



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

Assessment & Monitoring

After the first month, it's important to step back and evaluate. The goal is to learn and adjust. Here's what to do during this phase:



Feedback from the Community

Regularly engage displaced families to get their feedback on services—what's working well, what isn't, and where improvements are needed. Hold informal discussions and surveys to gather insights.



Assess Facility Functionality

Check the functionality of your kitchen, shower, and laundry facilities. Are there bottlenecks in meal preparation? Is the bathroom usage balanced, or do you need more facilities? Use the feedback to make any adjustments.



Staff, Members and Volunteer Feedback

Evaluate staff and volunteer performance. Are they clear about their roles? Are there any safety concerns that need addressing? Regular debriefings are crucial to ensure smooth operations and to address any emerging issues.

Takeaway for Replication

Regularly assess both community and staff needs. It's crucial to adjust based on real-time feedback to ensure the project runs effectively.



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

Service Delivery Continuation

The final phase is about maintaining and improving service delivery. Here's what you should focus on:



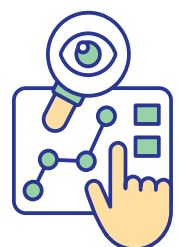
Sustained Meal Service

Continue providing daily meals, making sure you've adjusted portion sizes or ingredients based on community feedback. Offer a variety of nutritious options to keep families engaged.



Hygiene Services

Ensure that shower and laundry services remain available, and monitor usage. Adjust service times and numbers of facilities as necessary based on the community's needs.



Monitoring and Adjustments

Continue gathering feedback from the community on the ongoing services. If there are changes in the number of beneficiaries or new needs arise, be prepared to adjust your services accordingly.

Takeaway for Replication

Never stop improving. Continuous monitoring and making adjustments based on feedback will help sustain the project and keep it relevant to the community's evolving needs.



SERVICE
DELIVERY
CONTINUATION

KEY ACTIVITIES



Shower Service

Ensuring access to daily hot showers by maintaining a steady water supply, distributing hygiene kits to each participant, monitoring cleanliness, and upholding safety standards. Additionally, managing schedules for shower use on a daily basis to ensure smooth and organized access for all participants.



Hot Meal Service

Purchasing ingredients and food supplies weekly, ensuring proper storage to maintain freshness and prevent contamination. This involves organizing and counting items in storage for easy access and efficient use, as well as regularly checking inventory levels. Preparing and cooking meals daily, distributing meals using food trays while maintaining hygiene standards. Additionally, preparing the weekly menu, cleaning the kitchen, and washing utensils after each meal preparation.



Laundry Service

Managing schedules for laundry use, monitoring cleanliness, loading clothes into the washing machine, operating the machine, and ensuring that clothes are properly cleaned and dried. Additionally, organizing clothes in baskets for easy distribution and access.



Referral

Refer beneficiaries to other services where needed.



Awareness Sessions

Organizing sessions on PSS, stress management, how caregivers can help their children return to normalcy, and addressing grief and loss. Additionally, collecting qualitative feedback from beneficiaries after each session, and writing weekly reports highlighting the topics covered and the main ideas discussed.



STAFFING & ROLES:

Workflow

The following workflow was tailored to suit the specificities and resources of the Mouvement Social Bourj Hammoud center. However, similar or identical models can be replicated for such projects in other contexts.



Coordination and Management

The HOC oversees the entire operation, ensuring coordination between departments and addressing any challenges.



Project Oversight

The project coordinator manages overall project operations and financial coordination.



Service Delivery

The field officer manages on-ground service delivery, volunteer roles, and data collection.



Psychosocial Support

The PSS facilitator conducts awareness sessions and provides mental health support.



Community Engagement

Volunteers assist in service provision and foster community involvement.



Safety and Security

The security guard ensures a safe environment.



Cleanliness and Hygiene

The cleaner maintains the cleanliness and hygiene of the center.



COORDINATION & COLLABORATION



We collaborated with nearby schools in the Bourj Hammoud area hosting displaced families to enhance our outreach efforts, using these schools as platforms to connect with the community. In addition, we coordinated closely with the Bourj Hammoud municipality, which provided essential support by facilitating local outreach, helping us navigate regulations, and ensuring access to resources. Volunteers from both displaced and host communities were organized into community groups to assist with outreach, raising awareness about available services and encouraging participation. This collaboration fostered a sense of mutual support and ensured a comprehensive, inclusive approach, allowing us to effectively reach and serve those in need.

CHALLENGES & MITIGATIONS

Equipment and Resource Management

The dryer machine was discontinued due to its high water and electricity consumption, which was not sustainable. To improve efficiency and sustainability, it was decided to replace the dryer with an additional washing machine. This change involved:



Resource Assessment

Evaluating the resource consumption of existing equipment and identifying more sustainable alternatives.



Procurement and Installation

Purchasing and installing the new washing machine to ensure continued service provision without excessive resource use.



Efficiency Improvement

Streamlining the laundry process to maintain service quality while reducing environmental impact.



CHALLENGES & MITIGATIONS

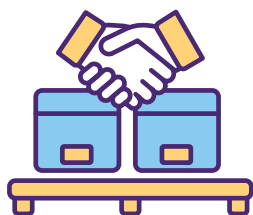
Logistical Challenges

Various logistical challenges were encountered, including maintenance issues, shortages of food trays, and water shortages. These challenges were addressed through:



Maintenance Protocols

Establishing regular maintenance schedules for all equipment to prevent breakdowns and ensure smooth operation.



Supply Chain Management

Strengthening relationships with suppliers to ensure a steady supply of necessary items, such as food trays and hygiene kits.



Water Management

Implementing water-saving measures and coordinating with local authorities to ensure a reliable water supply.



Contingency Planning

Developing contingency plans to address unexpected shortages or issues, ensuring that services could continue without interruption.



MONITORING & EVALUATION



Monitoring at the Drop-In Center was an ongoing process to ensure that services met the needs of displaced families efficiently. Various tools and methodologies were used to track service delivery, community engagement, and beneficiary satisfaction.

1. Daily Service Logs

- o Meal distribution logs recorded 123 individuals (108 females, 15 males) who regularly accessed hot meals.
- o Shower service logs tracked 196 beneficiaries (179 females, 17 males) using the facilities.
- o Laundry service records showed 134 individuals (105 females, 29 males) accessed clean clothes.
- o Hygiene kit distribution lists documented 274 distributed kits (207 females, 67 males).

2. Attendance and Engagement Tracking

- o Registration and attendance sheets captured participation in awareness sessions on hygiene, stress management, and PSEA.
- o Volunteer engagement logs recorded participation from both displaced and host community members.

3. Beneficiary Feedback Mechanisms

- o Regular surveys and informal discussions gathered feedback on service quality, accessibility, and gaps.
- o A confidential complaint and suggestion box allowed for anonymous reporting of concerns.

4. Staff and Volunteer Reflection Meetings

- o Bi-weekly staff debriefings addressed operational challenges, scheduling issues, and coordination gaps.
- o Volunteers provided input on how to optimize service delivery.

5. Collaboration with Local Authorities and Partners

- o Coordination with the Bourj Hammoud municipality ensured better outreach and regulatory compliance.
- o Partnerships with schools and NGOs facilitated referrals and broader support for displaced families.



MONITORING & EVALUATION

Moreover, and in order to measure the project's effectiveness, the following key performance indicators were tracked.

INDICATOR	MEASUREMENT TOOL	Impact Assessment
Number of displaced individuals accessing daily hot meals	Meal distribution logs	Improved food security
Number of displaced individuals using shower facilities	Service usage logs	Dignified hygiene access
Number of displaced individuals benefiting from laundry services	Laundry service logs	Improved hygiene & well-being
Number of hygiene kits distributed	Distribution records	Promoted hygiene awareness



Impact Measurement: How We Knew We Succeeded

Success was evaluated through:

- o **Quantitative Data:** Total service usage numbers provided measurable outcomes.
- o **Qualitative Insights:** Beneficiary feedback, staff reflections, and success stories highlighted deeper impact.
- o **Service Adaptability:** Adjustments based on real-time feedback improved service efficiency.
- o **Sustainability Indicators:** Volunteer engagement and partnerships with local stakeholders indicated long-term potential.



Lessons Learned for Replication

1. **Data-Driven Adjustments:** Regular feedback loops ensured responsive modifications.
2. **Community Involvement Enhances Impact:** Engaging both displaced and host communities strengthened trust and inclusivity.
3. **Scalable and Flexible Models Work Best:** The Drop-In Center's structure is replicable and adaptable to various crisis settings.

SCALABILITY



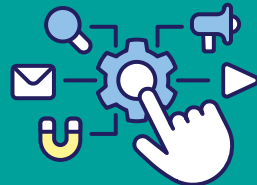
Needs Assessment

Identify areas with the highest demand for these services. This includes regions with large populations of homeless individuals, displaced families, and underserved communities.



Standardized Services

Develop a standardized model for the services provided. This ensures consistency in the quality and efficiency of the services, regardless of location.



Resource Allocation

Secure sufficient funding, staff, and materials to establish and maintain new service points. Partnering with local businesses, NGOs, and government entities can help in pooling resources.



Community Engagement

Involve local communities in the planning and implementation process. This fosters a sense of ownership and ensures that the services are tailored to the specific needs of each community. Recruiting local volunteers can also enhance credibility and trust.



Implement Mobile Units for Essential Services

Mobile units can be deployed to deliver essential services such as meal distribution to displaced or vulnerable Lebanese families in underserved areas. These units can travel to locations where families are unable to access the center, ensuring that basic needs are met. Additionally, mobile units can offer psychosocial support (PSS) sessions and hygiene education sessions. PSS sessions can help individuals cope with stress and trauma, while hygiene education can promote better health practices, reducing the risk of disease.



Reallocate Project Focus

The project can be adjusted to support children working on the streets or Syrian refugees, especially those residing in the most deprived areas. This reallocation would address the specific needs of these vulnerable groups. For street-connected children, the project can provide safe spaces, educational opportunities, and vocational training to help them build a better future. For displaced Lebanese, Syrian refugees and other nationalities, the project can offer tailored support services, including legal assistance, language classes, and integration programs to help them adapt to their new environment and improve their quality of life.



BEST PRACTICES



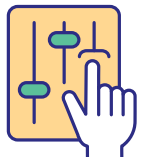
Encouraging Collective Activities

Group meal preparation with women from diverse backgrounds promoted social cohesion and a sense of community ownership.



Cultural Sensitivity

Adapting services to align with cultural and religious norms (e.g., halal meals, privacy measures in shower facilities) enhances trust and encourages participation.



Flexibility and Adaptability

Ensuring services remain relevant by adjusting activities based on ongoing feedback allows for quick improvements and responsiveness to beneficiaries' needs.



Involving and Engaging Volunteers

Engaging local volunteers strengthens connections, enhances outreach, and builds trust with beneficiaries.



Collaboration with Local Stakeholders

Partnering with municipalities, community leaders, and stakeholders strengthens outreach, mobilizes resources, and maximizes impact.



Creating Safe, Inclusive Spaces

Gender-sensitive, inclusive spaces foster comfort and accessibility for all beneficiaries, particularly vulnerable groups.



Dedicated Registration Room

A registration room for data collection and confidential discussions helped organize service delivery and ensured effective beneficiary tracking.



Resource Efficiency

Optimizing resource usage (e.g., replacing high-consumption dryers with efficient washing machines) helped reduce operational costs.



Transparent Communication

Clear communication about project goals and services prevents misunderstandings and helps manage beneficiaries' expectations.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

It's one thing to talk about what the center provides, but the real impact is felt in the everyday moments—when someone finally gets to take a proper shower, enjoy a hot meal, or simply feel safe again. Here's what people had to say about their experience at the center, in their own words:

“

I felt relieved, like I was letting go of all the pressure and unloading everything I had been carrying.”

— M.D., 49 years old

“

The food is delicious and clean. Even though you don't open on Sundays, you still make sure we have enough to eat.”

— A.A., 77 years old

“

Since I was displaced and ended up staying in the school, I haven't been able to take a proper shower because there was nowhere to do so... I had no choice but to wash myself with my hands because there was no privacy. But when I came to the center and you told us about the showers, I was hesitant—especially because I wear a hijab. But I found that everything was private, respectful, and fully secured. I felt at home and safe.”

— G.T., 56 years old

CONCLUSION

The Drop-In Center in Bourj Hammoud is proof of what can happen when we come together to face challenges head-on. It's more than just a space; it's a lifeline, a refuge, and a place where hope is rebuilt one step at a time. By responding to real needs with empathy and creativity, we've created a dynamic, inclusive hub that empowers individuals to find their footing again. But this is just the beginning—our commitment to standing by those who need us most remains stronger than ever, as we keep building bridges to brighter tomorrows.



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